

AAUP Report

Spring 2000

American Association of University Professors
Bloomington Chapter

Herman B Wells, 1902-2000

No one who knows anything about Herman Wells needs to be reminded of reasons to celebrate the luck of his presence at Indiana. In the past month stories about him in all of his many roles and guises have ambled like beneficent ghosts through newspapers and the talk of the campuses: Wells as Santa Claus; Wells as advocate of the arts and campus planner; Wells at table, capable of precisely recollecting the menus of dinners eaten in country hotels thirty years past; Wells abroad; Wells at home, remembered by three generations of students as a figure, even glimpsed from a distance, of enlivening spirit; Wells in the twenty-five years of his presidency leading the University to national and international prominence; Wells then giving nearly forty more years as Chancellor to help sustain and enlarge the manifold work he had accomplished.

Members of AAUP, along with many others in the University and throughout the state and the world, knew and learned from Chancellor Wells in many or all of these roles. But it is right that we fasten on two tenets that are at once central to his idea of the university and essential to us: Wells as a defender of academic freedom and the necessity of tenure, and Wells as a strong believer in the utility of faculty participation in the governance of the university.

In his reminiscences, *Being Lucky*, Chancellor Wells takes pains to note that a year before the promulgation of the 1940 AAUP Statement of Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure, he spoke out to advocate "the method that is peculiarly the university's own, namely, fearless inquiry into every subject in search of truth." He thought that tenure made academic freedom possible, and one of the first tasks of his presidency was to establish a policy and procedures for its award.

Probably the best-known episode in President Wells' consistent allegiance to academic freedom is his defense in the 1950s of the research and publications of Alfred Kinsey. It is not as frequently remembered that then acting president Wells exercised the same principle in the 1960s when he stood up to a different political constituency. A group of students demanded, in the vocabulary of that day, that the University eliminate programs in military training and police administration, and require faculty members to abandon research supported by federal agencies involved in the conduct of the war in Vietnam. Wells replied that to use a moral and political conviction about the war as a reason to dismantle courses and programs approved by the faculty "would in effect be yielding to precisely the same kind of pressures which from time to time have demanded that we cease teaching anything about Karl Marx, Russian history, and Slavic language and literature." And to refuse to support the research of faculty members who will make its results freely available would be to interfere with "the right of every faculty member to carry on without fear of censure or

disruption" the inquiries that are peculiarly the university's own.

In his account of this controversy Chancellor Wells includes a sentence that speaks his confidence in the rightness of his principle. At the same time he describes his opponents in a noun that reveals a bite not often apparent in memories of him. Advised by his associates not to debate in a public meeting, he delivered his response in writing. "Still," he writes in *Being Lucky*, "I shall always wonder if I might not have faced the propagandists down in a large meeting, had I tried."

Wells' commitment to a faculty role in governance was equally strong and consistent. As dean of the School of Business in the 1930s he discovered that "every effort to have the faculty fully participate in the decision-making process resulted in the release of the creative energies" of able colleagues. He presided over the Bloomington Faculty Council in years when its deliberations were closed, and he used this intimate forum not just to listen to discussions of faculty proposals but also to test reactions to and solicit opinions on administrative policies and practices still being formulated.

One of my memories of Chancellor Wells recalls an episode when these exemplary practices of governance broke down. During one tumultuous weekend in the 1970s the president of the University, Joseph Sutton, resigned and, effectively abrogating well-established procedures, the Board of Trustees immediately appointed John Ryan as his successor. This breach of the canons and custom of governance shocked and angered many faculty. Within a few days a delegation of members of the AAUP and the Bloomington Faculty Council (then, as now, often the same persons) met with some of the Trustees to protest and try to patch the hole blown in our expectations of the faculty role in important administrative decisions.

To accommodate the meeting Chancellor Wells vacated his office in Owen Hall, a big but not overbearing room, lined with books from the library of William Lowe Bryan, adorned on every surface with objects memorializing events in Wells' own career and travels. The meeting was correct and almost entirely unsatisfactory. As we left his office, a little relieved at the discharge of our embassy and greatly discouraged by its result, there was Chancellor Wells, not so idly standing by. "This is a very interesting building," he said to some of us, "perhaps you would like to know something about it." He walked us down the hallway to the door, pointing out architectural features and commenting on some of the memorabilia displayed in cases lined against the walls. Then he courteously said goodbye as we went down the stairs and out to the campus.

continued on page 2

It was a gesture characteristically canny and absolutely authentic. He was telling us that, whatever the discouragement and disjuncture of this moment, much had preceded it, and much would follow. We were acting in a place and history for which we, like him, were responsible stewards. Disheartened as we were, we could not but know and honor his heart, could not but feel his love and concern for an institution that mattered so much, and had been so shaken. That is a useful memory for members of the AAUP, and for anyone who cares about how the faculty matter in the University: Chancellor Wells, standing in one of the archives of his astonishing achievement, reminding us that we belong there too, indeed, that it also belongs to us, and then ushering the faculty onto the campus on which we, like him, still had a lot of work to do.

- Don Gray, English, emeritus

Faculty and Trustees: A Forum

The chapter's Tenth Annual Spring Forum was held on February 28, and addressed the roles of trustees and faculty in university governance. Speakers included former chapter President, Mary Burgan, now Secretary of the AAUP National Office in Washington, D.C., John Walda, Chairman of the IU Board of Trustees and President-Elect of the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), and Ted Miller, a member of the chapter Executive Committee and past President of the Bloomington Faculty Council.

The AGB recently formulated a new set of guidelines for trustee boards, superseding AAUP guidelines that had been a national standard since 1967. While the AAUP criteria envision a balance of governance roles shared among three chief groups -- trustees, faculty, and administration -- the AGB guidelines lay stress on the primacy of trustees and their appointed chief executive, the president of the college or university, and refer to the faculty as one among many "stakeholder" groups.

Burgan focused on the manner in which the AGB principles adopt the "managerial" model of university organization. By stressing the importance of executive efficiency and picturing faculty as a "special interest" on a par with student and employer "consumer" groups, the AGB principles obscure the special environment of higher education, which thrives on the free pursuit of knowledge with only secondary attention to its value as a commodity. This shift in emphasis accounts for the relative

marginalization of faculty in the governance model the AGB recommends. Burgan noted that it is increasingly common for faculty to be viewed as "amateurs" in the management of universities, with boards, guided by "professional" CEOs, gaining confidence in their abilities to design and guide the missions of their institutions.

Walda described the origin of the AGB guidelines as an attempt to upgrade practices of all varieties of higher education trustee boards by identifying and clarifying the ways in which boards delegate authority to faculty and administrative groups with which they share governance roles. Walda stated that the main target of the new guidelines were boards with weak traditions of shared governance, unlike IU's, and that the goal was to encourage structures of collaboration, rather than weaken them. Stressing that boards do bear full authority and responsibility for determining the academic mission and management of institutions, Walda argued that in this period of dramatic change, it is essential that boards work closely with presidents in establishing strong leadership, responsive to the full range of university stakeholder groups. Nevertheless, Walda stated that this strengthening of board/CEO leadership did not imply any diminishment of faculty role, as reflected in the AGB's call for boards to strive for consensus in decision making.

Miller focused on the situation at IU. He pointed out that, indeed, state law gives trustee boards authority over all aspects of universities, and although the faculty claims certain authority through its constitution, that document has never been endorsed by the trustees. Shared governance operates through traditions of cooperation and consent, and Miller noted that while these traditions have been strong at IU, they depend on lines of communication that are at present not functioning optimally. Acknowledging some recent areas of success, such as trustee approval of the Bloomington faculty's recent policy response to pressures for post-tenure review, Miller described how trustee decision making on matters of finance and facilities is structured to exclude faculty. This exclusion contributes to increasingly urgent calls for the establishment of faculty trustee positions. Miller noted that it may be equally critical to address the fact that state law stipulates no qualifications for trustees, most of whom sit by gubernatorial appointment unconstrained by any criterion of competence (a point he takes up further in an article on the following page of this issue of the *Report*).

- Bob Eno, EALC

Academic Freedom Is Not Free -- Join The AAUP!

Our chapter's recent membership drive has increased our numbers and strengthened our ability to influence events, but to fulfill our commitment to academic freedom and faculty governance, we need more colleagues to join with us.

For membership forms and information on reduced introductory dues and payroll deduction plans, please clip this form and let us know of your interest. Thanks!

Name _____

Campus Address _____

Please send this form to Julie Bobay (chapter treasurer), Library E002, or e-mail Julie at bobay@indiana.edu.

The Qualifications of Trustees

As reported elsewhere in this edition of the AAUP Report, the AAUP Spring Forum focused this year on the role of governing boards in higher education institutions. This topic was chosen because the Association of Governing Boards recently released a document (www.agb.org/governance.cfm) which advocates an approach to governance that is at odds with the governing principles adopted by AAUP (www.aaup.org/govern.htm), particularly with respect to the faculty role. In effect, it seems that the governing boards want to make clear that they are in charge.

Under state law, the Indiana University Board of Trustees is in complete charge of university affairs (www.ai.org/legislative/ic/1999/title20/ar12/ch1.html), even of matters most faculty members assume are theirs alone to prescribe, such as curriculum and "standards of proficiency and satisfaction" in courses. Recognition of this authority under state law, alongside adoption of new governing principles, naturally generates concern in faculty circles.

Faculty response to this concern in Indiana has focused on creating the position of a "faculty trustee", in much the same way that a board has a student trustee. The pros and cons of this policy have been debated in several recent legislative sessions, without being adopted, and the debate may well continue into future sessions.

In addition to this initiative, IU faculty should pay more attention to who sits on the Board of Trustees and consider how the members come to occupy their positions. Of the nine IU trustees, three are elected by alumni and 6 are appointed by the governor, among these latter being the student trustee. The three elected trustees and the student trustee are selected in a way that makes their views on higher education issues known publicly to some extent at least. My concern here is with the majority of the board, those five that are appointed by the governor with no public scrutiny of their knowledge of or views on higher education issues. Please recognize that my comments here are not meant to be personal with respect to current or past IU Board members. I am simply pointing out that the majority of the board may be appointed by the governor with no regard for qualifications whatsoever (see, www.ai.org/legislative/ic/1999/title20/ar12/ch24.html). To the extent that membership on a board of trustees is essentially honorific, perhaps this practice is benign. But in the current era where boards wish to project authority and manage the affairs of the university, it would seem at the very least that candidates for appointment to the board of a public institution should be known to the public, and should make known to the public their views on issues pertinent to the institution they seek to govern.

In addition to the faculty trustee issue, it would be appropriate for the Indiana Legislature to consider whether the public interest is well served by current practice in forming governing boards for public institutions of higher education in the state.

- Ted Miller, SPEA

Notes From the President

I'm happy to report a successful AAUP membership drive, with more than thirty new members thus far. This success is due in large part to the extraordinary efforts of dozens of loyal members throughout the campus, and they deserve our thanks. Many faculty, including our chapter's late senior member, Herman B Wells, graciously contributed their names

by signing and endorsing membership materials; many contributed time by contacting colleagues to ask them to join and serving as departmental liaisons for AAUP matters, and still more provided guidance and advice on conducting the campaign. These efforts are tangible evidence that IUB faculty "put their money where their mouth is," working together to safeguard the values they hold in common.

As colleagues frequently pointed out when asked to join, the AAUP is not a union. It has no constitutional or legal standing to set university policy. With broad and strong membership, though, it can be an effective collective voice, backed by a national organization, to safeguard deeply-held faculty values of academic freedom, faculty autonomy, and a voice in institutional governance. Our chapter has been instrumental in shaping key policies, such as the new policy on faculty misconduct, which has spared our campus burdensome post-tenure review procedures, and the current initiative to establish appointment standards for non-tenure track faculty that better protect their academic freedom and improve their working conditions. The chapter also continues to be active in many departmental and individual cases of faculty autonomy and academic freedom. Thanks to the efforts of many faculty, our collective voice is now stronger.

In addition to the benefit of increased membership, the campaign had other less tangible outcomes. It highlighted the ideals and values embodied by the AAUP at a time when many see increasing threats to those values. It mobilized a large corps of faculty to work together toward common goals. It strengthened the ties between our chapter and the national organization. And it brought faculty together across disciplinary, departmental and organizational boundaries to form a community with common values and goals.

This was just the beginning. We will continue our work to strengthen membership, offering programs, forums and sharing information on matters that affect us all. If you are not a member, please consider joining the AAUP. If you are, please let us know your thoughts and concerns.

- Julie Bobay, Libraries, President, 1999-2000

The Executive Committee wants to hear from you (chapter members, non-members, possible members) about matters that you think should be on the AAUP agenda.

Executive Committee Members, 2000-2001:

President	Robert Eno (EALC) eno@indiana.edu
Vice President	Ben Brabson (Physics) brabson@indiana.edu
Treasurer	Julie Bobay (Library) bobay@indiana.edu

Judith Anderson (English), David Austin (HPER), Ann Bristow (Library), Ann Gellis (Law), Don Gray (English), Ed Greenebaum (Law), Ted Miller (SPEA), Myrtle Scott (Education).

Visit our web page: <http://www.indiana.edu/~aaup>

Standards of academic freedom and tenure built up by the AAUP over 80 years represent a body of persuasive professional opinion with high levels of organizational endorsement. The AAUP also seeks to strengthen faculty governance, provide fair procedures for resolving grievances, promote the economic well-being of the faculty, and advance the interests of higher education.

Notes on the Chapter's Spring Meeting

To mark the success of its recent membership drive, and thank the many supporters who made it possible, the Bloomington AAUP chapter held its annual spring meeting as an afternoon reception at the IU Faculty Club on April 6. As is customary, the meeting featured discussion of a topic of current significance on campus. This year, the chapter focused on the roles and rights of non-tenure track faculty (NTTF), an issue that has become central in faculty governance discussions. This year, the Bloomington and University faculty councils have drafted new policy designed to improve academic freedom protections for NTTF colleagues, building on recently implemented policies that created a clinical faculty appointment structure. The new policy would extend to colleagues appointed as lecturers strengthened regularization of reappointment procedures and academic procedure protections.

Speakers at the reception included David Zaret and Bruce Jaffee, chapter members who are serving as associate deans in COAS and Business. They described ways in which non-tenure track faculty in their units add strength to academic programs; they also pointed to the difficulty of determining the roles that NTTF colleagues should be asked to play, and of the greater risk of exploitation that they may be subject to. The third speaker, Tina Manuel, a non-tenure track colleague in Speech and Hearing Sciences, described ways in which the new clinical appointment policies have actually reduced the governance privileges of some NTTF colleagues, which both limits NTTF options for positively exercising academic freedom in designing and implementing

academic programs, and deepens perceived divisions of opportunity and recognition on campus. Following the speakers' presentations, Ed Greenebaum, the principal architect of the proposed new NTTF policies, moderated a lively debate of these issues, which extended well beyond the scheduled meeting time. The discussion highlighted the complexities involved in trying to maximize academic freedom opportunities for all colleagues, when, in the current institutional environment, there will inevitably exist differences in the degree to which those freedoms are protected.

Prior to the NTTF discussion, the chapter held a brief business meeting, in which members approved the Executive Committee's proposed slate of officers for 2000-1. For the coming year, Bob Eno will serve as chapter president; Ben Brabson will become vice-president and president-elect for the following year; Julie Bobay, who is stepping down as president after a particularly active and successful year, will become the chapter's new treasurer. Other new and returning members of the Executive Committee include Judith Anderson, David Austin, Ann Bristow, Ann Gellis, Don Gray, Ed Greenebaum, Ted Miller, and Myrtle Scott. Ed Greenebaum will continue serving on Committee A, and will be joined by Bob Eno. The chapter notes with thanks the service of past president and Committee A member Mike Grossberg, Steve Johnson, and Doug Maynard, who are all stepping down from the Executive Committee. Dick Carr has also elected to take a break after ably serving as chapter treasurer for many years; we will miss the manner in which he can make a two dollar surplus seem cause for celebration.

- Bob Eno

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IN THIS ISSUE:

- Herman B Wells, 1902-2000
- *Notes From the President*
- Faculty and Trustees: A Forum
- The Qualifications of Trustees
- Spring Business Meeting