

Academic Freedom and Tenure: University of Pittsburgh

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# ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND TENURE

## UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

On June 30, 1934, Ralph E. Turner, Associate Professor of History at the University of Pittsburgh, was informed that he had been dismissed from the faculty of the University. Shortly thereafter, Dr. Turner brought the facts of his dismissal to the attention of the national officers of the Association and requested an investigation, alleging an unjustifiable termination of his tenure. The officers of the Association and the members of Committee A were of the opinion that *prima facie* his dismissal warranted an investigation and proceeded to appoint a subcommittee to inquire into the facts. The committee secured late in July consisted of three members: Professor Ralph E. Himstead, Chairman (Law), Syracuse University; Professor A. B. Wolfe (Economics), Ohio State University; and Professor James B. Bullitt (Pathology), University of North Carolina.

This Committee was given a two fold assignment: it was instructed to inquire into the facts relative to Dr. Turner's dismissal, and also into the facts relative to the general tenure policy and practice of the administration of the University.

The Committee began its work in Pittsburgh on August 9 and continued it for six days, August 9 to 14, inclusive. On November 3, two members of the Committee, Professors Himstead and Wolfe, returned to Pittsburgh for three days of further personal inquiry, November 3 to 5, inclusive. During the interim between these visits and up until a recent date, when a decision was reached on its findings, the Committee supplemented its personal investigation by considerable correspondence.

The Committee was cordially received by Chancellor Bowman and the relations between him and the Committee throughout the investigation were most cordial. The same was true of the relations between the Committee and the other officers of the University's administration with whom the Committee conferred.

### I. FACTS CONCERNING DR. TURNER'S WORK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Dr. Turner came to the University of Pittsburgh as an assistant professor of history in 1925. His work at that time was divided between the Down Town Division, Extension Division, and the College. His teaching program included one course in the College the first semester and two the second semester. Late in the school year of 1925-26, the

administration of the College set up a special curriculum known as "The Survey Course." In this set-up Dr. Turner was asked to teach a course known as the "Survey of Social Sciences." His book "America in Civilization" was used as the text material. He taught this course during the school year of 1926-27. About the middle of that school year he was informed by his department head, Professor Oliver, that he was to be placed in charge of a freshman course in history, following somewhat the lines of "The Survey of the Social Sciences." The objective of this new course was one of orientation. With an historical emphasis it sought to outline the career of humanity, utilizing materials from such fields of learning as geology, biology, psychology, anthropology, archaeology, economics, philosophy, and history. The scope of this course was a significant fact in this inquiry. In the opinion of the Committee it explains much of Dr. Turner's subsequent difficulty. Both the decision to offer the course and the decision as to its scope and general content were made without consultation with Dr. Turner. The evidence indicates that these decisions were made by the department head, the professors then in the department, and the Dean of the College.

After the plans for this course were complete, Dr. Turner was asked to take charge of it, and he accepted the assignment. At that time he was promoted to the rank of an associate professor (1927).

Since 1927, with the exception of one section of the Survey Course in the Down Town Division, all his work was in the College. In 1933, the section in the Down Town Division was discontinued so as to allow him more time to develop a course in English History. The evidence shows that he desired to discontinue this section much earlier, but the Director of the Down Town Division was reluctant to lose his services. Since 1927 the Introductory Survey Course, offered in several sections, constituted the core of his work. In addition he offered in alternate years advanced courses in Western Civilization and Contemporary Civilization. These two courses attempted to correlate social and intellectual development. Beginning in 1933, Dr. Turner offered a course in Modern English History, and in 1933 he was placed in charge of English History with an assistant to help in certain courses. At the time of his dismissal he was directing research in this field with several master and three doctoral candidates under his supervision.

Dr. Turner supplemented his teaching with considerable writing. His publications are as follows: "America in Civilization," published by Alfred A. Knopf in 1925; "An Introduction to the Social Studies," a teaching outline for orientation courses, published in 1927 likewise by Alfred A. Knopf; "The Relations of James Silk Buckingham with the East India Company, 1818-36," his doctoral dissertation at Columbia,

published privately in 1930; "James Silk Buckingham," a social biography, published first in England by Williams and Norgate, Ltd., in February, 1934, and in the United States by McGraw-Hill Book Company in April, 1934.

Although the Introductory Survey Course was not specifically required, either for history majors or for other students, the enrolment in it was large, a fact the Committee found not to be without significance. The figures show an enrolment ranging from two hundred and ninety students in some years to slightly over four hundred in other years. Meeting with these history survey classes was a class in "The Survey of Social Sciences" which further augmented the enrolment. The total registration in this course was between one-third and one-half of the freshmen in the College and the School of Education. In the single section offered in the Down Town Division the average yearly registration was approximately sixty students.

During this seven-year period more than twenty-nine hundred students took this course under Dr. Turner. His advanced classes likewise attracted an enrolment above the average for advanced classes. On the basis of the evidence, the Committee members are of the belief that the popularity of these courses was of the right sort, and grew out of a genuine appreciation of quality.

During the seven-year period Dr. Turner taught the Introductory Survey Course, a course whose scope and content were concerned with several fields of knowledge in each of which there are many controversial issues, the evidence indicates that he jarred some susceptibilities; he ruffled some students; he disturbed some parents; he piqued some of his colleagues, a few of them to the point of exasperation. But very careful questioning by the Committee of a large number of representative professors evidences the fact that there were few complaints from his colleagues, and by only one or two of the faculty was his ability as a teacher or scholar questioned or minimized.

*Complaints Brought to Dr. Turner's Attention.*—Aside from the administrative displeasure caused by his and other professors' interest in the Liberal Club, particularly at the time that organization was banned by the University's administration several years ago, the evidence indicates that during his nine years' service with the University only a few complaints were brought to his attention by the officers of the University's administration. None of these were tendered directly by Chancellor Bowman. Dr. Turner stated there were six occasions when complaints were called to his attention. The administrative officers directly concerned say that the number was slightly larger. In the opinion of the members of the Committee, the important consideration was not the number, but the nature of the complaints and the ad-

ministration's attitude toward such complaints as were communicated to Dr. Turner.

Two of these complaints were concerned with his treatment of the evolution of man in the Introductory Survey Course. In each instance the evidence shows that the administrative admonition was friendly, and that the complaint was regarded as one to be expected, and to be minimized. Dr. Turner was requested to temper the discussion of evolution. This he did. Dr. Turner stated that at one of these interviews a statement was made to him to the effect that Pittsburgh was in many ways a "fourteenth century community."

On another occasion Dr. Turner was asked how to answer a letter from a person making rather general complaints about opinions expressed both in class rooms and in student meetings held on the campus. The person mentioned Dr. Turner's Survey Course as one of the classes in which opinions that were displeasing were heard. To the question about answering the letter Dr. Turner said that he did not know how to reply to such a letter. He stated that the administrator then said, "We shall see who the author is," and taking from a shelf a book known as "The Directory of Directors," looked for the name of the author, found it, and said, "Well, he is small potatoes and we shall not pay much attention to it." In a subsequent conference with the Committee the officer in question could not remember whether or not he had made the "small potatoes" remark. Be that as it may, the evidence shows that the administration did not regard the complaint, either because of its nature or because of the character of the complainant, as serious.

On a third occasion Dr. Turner was told that a letter of protest had been received by the administration from the Sons of the American Revolution, alleging that he had presided at a meeting of an organization known as the Friends of Soviet Russia. Dr. Turner said that he had promised a student in one of his advanced classes to preside at the meeting, but the engagement had subsequently been cancelled and he did not preside. On the date of the meeting he was in New York City conferring with officers of the McGraw-Hill Company in reference to editing a series of history textbooks. At the time this complaint was called to his attention he was cautioned by the administrative officer to be more careful in the future because such organizations were only exploiting him in order to get a University man's name on the program. This advice and caution the Committee deemed commendable. Likewise commendable was the obvious motive for the advice and the manner in which it was given. The evidence shows that it was motivated by friendship and given in a friendly manner. The evidence also shows that it was received by Dr. Turner in the spirit in which it was given.

Shortly thereafter Dr. Turner said that he accidentally met the Chancellor at the annual dinner of the Trustees for the faculty. He said they met face to face in a doorway in a manner that made some conversation necessary. He stated that he opened with the remark, "I hear I have been causing you trouble," and the Chancellor replied, "Yes, you don't know how much trouble that incident caused." Dr. Turner stated that he then said to the Chancellor that he was sorry, for he didn't want to do things that would injure either the University or himself, and the Chancellor replied, "Forget it, forget it." This version of the incident was checked with other professors who witnessed the meeting and found to be quite accurate. Dr. Turner and the witnesses felt that while the Chancellor's manner was not uncordial, it gave the impression that he was more than a little nettled. His manner, they thought, was that of suppressed irritation. The Chancellor stated to the Committee that the incident had slipped his mind. This chance meeting between the Chancellor and Dr. Turner was the only time the Chancellor ever talked with Dr. Turner about any complaints prior to his dismissal.

The members of the Committee, in the light of the evidence secured in this investigation, do not have the slightest doubt that the complaint from the Sons of the American Revolution did give the Chancellor some concern. Therefore, it was a bit difficult for them to understand the Chancellor's insistence throughout the inquiry, as is pointed out in the next section in this report, that this complaint and kindred complaints did not in any way influence him in his decision to dismiss Dr. Turner.

Late in the school year of 1932-33, Dr. Turner received the first intimation that his position was in jeopardy. In February, 1933, he became interested in the Pennsylvania Security League, an organization uniting church groups, trade unions, unemployment leagues, railroad brotherhoods, and other organizations and individuals interested in the amelioration of economic conditions. This organization sought social legislation such as old age pensions, unemployment insurance, relief for the unemployed, regulation of sweatshops, and the ratification of the child labor amendment to the Federal Constitution. Dr. Turner stated that he did not regard the Pennsylvania Security League as one of those organizations he had promised to avoid. He declared that as a citizen he was interested in the objectives it sought to accomplish and that his rôle in its work was that of an interested citizen. Dr. Turner was State Chairman of the League from March until July, 1933.

The League was a vigorous pressure organization. It sought aggressively for a program of social legislation in the State Legislature. It published each assemblyman's attitude for and against each bill and the record of his vote. This published record was distributed over the state and aroused great interest in the attitudes of the assemblymen.

There is considerable evidence that this publicity and the resulting public interest were not regarded by all of the legislators as entirely pleasant. Certain groups and organizations were bitter in their denunciation of the League and its methods, but there was rather general agreement that its methods were effective.

That same spring when the reappointments of professors came through, Dr. Turner, for the first time during his eight years at the University did not receive a renewal. (Professors at the University of Pittsburgh are all on one-year contracts which, unless renewed, terminate at the end of the school year.) Upon inquiry, the Secretary of the University informed him that it was held up awaiting "special action" by the Chancellor. Upon the discovery of this fact, Dr. Turner conferred with the two administrative officers who had previously brought complaints to his attention. The conversation turned on the question of whether he was going to follow a political or a scholarly career. Dr. Turner stated that he replied that he intended to follow a scholarly career and asked in return what the University could do to further a program of research and writing he had previously outlined to his department head. The evidence indicated that at this point in the conversation he was praised, and was told how highly his work was regarded. He was told that the administration did not want so able a professor to divide his energies. He was asked to resign from the chairmanship of the Pennsylvania Security League. This he promised to do and subsequently did. After he resigned he was told that he had been reappointed to the faculty.

But the official letter of reappointment was not forthcoming. Upon further inquiry he was told that it had been held up in the Secretary's office. This delay, said Dr. Turner, was disquieting because he knew from the experience of others that it might well mean dismissal. Also there were further conversations with the two administrative officers which did not tend to ease his suspense. The subject of one of the conversations was his promotion to the rank of professor, which had been recommended some time before. He was now told that the Chancellor in his present mood was not planning to promote, but rather to dismiss him. He was told that the Chancellor was irritated by his outside activities. He was told that he had in fact injured the University "downtown." Dr. Turner testified that the term "downtown" obviously referred to business men. Several more weeks passed before Dr. Turner received the official letter of reappointment.

During Dr. Turner's last year at the University there is evidence of only one complaint being brought to his attention. He was called in and asked whether in a public address he had made the statement, "Just another dumb student from McKeesport." On further investigation



it was found that he was charged with having said, "Next year, students from McKeesport High School will not be admitted to the University because of inadequate high school preparation." On still further investigation it was found that this statement had been attributed to him by some one making a political speech in a school election campaign. An explanation could be found only by conjecture. An apparent explanation of the origin of the story was that when an "F" grade is given, the reason for so doing must be checked. Among several possible reasons listed is inadequate high school preparation. Apparently one of these freshmen grade cards from the Introductory Survey Course found its way into the hands of a candidate for public office. The evidence shows that the incident, having no foundation in fact, was regarded as amusing and wholly inconsequential.

The Committee has evidence that shortly after this incident, during the latter part of the school year, Dr. Turner was given assurance by administrative officers that his position was no longer in jeopardy. He was told that his name was down on the budget for the following school year just as it had been during the current year. He was told that he had played the game and lived up to his promise not to engage in outside activities. Dr. Turner had expressed a desire some time previous to be allowed to drop his work in the Introductory Survey Course. This did not meet with the approval of Professor Oliver, his department head. Dr. Turner was at this time assured that the Survey Course was a success, that he could teach it as long as he desired.

With the exception of the dissatisfaction incident to his connection with the Liberal Club affair, his activities with the Pennsylvania Security League, and the McKeesport High School incident, all the complaints brought to Dr. Turner's attention were complaints growing out of his class in the Introductory Survey Course. In view of the nature of that course and the large number of students involved, the members of the Committee feel that the number of complaints was much smaller than might well have been expected. The evidence also shows that their character was not serious, and they were not regarded as serious by the officers of the administration. Indeed, they might be characterized as they were by one member of the administrative staff, "picayune."

This is not to say there were no other complaints, for the Committee members do not doubt that there was a considerable number of other complaints, a fact which will be commented upon later in this report. But such other complaints were not communicated to Dr. Turner. There is also evidence that during this seven-year period there had been brought to the administration's attention many fine reports of Dr. Turner's work. Indeed, without a single dissent, officers of the University's administration directly concerned with his work testified that



while he did say things which irritated some people he was an excellent teacher and a thorough scholar.

*Contract Renewed May 9, 1934.*—On the basis of the evidence the Committee is of the opinion that Dr. Turner's feeling of assurance that his contract would be renewed for the coming year was warranted and as a matter of record it was renewed by the usual official letter from the Secretary on May 9, 1934.

*Dismissed June 30, 1934.*—Dr. Turner taught in the two-weeks' pre-summer session which ended June 29, 1934. On June 30, he was informed by Professor Oliver, his department head, that the Chancellor had decided to pay him a year's salary, but not to allow him to teach. Professor Oliver could not give Dr. Turner any official explanation of this action, but he did talk with him informally and confidentially. He gave no explanation why this action was taken or what Dr. Turner had done between May 9 and June 30. Dean L. P. Sieg, who at that time was leaving to assume the Presidency of the University of Washington, likewise declined to make any official explanations, but he too talked confidentially with Dr. Turner. The evidence indicates that both Dean Sieg and Professor Oliver told Dr. Turner that only the Chancellor could give him the explanation.

*Dr. Turner's Conference with Chancellor Bowman.*—On July 5, Chancellor Bowman and Dr. Turner, at the latter's request, met in conference. Dr. Turner said that he raised the same question with the Chancellor that he had raised with Dr. Oliver and Dean Sieg, "What happened between May 9 and June 30 to cause my dismissal?" He said the Chancellor replied, "Absolutely nothing." He stated that he then asked "What did cause my dismissal?" and the Chancellor, speaking very slowly, then said, "The University can carry on its policy better with you away from here," and added "There is discontent in the community." The Chancellor was then asked among whom there was discontent and the Chancellor again speaking slowly said, "The Board of Trustees is a group of business men and among them there is a great deal of discontent." Dr. Turner's next question was, "Among what other group in the community is there discontent?" He stated that the Chancellor said, "Turner, I want to talk with you as a friend." Dr. Turner told the Committee that he replied, "No, Dr. Bowman, this is official. Dr. Oliver and Dean Sieg referred me to you for an official explanation and I want it." After a long silence, he said, the Chancellor stated, "It is not politics," and said nothing more. Dr. Turner said they then discussed how his salary for the coming year was to be paid, and reported the Chancellor as saying that he would take it up with the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. By action of that committee, on July 6, Dr. Turner's coming year's salary was paid in advance.

The Chancellor's version of this interview is different. He said that when Dr. Turner came in for the conference it was evident that he was in an emotional state, that he tried to tell Dr. Turner why he was dismissed, but that Dr. Turner said he knew the reason and would not listen.

The story as it came to the Committee from several sources, allegedly from the Chancellor, was that the Chancellor called Dr. Turner in to talk kindly with him about some complaints, and that Dr. Turner was rude and disrespectful. Whereupon, the Chancellor decided to dismiss him.

## II. CHANCELLOR BOWMAN EXPLAINS REASON FOR AND MANNER OF DISMISSAL

The Committee began its work by conferring with Chancellor Bowman. In the first conference with the Chancellor, following a pleasant conversation about universities and faculties in general and the Cathedral of Learning in particular, the Committee raised the question as to Dr. Turner's dismissal. The Chancellor demurred somewhat to the use of the term "dismissed," stating that at the University of Pittsburgh every one, including himself, was on a one-year contract, therefore no one was ever dismissed. He indicated that in all cases where a professor's services were no longer needed or desired it was merely a case of that professor not having his contract renewed. This quibble about the use of the term "dismissed" was passed over pleasantly and a working agreement reached as to its meaning. The Chancellor, in subsequent conferences, made no further objection to the term "dismissed" as descriptive of his action concerning Dr. Turner.

The Chancellor spoke freely concerning Dr. Turner. He prefaced his remarks by saying that he liked him, and that he regarded him as an able scholar and one of the ten best teachers at the University of Pittsburgh. He gave it as his opinion that Dr. Turner could have been one of the best teachers in America. With considerable emphasis he said that Dr. Turner had not been dismissed because of his economic views or because of his political activities, as had been alleged in newspaper publicity and in certain editorials. Likewise with considerable emphasis, he said that there was no connection between his recent campaign for money with which to complete the Cathedral of Learning, and Dr. Turner's dismissal. In the light of the Chancellor's subsequent testimony, the members of the Committee construed the above statement as meaning that during the campaign for money nothing happened to cause the Chancellor to resort to dismissal; nevertheless, as will be indicated, on the basis of the Chancellor's own testimony, there was a connection between the campaign for money and Dr. Turner's dismissal.

The Chancellor further stated that there had been no coercion from any member of the Board of Trustees of the University. He stressed this point by saying, without any qualifications, that his trustees never in any way interfered with his control of the faculty. The Committee understood him to say that he had a completely free hand as regards the University's educational policies and program, and to indicate in very definite terms that he insisted on such freedom, but the Chancellor denies making such a statement. He cited a number of instances from his career as a college executive as evidence of his absolute independence in dealing with boards of trustees.

In reply to the Committee's direct question whether he had received complaints from business men because of Dr. Turner's economic views and public activities, he said that he had received such complaints, not only about Dr. Turner but about other members of the faculty. He indicated that he regularly received such complaints from business men, but that he had received no more about Dr. Turner than about other professors. Many of these complaints, he said, were brought to him when he happened to be at the Duquesne Club, but that he was likely to hear them at any time and place. He cited several instances indicating the different circumstances in which such complaints were brought to his attention. He also said that he frequently received letters from business men protesting against alleged statements of professors. He insisted, however, that these complaints from business men and others based on the economic views or public activities of professors had never in any way influenced him, but he later very emphatically said that he wished some of his professors would not make speeches on subjects that were none of their "damned" business.

The complaints, he said, which caused him to dismiss Dr. Turner came from parents, ministers, and students, and were that Dr. Turner's attitude toward religion was flippant and sneering. He told the Committee that after a ministers' meeting he had been asked to address, several ministers had said to him that this man Turner was undoing all they were trying to do. A large number of such complaints had been brought to his attention, he averred, but they had all been oral and therefore he had no written evidence of such complaints received prior to the dismissal to show the Committee.

*Letters Received by the Chancellor Subsequent to Dismissal.*—He did, however, finally offer as evidence a number of letters from some ministers, some parents, some alumni, and a few students. These letters it is important to note had all been written after the dismissal had been made public. None of them was dated earlier than July 7, and most of them were dated after the Chancellor's public statement to the Press on July 10 in which he, for the first time, indicated why he had dis-

missed Dr. Turner. They were congratulatory in tone and were in the nature of "moral support" and "sympathy" letters. Some of them assumed that Dr. Turner was unpatriotic and an atheist. Some assumed him to be a socialist or communist. Some of them deplored any criticism of our economic, political, and religious institutions, particularly criticism by professors. Some of them charged that Dr. Turner was flippant and scoffing in his attitude toward religion. One of them advised the Chancellor that "the important thing to do now is to replace this man by an outstanding young educator, more brilliant, of national reputation, from a large college, who will become even more popular in a class of 'History Survey'." In most of the letters it was evident that the writer based his statements on hearsay evidence only. Subsequent investigation emphatically indicates that such was the case. Only in one or two letters were there definite charges based on alleged direct evidence. Thus one writer charged Dr. Turner with having made definite remarks in a class in the Down Town Division in which the writer had been a student five or six years before. All of these specific charges were investigated and carefully considered by the Committee.

There was evidence in a number of the letters that the writer definitely associated Dr. Turner with the Civil Liberties Union, the Liberal Club, and Harry Elmer Barnes. Indeed such an association was apparently so fixed in the mind of one writer that he inadvertently congratulated the Chancellor on his dismissal of Harry Elmer Barnes.

The significance of this reference to Harry Elmer Barnes lies in the fact that, several years before, he was a guest speaker at a meeting of the Liberal Club at the University of Pittsburgh at the time that organization was banned by the University's administration. Following this incident a graduate assistant on the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh was dismissed allegedly because of his activities in the work of the Liberal Club and the Civil Liberties Union. His dismissal brought forth an investigation by the American Association of University Professors in 1929. (see page 266)

With these letters, all written after the dismissal of Dr. Turner, the Chancellor also submitted a congratulatory communication signed by a number of alumni, chiefly in Pittsburgh. This document, as the Committee later ascertained by direct evidence, had been drafted in the office of the Alumni Association. The allegations and characterizations of Dr. Turner which it contains border on the libelous. The author of this document admitted to the Committee that it was based on no direct knowledge of Dr. Turner's character or work but only on hearsay evidence. Several of the signers of the document, with whom the Committee conferred, made similar admissions.

The above comments concerning the communications sent to Chan-

cellor Bowman following Dr. Turner's dismissal are not intended to minimize their significance but to explain their nature. The Committee is fully aware that most of the statements they contain were not submitted as evidence, nor were they intended to be used as evidence or evaluated as such. Doubtless they were motivated by a number of different reasons, but they were intended, as most of them patently indicate, to be congratulatory and sympathetic messages to the Chancellor. They were designed to give him moral support, which many of their authors definitely declared they felt he both needed and deserved. Some of them implied and many of them definitely said that they were sure that the Chancellor must have had a legitimate reason for the dismissal.

The members of the Committee do not question the sincerity of most of the authors of these letters. Of the sincerity of some concerning whom it would be irrelevant to particularize, the Committee has great doubt. All of the letters, however, were genuinely helpful to the Committee in securing insight into the situation at the University of Pittsburgh and the environment surrounding it, as well as insight into the larger problem of academic freedom and tenure.

The Committee asked the Chancellor how long he had been hearing complaints about Dr. Turner's attitude toward religion. He said that he began getting complaints shortly after Dr. Turner joined the faculty in 1925. The Committee inquired whether these complaints had increased in number and seriousness during recent years. His reply was a definite "No." On the contrary, he said there were many more in previous years than during the last two or three. The Committee then asked the Chancellor why he had dismissed Dr. Turner now when there was in fact a diminution of these complaints, both in number and in seriousness. His reply was that his patience at hearing complaints about religion had become exhausted, and he had decided that for the University's welfare Dr. Turner should be dismissed.

The Committee inquired of the Chancellor whether his exhausted patience explained Dr. Turner's dismissal on June 30, following a renewal of his contract on May 9. The Committee was interested in getting the real explanation of this renewal followed so shortly by dismissal. If the explanation was exhausted patience, the Committee was interested in knowing approximately when and under what circumstances the Chancellor's patience became exhausted, and at approximately what time and under what circumstances the Chancellor became convinced that the University could carry on its policy better without Dr. Turner. In reply the Chancellor gave the Committee the following explanation.

*Dismissal Decision Made Prior to Renewed Contract.*—The decision to dismiss Dr. Turner was not made the latter part of June or at any

other date after May 9, but had been made before his contract was renewed. This decision, said the Chancellor, was made by himself alone but was approved by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees at a meeting of that Committee about the middle of March. It was decided at that meeting, said the Chancellor, that for "political reasons" this information was to be withheld from Dr. Turner until late in June. Chancellor Bowman gave the following explanation of what he meant by "political reasons." The University was just starting another campaign for money to complete the Cathedral of Learning and he and the Trustees did not want to be embarrassed by the undesirable publicity which they feared might be caused by Dr. Turner's dismissal.

Thus it is apparent that there was some connection between the dismissal and the campaign for money. The connection, according to the Chancellor's own explanation, was a very real factor in determining the manner of Dr. Turner's dismissal. But the Chancellor gave another motive for the manner of the dismissal. He said that by withholding the facts and renewing Dr. Turner's contract he was doing Dr. Turner a real kindness because it enabled him to pay Dr. Turner another year's salary. This, he said, he wanted very much to do. According to the Chancellor's version, Dr. Turner's contract on May 9 was in the nature of a bonus.

The Committee asked the Chancellor why he had not given this explanation to Dr. Turner when the two were in conference on July 5. It was in reply to this question that the Chancellor told the Committee that he had tried to talk to Dr. Turner, but Dr. Turner was in an emotional state, and said he knew the reason for his dismissal and would not listen. "Why is it that professors are so emotional!" the Chancellor exclaimed to the Committee.

*Matter of Religion First Mentioned on July 10.*—The members of the Committee regard it as significant that Chancellor Bowman at no time mentioned the matter of religion to Dr. Turner. He did not mention it during his conference with Dr. Turner on July 5, a conference sought by Dr. Turner for the definite purpose of finding out why he had been dismissed. Whatever else occurred at that conference, the testimony of both Chancellor Bowman and Dr. Turner is in agreement on the point that religion was not discussed.

The evidence shows that Dr. Turner's alleged attitude toward religion as the reason for his dismissal was first mentioned by Chancellor Bowman on July 10, in a letter written to Congressman Henry Ellenbogen. The Chancellor's letter was in reply to a letter from the Congressman under date of July 9.

Both letters were given by their authors to the newspapers and were published in full. Congressman Ellenbogen in his letter stated that



it had been charged that it was the policy of the University of Pittsburgh to dismiss professors who had liberal tendencies, or were active in movements to promote social justice. He indicated that these charges concerning a quasi-public institution such as the University of Pittsburgh were matters of serious concern to the people of Western Pennsylvania, particularly to taxpayers and contributors. The Congressman made it clear that he was definitely of the opinion that the time had come for the administration of the University of Pittsburgh to take the public into its confidence.

Chancellor Bowman replied to this letter the next day, July 10, as follows:

"Dear Mr. Ellenbogen:

"I have your letter of July 9, asking about the dismissal of Dr. Ralph E. Turner from the faculty of the University. Your courtesy and evident sincerity prompt me to reply. Current explanations also prompt me to reply.

"It seemed a matter of ordinary kindness to Dr. Turner, at the beginning of this incident, to make no statement except this: 'We believe that the purposes of the University can be better fulfilled with another man in his place.' I should be sorry now to cause Dr. Turner any unnecessary hurt.

"The right explanation is not simple. The University deals with facts and with the meaning of facts, as they may illuminate a path toward a happy, useful, and good life. The material of the University is boys and girls. They come, many of them vague in purpose, but generally with fine earnestness. For them the world is new. Days are all days of discovery. Just around the corner is fresh and wider vision. Surprised by what seems an escape from all that is ordinary they are fair and open-minded. They are quick about taking up new ideas. Now the point of this is that a teacher, if he even half realizes his responsibilities to these impressionable students, will feel himself exceedingly humble before God.

"Let me say a little more about this. A teacher, besides being a scholar, should have in him something of the ancient seer. His highest happiness is to see and to make others see an ideal of intelligence, of kindness, and of spirituality. This means, obviously, that he will not be sarcastic or flippant toward religion or sneer at a student's faith. Catholics, Jews, and Protestants in the presence of such a teacher will each feel an overflowing of reverence for their respective faiths.

"Briefly, I have stated here one of the policies of the University. It is this policy which, in our judgment, Dr. Turner did not adequately fulfill. His failure is not concerned at all with the New Deal. It is concerned with an attitude toward faith and toward spiritual growth.

"To be more specific, let me quote part of a letter written to me recently by a local minister:

"In particular, he (Turner) has ridiculed students who have been faithful in attending Sabbath School, greeting them as they entered the



classroom with a sneering remark, "Here comes our Sunday School boy." "

"At frequent conferences of ministers, we have discussed together the attitude which Dr. Turner has maintained toward religion and have felt that to permit him to continue his methods would be almost criminal. So persistently has his policy of instruction been carried forward, that quite frequently the term 'Turnerism' has been developed as expressive of the worst approach to religion. I realize, of course, that certain religious adjustments are necessary when boys come to college, but those adjustments should be undertaken by one who is in thorough sympathy with religious ideals and who is aware that permanent harm may be done by unwise handling of what we all recognize is a most difficult problem.

"With kind personal wishes, I am

Faithfully yours,  
(Signed) John G. Bowman

"The Honorable Mr. Henry Ellenbogen."

The minister's letter from which Chancellor Bowman quotes in his letter to Congressman Ellenbogen on July 10 was one of the letters received by Chancellor Bowman after Dr. Turner's dismissal had been made public by the Chancellor. It was one of the letters offered in evidence to the Committee by Chancellor Bowman.

In nine days of personal investigation supplemented by correspondence, the Committee found no evidence supporting the charge that Dr. Turner ever sneeringly greeted a student with the remark, "Here comes our Sunday School boy." Likewise the Committee found no evidence that the term "Turnerism" was current as expressive of any approach to religion. There is some evidence that the term has been used by some ministers and others since the Chancellor's letter to Congressman Ellenbogen on July 10.

In conference with the Committee the Chancellor was more specific than in his letter to Mr. Ellenbogen. He said that he had dismissed Dr. Turner not only because of a flippant and sneering attitude toward religion, but because Dr. Turner actively sought to break down the faith of his students. The Chancellor stated that there were two qualifications which he insisted all professors should possess: they must be patriotic, and they must be reverent in their attitude toward religion. Dr. Turner, he said, did not have the latter qualification, and that was the sole reason for the dismissal.

### III. SCOPE OF COMMITTEE'S WORK AND ITS FINDINGS CONCERNING DISMISSAL

The Committee is of the opinion that a report of this nature should indicate not only what was found but also the basis of those findings.

The findings in this report are based on testimony and evidence secured in personal conferences with representative members of the faculty, with representative students and former students—most of whom had taken work with Dr. Turner—with the administrative officers of the University directly concerned with Dr. Turner's work, with some ministers, some parents, some public officials, some social workers, and two members of the University's Board of Trustees, one of whom is President of the Board. These conferences were unhurried, ranging from a half-hour to two hours in length. Most of them were with individual conferees, though some were with small groups. In this manner the Committee conferred with a hundred and seventeen persons. The Committee also received written testimony from a considerable number of others. Much of the evidence received has been documented.

In securing these conferences the members of the Committee sought the cooperation of Chancellor Bowman. They asked him for a list of Faculty members and others with whom they should confer. The Chancellor gave such a list and in so far as possible the Committee met and talked with each person whose name was thus submitted. Likewise at the Committee's request Dr. Turner suggested a list of professors and others with whom he desired the Committee to confer, and in so far as possible the Committee did so. It was interesting to note that a large number of the names thus secured were suggested by both Chancellor Bowman and Dr. Turner. In the series of personal conferences which followed, the Committee sought the names of other teachers and persons who might have pertinent testimony and more names were thus secured. Some professors and others came to the Committee voluntarily. In all cases where a personal conference was not possible the Committee sought to have testimony submitted in writing and, as has already been indicated, much testimony was thus secured.

*Testimony of Professors.*—The testimony of a large majority of the professors conferred with indicates that to most of the Faculty the Chancellor's statement that Dr. Turner was dismissed because of his attitude toward religion came as a distinct surprise. Most of them expressed skepticism as to Dr. Turner's alleged religious attitude being the real reason, frankly giving as their opinion that the matter of religion was a red herring across the trail. Most of them were of the opinion that Dr. Turner was dismissed because of complaints concerning his economic and social views and his public activities. A number of the professors testified that they *knew* that the matter of religion was not the reason. They said they knew this because of statements made in conversations with one who could speak with authority, but that these conversations were confidential and could not be given in evidence. They told the Committee that if the facts could be secured, they

would show that the real cause of Dr. Turner's dismissal was complaints received concerning his economic and social views and his public activities. They said they *knew* there was a definite connection between the Chancellor's recent drive for money and Dr. Turner's dismissal.

Most of the professors were of the opinion that Chancellor Bowman's one objective is the securing of money with which to complete the Cathedral of Learning, and that he subordinates every other interest to that objective. They told the Committee that the Chancellor was extremely sensitive to criticism of whatever nature if it came from possible donors or would tend in any way to jeopardize the completion of the Cathedral. They said that the Chancellor and other administrative officers of the University frequently admonished the faculty not to say things that might antagonize "influential people." As evidence of such admonition they cited a speech which the Chancellor made to the faculty in which he told about a certain wealthy man who in his will had left the University a large sum of money. Later this wealthy man became very angry because of statements made by a professor which were reported in the newspapers, so angry that he changed his will and left the University nothing. The Chancellor quoted the offended man as saying that he would not contribute anything to a school with such a professor on its faculty. The Chancellor did not disclose the name of the offending professor. Some of the professors regard the Chancellor's story as a sort of parable.

There was a fairly even division of opinion in the testimony of the professors as to whether Chancellor Bowman has any positive objections to so-called radical doctrines or to religious liberalism *per se*. About half of the testimony expressed the opinion that apparently objection arises only when criticism of the University and threat to the University's income strike from the outside.

Concerning the charge that Dr. Turner was flippant and sneering in his attitude toward religion and that he sought to break down the faith of his students, it was the almost unanimous opinion that the charge could not be supported by facts. Many of the professors suggested, since practically all of the alleged complaints grew out of Dr. Turner's work in the Survey Course, that if his approach to and the consideration of social institutions, including religious institutions, was unsuited for beginning students, he should have been assigned to more advanced courses where he would be working with students who had become slightly more adjusted to education on the college level. As has already been pointed out, Dr. Turner wanted to do just that but was not permitted to do so. His dismissal, with but few exceptions, was regarded as unjustifiable. Likewise, the manner of his dismissal without

any hearing at all was condemned as inimical to academic freedom and tenure.

*Concerning Date of Dismissal Decision.*—It should be pointed out in this connection that none of the professors with whom the Committee conferred knew that the decision to dismiss Dr. Turner had been made by the Chancellor and the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees the previous March. Apparently the Chancellor gave this information only to the visiting Committee. In some of the conferences the Committee saw fit to bring out this information. The reaction in most cases was one of amazement and skepticism and in all cases the information intensified the manifestation of disapproval of the manner of the dismissal.

Confronted with so much skepticism as to the reason for and the time of the dismissal, the Committee members felt it necessary to verify as definitely as possible the circumstances of the dismissal decision. They requested of Dr. Samuel Linhart, the Secretary of the University, an authenticated copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees at which the decision to dismiss Dr. Turner had been made. On September 14, in reply to a letter from the chairman of the visiting Committee under date of September 5, Dr. Linhart sent such an authenticated copy of a July 6 meeting of the Executive Committee. Pertinent portions of the transmittal letter are as follows:

"I submit the following reply to your letter of September 5.

"(1) I enclose extract from the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees *at which it was decided to discontinue*<sup>1</sup> Professor Turner's services with the University. . ."

Enclosed on a separate sheet of paper was the authenticated statement as follows:

"EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH, HELD *JULY 6TH*,<sup>1</sup> 1934.

"The action of the Chancellor in *notifying* Ralph E. Turner, Associate Professor of History, *of the cancellation of his appointment*<sup>1</sup> for the year 1934-35 was approved."

On November 4, the Committee, two of the three members being present, in conference with the Chancellor and Dr. Linhart asked to see the minutes of the March meeting. The Secretary's record book showed several meetings in March, but there was no record of any action taken

<sup>1</sup> *Italics the Investigating Committee's.*

in reference to Dr. Turner. Chancellor Bowman said that it must have been at the meeting on March 2 that the dismissal decision was reached. He said the action had been more or less informal and that would explain why it did not appear in the minutes.

In this conference on November 4 the two members of the Committee present told the Chancellor why it had become necessary to verify the date of the dismissal decision. Cordially and frankly he said that he assumed full responsibility for the dismissal, that the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees had approved his action at the March meeting and it was at that time agreed that for "political reasons" he was not to tell Dr. Turner until late in June. The President of the Board of Trustees in a conference with the Committee that same day told the Committee that he did not recall when the action had been taken.

*Testimony of Administrative Officers.*—The administrative officers of the University with whom the Committee conferred gave as their opinion that the matter of religion was not the sole reason for the dismissal. Their opinions varied as to how large a part it had contributed. One administrative officer said he thought the matter of religion was the "overt act" which precipitated the Chancellor's decision caused by other irritations. Each of them was of the opinion that Dr. Turner's economic and social views and his public activities had brought forth complaints which had much to do with the Chancellor's decision to dismiss him.

*Testimony of Students.*—The Committee was interested in talking with students who had taken work with Dr. Turner. At the Committee's request, the Chancellor, the Dean of Men, and the Dean of Women submitted the names and sent to the Committee a number of students who in their opinion were representative. Slightly more than fifty per cent of the student conferences were arranged in this manner. The Committee, working through several student leaders, secured conferences with other students. In this manner, conferences were held with a large number of representative students. There was an essentially equal division of men and women and a good distribution as regards their interests and work. In this group there were Catholics, Protestants, and Jews.

With but few exceptions the students spoke in commendation of Dr. Turner's work. Many of them said that he made them think and created in them a desire for more knowledge. Many of them said that he succeeded in getting them to do an uncommon amount of collateral reading. Exceedingly few thought that his attitude toward religion could be considered as flippant or sneering.

Most of them thought that, in the relatively small part of the Survey Course which was concerned with the church and religion in man's

history, Dr. Turner dealt with the subject in an objective manner. Some of them said that he did occasionally say some harsh things about certain aspects of the institutionalized church, particularly about the priest-class during certain periods of history, but in doing so his attitude toward religion as such was neither flippant nor sneering.

An examination of a number of student note-books likewise failed to show any evidence of a prejudicial treatment of the rôle of religion in history.

There was testimony which indicated that some of Dr. Turner's remarks were misconstrued by some students, and in some cases were communicated to parents out of their setting, and hence in a way to foster misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

Some parents, it was evident, were considerably disturbed. Two or three of the students indicated that they themselves had been disturbed by some of Dr. Turner's remarks. They said that he had upset some of their previous beliefs, but as they had studied further, read more widely, and found that other professors in other courses were making similar statements, they now knew that certain details of their pre-college beliefs were not essential to their faith. Typical of this testimony was the statement of one student that she was greatly disturbed when, in the course of a class discussion, the statement was made that there were different versions of the Garden of Eden story.

One student, however, said he thought that Dr. Turner was a menace to the Christian faith, and should not be allowed to teach in a Christian school. He said that he thought the church should never be criticized.

Most of the students voiced the opinion that Dr. Turner was dismissed because of complaints concerning his economic views and public activities. In his economic thinking, he was regarded by most of the students as a realist and a liberal.

Among the students with whom the Committee conferred there were a number whose special interests were philosophy and religion. This number included students of diverse faiths. Because of their obvious insight, information, and sincerity of purpose, their testimony was especially helpful. It served to clarify the consensus of student opinion.

*Testimony of Trustees.*—The two members of the Board of Trustees with whom the Committee conferred stated they did not know Dr. Turner and that there had been no coercion from members of the Board to have him dismissed. They said that in most cases of dismissals they concurred in the decisions reached by Chancellor Bowman.

*The Personal Equation and Other Imponderables.*—All the evidence indicates that Dr. Turner is a teacher who has abundantly the courage of his convictions. Whenever the question of his personality was raised the most common adjective used was "dynamic." There is not



the slightest doubt that Dr. Turner is a dynamic person. He has an abundance of physical vigor, intellectual drive of high potential, courageous loyalty to his ideals, and a tendency to relentlessness in forensic logic. Always a forceful speaker, he understands, as the evidence shows, the appeal of the occasional use of the dramatic in speech. He is the type of speaker who gets positive reactions from his hearers. The favorable reactions tend to be very favorable and the unfavorable ones very unfavorable. This is in part due to his intense earnestness. Doubtless he has a sense of humor but so far as the Committee can judge very little lightness of touch. Nevertheless he is regarded as an able and interesting speaker and was much in demand. There is evidence that he frequently was asked to speak a second and a third time to the same group or organization.

The Committee desires to comment briefly about his speech before the Western Pennsylvania Historical Society. Dr. Turner accepted and fulfilled an invitation to address this society on April 24, 1934. His subject was, "History in the Making in Western Pennsylvania." He read this address, which was a scholarly presentation of his interpretation of the forces of industrialism and capitalism which have shaped the destinies of this great coal and iron region. The testimony concerning this meeting indicates that a considerable number of those in the audience were not used to critical historical analysis, were not expecting that sort of thing, and consequently felt distaste rather than enthusiasm over his logic and conclusions. It seems that several prominent individuals, including certain political personages, were in the audience, and that they were more than a little irritated.

The Committee has read the speech and can find nothing in it that need offend an open-minded person, but it was the wrong speech for that particular audience. It was an address better adapted to an audience composed of students of history. Whether Dr. Turner misjudged the character of the audience or simply neglected to adapt himself to it, the Committee does not know.<sup>1</sup> There is some testimony, however, to the effect that his manner of address, characterized by his usual energetic positiveness—easily misconstrued as combativeness—augmented the irritation of those who disagreed with the ideas he expressed. A large number of the individuals with whom the Committee conferred believe that this particular speech was a powerful factor in causing Dr. Turner's dismissal.

Dr. Turner's trenchant style and forceful manner lead some to think him dogmatic in attitude and temperament. Most of the students in-

<sup>1</sup> In regard to this point Dr. Turner says that since, during the period of his membership in the faculty of the University, several of his departmental colleagues had spoken time and again before the Western Pennsylvania Historical Society, he assumed that its members were accustomed to hearing historical topics treated critically and realistically.



interviewed thought he was not dogmatic, and some of his most critical colleagues testified that whatever suggestion of dogmatism there might be in his manner he was not dogmatic in his thinking. The Committee has read some of his publications and some of the reviews of his books, and is convinced that his conclusions are based on careful research. In this connection it is necessary again to take into consideration the nature of the Survey Course. In courses of this type, and especially in survey courses in history which are designed to give the student a rapid running view of the evolution of human culture, much generalization inadequately supported by detailed evidence and analysis is inevitable and necessary. Some of the generalization may seem dogmatic, even though it is the result of mature scholarship. It is one of the drawbacks of this type of course that it can hardly avoid the appearance of dogmatism. It is clear from student evidence, however, that Dr. Turner was unusually successful in avoiding this defect.

There is indication that Dr. Turner has a quick response mechanism, both in class and out, which at times leads him to inexpedient impulsiveness of statement. The evidence shows that his normal class periods were dignified as well as stimulating, but that in after-class discussions he was occasionally led into somewhat undignified and tactless remarks. Despite these lapses, the great preponderance of the evidence indicates that his forthright sincerity and ability gained for him an enviable respect and admiration on the part of the great majority of his students.

It was thought by many with whom the Committee conferred that Dr. Turner's philosophy, particularly his philosophy of education, was displeasing to the Chancellor and that such displeasure was a factor in causing the dismissal. There is not the slightest doubt that both as to philosophy and personality Chancellor Bowman and Dr. Turner are very different. To Dr. Bowman education is significant in the sense that it raises the aesthetic, cultural, and spiritual level of the *individual*. He stresses the cultural and aesthetic values of education as *individual* attributes. His speeches and writings and his remarks in conversation indicate that education as a preparation of men and women for the solution of economic and social problems apparently does not enter into his philosophy. There is nothing of the social reformer in his make-up.

Dr. Turner's philosophy is far more realistic. He is interested in the sociological significance of learning and in his thinking he subordinates the individual attributes of culture and refinement. He is primarily interested in society's welfare. He is troubled about and concerned with such ugly realities as unemployment, low wages, child labor, the sweatshop, squalor, and want, in fact with the whole of the problem of the under-privileged.

Whether this marked difference in philosophy produced an incompatibility which was a contributing cause of the decision on the part of the one with the power to dismiss the other is one of the imponderables in the situation.

Likewise an imponderable is the factor of personality. There was some testimony which indicated that the Chancellor did not like Dr. Turner's personality and that this set up an irritation which was a factor in causing the dismissal. The evidence which would seem to support this hypothesis was the testimony of a few personal friends of Chancellor Bowman on the faculty and in the administration. Some of them are old friends of the Chancellor who are in complete sympathy with his philosophy of life and education. These individuals gave evidence of cordial dislike of Dr. Turner. Their mere conviction that Dr. Turner was—as one administrative official alleged to the Committee—not an acceptable dinner guest because he argued too vigorously, was doubtless a minor detail. But irritations thrive on minor details which, when aggregated, become a felt cause for action. But mere irritation of this sort would hardly cause the Chancellor to dismiss a faculty member once regarded by him as one of the ten best teachers on his faculty.

The evidence, however, points to the Survey Course and Dr. Turner's work in that course as the source of much of the disquietude, the misunderstandings and the irritations which brought forth the complaints, whether of a religious or of a social and economic nature, that ultimately caused the dismissal by Chancellor Bowman. In so far as the imponderables, philosophy and personality, were factors in the situation, it was in the work of this course that the irritations caused by such factors were most in evidence. In the Committee's first conference with Chancellor Bowman and in subsequent conferences, he deplored the power to influence students which the nature of the Survey Course and the size of its enrolment gave to Dr. Turner. He told the Committee that the large enrolment in the course gave "Turner the actor" and the "advocate" an audience to play upon and influence. The Chancellor was not informed about Dr. Turner's other courses and he gave to the Committee no evidence of interest in such other courses. He spoke and apparently thought of Dr. Turner only in connection with the Survey Course.

Yet it was during Chancellor Bowman's administration that Dr. Turner was placed in charge of the Survey Course, one of the most challenging and hence most dangerous courses in the curriculum. Such courses are likely to be dangerous in communities far less conservative, as regards economics, and far less orthodox, as regards religion, than Pittsburgh. Likewise during Chancellor Bowman's administration Dr. Turner had been promoted to the rank of Associate Professor. Moreover, if Dr. Turner's work in this course was not satisfactory it was in

the Chancellor's power to assign him to other courses. Such a changed assignment, as has already been pointed out, was very much desired by Dr. Turner.

The nature of the Survey Course, as taught by Dr. Turner, made criticisms of his work highly probable. Dr. Turner believes in the cultural interpretation of history. Such an interpretation has, as a concomitant, implications likely to prove uncomfortable to some. Dr. Turner is a realist and one who looks at the facts of history realistically. He sought to make students understand that the historical persons of the past were real persons, possessing both virtues and vices and that they have their counterpart in others today. His choice of historical and present-day evidence and illustrations used in this comparative process was doubtless not always wise and caused some misunderstanding and criticism. In studying social conflicts and social traits he urged the students to observe those about them today, stressing the fact that the ever-shifting social processes are the stuff of history.

Dr. Turner taught the Survey Course frankly from the viewpoint of common men and their status under different economic, social, and political conditions. Because of this fact he was regarded by some, including the Chancellor, as a propagandist. Also at times he jumped the gap between the past and the present in order to compare and contrast the past with the present. This procedure the Committee believes was not for the purpose of commenting on present-day conditions, as some criticism of his work implies, but rather to create in the minds of the students a consciousness of historical continuity and development.

The student testimony indicates that the work of the Survey Course did tend to make the students sympathetic with the lot of the common man and did make them feel that there was much which they, as active participants in the making of history, could do about it.

*Conclusions Concerning the Dismissal.*—Whether Dr. Turner's economic and political ideals for social justice, coupled with his public activities in behalf of the under-privileged, brought forth the complaints which influenced the Chancellor in his decision to dismiss him, the Committee was not called upon to decide. There is much evidence in support of that hypothesis.

There is also evidence that the complaints concerning religion and those concerned with so-called radical, social, and economic teaching have common sources. Much of the evidence the Committee secured indicates that between the wealth of Pittsburgh and the churches of Pittsburgh there is something of an intimate relation. Chancellor Bowman himself pointed out this relation in explaining to the Committee why the religious complaints had caused him so much concern. He told the Committee that Pittsburgh is decidedly a religious community in which

orthodoxy and fundamentalism are strong. He also stressed the fact that most of the wealthy men of Pittsburgh, particularly those who are interested in the University's welfare, are active church workers.

Be that as it may, the Committee was concerned only with the reason for the dismissal as given by Chancellor Bowman and has to the best of its ability sought an objective determination of the facts on the basis of that reason. On that basis, in the light of the great preponderance of the evidence, the members of the Committee are of the unanimous opinion that Dr. Turner's dismissal was an unjustifiable termination of his services. Likewise they are of the unanimous opinion that the manner of his dismissal without any hearing, together with the concealment of the dismissal decision reached on March 2, followed by a renewal contract on May 9 with no notice of dismissal until June 30, is without any justification.

The Committee is convinced that, as regards the matter of complaints concerning religion, if Chancellor Bowman and Dr. Turner could have met in conference, and if the two together could have talked with parents, ministers, and students who were disturbed, no dismissal need have followed. In any event the Committee is of the belief that such an attempt to secure an understanding and adjustment should have been made. The Committee regards both the dismissal and the manner of the dismissal as contrary to the custom and usage of academic freedom and tenure which the Association of University Professors and other associations of higher education seek to protect.

#### IV. ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND TENURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

The facts relative to the tenure policy and practice of the administration of the University of Pittsburgh are not in dispute and they were easily secured. Except for the purpose of clearly ascertaining their effect on the work of the Faculty the Committee need not have gone beyond the Chancellor's testimony. He was very frank in talking with the Committee about the tenure policy and practice of his administration, and in stating his philosophy and convictions in reference thereto. His starting point was that all professors are on yearly contracts, and he made it clear that this policy was in keeping with his ideal of the Professor-Administration relation. The Chancellor named three factors that condition all academic freedom and tenure at the University of Pittsburgh: the competency of the professor, the University's need of the professor's services, and the degree of the professor's conformity with the University's policy and program. He said that if a professor were competent, if his services were needed, and if he were in harmony

with and furthered the University's policies and program, then such a professor had security of tenure.

The Committee pointed out to the Chancellor that in dismissals where incompetency was alleged or where it was alleged that a professor's services were no longer needed for reasons of economy, there were questions of fact involved, and asked him how and by whom such questions of fact were to be determined. Likewise in connection with the University's policies and program the Committee called the Chancellor's attention to several inherent questions. There was the question as to whether there had in fact been non-conformity on the part of the dismissed professor, and the far more fundamental questions relative to the status and the rôle of a professor in a university. Is it the rôle of a professor merely to teach viewpoints and philosophy predetermined by some governing board, or should his rôle be that of one seeking for truth and teaching the truth as he sees it? Is a professor's status in a university that of a partner with the administration or is it that of an employee? The Committee asked the Chancellor how and by whom he thought a university's policies were to be determined, and what concept he had in mind when he used the terms "university" and "university's policies." Did he refer to the Board of Trustees or to himself and the Board, or did he include in this concept the faculty and students?

These questions gave Chancellor Bowman little if any difficulty. He told the Committee that such questions had never occurred to him, but he regarded them as interesting and indicated that he thought them worthy of careful consideration. But he made it clear to the Committee that in all dismissals, for whatever reason, he and the Board of Trustees were the final judges. The Committee understood the Chancellor to say that in fact the Board of Trustees had delegated to him final power respecting dismissals, but the Chancellor denies having made such a statement. He said that he usually consulted his deans and department heads but that he assumed full responsibility. He cited his practice in making up the annual budget. In going over the names of professors in the several departments, if he saw the name of a professor who "couldn't teach," or was not needed for reasons of economy, or was not, in his opinion, conforming to the University's ideals, then he felt morally bound not to reappoint such a professor. He made it clear beyond any possible doubt that his concept of the Professor-Administration relation was that of an employer and an employee and that he regarded his power to employ to include the power to disemploy. The record of his administration of the University of Pittsburgh demonstrates that, on the matter of academic tenure and the status and rôle of a professor, he has carried his convictions and philosophy into practice.

While the tenure policy and practice of the administration of the University of Pittsburgh has the legal sanction of the Board of Trustees, the evidence indicates that Chancellor Bowman was largely responsible for the inauguration of that policy and is now responsible for its continuance. He told the Committee that at the time he accepted the Chancellorship of the University he demanded of the Board of Trustees a free hand in the matter of faculty dismissals. He said that at the end of his first year as Chancellor he called for and received the resignations of fifty-three professors.

Since 1921, the year he assumed the Chancellorship of the University, personnel changes on the Faculty have been many and continuous and the number of outright dismissals alarmingly large. According to the records in the office of the Secretary of the University eighty-four men of professorial rank have left the University during the last five years. The number of instructors dismissed was very large. The evidence shows that in this list there were many able scholars who would have remained but for the insecurity of tenure and the absence of bona fide academic freedom. The evidence shows that some of them, for one reason or another, had incurred administrative disfavor and sought positions elsewhere rather than face probable dismissal.

In this total number who have left the University during the last five years the records show twenty-five outright dismissals. Some of these professors had given many of the best years of their lives in faithful, intelligent service to the University. The reason assigned for the dismissal of thirteen of the twenty-five was "needed economy" and of the remaining twelve "unsatisfactory service." The reason for Dr. Turner's dismissal as listed by the administration was "unsatisfactory service."

Apparently the administration's policy concerning the personnel of the faculty is without plan. Both in the matter of appointments and dismissals there are apparently no guiding principles. The administration has never determined how many students the University can adequately care for. When enrolments increased, as they did several years past, the University greatly increased its staff. There was expansion and over-expansion. When the enrolment decreased during the depression many professors were dropped but the record shows that those dropped were only in some cases the recent appointees. Length of service apparently is not a factor in determining dismissals. Thus the University's personnel is always in a state of flux, and for this condition the faculty pay.

The record supports the testimony of the professors that dismissals are determined by whims and caprice. Among the professors dismissed for reason of economy there were some who had been on the faculty for



twelve years and had been regularly promoted in rank. Such was the case of Professor A who was appointed as an assistant professor in 1923. In 1927 he was promoted to the rank of an associate professor and to that of professor in 1928. During this period he was a productive scholar, having written several nationally respected books. On June 30, 1933, while he was out of the city he received notice that his services were no longer needed.

The salient facts in connection with the dismissal of Professor B likewise show evidence of a decision based on no rational or consistent policy. Professor B is a well-trained and productive scholar and one of the starred "American Men of Science." He was appointed to the faculty as an assistant professor in 1928. One semester later he was promoted to an associate professorship. In 1932 he was promoted to the rank of professor. On June 30, 1933, he was dismissed on the ground of economy.

The regular promotions of Professors A and B indicate that they had been considered able men, yet other men of more recent appointment and of unproved worth were retained in preference to them. The Committee questioned the Chancellor about some of the obviously able men who had been dismissed while more recent appointees of perhaps lesser ability were retained. He said of one of the dismissed professors, "If you knew that man you would understand why he was dismissed" and of another, "Sorry you can not talk to Dr. Sieg about him; he could tell you what an eccentric person he is." Yet the reason assigned for their dismissals by the administration was "needed economy."

The record of the dismissal of professors for alleged "unsatisfactory services" also gives evidence of caprice and discrimination. Some of the men thus dismissed had been on the faculty a number of years and were promoted to the rank of professor, to be subsequently dismissed. The Committee has made some investigation of these many dismissals and believes that some of them were arbitrary and unjustifiable, and that many were determined by whim and caprice. The evidence indicates that in many of them the assigned reason was not the real reason.

The Chancellor's explanation in justification of his tenure policy was the exigencies of the well-nigh hopeless condition of the University in the early years of his Chancellorship. He told the Committee that the University at that time was facing foreclosure on an indebtedness of two million dollars which was, he said, fifty per cent more than the University was worth. At that time, he explained, he found a faculty of inferior men imperatively in need of weeding out. He indicated that in doing so some injustice may have been done, but that he tried to avoid it. He had to work fast; he had to make arbitrary decisions; the bur-



den of his task was so great that he had no time for official amenities or for personal contact with the faculty.

At no time did the Committee suggest to Chancellor Bowman that he is autocratic and arbitrary. His statement as to early conditions and his autocratic action at that time, "I had to act autocratically," came not in response to any query from the Committee. But fourteen years have elapsed since Chancellor Bowman faced that emergency and his defense of the exigencies of the then situation breaks down on the time factor. It should have been an easy matter for him to have gradually desisted from autocratic methods and to have taken the faculty into confidence and real cooperation. Chancellor Bowman did not do this. Possibly his temperament is such that he could not do it. Having established the habit of autocracy, it was difficult for him to break it. Indeed there is no evidence that he ever, at least until very recently, thought of breaking it.

In further defense of his tenure policy, he told the Committee that during his Chancellorship some \$100,000 had been paid by the University as dismissal wages to men who had been dropped from the faculty. Apparently it has been a practice to pay something in advance when a professor is dismissed. In the Chancellor's mind this is evidence of the University's generosity and reasonableness. He does not see that such a practice in no way removes the feeling of uncertainty and fear from the minds of the faculty which is inevitable in a system where there is no assurance whatever of security of tenure, and no "due process" in the procedure of dismissals.

In the first conference with the Chancellor the Committee asked him whether there were any published rules or By-Laws governing the faculty. His answer was a definite "No." The Committee then asked whether at any time in the past any rules or By-Laws concerning Faculty-Administration relation had ever been formulated or published so as to be available to the faculty. His reply was that to the best of his knowledge no such rules had ever been formulated or published.

Later in conference with members of the faculty, the Committee was informed that during Chancellor McCormack's administration such rules had been formulated and published. They told the Committee that in Chancellor McCormack's report to the Board of Trustees for the school year of 1915-16, there was a statement of rules governing academic tenure which had been adopted by the Board of Trustees as of that date. That report, the Committee was told, contained a provision instructing the Chancellor to have the rules on tenure printed and made available to the faculty. Many of the professors with whom the Committee conferred stated that they came to the University while these

rules were in existence and they regarded such rules as a part of their contract with the University.

The Committee was unable while on its first visit to Pittsburgh to secure a copy of Chancellor McCormack's report. Shortly thereafter the Chairman of the Committee wrote to Chancellor Bowman and asked him if he could send the Committee Chancellor McCormack's report for the School year of 1915-16. The Chancellor replied under date of September 10. The pertinent portions of his letter are as follows:

"You ask for a copy of the Chancellor's Report to the Board of Trustees for the school year 1915-16. We have been able to locate here only one copy of this report. I assume that you are interested in the statement in this report concerning academic tenure. The By-Laws, however, it seems were revised in December, 1919. In 1930 the Trustees passed upon some further revision of the By-Laws, these to be subject to further study and revision before publication or presentation formally to the faculties. These By-Laws have not been published. They have, however, been studied by various Deans and officers of the University who have, from time to time, made suggestion toward their improvement.

"Naturally we do not want the By-Laws to go to our faculty through your Committee. While there is pretty general information in the faculty concerning the nature of these By-Laws, the final presentation should be directly through the University. It may be that some further changes in these By-Laws will be made before the presentation occurs."

Following an exchange of letters, the Chancellor, on September 18, sent to the Committee a copy of the tentative By-Laws with the following transmittal note:

"Dear Dr. Himstead:

"I have your kind note of September 17 and in answer I am enclosing herewith a copy of the By-Laws as they now stand,

With kind personal wishes, I am

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) John G. Bowman"

The caption on the outside cover of the By-Laws is as follows: BY-LAWS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND ORDINANCES, RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH. This notation follows the above caption, "Adopted December 9, 1930."

These By-Laws provide for a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees and vest in Chancellor Bowman vast and largely unlimited power. The provisions they contain in reference to the Faculty and in reference to tenure are in keeping with the Chancellor's ideals already indicated and with his practice since becoming Chancellor in 1921.

The Committee was still interested in reading the text of the tenure provisions that had been adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1916. While in Pittsburgh in November the Committee secured a copy of the desired report from a member of the faculty.

The preamble of the section of the report concerned with academic tenure is as follows:

#### ACADEMIC TENURE

"V. The subject of academic tenure has been widely discussed during recent years, and in many Universities, definite rules have been adopted. In our own Commonwealth, the University of Pennsylvania took action in the matter, and formulated rules which seemed to meet the situation in that University. The close relation between the two universities, and the identity of service they were rendering to the Commonwealth, made it seem wise in this case, as indeed in every case where possible, that the University of Pittsburgh should adopt substantially similar rules. In accordance with this purpose, the Trustees at the June meeting, adopted rules of tenure as follows: . . ."

The rules governing tenure in the seven sections that follow approximate the tenure rules later formulated by this and other associations at the Washington conference in 1925.<sup>1</sup>

Section VIII of this report specifically instructs the Chancellor to communicate these rules to the faculty.

The testimony of the two Trustees with whom the Committee conferred supports the conclusion that Chancellor Bowman is responsible for the present tenure policy of the University's administration. Their testimony indicates that the members of the Board of Trustees are conversant with few of the details of the University's internal administration. These two trustees did not know when the tenure rules adopted in 1916 had been abrogated, indeed were not aware that such rules had ever been in existence. Likewise they were not conversant either with the facts of their adoption or the content of the By-Laws adopted by the Board of Trustees in December, 1930. Mr. George Clapp, the President of the Board, frankly told the Committee that all matters connected with the faculty had been delegated to Dr. Bowman and that Dr. Bowman had indicated to him that the faculty were satisfied and that the University was running in a highly satisfactory manner. Mr. Clapp

<sup>1</sup> The Washington resolutions of 1925 were drafted by a conference called by the American Council on Education, in which the following associations were represented: American Association of University Women, American Association of University Professors, Association of American Colleges, Association of American Universities, Association of Governing Boards, Association of Land Grant Colleges, Association of Urban Universities, National Association of State Universities, and American Council on Education. The action of the conference was unanimous, and the resolutions were subsequently ratified by the two bodies chiefly concerned, namely, the Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors. These resolutions defined standards and procedure in cases involving academic freedom and tenure. While not formally adopted by many institutions, they are practically in effect in the better universities and colleges throughout the United States. *Editor*

expressed sincere regret that he was so busy that he had very little time to become familiar with the University's work or problems. He said that he had frequently told Dr. Bowman that trustees should be appointed who had the time to become informed as to the University's work.

In these two unhurried personal conferences the matter of tenure and the Association's ideals for tenure were discussed. The Committee sought to explain why the Association of University Professors stressed tenure protection, pointing out that unless a teacher had reasonable economic security he could not or probably would not be as objective and fearless as the public interest in a democratic society made desirable, but rather his work would tend to become that of a timid conformist, if not that of an actual sycophant, who sought only to please the one who had the power to dismiss.

Academic freedom was likewise discussed. The Committee stressed the point that if a University was to meet its obligations to the public it was essential that its administration protect a high degree of academic freedom. These viewpoints expressed by the Committee were cordially received. At the conclusion of the conference with Mr. Clapp he suggested that the Committee might well include in its report recommendations concerning tenure for the University of Pittsburgh. He indicated that he felt such recommendations would be carefully considered by the Board of Trustees.

*Yearly Contract System in Operation.*—Unless a professor on the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh receives a renewal contract by some uncertain date late in the current school year his appointment with the University automatically expires at the end of that year. The By-Laws of the University as they now stand provide that unless a professor receives a renewal contract by April 1 the contract expires at the end of the current school year. Most of the letters of appointment and reappointment sent out by the Secretary indicate April 1 as the date of renewal. But in practice, the evidence shows that most professors do not receive their renewal contracts until some time in May, and many not until June, and there is evidence that some professors have not received renewal contracts until late in the summer.

Notice of dismissal by the administration is not necessary to terminate a professor's service. All that is required to achieve that result is the administration's failure to renew the contract. Usually the administration does give the dismissed professor some sort of notice. Such dismissal notices have been sent to professors as late as August. But since professors have received renewal contracts as late as the middle of the summer, a professor is never sure what his fate is to be.

It is apparent that the yearly contract system as administered by

Chancellor Bowman provides for the factor of suspense in a well-nigh perfect manner. It requires no vivid imagination for academic people, accustomed as they are to living on modest incomes, to appreciate the effects of such a system. As is to be expected, the evidence shows that it has brought into the lives of the men and women of the faculty, and into the lives of those dependent upon them, acute anxiety, worry, and fear. It would be a sheer waste of time to point out to educators and to that portion of the American public interested in education that such an environment is not conducive to honest, creative, and fearless scholarship and that some few professors might even grow just a bit cynical in their attitude not only toward higher education, but toward the economy of things in general. Such results are inevitable where conditions of academic tenure are as they are at the University of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Samuel Linhart, the Secretary of the University, gave the Committee two letter forms that are used in making appointments to the faculty and in renewing appointments. The administration refers to these letter forms as appointment notices. With most of the faculty Form I is used. This letter evidences the administration's tenure policy. It is as follows:

*Form I.*

"My dear Professor———:

The Board of Trustees of the University has approved your appointment as —— in the School of —— for the academic year —— of ten months, beginning September, 19—, your salary for the period being \$——.

This appointment, if accepted by you, expires June 30, 19—, unless a written notice of renewal is given to you by the Secretary of the University not later than April 1, 19—.

Will you kindly advise me upon receipt of this notice whether or not you accept this appointment for the coming year subject to the above conditions.

The Trustees wish me to express to you their appreciation of your work as a member of the Faculty of the University.

I am,

Cordially yours,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary."

Form II is the one used in renewing the contracts of some professors. Dr. Linhart gave the Committee the names of fifty-three professors whose contracts for the present school year were renewed by the use of Form II letter. This form differs from Form I in that it does not specifically state that it is a renewal contract but merely indicates the

amount of the professor's salary. Dr. Linhart told the Committee that recipients of the Form II letter were regarded by the administration as having for the present "more or less indefinite tenure." Form II is as follows:

"My dear Professor ————:

The Board of Trustees of the University has approved your salary as ———— in the School of ———— for the academic year ———— of ten months, beginning September 1, 19—, at \$———.

Will you kindly advise me upon receipt of this notice whether or not you accept this appointment for the coming year subject to the above conditions.

The Trustees wish me to express to you their appreciation of your work as a member of the Faculty of the University.

I am,

Cordially yours,

Secretary."

The fact that a professor has once been the recipient of a Form II letter of appointment gives him no assurance that he will continue to be reappointed by the use of a Form II notice. The Committee has evidence that there are a number of professors who once received their annual appointment by a Form II notice who suddenly began receiving their appointments by the Form I notice. While such a change of form is not really important, since their actual status in the University is the same whatever form is used, yet to the professors concerned the change in forms is disquieting.

Appointments by Form II do not protect the appointee against the effect of a failure to receive a letter of reappointment at the end of the year. The effect is the same as if the professor's current year appointment has been made by Form I, namely, that of dismissal.

Occasionally these notices of appointment carry with them an ominous postscript which in effect conveys to the recipient in rather vague terms the information that at the expiration of his present appointment he may not be reappointed. There is evidence that a large number of professors find such disturbing postscripts added to their regular letter for the annual appointment. Many of the professors testified that these postscripts are usually phrased and worded in such an equivocal manner that it is impossible to construe their exact meaning.

Thus in the case of Professor C. Professor C had regularly been reappointed and promoted for eight years by Form I letter. Then one year he received his renewal contract with the following postscript:

"Further, in view of a probable decrease in the attendance, a reduction of the number of faculty may be imperative. The Administration

therefore wishes to notify you at this time that you may not be reappointed to the faculty at the expiration of this appointment."

Although a large number of professors receive reappointment letters with such postscripts added, in only a relatively few cases have such warnings been followed by dismissals. Professor C is still on the faculty. The evidence also shows the interesting fact that many of the dismissed professors were never the recipients of such warnings.

What is the effect on the professor who receives such intimation of possible dismissal? His morale is lowered, he becomes apprehensive as to the future, and his effectiveness as a teacher and a scholar is impaired. Many of them spend a large amount of time and energy trying to convince the administrative officers that the administration is mistaken in its evaluation of their worth. Some of them humiliate themselves and beg to be allowed to remain in their work. Compromises result and the professor is frequently kept on at a greatly reduced salary. Some of them become adepts at flattery and seek to please the vanity of those who have the power to take away from them their work which they love and their livelihood which they need.

The professors have been made to feel that they are in competition with one another. In fact, they are in such competition. One of the factors that conditions tenure is the University's need of the professor's services, and the professors have been made to feel that they are valued in accordance with the size of their classes. The system has given a real economic basis for professional jealousy and has introduced into the faculty mutual distrust and fear.

The Committee has evidence that in ways both direct and devious the faculty are made to feel the insignificance of their rôle in the University's work. Thus one administrative officer, in talking to a group of professors at a public meeting went out of his way to remind them of the administration's attitude toward their status. In substance he told them that the administration was not interested in their criticisms or suggestions and that if they did not like the way the University was administered they should get off the faculty. Such an attitude on the part of any University's administration makes a pathetic obsequiousness on the part of some professors inevitable. Such a result is clearly in evidence on the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh.

On the faculty of the University, however, there are many very able professors who serve the cause of learning faithfully and intelligently despite the depressing, disquieting, and inhibiting influence of an environment in which they are made to feel that the University is an entity, an institution, separate and distinct from the faculty, rather than a cooperative enterprise of which they are an integral part. They



do not have that feeling of solidarity which should exist in a community of scholars and which is so essential to creative and fearless scholarship.

#### V. DR. JOHN G. BOWMAN—THE CHANCELLOR

Chancellor Bowman's personality, his temperamental attitude toward administrative powers and functions, and his ideals of university purpose constitute the refractive medium through which the forces that have operated to make the University of Pittsburgh what it is today have been bent and focused. Into the total situation, including the physical plant, library and laboratory facilities, financial policy, administrative procedure, public relations, status of academic freedom and tenure, and faculty morale, the Chancellor's somewhat unusual personality enters, seemingly as the one great immediate determinative factor. So far as a given situation may ever legitimately be attributed to the attitudes and acts of an individual or individuals, all the evidence indicates that responsibility for the present situation, in both its favorable and its unfavorable aspects, must be laid primarily on Chancellor Bowman's official doorstep. In at least four important particulars the Chancellor's personality has been saliently significant in university organization and policy: (1) the projection, financing, and building of the Cathedral of Learning, (2) the policy adopted by the administration in meeting the financial depression, (3) the absence of rules, or at least of rules known to the faculty, governing the relations between the administrative and teaching staffs, (4) the lack of any adequate check or control on the Chancellor's personal judgment or feelings, not only in the determination of general university policy but in decisions as to appointments, promotions, and dismissals.

However difficult the task, it devolves upon the Committee to attempt some estimate of the Chancellor's personality and of its influence, not only in the "Turner Case" specifically, but on the total university situation. The Committee's estimate of the Chancellor and of his influence should be taken for what it frankly and avowedly is: the summarized impressions of three men who have sought to be as objective as humanly possible in their inquiry and have earnestly tried to arrive at a rational, yet sympathetic, understanding of all the significant elements, tangible and intangible, in the situation. The members of the Committee are under no illusions as to the possibility of wholly objective judgment as to the personality of the Chancellor or of anyone else concerned. The Committee's impressions and conclusions may or may not be adequately objective. Be that as it may, they are the result of sincere effort to hold the mind open, with no preconceived conclusions or "hunches," to any facts which might prove relevant to an understanding of the situation.

The sources of the Committee's estimate of the Chancellor's personality are three: (1) conferences with the Chancellor himself, (2) some of the Chancellor's published reports and articles, (3) the impressions and opinions of a large number of the teaching and administrative staffs and of a representative sampling of the student body.

First, and last, impressions were derived directly from the Chancellor himself. He was the first, and the last, person interviewed in the Committee's two visits to Pittsburgh. The Committee's first, and also its last, impression of Dr. Bowman was that he is a man of extraordinary personal charm. First impression was also that of a shy and retiring personality, one to whom every face to face contact might perhaps be painful; and the almost unanimous opinion of the faculty members interviewed confirmed this first impression. It is generally believed that the Chancellor dreads and shuns personal contact with any but his few most intimate friends. Unassuming in manner, quiet—sometimes even hesitant—in speech, always courteous but never offensively so, he is obviously a man of culture, sensitive to the aesthetic side of life. If one is looking for pompous “front,” commanding presence, or noisy self-esteem, one will look in vain for these attributes in Dr. Bowman. His manner and appearance are much more those of a recluse professor than of a highly paid and powerful executive who in less than a decade and a half has pulled an institution from the verge of bankruptcy, raised twenty-one million dollars for it, and dominated, apparently by a mixture of enthusiastic idealism, dogged persistence, and sheer audacity, a Board of Trustees composed mainly of millionaire business men.

Despite the fact that in the first half hour of our first meeting with the Chancellor he talked mainly of monetary matters, with evident pride in his financial achievements for the University, it was quickly evident that here was a man whose true nature was that of the artist and the mystic. Either that, or he was imposing upon us an extraordinarily clever pose. That it was not the latter was later evidenced by the unanimity of opinion which we found as to the Chancellor's temperament and values. Sometimes in admiration, sometimes in criticism, he was characterized as a “spiritual mystic,” “a romantic sentimentalist,” a “symbolist,” an “aesthetic” and a “dreamer.”

These estimates, we believe to be essentially correct, but not complete. There is likewise in Dr. Bowman's character a hard practicality and under certain conditions his diffidence turns into audacity. In the world of the existing industrial Pittsburgh, with its extremes of wealth and poverty, its pronounced materialism and individualism, and its irrepressible industrial conflicts, the Chancellor moves with one immediate driving motive: to wring from the community the money essential to the development and support of the kind of university

which his mind conceives as the ideal for this particular city. This ideal undoubtedly includes the usual equipment of laboratories and libraries, and a good teaching staff. But the heart and core of Chancellor Bowman's ideal of a university, or more specifically of the University of Pittsburgh, is a faculty devoted less to the processes of intellectual scholarship than to the duty of moral and aesthetic uplift—especially aesthetic. His ideal seems to be to give to the Pittsburgh masses some share and interest, however tenuous, in those aspects of culture which afford something of the real aesthetic—he may call it “spiritual”—content of life, rather than the mere mechanical technique of social relations. It is indeed the Chancellor's failure to see the importance of these social or institutional relations to the final educational purpose he has in view which blinds him to the irony of his own sentiment and to the value of men who face critically and analytically the existing institutional situation, economic and social, in all its ugliness and confusion.

It is impossible to evaluate the effect of the Chancellor's aesthetic idealism, and of his desire to awaken Pittsburgh to some sense of the cultural content of life, without specific reference to the Cathedral of Learning and the symbolic function it is supposed to fulfil in the future life of the University and the city. The whole existence of the University as a significant educational institution seems in the Chancellor's mind to pivot on the apex of this sky-scraping tower. Every financial resource has been poured into it. All administrative policy is colored by the hopes and difficulties of securing funds for its completion. To finish it is the all-absorbing thought of the Chancellor. To some of the faculty “Bowman's Folly,” the Cathedral to the Chancellor himself is the outward and visible sign of the inward grace which he feels it is the University's function to provide for the youth of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania.

It is entirely possible that in years to come, when the smoke of current conflicts has blown away and the hurts and grievances occasioned by the present focusing of effort on the Cathedral are forgotten, the sentiment and the vision of the Chancellor will be vindicated. It may be that the Chancellor is everlastingly right in his vision, and that the faculty members who disagree with him are petty and short-sighted. The Chancellor is sacrificing immediate requirements to a desideratum he considers infinitely more fundamental and significant. The faculty bear the brunt of this submersion of immediate interests. It is not strange that they are sore, resentful, bewildered, distrustful, and afraid.

Dr. Bowman's devotion to the Cathedral was clearly evident in our first interview. As we walked up the hill from the University Club to his office, he told us of his struggle to get the money to buy the site and start erection of the Cathedral. He told how, soon after arrival in

Pittsburgh, he concluded that what the community needed above all else was something to awaken its imagination. He wanted a "spiritual symbol," something tangible, material, yet so beautiful that it would cause anyone who saw it to "want to go to the ends of eternity." He wanted something transcendently beautiful; possibly also something unique and a bit dramatic, though he did not put it that way. He conceived the idea of a great cathedral-like building, incidentally to provide classrooms and offices, but essentially to lift the eyes of "drab" Pittsburgh from earth to heaven. He told us how he had longed to have the site, of fourteen acres, now Cathedral Square, across from the Carnegie Museum, because he wanted the Cathedral to be built where thousands on thousands of Pittsburghers, men and women of all walks of life, pass daily in pursuit of their affairs. He told how he stationed men to count the traffic, how prohibitive the price of this strategic location seemed, and how he begged and borrowed enough money to make the down payment, apparently without any conspicuous enthusiasm on the part of the Board of Trustees. Asked by a member of the Board where he got the money, he answered "I begged some of it, borrowed some of it, and the rest I just spent."

The Cathedral of Learning now stands, though unfinished, unquestionably an exceedingly beautiful architectural creation, and if not an inspiration to the imagination of the toiling masses of shop and white-collar workers of greater Pittsburgh, at least a towering proof of Dr. Bowman's ability to appeal to the imagination and the bank accounts of business men.

The Committee's interviews with Dr. Bowman revealed more than his emphasis on the aesthetic. They also suggested what at first thought seemed enigmatical contrasts and dualisms in his personality: timidity and reserve, audacity and amazing frankness, sentiment and material practicality, democracy of a sort—as illustrated by the "nation's room" in the Cathedral—and autocracy.

These impressions were in the main confirmed by faculty judgments. These judgments, taken individually or collectively, must probably be interpreted in the light of the faculty's own state of mind in the present juncture—the widespread dissatisfaction and uneasiness caused by the dismissal of Professor Turner, the soreness left by the seemingly planless and erratic way in which many men have been dropped for alleged "economy" reasons, the almost universal resentment at the cost, if not the idea, of the Cathedral, and so on. Like the faculties of other universities, that of Pittsburgh has been through very trying experiences. Under such conditions it is human nature to blame persons for what is inherently due to the institutional situation. Chancellor Bowman, while he apparently knows how to handle the Board of Trustees, and is

regarded by them as a quite wonderful executive, lacks ordinary political acumen in dealing with the faculty.

Whether the faculty really understand him or not, and whether their expressed opinions of him, even when discounted for the fact that the Committee's advent was the occasion for airing all sorts of personal grievances, are fair or not, the faculty estimates, true or untrue, were extremely significant for an understanding of the situation. It should be a matter of thoughtful concern to the Chancellor himself and to all who are responsible for the policies of the University of Pittsburgh that most of the large number of members of the teaching and administrative staffs with whom the Committee talked or from whom it secured testimony expressed opinions of him which were not wholly complimentary, and in many cases decidedly the reverse.

Even men who were evidently his close personal friends spoke of his diffidence, his moodiness, his sensitiveness, his sentimentalism, not necessarily in a bad sense, and his tendency toward romantic and aesthetic mysticism. Again and again we were told that his judgment could not be trusted, that he was erratic and whimsical in his decisions, that he frequently subordinated reason to intuition or hunches, and that consequently it is impossible to sense beforehand what his reaction to a situation or a problem will be. It was frequently alleged that he had intense personal likes and dislikes, and that he allowed these to sway his judgment and his decisions. He was charged with being deeply loyal to his personal friends and satellites, indifferent to the interests of those individuals not personally close to him, and likely to be positively hostile to any person who openly differs with his attitudes and policies.

Very few members of the faculty would say they really know the Chancellor. To them he is an enigmatical but powerful figure behind the screen of deans and other administrative officers who carry out his decisions and policies, frequently in opposition to their own considered judgment and in violation of their sense of fitness and fairness. He is regarded as erratic, constant in regard only to the one interest which is nearest his heart—the completion of the Cathedral—and with a great blind spot to every other interest of the University. Any one who talks long with the Chancellor will conclude that this impression does not truly reflect the Chancellor's inner character. It is derived from what he does, rather than from what he says or thinks. It overlooks the fact that while he appears to regard the Cathedral as an end in itself, he really conceives of it as a means in the service of what he thinks is one of the University's duties to the City of Pittsburgh. Given the Chancellor's aloofness and his failure to carry the faculty with him in the Cathedral project, it is inevitable that the faculty should judge him by his

immediate actions and policies. For it is these, rather than some far-off and tenuous ideal, that set the stage for the faculty's work.

The Chancellor's most serious mistake has been that he has played a lone hand and has not taken the faculty into his confidence. They feel that they have no voice or influence in what should be a great co-operative undertaking—the gradual upbuilding of a real university—that the Chancellor demands blind loyalty and obedience, and that he regards the members of the faculty as so many hired men rather than cooperators.

For this fatally unfortunate situation, it may be said that both the Chancellor and the faculty are to blame. Had faculty members, especially heads of departments, "stood up" to him, frankly and bluntly challenged him, as it is evident he has stood up before the Board of Trustees, it is possible that the present situation would not have developed. It is easy to say that the faculty has lacked courage. But when the history of the Chancellor's administration is reviewed, it is easy to see why at least some of them seem to lack courage and indeed appear to be devoid of morale, afraid of each other, and more like cringing underlings than upstanding, independent, and self-respecting men. Far more significant than any wrong the Chancellor may have done to Professor Turner and the other men who have been dismissed is the irreparable damage that has been inflicted on the self-respect of every man and woman on the faculty who ever has dared to think and act in terms of principles rather than in terms of immediate, material, and personal expediency.

The boundary line between those matters which should be decided by the executive himself without consultation with others, and those which should not be decided without such consultation, can not be sharply drawn. There must be somewhere a happy medium ground between government by faculty and committees and government by an autocrat who never consults the faculty. Probably no faculty could manage a university. The reasons are obvious. Faculty men are not administrators. Most of them are not interested in administrative problems or, unfortunately, even in matters of broad policy unless these matters touch intimately their own special interests. Faculty government is likely to result in quarrels between special interests or rule by a few adroit politicians. A university, like a department, needs a head. It needs a wise head. It needs a head who is not afraid to consult the staff, nor afraid to take the responsibility for final decisions. But only under very unusual circumstances should the head play a lone hand. An autocrat, a dictator, whether president, dean, or department head, is likely to develop a sort of superman complex and to begin to think and speak of "my staff," "my faculty." From that it is only a step



to the typical employer attitude. Faculty members become employees to be hired and fired at will. They have not even the dubious protection of a shop committee or company union. The evidence presented in this report as to the total absence of any rules of tenure clearly indicates that Chancellor Bowman's attitude is practically that of the private employer of labor.

*Conclusions.*—It is not the function of the American Association of University Professors to instruct chancellors and boards of trustees how to conduct colleges and universities. The Committee has carefully avoided making any such suggestions to Chancellor Bowman or the Trustees as to how the University of Pittsburgh should be administered.

However, in response to what the Committee believes to be a sincere invitation from Mr. George H. Clapp, the President of the Board of Trustees, the Committee suggests that the tenure policy and practice of Chancellor Bowman's administration, as codified and adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1930 should be abrogated and a policy inaugurated in keeping with the ideals of academic freedom and tenure represented by the Washington resolutions of 1925. The Committee believes that the present autocratic policy and practice of Chancellor Bowman in reference to tenure and to Faculty-Administration relations, is inimical not only to the welfare of the University of Pittsburgh but to the public interest of Western Pennsylvania.

RALPH E. HIMSTEAD

A. B. WOLFE

JAMES B. BULLITT

Approved for publication by the Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure, Carl Wittke, *Chairman*.

#### *Addendum*

As an addendum, some statement of the behavior of Chancellor Bowman since the investigation seems desirable. On February 13, 1935, the General Secretary of the Association mailed the Chancellor a copy of the draft report, inviting indication of "any factual errors . . . within the next ten days." One week later the Chancellor responded in a letter to the investigating committee by remarking on "the unrestrained hostility of your report" and asserting that one passage (lifted by him out of its context) "reveals an animus which removes your report from the realm of judicial consideration." He then denied the correctness of two purported quotations or paraphrases of his own statements to the investigating committee. In the light of this denial, appropriate modifications have been made.

It will be remembered that on the occasion of the last preceding investigation at the University of Pittsburgh in 1929 the Chancellor similarly accused the investigators of prejudice, and offered no factual corrections whatever. (*Bulletin*, vol. xv, p. 590, December, 1929.) The Association may therefore assume that the recitals of fact in the two reports are substantially correct, and that only the inferences or conclusions of the investigators have been challenged. It is to be regretted that Chancellor Bowman feels compelled to dispute the fairmindedness of two investigating groups carefully selected with an eye to that very quality.

The General Secretary's letter above referred to contained the following postscript:

"I think you will understand that until publication the report is confidential and not to be made public."

The publication referred to was of course to be in the *Bulletin* and only after correction and final approval. Nevertheless the Chancellor gave out to the newspapers the whole or a substantial part of the draft report. This unusual action is less disturbing than his explanation of it. He says (in his letter to the investigating committee):

"I am not aware of any mandate from your body in regard to the report. I refer it in plain duty to our Executive Committee, together with a copy of this letter. As for the contents of the report being confidential, therefore, such an injunction is necessarily without force."

This seems to mean that Chancellor Bowman's views of what is good for his University override the usual restraints of confidence and courtesy. Even assuming his complete sincerity and lack of self-interest, such an attitude indicates why many members of his faculties experience difficulty in dealing with his administration. This attitude in the long run can only defeat Dr. Bowman's own hopes of worthy service by the University to its community.

Carl Wittke, Chairman of Committee A