



TENNESSEE CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER

February 1992

Hughes Is President Until June 30

President Robert Glenn found himself unable to complete the final five months of his two-year term due to poor health. Professor Robert Hughes of Sewanee, who was Vice President for Private Institutions, agreed to step in and act as President of the Tennessee Conference until a new president is elected and installed.

We thank Bob Glenn for the excellent job he did as president. The Conference was extremely well run during his tenure in office, and there were significant attempts made to broaden the outreach of the Tennessee Conference. We wish him a speedy recovery.

We are also grateful to the Reverend Professor Hughes for his willingness to take on the responsibilities of president for the remainder of the term.

Message from the President

At the fall meeting, then Vice President Hughes spoke about his concern that the present financial difficulties faced by all institutions might be used as a political tool to drive a wedge between the public and private institutions. We asked Professor Hughes to write a short statement summing up his comments. His remarks serve both as a comment on an important problem and a statement from the new President of the Conference.

The politicians seem determined to set public and private education against each other; one hears, in particular, the claim that the Bush administration favors elitist, private institutions. This is a divide and conquer strategy by which both parties seek to distract us from the disastrous results of their failure adequately to support education. The deeper truth is that the private and public educational sectors tend to prosper or suffer together.

Dr. Samuel R. Williamson, Vice Chancellor and President of the University of the South at Sewanee, often points out that had one set out to design a program to do the maximum damage to private education in the U.S., one could scarcely have done better than the Reagan-Bush policies. In the light of Federal cutbacks, the line item for financial aid in our budget has had to quadruple since 1980, just to stay even. Bush's proposal to delete an additional 400,000 Pell grants would damage private and public education about equally, as both sectors would have to find the additional funds to meet provable need of students from lower middle income families. As national elections approach, it will be terribly important for educators from both sectors to remain united in support of our common goals and not be distracted by divisive smoke screen tactics from either party.

Location of Spring Meeting Changed: Sewanee

The spring meeting of the Tennessee Conference will be held on April 4 from 10 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. as planned. The location will be the Library at the University of the South in Sewanee. Coffee and doughnuts will be served at 9:30 for those who wish to come early and socialize. The meeting was originally scheduled for the UT Chattanooga campus, but a large conference there caused a schedule conflict.

Our thanks to President Bob Hughes and to Pat Phillips for arranging for the alternate site on short notice.

A registration sheet will appear in our next newsletter. Until then, mark the date in your calendar.

Lyle Reports on Legislature

Conference lobbyist Mary Frances Lyle submitted the report below while the special legislative session was still active. It has since adjourned and the regular session has convened. Her report is still very informative as a summary of action to date and a listing of the major tax proposals being considered in the current session.

Legislative Report

The 1992 Legislative Session got underway January 14th under a call by the Governor for a Special Session to consider the sole issues of education reform, taxation, and a limited constitutional convention on taxes and lotteries. The Governor introduced a tax reform bill which creates a flat 3% income tax with a \$4,000 per person exemption. It includes a half-cent decrease in the sales tax. Two percent of the proceeds, approximately \$928 million dollars, would be committed to education and would be placed in an education trust fund. Numerous other tax proposal bills have been filed, including proposed legislation that would remove many of the present sales tax exemptions. Interestingly, there have also been numerous bills filed to grant additional sales tax exemptions.

There is very strong opposition to the Governor's proposed tax plan. It seems to be in even more trouble than was his 1991 tax plan. The most likely resolution of the need for increased revenues is an additional half-cent sales tax, although the House Finance Committee rejected that proposal in a close vote on January 28th. It will no doubt come up for a vote again soon. A half-cent increase would raise approximately \$223 million dollars. Such an increase would do little more than restore the recent cuts in the education budget, including some \$60 million to higher education.

The Governor's education reform bill will likely pass in a modified form. The cost of his present plan is calculated at \$565 million for grades K-12, and \$209 million for higher education.

With regard to the issue of the constitutional convention, there is a predictable effort to expand the scope of the issues which could be

addressed at such a convention. There is, however, considerable reluctance on the part of the legislature even to have a constitutional convention, much less to have an unlimited convention.

Some of the tax proposals in addition to the Governor's proposal are as follows:

1. Increasing "sin" taxes on alcohol or tobacco products;
2. Raising driver's license fees and litigation taxes;
3. Enactment of a state personal property tax on automobiles;
4. Creating a tax system in which an income tax provides 75% of the state revenues and a sales tax provides 25% of state revenues. All other taxes would be eliminated;
5. Eliminating the local option sales tax and raising the state portion of the sales tax by a comparable amount;
6. There are various proposals to increase the state sales tax. Some proposals eliminate the sales tax on food;
7. Expanding the application of the sales tax to cover services of professionals such as lawyers, doctors, accountants, and so forth;
8. A flat \$200 tax for professional services including those listed above.

There is a possibility that the legislature will find they cannot agree on any tax proposal and will adjourn the special session and go into regular session. The Senate has actually set a vote for adjournment. The House would have to approve it.

Governor McWherter's budget was presented on January 28th and is based on present income levels without any assumption of additional revenues. It does not restore cuts made this year in education funding. Higher education would receive \$689 million.

Plan on Going to Washington

It's not too early to plan for the national AAUP meeting to be held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C. in mid-June. The theme of the 1992 meeting is "Financial Crisis in Higher Education."

The dates of the plenary sessions are Saturday and Sunday, June 13-14. Capitol Hill Day, which takes you to the offices of your representatives and senators, is on Wednesday, June 10, and the Assembly of State Conferences business sessions are on June 10-11. Annual Meeting panels are on Friday, June 12.

Our state conference can send four delegates to the Assembly of State Conference business sessions. If you would like to be a delegate, some financial help for the trip would be available from the Tennessee Conference. Contact President Robert Hughes at Sewanee if you are interested in representing the Tennessee Conference. His office phone—with answering machine always at the ready—is (615) 598-1377.

Nominating Committee Wants Names

The Nominating Committee again solicits your help in identifying candidates for the offices of Conference President, Vice-President for Public Institutions, Vice-President for Private Institutions, and Secretary-Treasurer. The term of office is two years. The Committee has several names, but would like more.

Ballots will go out in March. The Committee hopes to complete its work by mid-February, so do not delay in supplying names.

Members of the Committee to contact are:

David Lee (Chair), Germanic Languages, 701 McClung Tower, UTK, Knoxville 37996-0470 or by Bitnet at dlee@utkvx

Norman Ferris, History, Box 187, MTSU, Murfreesboro 37132

William C. Schrader, History, Tennessee Tech, Cookeville 38505

Minutes of the Meeting of the Tennessee Conference, AAUP, October 5, 1991

President Robert Glenn convened the Fall meeting at 10:10 a.m. at Tennessee Tech University. Twenty-four delegates attended.

President Angelo Volpe of Tennessee Tech welcomed the conference to the Tech campus.

Lew Wallace, President, Kentucky Conference of AAUP, commented on the current state of the Academy in Kentucky. He reviewed the problems and issues which faced AAUP in that state, noting that in many instances they are similar to those which exist in Tennessee. President Wallace stated that AAUP membership is increasing in Kentucky, especially in the community colleges.

Since the recipients of the Claxton Award were not present at the spring meeting, Milton Klein, chairperson of the committee, made the presentation to the first recipients, William Fisher of ETSU and Norman Ferris of MTSU.

Two items were added to the addenda under the section, Reports and Committees — Committee F (Neal) and Report on Retirement (Fisher).

The minutes of the April 6, 1991, meeting were read and approved.

Under business pertaining to reports and committees, Mary Frances Lyle, the lobbyist for the conference, gave a summary of the issues relative to higher education which probably will face the General Assembly when they meet in January 1992. Ms. Lyle added that Governor McWherter soon will announce what he plans to do as he embarks on a series of trips throughout the state to obtain some kind of consensus for his education and tax reform programs.

Robert Hughes, Vice President for Private Institutions, just back from a sabbatical to the West Coast, reported that AAUP remains strong at Sewanee and Vanderbilt, is growing at Bethel, and continues weak at Rhodes. He pointed out that there still continues the effort by politicians to set private and public institutions against each other. Hughes also noted that a serious crisis is in the making as the Bush administration attempts further cuts in aid and loans to students.

The Vice President for Public Institutions, Richard Gross, gave a review of the current problems facing Motlow State due to the dramatic increase of their FTE and the drastic budget cuts. This has resulted in low morale and stress among the faculty. Gross added that no progress was being made to solve their problems.

Secretary-Treasurer, Gil Fernandez, reported a balance of \$4,344.12 in the Conference's checking account as of this day.

Norman Ferris, Committee R chairperson, passed out two resolutions, one having to do with travel and another one that stemmed from recent comments by the Governor and negative newspaper commentaries relative to higher education. After considerable discussion, several amendments were proposed, but it was decided to defer the matter until after lunch.

Jim Neal, Chairperson of Committee F, reported that the Assembly of State Conferences approved the \$3000.00 grant to the Tennessee Conference.

Bill Fisher gave a brief report on the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System and said that there is a THEC report on cuts in salaries, positions, etc.

At noon the State Conference adjourned for lunch and viewed the video "Keeping In Mind" about the issue of academic freedom at the university of Michigan in the 1950s.

After the luncheon break, the conference reconvened at 1:45 p.m., at which time the two resolutions which earlier had been deferred, were again discussed separately. Resolution I, having to do with the issue of faculty travel, was discussed, amended and unanimously approved. Resolution II, having to do with negative comments about higher education, was also amended after considerable discussion and approved. Norman Ferris is to rewrite both resolutions as amended and forward them to President Glenn, who would send them to

the respective individuals in the name of the conference.

David Lee, editor of the conference newsletter, reported on the status of the newsletter, saying that five hundred ninety-nine copies of the last issue were mailed. Two hundred extra copies were printed and sent to help in recruitment and to inform potential members. Lee added that he would attempt to obtain advertisement from Valic and TIAA in order to help defray the cost of printing.

Those chapters that had representatives at the meeting gave brief reports on the activities and issues at each respective campus.

Under New Business, Marie Ventrice of TTU reported that she had seen a memo that stated that there will not be five-year tenure track review. John Selden of TTU recommended that State Committee A should take a more active interest in cases in the state regarding academic freedom. He said that "non-tenured faculty have no academic freedom."

The dates for the Spring and Fall 1992 meetings were announced: April 4, at University of Tennessee, Chattanooga [please note change in venue as announced in this newsletter—ed.] and October 3, at Motlow State Community College. President Glenn said that a nominations committee had been appointed to prepare a slate of officers for the spring election.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Gilbert G. Fernandez
Secretary-Treasurer