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Minutes, July 27, 1953

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MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
held in Hartford, July 27, 1953

Present:	Mr. Belden	Mrs. Mackie
	Mr. Bishop	Mrs. Posea
	Mr. Brock	Mr. Ryan
	Mr. Christensen	Mr. Shippee
	Mr. Howe	Mr. Suisman
	Mr. Jorgensen	Mr. Watson

The Chairman of the Board reviewed, for the benefit of the two Trustees who were not at the last meeting, the discussions of the meeting held at Storrs on July 21.

Assistant Professor Robert Glass came before the Board to discuss informally certain information which had come to the attention of the Trustees.

Since no further information was available to the Board of Trustees since the meeting on July 21, 1953, the following motion was re-affirmed:

"The Board of Trustees has investigated carefully the case of Assistant Professor Paul Rudolph Zinsel. The Board is satisfied that he is competent as a teacher and scholar. There is no evidence that Dr. Zinsel is a Communist or has been at any time since coming to the University of Connecticut. As a result of its findings, the Board hereby lifts the suspension quite properly placed upon Dr. Zinsel by President Jorgensen after Zinsel's appearance before the Velde Committee and pending investigation by the Board.

"The Board, however, severely censures Professor Zinsel for his refusal to cooperate fully with duly constituted Federal authorities.

"The Board, furthermore, expects Professor Zinsel to justify by his future performance the confidence (that the Board has) placed in him by his re-instatement."

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Trustees Christensen and Brock were not present at the meeting on July 21, 1953 and were, therefore, invited to record their votes. Messrs. Brock and Christensen were recorded in the negative.

The discussions with Messrs. Glass and Lewis were carefully reviewed and THE BOARD VOTED to instruct the President to write the usual letter for terminating the appointments of these two staff members, this action to be in accordance with University policy on tenure and employment.

It was the sense of the meeting that only the Chairman of the Board and the President of the University should release information to the press on the actions taken and that there would be no releases until after the President had an opportunity to discuss the actions with the staff members concerned.

The President advised the Board that he had addressed the following communication to the Attorney General:

"July 24, 1953

"Attorney General George C. Conway
State Capitol
Hartford, Connecticut

"Dear Mr. Conway:

"On March 23, 1953, the Board of Trustees adopted the following resolution:

'After considerable discussion, THE BOARD VOTED that (a) it will not knowingly employ a Communist, and (b) it will not knowingly retain a Communist in its employ.

'THE BOARD ALSO VOTED that any employee who is accused of or charged with being a Communist will be given the right to be heard in his own defense and if the Board becomes convinced either on its own investigation or on the basis of findings by any competent agency of the Federal or State government that the employee is a Communist, he will be dismissed immediately.'

"The legality of this new statement of policy adopted by the Board of Trustees has been questioned. Reference has been made to Section 374 of the General Statutes, 1949 Revision, Volume 1, page 168, which provides that 'the position of a State employee may not be placed in jeopardy because of political affiliation.'

"The Board action covers all employees of the University, both professional and classified. In your judgment, is the Board's action inconsistent or contrary to existing State statutes or special acts? In this connection, I should now like to call your

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attention to Section 3277 of the General Statutes, 1949 Revision, Volume II, page 1241, which says, in part, '...the professional staff of the University shall be under the sole jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees of the University within available funds...' Is it possible that Section 374 would apply only to the classified service and would not apply to the professional staff because of Section 3277?

"The Board of Trustees would appreciate an early reply to these questions.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) A. N. Jorgensen

President"

ANJ/mc

It was the sense of the meeting that the Trustees' action of March 23, 1953 probably would need to be revised but that no consideration would be given to this matter until after the Attorney General had replied to the above communication.

The President suggested at the close of the meeting that in all probability the Board should prepare and adopt a policy statement covering the matter of the rights and the obligations of University staff members to testify with complete frankness and candor before duly constituted authorities.

Respectfully submitted,

-s- J. Ray Ryan

J. Ray Ryan,
Secretary