



Letter to Edward A. Dickson, April 17, 1950: Banc Mss C-B 881, Box 177: 1950 #2 Loyalty Oath

[Letter, April 17, 1950]

April 17, 1950

MR. EDWARD A. DICKSON

Western Federal Savings & Loan Association

6th and Hill Streets

Los Angeles 14, California

Dear Ed:

I found on my desk this morning your letter of April 14th and the letter from your secretary, dated the 15th, which enclosed pages 2 and 3 to be substituted in place of those she originally sent me. I think you are very well aware of the position which I have consistently taken, as follows:

1. That the resolution of February 24th was essential and had to be passed in order to have a show-down with the Academic Senate, in view of the fact that the committees which it had appointed to confer with the Regents were unable or unwilling to ratify the agreements which these committees had several times reached with the Regents regarding the fundamental issue that a member of the Communist party was disqualified per se from sitting on the faculty of the University.
2. That the adoption of our policy by the Academic Senate by a vote better than three to one left only one question open, namely, what was the best way to implement the policy.
3. That it was my opinion that this could be done as well, if not better, by the Regents accepting in principle the method of implementation suggested by the faculty's resolution, namely, by contract in place of oath.

You may recall that I expressed these views in my letter to Mr. Neylan dated March 18th, which I believe he showed or read to you, and also in the memorandum which I read to the Regents at the conference in Los Angeles on March 30th. If the motion to rescind had been adopted at the last meeting, I was prepared to immediately offer a motion that an effective method of implementation by contract should be worked out by a committee of the Regents. I believed this could be accomplished by making the yearly employment contracts

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which are signed by members of the faculty conditional upon the acceptance by the signer of the policies against Communism adopted both by the Regents and the Academic Senate. I believe that this solution would be the one which would be least injurious to the University.

I fully realize that there are many issues regarding Communism which are national in scope and extend beyond this single matter of oath or no oath which alone concerns the University of California at present. I am opposed to the use of the University as the anvil on which will be hammered out all of the issues which are involved, because, frankly, I am very much afraid the anvil would be split in the process.

I have spoken with Mr. Neylan several times, and I believe he is fully familiar with all of the above. I have also been, so to speak, a channel of communication between Mr. Neylan and the President. On Tuesday, April 11th, I submitted to the President a communication from Mr. Neylan which suggested that either the oath or an equivalent affirmation, to the effect that the appointee was under no commitment in conflict with the University policies against Communism, would in all probability be acceptable. Since then I have not heard from the President.

Last Friday I met with the committee appointed by the Alumni Association, and discussed with it the issues which are involved. I read in the paper that this committee had gone to Los Angeles, and I presume it also has discussed this situation with you. I do not know what suggestion will evolve from the deliberations of that committee.

Cordially yours
SIDNEY M. EHRMAN