

F.C.C. file <sup>MBO</sup> 9/11/61

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT - MINNEAPOLIS 14

November 10, 1961

Dear Colleagues:

The preparation of this Consultative Committee news letter appears to me a wise departure. I hope the faculty will help make it an effective instrument, and by so doing close one of our communication gaps. I should like to take advantage of this first one to help establish the precedent. Some apprehension has been expressed among faculty members because of the news reports of our last Regents' discussion. May I assure you that no action was taken; we were only closing a communication gap with them.

The Senate Committee on Education is still discussing four alternative plans. The ad hoc group that has arranged faculty discussions is still weighing the implications of past conversations. The Faculty Senate will be given an opportunity to explore all important issues fully.

Sincerely,



O. Meredith Wilson  
President

OMW:lh

# FACULTY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER 61-1

November 1961

## 1. Purpose of the Newsletter.

We of the Consultative Committee are concerned about the failure of the faculty to communicate ideas to us. We feel that with a President who is unusually interested in what the faculty thinks about University policies and problems and who is remarkably receptive to good ideas, the faculty individually and collectively is missing a bet in not passing on to us ideas which we can transmit to the President.

Without a doubt, failure of faculty to communicate with us has in some measure been the result of our failure to communicate adequately with faculty. We hope to remedy this situation by issuing a newsletter from time to time to inform you about our meetings with the President. Too, we would like to use the newsletter as a means for passing on to all the faculty ideas transmitted to us by individual faculty members and as a means for soliciting faculty reaction to questions and issues.

At this time, it might encourage the solicitation of ideas, if we point up the unique opportunity we have to inform the President of faculty views.

## 2. Functions of the Consultative Committee.

The Constitution of the University Senate describes the Committee's functions as follows:

"The Faculty Consultative Committee shall meet with the President at regular times to discuss matters of policy relating to instruction, research, personnel, service functions, and the budget. It shall be empowered to appoint subcommittees or employ other devices which it regards as appropriate in initiating and furthering communication between the faculty and the President. It shall report to the Senate at least once in each academic year."\*

The terse language of the Constitution does not convey the full measure of the aspirations of the faculty in establishing the Consultative Committee as a special standing committee of the Senate. These aspirations were spelled out clearly in the report to the Senate accompanying the proposal for establishment of the Committee as: "(1) to establish and keep open a direct line of communication between the teaching and research faculty and the President as the head of the University administration; (2) to elicit from the faculty and to relay to the President the thought of the faculty on University problems; (3) to give the President also

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\* The Committee has recently been given the additional functions of (1) making nominations for the new Committee on Senate Committees and (2) publishing the Senate Forum.

the committee's own best judgment on the problems and policies of the University; and (4) to report to the faculty from time to time in such ways as are most likely to create an informed and responsible faculty opinion on the problems of the University."

Has the Committee fulfilled these aspirations? Our relations with the President could not be better. We meet frequently and he does listen to us. But to the extent that faculty does not use us as a channel of communication we are not fulfilling our function.

### 3. Composition of the Committee.

Members of the Committee are elected by the faculty. If no member is elected from the St. Paul or Duluth Campuses, the elected members must appoint one representative from each of those faculties. Also, the Committee appoints members to fill out the terms of elected members who are unable to complete their terms of office. The current members are:

Will M. Myers (1957-58, 1960-61, 1961-4) designated by the President as Chairman June 2, 1960

Cyrus P. Barnum, Jr. (1958-61, 1961-64)

Robert H. Beck (1957-60, 1960-63)

Sherwood O. Berg (1960-63)

Harold W. Chase (1961-62)\*

Herbert G. Heneman (1960-62)\*\*

William G. Shepherd (1959-62)

William Rosenthal (1957-58, 1958-59, 1959-60, 1960-61, 1961-62)

### 4. The President's Position on the Reorganization Proposals.

In our last meeting with the President, he answered very directly a question which has been much on the minds of faculty. To what extent will Senate action determine the outcome of the proposed reorganization? The President stated that he would go along with the Senate's decision except in the unlikely event that the Senate acted irresponsibly. At the same time, he indicated that he might want to propose some items for consideration of the Senate. In short, it is clear that what the Senate does about reorganization proposals does matter.

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\* Unexpired term of John R. Borchert

\*\* Unexpired term of Walter W. Heller

5. The Senate Forum.

After much consideration, the Committee is inclined to feel that the Senate Forum should be discontinued. But before we recommend discontinuance to the Senate, we should like to get some faculty reaction. Our reasons for feeling as we do are these. First, when the Forum was established, we thought that a number of faculty members would be eager to use it as a medium for airing their ideas. As things have turned out, few articles have come in unsolicited. Perhaps, we should not have been surprised. It's axiomatic that a good way to discourage people from coming up with ideas is to ask them to write them up.

Second, whatever the hopes for the Forum the AAUP Journal Inform apparently fulfills them better. There seem to be good reasons for this, the main one being that faculty feel they can write more freely and more critically in an "unofficial" publication.

Third, ideas communicated orally to the editor of the Newsletter, Hal Chase, can be described in abbreviated form in this medium.

6. The Technical Amendments Act of 1958 (the "Mills Bill") as it Relates to the Staff of the University of Minnesota.

The President indicated to the Committee that the Administration and the Advisory Committee on Insurance and Retirement are hard at work figuring ways to take best advantage of the "Mills Bill," in behalf of faculty and staff.

For our edification, Ray Archer has provided the following in-a-nutshell explanation:

"In brief, the Mills Bill is a legal device whereby the staff member participating on the Faculty Retirement Plan may request the University to reduce his salary by a certain number of dollars (subject to the 20% exclusion limit); the University uses this amount to pay the staff member's share of annuity premiums in the Faculty Retirement Plan. The advantage to the staff member is that currently such reduction in his salary would not be includable in Federal or State taxable income. (It must be immediately emphasized that this would result in higher taxable income to the staff member when annuity income payments began. In most cases, however, the individual at this point would be in a lower tax bracket and would enjoy more tax exemptions because he and his spouse are age 65 or over.)" [Editor's note: this does not reduce take-home pay!]

Ray cautioned that the above description related only to the Faculty Retirement Plan. He said that it is contemplated that staff and faculty will have the opportunity to elect further "reduction" in salary and to instruct the University to purchase for them additional retirement -- annuity contracts separate from the Faculty Retirement Plan.

Ray also informed us that faculty and staff will soon receive individually a detailed explanation from him concerning the possible options available in implementation of the Mills Bill.

7. Open Meeting - December 7.

The Committee invites the Minneapolis Faculty to meet with us on December 7, 1961. Time: 1 P.M.; Place: Campus Club 5th floor lounge. The purpose of the meeting is to hear and exchange ideas. We tried to pick a time and place that would be most convenient for the faculty.

This meeting, incidentally, is one in a series which we have been holding on the several campuses.

Consultative Committee Members

Will M. Myers, Chairman  
William G. Shepherd, Secretary  
Cyrus P. Barnum, Jr.  
Robert H. Beck  
Sherwood O. Berg  
Harold W. Chase  
Herbert G. Heneman, Jr.