THIRTY YEARS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
1950 – 1980
A Memoir

by

Stow Persons

[Not to be opened during my lifetime.]

April 1982

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I came to the University of Iowa in 1950 after ten years in junior positions at Princeton and eight before that as undergraduate and graduate student at Yale. I could not help but notice the sharp contrast between the lively concern for and involvement in institutional and academic affairs which had characterized the faculties of those two universities and the indifference and apathy which prevailed at Iowa. With a few exceptions Iowa faculty members went about their own business and left the management of the university to the administrative officers towards whom feelings of cynicism and suspicion were frequently voiced. Having no sense of joint responsibility for the welfare of the institution, faculty members distinguished sharply between their own functions and administration, which they were inclined to regard as contemptible. The administrators for their part saw how this attitude worked to their advantage in giving them a large measure of autonomy. I felt strongly that something should be done to bridge the gulf between faculty and administration.

In an earlier generation (which Gustav Bergmann has characterized as "the age of the dinosaurs") there had been several big men in the faculty who had seized their opportunities and molded the institutional structure to serve their scholarly and personal ambitions. What little I have heard of them suggests that their methods were arbitrary and autocratic, especially in their dealings with students. But they left marks on the institution which were still to be seen when I came here.

The activities of the dinosaurs had been concerned with the teaching and research programs relevant to their own interests. They seem to have been indifferent to university problems and organization as such. This attitude was probably strengthened by the fact that the ultimate control of a public university is located in agencies over which the university itself has no control and sometimes little influence. But
I should say, however, that during my time at Iowa the Board of Regents (in striking contrast to behavior in certain other states) has consistently left the management of academic affairs to the local institutions while representing and defending their interests to the public. In some respects the work of the dinosaurs accentuated the fragmentation of the university by creating a few strong programs which learned how to fight for their turf at the expense of less aggressively managed programs.

The atmosphere of indifference which found in 1950 probably did not disturb President Vergil M. Hancher, if indeed he ever took notice of it. Mr. Hancher did not have an academic background. A graduate of Iowa who had been a Rhodes scholar, he practiced law before becoming President. His taste of the amenities at Oxford was perhaps a handicap in adjusting himself to the rather grubby and sometimes uncouth style of the Iowa faculty. In any event, he was uncomfortable with his faculty and isolated himself from it. His principal concern was to keep the ship running with as little friction as possible. His administrative officers were naturally content to function accordingly. An episode will illustrate the style of his administration. As a substitute I once had occasion to attend the annual meeting of deans at which the budgets for the coming year were distributed. It lasted about thirty seconds. Harvey Davis, the Provost, who presided, announced that the pie would be cut in the same proportions as the previous year; deans dismissed. Another of Mr. Hancher's officers, the Administrative Dean, Allen Dakin, was an amiable gentleman whose function was never clear to me. Nevertheless, in a memorable aphorism law professor Samuel Fahr said of him: "fiat Dakin; rue it universitas!"

In a later time, President Willard Boyd put much emphasis on what he considered to be a distinctive virtue of the university, namely, its compact character, with all of its colleges and programs in close contact and interaction with each other. He wanted to close streets and divert traffic from the campus. In an unfortunate moment he extolled the virtues of a "pedestrian campus," apparently oblivious of the second sense in which the term could be taken. Despite his pedestrian ambitions Boyd introduced the cambus system, which took the students off their feet while contributing appreciably to noise and air pollution. In fact, the autonomy, not to say isolation, of its several colleges was and remains a distinctive
feature of the University of Iowa. There has never been an organized university faculty. During the Hancher era, when there was no Faculty Senate nor Faculty Council the absence of all-university bodies was more striking than it would be later. Nevertheless, it remained the case throughout my time at Iowa that only the President and his central administrative officers furnished a formal institutional bond between the several colleges. I noted this fact in the report of the Educational Directions committee (1978), and the Northcentral Association accreditation visitors of that year called attention to it in their evaluation of the University.

In the absence of an organized university faculty there was of course no such thing as a regular faculty meeting. On irregular occasions, perhaps once a year or so, President Hancher would summon the faculty for an extraordinary meeting, usually in the House chamber of Old Capitol. After attending several of these I realized that Hancher always addressed himself to some issue pertaining to undergraduates. Apparently his vision of the University did not extend beyond the Liberal Arts College of which he himself was an alumnus. Professional college faculty members must have found those meetings quite a bore.

The absence of a flourishing faculty club may not seem a matter of much consequence, but I have always felt that this lack symbolized the continuing indifference of the faculty to the potentialities of active involvement in the affairs of the university as a whole. I recognized in the mathematics professor who brought his lunch to campus in a workman's lunch pail the sworn enemy of all faculty clubs!

A more important consequence of the absence of an organized university faculty was a striking disparity in quality among the various colleges. Each college was pretty much a law unto itself, and one knew very little about colleges other than one's own. Rumors and an occasional episode suggested that the standards in certain colleges — notably dentistry, nursing, education, and engineering — were abysmally low. The central administration had neither the ability nor the will to impose academic standards. Professor Jerry Kolros, zoology, once remarked that
prior to the Boyd administration he had never known of a recommendation
for promotion from a college being turned down by the central adminis­
tration. Only in the 1970s did the central administration begin to take
seriously its responsibility for faculty quality.

I cannot say that I perceived all of this immediately, or that I
resolved at once to see what could be done about it. But there gradually
formed in my mind the idea that it would be a worthwhile project to
attempt to raise the morale of the faculty by trying to secure for it
a more active role in the management of university affairs. A sense of
involvement would nourish a more positive and constructive attitude toward
the corporate activities of the University. I knew that the nature of
academic life being what it was there would always be a large number of
faculty members who would prefer to mind their own business, and who would
remain indifferent or condescending toward faculty "politicians." But
I believed that a continuing effort to nourish more constructive attitudes
would result in the emergence of a growing number of concerned faculty
members who could be counted upon to assume leadership for worthy causes.
This has proved to be the case. Whatever the European experience may be,
I have never believed that full faculty self-government is practicable or
desirable in the American university. I recognize the advantages of
centralized administrative authority. All that I have contended for is
an appropriate institutional structure through which faculty opinion could
make itself felt, being confident that the weight of such opinion would
have a profound effect on administration.

I was fortunate in that my tenure at Iowa coincided with a long
period of institutional growth. For what it was worth, I had come to Iowa
voluntarily from a university of greater prestige, and to a department
which was vigorously promoting itself as dedicated to strengthening its
scholarly program. Perhaps more important, I had no administrative ambi­
tions. I had come to Iowa with the promise of the opportunity to develop
my own program of teaching and research; this always remained my chief
concern. I informed the history department whenever the chairmanship was
to be filled that I preferred not to be a candidate. Except for my first
year at Iowa, when the illness of the chairman resulted in the appointment
of a troika of which I was a member. I never served as department chairman. Sooner or later colleagues perceived that my "political" activities reflected only a desire to strengthen the university. While I shunned administrative positions I accepted election or appointment to committees, both University and Liberal Arts, and in most years I was serving on one or more committees, which became the usual vehicles for promoting projects.

During the later years of the Hancher regime (i.e., before 1964) there was increasing interest in and agitation for a more effective faculty organization. There had been a Faculty Council composed of members elected by the faculties of the various colleges since about 1947, but there was a growing feeling that the Council was not an adequate agency to speak for the faculty. Much as he feared or at least disliked an active faculty, President Hancher apparently felt obliged to recognize this growing sentiment and to consent to consider proposals for a new university organization. The Faculty Council formulated a plan for a "University Council," the chief architect of which was Professor Alan Vestal, law. I do not know the nature of the collaboration between Vestal and Hancher, but it was apparent that Vestal incorporated in his draft elaborate checks upon faculty independence obviously designed to assuage Hancher's fears of the faculty.

In the Fall of 1962 the Faculty Council endorsed and distributed to the faculty its proposal for a University Council of eighty-one members "to furnish a mechanism whereby the faculty can communicate freely with the administration and make recommendations concerning policy" to the President. Although the mechanism was described as "a revised University Council" it was in fact a wholly new kind of body based on different premises. It was to represent the entire University (i.e., administration and faculty), its membership heavily weighted by administrators serving ex officio, and by faculty members appointed by the President. The Council was to have no powers; it would simply discuss issues of concern to the University. Yet the President's fear of open discussion was so acute that the freedom to discuss was hedged by elaborate safeguards to prevent discussion of any topic which might frighten him. There was to be an Agenda Committee presided over by the President which would assign priority to topics deemed most important by the President. There would also be a Steering Committee which would provide initial screening of matters to be laid before the Council. It was apparent from these provisions that what the President
advice on matters of interest to him.

This was far from the Faculty Senate which a growing number of faculty members felt to be desirable, and vigorous opposition was expressed as soon as the plan was distributed to the faculty. Leadership in organizing the opposition was taken by Jerry Kolros, zoology, and Joseph Baker, English. The plan itself did not specify a mode of ratification or indicate the manner in which it could be implemented, although the amending process was stated in full detail. It is conceivable that the Faculty Council might have implemented the new body on its own initiative had it detected sufficient faculty support. But the strength of the opposition clearly rendered such a tactic impossible. The Council appointed a public meeting for discussion, to be followed by a faculty referendum in which a sixty percent favorable vote would be required for approval.

For the faculty meeting on October 30, 1962, I prepared a rather lengthy statement indicating my objections. The plan proposed to substitute for the Faculty Council as the voice of the faculty a University Council which would in theory blend the voices of faculty and administration. In order to achieve this result in principle a careful balancing of voices would be necessary, whereas the plan provided for the effective muzzling of the faculty voice. I noted that I believed in checks and balances in a legislative body, but that to curb the free expression of opinions in a body which could do nothing but talk seemed monstrous. What was needed was a more intimate rapport between administration and faculty. In the absence of an organized university faculty or senate I urged the faculty not to abandon its Faculty Council for a larger body in which its voice could well be muffled. I cannot remember actually delivering this speech. Perhaps the gist of it was said by others; or perhaps the trend of the discussion made it seem out of place. I do remember saying that the proposed structure was almost certainly calculated to alienate President and faculty from each other by putting control of the agenda in the President's hands and screening out the discussion of sensitive topics. The debate was acrimonious, and Baker was openly abusive of the President. Hancher subsequently thanked me for my constructive remarks! The plan was decisively rejected by the faculty ballot.
When Hancher retired and Howard Bowen became President in 1964 there was a dramatic change in the administration - faculty relationship. Bowen was a strong man who had no fear of the faculty - or anyone else, so far as I could see. And having once been an economics professor at Iowa he had first-hand knowledge of the traditions and problems here. One of his first acts was to initiate plans for the organization of a Faculty Senate.

The Graduate Council

I was elected to the Graduate Council for a series of terms beginning in 1953. Council membership proved to be a useful position from which to initiate some much needed programs. The Graduate Dean at that time, Walter Loehwing, a botanist, was at some point elected President of the Council of Graduate Schools of the U.S., an event which surprised President Hancher, who told me subsequently that he had considered Loehwing a nobody. The Dean was in fact a team player of a peculiar sort. His World War I experience had left him with firm notions of the chain of command, so that his bearing toward his administrative superiors was one of subservience. At the same time, however, he appreciated the kind of strength which lay in the independence of faculty membership, and he was always prepared to transmit to his superiors any evidence of faculty vitality, or even restiveness. He always supported the initiatives of Council members, seeing to it unobtrusively that their concerns were made known to the Provost and the President.

Shortly after joining the Graduate Council I wrote to the Dean asking how he would react to a proposal to create a Graduate College research fund to support the research of Graduate faculty members. With his approval I then submitted to the Council a formal proposal for the creation of a State University of Iowa Research Fund, to be administered by a Research Council (Dec. 5, 1953). The Graduate Council endorsed the proposal, and within three months the State Board of Education (later Regents) authorized the allocation of funds for the appointment of Research Professorships. Such a prompt response was a clear indication
that the time was ripe for a faculty initiative in the matter. At the outset only two such appointments per semester were made. Obviously, more money would have to be found. But the practice was started, and year by year the number of appointments slowly increased.

The University lagged behind other universities of the region (including Iowa State) in the systematic solicitation of contributions from alumni and friends for various university purposes. It was not until April 1954 that the Old Gold Development Fund was established. It occurred to me that here was a potential source of funds for the support of research which would be independent of legislative appropriations. The Fund was administered by a Council of seven members, three appointed by the President of the University and four by the President of the Alumni Association. During the first eight years of the Fund's existence approximately fifty percent of the gifts received were restricted by the giver, mostly for medical or athletic purposes. In January 1956 I renewed the proposal of a research fund to be administered by a Research Council and funded by the Old Gold Fund, foundation grants, and by a small research fee to be assessed to all students. Needless to say, nothing came of the latter proposal. It seemed to me that while the Old Gold Fund was an admirable body for the solicitation of gifts to the University it should not be in the business of deciding how unrestricted funds should be used. This was the responsibility of the President, acting through such an agency as a Research Council. The President, however, relinquished what little control he exercised over Old Gold Fund activities by assigning his appointees to the SUI Foundation. In 1960 I proposed to the Graduate Council a program of summer faculty research grants to be funded on a modest scale from $10,000 of Graduate College funds (20 awards at $500 each). I noted that such grants would assist faculty members who might prefer to devote their summers to research rather than to teaching.

Dean Loehwing died in the summer of 1960, and as chairman of the search committee for his successor I was determined to find a person who would act aggressively in the support of research. We found such a person in John Weaver, who proved to be an ideal choice. (Not all of my hunches about appointees were so fortunate.) Weaver combined personal ambition with a clear perception of the needs of the institution, which he did not
hesitate to press on the timid administration. In my discussions with him in my dual capacity as search committee chairman and as Acting Dean I emphasized the need for more vigorous support of research. Soon after taking office he persuaded Hancher to create a Research Council consisting of elected faculty members, to which I was appointed for an initial one-year term. I renewed the proposal for summer research grants, and the Council recommended the award of ten summer faculty research fellowships at $1000 each for the summer of 1962. At that time, nine one-semester Research Professorships were being awarded. The Old Gold Fund now turned over to the University in a lump sum the funds which it had previously allocated to individual projects, and the whole program for research support, both regular semester and summer awards, was placed under the supervision of the Research Council.

In establishing the Research Council the administration stipulated that the Council should review applications for awards and make recommendations to the Dean. Some faculty members who mistrusted or felt themselves discriminated against by their own departmental or collegiate officers were especially insistent that these officers have no part in the selection of recipients of research awards, which they felt should be determined by their peers on the Research Council. So long as the number of awards remained small I had no particular objection to involving the Research Council in the selection process. But it was essential that the number of awards be regularly increased, and as this should come to pass the burden on Council members would become ever greater. In a long memo to the Dean I criticized the practice of using the Council to evaluate applications. I pointed out that apart from the burden involved, the method contradicted the essential principle which governed the evaluation of performance throughout the university, namely, review and judgment by those most competent. Few Council members were qualified to judge the merit of proposals in fields remote from their own. I believed that judgments as to the value and direction of research efforts were as much the responsibility of administration as were decisions concerning salary and promotion. I also felt -- but did not say -- that administration was
anxious to fob off onto a faculty group the thankless task of spreading around the meager funds among many worthy applicants. My memo was discussed at length by the Council, which agreed to divide itself into subcommittees, each of which would review proposals in its general area of expertise. It was also agreed to recommend that the Dean consult appropriate specialists wherever desirable before making final awards. It was apparent to me, however, that this problem would not be solved until the number of awards available was so large as to render review routine.

From time to time faculty members urged the granting of automatic sabbatical leaves. During my time at Iowa such a program was wholly unrealistic. The best that could be done was to increase the number of research awards year by year so that ultimately the number awarded would approximate the number of leaves in a given semester that would be available under a sabbatical system. It has always seemed unrealistic to expect the public to accept the principle of a leave of absence by virtue of seven years of service, as distinct from a leave by virtue of a research project worthy of full-time effort.

When Howard Bowen became President in 1964 he appointed an ad hoc committee, of which I was chairman, to study and make recommendations to him on the matter of leaves of absence. Our report, submitted in the Spring of 1965, urged that the University move from a limited number of competitive awards to a number sufficient for rotation, or approximately one hundred per semester. As the goal was approximated the review of proposals would become increasingly routine. The committee also recommended the enlargement of the purpose for which leave could be granted to embrace "professional development." The Nursing Dean, Myrtle Aydelotte, who was a member of the committee, argued that most of the Nursing faculty were not yet ready to take advantage of research leaves; what they needed was time and support for advanced training. There were doubtless others in the same position. I agreed reluctantly to this dilution of the purpose of the program. It seemed to me that so long as research support remained inadequate it was a mistake to divert funds to what essentially staff training. The initial recruitment of properly trained junior faculty members should render such aid unnecessary. The report was accepted by President Bowen in October, 1965, but it was not implemented in any signif-
icant degree until after the appointment of May Brodbeck as Academic Vice President and Dean of Faculties in the Boyd administration.

Acting Dean, Graduate College

In August 1960 Dean Loehwing died suddenly. At that time the Graduate College administration was a small operation, consisting of the Dean, three secretaries, and a part-time student assistant. Since there was no Associate or Assistant Dean or other professional person to carry on the work of the office it was necessary to appoint an acting dean promptly. Provost Davis thought it appropriate to appoint a member of the elected Graduate Council, and he asked Ralph Shriner, chemistry chairman, to take the job. Shriner, however, was in the midst of planning an addition to the chemistry building and said that he could not handle both jobs. The Provost then asked me to take the position; he said that it was an emergency, and that he would not take no for an answer. I agreed to do it for not more than a year provided he would promise me that I would be under no pressure to continue with it on a regular basis. He said he would not only agree, but would make me chairman of the search committee for a dean; it would be my responsibility to find a successor. During the following year I had virtually no contact at all with President Hancher, although we both had offices in Old Capitol. He left the management of internal university affairs entirely in the hands of the Provost. The latter, on the other hand, was always readily available, and a most amiable man to deal with. But his availability — and indeed perhaps also his amiability — was doubtless a function of the fact that he conceived of university administration wholly in routine terms. There was no evidence that complex scholarly or educational issues ever clouded his horizon. It was enough that the machinery should run smoothly and budgets balance.

As Acting Dean I informed the Council that I did not expect to initiate new projects, but would be content to keep the shop running, and would rely on the Council for advice and support. The work of the office, although it occupied my full time, was almost entirely of a routine nature.
It dealt very largely with oversight of formal Graduate College degree requirements. The Dean also had at his disposal small accounts from which funds could be used to support scholarly projects. The amounts were pathetically small, and could not be publicized since they would fall so far short of demand.

I quickly discovered that one of the functions of the Dean was to blow the whistle on departments which attempted to circumvent degree requirements. A particularly flagrant case involved the nutrition program in Medicine. A request was received from the Professor in Charge to authorize a final examination for the PhD in that field. No record existed that the Comprehensive Examination had ever been authorized or taken, although the Professor insisted that it had been. (Conceivably it had been given without Graduate College authorization, which of course would have been strictly illegal.) The candidate was a Filipino then teaching in a Philippine university, and questions had arisen there as to whether she did in fact have the doctoral degree. Apparently she had represented herself as "Doctor." The Council agreed with me that a properly authorized Comprehensive Examination must be passed before a final examination on the dissertation could be authorized. The Council did make the concession of agreeing to authorize administration of the Comprehensive Examination in the Philippines. The Professor in Charge said some nasty things to me, but so far as I know, nothing more was heard of the matter.

Another problem had to do with standards. A medical faculty member complained to me of low standards in the College of Dentistry, where a controversial Dean had introduced a new program in dental education (not to be confused with the well-established programs in operative dentistry). The apparent object was to provide prospective teachers of dentistry with graduate degrees as distinct from professional degrees. A typical Master's thesis was called to my attention as illustrative of the low quality of the program in question. It was a script for a training film on some dental procedure. It began: "Lights, Music, Voice, etc." The same dean raised a more serious issue when he undertook to change a student's degree program arbitrarily. Dr. Alton Fisher, Oral Pathology, complained to me that the Dean was destroying his program. With the Council's concurrence I ruled that once a student had enrolled in a program the requirements of the program could not be changed without the student's
consent. Shortly thereafter the Dean was dismissed, although I doubt that these particular episodes had much to do with it.

The search for a Graduate Dean resulted in the appointment of John Weaver, then as I recall it Graduate Dean at Kansas State. I was not privy to Weaver's conversations with President Hancher, but I assume he asked for the title Vice President for Research as well as Graduate Dean. At any rate he received it. In my conversations with him I had stressed the importance of a stronger administrative role in the support and promotion of research. Weaver was an able and energetic man who subsequently went on to other posts including the presidency of the University of Wisconsin. Another concession which he obtained from Hancher was the right to participate in central administrative approval or disapproval of recommendations for promotion made by the collegiate deans. The Liberal Arts dean, Dewey Stuit, complained bitterly about this, no doubt fearing that something more than a perfunctory review of collegiate recommendations would result. Weaver offered me the position of Associate Graduate Dean, which I declined with thanks. When Hancher retired Weaver was rumored to be a leading candidate to succeed him, and he resigned when the appointment went to Howard Bowen.

The process of enlarging and upgrading the role of the Graduate College administration, especially through the support of research with outside funds, which had begun under Weaver, was greatly accelerated under Dean Spriestersbach, who also held the title Vice President for Research. Although the University in my time generally enjoyed a "lean" administration, this did not apply to Spriestersbach, who expanded his office enormously. (People joked about how much more luxurious his office was than the relative spartan quarters of President Boyd.) Three Deans (Schultz, Jakobsen, Mason) now did the work I had done on traditional Graduate College business. But beyond that there was a large professional and para-professional staff under Vice President Farrell (whose relationship to Spriestersbach remained obscure to me) concerned with facilitating the obtaining of research grants. Previously the health sciences had maintained their own offices of research support. Faculty members in other colleges worked on their own. Now all these activities
were coordinated through the Vice President for Research. His motto might have been: "You have to spend money to make money."

The Faculty Welfare Committee

The Faculty Senate on February 27, 1968 adopted my motion to create a standing Senate committee on Faculty Welfare. Subjects which I felt would profitably fall within the perview of the committee were questions of academic freedom, faculty grievances, causes of resignations, and faculty privileges including the privileges of emeriti. I envisaged a relatively small committee which could respond quickly and informally to matters brought to its attention, especially in the area of grievances, which at that time were dealt with (if at all) through regular administrative channels, and often with scant regard for the rights or sensibilities of the individual.

The procedures of the committee in the area of grievances developed along lines I had not anticipated. The committee chairman, Lawrence Gelfand, history, preferred formal procedures, and an early grievance case furnished the opportunity to develop them. Stephen Fox, psychology, brought a grievance against his department, and the committee set up a formal hearing, with stenographic record of statements, etc. The department chairman, Judson Brown, strongly backed by Dean Stuit, refused to appear before the committee. Because the committee had no means of requiring cooperation it could only hear Fox's side, although everyone knew that Fox was a scamp. I always believed that a committee which in the end possessed only the power to influence public opinion could function more effectively with informal procedures.

However that may have been, the Boyd administration was undoubtedly influenced by the activities of the Faculty Welfare Committee in reaching the conclusion that official University grievance machinery was desirable. The designing of this machinery was considered to be a delicate task entrusted by Boyd to two of his law faculty colleagues, David Vernon and William Hines (the former had been and the latter would become Dean). Parenthetically, I think it worth noting that four of the five
most recent presidents of the University of Iowa have been lawyers. As a faculty member once remarked to me, he favored lawyer presidents because they could be counted on to do nothing. Certainly it was the case that the non-lawyer of the group, Howard Bowen, gave the university its most notable administration of modern times. The grievance machinery which these lawyers fabricated was a monstrously complex structure that could only be made to operate by lawyers, which was indeed the intention. In order to bring a grievance it was almost mandatory to retain legal counsel, which could be extremely expensive to the faculty member. The State, of course, paid the legal fees of the University. The proceedings were so protracted and time consuming that it became increasingly difficult to persuade faculty members to serve on hearing panels. After a couple years' experience the Chairman of the Judicial Commission was convinced that procedures would have to be simplified or the machinery would collapse of its own weight.

While the Senate's Faculty Welfare committee had initiated a useful chain of events, another Senate initiative proved to be abortive. At an early meeting there was some discussion of the formulation of long-run goals for the University, of the criteria used in making budget allocations, of the locus of decision making, etc. Believing that the faculty should have something to say about these important matters the Senate created a standing committee on long-range planning. Unfortunately, the charge to this committee was so broad and loosely defined that the committee was never able to formulate a useful agenda, and shortly requested that it be liquidated.

On the other hand, the more narrowly focused Budget Review committee of the Senate proved to be a useful means of bringing a faculty point of view to bear on the budget making process. During times of expansion, which included virtually the entire thirty years of my tenure at Iowa, managing the university presented no very great difficulties. But in times of contraction and hardship such as appeared to be looming in the 1980s, it could well be important that a number of well-regarded faculty members should have had the first-hand knowledge of the problems of budget making that could be conveyed by membership on a budget planning committee.
Senate Chairmanship

It was my ill-fortune to be chairman of the Faculty Senate and Council during a year of student disturbances, 1969-70. It was also President Boyd's first year in office. Student unrest had been building up during the previous couple of years, and indeed it was rumored that a prime reason for Bowen's resignation was his wife's anxiety following demonstrations and confrontations both at the President's home and office. As the year 1969-70 progressed the objective of the radical students came to focus more sharply on shutting down the University as a symbol of protest against Vietnam, Cambodia, Kent State, and the draft. The abolition of the ROTC programs was also a major objective. The administration and, I believe, the vast majority of the faculty, however much they might sympathize with the student concern over public policy, saw no point in closing the university. That at any rate was the position which the Council and I took.

In the Spring of 1970 the tension on campus rapidly mounted. The Rhetoric Building, a World War II wooden structure, was burned; and an unsuccessful attempt was made to burn the old Engineering Building, on the northeast corner of Iowa and Dubuque. (The arsonists showed a commendable taste in selecting for the torch buildings which were most readily expendable.) An evening demonstration on the Pentacrest resulted in an order from Provost Ray Heffner (Boyd being out of town) to the police to clear the area. Some fifty or more demonstrators, including religion professor George Forell, refused to leave and were arrested. One practical consequence of these springtime activities was the changing of the university calendar in order to end the Spring term earlier when colder weather would discourage outdoor evening demonstrations.

Another focus of student protest was the office of business and industrial placement, located in the Memorial Union. Demonstrations here were intended to frustrate the recruitment interviews of such obnoxious employers as Dow Chemical and the armed forces. On one occasion the Madison Street entrance to the Union was blocked by demonstrators, and at least one who sought to confront interviewers inside the building was
maced. Eventually the Governor called out the State Highway Patrol who took over campus security. The presence of the patrol had an immediate calming effect. I was reminded of the observation of a Cornell University psychiatrist who witnessed similar demonstrations on that campus. He remarked that the fear of repression was less disturbing than the fear that no one was in control.

Because Old Capitol, which contained the President's office, was a principal focus of protest activities President Boyd decided to move the office to a less vulnerable location. This was done in great secrecy. One morning Provost Heffner came to me in my office in Schaeffer Hall (it was feared that the telephones were bugged) to conduct me in person to the relocated presidential office. We got into his car and drove out of town by a circuitous route, he constantly watching his rear-view mirror to see if we were being followed. Eventually we arrived at Oakdale, where sundry administrative officers were assembled, and where phone company men were busily installing a battery of phones. At this command post we gathered for several days to hear reports from the front, and we were, needless to say, deluged with rumors. The Governor came in from Des Moines and sat silently beside the President, lending his moral support. The President took it all very hard, and was obviously under great emotional strain. One day he arose suddenly from the table with tears streaming down his face and hastily left the room in order to compose himself.

Near the end of the Spring term the Faculty Senate took up a resolution condemning ROTC and demanding its abolition. The issue aroused great interest, and we moved the place of meeting from the Senate Chamber of Old Capitol to the auditorium of Calvin Hall in order to accommodate the crowd. I agreed to seat a delegation from the student government. I also appointed four of the largest and most imposing Senators to act as Sergeants at Arms, and stationed campus police officers at the door to exclude non-faculty. The hall was full with Senators and visitors. The vote by show of hands on ROTC twice came out tied. We then voted by written ballot, and the resolution passed by one vote. Someone who had been reluctant to vote publicly by voice vote cast an affirmative ballot. The Provost, who called me after the meeting to say that the President was
beside himself with chagrin and anxiety, asked me to do something. The only thing I could think of was to say that I would be willing to announce that had it been necessary to cast a tie-breaking vote I would have voted in the negative, since I believed that the resolution would serve no useful purpose, knowing the attitude of the Regents as I did. The President approved and the letter was sent to the Daily Iowan. Several proponents of the resolution expressed great indignation, alleging that I had no right to say anything. I never told anyone that I had done it at the President's request.

In later years I occasionally heard it said that the university had been shut down, but this was not the case. In the Spring of 1970 the President offered students three options: to finish out the term in the normal manner; to leave the campus with grades based on their work to the moment; or to leave with incomplete grades. In my own classes about half chose the first option and the other half the second. It is my impression that the excitement and unrest were centered in the Liberal Arts undergraduates and among graduate students in the humanities, including history. The professional colleges and the science fields were largely unaffected. I attended a meeting of student demonstrators at which there was excited talk about shutting down the University. A medical faculty member pointed out that an attempt to shut down medicine and the hospitals was serious business, to which my colleague Alan Spitzer replied that a way could be found to keep them open while shutting down the rest of the university. (In other words, we could play our symbolic games without interfering with the real world.)

At about the time the President announced his options for students certain of the teaching assistants in the Western Civilization core course decided to go on strike. Dean Stuit demanded that Spitzer, who was then history chairman, give him the names of the strikers, which Spitzer refused to do. Stuit told me in great indignation that had it not been within a few days of term-end, and also the end of Spitzer's term as chairman, he would have removed Spitzer for insubordination.

As I think over my own part in the troubled events of that year I still think that I took the correct positions, but that I was not
sufficiently firm and outspoken in representing them to the university community. Like most faculty members I sympathized with the students and shared their abhorrence of our militaristic foreign policy. But I did not share their perception of the university as being an agency of the "establishment." Quite the opposite; it provided them with the only environment congenial to their ideals. So far as ROTC was concerned, it seemed to me that given the need for officers it was better to train them in a university atmosphere than elsewhere. But my fear that the events of that year would result in the permanent politicizing of the campus, as in the European universities, proved to be groundless. The ending of the Vietnam war and especially the ending of the draft (however unwise it may have been) brought an abrupt change in the campus atmosphere. The traditional preoccupation of American university students with career preparation returned, and the last decade of my tenure at Iowa was a quiet one.

Library Planning

When I came to Iowa in 1950 the main library was housed in the central well of McBride Hall, a pathetically inadequate facility, and the first unit of a new library building was under construction. The librarian, Ralph Ellsworth, who subsequently acquired an international reputation as a library planner, was an advocate of the modular principle of construction, and the new building incorporated that principle. Thanks to the flexibility it provided, it was possible to build a library in several installments over a period of years while preserving the opportunity for a final rearrangement of functions when the building was completed.

One of Howard Bowen's major accomplishments was to secure from State and Federal sources the funds necessary to build the final unit of the library, an addition which would double the size of the then existing building and make possible the ultimate arrangement of library facilities within the building.

Shortly after Bowen's announcement a group of about eight faculty members, including John Gerber, English, Donald Johnson, Political Science, and myself, went to the President and told him that we had no confidence
in the ability of the librarian, Elsworth’s successor Leslie Dunlap, to carry out successfully the important task of planning the arrangement of facilities and services in the completed library building. There was a standing faculty committee on the library, but several of us who had served on that committee had found that Dunlap had no intention of consulting it or taking its advice. We recommended that the President appoint a planning committee with authority to make the decisions. Mr. Bowen agreed to this without hesitation, although he remarked that he could hardly exclude the librarian from such a committee. We concurred, but suggested that someone other than Dunlap be made chairman of the committee. I proposed that he appoint Merritt Ludwig, the Director of Planning and Development, who had come to the University with Bowen and who had no local background. I knew that he would be Bowen’s man and not likely influenced by the arrogant style of Dunlap which had alienated so many faculty members. Bowen appointed a planning committee of seven, including Ludwig, Dunlap, Johnson, Roger Hornsby, Classics, Rex Montgomery, medicine, Robert Scholes, English, and myself. The standing committee on the library (probably encouraged by Dunlap) complained of its exclusion from the planning function.

The planning committee concentrated on the problem of serving the needs of undergraduates and graduate students and faculty researchers. Projected increase in the size of the collection indicated that within a few years the building would be crowded and that functions and services would necessarily suffer. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that study in the dormitories was virtually impossible, so that the library must serve as a study hall, with all of the attendant confusion and socializing, especially in the late afternoon and evening hours. Ellsworth had introduced the idea of a separate undergraduate library, a basic collection of books with adjacent study space. The committee agreed to preserve this and to provide a substantial number of seats for study. I proposed and the committee agreed that top priority in space allocation be given to the research needs of graduate students and faculty. We recommended limited access to the book stacks for undergraduates, and study
rooms for graduate students wherever graduate departments felt that such facilities would be desirable.

It soon became apparent that all of these facilities could not be adequately provided in the building, and the committee recommended that rather than complete the main building a separate undergraduate library be located either on the tennis courts north of the main building or on the women's playing field south of the Union. We were quickly informed that the playing fields were sacred ground. So also were the four corners of the Pentacrest, each of which could have held a substantial building without harming the esthetic virtues of that area of the campus. As it was, the observance of these pieties forced the University into "campus sprawl," with consequent scheduling problems and inconvenience to students.

The committee vote for the separate undergraduate library had been unanimous (June 27, 1966), but during the summer Dunlap reversed himself, and without consulting the committee recommended completion of the main building. Bowen accepted that recommendation, which settled the matter. I probably should have resigned from the committee at that point. But there still remained the problem of allocating functions within the completed building. After much wrangling with Dunlap it was agreed that the second floor would house the undergraduate library, the fourth and fifth floors would contain the main library collection with research and graduate study facilities, and the third floor would house periodicals, special collections, government documents, and offices for the departments of library science, geography, and philosophy. I objected as strongly as I could to the location of departments in space that would soon be needed for books, but Bowen was adamant that they be provided for in the library.

It was agreed in the committee that undergraduates should have access to the periodicals on the third floor, but that they should need a special permit for access to the fourth and fifth floors.

By the time the building was completed Bowen had departed, and Boyd apparently relied on Provost Ray Heffner for his library policy. On September 14, 1970 he announced that on Heffner's advice the stacks would be open throughout the library. That decision made it impracticable to provide restricted study rooms for graduate students in English and history. Heffner preferred to work with the standing library committee,
and the planning committee ceased to function. On the whole, I believe that in spite of disappointments the work of the committee resulted in a more satisfactory library than would otherwise have been obtained.

Honorary Degrees

A matter of no great importance, but one which surfaced repeatedly over many years and took up time that had better been devoted to other things was the question whether the University should grant honorary degrees. There was a strong current of sentiment in the faculty, and perhaps also in the administration, against the practice. I often heard it said that it was to the credit of the institution that it did not engage in the sordid business. The fact that the matter would not down was doubtless due to pressure from various sources, both external and internal, to award such degrees. The President was the focus of such pressures, and it is not surprising that a timid man like Hancher was unable to put the matter behind him.

The faculty in 1896 had voted in favor of honorary degrees, but with the provisos that no one who applied directly or indirectly for such a degree should receive one, and that none should be awarded to any person having an official connection with the University. Both of these caviats were to be violated in my time. The recommendation to award such degrees was reaffirmed by a committee appointed by President Hancher in 1954. This committee proposed that the Board of Deans function as an honorary degree committee. I do not know why Hancher found it necessary to appoint another committee in 1957, but he did, and I was a member of it. This group also recommended the award of some three or four degrees annually, the recipients to be chosen by a standing committee composed largely of faculty members. It also recommended the granting of Distinguished Service awards to be managed by the Alumni Association. President Hancher sat on these recommendations for several years, perhaps content to be armed with machinery ready for use should the pressure become unbearable. One day late in 1962 he called me into his office and told the following tale: he had recently called his friend Lewis L. Strauss, former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, on some matter of personal business. Strauss' secretary had said that he was out of the country, but that if President
touch with him! We both laughed, and I said that it was fortunate that Hancher had the machinery at hand with which to proceed. At the time I took the story at face value; only subsequently did it occur to me that this may have been Hancher's way of getting around an honorary degree committee. In any event, Strauss was made Honorary Doctor of Laws at the 1963 commencement. I imagine that the faculty of 1896 would have considered it an indirect application.

When Hancher retired in 1964 he let it be known that he wished to have a simple commencement ceremony at which he himself would be the principal speaker, and he notified the honorary degree committee that he preferred that there be no honorary degrees awarded. Over my objection Alan Vestal pushed through the committee a recommendation that Hancher himself be awarded a degree, which was done. Could one say that Hancher had no official connection with the University? I resigned from the committee in protest, and in his letter accepting my resignation the President acknowledged that he himself had doubts about the merits of the practice. I do not know President Bowen's opinion of the matter, but President Boyd informed the Faculty Council in 1972 that it was no longer the policy of the University to award honorary degrees.

The vacillation over honorary degrees provides some insight into the failure of the University of Iowa in my time to develop and foster its own distinctive image of itself as an educational institution. Public ceremony would have been one facit of such an image, but athletic contests were the only public ceremonies into which the University threw itself with any enthusiasm. Academic commencements were, by all accounts, drab affairs to which the faculty was admitted only in small representative delegations. In my thirty years on the faculty I was never invited to attend a commencement exercise save for the two occasions when I was present in official capacities.

The Affair of the Midnight Nurses

[On March 3, 1801, in the waning moments of a failed administration, President John Adams made the appointment of the so-called "midnight judges," a series of partisan judicial appointments designed to perpetuate Federalist principles in the judiciary.]
May Brodbeck, Academic Vice President and Dean of Faculties in the Boyd administration, was unquestionably the ablest and most conscientious occupant of that position during my time at Iowa. Following an outstanding academic career in philosophy at Minnesota she had entered administration from the highest of motives — the belief that wise administration could actually enhance the quality of the institution. Since quality is in fact a function of the faculty rather than the administration her task was in effect to do what was possible to strengthen and improve the quality of the faculty. One obvious way to accomplish this was to scrutinize more closely the recommendations of the collegiate deans for tenure promotions, and under Dean Brodbeck such scrutiny was in fact initiated.

Against this background, the decision with respect to tenure promotions in the College of Nursing which she announced in November 1979 was most difficult to understand. She declared her intention to confer tenure upon twenty-three faculty members whom she herself admitted to be unqualified in terms of the University criteria for tenure appointment. The extenuating circumstances which were presumed to justify her decision were complex and of long standing. Fundamentally, it would appear that the tradition of nursing education as it had existed in the United States up to that time had not fostered the scholarly practices which were presupposed by university criteria for promotion to tenure, namely, engagement in useful research. Although nursing faculty members at Iowa had been advised officially and repeatedly over a period of years that they must satisfy the criteria if they were to be promoted, most of them had not done so. The administration, both collegiate and central, was at fault during those years in failing to enforce the penalties it had repeatedly invoked. When Dean Brodbeck took up the matter in 1979 several of the faculty members involved were well beyond the seven-year up-or-out rule. I can only speculate as to why she made the decision to confer tenure. She was a single woman in poor health surrounded by a covey of importunate females who were constantly beating on her to redress the long-standing balance of discrimination against women, and the pressure became unbearable.

Whatever the explanation for her action, I felt strongly that it was necessary to challenge it in order to initiate a discussion of the circumstances surrounding unwise or unjustified tenure decisions. In a
letter to the President of the Faculty Senate, November 7, 1979, I proposed the creation of an ad hoc Senate committee to inquire whether existing standards of promotion were reasonable, and if so whether they might equitably be applied throughout the university. The Senate President consulted the Council, and with its approval asked me to chair such a committee.

The committee might have found either that the standards were applicable and enforceable throughout the university, or that in an area such as nursing the absence of scholarly traditions and opportunities for research rendered such standards inapplicable or inappropriate. The committee found unanimously — but unwisely I now believe — that the former condition prevailed. I suppose that we shrank from the implications of formally recognizing a category of faculty members to whom the general standards did not apply. In any event, we accepted (perhaps too casually) the opinion of the Acting Dean of Nursing, Sue Rosner (a psychologist, not a Nursing faculty member), that the Nursing faculty had available opportunities for useful research and could appropriately be expected to engage in it. Our problem then became one of finding a reasonable and humane solution for the situation created by the twenty-three faculty members who did not at the moment satisfy university criteria for promotion to tenure.

Our proposal was to use the category of Clinical Faculty appointments. A Clinical Professor would be the equivalent of an ordinary professor, but without tenure. There would be no limit on the number of annual renewals of appointment. We assumed that most if not all of the twenty-three would fall in this category. The Senate accepted our report, and President Boyd announced that he would be guided by it, thus repudiating the decision of Dean Brodbeck of which he must almost certainly have previously approved. Some months later, when she resigned her administrative position and returned to her professorship of philosophy I could not help but feel that her public repudiation by the President on this issue must have been a factor in her decision. She never gave any sign of resentment or ill-will to me.

The draft report which I prepared for the Committee went beyond the immediate problem of the nurses to address the broader issue of the role of the central administration in the promotion process. It proposed the creation of a University-wide faculty committee to assist the Dean of
Faculties in reviewing recommendations from the college deans for promotions to tenure. However, Dorsey Ellis, law, who had formerly served a term as Associate Dean of Faculties, opposed this proposal and persuaded the committee to strike it out of the final report on the ground that it was not germane to the purpose of the report.

**The Herrnstein Affair**

The chief significance of the Herrnstein affair for the University of Iowa, apart from the gross violation of academic freedom, lay in the light which it threw on the timidity and muddled thinking of the Boyd administration. Richard Herrnstein was a Harvard psychologist who had incurred the wrath of social radicals by an *Atlantic Monthly* article on IQ, in which he reviewed dispassionately the current literature on presumed racial differentials in intelligence. Quite apart from whatever conclusions one might draw from such materials, the mere fact that the subject seemed to merit serious attention was sufficient to bring down on Herrnstein a torrent of abuse and a calculated pattern of harassment extending over several months.

Early in 1972 the Iowa psychology department invited Professor Herrnstein to conduct a "seminar" on his current research dealing with the effects of rewards and punishments on the learning process in pigeons. The seminar was in fact to be a public lecture delivered in a large classroom in the Physics building. The event was subsequently investigated carefully by a Faculty Senate committee whose report is on record, and I need not go into details. Suffice it to say that the hall was infiltrated by demonstrators led by a nucleus from out of town and that the disorder was so great that Herrnstein, who had recently faced similar situations, declined to attempt to speak.

The aborted lecture occurred on February 25, 1972. President Boyd was out of town, and a reporter who inquired as to the reaction of the administration was told by the President's assistant, Robert Engel, that he imagined that the faculty would "think twice" before again inviting a controversial speaker to campus. The acting president, Provost
Ray Heffner, said nothing publicly. At a regular session of the Faculty Senate four days later, February 29, Jerry Kolros, zoology, and I deplored the outrageous violation of academic freedom and castigated the administration both for its failure to defend Herrnstein's right to speak and for its subsequent failure to perceive the significance of the event. On our motion the Senate created a committee to investigate the affair. Only then did Provost Heffner, who was present, acknowledge that the event did indeed hold significant implications for the academic processes of the university.

In a formal statement issued to the press on March 6 Heffner promised that the administration would "cooperate fully" in the Senate's investigation — i.e., implying that it need not conduct an investigation of its own. He also attempted to divert attention from his own ineptitude by castigating history Professor John Henneman, who had canceled a class in protest. Heffner requested that the Dean and Executive Committee of Liberal Arts take appropriate action to discipline Henneman. After returning to the campus, Boyd also issued a statement, March 7, in which he too repremanded Henneman, who had clearly taken his place in the administrative mind along with the demonstrators as a principal villain of the affair. Boyd acknowledged that the University had failed to maintain a forum for free speech, and he insisted that it was the joint obligation of faculty, students, and staff to assure such a forum. He noted that Herrnstein had not technically been disrupted since he had not started to speak, as though this somehow mitigated the University's responsibility to him.

The University officials and the psychology department had not by any means been taken unawares. The previous history of harassment of Herrnstein was well known to them, as was the presence on campus of outsiders who were organizing the demonstration at the lecture. The security forces had planned to lock the lecture hall prior to the lecture, with the apparent intention of screening those who would be admitted. How such a tactic would be compatible with Boyd's expressed devotion to free speech remained unexplained. In any event, the demonstrators outwitted the security forces by the simple tactic of infiltrating the hall during an earlier class period; when the security forces arrived the room was already occupied and no effort was made to evict the occupants. Robert Engel came to my office following the Senate meeting to explain all of this to me, weeping
copiously, and apparently feeling that he had been betrayed by events.

The psychology department also bore its share of responsibility for the outcome. Although it knew that trouble was in store it made no alternative plans for the seminar in the event of disruption. Herrnstein was given a cocktail and dinner and packed off. It appeared that if a scholar could not speak freely and publicly he could not speak at all. There was no apparent realization that the scholarly enterprise must be carried on in private if it could survive publicly. The psychologists were content to stand there in their academic gowns and be shot down.

My criticism of the University rested on its failure to understand the distinction between free speech and academic freedom. Willard Boyd had once said that his ultimate conception of himself was that of a civil rights lawyer, and it was indeed the case that he understood the Herrnstein affair as a challenge to the civil right of free speech. Academic freedom, however, is a much narrower concept which, although it may rest ultimately on the right to communicate, refers to certain special values distinctively its own. Free speech is a civic and political right; it is the right to persuade, and all popular government rests upon it. It is concerned with the transmission and application of values of which all are properly the judges. Academic freedom, on the other hand, is concerned with the means by which knowledge is discovered and transmitted. These are matters of fact as determined by those competent to judge. The right to speak was central to Herrnstein only to the extent that by discussing his research with those competent to assess it errors or unforeseen implications might be brought to light. The right to question the speaker -- of which much was made in subsequent campus discussions -- may be of central importance in the free-speech context, but in the scholarly context it extends only to those who are competent to judge the matter at issue, and to those who desire to learn. An open forum is largely irrelevant to academic freedom, which concerns the right to investigate and to transmit the results to those capable of judging them.

As a consequence of the confusion over the meaning of the Herrnstein affair the University community, led by its administration, became
involved in a protracted and irrelevant discussion of what was known as the "controversial speaker" issue. Given the preoccupation with freedom of speech the focus of this discussion was on the provisions to be made for protecting the rights both of the speaker on a controversial subject to present his views and of his audience to question him. The Regents rule on the matter prescribed that a faculty member must preside over such occasions, as though this would assure decorum and fairness to all parties. This was irrelevant to the challenge to academic freedom occasioned by the Herrnstein visit. But to the extent that President Boyd may have believed that he was coming to grips with the problem of protecting academic freedom he was sadly mistaken.

The Liberal Arts College

Sometime in the mid 1940s the College had adopted a general education program consisting of Skills and Core course requirements which all undergraduates in the College had to satisfy. The Skills -- rhetoric, mathematics, and physical education courses -- were required of all. The Core areas -- literature, historical and cultural, natural science, and social science -- each offered a number of courses among which students might choose in order to satisfy the area requirement. Two years of college-level foreign language were also required. An elected Educational Policy Committee presided over by the Dean was charged with the oversight and management of the program.

Over the years the program experienced substantial modifications. The math skills course was abandoned at the request of the math department on the ground that it was not a college-level course. Physical education, on the other hand, was stoutly defended by its department in the face of ongoing and sometimes vigorous complaint by students and faculty that it was irrelevant to educational objectives. Rhetoric was also defended by the several departments which furnished teaching assistants against the complaint of faculty members that their upperclass students were often incapable of writing. At the Core level, the original intention had been to offer broad courses specially designed to serve as introductions to the
areas, not as introductory departmental courses. Gradually, however, this intention was eroded as many faculty members came to recognize that the two objectives were incompatible, and to declare their lack of interest in non-departmental education. Additional courses were frequently offered in the various core areas as departments sought to increase their enrollments and provide added teaching opportunities for the support of their graduate students. Thus, the Asian language department proposed to offer Asian Civilizations as an option in the Historical-Cultural area. At that time Western Civilization was the only true historical option available, although courses in music, arts, philosophy, and religion were offered in the same area. In the Educational Policy Committee I opposed the Asian Civilization proposal on the ground that the choice of Western or Eastern Civilizations was inappropriate at the Core level. (I also had doubts about the competence of the Asian Languages staff.) The Educational Policy Committee rejected the proposal. Several years later, however, after the History department had added staff and courses in Chinese, Japanese, and Indian history the proposal was renewed within my own department. In the interest of local harmony I made no further objection, and the Asian Civilization option was added. I should say that I no longer had doubts about the quality of the instruction. In History we ourselves further corrupted the core concept of offering topical "problems" courses as alternatives to Western Civilization for no better reason than that the teaching assistants could teach them more effectively.

It was doubtless the intention of the designers of the general education program that the faculty committee would exercise effective oversight, but this proved not to be the case. I do not know the circumstances under which the Educational Policy and Executive Committees were established -- it was before my time -- but the provision that these committees be presided over by the Dean proved fatal to the prospect of effective faculty control. Throughout my tenure at Iowa (until the last year) the Dean was Dewey B. Stuit, a stubborn Dutchman and psychologist, who had firm notions of his proper role as a "leader," a word which he used frequently. Under his leadership the elected college committees were content to do his bidding. He fixed the agenda and ran the committees with a firm hand. I served several terms on these committees and had ample opportunity to observe how
a supine faculty was content to be led. The librarian, Ralph Ellsworth, who, as professor of library science was a member of the Liberal Arts faculty, complained to me that the Dean circumvented the Executive Committee by taking his business to meetings of the departmental executive officers, a tactic not contemplated by the collegiate constitution. However that may have been, it was certainly true that the Executive Committee very rarely had business of any consequence, and after a couple of terms on it I refused to accept further nominations for election to it. As a consequence of his commitment to leadership the Dean failed to recognize the need to encourage and foster a more active faculty involvement in college affairs. This was not something to be invoked by a simple assertion of authority, but was a long process of nourishment and cultivation. When, under Stuit's successor Howard Laster, a long overdue review and revision of the general education program was undertaken it quickly became apparent that the faculty was not prepared to carry through this task in a responsible manner.

The characteristic "leaness" of administration at Iowa was certainly true of the Liberal Arts college. With over fifty schools, programs, and departments under his jurisdiction, and hundreds of faculty members, the Dean had no administrative assistance other than the services of two Associate Deans for student business. When I once expressed doubt that one man could handle such extensive responsibilities Dean Stuit replied that it was perfectly possible provided that he could depend upon the departmental executive officers to manage their departments competently. The status of the D.E.O. was somewhat ambiguous. Some were Heads, serving indefinite terms at the Dean's pleasure; others were Chairmen, elected for specified terms, usually three years. The Dean considered the D.E.O. an administrative officer responsible to him. He told me that he expected the D.E.O. to endorse personally any recommendation he might bring from his department; in other words, the D.E.O.'s negative vote outweighed the wishes of a majority of his colleagues. Many faculty members, on the other hand, considered the D.E.O., especially if he be a Chairman, to be their representative, bound by the will of the majority. I can recall no
occasion when a D.E.O. resigned over this issue. Knowing the stubborn and
determined nature of the Dean I suspect that if it ever arose the Dean
simply made his decision and the D.E.O. accepted it.

The fact was that the Dean could not always depend on the D.E.O.
to act responsibly, and then trouble arose. On at least two occasions he
supported D.E.O.s, apparently as a matter of routine administrative rule­
of-thumb, when he should have inquired more closely into apparent problems.
Had he done so he would have uncovered gross maladministration within the
department, and by prompt action could have averted what became unnecess­
arily painful experiences for all involved.

Dean Stuit understood the importance of research and was prepared
to recognize and support it. But he also believed that the University was
unable to finance all of its teaching programs with a research-oriented
faculty, and he told me that he distinguished between research departments
and teaching departments, the latter carrying heavier teaching loads and
receiving lower salaries. So far as I know, this important distinction
(or discrimination) was never publicly acknowledged in his time.

The length of the Stuit regime — thirty years or more — furnished
good evidence of the desirability of collegiate reviews. Iowa might also
have profitably emulated the practice at Princeton, where the Deans all
submitted their resignations whenever there was a change on the presidency.

The History Department

The History department in 1950 consisted of twelve members, five
of them appointed in the previous year by the new chairman, William O.
Aydelotte. The condition of the department had deteriorated under his
predecessor, W.T. Root, and Aydelotte made much of his determination to
strengthen it. He told me that I was the department’s fourth choice for
the position I had accepted, naming three distinguished historians who had
declined his offers. The Provost, Harvey Davis, said of him that Aydelotte
always insisted on offering appointments to Jesus Christ, and that when he
decided to come Aydelotte wanted one of the twelve disciples. Neverthe­
less, it must be admitted that however ludicrous his ambitions may have
seemed to those who were content with mediocrity his meticulous methods of
search and review, his willingness to read endless pages published and un­
published, his nation-wide solicitations of advice and suggestions,
historians, but perhaps even more important, in rooting firmly in the department expectations of excellence which will happily long outlive his tenure.

My first years in the department were not particularly happy ones. Shortly after I arrived as a Visiting Professor in the Summer of 1950 Aydelotte came down with tuberculosis and was hospitalized for a year at Oakdale, then the State T.B. sanitorium. Because he did not trust the senior members of the department he persuaded the Dean to appoint a three-man executive committee consisting of Harrison J. Thornton, the senior member, J. Frank Gilliam, an Assistant Professor, and myself. This was an awkward arrangement, especially since Thornton took it for granted that as the senior member he would function as chairman. Perhaps by tacit concurrence the Dean sent departmental business to Thornton, with the result that matters were often disposed of without the knowledge of the other two committee members. I found it necessary to threaten to resign from the committee in order to obtain an appropriate procedure for handling departmental business.

Owing primarily to the machinations of Stuart Hoyt, the medievalist, the department became factionalized. An intensely ambitious man with paranoic tendencies, Hoyt had actively promoted Aydelotte for the chairmanship in the expectation that he would be the power behind the throne. When Aydelotte demonstrated his independence Hoyt became bitterly hostile and organized a faction to oppose him. He terrorized George Mosse, an amiable but weak character, and appealed to the frustrated ambitions of Thornton. These three became the nucleus of the faction, with occasional support from Ross Livingston, an embittered man who had abandoned a scholarly career and nursed a general grievance against the University. Aydelotte was supported by the junior members, notably by Nicholas Riasanovsky and Frank Gilliam. I would have much preferred to stay out of these squabbles, but that proved to be impossible. I always supported Aydelotte and thus earned the enmity of Hoyt.

Against the background of my previous experience at Yale and at Princeton I found it difficult at first to take the full measure of Thornton. He can only be described as a pious fraud. He was said to have begun life
in South Africa as a clergyman, and her certainly retained many of the unctuous mannerisms of the small-town preacher. He modelled his platform style on that of the radio commentator, Gabriel Heater. In spite of his professions of piety he was thoroughly unscrupulous. He had published some biographical sketches of former University notables on the strength of which he had been appointed university historian. For some years the Graduate College had provided him with secretarial assistance, a telephone (something other members of the department did not then enjoy), and research funds to assist him in preparing a history of the University. Following his sudden death, about 1953, when the President asked for the transfer of his materials so that work could be continued by someone else, it was found that he had done nothing.

An amusing episode will illustrate the contrast between the old methods and the new. The department was assembled in the chairman's office one day to discuss the specifications of a new position in American history, prior to initiating the national survey of candidates which had been established as routine procedure. Professor Thornton proposed the appointment of one of his doctoral students, a man known to several of us as wholly without the ability or qualifications we took for granted in the appointee. Mosse brushed aside the proposal as frivolous, but Thornton persisted. He praised the virtues of his candidate, which appeared to consist chiefly in his great need for the position and in his sincere desire to be of service to us. Finally, Thornton begged us to delay no further, because the candidate was waiting just outside the door, and it was cruel to keep him there in suspense!

With the departure in 1955 of Hoyt and Mosse following shortly upon the death of Thornton the faction was dispersed, and since that time the department has not been riven by factional disputes. There have at times been sharp differences of opinion which have not, however, resulted in factional alignments. Sometime in the 1970s David Schoenbaum was quoted as remarking that the department was run by a "Jewish mafia." But this was more an evidence of Schoenbaum's penchant for hyperbole than an accurate indication of the real state of affairs. Aydelotte served as chairman through several successive terms, following which a series of individuals
served for single terms each. All served the department in an exemplary manner. I regularly urged the retiring chairman to consent to another term, but my support was invariably declined with thanks.

Iowa City
February 1982