

Report of the General Faculty Meeting
April 27, 1984

Mayer-Oakes, Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order and announced that this meeting was called in accordance with Article V, Section 6 of the Faculty Senate Constitution.

First order of business was to election a secretary to record this meeting. Sullivan moved to elect Murray Coulter. Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Motion to adopt Roberts Rules of order passed.

After an opening statement from the chair, and introduction of speakers and guest, statements were made by James Brink, History; Jac Collins, History; Marion Hagler, Engineering; and Henry Shine, Chemistry. (see statements attached)

Chair read his letter to President Cavazos (see attachment).

Chair introduced Peter Bishop, President of Conference on Faculty Governance Organizations.

The secretary read a letter from Jim Noble, President of the Student Association.

Twenty persons reported that their respective departments had voted unanimous disapproval of the proposed tenure policy. Schoen said the American Bar Association will not accredit a school operating under such a policy.

Sasser, Senator At-Large, requested that a letter be sent to each of the regents, the President of this University, and to the Vice Presidents of Texas Tech urging that a vote on the new tenure policy be postponed until such time as they have met with representatives of the faculty and fully explored faculty opinions on this matter.

2:30 p.m.

Newcomb moved that this body adjourn until Friday, May 11, 1984.
The motion passed.

Statement to the Texas Tech University Faculty - Friday, April 27, 1984

You will no doubt be relieved to know that the true origin of the proposed new non-tenure policy has just been learned. It seems that it was written as a practical joke in the development office of one of our large downstate rivals. It was, without any malice intended, introduced by stealth into the East Wing of our own Administration Building as an April Fool's Day prank. Unfortunately, the folk over there did not recognize a joke when they saw one. Thinking it was a real tenure policy, they have, with their own endorsement added to it, sent it along to us. What we have on our hands is worse than an Aggie joke. It is a Red Raider nightmare, a Texas Tech reality--minus fourteen days--and counting.

I have been asked to speak specifically about "Texas Tech University tenure and governance in regional and national perspective." It was intimated that the reason for my being asked was my work with the American Association of University Professors. I must admit that I have contributed some of my spare time to that organization, especially at the state and national levels.

Being active in AAUP also means that I own a copy of the Red Book. This is a collection of the basic policy statements written by AAUP, often in conjunction with other academic organizations, covering all aspects of good academic principle and practice. The most basic document is the 1940 Statement of Principles, which is also entitled "Academic Freedom and Tenure." Since it was first written and endorsed by AAUP and the Association of American Colleges, it has also been endorsed by dozens of other organizations representing many academic disciplines. After introductory paragraphs describing the

importance of academic freedom, it states

Tenure is a means to certain ends; specifically: (1) Freedom of teaching and research and of extramural activities and (2) a sufficient degree of economic security to make the profession attractive to men and women of ability. Freedom and economic security, hence, tenure, are indispensable to the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society.

The "Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities," jointly formulated by the AAUP, the American Council on Education, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, emphasizes the ideas of shared responsibility and cooperation among the components of the academic institution. I recite this information as a reminder that there is in the academic profession a set of recognized standards of good usage. Institutions and representatives of institutions are recognized or cast aside with disapprobation for their adherence to, or rejection of, the accepted principles of the profession, much as a doctor or lawyer is respected or shunned for his or her adherence to or rejection of the canons of ethics of those professions. I assure you that the standards of our profession do not embrace the idea that a succession of term contracts adequately protects academic freedom. Nor is divine right monarchy an acceptable form of university governance.

Long ago, in the dark ages of 1958, before Texas Tech could claim to be a great university, the AAUP censured not the administration, which is the normal procedure, but rather the Board of Directors. The Board gained this opprobrious distinction by summarily firing a tenured full professor for his political activities and by dismissing without notice two other non-tenured professors. Censure remained as a cloud over the campus for nine years. Even the best and most famous universities occasionally get put on censure. The measure of ^a university's greatness is the speed with which it acts to get the _^ censure removed.

President Grover Murray understood the importance of getting Texas Tech accepted into the mainstream of American higher education. He understood the

actual and the symbolic importance of the removal of censure. The removal of censure involved making recompense to the professors who had been injured but also the writing and adopting of a tenure policy that came up to accepted national standards. This is the origin of the tenure policy which we still enjoy today. The tradition of introducing and upholding national standards was continued and enhanced by presidents Cecil Mackey and Larry Graves and by Academic Vice Presidents Sabe Kennedy, Bill Johnson and Charles Hardwick. That Texas Tech had been brought into the mainstream of American higher education was apparent from the success of its faculty and from the fact that Tech became something of a farm team where other schools could find capable and right thinking people to fill the highest echelons of their administrations.

The existing tenure policy was written as a joint effort of the faculty and administration, and it is in conformity with the best national standards. After it had been formally accepted by a positive vote of the faculty, it was formally adopted by the Board. On each of the occasions when the policy has been amended, the same procedure was followed: faculty and administrators agreed on the changes, the faculty formally voted approval and then the Board formally adopted. Needless to say, the procedure being used regarding the new non-tenure policy has broken with the time honored tradition of shared governance and cooperation.

But now it appears that Texas Tech's age of advance is about to come to an end. Adherence to accepted national standards regarding academic freedom and tenure and regarding shared governance and cooperation are giving way to reckless administrative adventurism. The Chronicle of Higher Education will report our retrogression, one day the AAUP will have to return and censure our administration, and the national leaders of higher education will chuckle as they have confirmed what they always suspected about the backwardness of the great American desert. Pity the poor second echelon administrator who aspires to leave Texas Tech for a higher office elsewhere. How will he explain

the role he played in the destruction of academic freedom and tenure at Texas Tech. Or how will he demonstrate his genuine innocence.

The lights are going out across the Texas Tech campus, as the most attractive and mobile of our faculty members depart, equally repelled by the chill that has fallen on Texas Tech and attracted by the better academic climate and conditions elsewhere. The rest of us must hunker down, first to withstand the assault and the siege that is upon us, and then to undertake the long task of rebuilding what has been lost in what we must hope will be only a brief but tragic exception to the progress of a generation.

Jacquelin Collins

J. E. Brink

April 26, 1984

It falls to me today to speak to you about Tenure at Texas Tech in 1984. As a way of doing just that, however, I think it is important to recount just how we got to our present state. Thus I hope you will permit me a little bit of history. As most of you will remember, a dispute over denial of tenure and an appeal surfaced in March of 1981. Beginning in August of that year, concerted faculty action began, in cooperation with the central administration, to work out the differences. President Cavazos and Vice President Darling were actively involved with the Faculty Senate and appropriate faculty committees in the formulation of an acceptable revised tenure policy for Texas Tech. Vice President Darling said on the occasion of the revised policy's approval by the Faculty Senate, that the revision was "good and clear-cut." The revised policy went to the President and to the Board of Regents in the Spring of 1983. Then, quite suddenly, on January 19, 1984, the Board rejected the revised policy, although the item was not on the agenda for that particular meeting. What the faculty heard from that meeting was that the Board found the revised policy contained an appeals procedure that was "lengthy and cumbersome." "Darling predicted," according to the Avalanche-Journal on the next day, that "some faculty will be unhappy and that should produce some heated discussions." "'It's going to be an interesting six months or so,' he was quoted as saying with a grin." Naively, I believe,

the faculty thought that some fine tuning was needed to iron out the differences between the Board and the faculty. Cavazos said at that time that the commitment to tenure at Tech was strong. He also said, however, that the revised policy was a dead issue. We should have been more alert. Four months later, President Cavazos and an ad hoc committee of the Board passed a new policy which was issued last week, April 19, to the press and the Academic Council; most faculty did not see it until this Monday, April 23. Cavazos' attitude after this policy was sent down is best summed up in his own words as quoted in the A-J. He acknowledged that "such issues normally go directly to the faculty . . . (for consideration) and then said "'If they (the faculty) feel bypassed, that's too bad." He also supposedly said that the faculty had already had their "input," presumably he meant when we had struggled over the revised policy for two years only to have it rejected. Well, I don't agree that the faculty has had their input on this policy. And, by your presence here today and the numerous departmental meetings held on this campus over the last four days, you evidently don't either.

Now, as an historian, I can't help but note some unusual circumstances surrounding the release of this new policy. As you are aware, Texas Tech has just completed an eighteen month self-study as part of a ten year reaccreditation process under the auspices of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The site visit of the Southern Association took place

this month between April 8 and April 11. At their exit interview on April 11, the committee praised Texas Tech for its progress since the 1972 visit. They cited our commitment to excellence and our fine faculty, our sound undergraduate and graduate programs, and our enviable research record.

Individual members of the team noted to me the apparently solid governance system at Tech, how there appeared to be an atmosphere of collegial cooperation between the faculty, through the Senate and other committees, and the central administration. I now remind you that eight days after that committee left campus, President Cavazos sent down the proposed tenure policy. I wonder, again as an historian, if the accreditation team would have been so laudatory were the scenario reversed and the policy delivered prior to their visit. As a member of the Tenure and Privilege Committee, I believe it is the faculty's right to be consulted about policies which affect our professional careers and future as residents of this city.

Many of you are aware of the close similarity between the proposed policy and that of the Health Sciences Center, passed by the Board on that same January 19, 1984. What you may not know is that there was a very lengthy and productive process of faculty consultation and involvement in drafting the Health Sciences Center policy. In this totally new tenure policy, why aren't we entitled to the same respect shown our colleagues across the railroad tracks? I shall not go into my objections to the substance of the proposed policy.

It is simply too big a collection of bad ideas to deal with here. I would only say that the University and indeed the Lubbock community should be aware of the consequences of a policy which offers no job security whatsoever. Even if a candidate would consider uprooting a family to join our faculty, given this uncertain atmosphere, I predict that the Lubbock community would still suffer. That faculty member would most likely not sink roots in our city. Why would he or she commit to the purchase of a home, furniture, appliances, or an automobile, if there was no long-term commitment from Texas Tech? Why would that faculty member become involved in our school system, churches, or cultural life if there was no long-term commitment from Texas Tech? I suggest there is NO REASON WHATSOEVER. We are all losers under this proposed policy; the faculty, the staff, the students, the merchants, the entire city. Finally, I want to confess something to you. I have always suspected that I would enjoy an idealized system of enlightened despotism where sound leadership takes care of the details of my life so that I could pursue my questions with security and intellectual freedom. The details of my life are certainly being addressed by the President's action of last week. Unfortunately what we have here is only half of enlightened despotism. I leave it to you to decide which half.

Most of us here agree that our objective for Texas Tech is excellence. Texas Tech is presently a good, but not great, university. Yet the potential for greatness is here. Whether or not it is achieved depends in large measure on the quality of the faculty who assemble at Texas Tech. For in a great university, it is the faculty who take the initiatives required to develop programs of excellence in teaching, research, and professional service. To achieve greatness, Texas Tech must provide an environment in which highly motivated, competent, and ambitious faculty are stimulated to levels of achievement far above that which might be expected at an emerging university. Unfortunately, we often provide an environment that stifles rather than stimulates our best faculty. As a university we do this, perhaps unwittingly, by patronizing our faculty. In dealing with problems, for example, we fail to consider the perspectives of those most directly concerned. In reorganizing research administration, in selecting a computer registration system, in choosing a new financial administration system, in planning computing facilities or in dealing with problems of computer security, we tend to avoid interaction with the faculty most directly concerned. This isolation of the faculty from the decision making process of the University leads to feelings of powerlessness that inhibit the faculty initiatives in research, teaching, and professional service which, as I mentioned, are the key to achieving excellence as Texas Tech. In little more than a year, more than 1/4 of the faculty in my department will have departed in frustration.

Today, we as a university are considering a new tenure policy. I believe that we can agree that the major objective of any new tenure policy is to enhance the quality of the faculty at Texas Tech, and to speed along our approach towards excellence. Unfortunately, the proposed new policy seems, for most disciplines in the university, to offer rather less appeal to the highest quality faculty candidates than to those with more modest qualifications. Implementation of this policy therefore would lead to exactly the opposite of the desired effect. In my department, our competitive position would be severely compromised in comparison with other universities.

It is doubly unfortunate that the way in which the proposed tenure policy was introduced to the faculty can be viewed as the latest in a series of instances in which substantial faculty participation in addressing problems in the university is avoided. In my department, the remaining core of faculty view the development and presentation of the proposed new tenure policy as the latest example of inflexible top-down administration at Texas Tech. If the policy is implemented, many of these faculty will conclude that it is no longer possible to build or maintain programs of excellence at Texas Tech.

What we as a University must do at this point is to avoid shooting ourselves in our collective foot. We must not adopt a policy that makes it more difficult to attract the best qualified new faculty, or adopt one by a procedure that demoralizes currently productive faculty. Instead, if there

are problems in the present tenure policy, let's identify them, propose solutions, debate the issues and in the process, forge a solution not by fiat, but by the more traditional academic process. This is the surer path to excellence. And excellence is what tenure is all about.