



Excerpts from the Loyalty Oath Memos of Robert G. Sproul, August 8-September 26, 1951

[August 8–September 26, 1951]

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PROFESSORS STANLEY AND GREETHER

Berkeley

August 8, 1951

respectively the outgoing and incoming chairmen of the Committee on Academic Freedom, talked to me about the Memorial passed by the Academic Senate, Northern Section on June 5th, 1951, and approved for submission to the Regents by the Academic Council, and certified by Professor J. A. C. Grant in a letter dated June 13th, 1951. They informed me that the resolution had not been ready for presentation at the Regents' meeting before my departure for Europe, and that it had been agreed by all concerned that it should not be presented in my absence. They then talked about its presentation at the August meeting. I told them that I would feel that, under the rules of the Senate and the Regents, I would have to present the Memorial at that time, although I might have wished for a more representative attendance of Regents than is likely in August. They were strongly of the opinion that, in spite of this possible difficulty, the presentation of the Memorial should not be further delayed. They pointed out that, even if the proposals of the Senate are not accepted, because of unrepresentative attendance at the Regents' meeting, a motion for reconsideration can be made, thus postponing final action to the September meeting. They regard the adoption of the procedure recommended in the Memorial as imperative if the whole faculty-Regents controversy is not to break out again with redoubled intensity. I asked them whether objection to the procedure could be made on legal grounds, insofar as they knew, and they stated that legal advice of high quality had been sought, and that they had been given complete assurance on this point. I then said that I would present the Memorial,

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and support it unless new facts develop in the meanwhile, concerning which I would, of course, talk with them further before the Regents' meeting. They asked me whether I could be quoted to the faculty about the results of our conference, and I said "only as to my intention to present the Memorial." I pointed out that to go farther without clearing up all doubtful points, such as the legal point, for example, would be prejudicial to the interest of the faculty, as well as to the full strength of the President's position with the Regents.

CORLEY, VICE PRESIDENT

Berkeley

August 13, 1951

1. Reported to me that Assembly Bill #3455, relating to the discharge of any employee of the University or of any State College who is a member of an Communist front or Communist faction organization, had been withdrawn by the authors.

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#4: Dr. Pettitt: I'm afraid that we at Berkeley, upon whom the whole blame will be laid, will be in for castigation if this business isn't brought to a conclusion. Therefore, I'd keep pressing for whatever action is needed in the South, and protect myself in every way possible.

RGS

8/25/51

GRANT, PROFESSOR J. A. C.

Los Angeles

August 20, 1951

1. I told him of the statement made by Regent Neylan, according to information which has come to me, at the July meeting of the Regents, to the effect that he and Davisson, a meeting at with Neylan in December 1949, had said that "there are budget committees for the faculty which handle certain promotion cases and through these can exercise control over the actions and opinions of faculty members; that he had objected to this as a star chamber proceeding under which members of the faculty could be fired for supposed actions of which they were not aware,

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and might be disciplined by their colleagues; that they certainly could be encouraged to support the American Association of University Professors rather than the Regents." Professor Grant said that this statement is not incorrect but is out of context; that it had been made in response to a question from Regent Neylan as to what the faculty could do to screen prospective appointees with reference to loyalty, and that Professor Davisson had outlined the budget committee procedure as a way of doing this.

GRANT, PROFESSOR J. A. C.

Los Angeles

August 20, 1951

2. reminded me of the request of Professor Arragon, AAUP, for the results of the Wenger Poll on the loyalty oath. Grant thinks that I should comply with this request because Arragon is critical of me anyway, on the ground that Professor Davisson, for the Academic Senate Committee then negotiating with the Regents, made a proposal which was eminently reasonable and which I would not support. Professor Grant said that this conclusion of Professor Arragon's is not well grounded, the proposal referred to being one which was considered by the joint committee, representing the Northern and Southern Sections of the Senate, in Los Angeles, with me present, and that the conclusions reached at that time, in which I joined as he remembered it, had been unanimous.