

December 27, 1954

R. E. Kennedy - C. O. McCorkle

Julian A. McPhee

Co-Education

Attached are copies of letters I just received from Senator A. A. Erhart, a note to me, plus a copy of a letter from Al to Dr. Roy Simpson regarding co-education. I am sending this to you for your information. Attached also is a copy of my letter to Al.

Attachments (3)

P.S. Simpson spoke of this letter to Wilson and Hayes last Thursday in Sacramento. Ask them for a report.

1 of 3 jam

Dr. Roy Simpson
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
State Department of Education
721 Capitol Avenue
Sacramento 14, California

Dear Dr. Simpson:

I am writing to you for advice as to how we can best handle a situation involving a request for admission of women students to Cal Poly. The problem was presented to me officially as a legislative representative of this county by a group of San Luis Obispo county and city school teachers.

A petition signed by 100 women school teachers of this area was presented to me on Tuesday, November 16th, at a meeting which I was asked to attend. They claim they have been denied the right to admission at Cal Poly only because they are women and that they believe this action to be not only illegal, but "unfair, unjust, and un-American."

On the basis of the facts presented to me at that meeting, I could not help but agree with them that they were being discriminated against and that such discrimination could not be justified in a state, tax-supported institution.

I did not want to take any action that would embarrass the college officials, so I contacted President McPhee on November 18th. I followed up this conversation with a letter to President McPhee, a copy of which is attached. President McPhee has answered my request for information in his letter of November 27th, a copy of which is also attached.

It is my understanding that President McPhee can do nothing about the admission of women as regular students until he is given that authority by the State Department of Education. In view of existing legislation, I cannot provide any sound argument that would refute the claim of the women who have contacted me that they have a legal right to admission. It is my opinion that we should provide admission for women to Cal Poly or we should amend the existing law which specifically establishes the college's obligation to provide education for "both sexes". Personally, I would oppose any legislation that would attempt to limit the future enrollment at Cal Poly to men only.

It would appear to me that we should seek an Attorney General's ruling on whether or not Cal Poly is obligated at the present time to accept women students. Before taking any further action myself, I would appreciate having you advise me as to what procedure you would prefer that I follow in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A. A. Erhart

cc-President Julian A. McPhee
California State Polytechnic College
San Luis Obispo, California

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