

**Sproul, Robert Gordon, 1891-1975**

Excerpts from the Loyalty Oath Memos of Robert G. Sproul,  
September 26-November 12, 1951  
Part of Robert Gordon Sproul personal papers as president and  
president emeritus of the University of California, CU-301  
CU-301, Box 2

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**[September 26–November 12, 1951]**

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### **WILLIAMS, PROVOST**

Santa Barbara  
October 10, 1951

5. Reported that O'Gorman, who refused to sign the loyalty oath, and jointed in the case brought against the Regents, has now reached the conclusion that he acted foolishly. He would be willing to come back and meet all the Regents' requirements. He is now holding a position under the Government for which he has been given "Q" clearance. I said that his case could hardly be handled while he is in legal opposition to the Regents, and that what happens in the Supreme Court might have a good deal to do with the ultimate decision. However, I asked if the Department really wanted him back, and was told that it did not. I then suggested that, without any reference to the loyalty oath controversy, O'Gorman be notified that he will not be recommended for appointment after July 1, 1952, in any circumstances. This should be done before January 1.

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### **HANSEN, MR. TERRY Berkeley Daily Gazette (Telephone)**

Berkeley  
October 8, 1951

Told me that he had heard that Mrs. Sproul was looking at houses in Berkeley, and asked if this had anything to do with recent troubles in the University. I told him that Mrs. Sproul dabbles in real estate as an avocation, and that he might be sure that I was not presently thinking of resigning.

### **LA BOHEME, AS A GUEST OF MRS. PRENTIS COBB HALE.**

San Francisco, October 8, 1951

### **GREYER, DEAN E.T.**

Berkeley  
October 8, 1951

1. Talked with me, in his capacity of chairman of the Committee on Academic Freedom, about members of the faculty who have not signed acceptances of appointment for 1951-52. I gave him the names which have been submitted to me, and told him that I thought that all but five or six cases were routine, failure to sign being based upon absence from the campus or some similar reason. His committee proposes to make a brief report

to the Academic Senate this afternoon, and he and I agreed that no action by the Senate would be desirable. He raised the question as to the personal advice I had given the Southern Section of the Senate, to the effect that a petition of early consideration of the Northern Section's Memorial on the 35 discharged professors would not help at the present time. He thought that this was contrary to the advice I had earlier given to him. I said that it was, but that there had been developments in the meantime which accounted for what I had done. I authorized him to transmit this information to Dean Dodd, who seems to feel that Grether had misled him as to my attitude. Grether seemed to be satisfied.

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### **STEINHART, REGENT (Telephone)**

Berkeley

October 17, 1951

Consulted me about the resolution which Regent Neylan offered at the last meeting of the Regents, having to do with communication between the faculty and the Regents. He said that he had not been able to find any prohibition in the Standing Orders against Regents talking to faculty, although he had found a section which prohibits faculty from talking to Regents except by communications through the President. He asked me to check on this and report to him not later than tomorrow morning, which I said I would do.

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### **KIDNER, PROFESSOR FRANK L. (Telephone)**

Los Angeles

October 30, 1951

Informed me that the Coordinating Committee of the Academic Senate is meeting this afternoon, and wishes to know if there is anything that it should do to prepare for a request from the Regents to meet with a committee from the faculty to discuss means of communication between the faculty and the Regents, as proposed in a resolution introduced by Regent Neylan at the October meeting of the Regents. The Coordinating Committee believes that the Academic Senate, both sections, should eventually name such a committee, but that the Coordinating Committee or the Advisory Committee to the President should be prepared to act ad interim between Senate meetings. I told Kidner that I agreed with him, and suggested that a committee of three, consisting of the Chairman of the Coordinating Committee (Dean O'Brien) and the Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Committee at Berkeley, who is also a member of the Coordinating Committee (Kidner), and a comparable person from the Los Angeles section of the Senate be recommended to me. He thought that this was an excellent suggestion and said that he would proceed accordingly.

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### **KIDNER, PROFESSOR FRANK L. (Telephone)**

Los Angeles

November 2, 1951

Reported to me that the Coordinating Committee for the two sections of the Academic Senate had met and recommended that the Advisory Committee be used on both campuses: 1) In case the President needs to get advice from the faculty on the problem of relations between the Regents and the faculty; 2) To consider what kind of arrangements would be appropriate when the President is informed as to the views of both Regents and faculty; and 3) To prepare for the Senate appropriate legislation on setting up an Advisory Committee or some other committee if this should become necessary. He suggested that I might wish to ask the two Advisory

Committees to confer and plan for contingencies, and I asked him to do so right then, and told him that I would later ask Professor J. A. C. Grant, his opposite member on the Los Angeles campus. This I did by a teletype on November 5th.

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## **STEINHART, REGENT**

San Francisco

November 13, 1951

2. dislike for opposing Hansen, who has stood by our side on many issues where it was difficult for him to do so. I said, however, that Hansen had been completely misled by Dean Coffman, and was doing a most unnecessary thing, which would once again pour gasoline on the fire of faculty resentment toward the Regents. Moreover, I pointed out how difficult the situation would be for me, forced to take a defeat in the Board, or to become anathema with the faculty in all parts of the University. He saw the point and said that he would telephone Hansen and see if he could call him off. I told him I saw little hope of that, but encouraged him to do so nevertheless. He had another alternative, namely voting to release the School from the conditions which the American Bar Association seems to find objectionable for a year, during which discussions with the Bar Association and the faculty might go on. I told him that this compromise was worth thinking about, although frankly I was not enthusiastic about it.

## **SENATOR BURNS and ATTORNEY COOMBS, Of the State Senate Un-American Activities Committee**

Berkeley

November 13, 1951

Lunched with me and discussed the feud which has been going on between that Committee and the University. They said that they had at no time impuned my loyalty (and the reports of the Committee confirmed this), but that the Committee had felt that it must put pressure on the University, of which the President is the symbol, in order to get certain needed reforms. Their contention is that, while we have a fine anti-Communist policy, which the administration is honestly trying to carry out, it does not have the facilities to do so, and the policy is therefore relatively ineffective. They think that a full-time security officer should be appointed for the University, who could cooperate with the agencies familiar with the Communist party organization and activities, who could keep me advised as to organizations which need watching, and individuals who should not be appointed however many oaths they may swear. They are much exercised because the father of Hudson, the UCLA student who died last year (they think he was murdered by the Communists) was told by the deans on the Los Angeles campus that the Communist organizations to which the boy belonged were harmless groups of idealistic young men. Their contention is that, if the University administration had received proper advice from a security officer, it would have been able to answer the father much more intelligently, and he might have been able to take his son out of danger. They think

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also, that a number of appointments have been made by me which I would not have made if I had known about the men all that is generally known by agencies such as the FBI, Army Intelligence, Naval Intelligence, etc. Their expressed attitude was highly cooperative, they asserted that they agreed with me that no gestapo should be established, and that no effort should be made to discharge professors now on the staff, who commit no overt acts. But they thought that I ought to know who those professors are, watch them, and see that they do not abuse the privileges of the professorship. I asked them what type of man they thought should be appointed, and they both said immediately that I could not do better than to relieve Wadman from his present activities

as Berkeley campus chief police officer, and general overseer of the ordinary police duties throughout the State, and assign him to security work exclusively, with funds for proper files and assistance and traveling expenses. They regard him as a well-trained discreet person, with a university background environmentally, and an understanding of university people. Their suggestion, of course, commended itself to me if I am to do anything along the lines indicated, because bringing in a man from the outside would be sure to antagonize the faculty, while a change in Wadman's duties could be brought about with little or no excitement. I indicated by interest in their suggestion, and my intention to make a decision one way or another shortly. They asked me, also, if I would be willing to have a seminar held on the University's two major campuses, for the administrative officers concerned with appointments and with student conduct, to which they would send Coombs from the Un-American Committee's staff, and get people from the FBI and other agencies. They told me that they had held such seminars elsewhere, for example, on Army posts and for Americanism committees of the American Legion. I told them that I would take this under advisement, having in mind the possibility of some modification of their show, which is a two-day series of programs at a week-end, to be participated in by the President's Advisory Administrative Conference members, with a few others added. They assured me that, if steps of the kind indicated are taken, there will be no more trouble between the University and their Committee. Instead they will work with us hand in glove, giving us all the information at their disposal, and ceasing to heckle us about Communist students and alleged Communist professors, about whom they realize as well as we do that nothing can be done under the present laws.

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### **McLAUGHLIN, REGENT D. (Telephone)**

Berkeley

November 14, 1951

Talked with me about the meeting of the Special Committee of the Regents on relations and communications with the faculty, which has been called for tomorrow afternoon. I said that I had understood, from a telephone conversation with him while I was in Los Angeles last week, that the first meeting of the Committee would be held without the faculty present, but that Secretary Underhill had told me that he and McLaughlin had agreed that the faculty should attend. I said that it would be difficult to get a Committee of the faculty on such short notice, there being some reluctance on the part of the faculty committees to meet with the Regents unless fully authorized by the Academic Senate to do so. He immediately saw the force of this argument, and added to it his own belief that it would be preferable if the Regents had met first and somewhat crystallized their own ideas. He authorized me to tell Mr. Underhill that, unless the action

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of the Regents compels a joint meeting, even in the first instance, he would prefer not to have the faculty present. This I did immediately after talking with him.

### **UNDERHILL, MR. R.M. (Telephone)**

Berkeley

November 14, 1951

1. Agreed, in the light of my conversation with Regent McLaughlin, that there is no compulsion upon us to have the faculty present at the first meeting of the Regents Special Committee on relations and communications with the faculty.