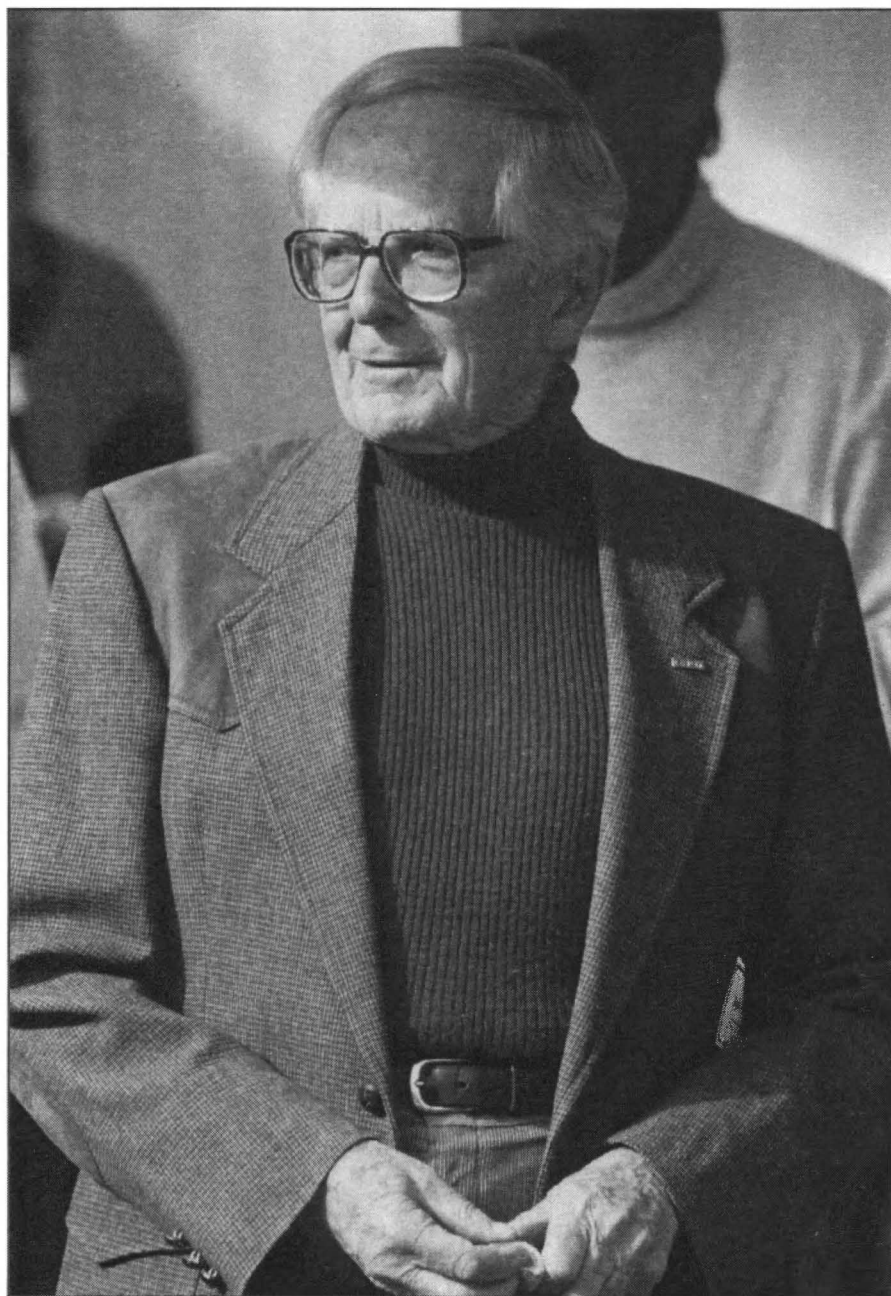




ROBERT E. KENNEDY

# LEARN BY DOING

*Memoirs of a University President:  
A Personal Journey with the Seventh  
President of California Polytechnic  
State University.*



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MEMOIRS OF A UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

*A Personal Journey  
with the Seventh President  
of California Polytechnic  
State University*

*by Robert E. Kennedy*  
PRESIDENT EMERITUS



SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA

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ADDRESS ORDERS & INQUIRIES TO  
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To the late Julian A. McPhee,  
*Cal Poly's president from 1933 to 1966, who taught me the  
practical importance of an educational philosophy called  
"learn by doing," and who was for 26 years my mentor  
and most severe critic*

and to my wife, Mary,  
*who tried to teach me over a period of 60-plus years to be more  
patient and more accepting of other people's viewpoints, and  
who was and is my most influential adviser*

and to my four children,  
Bob, Maridel, Steve, and Susan,  
and ten grandchildren  
and six great-grandchildren,  
*whose visits to the campus in their early years gave them the  
impression that I was a farmer who raised cattle, sheep,  
hogs, and horses, and had a dairy*



## Acknowledgments

I OWE THANKS to many people who put up with me while I sought verification of names, dates, and how things happened; to so many friends, in fact, that I cannot hope to list them all. But there are some who gave the kind of help one cannot buy or repay.

Three of my co-workers who knew a great deal about much of what I have written were asked to read the first draft and offer alternative views. They had no major differences of opinion and their suggestions for changes were accepted as improvements. For that help I am grateful to Grace Arvidson, Starr Jenkins, and the late Harold O. Wilson.

Arvidson, retired administrative assistant in the Cal Poly president's office, had the unique experience of serving in that position under three college presidents: McPhee, Kennedy, and Baker. Dr. Jenkins, retired professor of English who taught at Cal Poly from 1961 to 1988, did an excellent job of improving the book. Wilson, emeritus administrative vice president, held a number of administrative positions at Cal Poly from 1946 to 1974.

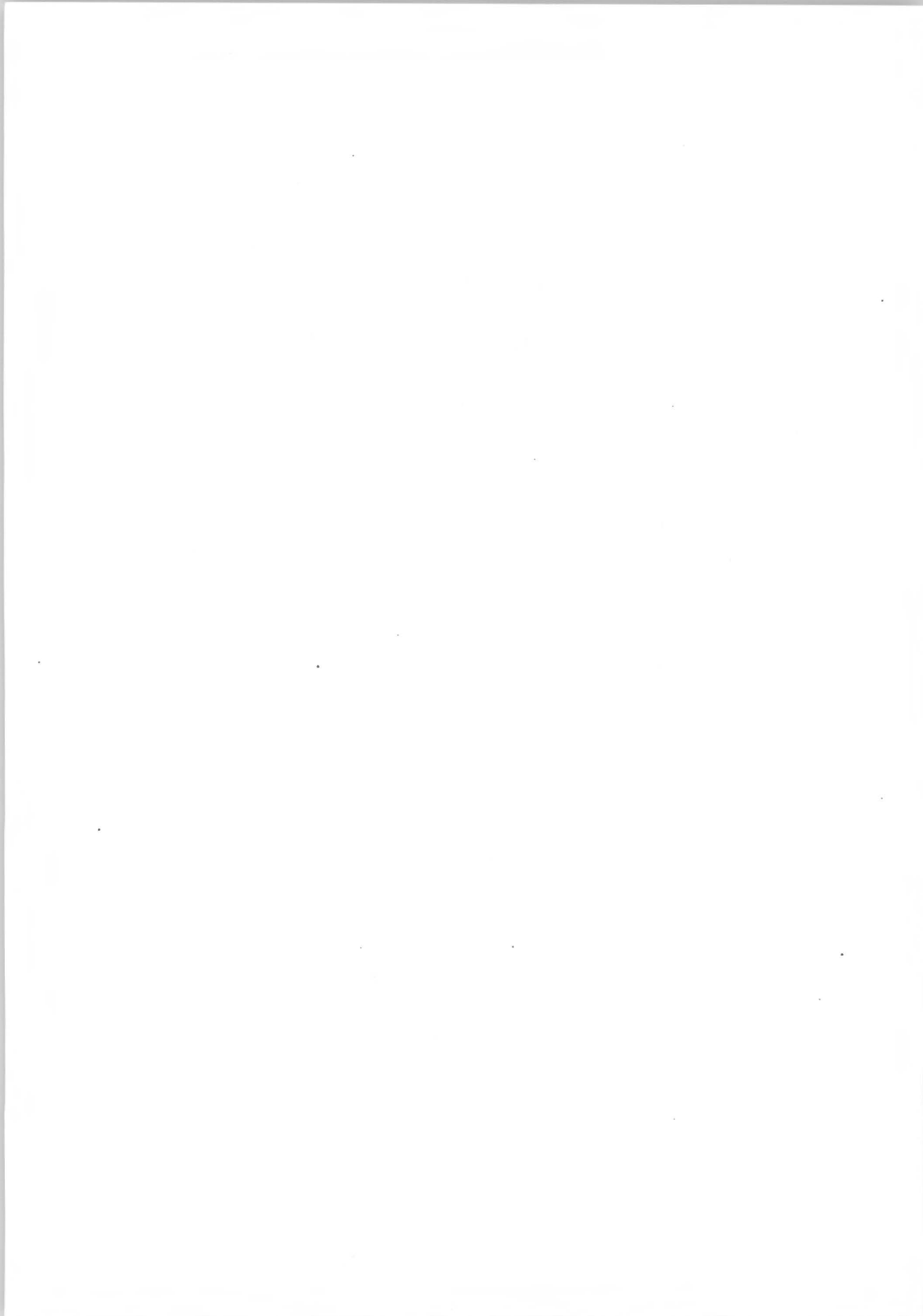
Support for the publication of the book as part of Cal Poly's Centennial celebration came primarily from William Boldt, vice president for advancement; Irene Hoffman, former library advancement director; Hiram Davis, dean of library services; Nancy Loe, head of special collections and university archives; Michael Line, library assistant, special collections; and Catherine Trujillo, staff assistant.

Special thanks to Emmons Blake, a former student of mine, and his son Richard, whose support for publishing this book was a positive influence from beginning to end.

Last but not least I am very grateful for the work of Scott Freutel, editor, who prepared the book for publication; Claudia Davis, who proof-read it; and Leslie Cotham and Bruce Dickinson, who on behalf of Poor Richard's Press steered us through the final stages.

REK

*San Luis Obispo*  
*August 22, 2001*



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## Prologue

All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts.

—Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, act 2, scene 7

I HAVE BEEN AN EYEWITNESS TO and an active participant in the last half of the 100-year existence of California Polytechnic State University. I can say with authority that its history has not always been smooth, safe, and peaceful.

I am not a historian. I am by inclination, training, and experience a journalist who somehow lost his way and became a college teacher and administrator. At one time I could have given you, if not an historical evaluation, at least an accurate newspaper reporter's account of what I had seen and what others had told me about the critical years in Cal Poly's development. That kind of unbiased and disinterested view is, unfortunately, no longer possible for me to take and to write.

What I have written in these pages is a personal recollection of a very involved and prejudiced witness, most of whose working years were devoted to the task of building and improving Cal Poly's reputation and seeing to it that the world knew something about it. It is a story about the growing up of both an institution and a man. Writing it involved interweaving an autobiography with the historical facts about Cal Poly, as remembered by the writer or told to him by other actors who also occupied the stage for a time.

I came to Cal Poly at the age of 24 to take on newly assigned responsibilities as Cal Poly's publicity man, journalism teacher, advisor to student publications, and editor of the college's official publications. We had arrived in San Luis Obispo looking for a house just a few days before Labor Day, 1940. The "we" was myself, my wife, Mary, 23, and our firstborn son, Robert Jr., aged four months. Before we could arrange the furniture, the president of Cal Poly, Julian A. McPhee, had me on a Southern Pacific train going to Sacramento via Oakland to learn how to lobby the state Legislature.

It was fortunate that I was interested in and enthusiastic about the political process. It brought out the best in President McPhee, a master of political know-how who was also an excellent teacher. On that day in 1940, and for the next 26 years until his retirement in June, 1966, President McPhee was my mentor, my teacher, and I was his "graduate student." Although he

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was only 20 years my senior, he treated me for most of that 26-year period like a tough father often treats a son who studied agriculture at college but has never farmed. McPhee was continually testing me in every conceivable situation in which he thought my academic training needed to be beefed up with practical, learn-by-doing experience. He gave me increasingly difficult assignments, and by 1955, he let it be known to me, if not to others, that he was grooming me to be his successor.

Like father and son, we often disagreed, and frequently were barely civil to one another. I threatened to resign almost every spring when hay fever turned to asthma. My wife still has a collection of my resignation letters she wouldn't let me send.

At the very end, in his last year as president, he let it be known that I was not his favorite candidate to carry on his brand of education and administration. He told others that I was not a "strong, authoritarian leader." On the last day of April, 1967, when the Trustees announced they had appointed me as president on the recommendation of a Cal Poly faculty-staff selection committee, there was more than one witness to the procedure who concluded that the always politically-wise strategist, McPhee, had anticipated that both the faculty and the Trustees were tired of his "strong authoritarian leadership" and would never have agreed to a new president who was a McPhee protégé — unless there had been an open, public rift in that relationship. They believed he had created such a rift in order to achieve his end. Is the story true? You can't prove it by me. As far as I was concerned, the breach between the two of us during his last year was very real. I continued to do my job as vice president very carefully, very efficiently, and with a growing sense that my future in education would be at some other campus.

Mr. McPhee was 70 years of age on February 7, 1966, and was required by Trustee policy to retire at the close of that academic year. He did not know until shortly before his scheduled retirement that he had cancer; it took his life on November 10, 1967.

Julian A. McPhee was the right man for the right job at the right time. I doubt that any other educator in the state had the political savvy and support that could have saved Cal Poly from the crises that repeatedly threatened the school in his 33 years as president, 1933–1966.

For nearly 40 years Cal Poly occupied more of my waking hours than any other factor of my environment. I can't say I loved every moment of the experience because there were some incidents that were like bad nightmares. But on the whole it was a great experience. It became an integral

part of a very enjoyable life — the kind I wish all young people could look forward to with great hope and enthusiasm.

For those many years that I was associated with Cal Poly, in a half-dozen different roles, I came each night with a story to share with my wife about the happenings of the day. She used to tell me, "Bob, don't just stand there and tell me that story, go write it down." And I did write many of them down. Even those I didn't write down are as clear in my memory as if they happened yesterday. In fact, I remember them better than what I had for dinner last night. All these stories may not be unusually significant, and the total may be insignificant in the opinion of those who think all history must be full of dates and facts rather than anecdotes. My hope is that these stories will be both informative and interesting. Maybe even amusing in parts. In all of them there were lessons that I learned. And I certainly was living out the Cal Poly philosophy — learning by doing.

When I retired in 1979 I was interviewed by a reporter for Cal Poly's student newspaper. He asked me a question I could not honestly answer, though I really tried. He asked, "How did you become a university president?" I knew by the tone of his voice and his inflections that he was not questioning my qualifications, but really wanted to know how an individual acquired a job which he believed had a powerful influence on the lives of thousands of his fellow students. He probably had read articles entitled "How to Be a Newspaper Reporter" or "How to Be a Successful Photographer." Dodging the how-to-get-there aspect of the question, I listed a number of subjects a successful university president should know more than a little about: law, finance, public relations, legislative process, decision-making, employee relations, organizational theory, management principles, consultative processes, fund-raising, and finally, but not least, knowledge of the educational process based preferably on personal experience as a learner and teacher.

I never read his article. It may never have been published. I felt guilty that I had not really answered the reporter's question. As I now contemplate this failure on my part, I realize there is no simple answer because life itself is nothing more than a series of "how to" experiences. William James, considered the father of American psychology of education, wrote in his 1890 book, *Principles of Psychology*, "...the purpose of education is to organize the child's powers of conduct so as to fit him to his social and physical environment." John Dewey, another 19th century American philosopher-educator, joined James in promoting and defending the concept that man

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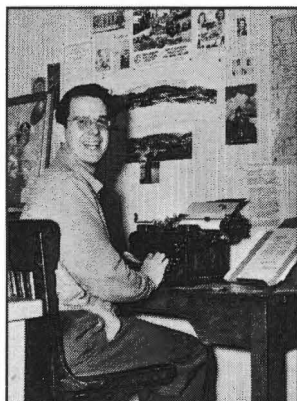
is a product of both heredity and environment; both "being" and "doing" are important parts of the educational experience. James and Dewey were convinced that motivation was essential to learning and pragmatic experiences from the real world were better motivators to learning than anything a teacher could say or a student could read in a book.

It was this philosophy of education being written about in the late 1800s that influenced the San Luis Obispo editor, Myron Angel, the real founder of Cal Poly, and the school's first president, Leroy Anderson, to incorporate into the 1901 polytechnic school the concept of "learning by doing." The concept was strengthened by the strong belief in vocational education advocated by the sixth president, Julian A. McPhee. Working closely with President McPhee for 26 years before becoming his successor as president, I was greatly influenced by my observations that motivating students to learn using practical real life experiences was the key to Cal Poly's success and should be continued and strengthened.

Important as formal schooling is, young people should know there is no easy or direct route to success in any endeavor. Not only is luck an important ingredient, goals themselves are not often clear. The important lesson is to learn something from every experience. If the road is winding, seemingly endless, and tiresome, we must realize each bend has a purpose. Wisdom can come not only from winning but also from losing. "Learn by doing" is not an idle slogan. The person who learns to adapt to his or her environment is a survivor. Satisfaction in one's work seems to come in direct proportion to what one learns from the experience. Despite the contrary expressions of King Solomon, acclaimed as the wisest man of Old Testament Biblical times, no experience is meaningless if we can find the moral of the story.

In the winter, 1994-95 number of *Cal Poly Today*, a writer described my career at Cal Poly in the words reprinted on the opposite page. The story was accompanied by two photos, also reproduced here, one taken of me at my Cal Poly typewriter in 1940, when I was 25, and one with my wife at the time of an informal reception on my retirement in 1979, when I was 63. As the writer noted, in both shots I wore a big smile.

*Remember, the moral of a story is simply a lesson taught by experience.*

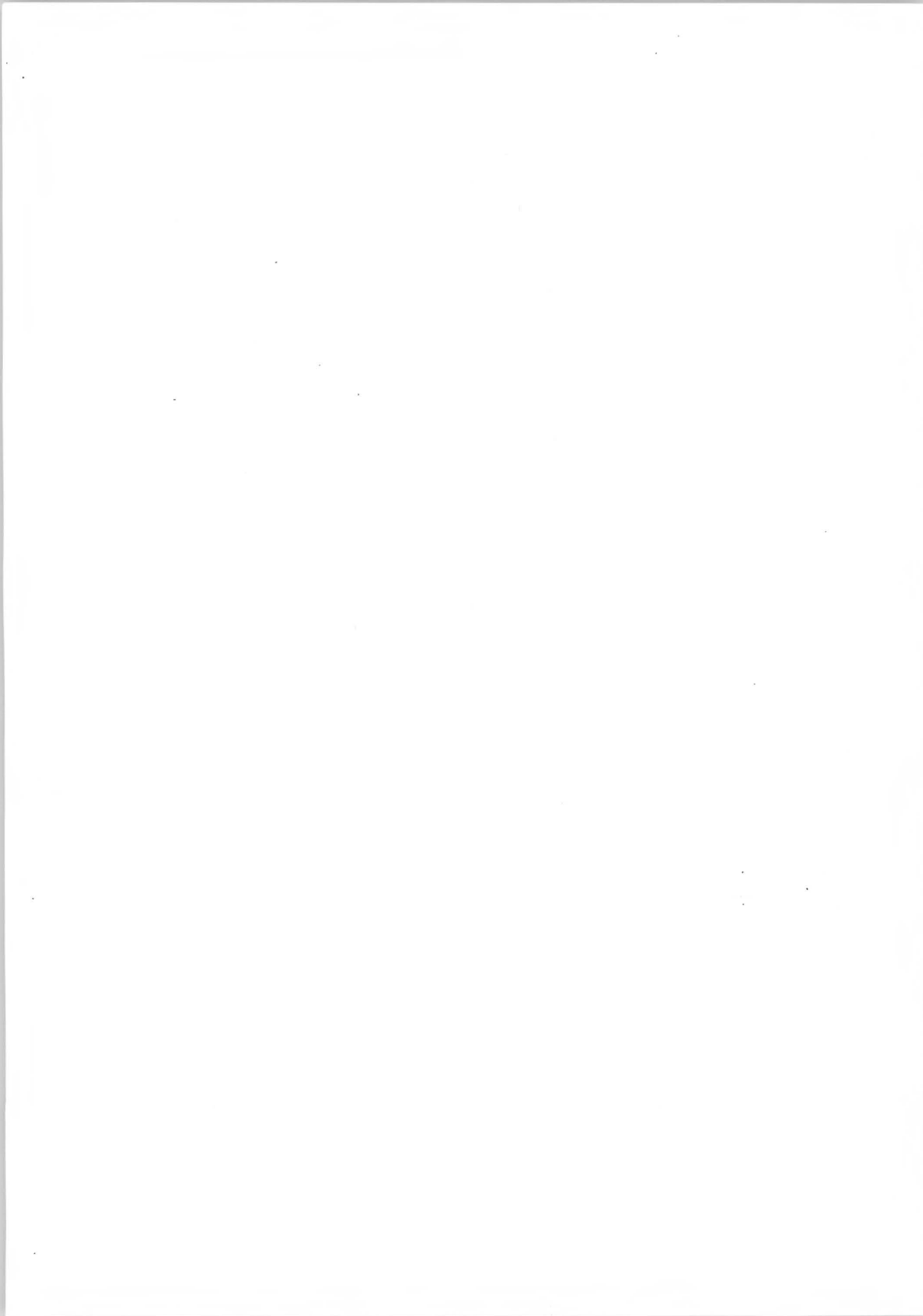


*Left, REK, publicity man, journalism teacher. Cal Poly, 1940. Above, REK and Mary at the retirement party arranged by staff, 1979.*

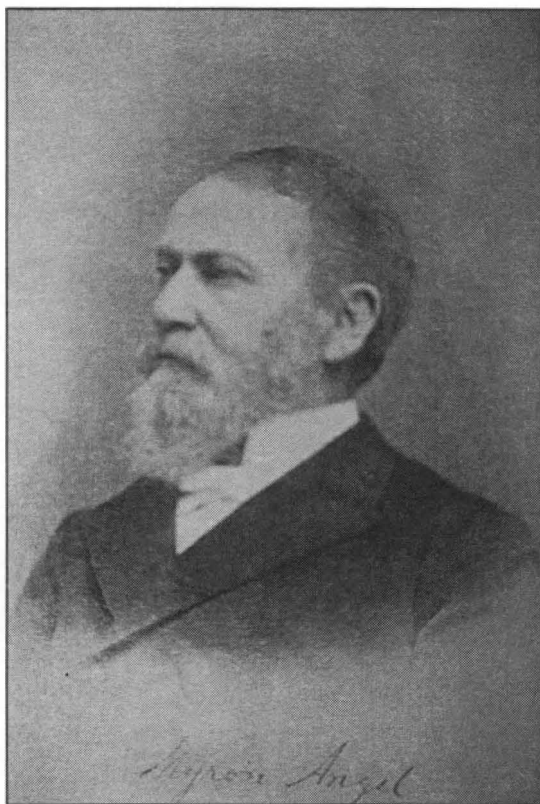
### STILL SMILING AFTER ALL THESE YEARS

After nearly 40 years and more than seven different job titles, Cal Poly President Emeritus Robert E. Kennedy's attitude is written all over his face. Starting as a journalism teacher...to his retirement as president in 1979...Kennedy has racked up enough accomplishments and memories to keep him smiling. "It is best to quit when you're ahead, whether it is a lifetime work or a poker game," advised Kennedy when retiring at the peak of his performance. The university's seventh president, Kennedy came to campus two years after graduating from San Diego State. He served as senior class president there, so it was a sure bet he was destined to succeed. After playing his hand as a teacher, Kennedy served as head of the Journalism Department. Over the years, while serving in a variety of positions, the cards seemed stacked in his favor as he moved from public relations director to librarian, from assistant to the president to dean of Arts and Sciences, and from vice president to president in May 1967, when the CSU Board of Trustees named Kennedy president. He was anything but poker-faced when he was formally inaugurated in a ceremony that included a talk by then Gov. Ronald Reagan. While college campuses across the nation were exploding with student unrest, Kennedy's ace-in-the-hole was to include students in decision-making and answer all questions. His leadership style paid off. During his tenure, he saw enrollment grow from 739 students to nearly 16,000: Cal Poly had indeed become a full house. The year before he retired, the odds were still with him — the new \$11.5 million library, at the time the largest construction project in Cal Poly history, would be named in his honor. No wonder Kennedy keeps smiling. He knows what it means to hold a winning hand.

—*Cal Poly Today*, winter 1994-95



## LEARN BY DOING



*Myron Angel, journalist, editor, historian,  
"Father of Cal Poly," 1897.*



## HOW TO START AND SAVE A SCHOOL

I WOULD LIKE to have you believe that what I am about to tell you about Cal Poly's birth and formative years came not so much from research as from listening to and reading accounts written by men and women who were on the scene when many of the critical actions that impacted Cal Poly actually took place. These were men and women with whom I had personal contact – of sorts.

The man who is frequently called "The Father of Cal Poly," Myron Angel, a 19th century San Luis Obispo journalist, died in 1911, four years before I was born. It is going to be rather difficult to convince any reader that I had a personal contact with this man who had such an important role in the founding of Cal Poly. But wait, it only takes a little imagination.

A somewhat tattered but precious little paperbound book that I own carries these handwritten words on the flyleaf: "From your old friend, Myron Angel, San Luis Obispo, California, U.S.A., April 23, 1908."

The book is mine, but the note was addressed to Ernest Vollmer Sr., then U.S. Vice Consul in Tsingtau, China. The book was given to me years ago by the late Ernest Vollmer Jr., whose children played with our children while growing up in the same San Luis Obispo neighborhood. When I read this little book, which I have done many, many times, I feel that Myron Angel is telling me personally about the experiences that led to the creation and early development of the California Polytechnic School.

One does not have to be a history buff to be familiar with the story about how Myron Angel had an unemployment experience in San Francisco during the Gold Rush of 1849. The University's official catalog, with which most students and all faculty are familiar, contains the story of how Myron, broke and hungry, was offered a job at \$8 a day nailing shingles on a house. He turned the job down, because as he said, "I never drove a nail in my life."

The importance of the story is not that a future journalist did not know anything about carpentry; few journalists do. The story is important because Myron Angel told it to support a proposal he was making to an investigating joint house-senate state legislative committee on February 20, 1897, at a banquet held at the Ramona Hotel, hosted by San Luis Obispo's City Council.

#### LEARN BY DOING

I always felt that I heard the story from Myron Angel himself, because my first exposure to it was when I read it in his own words in that autographed copy of his 1908 book, *History of the California Polytechnic School*. It was like one journalist talking to another, an experience I had many times in my life, starting as a cub reporter covering the police beat for the San Diego *Sun*.

The proposal that Angel was supposed to make to the state legislative committee in 1897 was to establish in San Luis Obispo the state's fourth normal school for the training of teachers. But Angel had learned from newspaper colleagues in San Diego that the interim legislative committee gathering information on possible normal school expansion already had visited San Diego. The "insider" information relayed to Angel was that the legislators had decided that any new normal school to be financed by the state should go to San Diego.

In Angel's own words he described in his little book the opportunistic switch from a proposal to establish a "state normal school" to a "polytechnic school." And by his own account he believed that the punch line to his San Francisco tale swayed the legislative committee to support rather than oppose San Luis Obispo as the site of a state school.

Angel's account, written soon after that 1897 encounter with the state legislative committee, concluded his story of how he turned down the \$8 per day employment offer he so desperately needed with these words:

I could have told the man a great deal I had learned in the books, but nothing about building a house. I met other young fellows who could do blacksmithing, house painting and other artisan work, and were paid high wages but there was no such opening for me. Now, gentlemen of the Legislature, I will say I have planned for a school here which will teach the hand as well as the head so that no young man or young woman will be set off in the world to earn their living as poorly equipped for the task as was I when I landed in San Francisco in 1849.

The report of the joint legislative committee was favorable and the bill to establish the Polytechnic School introduced by Republican Sen. S.C. Smith, representing San Luis Obispo County in 1897, was passed by both houses. But it was vetoed by Democrat Gov. James H. Budd, who served one term, 1895 to 1898. It was the first of many political actions that adversely affected Cal Poly during its gestation and formative years.

Myron Angel had begun his quest for a new school in San Luis Obispo following a visit to his birthplace, Oneonta, New York, in 1893. He discov-

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ered, after a long absence, that the town had made great progress not only in population but in "enlightenment and refinement," which he attributed mainly to the establishment there of a state Normal School. He resolved, he wrote, that on his return home he would endeavor to have such a school established in San Luis Obispo County.

The city of San Luis Obispo was then, wrote Angel, "one of the most neglected places in California, and was struggling for recognition and progress." The Southern Pacific railroad had not yet reached the city, and there was no prospect "of wealth or influence" in the city, so he turned to the state. Angel, as chairman of a citizens committee, presented a petition in January, 1897, to state Sen. S.C. Smith presenting facts as to why San Luis Obispo was a perfect site for a new state Normal School. At that time there were only three cities in California with schools for training teachers: San Jose, Los Angeles, and Chico. Senator Smith introduced a bill for a state Normal School at San Luis Obispo in January, 1897. Before it went to vote, he amended it at Angel's request to a "Polytechnic School."

We know how clever Angel was in making a last-minute change in his remarks, but despite his persuasiveness an economy-minded governor spoiled that first effort. That first defeat in 1897 was followed by a defeat in 1899, not because of lack of merit but because of the momentary political unpopularity of one of the legislators who represented San Luis Obispo County. Senator Smith had reintroduced the bill on the Senate side, where it passed by a vote of 29 to 1; but on the Assembly side, where it was sponsored by Assemblyman J.K. Burnett, it lost 30 to 23. Burnett had supported a measure that would have discontinued the popular coyote-scalp bounties. His Assembly colleagues were punishing him for pushing a bill not wanted by the Assembly floor leadership.

Warren M. John replaced Burnett as assemblyman from San Luis Obispo in 1900. Joining with Senator Smith, Assemblyman John rewrote the bill for the 1901 legislative session, including a clause "that funds for the school were not to be made available until after Jan. 1, 1902," an idea inserted to discourage veto by the governor. In February, 1901, this bill passed both houses of the Legislature, and it was signed into law by Gov. Henry T. Gage on March 8, 1901. Among those who Myron Angel got to support the bill was Stanford University President David Starr Jordan — just the first of many Stanford influences on Cal Poly.

The 1901 Enabling Act was so liberally worded in terms of the institution's officially stated purposes that it continued to protect the Polytechnic "as an



*Above, a learn-by-doing laboratory where home economics students learned to make more than pumpkin pies. Below, learning by doing on the farm was more than educational, it was hard work.*



#### HOW TO START AND SAVE A SCHOOL

exception to the rule" even after it had become part of a system made up primarily of teachers' colleges wanting to grow into liberal arts colleges. The mandate was clear:

To furnish to young people of both sexes mental and manual training in the arts and sciences, including agricultural mechanics, engineering, business methods, domestic economy, and such other branches as will fit the students for the non-professional walks of life.

The final words were that the "act was to be liberally construed" so that the institution could always "contribute to the welfare of the State." Only once was it necessary to amend this act, and that happened at a critical time some 60 years down the road — a story that will come during the period 1960-61.

In Myron Angel's book he describes a victory banquet held after the passage of the enabling act. Present was Professor E.J. Wickson, a University of California professor who had been named as one of the five trustees for the new school appointed by Governor Gage. Angel quoted Wickson as follows:

"The President of the University urged us to make a school here that would teach a lady pupil to make a good pumpkin pie."

This lack of vision and sample of male chauvinism of those times was not shared by Angel.

Before the first class of four girls and four boys graduated from the Polytechnic in June, 1906, Myron Angel published an editorial dated June 12, 1906, in which he concluded with this visionary statement about the future of the California Polytechnic:

"...[G]reatness lies before it as to become the monumental school of its class in America...such is the most useful and popular university of the future."

With all modesty I have to say that this is almost exactly what has happened. It may not have happened as quickly as an optimist like Myron Angel envisioned it, but it certainly fooled a lot of people, many of whom as late as the 1940s rated Cal Poly at the bottom of almost any listing of California public or private colleges.

Keep in mind that the school Angel knew was "open to any boy or girl of good character, who is at least 15 years of age and has completed the eighth grade of the grammar schools." To be admitted one did not even have to have a diploma showing graduation from the eighth grade but could be admitted if one got a satisfactory grade on an examination in English, arithmetic, his-

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tory, and geography. It was, strictly speaking, an experimental, state-supported vocational high school.

Yet its founding father, Myron Angel, predicted before its first class graduated that it would someday be "the most useful and popular university of its class in America"—and that vision has come true! Just check the *U.S. News & World Report* annual issues rating U.S. colleges for the last few years.

The first step on the road that led to the fulfillment of Angel's vision was the selection of its first president, Dr. Leroy Anderson. When Angel was first describing what he hoped to achieve with a Polytechnic school, he wrote an editorial in 1898 which stated:

"What Freiberg and Heidelberg are to Germany or Cornell to New York, the Polytechnic School of San Luis Obispo is designed to be to the Pacific Coast."

It was not unexpected, then, that the committee, of which Angel was a member, found a Cornell University graduate to fill the role. Dr. Anderson, then teaching at the University of California, had been asked to assist his colleague, Trustee Wickson, by writing specifications for the position of director of the school, including ideas of what the school should be like. Dr. Anderson's letter of May, 1902, made such a hit that the Trustees unanimously voted to offer this Cornell agriculture Ph.D. the job, which he accepted on June 1, 1902.

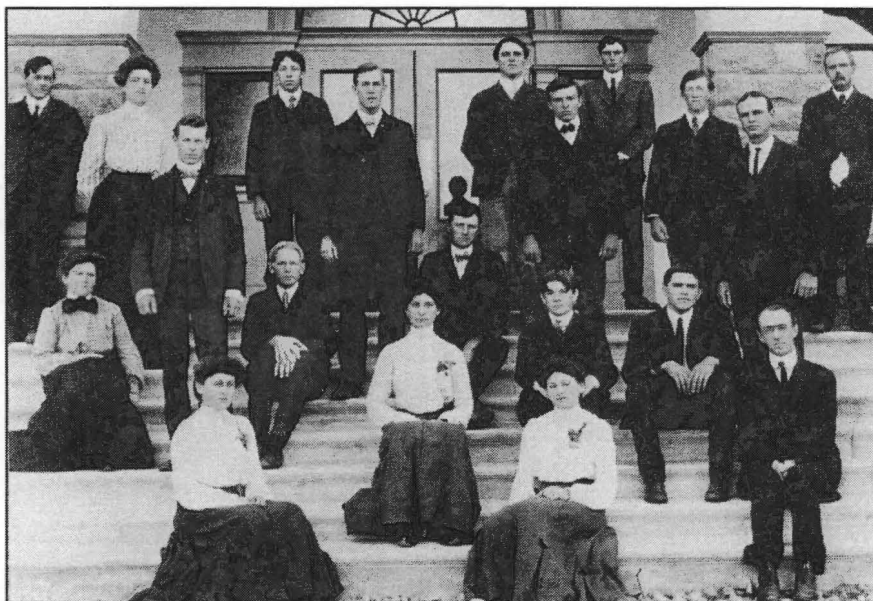
The "pumpkin pie" remark by Trustee Wickson was quoted earlier as an example of the male chauvinism of that 1900 period. More than a quarter-century later the situation was even worse. In 1929 the state Legislature passed an act denying women students the right to admission at Cal Poly. Today it seems impossible that such a thing could happen. But happen it did, and girls were not readmitted to Cal Poly until 1956. The original reason and the continued justification for the next 27 years was a simple statement declaring the all-male status was justified because of "lack of funds" and "lack of interest by girls in the offerings of a polytechnic school."

Enrollment at the Polytechnic increased from 20 students in its first year of operation, 1903-04, to 101 students by March, 1907, of whom 70 were male and 31 were female. Dr. Anderson resigned in December, 1907, just five years after he had set in place at Cal Poly the practical, learn-by-doing educational methods patterned after those of his alma mater. He left to assume the position of superintendent of the University of California's farm school to be established at what was then called Davisville (now Davis). His vice director, Mr. Leroy Smith, also a Cornell graduate, was appointed to succeed Anderson in January, 1908; enrollment rose to 141 in 1908-09.



*Leroy Anderson, first director of Cal Poly,  
served from 1902–1907.*

Dr. Anderson's role in the early formation of the direction that Cal Poly was to take was made more significant to me because I had the opportunity to meet and talk to him about Cal Poly on two occasions in the 1940s. The first time was on February 25, 1941, when Dr. and Mrs. Anderson came to the campus at the invitation of President Julian A. McPhee to take part in what we called the "unlaying" of a cornerstone. Just before the scheduled demolition of the old Administration/ Classroom building, built in 1903,



*The entire faculty and staff on the first day of school, Oct. 1, 1903.  
Dr. Anderson is in the front row at right.*

to make way for a new structure that met California's school earthquake resistant law of 1933, we planned to remove the contents of the original building's cornerstone, which contained information placed there in 1903 by Dr. Anderson. Workmen who were standing by removed the stone blocks around the cornerstone, revealing the metal box that held the materials placed there on January 31, 1913. The box was opened, but unfortunately much of the contents were damp and mildewed — impossible to read until dried out. As the then public relations director handling the details of the "unlaying" ceremony, I escorted the Andersons around the campus and had the opportunity to ask questions about the educational philosophy Dr. Anderson had espoused in those first five years.

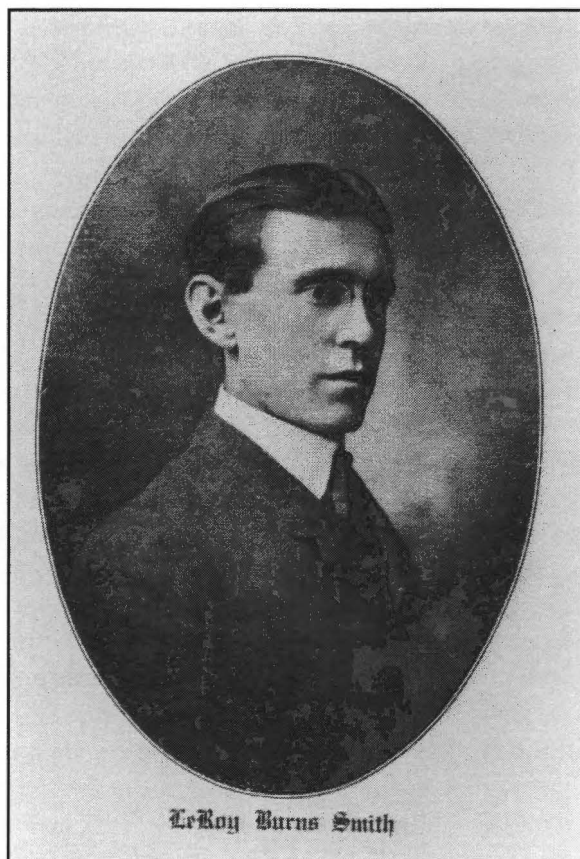
I thought I was going to get to see Dr. and Mrs. Anderson again when we invited them to participate in the cornerstone laying of the new Administration/Classroom building completed in the summer of 1942. We had delayed the cornerstone laying ceremony because of World War II restrictions on travel, but by April 18, 1943, Poly Royal it was agreed such an activity would be acceptable, since by that time the building was being used primarily by the Naval Flight Preparatory School. The Navy officials favored the proposed ceremony, which included putting material in the new sealed metal box that described, among other things, the role of the Navy on cam-

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pus during World War II. Dr. Anderson wrote that his health would not permit the trip, but he sent a letter, a copy of which was enclosed with other material in the new sealed box.

The last time I saw and talked to Dr. Anderson was in 1949, when I visited him at his home in Saratoga, California. Had he remained in charge of the Polytechnic for another five or six years he might have resisted a trend that weakened Cal Poly's statewide support between 1908 and 1914.

It was during that period that a strong local influence developed on the Polytechnic Board of Trustees, pressuring the Smith administration to cater to local student needs and neglect statewide responsibilities. As a result the support from the state Legislature was weakened and the building program came to a halt in 1910 due to lack of funds.



*Leroy Smith, second chief executive officer, who served from 1908-1914.*

## LEARN BY DOING

The enrollment of regular students slumped heavily after 1912. With the exception of \$4,000 for a new barn in 1917, the 1909 appropriations were the last the Polytechnic received for new buildings for more than a decade.

While some on-campus dormitory housing had been available for girls at the Polytechnic in the early years, conversion of a dormitory into needed classroom space eliminated that opportunity and helped drive the female enrollment down. Commencing in 1913, catalogs included a statement that "lady faculty members would help non-local girls find housing with suitable families in San Luis Obispo." But that assistance was hardly enough to satisfy the parents of 15- and 16-year-old young ladies that they should permit these girls to go away from home to a high school to take home economics, a course they could take in a school at home.

It was different for the boys. They could take courses in agriculture and industrial fields not offered at local area schools, since vocational education was not encouraged in high schools until after the federal Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. Furthermore, parents of boys used different standards of permissiveness in terms of acceptable behavior and opportunities for independent living.

At any rate, the Polytechnic was in trouble in Sacramento as early as 1918, when a Board of Control report, following a campus inspection, was highly critical and recommended the Polytechnic be moved from San Luis Obispo or be discontinued altogether. Then an attack came in 1923 from Gov. Friend Richardson, whose budget message stated that the "school was out of joint with the state's educational system and should be turned over to some other agency." He was no friend of Cal Poly.

All these economy-motivated attacks caused administrative retrenchments, and that meant cutting out programs. After all the courses that would have attracted girls had been discontinued, Cal Poly opened in the fall of 1924 with only 106 students. By November, 1924, a total of nine girls had returned to school, all taking courses in printing. During the next several years, female enrollment was never more than five percent of the total. The action barring women students became effective beginning June 30, 1929, and after June 30, 1930, no female students were in attendance.

When I arrived on campus in September, 1940, to begin my journalism and public relations job, there was only one female teacher on the staff: Miss Margaret Chase. Miss Chase had begun her career at Poly in 1908, the same year Dr. Anderson left. Miss Chase, an English teacher, became for me more than just a source of the early history of Poly. As a new and inexperienced



*Miss Margaret Chase, English teacher, vice president, and acting president.*

teacher, I sought out the only teacher I felt could advise me on how best to teach my journalism classes. She was the only professional English teacher on the faculty; all the other teachers assigned to teach English classes were actually specialists in other fields. When I questioned a staff member once about an "ag engineering" faculty member who also taught an English course, I received this reply: "It would be a lot funnier if you asked an English teacher to teach an agricultural engineering course." I certainly could not deny the truth of that statement.

I had known some Cal Poly graduates among acquaintances in San Diego. When I applied for the position at Poly my wife, Mary, and I talked with some of them about the school, its president, and its faculty. I had heard "Maggie" Chase's name mentioned more than once as a fine lady who tried to knock some writing skills into the heads of agricultural and engineering students — none of whom thought, at the time, that "they would ever have need for such nonsense." As graduates every one of them expressed regrets that they had not paid more attention to Maggie Chase.

Besides asking for her help on how to teach my journalism courses, I often talked to her about the early days at Poly because I felt one of my jobs, writing publicity stories, required me to know about how things got to be the way they were.



*Major Robert Ryder, third director and commandant of cadets, served from 1914-1921.*

Miss Chase certainly admired the work of Dr. Anderson. She said she had talked to him a number of times when he returned to the campus to help his former colleague, Leroy Smith, who was Anderson's successor as chief administrative officer of the school. Miss Chase had survived every administrative upheaval and change in the first 40 years of Cal Poly history.

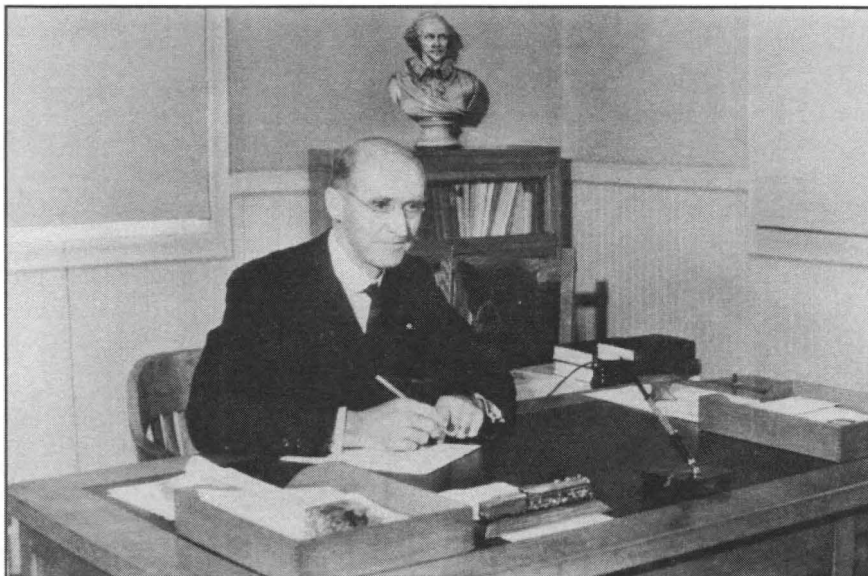
She provided for me a living link with the past, telling me some very grim tales of financial difficulties Cal Poly had survived. The school had been threatened with extinction by more than one governor. She herself had been appointed acting president from February to August, 1924, following the resignation of President Nicholas Ricciardi, the fourth chief administrative officer, who had served only two and a half years (July, 1921, to February, 1924).



*Nicholas Ricciardi served only from July, 1921, to February, 1924,  
but with the new title of president.*

Ricciardi's resignation was the direct result of action by Governor Richardson, who cut the budget in half. After Richardson had made it clear that the Polytechnic was unnecessary and should be eliminated or used in "some other capacity" (often suggested to mean a prison), the alumni and friends of the Polytechnic led a campaign to save the school. The campaign succeeded to the extent that Governor Richardson did not eliminate the entire funding, merely cut the biennial appropriation (1923-25) from \$254,000 to \$124,500.

President Ricciardi estimated the school could operate for perhaps 12 months on the reduced appropriation. The staff was cut by 50 percent and all the livestock was sold at public auction; a few Jersey cows and a few horses



*President Benjamin Crandall served from 1924 to 1933 and raised instruction to the junior college level.*

were kept. The state treasury realized only \$8,500 from the sale, a sum far less than the value of the livestock.

The third president, Robert E. Ryder, who served from 1914 to 1921, had promoted Miss Chase to vice president as well as head of the academic department. She had continued to serve as vice president under Riccardi's short term and the nine-year term of the fifth president, Dr. Benjamin Crandall (1924-33). During Crandall's administration, Miss Chase had been instrumental in establishing the Junior College program, and was its dean. In fact, it was that role that caused the sixth president, Julian McPhee, to tell me at one time that it was her advice and leadership that had "veered Cal Poly off the track."

McPhee believed Dr. Anderson's original "track," laid out for Poly in 1902, was the right direction, and that Miss Chase and others had been too concerned with serving local instead of statewide needs. "She was too anxious to change from a vocational-occupational orientation to an academic program which would be transferable to four-year colleges, specifically the University of California," President McPhee said.

President McPhee had no place in his administrative plans in 1933 for Miss Chase, so she was returned to full-time teaching. In my frequent conversations with Miss Chase I learned she had a healthy respect for President McPhee. She spoke of him as "a man of power," especially in his relation-

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ships in Sacramento. She had accepted his leadership and was reconciled to the emphasis that he was placing on all the vocational and occupational fields with the job-getting results of a technical education apparently superior to those of a liberal education during the Depression and post-Depression years.

On one subject she thought he was very wrong, however. She understood why the Legislature had taken the action in 1929 to eliminate the expense of special programs for a few women students. She also understood something that was not generally known by Cal Poly faculty and staff, and never mentioned by administrators. The Legislature had in 1937 repealed the 1929 ban on female enrollment. Legally a girl could have forced the issue at any time, but "women's lib" activists were few and far between in the period 1930-1950.

"How can Mr. McPhee say that he is educating men for the 'real world' if they never learn to deal with any women except me?" Miss Chase asked me one day when I stopped at her office to return a book she had loaned me.

President McPhee, who took over as president of Cal Poly on July 1, 1933, had not requested that the 1929 law be repealed. He certainly did not publicize the fact and merely continued the "policy" by stating "Cal Poly is an all-male school." As public relations director one of my responsibilities was to produce publications and publicity that would assist student recruitment. Having experienced education only in coeducational environments, it seemed obvious to me we could double our enrollment anytime we decided to open the doors to women.

When I suggested that to the President one day, he merely said, "We are not ready."

But he had a plan. He wanted to establish firmly the concept that Cal Poly was a "statewide" college and thereby get support from legislators from all over the state. He felt that enrollment of girls in the 1920s had become strictly a local issue. His analysis was that "listening to the local population had been counterproductive for prior administrations."

The readmission of women and how it finally came about is a part of the Cal Poly story yet to come.

Both President McPhee and Miss Chase had given me their views of the critical period in Cal Poly history just before McPhee was appointed to the presidency. Basically the two stories are in agreement, and subsequently the facts were spelled out in the most comprehensive history of Poly from its founding until 1950, written by Dr. Eugene Smith as his doctoral dissertation.

In 1932 the Legislature set up a \$25,000 study of colleges and universi-

ties in the state and Governor Rolph asked the Carnegie Foundation to undertake the project. Dr. Henry Suzzallo, then president of the Carnegie Foundation, visited Cal Poly and spent several days checking records, investigating procedures, and interviewing faculty and students. The recommendations of the commission, popularly known as the Suzzallo Report, appeared in 1932. The report concluded that the California Polytechnic School should be abolished as an educational institution, not only because its cost per student was excessively high, but because the institution was not performing functions that differed from those carried out by many locally-financed California junior colleges and high schools. So, in the interest of economy and to avoid wasteful duplication, Cal Poly was to be abolished.

In the depths of the Great Depression, with the state Legislature and the governor both seeking ways to cut taxes, a nationally respected committee of seven educational experts had investigated and agreed that Cal Poly was too costly and duplicated functions offered in many other places in the state. What a death knell that would be for any state-supported agency. Should such a thing happen now, one would expect a tremendous outcry from parents, local townspeople, business owners, alumni, and particularly currently enrolled students. Students could and would mount a demonstration that legislators could not ignore.

In 1932 it was not any of those groups, and especially not the students, who saved Cal Poly. There were only 384 students in 1930-31, and in 1931-32 that figure had declined to 334; a year later, in 1932-33, there were only 117. When the figure was 334, about one-third were from San Luis Obispo, 113 came from 71 other places in California, 16 were from out of state, and three were from foreign countries. There was no organization of parents to protest the closure. The people of San Luis Obispo had enjoyed the availability of a junior college in the area without the necessity of paying local taxes for its support. Any local protest to the Legislature would be met with a request for local funds for the college's support.

The real savior of Cal Poly this time was Assemblyman Chris Jespersen of Atascadero, later to become one of the most powerful senators in the Legislature. Jespersen, in recognition of problems growing out of the continuing failures of Cal Poly to properly justify its costs, had gone to the chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education, Julian A. McPhee, with a request to systematically use the facility in the summer months. As early as 1925 the Bureau had sponsored an agricultural conference at the Polytechnic. In 1929 some 250 high school ag students had visited the school for several days. Starting in the summer of 1931, Mr. McPhee arranged for a two-week re-

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fresher course attended by 206 vocational agriculture teachers, followed by the annual state convention of the California Ag Teachers Association. That same year, Mr. McPhee arranged to have a training program for vocational agriculture cadet teachers established at Cal Poly.

Early in 1931 Mr. McPhee had prepared a report called "A Suggested Plan for the Utilization of the California Polytechnic School in the Further Development and Integration of the California Agricultural Education Program." With the approval of the State Board of Education on May, 1931, the plan was implemented, and by July of that year all agricultural instruction at Cal Poly was under the direct supervision of the state Department of Education, with responsibility delegated to the chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education. Part of the plan was to eliminate the junior college division and eliminate all high school courses carrying credit for university transfer; it was to continue only vocational training, preparing students for work in agriculture or in industry.

Within six months these changes were made and the state superintendent of public instruction, Vierling Kersey, announced publicly that those sections of the Suzzallo Report that called for the abolition of Cal Poly were "obsolete" and that Cal Poly was no longer "operated as a general education institution of high school and junior college grade but rather as a technical institute offering only vocational education in certain specific fields of agriculture and industry."

Julian McPhee, operating from his Bureau office in Sacramento in 1932, took charge of the agricultural instruction at Poly with no requirement that he deal with President Ben Crandall. McPhee appointed C.O. McCorkle, head of the vocational agricultural department at Red Bluff High School, to administer the agriculture training program. McCorkle, one of McPhee's former students at Gilroy High School, had been elected president of the California Agriculture Teachers Association in 1931 and was considered one of the outstanding teachers in the state. McPhee then arranged a joint appointment with President Crandall of four more well-known agriculture specialists to serve both the Bureau and Poly.

Julian McPhee was born February 7, 1896, in San Francisco. He was reared in that very metropolitan city, and educated there in parochial schools and across the Bay at the University of California, Berkeley. Where did he get his abiding interest in and zeal for agricultural education? His father, Charles McPhee, a Scot, owned and operated a drayage business hauling goods in horse-drawn wagons from bayside wharves to warehouses; he also operated a tugboat business. His mother, Ellen (MacDonald), following a



*President Julian A. McPhee served from 1933 to 1966 and raised instruction to bachelors' and masters' degrees.*

family tradition, saw to it that her children did not spend the summer in the city. The family owned the Glen Allen Ranch of some 300 acres west of Morgan Hill, about 70 miles south of San Francisco and about 15 miles north of Gilroy. McPhee spent every summer on the ranch, which consisted of a redwood forest, vineyard, and pasture land for draft horses, and loved the experience.

In fact he took so well to horses that in 1906, when the San Francisco earthquake and fire threatened the family home, McPhee's father entrusted Julian, then age 10, to drive a team of draft horses with a wagonload of family possessions to a leased farm near Hunters Point, south of the city. By the time

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he was 12 years old, McPhee was driving teams of draft horses to the Glen Allen Ranch near Morgan Hill, a trip of several days from San Francisco.

The year McPhee entered the University of California, Berkeley, in 1913, at age 17, he signed up that first year for one semester of 12 units in engineering and one semester of 12 units of agriculture. He liked agriculture best and graduated in June, 1917, with a B.S. degree in agricultural education. In September he took a position as instructor of vocational agriculture at El Dorado Union High School in Placerville, California. While at the University he enrolled in Navy ROTC, and in 1918 he enlisted in the Navy and served as an ensign for two years during World War I at duty posts in San Francisco and San Diego.

It was during this period that he married Alma C. Doyle, whose father had built the famous City of Paris store in San Francisco. Alma was born in 1895 and graduated from the Sisters of Mercy convent in Oakland. At the end of World War I, Ensign McPhee received an honorable discharge from the Navy. He took a job in January, 1920, as assistant farm advisor in Merced County. That summer he accepted the directorship of the vocational agriculture program at Gilroy Union High School, where he remained for five years. It was here that he got his first taste of holding more than one position at the same time. In 1923, while still teaching agricultural classes, he became vice principal of the high school. A year later, he was named principal of the Gilroy Union High School Evening School.

In August, 1925, the California Board for Vocational Education appointed McPhee to the position of assistant state supervisor of agricultural education. In a year he had been promoted to supervisor, and by July 1, 1927, that job title had been changed to Chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education. He held that position until 1945; for 12 of those years, he was also president of Cal Poly. In 1945, still continuing to hold the position of Cal Poly president, he was promoted to state director of vocational education. He gave up the vocational education directorship in 1949, and for the first time since 1923 was able to concentrate on just one job. Even then he was the only state college president with responsibility for administering two campuses — campuses 240 miles apart.

To complete our story of how Julian McPhee was selected to be the president of Cal Poly when he already had a full-time job in the field of his greatest interest, agricultural education, we have to look toward the political sphere of influence, which has more to do with higher education than most people suspect. Still seeking economy, Governor Rolph presented with

#### LEARN BY DOING

his 1933-35 biennial budget a message that included the statement that the Polytechnic should be closed or perhaps converted to a state prison. A Senate fact-finding committee pointed out that shutting down the institution would save the taxpayers at least \$312,000 in the next two years.

By this time, Assemblyman Jespersen had become a senator and was a member of the Senate Education Committee as well as the Senate Finance committee. He brought McPhee before the two committees to prove to the members the importance of functions in agricultural training then dependent upon the continuation of Cal Poly.

President McPhee told me more than once that the high point of his appearance before the finance committee was when he was asked point-blank by Senator Jespersen, "What would you do if you were president of Cal Poly and just how little money do you think the school could be operated on for the next year?"

McPhee told me that he knew the proposed budget for the biennium had been about \$380,000 and had been cut by about \$70,000. Since he thought Jespersen had asked specifically how much it would cost to run for "the next year," he responded by saying, "about \$150,000." All the legislators on the committee were thinking in terms of biennial budgets, however. A few days later Governor Rolf signed the budget bill with a biennial appropriation of \$159,000 for Cal Poly — about 60 percent less than the allotment for the prior two-year period.

President Crandall resigned with this statement: "I regret that the vision of a great institute on the Pacific Coast must be abandoned." Crandall then extended his best wishes to Julian McPhee and left for a new position as principal of Wasco Union High School.

With the approval of the State Board of Education, Superintendent Kersey appointed Julian McPhee to be the sixth chief executive of Cal Poly effective July 1, 1933. Recognizing the instability of a position as president of Cal Poly, McPhee made a deal with Kersey. McPhee was to retain his position as chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education, responsible for all vocational agriculture education in the high schools of the state. He was to handle the Cal Poly job on a half-time basis, with no extra pay. In my opinion, Mr. McPhee actually devoted as much time to his Bureau job as he ever had, and then devoted another 100 percent to Cal Poly. He did it by working harder, longer, and more effectively than most people ever could.

Obvious to McPhee was the vulnerability of Cal Poly because of fluctuating financial support. There was a move afoot to legalize pari-mutuel bet-

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ting on horses at racetracks in the state. McPhee jumped into the campaign — some say he actually engineered it — and the result was the legalizing of racetrack betting in California, with a percentage of the state's share going to support the state and county fairs and the agricultural schools, UC Davis and Cal Poly. By 1935 Cal Poly began receiving its 25 percent of the "second balance" after funds went into the Fair and Exposition Fund. McPhee had wisely arranged for the University's percentage to be larger than that received by Cal Poly, which avoided opposition.

President McPhee kept a little black book in his pocket in which he entered the officially reported amounts that were wagered at the tracks, since the application of a percentage formula could tell him how much of that was Cal Poly's share. The racetrack betting was soon the source of more money than Cal Poly needed for operating expenses. McPhee then made arrangements to set up reserve funds for future building needs. During World War II a Pacific Coast blackout was mandated by the military. The tracks were closed and Poly's source of funding dried up overnight. A 1941 effort got legislation passed to temporarily finance Poly from the General Fund. When the tracks reopened, Poly's racetrack funds resumed. Soon after Pat Brown was elected governor, in 1959, he sponsored legislation that put this special source of funding into the General Fund, forcing Poly to compete for funds with other state colleges.

In 1938 Charles B. Voorhis and his son, Jerry Voorhis, deeded to Cal Poly a 167-acre farm and school near San Dimas, California. It was to be used by Poly as an agricultural branch. The school had been built for disadvantaged boys, and its headmaster was Jerry Voorhis. When he ran for and was elected to Congress, he and his father decided to give the multimillion-dollar facility to Cal Poly because they felt it was the kind of school that needed a Southern California branch — an idea that Julian McPhee had firmly planted in their minds. President McPhee immediately began operating it with a small staff transferred from San Luis Obispo and with agricultural inspection students, also transferred with very little consultation.

In 1939 President McPhee began talking to state board of education members about granting Cal Poly authority to increase the program to four years and award the bachelor of science degree. The proposal was opposed vigorously by the University of California, which feared competition to its agricultural degree programs at Davis. Several members of the board were considered UC supporters who consistently voted the way UC representatives recommended. But two members, Armistead B. Carter, of San Diego,

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and Daniel C. Murphy, of San Francisco, were great admirers of what Julian McPhee had accomplished at Cal Poly in a very short time. Carter once described to me the following scenario:

Dan and I knew that we had the votes to support McPhee's proposal for degree status, except for two members. One day we discovered we had a quorum and the two members in question had left the room for some reason—maybe to answer phone calls. I made the motion, Dan seconded it. A vote was called and passed. When the opposition returned to the meeting, the act had already been accomplished.

Thus Cal Poly was authorized to offer B.S. degrees starting in the fall of 1940. It was during this period, 1938 to 1940, when President McPhee was striving to open new horizons for the struggling little almost-unknown technical school on the outskirts of an almost equally unknown town of fewer than 8,000 souls, that events taking place in a much larger town were destined to create a coincidence that had a lasting affect on one Robert E. Kennedy.

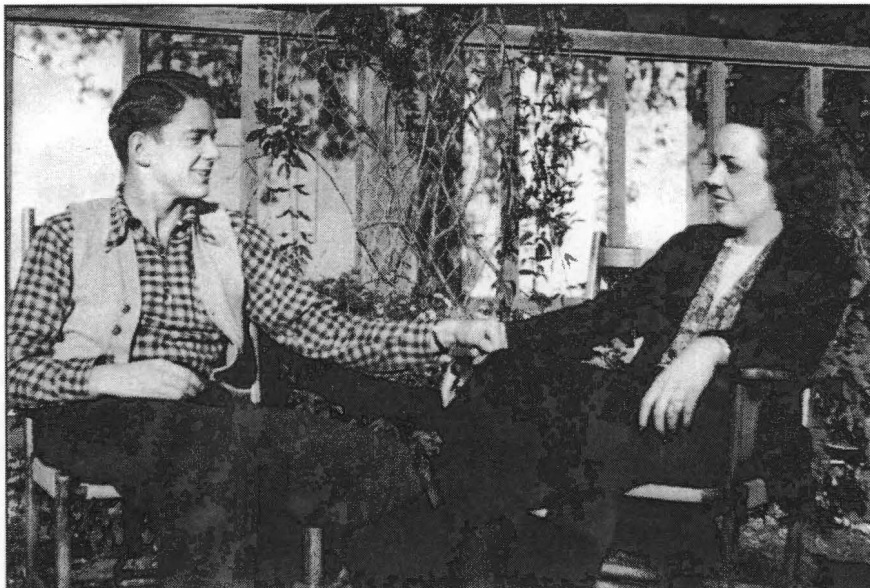
*LESSON ONE Creating a learning-by-doing polytechnic school, like many a worthy project, may depend originally upon imagination and vision, but making it survive and prosper takes persuasion, persistence, and great skill in politics.*

ON BEING A PIONEER IN A NEW LAND

**B**EFORE I GRADUATED from San Diego State College in June, 1938, I had worked full-time one summer as a reporter for the *San Diego Sun*, a Scripps-Howard newspaper, and had been promised a permanent position. Even before I graduated the *Sun* was laying off staff, and within two years had sold out to the opposition newspaper, the *Union-Tribune*.

Economists and historians look back and tell us that in the summer of 1938 the United States and California were still in the bottom of the worst depression the country has ever had. When Magner White, the *Sun*'s editor, told me the promised job was not going to materialize, I immediately told Mary Paxton, the girl to whom I was engaged to be married on June 12, two days after the scheduled San Diego State College graduation exercises. As president of the senior class I had a very minor role in that event, but suddenly that anticipated ceremony took a back seat to a more pressing problem.

Mary Paxton was more important to me than a college degree, a newspaper reporting job, or anything else I could imagine. I had met her in my freshman year at San Diego State, when we were introduced by Dick Shattuck, my closest friend since junior high school days. Mary was 17 and I was 18; she was a senior at Hoover High School, the school I had graduated from two years earlier. We had also both attended Woodrow Wilson Junior High School, but our paths had never crossed in either school. She claims she saw me once when she was a 7th grader and I was a 9th grader. She attended the finals of a public speaking contest in which I was the master of ceremonies, an honor bestowed on me because I came in sixth in a preliminary contest when the judges selected the top five. She said I looked "cute" but she thought I was spoiled and arrogant. Of course I told her that I would have won that contest if my faculty speech teacher had been wise enough to advise me not to select John D. Spreckles as "My Ideal American Citizen" just because I liked sugar and San Diego electric streetcars. The five top contestants had each selected an American president, from George Washington to Woodrow Wilson. I always wanted to be different.



*Bob and Mary in love on the San Diego State campus in 1936.*

I can't say I fell instantly in love with Mary because I claimed I never made any snap judgments. But it was close. We started going together steady, as they said in those days, and by the time I was a sophomore at State I seriously considered quitting school in order to get married. In fact, we had a joint meeting with Mary's girlfriend's father, a Mr. Warren, a columnist for the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. He advised me to stay in college, get a degree, and then get married. So that became our plan.

If I hadn't been an only child, reared by not just one set of parents but by six adults, I might not have been sufficiently self-confident to have pursued Mary Paxton. She had been narrowly defeated by Joe Shell, a high school football hero who later became an All-American, for the office of student body president. She was elected president of Hoover High's Cardinal Co-eds, and at the time of her graduation was honored in the school paper as the most talented and popular girl at Hoover. She had an excellent academic record, was a favorite with her teachers, and played the lead in many school plays, including the senior class play, which I watched with some jealousy as the very handsome leading man kissed her as the curtain came down.

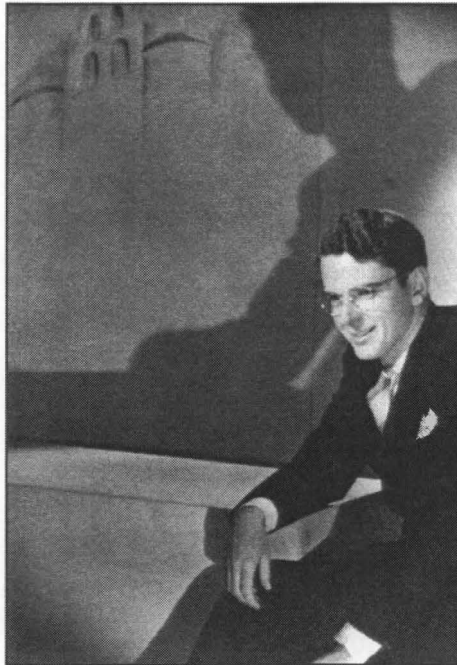
As a child Mary had a number of experiences that made her a "learn by doing" expert on how an individual relates successfully to the group. Included was a three-year period in which she lived as though she was an orphan in the Pythian Childrens Home in Decatur, Illinois, where her mother was employed

#### ON BEING A PIONEER IN A NEW LAND

as a governess responsible for 80 boys and girls three to 18 years of age. Then her mother took a similar position, with a different age group, in the Fredricka Retirement Home in Chula Vista, California, where as a teenager Mary learned how to listen to retirees talk about their lives. In our more than 60 years of married life Mary has provided not only the loving support that bolsters one's self-confidence, but often supplied inspiration by suggesting new ideas and appropriate words I could use in communicating persuasively with trustees, faculty, students, and others.

Mary understood my problem of trying to find a job as a journalist when more experienced journalists were suddenly out of work in a one-newspaper town. And so began my frantic search for the kind of work I had been preparing for over the past four years.

I had worked part-time during my senior year for San Diego State as publicity man for all college activities except sports. Trying to parlay that part-time job into a full-time position, I was lobbying Dean A.G. Peterson,



*REK as he appeared in the San Diego State  
College yearbook section featuring  
10 outstanding seniors.*

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second in command under San Diego State's president, Walter Hepner. The dean said, "You're right, Bob, State needs a full-time public relations person, but we've been unsuccessful in getting a position, and even if we had such a position you wouldn't be considered unless you had at least a master's degree." Then he added, "Why don't you contact Armistead B. Carter? He's a local businessman who told me at Rotary Club last week that he may be hiring a publicity man for a political campaign." He added, "Carter is a very influential Democrat who is a member of the State Board of Education."

How I convinced Mr. Carter that I was the right person for the job was probably due more to my persistence than to any evidence of talent or experience. The key factor, no doubt, was Dean Peterson's recommendation. That first job was publicizing the primary campaign to get the Democratic party nomination for Daniel C. Murphy for governor. Carter was Murphy's San Diego County campaign manager, and Murphy was a fellow member of the State Board of Education. When that primary campaign was over (Murphy losing to Culbert L. Olson, who became governor in 1939), Carter arranged a job for me as executive secretary of the Civic Affairs Conference, an organization that backed the campaigns of selected candidates for city council. On the board of directors of that organization was Thomas Hamilton, owner of Hamilton's Ltd., the finest food store in San Diego. Mr. Hamilton was looking for someone to replace the advertising manager and to understudy Mr. Henry, Hamilton's Ltd. general manager, who needed an assistant. When the city election campaign was over, Mr. Hamilton offered me the position. I took it and began a new experience learning on the job.

In front of me on my desk was a pile of reports covering the fiscal year just ended. Mr. Henry had laid them there just an hour earlier with the comment, "Study them today. Tomorrow we'll talk about how to make some changes to improve our cash flow." For the past six months he had been tutoring me, his 24-year-old assistant, on an almost daily basis. His boss, Mr. Hamilton, expected me to become manager when and if Mr. Henry decided his ill health required him to retire. I liked the advertising phase of my two-part job: advertising manager and assistant manager. But bookkeeping, accounting, price analysis, and cost analysis, were not the parts of management that appealed to me. I was most interested in how to improve our personnel management by bettering working conditions and increasing employee involvement in operational decisions.

During the four months that I had worked in every department, learning the grocery business, I had kept a calendar/diary of ideas for operational

#### ON BEING A PIONEER IN A NEW LAND

improvement gleaned both from talking to employees and from observations made at a firsthand working level. These I had written as a report that went to Mr. Henry and Mr. Hamilton, president and principal stockholder of the firm. I was happy when they told me we could implement one suggestion. It was a weekly newsletter of two pages keeping employees informed of management decisions and proper procedures for various operations. I felt it was an opportunity to improve operations through better communications.

My phone rang. It was an outside call. The female voice said, "This is the San Diego State College placement department. I would like to talk to Mr. Kennedy." I replied, "This is Kennedy. What can I do for you?"

"We have been informed of a job opening at a technical college in San Luis Obispo. We circulate such announcements to faculty we think know our graduates. Several of them have indicated your name as a person qualified and possibly interested in this job. In fact, Dean A.G. Peterson has recommended you apply for the job and he said he would write a letter of recommendation on your behalf."

"What is the job?" I asked.

"I'll read you the announcement," she said. And she did. It was from Cal Poly, the school Mary's high school friend Bob Magness had graduated from in 1938. The school was looking for someone to teach introductory journalism courses, be adviser for the college weekly newspaper and yearbook, write publicity for the college, including sports, and edit all official publications of the college including the catalog of course offerings. The starting salary for 10 months' work was to be \$200 per month with annual merit increases that eventually would bring the person's salary to \$300 per month. The lady on the phone then said, "We are giving this information to only one other San Diego State graduate, Ed Thomas. Do you know him?"

"Of course. We worked together on the college newspaper and the yearbook. Is he going to apply?" I asked.

"I was going to call him next. But I only have his home phone. Do you know where he works?" she asked.

"He's working for the United Press news service."

That night I talked to Mary about the opportunity to get back into a field for which I was trained and which I liked better than the grocery business. She understood. Even the fact that we would have to move over 300 miles away from her folks didn't daunt her. "If you want that job and can get it, moving away from San Diego is no problem," she said. "I've thought



*Armistead B. Carter, talking here to President John F. Kennedy at San Diego State, June 6, 1963, was REK's boss after he graduated from San Diego State, June 10, 1938.*

for some time that we are too dependent on our families for moral support. Maybe we should strike out on our own and not be afraid to pull up roots," she added.

The next morning at 8 A.M. I was waiting for the placement office at State to open its doors. I got a copy of the announcement, which gave details as to what was wanted in an application letter and where to send it.

The application was to go to the president, Julian A. McPhee. It indicated that after a preliminary screening of applications, a selected few would be interviewed at a time and place to be determined later.

At work I called Armistead Carter and asked if I could take him to lunch that day as I had something I wanted to show him and talk over with him. Over the table at lunch, I handed Armistead the copy of the announcement of the job opening at Cal Poly. "As a member of the State Board of Education, do you know anything about that school or its president, Julian A. McPhee?" I asked.

"Of course, I know all about Cal Poly. I've had a lot to do with it recently. It's one of my favorites of the state colleges. And I know Julian McPhee better than I know most any of the other state college presidents," he replied enthusiastically. "Let me finish reading the description of the job."

Armistead read to himself for just a few moments, then looked up at me with a big smile and a twinkle in his eyes. "This job is made for you, Bob. I hope you are going to apply. Did you talk to Mary? What does she think?"

I told him what Mary had said the night before. "Good for her. She's got the right spirit. I hate to see you kids leave San Diego, but it sounds like a great opportunity. They don't expect you to have more than a bachelor's degree and experience in newspaper and advertising business. Most state colleges won't hire any faculty member with less than a master's degree and they want the faculty member to have a doctor's degree within four years or they won't offer tenure or reappointment. But Julian McPhee has a different idea. His school is dedicated to the practical approach. It is not a liberal arts college but a technical college. It was only this last year that the State Board granted it the authority to give instruction leading to the bachelor of science degree. Up to that point it awarded only two-year vocational certificates and three-year technical certificates. It won't grant its first bachelor's degree until June of 1942." Armistead's recital of facts about Cal Poly flowed out in a rapid stream.

"How come you know so much about Cal Poly?" I asked in amazement.

"For several years McPhee has been trying to get the Board to give him the authority to grant degrees. There was opposition on the Board, primarily from a few members who are avid supporters of the University of California. They think that Cal Poly's agricultural program would compete with UC Davis. I'm certain that the University has some of our Board members 'in its pocket,' so to speak. I had always supported the idea that Cal Poly should

become a four-year, degree-granting college, and so had Dan Murphy and a few other Board members. But we were never able to put together enough votes, even though McPhee has been pushing the idea since 1937."

Armistead paused for a moment, then continued.

"Last year McPhee had lunch with Dan and me and asked us what we thought was blocking his attempt to get degree status. We told him our suspicions, and he agreed." Armistead then told me that McPhee was convinced that he had lined up enough affirmative votes to pass a motion anytime two of the most vocally-negative members were absent."

At this point Armistead told me the story of his and Dan Murphy's involvement in the passage of the action that gave Cal Poly degree-granting status, effective September, 1940.

I knew how excitable Mr. Carter could get over anything he thought was a good idea and how impassioned he could become in his efforts on behalf of political candidates he was supporting. I was afraid he would rush back to his office and phone President McPhee immediately.

"Don't contact President McPhee on my behalf, Armie, until they ask me for recommendations. I don't want to put pressure on prematurely," I cautioned.

"You're right, Bob. But I'm sure that when President McPhee gets letters of recommendation from both me and Dan Murphy, telling of our personal knowledge of your abilities in journalism, publicity, and advertising, he's going to be impressed. I'll talk to Dan Murphy on the phone today and tell him how we're going to handle it," Armistead said with the finality typical of him in matters of political manipulation.

That night Bob Magness came over to the house, bringing his Cal Poly yearbooks, which featured photographic views of the campus, the community, the rolling hills and open spaces surrounding the college farm. Bob was such a loyal alumnus that I couldn't get him to say one negative thing about the college, its faculty, administration, or the town of San Luis Obispo. His descriptions of nearby Morro Bay, Pismo Beach, and Avila Beach were intended to persuade us that it would be a great place to raise those six kids Mary talked about having—eventually. (My experience up to that point, with just one, was making me apprehensive about even a second.)

About two weeks after I sent my application, I received a letter signed by George P. Couper, assistant to the chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education of the State of California. It stated, "President McPhee has determined that you are one of the applicants to be interviewed and he has

asked me to undertake the interview in the Bureau of Agricultural Education office in the State building in Los Angeles." It gave a date and time for the interview and asked that I confirm it by telephone, collect. This I did.

I called Ed Thomas to ask if he had applied and, if so, if he had received a notice of an interview.

"I just got my notice of an interview today, but I haven't confirmed it yet," Ed said.

When we compared notes we discovered the letters were identical and the date and place were also identical. His interview was scheduled a half-hour before mine.

"Do you want to ride up with me and share expenses?" I asked. He agreed that was a good idea.

The day of the interview we found the State building in Los Angeles and the Bureau of Agricultural Education office. We went in together. While I waited in the reception room, Ed was interviewed by Mr. Couper. Ed came out in a half-hour, wearing a happy smile and said to me, "Let's go, I'm sure I've got the job. No use wasting your time with an interview." I looked at him carefully. He seemed serious, then the corners of his mouth turned up and he could no longer conceal his attempt at a good-humored joke.

Just then the secretary said, "Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Couper will see you now."

Mr. Couper seemed most interested in my political campaign experience, part-time publicity experience for San Diego State, and my work on both the student newspaper and the yearbook. He hardly mentioned the thing I was most concerned about: my lack of teaching experience.

"I notice in your résumé that you worked for Armistead B. Carter and Daniel Murphy. Can you get letters of recommendations from both of them?" he asked.

"Oh, yes. I'm certain both will recommend me," I said with confidence.

"I suggest you get them to send those letters to President McPhee without delay. He knows both of them personally and has high regard for them. Their opinions will have a great deal of weight with him." Then Mr. Couper asked if I had any questions.

My questions were all centered on what I would be expected to do as a teacher of journalism classes. That's when I learned that Mr. Couper was not only assistant to the chief of the state bureau of agricultural education, but the chief he worked for was Julian McPhee, who devoted only half-time to being president of Cal Poly.

Mr. Couper, I learned, also shared responsibilities between the Bureau

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and Cal Poly. Part of his Bureau job included being editor of the State Future Farmers of America monthly magazine, which was printed at Cal Poly. Part of his college job still included editing official college publications like the catalog. He said that in the past he had also been adviser to the yearbook and the school paper and taught the journalism courses.

"If you are hired," he said, "I will be your adviser and will help you get started on all the duties outlined in the announcement. About the teaching, don't worry about it. Since you have taken journalism courses and majored in English you can learn all you need to know while you are on the job. The students will all be agriculture and engineering students taking the few journalism courses we offer as electives — we do not have a major in journalism and I do not contemplate we ever will have. If you are hired, your main function will be that of the college publicity man. Since we are just now becoming a full-fledged, degree-granting college, we need lots of good publicity to bolster our small enrollment of 700 students."

With that last statement, Mr. Couper stood up, smiled, shook my hand, and said, "Good luck." I thanked him for his time, turned, and left.

In the reception room I motioned for Ed to follow and walked out into the hall. Outside in the corridor I said, "What did you mean, you had the job sewed up? Couper just hired me. He also had forgotten your name and asked if I knew you. I told him I never saw you before in my life."

I tried to keep a straight face but failed. I was trying unsuccessfully to choke back my laughter. Ed started pounding my arm and repeating, "You liar, you liar."

He was right. I didn't have the job sewed up and neither did Ed.

On the ride back to San Diego Ed said, "I really hope you get that job, Bob. It sounds more up your alley than mine." When we were in college, Ed had worked part-time for the United Press news service. The day after he graduated, in June, 1940, he went to work full-time as the manager of the UP bureau in San Diego. I knew he liked his job with UP, so I asked, "since you like your job with UP so well, why did you apply for the Cal Poly job?"

"I guess it was the higher starting salary and the more definite future that attracted me. When you are working your tail off for less than \$100 a month, a job that starts at twice as much is a big temptation," Ed answered.

For me, however, it wasn't the higher salary that was the big temptation but the opportunity to do something that I was certain I would like better than the grocery business. Ed Thomas made a wise decision and so did I.<sup>1</sup>

The next morning I called Armistead and told him about the interview

with Couper. I told him that Couper had said letters from "Carter and Murphy direct to McPhee" would be "very influential."

"I'll get a letter off to Julian McPhee today. I'll phone Dan Murphy and tell him to send a letter on your behalf telling about your publicity work for him," Armistead eagerly responded.

The next day Armistead called me to have lunch with him at his club. He told me while we were waiting to be served that when Murphy got on the phone, he not only agreed to send the letter but asked Armistead to dictate to Murphy's secretary what he thought ought to be said. Murphy told Armistead he would use that draft to formulate his own personal letter. Then Armistead handed me a copy of the letter he had sent over his signature to McPhee. It was such a glowingly complimentary letter, even I was impressed. I said to Armistead, "If I were a college president and had an opportunity to hire a fellow like the one you just described, I wouldn't hesitate very long before making the offer."

"When you're a college president someday, and I predict that you will be, just remember you can only trust a letter of recommendation if you know and trust its author. The happy part about this situation is that McPhee knows me, trusts me, and I didn't put anything in that letter that I don't believe 100 percent," Armistead declared. Then he added, "If I were McPhee, I wouldn't hesitate a moment before I made the job offer to you."

But McPhee did hesitate and for much longer than a moment. It seemed like an eternity of waiting; actually about two weeks went by without a word by mail or phone. I shared with Armistead one day in his office the terrible anxiety I was having about the delay. He grabbed his telephone and asked his secretary to get Julian McPhee on the line. In a few moments, I was listening in on a fascinating conversation. It was all about state college business on the agenda for the next State Board of Education meeting. Carter

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1. Ed Thomas, single and classified 4-F, was transferred by United Press to Mexico City in June, 1942. In 1944 he became restless and applied for war correspondent's credentials with UPI's endorsement. He covered the battleship *Missouri's* first combat mission, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, and B-29 actions, including the first atomic bomb strikes on Japan. After the war UPI assigned him desk jobs in Honolulu and San Francisco. He married, returned to UPI in Mexico City, then quit UPI to become public relations director for Creole Petroleum Corp., Caracas, Venezuela. He became editor of the *San Diego Union*, retired in 1970, and moved to Borrego Springs. He edited Copley's *Borrego Sun* for five years, retiring for the second time in 1981.

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was asking McPhee's opinion on first one matter and then another. I thought he had forgotten why he called. Finally, and very casually, he said, "By the way, Julian, my friend, Bob Kennedy, hasn't heard anything about that Cal Poly teaching and publicity job and he is getting nervous." Then I heard just Armistead's short responses to McPhee's comments, "Yes...Oh...Sure — Ahuh...I'll tell him."

"What did he say?" I asked excitedly.

"I think you've got the job. But he wants to interview you personally before he makes it final. He tells me that they have more than 40 very qualified applicants, many with lots more experience than you have had. But he tells me he prefers a younger, less experienced man, whom he can train himself. That's got to be the key," Carter said.

Two days later I got a telegram telling me to be at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles on a certain date and time to be interviewed by President McPhee. When I walked into President McPhee's hotel room, I was greeted first by George Couper, who then introduced me to Mr. McPhee. McPhee reminded me of Dan Murphy. He was big: over six feet tall and probably about 225 pounds. He was in his shirtsleeves with the cuffs rolled back.

He asked if I wanted to take my coat off. I did. There were three straight-backed chairs around a small writing desk that had been pulled out into the center of the space not occupied by the bed. George Couper had taken one of the chairs. McPhee motioned for me to sit in one of the two vacant chairs but he didn't sit down himself. Instead, he walked toward the window, turned around and stared at me with dark, beady eyes.

"You don't look very old to have had all that experience," he said. The words were ominous but the tone of the voice sounded as though he were making a humorous comment. "How old are you?" he asked.

It was all in the record. He must have known, but I answered quickly. "I'm 24 but I'll be 25 in two and a half months." Then I added, "I'm married and have a son nearly four months old." I figured that fact would impress him with my maturity. He laughed and said, "Good. That's a start. I've got six daughters, but no sons — yet."

I thought the interview was for the purpose of convincing McPhee that I was the man he should hire. It was apparent to me very shortly that decision had been made. He and Mr. Couper began telling me what they expected of me, how I was to seek Couper's advice on all matters of concern, and to be available to travel with Mr. McPhee to the state Capitol soon after I reported for duty on Monday, September 3. It was now mid-August,

and I had thought since school didn't begin until mid-September, I would have 30 days to give Hamilton's notice, buy a better car, and find a place to live in San Luis Obispo. That's when I learned for the first time that Cal Poly was "different" — not only in such things as working hours for its faculty and staff, but in almost all other commonly held concepts of what went on in an academic community.

At that meeting McPhee became a missionary selling me his ideas of how this new college, which had been grafted onto a 40-year-old technical school, was going to offer a four-year degree program that was "upside-down" from the way curricula are arranged at other colleges.

"We are going to have students take practical learn-by-doing courses in the fields of their majors as freshmen. All the theory and background courses can come later, after they have learned how to use their hands as well as their heads. If a student finds he can't afford to stay four years to get a degree, he'll be able to drop out at the end of the second year with a vocational certificate or at the end of the third year with a technical certificate. Even if he only finishes one year, he'll be qualified to get a job using skills he has learned as a freshman."

It was obvious I was listening to a man who had positive ideas, knew how to sell them, and knew how to make them work. What he was proposing was indeed topsy-turvy, but it made lots of sense during a time in which many students couldn't afford a four-year college stay and needed to acquire job skills that would open employment opportunities for them. I had already learned from Bob Magness that Cal Poly was an all-male school.

"Why don't you have girls at Cal Poly?" I asked not so innocently, thinking we could probably double the enrollment overnight with that simple change.

"They tried it from 1903 to 1929, but it didn't work. A technical college is no place for a girl. I don't want to put in the kind of programs you would have to offer to attract girls. Besides, most of our students come from outside the county of San Luis Obispo, and we have dormitories for boys only. Girls would complicate the situation. Someday maybe, but not for a long time," he concluded. He was right. It didn't happen very soon — not until 1956.

Back in San Diego my announcement that I had been hired at Cal Poly and we had to be there before September 3rd gave Mary mixed feelings. She was glad I had a new job in the field of my ambition. She was even willing and happy to take off into unknown territory with her little family, but having less than two weeks to get ready to leave all your relatives and friends was not what she had anticipated.

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When I told Bob Magness I was going to work at his alma mater, he congratulated me and said, "You'll never regret it. It's a great place." Then he winked at Mary and said, "Don't you think your Model A coupe is a little old and small for the trip?"

I agreed. "Mary wants a car big enough to carry the baby's bassinet on the rear seat. Can you help me find one that won't be a lemon but won't cost too much?" I asked.

What Bob found for us was a 1938 Graham-Paige, a big, powerful eight-cylinder, light-green, four-door sedan. The owner wanted \$400 but I offered \$300 cash and it was a deal. Bob had road-tested it and assured me that it was a great buy. He was right. It was a great car and we kept it for another ten years. We would have kept it longer but the Graham-Paige Motor Company had gone out of business and replacement parts were no longer available, which made repairs difficult. By coincidence we discovered on arriving in San Luis Obispo that my adviser, George Couper, had an exact duplicate of that car—same color, same model. The cars were such a rarity, Couper commented, "That must say something about the way we both think."

With the four-month-old baby in the bassinet in the rear seat alongside Mary, my mother-in-law and me in the front seat, and all our clothes in suitcases and boxes in the car's big trunk, we left for that faraway place with the funny name, San Luis Obispo.

The hills beyond Santa Barbara were golden brown and the ocean was a bright blue along one of the most picturesque stretches of Highway 101. Going inland at Gaviota Pass we left the ocean and journeyed through beautiful range land, dotted with grazing cattle, for the last 100 miles of our journey. We came in sight of the ocean again near Pismo Beach and realized that the high fog blotting out the sun had cooled the weather considerably. Turning inland again about four miles north of Pismo Beach, we left the fog and came again into bright sunshine. We wound our way along the two-lane highway that followed San Luis Creek, the stream that comes down from Cuesta Grade and the Santa Margarita Mountains to run through the residential and business district of San Luis Obispo before it empties into the sea at Avila Beach. Our first sight of the town was when the highway broke out of the winding hills into a large flat valley with a range of beautiful mountains forming a backdrop. It was just like the view photos in Bob Magness' Cal Poly yearbook. It looked even better in natural color.

That first night we stayed in the Roberts Hotel, a frame building that once stood where the Fremont Theater now stands. There were only three

hotels in the city limits, and this was the least expensive. Mary, the baby, and I had one room, and Mary's mother had a room down the hall. The bathrooms were also down the hall. Mary made a bed for the baby in the bottom drawer of the dresser, with the drawer pulled out partially and resting on a chair. It looked every bit as comfortable as the swaybacked bed, but we were tired and went promptly to sleep.

A terrible bellowing noise that seemed right outside our window startled us wide awake and scared us simultaneously. Jumping out of bed in the dark, I crashed into Bobby Jr.'s makeshift bed, barking my shins but fortunately doing no other damage other than waking the baby and making him cry. The bellowing noise continued for some time. When I called the office to find out what the terrible noise was all about, the clerk responded, "Oh, that's just 'Ferdinand the Bull.' That's the town's fire siren that awakens the volunteer firemen. The fire isn't near here. You can go back to sleep."

In 1940, we discovered the next day, San Luis Obispo not only still used volunteer firemen, it still had gas streetlights. These were lighted every night by a man on a bicycle who pedaled around town, raising a long pole with a lighter on the end to ignite the gas mantles.

Mary's desire to find a brand-new unfurnished apartment was almost fulfilled. What we found was a nearly new unfurnished one-bedroom, one-bath duplex located on Hathway Street, convenient to the campus. Its owner was Miss Anita Hathway, who by coincidence taught Spanish at San Diego High School and only spent summers with her sisters in San Luis Obispo. We were able to rent it, ready to move in, for \$25 per month. I could walk to school and Mary could use the car. Between the back porch and the back yard, where the clotheslines were located, was a wooden bridge that spanned a small creek, bone-dry the last part of August. We found later that when heavy winter rains swelled that creek, our bedroom, cantilevered out over the surging water, gave us the impression we were living on a houseboat. We also soon discovered that we were located just one block from the main line of the Southern Pacific railroad at the junction of what was called the "Hathway Siding." Here both passenger and freight trains going in opposite directions would wait while the train with the right-of-way would pass in the opposite direction. It took some time to become used to the rumble of long freights, which actually rattled our windows as the multiple diesel and steam engines strove to get up speed enough to take the 100-car trains up over the Cuesta Grade — the toughest climb on the coastal route.

Mary's mother was a great help in getting us settled and watching the baby while Mary did a hundred and one things. A phone call to the Ace Trans-

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fer and Storage Company in San Diego had started our furniture and household goods on the way. I thought the bill for \$100 was exorbitant – but then, after all we could now afford such luxury. I was soon to be making \$200 per month, or \$2,000 for a ten-month academic year. I wouldn't have any income for two months each summer, but we figured I could get a part-time newspaper job as a reporter doing vacation relief work. Besides, the job description seemed like it would be more fun than work – just like starting as a freshman at a new campus. What an adventure.

LESSON TWO *While change may be a source of frustration and may perplex even kings, never fear it but observe that all results we call progress are the result of change.*

# FINDING YOUR WAY SLO-STYLE

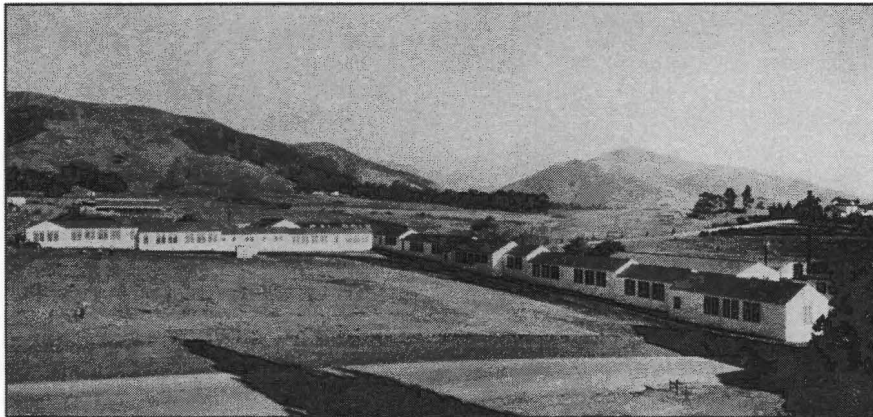
IT WAS NOT YET eight in the morning of the Tuesday following Labor Day, 1940. We were still staying in the tourist cabins at the foot of Cuesta Grade, just north of San Luis Obispo's city limits. The "we" included Mary's mother, Mrs. Paxton, our four-month-old baby, Bobby Jr., my wife, Mary, and me. Mrs. Paxton was going to baby-sit while Mary drove me to the Cal Poly campus for my first day on a new job.

We pulled carefully out onto Highway 101, looking apprehensively up the winding Cuesta Grade for the runaway trucks the tourist cabin proprietor had so vividly described the night before.

"Sometimes," he'd said, "they go by here so fast they're just a blur and they go right down Monterey Street, blaring their horns, unable to stop for boulevard stop signs or anything else. Sometimes they successfully negotiate the right turn jog which takes them past the Old Mission, but two blocks further they can never make the sharp left turn at the point where the street dead-ends in the creek." Then he added, "Sometimes for months there'll be wrecked trucks hanging there, half-in and half-out of the creek, as a warning to other truck drivers to check their brakes."

It was no divided freeway in 1940, just a two-lane road with a hard-to-see faded white stripe separating north- and southbound traffic. The highway didn't bypass the town but went through the entire city as Monterey Street on the north end of town and Higuera Street on the south. We had been told that the best way to get to the Cal Poly campus was to go south on Monterey Street until we got to Toro Street, turn right and follow Toro about four blocks and it would run into Hathway Street. Hathway Street would take us back toward the campus. My informant had said we should proceed on Hathway until it crossed the Southern Pacific tracks and then make a left turn onto California Blvd., which would lead us to the main Cal Poly buildings sitting on a hill. "California Boulevard dead-ends in front of the administration building — you can't miss it," he had said.

He was absolutely right, we couldn't miss it. As soon as we turned onto California Blvd. we knew we were on an entrance road to something important. Both sides of the street were lined with well-trimmed palm trees. On the left was the Southern Pacific railroad right-of-way, double-tracked



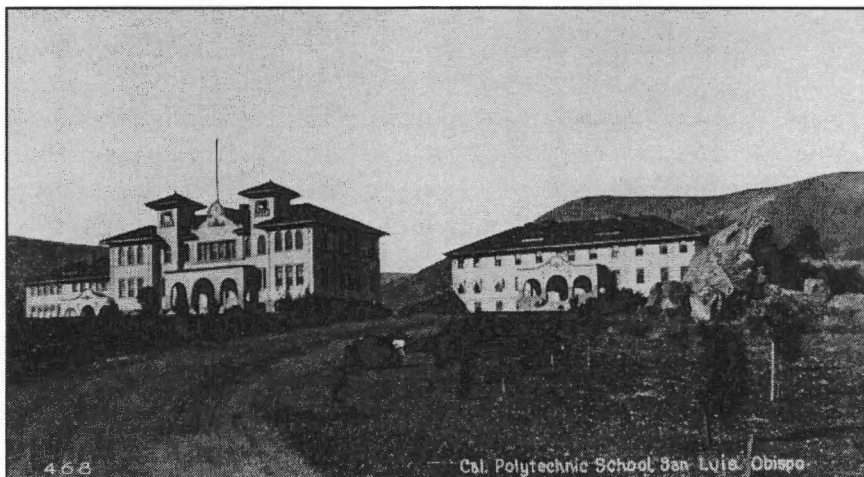
*This is the campus and farm view REK saw his first day on the job in September, 1940.*

for a half-mile or so with spur tracks leading to a sugarbeet loading tower at the Hathway Siding. On the right for several blocks there was a scattering of nice single-family residences, with as many vacant lots as houses. Just on the edge of the campus boundary was Becker's feed store, with loading platforms and a large warehouse.

As we passed Becker's feed store, we turned right onto an unnamed street that proceeded past three identical wood-frame bungalows, obviously residences for college staff members. Turning left, we entered another unnamed street that could have been called "Dormitory Row," since it fronted four dorms, two on either side of the street. Jespersen Hall and Heron Hall were on the left, and Deuel Dorm and Chase Hall were on the right. The next building on the right was simply named "Cafeteria." To the left we could see the grass of the athletic field, football goalposts and wooden stands with California Blvd. and the railroad tracks behind them.

An immense (compared to the other buildings we had seen) square white stucco building bore the name "Natatorium," and was just across the street from the athletic field. Connected to it by a one-story building was a two-story building bearing the name "Crandall Gymnasium." So far it appeared that the best facilities Cal Poly had were dedicated to physical education and athletics. The football field wasn't very impressive compared to the new San Diego State College stadium, built by the WPA to seat 6,000 spectators. I doubted the Cal Poly stands would seat more than 2,000. Since I knew that my new duties included handling athletic publicity I remarked to Mary, "It shouldn't be hard to fill those stands even if the student body is only a little over 700 men."

At that point Mary asked, "What are they doing here on the right?" It



*The first three buildings on Polytechnic campus, shown in a pre-1910 postcard from Dean Elgin Knott's collection.*

was not yet 8 A.M. but workmen were busy on the job, ripping down the studs of what had once been a two-story frame and stucco building. The debris was being loaded onto dump trucks, and dust was flying.

"That must have been one of the original 1903 buildings we saw in year-book photographs of three buildings sitting on this hilltop in front of us. Very soon there will be only two," I replied.

We pulled up in front of the building that had been the center structure in the group of three original buildings. I got out of the car, kissed Mary good-bye and said, "Why don't you try to get back here about 5 P.M. I'm going to find George Couper and get squared away. He said to meet him in his office soon after 8 o'clock Tuesday morning. Maybe by the time you get back this evening, I'll have an office and a telephone number."

I went up the steps and into the foyer of the Administration Building, hoping to find a directory of offices. I was not prepared for the rather shabby, dismal appearance of this not quite 40-year-old building. There was no switchboard, no information desk, just a series of doors, mostly unidentified, except by number. Just then a young woman, who I assumed was a secretary, came out of one of the doors. She evidently could discern my bewilderment. "Are you looking for someone?" she asked.

"Yes, I'm looking for Mr. George Couper," I responded.

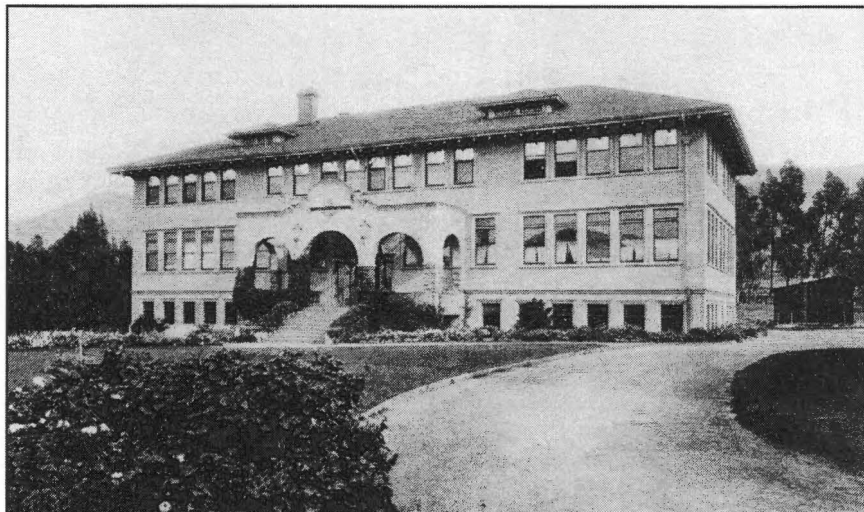
"Oh, Mr. Couper and Mr. McPhee and all the Bureau staff members have already moved next door to the Ag Education building," she informed me.

"This is the Administration building, isn't it?" I asked.

"Yes and no. It is still called that but most administrative offices have moved already. As soon as the workmen are finished tearing down the old classroom next door, they're going to start on this building. It may be a few months yet, since we have to find space to put existing offices and activities before a new building can be built on this site," she explained.

Thanking her for the information, I went out a door opposite the direction I had come in. Standing on the steps, looking up the hill to the east, I could see a large letter "P" on the mountainside. Directly in front of me stretched a block-long row of wooden buildings that stairstepped up the gradually climbing campus terrain and connected perpendicularly at the eastern end with another row of similar wooden buildings running north and south for what appeared to be the distance of a normal city block. On the opposite side of the street from these buildings, which appeared to be individual classrooms or laboratories, there were more wooden buildings, some of which looked older and more decrepit than the one that was being torn down. A two-lane road ran up the hillside, and off either side of that street were various farm buildings. Almost directly behind the several old buildings that faced the L-shaped classroom/laboratory building I could see a large fenced pasture with maybe fifty dairy cows grazing. Further up the hill and to the left I could see what appeared to be a poultry yard with flocks of white chickens. I had never seen an agricultural college before, but it was immediately obvious that ag students at Cal Poly weren't going to get all their knowledge out of books.

Glancing at my wristwatch, I realized I didn't have much time if I wanted to be at Couper's office "shortly after 8 o'clock." To the north of where I was standing was a building identified by a sign as "Ag Education." It looked quite similar to the building I had just left, although the entrance steps and the roofline were different. As soon as I stepped into this building I knew I was in the administration building despite the fact that it bore another name. There was a switchboard manned by a pleasant-looking young lady with very dark, medium-length hair, a perky manner, a pleasant voice, and a nice smile. Her name, I learned later, was Rosita Fischer, and she worked on the switchboard only occasionally now because she was the unofficial recorder and the keeper of supplies for faculty members. When I inquired as to where I would find Mr. Couper, she responded, "Up that stairway to your right. He's in room 205." I knew that George Couper was an assistant to Mr. McPhee, in McPhee's Bureau of Agricultural Education role, so I expected him to have a nice office with a secretary. He had no secretary. When I



*The Domestic Science building, renamed Ag Education by President McPhee, who had his office on the top floor.*

knocked on the door of Room 205, Couper's voice came back to me, "Come in." He sat behind a desk that was literally covered with paper and photo-enlargements to what looked like a depth of six inches. He had his back to me and was pounding away on an old Royal typewriter. Behind his typing table stood a tall old-fashioned table lamp with a green shade that put maximum light directly on the paper on which he was writing. Without looking to see who had come in, he said, "Just a minute till I finish this story."

I turned around and looked for some place to sit. There were several chairs but each of them held papers, photos, and books. I just stood and watched him peck with his index fingers about as fast as I could with all ten. It was fascinating to see how fast he could go with the two-finger method, all the while watching the keyboard, as though he didn't know where the keys were located.

Suddenly he stopped, whipped the paper out of the typewriter, and swiveled his chair around so he could lay the newly typed story in the top of a three-tiered basket marked "outgoing." Recognizing me, he stood up and extended his hand.

"Welcome, Kennedy. I've set aside the morning to orient you to your various tasks and to introduce you to some of the people you'll be working with. But first let's talk a little bit about your various responsibilities."

I had brought a briefcase with me. Taking out a pad and pencil, I said, "I had better take notes." For the next half-hour I thought I was back in school

listening to a lecturer on the practical aspects of how to get along on a job in which you have three or more bosses.

"One of the reasons you were hired, Kennedy, is because your employment record and your letters of recommendation showed you could do a lot of different things all at the same time. I don't want to scare you, but we hired a young journalist for this job last year, and he quit before the year was up. He told me before he left for his new job with the United Press bureau in Reno that our Cal Poly job was an 'impossible' assignment and we needed to hire three different men to do what we expected one man to do."

Couper paused and looked penetratingly at me to see if I was flinching with this revelation. He continued, "We are operating this college on a very thin budget, and we can't afford three people to do the work that needs to be done — but if you can stick with it and succeed, things will get better and we'll be able to hire more people and divide the work up. You are in on the ground floor. It is really like we are just starting a new college with a new philosophy, new methods, and lots of potential for the future."

He opened a desk drawer and took out an envelope. As he handed it to me he said, "There are four keys in there and a key authorization card, which you need to sign in the four places after the number of each key." I signed the card in four places and handed it back to him. "What do the keys open?" I asked.

Couper, a man slightly smaller than myself, appeared to be in his mid-forties. While I checked the numbers on the keys to see that they matched the numbers typed on the card, he dialed one number on his phone and in a moment said, "Rosita, Mr. Kennedy and I are going down to the publications office and into the print shop. Then I'm going to take him on a tour of the campus to meet some of the people he'll be working with. If anyone wants me, I'll be back in my office shortly before noon."

"That's one of the first things you need to know about your job, Kennedy. Always keep the switchboard informed of your whereabouts. Nobody here except the president has a private secretary. So the rule applies to everyone: faculty, staff, administrators. If you leave your office, tell the switchboard where you can be reached or how soon you'll be back," Couper advised.

We went down the stairs to the first-floor lobby and stopped at the switchboard, where Couper introduced me officially to Rosita and told her what my job was to be and where my office was located. "His phone number will be the same as the one Ernie Foster had," he told her. She responded with a smile and said, "Well, good luck, Mr. Kennedy." The way she accented

the word "luck" made me look at her carefully to see if I had been given a hidden message. She was smiling pleasantly, so I figured I was just being overly sensitive about the earlier revelation of the short tenure of my predecessor.

Turning away from the switchboard, Couper led me down a wide, dark stairway to the basement. There seemed to be only three doors off this small basement hallway lighted by one bare bulb in the ceiling. Couper walked to the door numbered with a painted white "3" on the very dark brown wooden door, and opened it with a key. "Better check to see if your key opens this door. It's your office — the office for the yearbook, the school paper, the journalism classroom — and the typing classroom combined," he explained as he switched on the lights.

It was a large room, probably 30 by 40 feet, with several posts supporting ceiling beams. Along the east wall was a high row of windows like transoms through which the morning sun was casting its rays on the dark, oiled wood floor. One ray shone on a small wooden desk in the far corner, highlighting it like a spotlight. It was a cheery sight, and somehow I knew instantly that I was going to like that corner work space even though it was obvious there would be no privacy between teacher and students. It was the nearest thing I, a city boy, had ever seen to a one-room rural schoolhouse.

Directly in front of the teacher's desk were three rows of student armchairs. I counted them quickly and figured there were 18. Behind them and extending to the depth of the room were typing tables with typewriters and straight chairs. It looked as though there were 10 or 12 typing stations. On each table was a typewriter, a typing copy stand, and a typing practice book that looked like the one I'd used when I'd learned to type in the ninth grade.

"You didn't say anything about my being responsible for teaching typing," I said to Couper with an obvious note of pique in my voice.

"Oh, you don't have to teach typing. That's handled by Howie O'Daniels, he's the head football and basketball coach. He also runs the student store and teaches accounting and typing. You'll be doing a lot of work with him on athletic publicity, so I'll try to get you two together before the day is over," explained Couper. Then he added, "The way he teaches the typing class is by 'independent study,' so you won't be bothered by having Howie in here lecturing to a class." How true that was, I found out in the months and years to come. Howie never bothered me, true, but somehow the typing students never got the word that I wasn't, somehow, responsible for their typing education. It took me a while to figure it out, but it

appeared that 90 percent of the typing students were athletes, mostly football and basketball, and most of them got As, which had to be based on effort and not ability. The system was simple: Howie met them the first day of class, told them to read the book, do the exercises, and put their typed work in the file folders, one for each student, that were kept in the drawer of the typing tables. Howie would periodically check the file folders to check the students' progress, and he'd be present when they took the final exercise on the last day of class. He also gave them their final grade.

It was indeed "independent study" except for one thing: Since I was frequently present at my desk, generally typing a publicity release, it was the most natural thing in the world for the students to query me on all the technical functions of the typewriter, such as how to set the stops, adjust the margins, align the paper, use the tabulator, change the ribbon, etc. They were not reluctant to ask for interpretation of the exercise book's simple instructions. Such requests usually began with a shout from the back row, "Hey, Coach" — athletes seem to call all teachers coach — "how can I figure 'words per minute' when I don't have a stopwatch?" But despite the fact that their interruptions always seemed to come when I had a deadline to meet, I enjoyed helping these athlete-students even though they weren't my students. It gave me an opportunity to know some of the athletes better, and that enabled me eventually to train some of them to do athletics publicity as part of a student news bureau. At least one of them went on to become a professional sports publicist.

The good news that I wasn't going to have to teach typing was followed by several other revelations that were somewhat more threatening.

"In these locked cabinets you'll find all the cameras and photo supplies you'll use for yearbook, school newspaper, and publicity photographs," Couper announced.

"Do we have a school photographer?" I innocently asked.

"Yes and no," replied Couper. "Mr. Aston, a commercial photographer with a studio downtown, does all our developing and printing on a contract basis. You'll have to learn how to use the various cameras and teach some of your student editors how to use them, too. I'll show you how to operate the 4 x 5 Speed Graphic, the 5 x 7 Graflex and the 3 1/4 x 4 1/4 Graflex, the 35mm and the Bell and Howell 16mm motion picture cameras. But we'll do that later," he advised.

"Now I want to take you next door and show you the print shop." With that Couper flipped off the lights, locked the office door, and beckoned for



*This is the first "learn by doing" class REK taught when he supervised the 1940 El Mustang staff.*

me to follow. We walked out of the basement, up a flight of stairs to the ground level, and around to the north side of the building. There he opened a ground-floor door and we stepped into a basement print shop, probably twice the size of the space occupied by the editorial offices and journalism/typing classroom. My familiarity with commercial printing plants made it easy for me to recognize the several platen presses, three Linotype machines, and a large flatbed press that obviously could handle a school newspaper. Around the walls were typecases for hand-set headline type and a paper room in which I could see large packages of newsprint stacked on shelves. Make-up stones with metal chases into which metal type was locked page by page occupied most of the remainder of the floor space.

"Who is in charge of this operation?" I asked.

"Well, Mr. Ben Preuss Sr. used to be the print shop teacher, but we no longer offer any printing courses, so he only works for us on a part-time basis, setting type and making up pages for various publications like my *Future Farmers* magazine and the school paper," Couper replied.

Couper went on to explain that Mr. Preuss had his own commercial printing plant downtown and only came out to the campus to work by the hour on specific typesetting jobs. "Since the school newspaper uses the print shop most often, it is your responsibility. You will be able to hire students to do all the work except Linotype operations and pay them from a National Youth Administration payroll at 35 cents an hour," Couper explained.

My expression of concern for this new revelation must have been obvi-

ous. Couper immediately added, "Don't worry about it. Several of the students know how to hand-set head type, how to make up and lock up pages, and how to run the flatbed press on which the newspaper is printed. They'll teach you all you need to know so you can pass that knowledge on to new students in future years." Then he added, "Someday I hope we'll start teaching printing again and have some printing teachers here to take charge. In the meantime, you're in charge."

We had been on our orientation tour for only about an hour, and already I had acquired two new fields in which I was going to have to become proficient: photography and printing.

Couper looked at his watch and said, "I told Howie O'Daniels and Capt. Deuel that we'd come down to the athletic office at 9 o'clock. Let's lock up here and walk to the gymnasium." As we walked down the hill toward where I had seen the sign "Crandall Gymnasium," Couper explained that Poly really didn't have any full-time coaches or physical education teachers. He had already told me about Howie O'Daniels' multiple jobs.

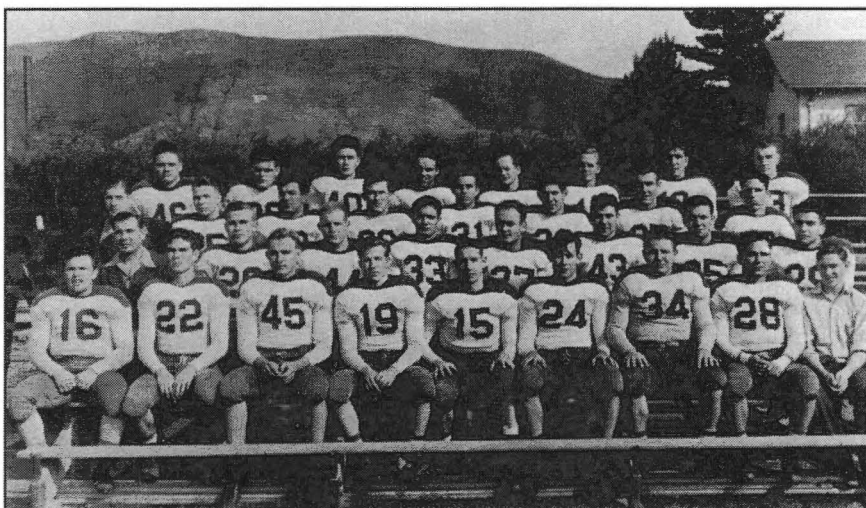
"Howie has an assistant coach, Don DeRosa, who handles the backfield and other miscellaneous coaching jobs in addition to teaching English," Couper said. He said Capt. Deuel, who had handled military classes no longer offered, was now in charge of the dormitories, the library, and baseball coaching, and was the athletic director. Several other faculty members who taught such courses as public speaking, mathematics, and physics coached track, boxing, wrestling, fencing, and tennis.

O'Daniels and Deuel were sitting at their desks in a very nice large office just off the main entrance into the Natatorium. Both men seemed glad to meet the new man who was going to write sports publicity for their teams. Immediately O'Daniels, a lean, handsome Irishman who had been an outstanding tackle on a winning Santa Clara football team in his college days, told me that I would be responsible for publishing the advance sports publicity booklet on football to be sent to sportswriters within the next two weeks. He handed me biographical sheets of each of his football players, and a folder of photographs of his returning lettermen. He said I needed to get mats made of some of the outstanding players. He had marked an X on the back of those pictures.

Couper interrupted and said, "Better tell Bob about the Goal Post football programs — particularly the need for someone to sell advertising — and also the need for a crew of salesmen to sell the programs in the stands before and during the home games." Then Couper said, "Maybe he should



*This was the entire athletic coaching staff in 1940-41. All four men also had other teaching and administrative jobs. From left: Don DeRosa, Howie O'Daniels, Paul Gifford, Capt. J.C. Deuel.*



*The Mustang football team ended its 1941 season one month before Pearl Harbor. Soon most coaches and team members were in military service.*

#### LEARN BY DOING

come back this afternoon and let you give him all the information he needs on football publicity." With O'Daniels in agreement that I should return after lunch, we took off to go see Harold P. Davidson, music director, and Carl Beck, Poly Royal adviser. Couper said I needed to meet these two men because they would be competing with publications and athletics for the meager funds that the student body made available for extracurricular activities. In answer to how much money the Associated Students allocated to various activities Couper said it was distributed approximately as follows: \$2,000 to athletics, \$750 to the yearbook, \$500 to the newspaper, \$500 to Poly Royal, \$350 to band and glee club, \$750 for general purposes, and a \$150 reserve. I wasn't too concerned about the two publications, because I knew they could be supported by advertising, but I was concerned that nothing was budgeted for publicity. "Don't worry, your biggest expense will be for photographic supplies and student help, and we'll be able to take those costs out of the state budget allocation to the journalism program," Couper explained.

Beck and Davidson shared an office, and we found them together talking over what they had done during the summer. Davidson, a graduate of Pomona College, not only was music director, which included personally directing the marching band, the Men's Glee Club, the Collegian dance band, a quartet and a double quintet called the Majors and the Minors, but he also taught a course in family relations or, as the students called it, sex education. Beck, a former vocational agriculture teacher, taught farm accounting and ag math, and was adviser to Poly Royal, the "country fair on a college campus" that was a college-wide activity the last weekend in April. I liked them both because of their enthusiasm in telling me how important their respective activities were to the students.

Davidson reminded Couper that he had promised to get the Glee Club on the Mutual Don Lee radio network during the year. Couper turned to me and said, "That's another job you just acquired, Kennedy." He then added, "It won't be as difficult as it sounds. The Mutual Network station here, KVEC, has its transmitter on college property. Our lease arrangement requires that they give us 30 minutes of air time once a month on a network hookup. It's your responsibility to see that we have programs for that air time." Couper added, "The man you need to see is Aram Rejebian, program director at KVEC, or Les Hacker, station manager. Deal with Rejebian if you can; Hacker is not too cooperative." Now I had acquired another special area of concern: radio programming.

Beck spoke up and asked Couper if he had taken me out on the farm yet to see the livestock. When Couper said we hadn't had time, Beck said, "Better make time, Lyman Bennion is counting on the new publicity man getting lots of publicity for the ag division at both the Cow Palace show in South San Francisco and the Great Western Livestock show in Los Angeles. Lyman thinks we've got some grand champion material this year."

"That's where we're headed now, to see Lyman, and get a line on what the livestock show schedule is for the year," Couper responded. The tour of the agriculture units, which were spread over the several-thousand-acre farm, took the rest of the morning. We didn't run into Lyman Bennion, head of the meat animals department, but some of the student assistants said they expected him at the beef unit right after lunch. Couper said, "Let's go have lunch and then find Lyman."

During lunch Couper gave me a general review of what to expect in sending out advance publicity on livestock that was to be sent to a livestock show, particularly emphasizing the need for me to learn how to use the Speed Graphic and the Graflex cameras in taking posed livestock photos. "It's not easy to be a good livestock photographer, but we've got some men on the faculty here who will gladly teach you how the animals must be posed. In fact, if you'll just get set up and let them pose the animals and listen for them to say 'now,' you can get some prize-winning photographs. George Drumm, head of the dairy husbandry department, is probably the best dairy cattle judge in the country, and when he poses animals all you have to do is make sure you've got the animal centered in the viewfinder and snap the shutter when George tells you to."

After lunch we went back to Couper's office so he could make some phone calls and locate Lyman Bennion and some of the other ag teachers he wanted me to meet. Before we could leave, his phone rang. It was McPhee. He wanted both of us in his office immediately. The president's office was around the corner from Couper's. Alice Daniels, the president's secretary, greeted us. Couper introduced us. She said, "Go right in, he's waiting for you."

McPhee was sitting behind his desk, but he got up and came around to shake my hand and ask, "Well, Kennedy, what do you think? Can we make something out of this place? Have you toured the farm? Has Couper shown you where you'll hang your hat? Has he answered all your questions? Are you ready to go to work?" With that last question, he went back to his swivel chair and sat down, motioning me to sit in a chair to one side of his desk.



*Students wearing Cal Poly jackets exhibit their Angus cattle before President McPhee and State Director of Education Roy Simpson. Early '40s.*

I didn't know which of these rapid-fire questions I should attempt to answer first, but the last one was freshest in my mind. "I'm raring to go to work," I said.

"Good," he exclaimed. "I've got a special assignment for you. Ed Everett, assistant chief of the Bureau, is going to go to Sacramento by train tonight and I want you to go with him. He and Byron McMahan, another Bureau assistant, already in Sacramento, can teach you all you need to know about lobbying legislators."

McPhee didn't ask if I wanted to go, if it would be convenient for me to go at this time, or if there were any problems with my leaving my wife and child in a strange town after being here only a few days. It was not stated as a direct command, but I took it to mean that I was being ordered to go, and I did not raise any objection.

I found out some years later that had I raised the question about leaving my wife and child alone in a strange town, McPhee would have apologetically said, "I'm sorry, I didn't think about that; we'll arrange to do it some other time." He was always considerate about family matters, but no other excuse was sufficient to place something in a higher priority than Cal Poly business.

## FINDING YOUR WAY SLO-STYLE

I was taken down the hall to meet Ed Everett, who gave me all the particulars on how I was to get travel advance funds from the business office, and make my train reservation and my reservation at the Senator Hotel in Sacramento. Couper called off all the other campus contacts he had made for the day, including my afternoon session with Coach O'Daniels, and took me in a state car to the train station to get my ticket and then back to the tourist cabins so I could break the news to Mary that I was leaving that night for Sacramento and would return on the train Saturday at 2 A.M. Mary was not enthusiastic about my leaving, and did not understand the necessity for me to learn how to lobby. In view of all the other things I had to learn how to do in order to succeed on this new job, I wasn't too sure I understood either.

Both Ed Everett and Byron McMahon had worked many years with Julian A. McPhee as regional supervisors and assistants to the Chief. They took me to the state capitol building and introduced me to secretaries, administrative assistants, and legislators, and showed me their system for keeping track of legislation. It was hard for me to understand why a publicity man and journalism teacher should learn how to lobby. I could not have been an effective salesman for Cal Poly. I hardly knew enough about it yet to answer even the most elementary questions. But Byron McMahon answered my doubts with the simple expression, "Just trust McPhee. He knows what he's doing. If he thinks you ought to know about how Sacramento operates, he has a reason that will make sense someday." And it did indeed make sense — eventually.

LESSON THREE *Heavy responsibilities may appear excessive, but undertake them with enthusiastic desire to learn by experience and you'll discover great new opportunities.*

# STUDENT JOURNALISTS CAN TEACH TOO

**T**HERE I SAT on the platform of Cal Poly's auditorium, facing several hundred new students at the opening assembly of the fall quarter, 1940. I had been invited by Bill Himmelman, president of the student body, and told by President McPhee to be there. I was to be given an opportunity to recruit students to work on the college newspaper and yearbook and encourage other students to sign up for a news bureau I was creating to help me accomplish some of the publicity work that went with my job as the new journalism teacher. Himmelman had suggested that I make my remarks humorous because I would be competing with Coach O'Daniels, Music Director Davidson, and Poly Royal Advisor Carl Beck to get students to sign up for our respective extracurricular activity programs.

Himmelman had just introduced President McPhee for what he said would be McPhee's traditional message to new students. His message was short and to the point. It included a short description of how Cal Poly's educational program was different because it stressed "learning by doing" and "earning while learning" opportunities, and an "upside-down" curriculum that enabled students to drop out at any time and get a job because they would have learned from the very first day skills that would make them employable. He said they should study hard and make good grades. Then he gave them what the faculty called his one-two-three punch. He said, "There are three things which you must not do while a Cal Poly student. If it is reported to me that you have done any one of these three things, I will expel you from school. Do not get drunk on campus or get arrested for drunkenness in town. Do not go to any of the several whorehouses that are operating in this area. Do not steal from the school or any of your classmates." There were no questions asked about details and no answers given as to how the guilt of a student was to be determined.

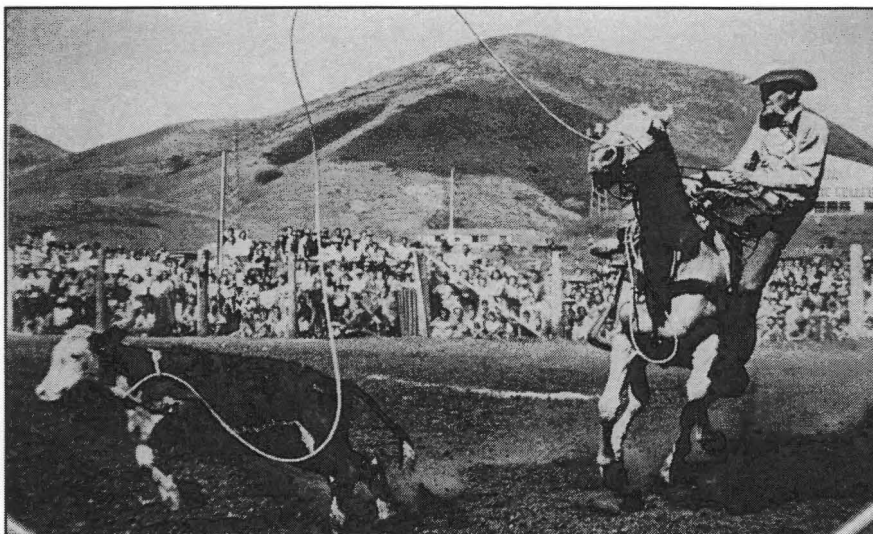
I cringed as I listened to O'Daniels and Davidson make disparaging remarks about each other, while the students roared in appreciation at what they understood to be good-natured rivalry. O'Daniels was inviting any student, whether or not he had ever played football, to come out for the team. Davidson didn't go quite so far in an open-ended invitation; he wanted any



*REK competed with Davidson, Beck, and O'Daniels in getting students to sign up for practice journalism instead of music, Poly Royal, or athletics.*

student who could play any musical instrument to come try out for the band or the dance orchestra. But Davidson's invitation to those interested in singing in the glee club did not stress ability to read music. "If you like to sing, come try out," he said.

Carl Beck introduced Bill Bradley Jr., superintendent of Poly Royal, who in turn invited students to volunteer to work on the big "country fair" to be held the last week in April and to which they would invite their parents, brothers, sisters, and friends, to come see what they were learning. My invitation was as open-ended as Davidson's had been. I hoped some students who had experience working on their high school newspaper, yearbook, or magazine, and anyone else interested in writing, editing, advertising, or photography, would sign up for "practice journalism," a course in which they could earn from 1 to 3 units of credit merely by working under my supervision on any of several projects: the weekly *El Mustang*, the annual *El Rodeo*, the *Green & Gold* football program, the new student news bureau, or a radio workshop that would produce a weekly show to be aired on KVEC. This last arrangement had been approved by Aram Rejebian, program director of KVEC, San Luis Obispo's only radio station in 1940. Rejebian had worked with our electrical engineering department to install remote connections to various spots on the campus and farm from which we could do live broadcasts. I didn't make any disparaging remarks about my colleagues and I didn't get any laughs. But I did say that students working on publications would have lots of fun and they might learn something. That got giggles if not belly laughs.



*Such Poly Royal crowd-pleasing events as the rodeo gave photojournalism students like Cas Szukalski the opportunity to produce prize-winning shots.*

That first year's experience teaching journalism to agricultural and engineering students did fluctuate from giggles to belly laughs, with a few episodes bordering on tears. The first student I met was Roy Brophy, who had been selected by the Student Publications Board to be editor of *El Mustang* in 1940-41.<sup>1</sup>

Roy, an air conditioning and refrigeration major, had worked on the paper before and was familiar with the printing operations. Roy was a full head taller than I and four years younger. He also thought he knew more than I did about publishing the weekly newspaper, and at times I was sure he was right.

Roy was a good editor and a good photographer. Mechanically inclined, he could run the flatbed press, a temperamental, ancient hand-fed model always in need of repair. Roy was even a good manager; he recruited a crew of aeronautical engineering students skilled at mechanical processes who

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1. Roy Brophy served in Naval Intelligence in World War II, returned to Cal Poly after the war, and asked my advice about a career in journalism. I suggested he transfer to San Jose State and major in journalism. He did so and graduated, married, and became very successful as a building contractor. He was appointed by Gov. Reagan to the State College Board of Trustees, and served two eight-year terms, including several years as chairman. He was named by Gov. Deukmejian to the UC Board of Regents. He had earlier served on local school boards, elementary through junior college; the scope of his school board experience is unique.

#### STUDENT JOURNALISTS CAN TEACH TOO

overhauled the press at National Youth Administration wages of 35 cents an hour.

Roy's first decision in which I was not in agreement was to change the name of the paper from *El Mustang* to *The Californian*. Artwork and a plate for a new masthead made it official, and we began printing under the new name. I was concerned that the Cal Poly paper would be confused with the statewide paper of almost identical name being published in Sacramento that was promoting an old-age pension scheme that was very controversial at the time. Eventually I convinced editor Brophy and his editorial staff and the publications board that *El Mustang* was a more appropriate name for Cal Poly's paper, and the old name was revived for the winter quarter.

Our first real problem was over something some staff member was alleged to have said to Ben Preuss Sr., our elderly part-time Linotype operator, who had at one time been the printing instructor in charge of all the equipment in the print shop. Ben announced to me that he was quitting. "Don't need to have any smart aleck kids telling me what to do." Besides his business downtown was thriving and we weren't paying him enough. I called print shops and small weekly papers all over the county to see if I could find a replacement. The Paso Robles Press told me about a Mr. Soper, an itinerant Linotype operator and printer who lived in Pasadena and traveled as far north as Paso Robles to pick up part-time work.

For the next two years, Mr. Soper was our man. He arrived on campus every Wednesday, set type, slept in the paper room on top of stacks of newsprint, and worked until the paper went to press on Thursday night. He was a very small, frail man in his late 60s. He ate in the cafeteria with the students. They respected him and never played any tricks on him.

That was more than I could say about my own experiences. I can't say they didn't respect me, but the fact that I was only four or five years older than most of my students, and in appearance as young as many of them, made the relationship one based on the mutual respect of equals rather than the traditional student-teacher relationship. I felt more like a fellow student than a teacher.

My first run-in with the administration over an issue of freedom of the press occurred near the end of the football season. At the beginning of the football season the student body had made arrangements with Southern Pacific to have some rooter trains for games away from home. The first was to San Francisco. Since I had to be present at the game as the sports publicity man, it seemed a good idea that I should be one of the faculty chaper-

## LEARN BY DOING

ones on the rooter train to San Francisco. Cal Poly was an all-male college, but that didn't stop the boys from having convinced a great many local high school girls that this trip on a "faculty-chaperoned" train trip to San Francisco would be fun; how they were able to convince the girls' parents is a mystery.

The trip up was not so bad. But after a victory, the trip back was a nightmare for the several faculty chaperones, of which there were too few. There was drinking, and there was drunkenness, and there was lots of hanky-panky under blankets. I doubt that there was any rape; at least none was reported. I was not asked for a chaperone's report, but I'm sure that some of the older, more mature faculty reported to President McPhee that rooter trains were dangerous. The President cancelled the next scheduled rooter train, which would have taken students to Reno, Nevada.

Brophy wrote an editorial criticizing the administration for using its authority to cancel the scheduled rooter train without consulting with the student leadership, which had made the arrangements. I talked to Brophy about the things I had seen on the previous trip and tried to persuade him to take a different tack, criticizing the students for their less than exemplary conduct and thereby causing what would have been a fun trip to be cancelled. His rationale was that McPhee should have called in the student leadership, persuaded them that they had an obligation to run a tight ship, and since they didn't or couldn't, they — not the president — should cancel any other such scheduled rooter trains.

Brophy's final draft of the proposed editorial was so much better and so much less critical of the administration than his first version that I saw no reason to attempt to stop its publication. Still, I was not surprised the Friday that issue was published to get a call from Alice Daniel, the president's secretary, asking me to come to the president's office immediately.

The President was hot and said immediately that my job as adviser was to see that such editorials critical of the administration were not printed. I told him I understood his concern, and that I agreed with the decision not to have any more rooter trains. "Had I refused to let Brophy publish the editorial," I told McPhee, "particularly after he had rewritten it to accommodate some of my suggested changes, I would have generated a much bigger controversy over the issue of an attempt by the administration to limit the freedom of the press." I had anticipated that McPhee would see the wisdom of my decision to not create a more serious controversy, and would congratulate me. But he didn't see it that way.



*Learn-by-doing creativity and mechanical skill produced this mobile platform for photojournalists J. Reid and Jim Tanji (top) and Cas Szukalski and H. Worley. These students took lots of action photos for publications.*

"As the public relations director your duty is to see that Cal Poly gets good publicity, not bad publicity. I consider it bad when a student editorial criticizes the president for a decision made in the best interest of the future of this school. See that it doesn't happen again," he demanded.

"But, Mr. McPhee," I cried, "I'm not the public relations director when I'm the adviser for the paper — I'm a journalism teacher then. I can't teach principles of journalism in a practical environment while resorting to censorship."

He looked at me like I was some kind of traitor. "There is a difference between being a newspaper reporter and a public relations director," he said. "In your job at Cal Poly you are always the public relations director. You find a way to handle the problem. Just don't let it happen again."

With that statement I knew my job was on the line. I decided not to argue further but to seek wiser counsel. I walked out and down the hall to George Couper's office and told him my dilemma. George, a former newspaper reporter and editor, understood the dilemma, the paradox caused by the ambiguity of conflicting roles. "I've been through it with Julian myself, Bob," he responded. "Just hang in there. He talks tough but he understands the problem better than you think he does. He just wants to impress on you the need for wise counsel with students who are writing critical editorials. You won't get fired for doing your job — and it isn't keeping editorials out of the paper, but getting students to weigh the consequences of their actions and make sure they are right before they publish."

Then Couper disclosed to me that President McPhee was not a great believer in the value of a student newspaper. A previous school paper, the *Polygram*, had been discontinued when McPhee took over control of Cal Poly in 1932 because a limited budget had eliminated printing and almost all programs except those in agriculture and industry. There was no school paper between 1932 and 1938. It was the persuasive efforts of Harry Wine-roth, 1938 student body president, that finally convinced McPhee to permit the experimental publishing of *El Mustang*, on a twice-a-month basis, starting on November 4, 1938. The first editor was Tom McGrath, who soon gave up that job to become editor of the 1939 yearbook, *El Rodeo*.<sup>1</sup>

I considered telling Roy Brophy about my meeting with the President, then discarded it as a bum idea. I knew he might want to write an editorial about it, and then the fat would be in the fire. That experience was a helpful reminder to me in my years as a college administrator of the difficult role that a journalism teacher and school newspaper adviser has in dealing with the issue caused by a basic policy indecision concerning who really is the publisher of a school paper — the students or the administration.

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1. McGrath, who earned a technical certificate from Poly and a degree from Santa Barbara State College, was a teacher and counselor at Cal Poly's Voorhis campus when he quit and went to work as a psychologist-researcher for the Navy. Eventually I helped McPhee convince McGrath to return to Poly as assistant to the president at Cal Poly Pomona; he became dean of students, then assistant to Chancellor Dumke, and finally president of Sonoma State College, before retiring.

#### STUDENT JOURNALISTS CAN TEACH TOO

Thursday nights were always busy in the publications office and print shop. All of the newspaper staff writers were agricultural or industrial students; there were no other majors in 1940. Most of them had more enthusiasm than writing ability. They knew almost nothing about punctuation and grammar; spelling was a skill they assumed they would never need. During the week I would read every story submitted, and frequently would return it to the writer with corrections for rewriting and resubmitting by the Wednesday noon deadline. Sometimes the rewrites would be almost as impossible as the originals, so I would sit at the typewriter and do a rewrite before sending it into the print shop to be set in type. The students would read galley proofs but I had to read them before they were sent back for correction since they seldom caught misspelled words, only garbled sentences. But the really critical proofreading came with the page proofs late Thursday evening. I would come back to the print shop after dinner, help with the page make-up, and then read the page proofs to make certain heads were on the right stories, and that there were no typographical errors that we hadn't caught earlier. Sometimes I wouldn't finish that chore until midnight. After I had put my initials on the last corrected proofs, a student crew would stay on and run the flatbed press, printing about a thousand copies of the four-page papers, which would take them several hours. I would have gone home as soon as the press began to run and normally would be sound asleep when the boys would leave several of the final printed papers on our front porch at 517 Hathway St., which was on the direct route from the campus to the downtown restaurants where the boys would go for an early-morning snack.

One edition I recall vividly featured an article on the front page about the campus fire department manned by a student crew that lived at the station house. The article was illustrated with a panel of photos showing the boys running out of the fire house, pulling up their pants, and jumping aboard the moving fire truck. On the same front page was another article about the arrival on campus of the first contingent of women who were to be trained as welders and aircraft metal workers in a National Defense Training program on campus. The headlines were appropriately descriptive for the respective stories. On Friday morning about 7 A.M. I opened our front door and picked up several copies of *El Mustang* and began to read.

To my dismay, the front-page headline over the panel of photos of the fire crew read, "POLY STUDENTS TAKE DOWN PANTS FOR ARRIVAL OF COEDS." Without waiting for breakfast, I jumped in the car and drove at

breakneck speed the few blocks to the campus and stopped in front of the cafeteria, where the main newspaper distribution box was located. I ran from the car to the box, grabbed a paper, and began looking at the front page. It was okay, just as it had been when I'd read the page proofs before midnight. I grabbed several others and flipped to the front page. They were all OK. Then I heard the laughter. The whole editorial staff and printing crew were standing just around the corner watching me bite on their headline-switching prank, which they'd perpetrated for my exclusive benefit.

That was just a sample of pranks designed to keep me off-balance and nervous. Another happened several years later, when we were doing the last lock-up on yearbook pages that were being packed into the back of a pickup truck that I was going to drive to the Schaurer Printing Studio, in Santa Barbara. Schaurer had given us a good price to print and bind the book if we did all the composition and make-up of pages in our own print shop. I had warned the students a dozen times to be careful and not jar any of the string-tied pages as they gingerly packed them with cardboard protection into the bed of the pickup. Suddenly one of the older and most trusted of my student printers, Emmons Blake, who was carrying a heavy stack of several locked-up pages on a metal tray, tripped and fell headlong to the floor, throwing the loose type and engravings all over the room. I almost went into shock. I immediately yelled to everyone to stand back. "Don't disturb anything, pick it all up very carefully, and we'll get these pages remade." I was down on my hands and knees picking up cuts and type when I realized I was the only one following my orders. Then I heard it. It began as snickers, then guffaws, then a ruckus with students beating on each others' backs as they practically rolled on the floor in glee over my headlong fall into their trap. What Emmons had so artfully dropped was a special collection of used type and cuts destined to be melted down into lead ingots.

Yearbook production is a yearlong project, fraught with many dangers, the most serious being that the book won't make the final deadline and will not be ready for distribution before the end of the school year. That first year I was blessed with an editor, James Pappas, a very conscientious dairy production major who was something of an artist by talent and taste. Jim had picked a good staff and we had lots of good times putting together a first-class yearbook that was a prizewinner among small colleges' efforts. In order to help the boys meet their deadlines and encourage them to work as a team, even far into the night, Mary and I frequently invited them over to the house for dinner and an evening of editorial work. Oftentimes Mary

#### STUDENT JOURNALISTS CAN TEACH TOO

would join in the editorial effort, usually siding with the students against the adviser on matters of artistic layout. Once, after the boys had left, she chided me for being too specific with my instructions. "You don't leave them enough room to be wrong," she said. "You make work out of something that should be fun." When I demanded an example she said, "For example, you even made Jimmy Pappas rewrap and retie the package of photos he was going to take to the Greyhound depot for delivery to the engraver. You would think your way of tying knots is the only right way." I guess that's what you get for having been a Boy Scout and learning to tie a proper square knot.

During the winter quarter of 1941, soon after the February 25 "unlaying" of the cornerstone of the old Administration Building, the razing of the building began in earnest. It didn't take very long for the workmen to tear down the wood and stucco structure and clear the site for new construction. The first phase of new construction involved excavating to accommodate a basement that was to be only partially below ground level on the north end. Alex Madonna, a young man who had just recently started construction contracting, was the low bidder on the excavation job. His dirt-moving crew soon ran into some boulders they couldn't budge. Where I sat at my desk in the basement of the Ag Education building, my back was to the excavation activity, with just the foundation of the old Ag Ed building between me and the new construction.

One day a great explosion occurred that knocked my swivel chair out from under me. I fell to the floor. It seemed as though the noise continued to vibrate inside the publications office for some time, but probably it was just inside my head. Madonna's crew had used dynamite charges to dislodge the boulders, but packed too much in the charge, which sent rocks the size of a man's head clear over the top of the two-story Ag Education building to damage cars parked on the other side. By some miracle no one was hurt.

I was greatly interested in the construction of the new building because I had been given an opportunity to review the plans and suggest changes to the wing that was to house a new printing plant and offices for all the publications and for several new faculty members who were to teach printing and journalism. Construction went ahead rapidly, and by April of 1941 scaffolding had been erected around what was to be the clock tower. As the college's official photographer I had already taken campus views from almost every angle imaginable. I decided one day that the vantage point from the very top of the clock tower, which could be reached by ladders that led up to the scaffolding, would be an ideal spot from which to take a series of

photos that would give a 360-degree view of the campus. It was just a week before the scheduled 1941 Poly Royal, which I had been publicizing widely throughout the state and nation without ever having seen the event.

It was a very warm spring day. I had a late-afternoon practice journalism lab scheduled for 3 P.M. but I decided sometime after lunch that the day was ideal for taking photos. Taking several cameras with me and plenty of film, I climbed to the top of the scaffolding and finally up the last ladder until I was seated on the highest point of what was to become the tower roof. I must have spent at least two hours there, in the direct sunshine, taking photos from all angles. When I came down from the tower and into the coolness of my basement office, I felt like I was getting a chill.

During the lab I had contact over a two-hour period with a couple dozen students. Several of them noted that my face was flushed and they asked, "Are you all right?" When Mary came to pick me up at 5 P.M., she, too, noted that I was flushed in the face. I had been coughing during the lab period and blamed it on too much spring air, bringing on a hay fever attack. I asked Mary to drive around by the infirmary so I could see the school doctor. "Maybe he can give me something for my hay fever," I said. I walked into the infirmary and talked to the doctor. He immediately wrote out a prescription. As I was getting into the car, he came rushing out to the car and asked me to get out. When I did, he pulled my shirttail out of my pants, raised it, and looked at my belly. "Just as I thought! See those spots? You've got measles. Forget that other prescription — I'll write out another one. Go home and go to bed. I'll stop by and see you tomorrow."

And so began the measles epidemic of the spring of 1941. Most everyone in my 3 P.M. lab came down with the virus and it spread quickly and widely. I was in bed, in a dark room, all during the 1941 Poly Royal. There were those who said that at least one faculty member at Cal Poly was teaching before he had gotten over having childhood diseases.

Early in the year I had convinced Poly Royal adviser Carl Beck and the Poly Royal board of directors that we could get a great deal of publicity if we "borrowed" a queen from one of the other state colleges instead of using a local high school girl, as had been done since 1932. I contacted the public relations directors at the six other state colleges. Harold Martin, San Francisco State's public relations man, was immediately enthusiastic. San Francisco State students elected a pretty coed, Barbara Biggs, as the first borrowed queen. She was brought to the Cal Poly campus early in the year for a photo session with student photographers, who posed her against agricultural and

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industrial backgrounds. The local girls were pacified by the selection of four high school girls as princesses. Publicity was indeed greatly increased; many national agricultural and industrial magazines used our photos, some even for covers.

Not seeing the 1941 Poly Royal meant another year of my putting out publicity brochures, posters, and news stories based on hearsay, not personal knowledge. But there was nothing novel about that approach to either journalism or public relations.

LESSON FOUR *Just as one can learn more by listening to people than by preaching to them, a teacher open to student opinion will discover a new level of mutual respect.*

## LEARNING ON THE JOB

THERE IS SOMETHING about the environment of a small college that promotes a friendliness among fellow workers and their families not so easily achieved in large universities or the average large business organization. Mary and I were used to college life as students when San Diego State had fewer than 2,000 students.

Cal Poly was a very different kind of college and in the fall of 1940 had only 760 students, all men. Its social life was much different from that of a coed college with fraternities and sororities sponsoring formal parties and dances. Poly's social calendar seemed to revolve around athletic events, plus rodeos, livestock shows, and occasional weekend dances held in the gymnasium with Harold Davidson's Collegians providing big-band music in the style of Les Brown and Stan Kenton. Faculty members and their wives were encouraged to attend the dances, not as official chaperones since their presence was all that was needed to maintain proper decorum among the students.

We could get baby-sitters for 35 cents an hour from a list of students who frequently preferred a home-like atmosphere and a book to the prospects of standing in a stag line with hundreds of other Poly men trying to get an occasional dance with the 50 or so stag high school girls whose parents permitted them to attend Poly dances.

Gladys Couper, wife of my mentor, George Couper, was the first to call officially on Mary and invite her to join the Cal Poly Women's Club, which met regularly and occasionally sponsored events to which the men were also invited. One of those early events was a box-lunch square dance held in what was still referred to as the "J.C. Room" of the Cafeteria.

Mary and I had never been to a square dance and were not too sure what was meant by a box lunch. Mary thought we were to bring our own food plus a potluck dessert. She baked a beautiful chocolate cake, but ran out of time so just put up a simple brown-bag lunch with some peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for us. I was one of the few males not dressed in bib overalls or blue jeans with boots, bandana, and cowboy hat. Most of the women were dressed country-style, but not Mary.

## LEARNING ON THE JOB

To start the party off, one of the men took over as the “auctioneer” and before we knew what was happening, all box lunches were collected and auctioned off — contents sight unseen. Gene Boone had smelled chicken frying at his house in the afternoon and anticipated a great supper. He wound up eating peanut butter and jelly sandwiches with Mary while I enjoyed fried chicken with his wife, Rachel.

The first official faculty-staff party of the year was held at Mattie’s Tavern in Pismo Beach, where the newly hired faculty were coerced into providing the entertainment. The new faculty on that fall evening of 1940 consisted of only three men: Spelman Collins, sheep husbandry specialist; Paul Winner, agricultural mechanics specialist; and Bob Kennedy, definitely not a specialist. The total faculty and administrative staff that first year consisted of about 40 people, 39 men and Miss Margaret Chase, the spinster English teacher who had by that time served 32 years at Poly.

San Luis Obispo has a recurring history of drought followed by floods. In 1940–41 torrential rain storms began early in the year and brought a record rainfall of nearly 44 inches. Our little rented duplex at 517 Hathway St. was built with a small wooden bridge from the back porch to the back yard. It had to be traversed to reach the clotheslinès, on which cloth diapers were hung to dry on the few sunny days. It was muddy under the clothes line, muddy in our unpaved driveway, and muddy up and down both sides of Hathway Street, which had no sidewalks. In fact, you could find mud on



*In the 1940s Harold Davidson was the music department. He directed the Men’s Glee Club, the marching band, and the Collegians dance band, and taught classes.*

#### LEARN BY DOING

numerous streets in downtown San Luis Obispo in the late fall and early winter. The federal government was rebuilding Camp San Luis Obispo from a small, state-operated national guard camp into a large U.S. Army camp in anticipation of U.S. involvement in the war in Europe, for which the government had already, in 1940, established a draft registration system. Big construction equipment working in the mud at Camp San Luis Obispo tracked mud all the way down the old, two-lane road that led from Morro Bay to downtown San Luis Obispo.

The tall eucalyptus trees in our front yard and lining the full length of Hathway Street made mournful sounds during frequent rain storms. The wind thrashing through the brittle branches was severe enough to break and drop rain-heavy branches in the yard and on the roof. For two people used to San Diego's semiarid, 8-inch annual rainy season, the San Luis Obispo weather was depressing.

When we went back to San Diego for Thanksgiving vacation of less than a week, Mary decided she and the baby should stay with her parents until I could come back and pick her up at Christmas vacation. Part of Mary's unhappiness with San Luis Obispo that first fall had been the weather, but my frequent trips to Sacramento, to livestock shows in San Francisco's Cow Palace, and Los Angeles' Great Western fairgrounds, and visits up and down the state to become acquainted with newspaper and magazine publishers, had left her at home with a six-month-old baby and not many friends, at least none she had known very long.

Even when I was home over a weekend, I usually wanted to cover every Cal Poly sporting event or student activity which might provide photos for the yearbook or publicity for the school. While there was lots of variety in those activities, they still were "all school and nothing else." In fact, the city of San Luis Obispo was considered in 1940 to be a cultural desert by many residents. Most Cal Poly faculty members, being former vocational agriculture teachers, had lived in towns even smaller than the SLO town of less than 9,000 residents and probably were quite happy with both the college and the town. While I was too busy to give much thought to lack of cultural opportunities, Mary was feeling lonely and somewhat abandoned.

There were only two theaters in town that first year: the Obispo Theater, which has since burned down, and the Elmo Theater, a former opera house that featured a two-film program on Friday nights with a price of \$1 for the whole family. The Elmo was next to the downtown Elks Club building; both were torn down to make way for Security Pacific's new bank building, which has since become Union Bank.

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While Mary was in San Diego with the baby, I had nothing to do but work. In one of my earliest meetings with McPhee I had asked him some questions about plans for the future, and he had replied, "I'll arrange for you to attend the meetings of the Administrative Council, which meets once a week. Sit in on those meetings and you'll learn about everything we're planning to do."

President McPhee spent at least half of his time each month in Sacramento or elsewhere in the state carrying out his responsibilities as chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education, which made him responsible for all vocational agriculture programs in the high schools of the state. The Administrative Council of Cal Poly consisted of four deans: Walter Patchett, agriculture; Elgin Knott, industry; Oscar Lucksinger, related subjects; and C.O. McCorkle, assistant to the president.

I soon discovered that when McPhee was not present at these meetings, nothing took place except in-depth discussions of minor procedural matters. The meetings were held on Monday nights, starting at 7 P.M. and ending never earlier than 9 P.M. After a couple of months of attending the meetings, I stopped going, and no one ever asked me why.

The assignment that gave me the most education about Cal Poly was the preparation of the college's catalog, and the second most educational assignment was the writing and editing of the annual report to the State Board of Education. Couper had been responsible for both those projects and had not turned them over to my predecessor, Ernie Foster. Couper called me into his office one day in the late fall and said, "McPhee asked me the other day how you were doing and I told him you were doing fine. He has some other Ag Bureau assignments he wants me to handle, so he suggested I turn over to you both the catalog and the annual report."

Couper then handed me a copy of the latest edition of both and said, "It is a simple matter of updating each of them with new material that you will get from other people. You will now be a member of the Faculty-Administration Catalog Committee, and that group will provide you with the information you need to update the catalog each year. It is printed at the state printer's in Sacramento. Someday when we are in Sacramento together, I'll take you over and introduce you to the state printer, who will give you instructions on how the copy is to be submitted. You will obtain the annual report material by sending out a memo to a list of people I will give you and by following up with personal interviews with those whose material is sketchy or not satisfactory. The list includes all department heads and administrative officers."

## LEARN BY DOING

My second major brush with President McPhee was over the content of my first proposed annual report. I had decided to interview each department head instead of asking for a memo response. Past editions of the annual report since 1933 had stressed the "learning by doing" and "earning while learning" philosophy and how the "project system of instruction" operated in every instructional department so that all students had an opportunity to earn money while they were learning a skill. It had not stated directly, but implied, that any student in any department could borrow money from the Project Fund to finance an enterprise that would be operated as a commercial profit-making project.

In my interviews I discovered that this concept worked well in all the agricultural departments, and students were indeed making profits raising and selling crops, livestock, poultry, dairy products, and ornamental nursery stock. But in the industrial or engineering departments it did not work so well. For example, the Stinson private plane, which had been rebuilt to sell, had been rebuilt each year for the past half-dozen years but had not yet been sold. No profit. The air conditioning and refrigeration students were rebuilding old refrigerators, mostly for the school cafeteria, on a salary basis.

Some students made money doing welding for various people, and students often used the machine shop to build replacement parts for some friend's car, but usually without much profit. Mr. Hyer, head of the electrical engineering department, was positively adamant: "We don't have any of those 'earning while learning' projects in this department."

My annual report copy had been given directly to President McPhee. I got a call from Alice Daniels. "He wants to see you about the annual report."

He had it in front of him when I walked in. He flipped a page he'd marked with a paper clip. He began to read, "The learn by doing, earn while learning project system works well in the agricultural division, but is not used extensively in the industrial division."

He looked up. "Where did you get that crazy idea? The project system is used in every department. This needs to be rewritten."

I then told him of my experience in interviewing each department head, and my desire to have the annual report reflect the facts.

"By the time that report gets to the State Board of Education, the project system will be working in every department, mark my word. So you fix it so that it reads just like it was stated in last year's report. And I'll have Elgin Knott in here very shortly and he'll fix the departments so that the statement will be absolutely correct," explained the President. That's when I

## LEARNING ON THE JOB

learned again that I was not a newspaper reporter but a public relations man.

This incident was not typical of President McPhee's reactions to the scores of written reports I submitted directly to him over a quarter of a century. However, it was typical of his concern for adherence to an educational philosophy that emphasized practical, learning-by-doing experiences more common to vocational education than to the theoretical and book-oriented teaching practices of most other colleges. He believed Cal Poly was different and he wanted it to remain different. He had true missionary zeal for what he believed was the most convincing way to make students want to learn and to remember what they had been taught. The key, he believed, was to make the learning experience apply as closely as possible to real life situations. Not all faculty members agreed, especially those who taught courses where practical applications are not easy to find.

Never once in the 25 years of our close association did he ever suggest to me that publicity stories should be written about him personally. He always wanted the publicity stories to emphasize what faculty and students were doing or what was being accomplished in the way of funding for new facilities and new programs. It is true that many people felt that President McPhee received more credit for Cal Poly's progress and accomplishments than he deserved, but that was more my fault than his.

My earliest experience in the field of public relations had been in promoting the election of political candidates. When I came to Cal Poly, I saw how charismatic President McPhee was and how the public reacted to his descriptions of Cal Poly's educational methods. Newspaper and magazine editors seemed to favor stories that included an image of an educator who dared to be different and who was not enamored of higher degrees, academic regalia, or the prior scholastic accomplishments of students. And so the early stories I wrote often played up the missionary zeal that this man had for educating young people for careers in practical fields of agriculture, engineering, industry, commerce, and science.

When I no longer was doing the actual writing, I was often the immediate supervisor of those who did the writing, and probably was the one who had hired them. In my orientation of those persons to their new work, I passed on to them my philosophy of college public relations, which was to personalize it and humanize it by describing the role people played in any newsworthy event, whether it was students, faculty, deans, or the president. But experience had taught me that quoting the president got more acceptance by editors than quoting anyone else.

## LEARN BY DOING

Although I never met Dr. John A. Hannah, long-time president of Michigan State University, East Lansing, I had read about him and had early discovered that President McPhee not only knew him personally but admired Hannah for what he had accomplished at MSU.

Once, in a meeting at which both my wife and I were present, we heard President McPhee tell a group of college public relations people some advice President Hannah had given him very early in McPhee's career as a college president. "When you pick someone to be your public relations man, get a young man who knows how to write and who will willingly take your advice." I owe the late Dr. Hannah thanks for influencing the action that brought me to Cal Poly.

To me it was something of an anomaly that McPhee would look to Michigan State as a model. Michigan State University of Agriculture and Applied Science, founded in 1855, was a co-ed institution that served as the model for land grant colleges and universities founded later in the United States by the Morrill Act of 1862. That act by Congress granted federal land to each state that could be sold, invested or used for founding and supporting public colleges of agriculture and mechanic arts like Michigan State. But land grant colleges expected faculty members to become involved in basic research and the publishing of results of that research. That was an activity that President McPhee felt took faculty physically out of the classroom and limited the amount of time they had to teach and advise students. Nevertheless, President McPhee looked to Michigan State University as a model at the beginning and the end of his career as a college president. Just before he retired, he went to MSU to find a new vice president, Dr. Robert Kramer, to be in charge of the Kellogg Campus and eventually to be his successor at that college when it was given its independence by the Legislature and Trustees.

About the time I was writing that 1940-41 Annual Report, I learned I was a 10-months employee and not an "academic year" employee. An academic year employee was a teacher who worked pretty much the same schedule as the students went to school. When students had a holiday, teachers had a holiday. But a 10-months employee started on or about September 1 and worked until June 30, with only legal holidays off. In fact, I learned that I had inadvertently taken more time off for the Thanksgiving holiday than I should have, and I should not count on taking off the three weeks students would be gone before Christmas and until New Year's.

I knew I wasn't a "professor" but then no one else at Cal Poly was in those days. The traditional academic titles of assistant professor, associate profes-

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sor, and professor were not used at Poly. Instead, McPhee had adapted a system taken from federal civil service, using the titles assistant, junior instructor, intermediate instructor, senior instructor, and principal instructor.

I had started at the lowest rank of "assistant," at the lowest salary range, \$200 per month or \$2,000 annually, and without pay for two months in the summer. At the end of the first year I received a pay increase and a promotion to junior instructor, but in the catalog I fortunately was listed simply as "journalism and public relations." That preserved my dignity, I thought.

As Christmas vacation was drawing near, I was planning my trip to San Diego to pick up Mary and Bobby Jr. and bring them back to San Luis Obispo. Dave Carlin, an *El Mustang* staff member, asked if I would give him a ride to his home in Guadalupe. "It's not far out of your way," he said. Dave was a very heavy-set, deliberate, serious dairy production student who handled advertising and business affairs of *El Mustang*. It appeared on the map that I could drive Highway 1 from Pismo Beach direct to Guadalupe and then cut back to Santa Maria without loss of much time. Never having been on that road, I thought it would be good to explore the area. I picked up Dave at the resident bungalow across from the Poly dairy where he lived and worked, and we took off. It was new territory after Pismo Beach and the very winding, narrow road slowed me down considerably. After voicing my frustration at having to drive so slowly, I decided I would make use of Dave to give me a performance evaluation on my first four months as a journalism teacher and publications adviser.

Dave cleared his throat and said, "You are not dignified enough, Mr. Kennedy." End of evaluation. Dave went on to graduate and became a successful banker. I stayed at Cal Poly and tried to acquire some dignity, but it was an uphill battle, which I think I lost.

Before I had left Hamilton's Ltd. I had reported to Mr. Henry and Mr. Hamilton that I had been in a small accident in the freight elevator and thought I had ruptured myself in the right groin. The accident had occurred when I was helping Karl, the window trimmer, move a big display table from the storeroom on the third floor to the first floor. We had to stand the table on its end in the roofless elevator as it was too long to fit in horizontally. Either Karl or I had forgotten to set the safety latch that prevented anyone on another floor from pulling the rope to start the elevator moving up or down. We had the table almost in and standing slightly tipped toward the gate when the elevator began to move up and the gate dropped onto the top end of the table, pushing it and me into the back wall. I strained to hold

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the table from crushing me against the side of the elevator and Karl grabbed the rope control and stopped the elevator.

I felt something pop in my side, and that night discovered a bump in my groin that had not been there before. I was sent to see the workman's compensation doctor, who diagnosed it as a right abdominal hernia which should be corrected by surgery. This was in late August and I didn't have time for surgery before going to San Luis Obispo, so the doctor said, "No problem, we'll schedule surgery for next summer; in the meantime, wear a truss and be careful."

Before leaving for San Diego I had received a letter from Tom Hamilton asking me to reconsider my decision, as my job was still open at Hamilton's Ltd. and they would pay me a salary equal to whatever I was being paid at Cal Poly, with the opportunity for bonuses based on company profits. As soon as we got to San Diego I went to see the doctor, who scheduled surgery for July at Mercy Hospital. After surgery I was confined to the "compensation ward" for 14 days during which I was entertained by fellow patients, some of whom were ambulatory enough to sneak out at night and return with liquid refreshments for the brethren.

When Mary's folks and my folks learned that Hamiltons wanted me back and would equal the pay I could get at Cal Poly, they were all anxious that we consider moving back to San Diego. I thought perhaps Mary would want to move back because of her less-than-happy first few months in San Luis Obispo.

Her answer was, "Let's give it a better trial. I think we have a better future at Cal Poly than in the grocery business." She was right, as usual. So after my recovery from surgery, we returned to San Luis Obispo.

A year later, on December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor as well as Army air bases and other targets around Honolulu. An hour and fifty minutes after the attack by hundreds of Japanese fighting planes, dive bombers, and torpedo bombers, America had lost five battleships, three destroyers, and a number of other ships and more than 150 Navy planes at Hickam Field. The dead and wounded Americans included more than 3,500 soldiers, sailors, marines, and civilians. The Japanese government declared war on the United States, Great Britain, and the Netherlands.

On December 8 President Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war on Japan, which was done immediately with only one dissenting vote. Great Britain also declared war on Japan on December 8, and three days later Germany and Italy declared war on the United States. President Roosevelt

## LEARNING ON THE JOB

and Congress responded immediately with declarations of war against those nations. The United States had been trying to stay out of the European war since 1939 but had declared itself the "arsenal of democracy" and had begun supplying materials of war to the allies several years before the Pearl Harbor attack. Cal Poly was heavily involved in National Defense training programs all through 1940, 1941, and 1942, training thousands of workers in federally financed programs. These programs also paid for wood-constructed temporary laboratories, classrooms, and barracks to house adult and National Youth Administration students who were taking courses primarily in welding, sheet metal, machine shop, and radio repair.

The yearbook we published in June, 1942, was dedicated to the National Defense effort and featured photographs of all the kinds of training programs and food production programs designed to help the nation's defense effort.

Regular civilian enrollment, which had reached a high in the fall of 1940 with 762 men, dropped to 711 in 1941 and to 570 in 1942. Students were being drafted and were volunteering for the armed services. The military put a ban on horse racing in California, and that stopped pari-mutuel betting, which had been the sole source of Cal Poly's funding since 1937. President McPhee immediately initiated a blitzkrieg effort, calling on all alumni and friends of Cal Poly to pressure Governor Olson and the Legislature to provide emergency funding from the general fund.

The effort was successful, but McPhee recognized that something more had to be done to preserve Cal Poly's very existence through a war of indeterminate length. He had served as an ensign in the U.S. Navy in World War I and so naturally his thoughts turned to the possibility that Cal Poly could become a Navy training facility.

I got personally involved in this effort when I was called into McPhee's office for a meeting and was told to develop several identical reports describing and illustrating all the facilities we had, including dorms, barracks, cafeterias, classrooms, labs, library, and anything and everything that might possibly be of use to a military training facility. I stopped every other project and began taking view photos of all facilities inside and out. Mr. Aston made 8 x 10 enlargements and they were assembled into several volumes with appropriate descriptive statements.

The books were delivered by President McPhee to Navy contacts and in October, 1942, a group of naval officers arrived on campus to inspect firsthand the campus facilities. Within two months of that visit came the

announcement that Cal Poly had been selected as one of 17 United States Naval Flight Preparatory Schools. Within a few weeks President McPhee cancelled all other war training projects on the campus. From January, 1943, to the end of 1945, two naval preparatory training programs took precedence over all activities at Cal Poly.

It was in late May 1942 that a student answered my phone while I was out and left me a scrawled message: "President McPhee and Dean McCorkle want to see you in the president's office at 4 P.M. today." Students always answered my phone when I wasn't there, since my desk and phone occupied the southeast corner of the publications office where newspaper, year-book, and student news bureau staff put in almost as much time as I did.

I immediately began to think back over recent issues of *El Mustang*. I could think of no editorial that was controversial enough to warrant my being called onto the carpet, but then I had been wrong before.

When 3:55 P.M. came around, I walked from the basement to the second floor, went into the president's office and greeted his new secretary, Angie, who told me to take a seat and they would be ready for me in a few minutes.

Shortly, Dean McCorkle came to the door and invited me to enter. He seemed most cordial and Mr. McPhee, behind his big mahogany desk, also appeared to be in more pleasant mood than usual. I thought, "If they are going to fire me, the least they could do would be to wear sad expressions."

Well, you guessed it. They didn't fire me. Instead they told me that my friend, Henry Lash, the first fully qualified librarian that Cal Poly ever had since the school opened its doors in 1903, was resigning after just a year on the job. Henry, a bachelor, was worried about the draft, and he had located a new job as librarian at the Air Force base in Santa Ana. I figured they were going to ask me to write a news story about the vacancy in order to help locate a few applicants. That wasn't the plan. They wanted me to become the head librarian on a temporary basis, of course, just until a qualified librarian could be found.

"What about all my other jobs?" I asked.

"Oh, you can keep them. You're doing a fine job and we know that with enrollment dropping off because of the war, there will be fewer students in your classes. You can fill in the time by buying books, cataloging them, checking them out."

They suggested I could move my office to the Library or I could keep offices in two places and move back and forth as necessary. It finally dawned

## LEARNING ON THE JOB

on me that I had really just become the temporary librarian. I asked Dean McCorkle why they had chosen me. The answer was perfectly rational: "You have a bachelor of arts degree in English and your friend, Mr. Lash, recommends you because you are the only faculty member who visits the library every day."

"Buck" Lash knew perfectly well that I went there every day to read the San Francisco and Los Angeles papers to see if any of the big-city papers had used any of our sports publicity stories. But I didn't say a thing. Why would I want to destroy the Dean's opinion that I was a truly academic person who spent my spare time improving my mind in the library?

I already had made arrangements to work that upcoming summer as a reporter on a new daily newspaper, the *San Diego Daily Journal*. As we left the President's office I reminded Dean McCorkle that I would be doing something in the summer that President McPhee had recommended the first time I had asked him if I should do graduate work and get a master's degree. His answer had been, "No, it would be better to get a job on a newspaper and get more practical experience."

"With Henry Lash gone, who will be minding the library during the summer?" I asked.

"That won't be a problem, we'll just close it for the summer," he replied.

I was given a key to the library when I left for the summer. On the first day back on campus in September, I walked briskly toward the Library with the expectation and excitement of any new job. The Library was located about two city blocks from my basement journalism office.

The library consisted of several joined classrooms in the wooden L-shaped classroom unit across Pepper Lane from the old aero lab. I put my key in the lock and stepped into the biggest mess I have ever seen.

The library had been closed during June, July, and August. But someone had forgotten to tell the U.S. Post Office. Libraries get mail. Even little libraries are on everybody's mailing list. The college ran its own mail service, as it does today, but student assistants delivered the mail to the library in large cardboard boxes. Instead of leaving the mail in the boxes, they dumped it on the librarian's desk for the first few loads, until it ran over onto the floor. Then they started dumping the mail on the nearest table in the reading room. As each table filled up and ran over, the student assistants moved to another table and dumped the next load.

Three months later, I was looking at one reading room, small by present standards, but terrifyingly large when filled with unopened mail, newspapers,

magazines, books that had been ordered, books that hadn't been ordered, bills, government pamphlets, and everything that we know as junk mail.

I took one look, backed out, locked the door, and walked the two blocks to Dean McCorkle's office.

"I quit the library job. Here's the key," I said to Dean McCorkle as I laid the key on his desk.

I explained to the Dean as graphically as possible the mess I had just seen. He picked up the key, got up, and said, "Let's go back over to the Library and talk about it."

McCorkle convinced me that he would assign some secretaries and student assistants to come in immediately and they could have it all cleaned up in a couple of weeks, before classes started.

I said, "Fine, I'll come back in a couple of weeks and reconsider the job of temporary librarian. In the meantime, I've got a lot of other things to do to get ready for the fall quarter."

McCorkle said, "That's fine, but you need to know about another decision that was made this summer. We have reserved several of the largest rooms on the second floor of the new administration building for the library and you need to get a crew and work with the maintenance department to move the library to the new location."

I knew that I was scheduled to move the publications office and my own office into the basement west wing of the new building. But that turned out to be very simple compared to the move of the library to the second floor of a building without an elevator.

With a crew of four student assistants, and two trucks loaned from maintenance, I physically participated in the move of every book, every file, every magazine. We pushed every box of books and magazines plus metal file cases of government bulletins up a wooden ramp we built on the stairway. Those files of government publications must have included every bulletin ever issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. When the move was finished, I told Dean McCorkle the next time he needed to have a temporary librarian he should get a physical education graduate, not an English major.

By the time my library duties had begun, Mary was about three months pregnant with our second child and she was certain that we needed to find a larger house. She found just what she wanted, a brand new bungalow at 17 Mt. Pleasanton Drive. But it wasn't for rent, it was for sale. The owner, Mrs. Ivan Loomis of Arroyo Grande, wanted only \$4,000 for the new two-bedroom, one-bath home built in the middle of an almost vacant city block

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at the intersection of Foothill Boulevard and Mt. Pleasanton Drive, which has since been renamed Chorro Street. It was across the street from the Edgemon trailer park and grocery store and within walking distance of the campus.

Mary was ready to buy, but I was apprehensive. I still was not sure that Cal Poly was going to be a permanent job for me. My folks had always rented, at least until my grandparents had built a house. We didn't have any money saved for a down payment and even though Mary thought our two families could come up with the down payment, I was reluctant to ask. So Mary talked Mrs. Loomis into renting the new house to us with an option to buy at some future date, but with no contract to hold the original asking price. We had still been paying only \$25 per month for the Hathway house because of wartime rent control. The new rent was almost twice as much. We lived there for several years before we finally bought it, paying at least \$3,000 more for it than we would have had I not been reluctant in the first place. We lived in that house until 1950, remodeling it and adding on to accommodate a growing family, which became four in 1943, five in 1945, and six in 1947.

LESSON FIVE *A boss does not always want to hear the unvarnished truth about his organization's operations, but better he should hear the truth than believe colorful descriptions written to influence customers and stockholders.*

## HOW TO WORK FOR THE NAVY ON DRY LAND

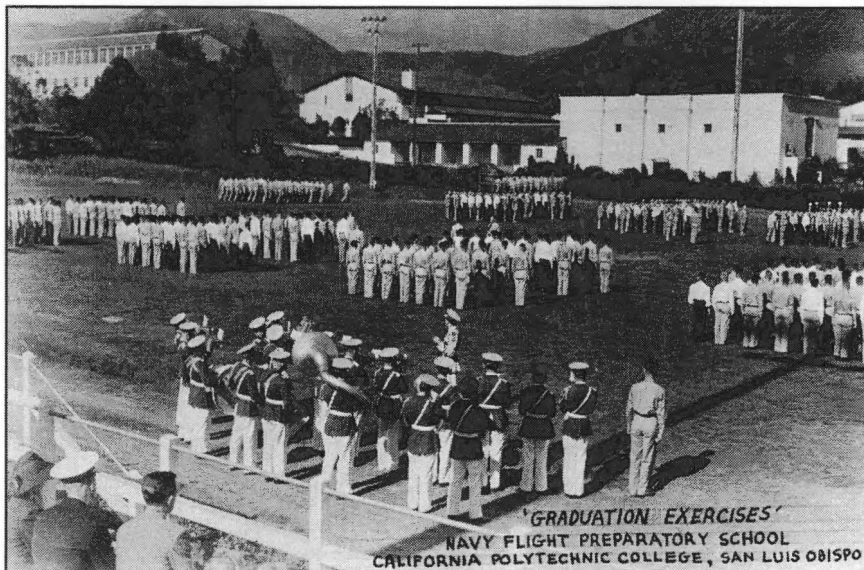
IT WAS PITCH BLACK at 6:30 in the morning. Daylight savings time was still in effect right through the winter in 1943. It was raining, but not hard, when I pulled my bicycle out of the garage and tried to mount it so my raincoat would cover my legs as well as my back. Mary had offered to take me to the campus in the car, but I had said, "No, you would have to wake Bobby and take him too." Bobby was two years and nine months old and Mary was seven months pregnant with our second child.

Just the day before Mary had been irate at a remark made to her by our mailman. She had been standing next to our rural mailbox near the intersection of Foothill Blvd. and Mt. Pleasanton Street, renamed Chorro some years later.

She had Bobby by the hand as she patiently waited for the mailman to hand her our mail, hoping there would be one from her mother in San Diego. Noting the small child and the pregnant mother, our not-so-friendly mail carrier said, "You would think people would have better sense than to have babies in wartime."

He drove off, not waiting for a rebuttal which Mary said she couldn't have voiced anyway.

I was thinking about what I would have said as I turned on the flashlight attached to the handlebars and started pedaling toward the campus about five blocks to the east. I guessed that statistics would prove that more babies are conceived just before and just after wars, but that answer probably wouldn't satisfy our curmudgeonly mailman. Trying to avoid puddles, which wasn't easy in the dark, I arrived at my classroom at 6:45 A.M., in time to get the equipment set up for my first-of-the-day Navy communications class at 7 A.M. The classroom was cold so I had turned on the steam heat, produced by Cal Poly's own central power plant. Very shortly I heard the pounding of many feet, marching to the cadence count of a platoon leader "Hup, two, to your left right, left right." I could hear the command, "Halt, right face, single file, march." The door was flung open by the first cadet who stepped inside; he held the door wide open while the platoon of 28 men marched in and stood beside their desks at attention. The platoon leader



*The Naval Flight Preparatory School operated on the campus from 1943 to 1946, graduating a battalion of 200 cadets every three months.*

faced me and stated routinely, "All cadets in Alpha Platoon present or accounted for, sir." I answered, routinely, "At ease, and seats." There was much scraping of feet and miscellaneous chatter as the men took off their wet poncho raincoats and hats and stowed them under their seats.

Not only was the arrival of every class in the Naval Flight Preparatory School in accordance with proper military protocol, everything else about teaching was now "according to the book."<sup>1</sup> And the "book" was the Navy manual provided to civilian instructors who were cautioned not to deviate from the "Navy way" of doing things — and we didn't. The campus became a ship; walls were bulkheads, floors were decks, and toilets were heads. The first battalion of 200 cadets had "come aboard" on January 6, 1943, to commence a 90-day instructional program at Cal Poly which would, if they were successful, launch each of them on even tougher additional training at pre-flight and flight schools where each hoped he would finally earn a commission and wings as a naval aviation pilot. With the arrival of a second battalion in February and a third in March, the Naval Flight Preparatory School reached its supposed full complement of 600 cadets. Most of these first

1. In December, 1942, Cal Poly signed a contract with the U.S. Navy and became one of 17 Naval Flight Preparatory Schools with an original regimental size of 600 cadets. It became the largest NFPS program in the country, graduating 3,500 cadets between January, 1943, and October, 1944.

## LEARN BY DOING

cadets were college graduates fresh out of school with lots to learn about the Navy.<sup>1</sup> The first year 2,200 cadets in 11 battalions received flight preparatory training at Poly.

I was one of the regular Cal Poly faculty members assigned to teach in the several Navy programs held on campus during the period 1943 to 1946. President McPhee had added 19 new instructors to the teaching staff to handle the Navy programs, and by 1944 we had 46 teachers.

Cal Poly's civilian student enrollment during World War II had dropped to about 80 students, most of whom were either 4-F or disabled veterans, who fortunately were able to assist as part-time workers maintaining the herds, flocks and laboratory facilities and equipment while taking a limited number of courses offered, primarily in agriculture or engineering. Those Cal Poly faculty members who had not already been drafted into or volunteered for the armed forces were, in most cases, transferred to the teaching staff of one of the Navy programs. Those transferred were qualified to teach mathematics, physics, history, English, and communications; eight instructors took naval refresher courses in navigation in December, 1942, before the first cadets arrived. In addition to the civilian teachers, 25 commissioned naval officers were stationed on campus. The officers taught or supervised programs in physical education, drill, and ship and aircraft recognition, and handled all discipline of cadets.

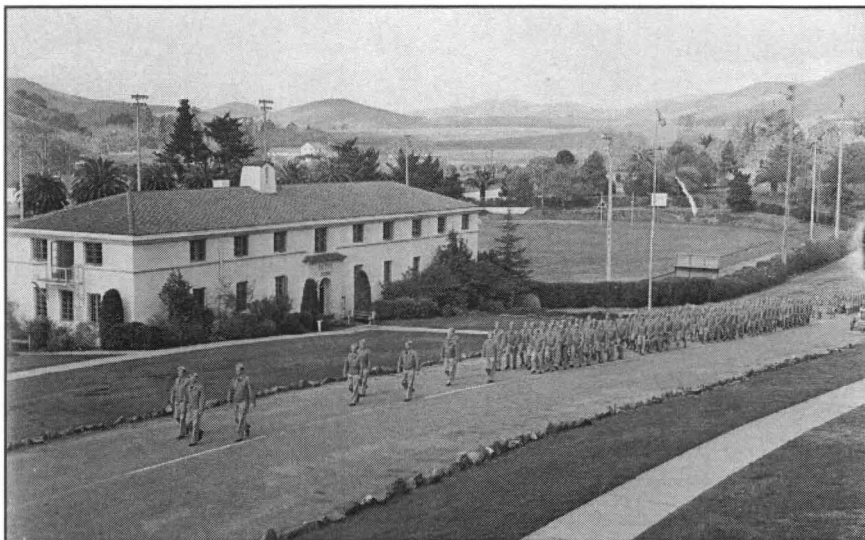
The first contingent of Naval officers arrived before Christmas with Lt. Commander Cook, officer in charge of the Naval Flight Preparatory School.<sup>2</sup> When the first cadets arrived in early January, the Navy was not really ready for them; there were no uniforms and some of the equipment for the obstacle course was yet to be built.

That first battalion of 200 college graduates was joined within three

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1. On November 29, 1943, Navy officials reclassified Cal Poly as a "Fleet School." Thereafter, cadets were drawn from battle-experienced Navy and Marine Corps enlisted personnel, many of whom had experienced air combat as rear seat gunners and radio men. The battalion strength was increased to 280 men. The total complement on board at any one time went to 840 men.

2. Lt. Commander H.S. Cook, a 1932 U.S. Naval Academy graduate, served from 1932 to 1936 on battleships and destroyers and at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, before resigning his commission in 1936, becoming an inspector for the U.S. Dept. of Interior on the construction of the Grand Coulee Dam. He went back on active duty with the Navy in September, 1940, serving on torpedo boats before being promoted to Lt. Commander and assigned to establish the Naval Flight Preparatory School program at Cal Poly.



*NFPS cadets march up College Avenue in front of Jespersen dorm in this 1943 photo taken after uniforms had been issued to all cadets.*

months by two more battalions of 200 men each. The normal regimental strength of the NFPS was 600, graduating 200 cadets every month after a three-months instructional program that included lots of physical fitness training as well as navigation, aircraft and ship recognition, and communications, including radio code.

The skills required to teach "communications" were not stringent. Our major task was to operate a record player, play the identified records in the proper order, correct the cadets' test papers, and issue a "pass or fail" grade based on the accuracy of a test taken at the minimum speed of 10 words per minute. We were required to operate a film strip projector used in teaching and testing the cadets' ability to read semaphore flag messages.

The toughest part of the course for cadets was the switch from recognition of Morse code by ear and the same code by "blinker" light. Both practice and testing of blinker was done by connecting the phonographic output of sound signals to a bare lightbulb mounted above the blackboard in the front of the room. To operate the blinker, the room had to be darkened, and that made it difficult for a cadet to see the paper on which he was writing. He could not afford to look down at his desk or he would miss significant letters in the message. The most frustrating experience for a cadet was to discover at the end of a crucial test that he had written part of the examination on the chair-arm desk instead of the paper. More than one cadet attempted to hand in the chair at the end of the class.

## LEARN BY DOING

Cadets with musical skills or a good rhythmic sense seemed to do well in code and blinker. An ear for code is like an ear for music. Those with an ear for the rhythm seemed to sense the message in units, like whole words, rather than like a series of dots and dashes making up a string of single letters. I must confess that while I could teach the course in accordance with the "Navy way" I could never have passed the minimum rate required in either code or blinker. The strictly visual semaphore signal system was a piece of cake for me, but not for every student.

One of the biggest deterrents to cadet proficiency in communications was the sense most of them had that it was an old, outdated, obsolete, less-than-state-of-the-art method of communicating. No matter how much the teachers stressed the Navy manual's justification, based on the dangers of using radio voice communication in wartime when the enemy could overhear, we seemed to be less than convincing because we were simply repeating an academic argument. When the Navy brought "Pappy" Boyington, Marine ace, to the campus, he inspired the cadets with stories of how he would never have found his carrier after an air battle had he not known radio code. He was equally inspiring to cadets who were having trouble with the toughest of the navy courses, navigation. He described the dilemma of lost pilots sending code to the carrier but receiving no response because of "radio silence" required to prevent the enemy from finding the location of a carrier. It became obvious to the cadets that there would be times when their lives would depend upon their ability to communicate, but other times when only their ability to navigate would save them. Even the teachers who heard Boyington were impressed and were able to pass that message on more dramatically to subsequent classes.

From July to November, 1944, Cal Poly had a new contract to operate concurrently with the NFPS another Navy program called the Naval Academic Refresher Program, or NARU.<sup>1</sup> This latter program continued through January, 1946, providing training for an additional 1,100 enlisted Navy

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1. The program involved enlisted Navy men who had seen active duty and were looking forward to honorable discharge at the end of NARU training. From its inception in July, 1944, through October, 1944, the NARU program ran concurrently with the NFPS program. The NFPS program was the largest in the country, with as many as 840 cadets on board at any one time; Poly's NFPS program was the only one west of the Rockies. The NARU program was the largest of eight in the nation with an average enrollment of 250 to 300 enlisted men at any one time, but in the summer of 1945 enrollment exceeded 500.

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men who retained their regular service ratings while taking eight-, 16-, or 24-week courses in history, physics, English, mathematics, and physical education. The length of their respective program was dependent upon the results of their entrance test scores.

When the NARU program began July, 1944, I was transferred from NFPS communication to NARU English, but was still required to teach from a Navy manual which included some prescribed forms of official Navy communications which standardized both the appearance and the content of most internal memoranda. Both NFPS cadets and NARU enlisted men had a favorite expression: "There are two ways of doing anything: the right way and the Navy way." Nevertheless teaching the NARU English courses was a welcome relief from the NFPS communication course. There was latitude, especially in the portion of the course devoted to expository and narrative writing and public speaking.

Although I taught continuously the year around in Navy programs from January, 1943, through January, 1946, what was considered a full-time load at most NFPS and NARU schools, I continued to have responsibilities as librarian, publications adviser, photographer, and public relations director. The library responsibility involved supervising one full-time assistant and several civilian student assistants, handling the limited budget for book and magazine purchases, and processing new books in accordance with the Dewey decimal system of cataloging which the outgoing librarian Henry Lash, had taught me in a very short session in May, 1942. The first full-time adult woman assistant, whose name shall remain anonymous, was hired for me by Dean McCorkle, who assured me she was an experienced "library assistant." She may well have been, but what he failed to discover in advance was the fact that she had recently had some serious traumatic, emotional problems that had left her with some psychoses that evidenced themselves in a form of schizophrenia that didn't fit well into the operations of a so-called well-ordered library. She began reporting to me daily that someone was watching her and their spying activities made her unwilling to check out books to them. A few months of her positively stated "recollections" of things I had told her to do, about which I had no recollection, began to make me doubt both my memory and my sanity. Eventually it dawned on me to ask McCorkle to check her recommendations again, which he did. He then told me that I could notify her that her services were no longer needed.

The next several assistants in the library were attractive young women whose presence tended to increase traffic in the library, if not scholarly study.

#### LEARN BY DOING

The library was used most frequently by the Navy as a study hall for cadets, and they frequently filled every table in the reading room. That pleased the female assistant librarians whether or not the cadets checked out any books.

When using the library as a study hall, the NFPS cadets arrived in platoon formation, marching into the reading room, obeying the platoon leaders' commands to maneuver around tables and chairs and "halt," and "take seats," all not as quietly as normal entrance into a library reading room dictates. But, once in and seated, the men were remarkably quiet as they did their homework.

My most time-consuming official duty, other than classroom teaching, was "supervising" civilian and Navy cadets who became staff members for a monthly magazine, *Mustang Roundup*, which had been initiated in September, 1942, even before the Navy programs had arrived on campus. "Supervising" was a much more active concept than "advising." It meant recruiting student staff members and convincing them they should work on the project even though there was no longer any reward, at least for the Navy cadets, in the form of units earned in practice journalism courses. It meant taking photographs for a magazine that was mostly photographs, and for which most cadets didn't have time to learn how to be photographers. It meant editing and writing a considerable amount of copy in order to meet deadlines. And it meant seeing to it that the magazine was printed at a commercial printing plant and that advertising revenue and income from sales at 25 cents per copy at least equaled the production costs.

The civilian Student Publications Board, at my recommendation, had agreed to substitute a monthly magazine instead of attempting to publish after June, 1942, a yearbook and a weekly newspaper. The last civilian editor of the yearbook, *El Rodeo*, had been Dwight Wait, whose 1942 yearbook featured all the National Defense Training activities that President McPhee had promoted with federal funding. That edition of *El Rodeo* was to have been co-edited by Tom Brannum and Wait, both ag students, but Brannum was drafted in November, 1941, leaving Wait to bear the burden. Wait was definitely a sleepy-head on Saturday mornings, and I frequently would stop at his dorm on my way to the office before 8 A.M. I would wake him, practically dress him, lead him to the cafeteria, see that he got a tray full of breakfast, and watch him eat, while I drank a cup of coffee. That got him to the publications office early enough so that he could work with his staff, most of whom were self-starters. It also got me to the office on Saturday mornings, and kept me from getting on President McPhee's "absent without

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leave" list. It was rumored that McPhee would go to his office every Saturday morning at his usual time, which was often by 6 A.M. or before. By 8 A.M. he would start phoning around the campus to various faculty members. If they answered, he would have a pleasant conversation about things in general. If they didn't answer, a note would go to the respective dean with a reminder that all faculty members were required to work a minimum of four hours on Saturdays. I personally doubted that McPhee did this as frequently as the faculty believed he did, but he did, indeed, do it on occasion and it had the same effect as though he did it regularly.

In 1941-42 all publications were having difficulty in keeping trained staff members. Students were being drafted or they were volunteering for a branch of the armed services. Bill Reddick, who started the 1941 fall quarter as editor of *El Mustang*, soon joined the Coast Guard. He was replaced by Charlie Mendenhall, probably the most experienced and talented journalist Poly had before the 1950s. While in high school Charlie had worked for the Livermore weekly paper, both as a writer and a printer. He left in June, 1942, the last *El Mustang* editor until the fall of 1946. It was obvious we could no longer afford or staff both a weekly newspaper and a yearbook. With the agreement of the Student Affairs Council, both publications were discontinued. We substituted the news-photo magazine, *Mustang Roundup*, financed by advertising and sales.

After the Navy programs began in January, 1943, the officers in charge liked the *Mustang Roundup*, so it was continued as a joint civilian-Navy publication. The officers willingly scheduled graduating battalions by platoons so that either I or a student photographer could take group photos to be used in a "graduation" issue. Since the battalions soon were "graduating" every month, each issue was a type of "monthly yearbook," and a record which the cadets enthusiastically purchased. In addition, the publication made a profit on resale of 8 x 10 enlargements of the group photos, turned out for us in large quantities by a Hollywood photo studio called Holly Prints.

One of the first Naval Flight Preparatory cadets I recruited was not a writer or an editor but a cartoonist. Greg Wheatley, a cadet in the earliest 1943 battalion, was, by any standard, as skilled in the art of cartooning as the professionals then publishing in *Esquire*, the most popular of the men's magazines in the 1940s. Greg not only was an artist but a humorist; he could see something funny in almost everything that was happening to the cadets from the moment they stepped "aboard," got their shots and their crew cuts, and were lined up for a go at the obstacle course. Fortunately for the

*Mustang Roundup* the Navy was not ready in April, 1943, with the first of the flight schools, and Greg's battalion graduated but was held over for at least another month. During that time he turned out a supply of cartoons that lasted for months after he was gone. He went to flight school in Ely, Nevada, and showed his loyalty to Cal Poly and the *Mustang Roundup* by continuing to do cartoons of what was happening in the next steps in his Navy education and sending them to me for publication. Other cartoonists inspired by Greg's work came on the scene in the next three years, but none of their cartoons were so professionally drawn or so basically funny. Since the turnover in the Navy program was so frequent, we could rerun Wheatley cartoons every three months. Only the officers and civilians would have seen them and even they believed the humor was timeless.

Another *Mustang Roundup* feature that sold copies was the monthly "beauty contest" in which cadets would submit photos of their girlfriends. A panel of judges, which always included the *Mustang Roundup* editor, the *Trim Tab* editor, and myself, would select a winner and print her enlarged photo and a photo layout of all the entries submitted. There was an entry fee, which was used to reimburse the travel expenses of the winner so she could attend the graduation exercises and the monthly regimental dance, which always featured one of the big-name bands such as Alvino Rey's, Stan Kenton's, or Les Brown's.

The original commanding officer, Lt. Commander Cook, in charge from January to November, 1943, was followed temporarily by the executive officer, Lt. R.E. Harris, as acting officer in charge. A newly-assigned commanding officer arrived on board December 10, 1943. The new commander, Lt. Robert Bruce McPhail, had a striking resemblance to Edward G. Robinson and frequently acted as tough as some of the roles Robinson played.<sup>1</sup> Commander McPhail was soon nicknamed by the cadets and even some of the officers as "Never Fail" McPhail. One of the officers had Hol-

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1. Lt. Robert B. McPhail attended Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire, graduated from Dartmouth in the 1920s, attended Harvard Law School, and was commissioned in the Navy in 1941 and assigned to the Naval Air Station, Quonset Point, Rhode Island. He had three other naval aviation training station assignments before arriving at Cal Poly. The book, *Football in War and Peace*, listed McPhail as "one of the greatest quarterbacks of all time." In 1925 Dartmouth had been national champions and earned additional fame as the "brain team"; it could field a team every member of which was then or later a Phi Beta Kappa member. McPhail was NFPS C.O. at Cal Poly until November, 1944.

lywood contacts, and very shortly the monthly graduation dances included a "female stag line" of 60 Hollywood starlets who were brought by chartered Greyhound bus. The organizer of this volunteer USO activity was none other than Mrs. Edward G. Robinson. When she and Commander McPhail sat side by side at one of the dances, some of us wondered if she thought her husband Edward was playing a new role. The dances were held off-campus, usually in what is now the city recreation building but was originally the USO Hall, or in the Log Cabin, a facility with a dance floor on south Broad Street. The cadets wanted to get off the "ship" and so did the officers, many of whom did not appreciate President McPhee's continuation of the peacetime prohibition of alcoholic beverages on campus. McPhee didn't care whether the Navy considered it a "ship" or not; to him it was still his campus and would be operated under the laws and restrictions of the state.

McPhee and McPhail seemed to take an immediate dislike to each other. McPhail insisted that the campus recreation hall, built by the National Youth Administration to a design by Richard Neutra, the famous architect, be turned into an officers' club, in which liquor could be served. McPhee's strong democratic orientation made him object not only to the liquor proposal but to the assignment of any facility on campus that would discriminate against those who were not officers, meaning cadets, enlisted personnel, and civilians. McPhee repeatedly refused to give permission, but finally McPhail got a ruling from Navy higher-ups that declared McPhail had the authority to use the NYA recreation hall in the way he proposed. McPhee never forgave him for winning that battle.

Almost from the very beginning of the Naval Flight Preparatory School in January, 1943, I became aware that our complement of 600 cadets contained a most unusual collection of nationally-known top-ranked athletes. I was still doing public relations and publicity, and was sharing information and assignments with Lt. Harry Bonath, a well-known watercolor artist from Washington State who owned an advertising agency in Seattle. Harry helped particularly with artwork for the *Mustang Roundup*, and I helped, particularly with photos, with a little official Navy publication called *Trim Tab* that Harry edited.

First Harry tipped me off that a number of the NFPS physical education staff were former All-Americans, with particular emphasis on football. The Navy had determined a high morale among the "troops" could best be maintained with competitive athletic programs, but not at Flight Preparatory Schools. The Navy was going to concentrate on having the best

## LEARN BY DOING

possible football teams at the several Pre-Flight schools, which included St. Mary's, where cadets from Cal Poly were destined to go if they were successful in the NFPS and Flight Training programs. Approximately three months before it was announced that St. Mary's Pre-Flight would field a football team, there arrived at Cal Poly a battalion of cadets that contained 50 or 60 of the best college football players in the country, many known for having won All-American honors. The Navy immediately changed the physical education program for these hand-picked cadets; no more obstacle course training, but instead basic football training. After watching practice for several days, I suggested to Lt. Bonath that we should arrange a game with our team against any other college team in California before our boys graduated. Bonath thought it was a good idea, talked to his commanding officer, and reported to me to "go ahead and see if you can line up an opposition team."

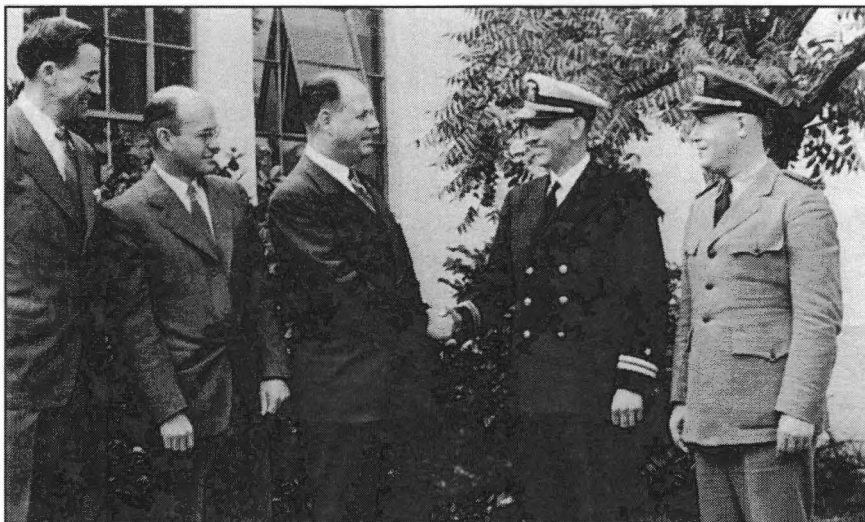
Gathering all the information I needed on each of the team members and the coaches, including photos, I got permission to leave the "ship" on official business. I traveled to Los Angeles and San Francisco, and got sports editors of the daily papers to run stories in which Cal Poly challenged any college or service team in California to play on any of several available dates about two months hence. There were never any takers. Cal Poly's most outstanding football team never got to play competitively, not, that is, until the team members became cadets at St. Mary's.

During the last two month's operation of the NFPS program, the new Naval Academic Refresher Unit (NARU) program was running concurrently with its own commanding officer, Lt. George Weigel, with whom President McPhee got along marvelously.<sup>1</sup>

In the first battalion of NARU trainees there were at least 15 former Future Farmers of America from nine different states, including the state FFA president from Georgia. With Lt. Weigel's cooperation, McPhee, as Chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education and State Adviser of the FFA, met with the group and was photographed for publicity purposes. It was one of the last photos that President McPhee had taken while Chief of the Bureau. The next month, October, 1944, McPhee became State Director of Vocational Education and Byron J. McMahon, McPhee's assistant, was appointed by the State Board of Education to the position of Chief of the Bureau.

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1. Lt. George D. Weigel, NARU commanding officer, had received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in education from Indiana University. He had been attached to several NFPS schools before being assigned the Cal Poly NARU unit.



*The Naval Academic Refresher Unit was the second Navy program operating at Cal Poly during World War II. President McPhee, Dean McCorkle, and Registrar Gene Egan welcome Lt. George Weigel and Lt. Fries, officers in charge of this program for enlisted Navy personnel, which ended in January, 1946.*

That ended McPhee's 19-year career as Chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education, 11 years of which was after he had become president of Cal Poly and devoted half-time to each job. Headquarters for the Bureau and its nine special and regional supervisors remained at Cal Poly, where annual FFA and California Ag Teachers conventions were held. Now President McPhee would balance his time between the Cal Poly presidency and his new half-time position, which placed him in charge of all vocational education offered in the state's high schools and gave him the responsibility for administering federal funding for those programs. Dean McCorkle was now both dean of instruction and assistant to the president, in charge of the civilian operation of the college whenever McPhee was off campus.

I was becoming concerned in 1944 regarding the attitude of some citizens who were advocating that Japanese-American civilians being held in concentration camps in other states not be permitted to return to their former homes on the Pacific Coast at the end of the war. At the time of Pearl Harbor I had several American citizens of Japanese ancestry working on student publications, and I knew a number of others who were active in the musical organizations and student government.

At the time the military gave the order that specified March 27, 1942, as the last date that persons of Japanese ancestry, even if American-born, could move voluntarily from Military Area No. 1, two Japanese-American students, Nelson Akagi and Jiro Kai, were working on the yearbook. Both of them

#### LEARN BY DOING

came to me and asked if I would keep their cameras and photographic equipment until they could come back to school after the war. Both of them enlisted in the Army, but their families were placed in concentration camps, as were all other persons of Japanese ancestry along the Pacific Coast, although none in the Hawaiian islands were so confined nor mistrusted.

Literature that was coming across my desk in the library was providing arguments pro and con on the matter, but I felt that it was basically un-American to place U.S. citizens in concentration camps on the basis of the color of their skins, denying them their rights as citizens without due process of law.

It was then the policy of the *Telegram-Tribune* to accept letters to the editor for publication signed only by a nom de plume if the identity of the writer was known to the editor. Editor Bob Goodell certainly knew me when I handed him my lengthy letter on August 21, 1944, but I had signed the letter with my full name, but no title connecting me to the college or the Navy program as a teacher.

He read the letter and said, "Are you sure you want to sign it? You may get a lot of flack from some people who can't separate their patriotism from their prejudices."<sup>1</sup>

I said, "I have two former yearbook staff members who are fighting for our country, Jiro Kai and Nelson Agaki, and I want to be able to face them when they return to retrieve their camera equipment, which they couldn't even give to their families because of the unfounded prejudice of some people."

I expected to receive some kind of criticism from President McPhee, not because of any prejudice, but because he had an unwritten policy at the time, which was later made a written policy, that frowned on any faculty member's writing anything for publication which might bring criticism to the school. McPhee's only comment to me some weeks later was, "I liked your letter to the editor about Jiro Kai and Nelson Akagi." Both Corporal

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1. First published August 22, 1944, it drew little criticism and no praise. Forty-one years later, on June 29, 1985, it was reprinted by the *Telegram-Tribune* in a column by historian Dan Krieger, who wrote, "That letter is an important historical statement about the responsibility which goes along with the freedoms we cherish as Americans." Dr. Krieger said, "I'd like to retitl it, 'An American Speaks Out.' With the second publication I received considerable praise, some from prominent Japanese-Americans, and one letter from a man I do not know who said, 'I wish I had written it. I'd rather have my name on a letter like that than on a university library.' He ended his letter, 'Hey, man, ya got the right stuff!'"

#### HOW TO WORK FOR THE NAVY ON DRY LAND

Nelson Akagi and First Class Jiro Kai came back to Cal Poly in 1946 and I had the pleasure of returning their camera equipment to them.

The birth of our second child, Maridel, born April 4, 1943, and my "essential job" teaching in the Navy program, seemed to be all that were necessary to maintain a deferment from the draft. It wasn't destined to last, however. I'm not sure of the date when I got the notice that I had been reclassified to 1-A and was ordered to report to the draft board for a physical examination. When I approached the doctors' table, one of them, Horace Hagen, who had been treating me for asthma since 1940, looked up and said, "Bob, what are you doing here? You can't pass a physical with asthma." He signed a paper, handed me a slip. I was 4-F, a most effective classification for a family man with a wife, two kids, and a Quaker heritage.

LESSON SIX *For an organization to survive a drastic change in society's need for its products or services, its leadership must be creative, flexible and persuasive with subordinates who need to adjust to new directions and goals.*



## BEATING SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES

I WAS SITTING AT THE EDITOR'S DESK of the San Luis Obispo *Telegram-Tribune* on August 6, 1945, when it happened. This was the first summer that I had been able to work longer than two weeks on "vacation relief" at the daily newspaper since the Navy program began at Cal Poly in January, 1943.

The bell on the teletype machine began clanking away, warning me that something was coming in over the United Press wire service that deserved my immediate attention. I got up, took two steps over to the machine which was now busy typing a high-speed-message that had started with the notation: "FLASH."

"August 6, 1945. U.S. planes drop atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, city devastated, estimated 50,000 civilians killed. More to come."

It was obvious that whatever else was to come, this news alone was enough to change the front page and might even justify an "extra," although I had been told the paper seldom if ever printed an "extra." I was sitting in for editor Bob Goodell, who was on vacation. On August 9, a second atom bomb was dropped on Nagasaki when Japan refused to surrender, devastating at least ten square miles of that city with a blast that could be seen 250 miles away.

By the time the Japanese surrendered, on August 14, I was back working on the campus, editing the Naval Academic Unit's newspaper, *Trim Tab*, which on Tuesday, August 14, did publish an extra with the headline: "Beaten Japs Yell 'Uncle' and a subhead: "War End Heralded by Nips in Domei News Broadcast." The rest of the front page was devoted to stories describing the U.S. reply to a peace bid by the Japanese, and a review of the terms of the Potsdam declaration issued by the Allies to the Japanese on July 26.

In a prominent box on page 4 Lt. George Weigel, commanding officer of the Naval Academic unit at Cal Poly, issued the following statement to the 500 trainees in the NARU program, largest in the United States: "Cessation of this nation's war activities, which has just been announced, should not affect the attitude of Naval Academic Refresher Unit trainees attending this school. The Navy still expects you to carry on until official word

#### BEATING SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES

has been received to the contrary. We do not expect that the ending of hostilities will noticeably affect this program for some time to come."

He was right. The NARU program continued through January, 1946, and my duties continued as numerous as they had been since 1943. I was teaching refresher English to Navy trainees, supervising publication of both the monthly magazine *Mustang Roundup* and a Navy newspaper, *Trim Tab*, functioning as head librarian, and participating in postwar planning, including production of literature to be used for recruitment of new students at West Coast military "separation centers."

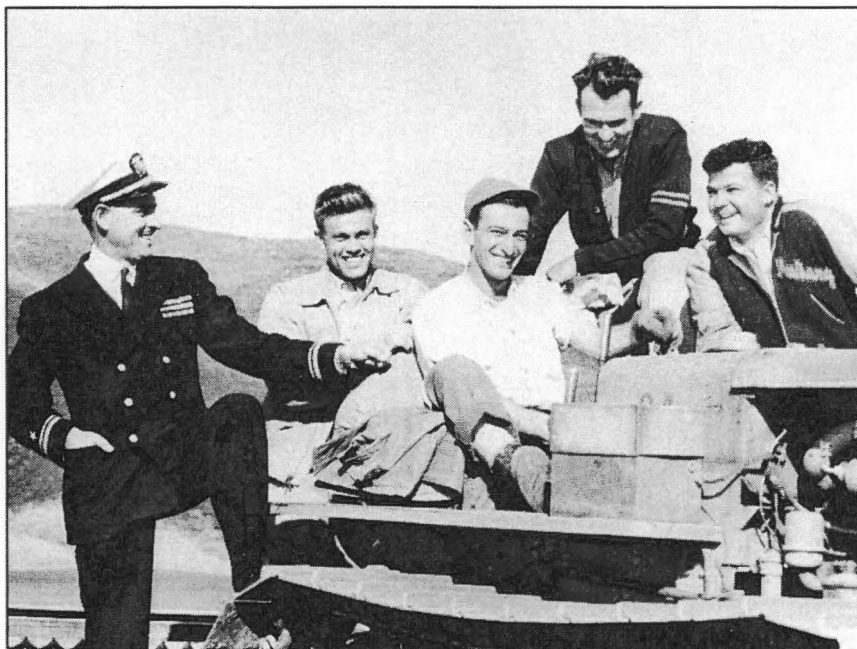
It was that last activity, postwar planning, that had been occupying much of the time of President McPhee and Dean McCorkle and some of the spare time of most of the permanent Cal Poly civilian faculty since VE Day, May 8, 1945. With the war over in Europe, after Germany signed an unconditional surrender, the prospects of an Allied victory in the Pacific seemed to warrant planning for a return to peacetime educational programming. Almost a year earlier, on June 22, 1944, President Roosevelt had signed Congress' monumentally important G.I. Bill of Rights, authorizing educational and other benefits for World War II veterans.<sup>1</sup>

Veterans with service-incurred disabilities had been eligible for education and vocational training benefits provided by federal programs since the end of World War I. Under programs such as Public Law 16, disabled veterans could receive training for four or more years, subsistence allowances, and their disability compensation, which varied with the extent of the disability. By the spring of 1944 Cal Poly had 16 veterans who had received Purple Hearts.

My part in Cal Poly's postwar planning had been assigned to me by Dean McCorkle in the spring of 1944. He had said, "Develop any kind of appropriate publicity that would help veterans discharged from the armed services understand the kind of educational opportunity they could get under the G.I. Bill at Cal Poly." Since we already had 26 veterans, I began by interviewing them about why they had chosen Cal Poly. I discovered that

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1. The G.I. Bill's official name was "Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944." It provided education and other benefits to World War II veterans who had served at least 90 days and received an honorable discharge. Sixteen million veterans received financial support of unemployment insurance, generous educational opportunities ranging from vocational training to higher education, and home ownership. The G.I. Bill changed America's colleges and it changed America's concept of the value of higher education.



*These four former Poly students returned on the G.I. Bill having been classified by their respective services as bona fide heroes. Their stories of why they chose Cal Poly influenced other ex-servicemen to attend Poly.  
From left: McGrath, Holmes, Vanoncini, Cook, and James.*

80 percent of them were interested in agriculture and that only 20 percent were interested in the engineering and industrial programs. I took photos of each veteran working in a practical, learning-by-doing laboratory situation, many with animals but some with industrial equipment. These photos, printed as thumbnails with short statements about each student's ambitions, made up a center spread in a brochure that painted Cal Poly's practical, occupationally-oriented educational program in the light I thought would be most attractive to a soldier, sailor, or marine being discharged after several years in the service.<sup>1</sup> My association with cadets from the NFPS fleet school and the Naval Academic Refresher Unit trainees, all of whom had seen active service, made me realize that Cal Poly had one big drawback to

1. Five G.I. Bill students were among the 65 civilian students who registered on September 12, 1944. For spring quarter Cal Poly had 10 G.I. Bill students, 13 Public Law 16 veterans, and three veterans who were not yet receiving any public law benefits, for a total of 26 veterans. Eleven of the 26 were married, one had two children, and two had one child each. There were 213 naval aviation cadets in the NFPS and 169 enlisted trainees in the NARU program.

#### BEATING SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES

discharged veterans: There were no women students at Cal Poly. The cover, in full color, featured a photograph I had taken by the rocks of the lily pond with a background of the clock tower, Cal Poly's most easily distinguished building of that period. In the foreground I placed a group of several male students, wearing lettermen sweaters, lying on the grass talking to three or four of the youngest, best-looking female secretaries I could recruit as "models" from the secretarial pool, with permission of their supervisor. The people in the photo were not identified.

Later, some of the returning servicemen who signed up for my journalism classes and worked on publications accused me, good naturedly, of course, of having used false advertising. They said, "On the basis of that cover photo, we decided to come to Cal Poly, believing that Cal Poly was a co-educational school." These brochures had been distributed in large numbers to every military separation center in California so that any G.I. interested could have one. Separation center personnel were anxious to give discharged veterans maximum information about their G.I. Bill of Rights and their educational opportunities. Coeds or no coeds, Cal Poly was attractive to veterans who were anxious to acquire knowledge and skills in such fields as agriculture and engineering. There were few other colleges in California providing undergraduate, practical, occupationally-centered education in the mid-forties.

Lt. George Weigel, commanding officer of the Naval Academic Refresher Unit program, had permitted Navy personnel to participate with civilian students in most extracurricular activities, especially publications, music, and athletics. In fact, most of the Navy trainees who worked on publications were those I recruited out of the English classes I taught. Many of the special stories printed in the *Mustang Roundup* were stories written as class assignments and selected by the instructor for publication because of some special humorous or entertaining quality. The possibility that articles written for class might be selected for publication seemed to be an even greater incentive for extra effort than a good grade, particularly for men with battle stars on their blouses.

By October, 1945, I had reactivated publication of *El Mustang* as a weekly newspaper, although the first few editions were small, four-page half-sheets that shortly grew back to normal tabloid-sized papers as we were able to gain advertising support. First editor of the reestablished paper was Leon Garoian, an early discharged veteran; business manager was Merval Mayer who had been civilian editor of *Mustang Roundup* February through July,

1945.<sup>1</sup> Chuck Chapman, another returned serviceman who had been a Navy photographer, enrolled in 1945 and I soon had him in charge of the college's photo lab and had talked him into taking on the *Mustang Roundup* editorship starting November, 1945. The last issue of that publication was November, 1946; after we revived both the weekly newspaper and the yearbook, there was no further need for such a monthly publication. Advertising revenue was too hard to come by to support three major publications. Garoian's big editorial campaign of the year was to get everything having to do with Cal Poly's former status as a technical school changed to a degree-granting college — and that included official letterheads and directional signs around the city. These were the kinds of editorials President McPhee liked to see in a student newspaper. We had no actual or even potential administrative censorship problems with editor Garoian, who was more builder than critic.

The job of editing the first postwar yearbook, *El Rodeo*, went to Glenn Arthur, who had worked on publications in 1940–41 and also on the radio workshop as scriptwriter and actor.<sup>2</sup> He had left Poly for the armed services, saw active duty in the South Pacific, and returned to renew his career in ornamental horticulture and his avocation as an outstanding athlete in both basketball and baseball. His assistant editor was John Richmond Shea, a dairy student, who also had worked in publications during 1940–41 before going into the armed services. It had not been until the beginning of the winter quarter, January, 1946, that the Student Affairs Council had authorized a yearbook. With a normal year of yearbook production work half gone before they were able to start, Arthur and Shea and their business manager, Ben Gupton, were in a race with time. Charles Chapman, the yearbook photographer, could always be found in the darkroom except when he was out on the campus taking photos.

When the book was finally out in June, I discovered under my picture on the publications page a caption written by editor Arthur: "Robert E. Kennedy, Journalism, English, Publications, Publicity, Photography, Librarian. Always busy, not many grey hairs yet. Car trouble, watch trouble, car trouble, kid trouble."

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1. Leon Garoian was student body president in 1946–47, graduated with a degree in Agricultural Inspection in 1947, married a *Telegram-Tribune* staff member, did graduate work at Oregon State University, and became a Farm Advisor and member of the state university faculty.

2. Glenn Arthur, nephew of Ted Howes, head of the ornamental horticulture department in the 1940s, graduated in 1946; he became a vocational agriculture teacher and taught for many years at San Bernardino Community College.

By the time Arthur wrote the comment about "kid trouble and car trouble" he and many others knew that the Kennedys had three kids under the age of six; they also knew that our 1938 Graham-Paige, a car no longer manufactured, had many mechanical problems not easily repaired without parts. On more than one occasion friendly, helpful fellow faculty members had produced in the Cal Poly machine shop various gears needed to replace broken ones like the starter gear, without which we didn't go far. On another occasion a search of auto junkyards had located a wheel bearing in an ancient Reo truck that a smart aero teacher by the name of Roy Metz had told me was a duplicate of the one in the Graham. How he knew such a fact was beyond me.

It was that same Roy Metz who agreed one summer to replace a leaking water pump with some non-Graham part he knew would work if I would clean the grease and dirt off the motor block before he went to work on the car. Since I could get no one else to fix my car, I agreed readily. Roy was the kind of meticulous mechanic who at home trimmed his grass around edges and flower beds on his hands and knees with a pair of scissors. Roy handed me a bucket of kerosene and some rags and I cleaned the engine block till I thought he could reach in without getting greasy. He took one look, said, "I want it so clean I can wipe my white handkerchief on it and not get a speck of dirt on it." That's the kind of "car trouble" Arthur was talking about.

The stories of the Kennedys' car trouble had even penetrated the executive suite. In 1945 Dean McCorkle and his wife, Avis, volunteered to let me take their car to Fresno when they heard that my stepfather, Harold Bronson, had passed away. I had had to fill out a request for leave form in advance and had submitted it to Dean McCorkle for approval. He asked me how I was going to get to Fresno, a good question in 1945. There was no direct public transportation; the usual route was by bus or train to either San Francisco or Los Angeles with a transfer up or down the San Joaquin Valley, in either case hundreds of miles of extra travel. They had just one car, but they insisted I borrow it, and even offered the gasoline ration stamps needed, but we had some of those our often-incapacitated car had not been able to use.

That was just a sample of the family spirit that existed at Cal Poly when it was small. After the funeral, my mother, then about 55 years of age, asked me to consider leaving Cal Poly and joining her as a partner in her Fresno variety store business. Her proposal was financially attractive, but I could visualize myself busier than a cranberry merchant trying to keep track of

the thousands of items in a dime store and with nothing to promote except merchandise. It wasn't a good match, and I declined, reluctantly.

It was early in 1945 that President McPhee had me come into a meeting in which Dean McCorkle, George Couper, and Dean Elgin Knott, head of the engineering division, were already present. I soon discovered that they believed it was time that we reconstitute the instructional printing program, using our present facility and equipment as the basic complement and expanding from that point. I quickly made them aware that neither the limited space available in the basement of the old Ag Education building nor the equipment was in shape to be used as an instructional printing laboratory. McPhee seemed not to be bothered with such details but proceeded to tell me that I was to work with Dean Knott and develop a curriculum for a four-year degree program in printing that he could use to get State Department of Education approval. Knott and McCorkle were, of course, quite familiar with what had to be supplied; I was to do the necessary research and, with Couper as my adviser, put together a curriculum that Dean Knott could consider "printing engineering." In the next few months while sitting at my desk in the library, I poured over catalogs from Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh (now Carnegie-Mellon University) and Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, N.Y. McPhee had also asked that we develop a job description for a person who would be the only teacher and head of the department at the outset. Dean Knott was told that President McPhee personally would recruit and hire the best possible person.

I was enthusiastic about doing this extra assignment because I knew that once we had a new man to head a printing program I would no longer have to be responsible for all the printing equipment, which was hard to keep operating. Of the three Linotype machines in the shop, only one was operational; we had cannibalized two to get replacement parts for one. I also anticipated that such a program would provide more journalism students for my classes, and, if we ever had a journalism major, which I never spoke about in front of anyone except my wife, it would make an ideal working situation not enjoyed by many schools of journalism. The assignment was completed to the satisfaction of Messrs. Couper, McCorkle, and Knott and given to President McPhee. The next time I was told about progress on the project, Couper said, "President McPhee is about to hire a man named Bert Fellows, a machinist at the Santa Monica *Outlook*, who is also the 'legislative advocate' of the Allied Printing Trades, a union group made up of all the printing trades." I immediately expressed my apprehension to Couper

that McPhee was considering hiring a "politician and lobbyist" instead of a "teacher." Couper looked at me over the rims of his glasses and said, "Oh, I imagine there are some people who thought the same thing when he hired a journalist-publicist in 1940." That kept me very quiet.

I was wrong about my concern. Bert Fellows was a perfect match for the Cal Poly position, and he built the nucleus of what has turned out to be the finest printing program in the United States, surpassing in industry acceptance both the schools I used as models in developing the first curriculum draft. That curriculum, of course, was changed many times over the next forty years.

By late May of 1946 I had been the "temporary librarian" for four years and I saw no action by anyone that led me to believe the administration was seeking a permanent librarian. One day I made my routine stop at the Post Office in the basement of the clock tower building, then officially known as the "Administration-Classroom Building." I opened each of the several large drawers assigned to the library and removed the contents. I piled the books together in the bottom of a cardboard box I had picked up from the kitchen of the El Corral Coffee Shop, next door to the Post Office. On top of the books I piled all the new magazines, then the government publications, a lot of big envelopes of hard-to-recognize stuff, probably junk mail, and finally all the bills and correspondence. On top of this I placed some loose interoffice memos, obviously from faculty and administrative staff, usually suggesting some book they wanted me to buy. I picked up the box and hoisted it up to my waist so I could climb the stairs to the library on the second floor. The top of the stack of material was right under my chin.

By the time I had reached the first floor I had read the first open memo, one from President McPhee. In effect, he asked me to drop whatever else I was doing immediately and give him names of some current students or alumni he could recommend to fill an assistant editor and writer position at *California Cultivator*, later to be known as *California Farmer*, a farm magazine with much political clout. The editor-publisher had requested help and McPhee intended to give it.

I turned off at the first floor, walked to the president's office, stood over the desk of the president's secretary, Leona Boerman, and blew the memo off the stack in my arms onto the desk in front of her. I said, "Tell the President I don't have time to take care of this request and we don't have any graduates who are properly trained for such work." When I got to the top of the stairs on the second floor, I could hear my telephone ringing, and no

one answering it. Before I could arrive at my desk and pick up the receiver, it must have rung a couple of dozen times or more. It was President McPhee — not his secretary. He said, "Get down here now. I want to talk to you." When I walked into his office about two minutes later, I stood in front of his desk and said, "I quit." This stopped him from what he obviously had planned to say to the insubordinate upstart standing in front of him. He asked, "Why?" I answered, "Because I can't do all the jobs that I am supposed to be doing and continue as the head librarian."

I think President McPhee's next words to me were, "You mean you are still handling the library?" I was irritated before, but I was very mad when I turned on my heel and started to leave. He said, "Wait a minute, let's get Dean McCorkle in right now." In less than two minutes McCorkle was in the room and McPhee said, "Why haven't you found a new librarian?" McCorkle responded, "I think we have one coming for the beginning of the fall, 1946, quarter. His name is Ainsley Whitman; he has an A.B. degree in library science and is currently working in the San Jose State College library."<sup>1</sup> That ended my role as an imposter not-so-temporary librarian.

By February, 1946, President McPhee had terminated all wartime training programs and instituted activation of normal civilian Cal Poly programs that had been planned by postwar faculty planning committees. The fall quarter, 1945, enrollment of 819 had jumped to 2,044 at San Luis Obispo in 1946 and the Voorhis branch at San Dimas had reopened with 238 students. Such rapid enrollment growth, never before experienced, was not anticipated by the postwar planners. The total numbers hit the campus and the community harder than expected. It created a major housing crisis for students, requiring the temporary installation of bunk beds on the floor of the gymnasium.

Another crisis created by the sudden enrollment surge affected me personally and seriously. I had just stopped teaching English to Navy trainees and thought I would be able to concentrate on journalism, publications,

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1. Ainsley Whitman was head librarian for only two years, 1946-48. Dorothy Wright, assistant librarian, was acting head until the promotion in 1950 of Frances Allen, who had been reference librarian since 1949. Allen was head librarian, 1950-1964. He was succeeded by Harry Strauss, who had been on the library staff since 1961. Strauss served as head librarian, 1965-1976. He was succeeded by Norman Alexander, who held the position until his untimely death in 1978. Anglina Martinez, reference librarian since 1966, was acting head, 1978-79. Dr. David Walch was appointed dean, library services, August, 1980. He was succeeded by Dr. Hiram Davis in 1996.

and public relations. Dean McCorkle drafted me again, this time to teach two sections of first-year English composition. The classes were scheduled in the largest lecture room on campus, next to the Library, accommodating more than 80 students in armchairs.

At my first class meeting for that course all seats were filled and at least another 20 or 25 students were seated on the floor with their backs to the walls along both sides of the room. My complaint to the dean immediately after the first class was over resulted in the creation of another section, but left me with two sections of more than 45 students each — a very difficult situation for an English composition course. The dean gave me immediate authorization to hire a “reader,” something not previously provided for at Cal Poly, to grade submitted composition papers.

I was lucky enough to locate a retired high school English teacher, Maude MacDougall, who for the rest of the year spent almost full-time reading, marking, and grading papers for my classes. She was good but tough — much tougher than I would have been. Often her corrections were so technical that I couldn’t explain the reasons to my students. Usually in such cases I would say, “There are several right ways to handle that situation. Let’s just say your way is as good as mine, and raise your grade a bit.” There never were any arguments.

Near the end of the academic year 1946–47 it was becoming obvious to Dean McCorkle that the activities of the publications and journalism department were on as large a scale as many colleges where journalism was a major subject. Furthermore, the President was calling on me more and more to do special writing and reports, which always had the highest priority; the athletic department was expanding and demanding more athletic publicity. The addition of the new printing major required the offering of more journalism classes each quarter, a welcome opportunity but an extra load. The dean finally said, “OK, the President has released another position so that you can hire a second person to teach journalism and you can divide up your other responsibilities to even the load.” And so began my first experience at recruiting faculty candidates, screening applicants, and finally hiring a faculty member.

Sometimes tempers around the student newspaper or yearbook office would flare when assignments were missed and editors felt let down. Violence, however, is not the usual remedy used by journalists; instead, caustic, angry, and even profanely insulting words are the substitutes student editors and writers frequently use on one another.

## LEARN BY DOING

John Richmond Shea, one of my most experienced journalists, who had worked for *El Mustang* in 1940 before he was in the service, was assistant yearbook editor under Glenn Arthur and then editor of the 1947 yearbook. One of the co-business managers in charge of advertising was Cyrus Hovig, another ex-serviceman, who had vowed he was through putting up with the "kind of deprecating remarks" he had gotten from superior officers.

One day, sitting in my office next door to *El Rodeo's* office, I thought we were having an earthquake. A terribly loud bang as though a desk had been overturned, followed by several more crashes of furniture being tossed against walls or other furniture, brought me to my feet and out into the corridor just in time to see editor Shea dash out the door followed closely by advertising manager Hovig. What Hovig was shouting I couldn't quite understand but it sounded as though he was threatening to kill Shea. I stepped between the two men, put my hand on Hovig's chest, and tried to push him back. Hovig played first-string tackle on the Mustangs football team — and he wasn't easily pushed back by a 130-pound talker. I realized Hovig was shaking all over, and I told Shea to go outside. As Hovig calmed down he said to me, "Man, don't ever get in front of me again when I'm that mad. I might have smashed you instead of Shea, and I wouldn't want to do that." Later I asked editor Shea what had caused the uproar. He said, "We got into an argument over an ad layout. I got mad, called him a name that cast doubt on his parentage. I forgot Cy is sensitive about being called anything but his own name."

Shortly after that episode, Hovig initiated a petition signed by all the football players and sent to the President demanding that Coach O'Daniels stop using profanity when criticizing his football players for some failure to achieve the results O'Daniels demanded. As Hovig said, "This isn't the Navy!"

By this time O'Daniels had returned from his Navy tour of duty, resuming responsibilities as head football and basketball coach. The 1946 football season, started by Coach Ronnie Henderson, was half over by the time O'Daniels returned. Even with Howie's help the Mustangs lost all the remaining games, a dismal five loss, one win, one tie record. The season started with a squad of almost all NARU trainees and an extra coach supplied by the Navy, Lt. Homer Cole, former Chicago Bears trainer and assistant coach. But the old adage of the "right way" and the "Navy way" got in the way, according to some of the men playing on that team. Just before the first game of the season a Navy order came through to all NARU trainees that gave them the alternative of signing up for a four-year hitch and remaining in the flight program or of returning to regular duty from which they could

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receive a discharge on points or within six months, whichever was the shorter. About 250 of the NARU trainees left immediately to return to active duty and an early discharge. With that exodus the football team lost all but one first-string lineman and a large part of the remainder of the squad. It seems that Cal Poly was not destined to have a winning Navy football team. By this time two other athletic coaches on military leave returned: Captain Deuel returned as Major Deuel to resume baseball coaching and dormitory supervision, and Chuck Pavelko returned from the Navy to join O'Daniels in coaching the 1947 football squad.

Lew Bewley was the NARU trainee responsible for Poly's only win in the 1946 season with a conversion kick that gave the Mustangs a one-point, 7 to 6 victory over Cal Tech. Lew was one of a number of NARU trainees who elected to stay, complete the NARU program, and enroll in Cal Poly's degree program. I knew Bewley, the football player, from having written publicity about the squad, but I was amazed one day when I got a letter from Odessa, Texas. The letter was from Lew's mother-in-law, who started out something like this: "You call yourself a public relations man. Do you know that the wife of one of your football players is a national champion baton twirler?" Enclosed was an 8 x 10 glossy print of a very pretty young woman, obviously a classy baton twirler, and definitely something that Cal Poly did not have, male or female. I took the photo over to Harold Davidson and said, "How would you like to have her performing in front of your band?" Harold, being slightly older and more mature, ventured, "It might work out but this may be only her mother's idea and her husband may look on it differently." But husband Lew was cooperative and Betty Jo became a Cal Poly feature for several years. A *Mustang Roundup* photo feature by Charles Chapman on Betty Jo in November, 1946, declared, "Cal Poly's musical organizations have always been something a little bit extra — but with short-skirted, high-stepping Betty Jo out in front the 'hip, hip, hoorays' have been louder and longer than ever." The article concluded, "This is just a sample of what it would be like if we had coeducation." Betty Jo, like hundreds of student wives over the next few years, helped "put her hubby" through college by working as secretary at the college. At Poly student wives were awarded "PHT" certificates by the President and his wife, a tradition for many years.

There weren't many opportunities for student photographers who were taking my class in photography to practice what the media calls "leg art." We had lots of livestock, and lots of industrial equipment, but between 1940 and 1956, there were no coeds, except those borrowed from other state colleges for Poly Royal queens. Since some of the college secretaries were young



*In 1950 Cal Poly had no coeds. These five women were wives of students. Kneeling is Betty Jo Bewley, a national baton twirling champion whose husband, Lew, came in for a Navy program and stayed to get a degree.*

and unmarried, they sometimes were asked by student photographers to model, particularly with livestock with which the photographers were sometimes lucky enough to get an exceptionally good photo that could be sold to a national magazine. Many class assignments were designed so that there would be a possibility of selling the result, if it were really good. Lots of latitude was given, so student photographers could use their own initiative as to types of poses, backgrounds, props, etc. I would venture into the dark-room almost every day to inspect whether it was being kept clean and neat, an essential for good production. Negatives, both roll film and cut film, would often be hanging on dryers, waiting for the owners to return and make prints or enlargements. Curiosity always overcame me on such occasions and I would frequently inspect the dry negatives with a light to see the quality of the negatives. One day some 4 x 5 cut film seemed to have as a background a familiar pattern in a rug on which a sparsely clad model had draped herself. Inspecting it more closely, I was horrified to discover what I was certain was the rug in President McPhee's office. Furthermore, for the photographer to have taken the photo I was looking at would have required him to stand on a ladder.

I got hold of Chuck Chapman immediately, since he acted as the dark-room supervisor and checked students in and out. He told me the name of the student whose negatives I had just examined. I confronted the student.

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He admitted the photos were taken in the president's office without permission. Asked how he got in, he said simply, "A friend is the student janitor." The girl was a secretary. He had not had a ladder. He put newspaper on the president's desk and stood on it for the angle he wanted. Why? "It is the only place on the entire campus which has a carpet on the floor," he explained so very rationally. I suggested he destroy the negatives, make no prints, make sure his janitor friend understood he had committed an unpardonable offense in the eyes of his supervisors, and pray that no one else would discover his indiscretion. My cautionary remarks were meant not so much to protect one student as to preserve the employment of one faculty member.

As Cy Hovig had said about Cal Poly, "It is not the Navy"—at least, not anymore. Neither was it the Army, the Air Force, nor the Marines, but in the next ten years after World War II, the men enrolling under the G.I. Bill, both single and married, soon numbered nearly half the student body. They had all been there and they wanted something better for the rest of their lives. They knew they had lost precious time. They were intelligent, hard-working, and very serious students. The student wives frequently worked, many of them at the college or in the community as secretaries and clerks. Hundreds of married students, some with several children, lived in military surplus campus housing. Poly was family-oriented for sure.

With the arrival on the campus of Bert Fellows, an expert printer who knew how to get the facilities he needed, and my new colleague in the journalism department, John R. Healey, I felt that the areas for which I was responsible were soon going to be something of which Cal Poly could be proud. John Healey, a San Jose State College journalism graduate, had been Valley editor of the *Modesto Bee* and was a sports fan. We divided the job so that John took the newspaper, sports publicity, photography, and part of the journalism teaching load. I took the yearbook, official publications including the catalog, public relations, and the other half of journalism instruction. The dean considered me to be the "head of the department" and the President considered me to be "his man" to write anything that he felt needed to be written or otherwise handled. I had taken the President's advice and not concerned myself about lack of graduate degrees. Instead I had worked every available summer and other vacation periods at a newspaper, just as he had suggested in 1940.

My frequency of working for the San Luis Obispo *Telegram-Tribune* during the period 1940–1944, when Jean Paulson was editor, led Paulson to propose I quit Poly and accept the managing editorship in 1944 when he was

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leaving for the *Berkeley Gazette*. At that time the *Telegram-Tribune's* total county circulation was only 6,000. I figured Cal Poly's future was brighter. During a month's vacation in May, 1944, I worked as a reporter for a new daily newspaper, the *San Diego Daily Journal*, but managing editor Joe Kneffler not only didn't offer me a permanent job, he almost fired me when I worked on a gas rationing story he had not assigned to me.

Both before and after the war the college veterinarian, Dr. Mort McCapes, an officer in the California Veterinary Medical Association, had succeeded in bringing the association membership to the campus for annual state conventions. There was not yet a veterinary medical school in the state. I had handled their convention arrangements and publicity as part of my Cal Poly public relations work. They were impressed enough to offer me the position as Secretary-Manager of the association at more money than I was making at Poly. Again I looked at the future and decided, with Mary's strong support, that Cal Poly offered the best prospects for growing into something even better. The biggest drawback to a Poly teaching job was the lack of salary for two months each summer. But as long as *Telegram-Tribune* editor Bob Goodell used me for vacation relief, as he had each summer since the war and for as many weeks as I wanted to work, we figured we could get by.

But the question that kept nagging Mary, even more than it did me, was whether I would be growing as fast as the college. That was the night she advised me to stop reading Mickey Spillane's private eye detective stories, stop joining my photography students in "leg art" sessions, and get serious about being a college professor. By October 25, 1947, the Kennedys had four children, two boys and two girls, a mortgaged house that we had just remodeled, an old car, and no plans yet for how we could afford to buy a better one. I couldn't figure how it was possible that I could ever afford to do graduate work while supporting a wife and four kids. But I hadn't figured on the ingenuity of my wife or the motivation she can provide, and the cooperation of my mother.

LESSON SEVEN *When eventual change is anticipated, long-range planning can smooth the way and bring about a transition with a minimum of trauma for all involved.*

IS THE GRASS GREENER HERE OR THERE?

OUR LITTLE SAN LUIS OBISPO house on Mt. Pleasanton Drive was empty and dark. The Dennis Transfer moving crew had finished loading the van the previous afternoon and taken off for Los Altos, just a few miles southwest of Stanford University. Our good next-door neighbors, the Neresons, had bedded down all six of the Kennedys for the night and just finished feeding us a warm breakfast at the ungodly hour of 4 A.M. Our new Pontiac station wagon was finally loaded, with three of the kids, Bobby, Maridel, and Steve, all stretched out on pads and covered with blankets in the back. Mary was holding Susan, just six months old and still nursing. We felt like a pioneer family loaded down in our prairie schooner and headed for the Western frontier. Our immediate objective was to drive 200 miles north and arrive at our new home on Marvin Avenue, Los Altos, by 8 A.M. We anticipated the Dennis crew would be waiting to move our furniture into a two-bedroom home my mother had bought for us a few weeks earlier and which we had yet to see. My mother, Hazel, a tiny 4-foot, 11-inch, bundle of energy, had always been a nervy little lady. Now, at age 58 and a widow for the second time, she seemed fearful of nothing and willing to gamble on her son's future. She had described the house to us by telephone, and given us the address on Marvin Avenue. She said it was in a nice residential area surrounded by prune and apricot orchards and within walking distance of Los Altos Village. It was only a few blocks from a nice elementary school, close enough, she said, that her two oldest grandchildren, Bobby and Maridel, could walk. She had described the patio and enclosed backyard as a place in which Stevie could run and Susan could learn to walk. After the death of my stepfather, Harold Bronson, a few years earlier, my mother had sold her Fresno variety store for a profit, and moved to Long Beach to help the working families of two struggling sisters-in-law raise some grandchildren. She had cash she needed to invest at a time when her only child needed financial assistance, and as I said, she was nervy. She had even loaned us the money to buy the new car in which we were traveling.

When we pulled off the Bayshore Highway and started up the hill on San Antonio Drive, following the signs that read, "Los Altos," we were in

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territory new to us. We had been told Marvin Avenue was "just off" San Antonio. We asked several people for directions before we could find the street. Marvin Avenue, it turned out, was a short, two-block cul-de-sac that didn't actually intersect with San Antonio Drive. By the time we found the street it was a little after 8 A.M. and the movers were parked in front of the house waiting for us to open the doors.

It was Memorial Day weekend of 1948 and a lot of planning and action had taken place during the past year in anticipation of this temporary move so that I could do graduate work at Stanford University and earn a master's degree in journalism. I didn't need the master's degree to get a teaching job; I already had that. What Mary and I agreed I needed was a new beginning that would both inspire me to move forward and give me confidence that I was qualified to do what I had been doing since 1940, teaching journalism and handling public relations at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo.

President McPhee had not forgotten our little confrontation in the spring of 1946, when I refused to recommend the names of any Poly students or graduates for an editorial position on an agricultural magazine because we were not providing students a proper educational experience that would qualify them for such positions. McPhee realized that Cal Poly's ability to recruit students to its agricultural programs could be greatly enhanced by having loyal Cal Poly graduates in two strategic spots: (1) as high school teachers of vocational agriculture, and (2) as editorial staff members of publications that reached farmers and their families. He had solved half the equation years earlier by tying his work as president of Cal Poly to his responsibilities as chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education and making Cal Poly headquarters not only for the Bureau but also for the agricultural teachers of the state and their students, the Future Farmers of America.

At that time Cal Poly was producing more than half of all the vocational agriculture teachers trained in California, since the only other institution then training ag teachers was the University of California at Davis. The alliance with high school vo-ag teachers had helped build Cal Poly's enrollments in the postwar years. McPhee felt that his ability to influence the Legislature to support Cal Poly both financially and with helpful legislation would be enhanced if the editorial weight of farm publications was slanted toward Cal Poly's needs. We had had several conversations about what I thought would be needed in an instructional program that would train ag journalists, but the President had never seemed particularly fond of the idea that it would require a major in journalism.

I had made some discreet inquiries of contacts at the State Department of Education when I was processing catalog copy, which required actual review and approval by the office of Aubrey A. Douglass, associate superintendent of schools in charge of state colleges. The scrutiny of any state college proposals for new programs by the State Department of Education staff had become more stringent as a result of the publication on March 1, 1947, of the Strayer Report, which criticized the presidents of the seven state colleges for operating their campuses and the system without proper coordination by State Superintendent Roy Simpson and the State Board of Education. Before the Strayer Report was published, state Education Department staff thought the field of journalism was well covered by programs offered in two other state colleges. I had figured it would be almost impossible to get approval for another major in general journalism. It has always been a mystery to me how Dr. George D. Strayer, of Columbia University, and his research staff came to one conclusion about journalism instruction in the state colleges. Although Cal Poly had been offering elective courses in journalism since 1939, three of those years were during our wartime Navy days, and no students taking the courses expected to make a career of journalism. Yet the report stated, "It seems wise to limit the number of state colleges offering occupational training to those with the best programs, namely Fresno, San Jose, and California Polytechnic College."<sup>1</sup> I must have really snowed the researchers when they interviewed me, or else they were basing their opinion on the fact that Cal Poly was dedicated to doing a good job in any occupational field in which it offered instruction. When I talked to State Department of Education staff about the need for ag journalists, who were not being trained anywhere in the state at the time, there had been a glimmer of hope, but only if the need could be "adequately proved." That was what I hoped to do during my Stanford University study.

Cal Poly had not yet developed an in-house bulletin for faculty and staff in 1947 and so we depended upon memos and notices and the school paper to get the word out on new developments of interest to employees. Dean McCorkle, in his role as dean of instruction and assistant to the president, received all the official mail from the State Department of Education and took whatever action was necessary, even before sending certain communications on to the President. The President had too many important re-

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1. Strayer Committee, *Report of a Survey of the Needs of California in Higher Education* (Sacramento, 1948), p. 30.

sponsibilities to be much concerned about details, particularly now that he was also State Director of Vocational Education and, since the fall of 1947, national president of the American Vocational Association. That's how it came about that I knew that faculty members at Poly were eligible for sabbatical leaves before the President did. Dean McCorkle had sent a State Department of Education bulletin to me for possible rewrite into a short notice in *El Mustang*. The announcement clarified a point: Even if a state college had not yet made budgetary provision for financing "sabbatical leaves" for eligible faculty who had been employed a minimum of seven years, faculty could apply for a "difference in pay leave" because the person receiving such a leave would be paid only the difference between his salary and the salary of a substitute who, it was assumed, would work for less.

Mary and I had been trying to figure out how we could afford to leave San Luis Obispo so I could attend USC or Stanford, both of which had good graduate journalism programs. I had corresponded with both department heads and had been assured that I would be accepted at either school. There had been one definite advantage to enrolling at Stanford: I had been promised a part-time reporting job at the Palo Alto *Times* by Jean Paulson, managing editor. Paulson, former editor of the San Luis Obispo *Telegram-Tribune*, had left the *Berkeley Gazette* and was now at Palo Alto. He had assured me he could give me as much work as I could fit in around a class schedule and could arrange the hours so I could cover mostly night meetings of city councils and other civic groups. After we had made the decision to go to Stanford, it was Jean Paulson's wife, a real estate broker, who helped my mother find the house in Los Altos. Not only was I accepted as a graduate student at Stanford, Dr. Chilton Bush, Stanford's journalism director, wanted me to teach a one-week high school yearbook workshop as soon as I arrived in mid-June.

On the basis of the inside information I had about leaves with difference in pay, I had prepared a request for approval of such a leave based on the need to do a master's degree thesis study justifying the need for an agricultural journalism major at Cal Poly. I had already made contact with John Long, general manager of the California Newspaper Publishers Association, who had agreed to sponsor that portion of the study having to do with a survey of California newspapers.

The request was submitted to President McPhee, whose first reaction to me was, "Where did you get the idea that Cal Poly could grant such a leave?" Lou Merrill, general manager of the Western Fairs Association, gave

me a recommendation for a substitute teacher, Dick Washburne, an agricultural fair publicist, who Merrill was convinced could teach, supervise the yearbook, and handle public relations. I knew that President McPhee knew John Long, one of the most effective lobbyists in Sacramento, and that he would be influenced by John Long's willingness to support my study of the need for an agricultural journalism program. He also knew and had respect for the opinions of Lou Merrill. And so it was that I became the first faculty member at Cal Poly ever to receive a leave with any kind of pay attached to it.

McPhee made it plain to me at the time he discussed approving the request that he was doing it "Not because you are going to be working on a master's degree, but because you are going to bring back evidence of need we can use to justify the approval of a program that will train Cal Poly students to be writers and editors of farm news."

Dick Washburne had agreed to take the position at a salary that would have given me \$135 per month "difference in pay." In August I received a phone call from President McPhee. He said, "Bob, Dick Washburne tells us now that he won't be able to take the job unless we pay him at least \$100 more per month. What do you say to that?"

"We can't make it financially unless I have at least \$135 per month from the Cal Poly leave program," I replied. McPhee answered, "That's what I told Washburne. Go find someone else you are confident can do the job who will work for the salary we originally agreed upon. Better hurry."

Luck was with me. I already had become acquainted with two staff members at the *Palo Alto Times*, both Stanford journalism graduates who had evidenced interest in my college public relations work during some coffee break bull sessions: Dan Endsley and Boyd Haight. I immediately contacted each of them and individually discussed my dilemma and presented the idea that it was an opportunity to get some experience in a field that might lead into similar work at Stanford University, where both of them yearned to work. Boyd Haight, assistant city editor and a bachelor, jumped at the chance. He was hired, and there was then a bigger hole in the *Palo Alto Times* staff, which gave me more part-time work for the next 12 months. My total leave pay from Cal Poly for the 15 months we were away from San Luis Obispo was \$1,350, a sum I would have to repay the state if I failed to return to my job and work for a minimum of two additional years. After his experience at Cal Poly, Boyd Haight joined the public relations staff of Stanford University. It was fortuitous for both of us that our paths crossed.

I went back to San Luis Obispo by train after helping Mary unpack the boxes and move the furniture around during the three-day holiday. Neighbors on Marvin Avenue had, on the first morning, asked us to breakfast; it was obviously a friendly neighborhood with people anxious to help Mary and the kids feel at home.

I still had at least two more weeks' work to complete, wrapping up the end of the 1947-48 academic year with graduation exercise publicity and final examination grading and grade posting before I could make the move to Los Altos. Our house at 17 Mt. Pleasanton had been rented, unfurnished, to the local Studebaker dealer and his wife as of June 1. I had made arrangements to stay in a guest room that was part of the old Navy sick bay now used as the college health center. All meals could be eaten in the college dining hall with the students, an experience all faculty members should have from time to time.

Before we had moved to Los Altos, I had come home one day from work to notice a very beautiful red metal and wood station wagon parked in front of the Mt. Pleasanton Drive house. It looked brand new and seemed to have all the extras on it, including a spotlight, fancy mudguards, and lots of chrome. But it was the real mahogany wood finish that was most spectacular. As I got closer I could see that it was Pontiac's largest eight-cylinder model.

Stepping into the front room, I was surprised not to find some visitors, just Mary and the kids. "Whose car in front?" I asked. "It's ours, as soon as we make the down payment," Mary replied. An immediate inspection of the car convinced me that Mary had found a bargain. It belonged to her friend, Mrs. Fred Kimball, Bobby's Sunday school teacher. Mary was the assistant Sunday school teacher and she had been admiring Mrs. Kimball's new station wagon for some months. Mrs. Kimball, the wife of the local General Motors dealer, drove only the best of new cars. It was a 1947 model that she had had long enough to have the garage work out all the bugs and add all the extra touches she could think of to make it better. The price was \$2,500 plus sales tax and license. As a part of the move to Los Altos, my mother advanced the cash. We paid her back over a period of several years, without interest. I never claimed to be a self-made man. All during my life there was at least one woman, a grandmother, mother, or wife, standing behind me and working in my best interest.

My experience at Stanford could have been called the "awakening" in terms of my education. I'm convinced that students should put several years of work-experience between a bachelor's degree and any graduate work they

undertake. Only after some practical, real-world experiences can a student find in graduate school what he or she needs to make the coursework really meaningful. Dr. Chilton Bush, head of the Stanford journalism program, was operating one of the nation's leading research-oriented journalism departments, specializing at that time in readership surveys. He wanted me to undertake as my master's thesis a study that would tie in to other readership research he was doing. I explained my desire to develop "a survey of media to determine the possible need for a program in agricultural journalism and a survey of existing agricultural journalism programs in mid-western farm states to determine what the experts felt was the ideal curriculum. While he was not enthusiastic, my determination was "overpowering," he said, and permission was granted.

The coursework in graduate journalism courses was comparatively easy for me, and several of the courses gave me new experiences and new confidence. One, in magazine feature writing, required the writing and submission to publications of feature stories on any subject. As a result of that course I sold one full-length feature to *Parents' Magazine* entitled, "How To Finance a College Education," and several shorter articles I did on traveling blacksmiths and blind children's schools, which were rewrites of features written originally for the *Palo Alto Times*.

My work for the *Times* started out in June, 1948, with an assignment of doing local news stories for a 10 A.M. radio broadcast over a local station. Five days a week I would arrive at the newspaper office at 7 A.M., rewrite local news items I thought would interest a radio audience in news broadcast style, and deliver the script to the station a few minutes before 10 A.M. That assignment continued for most of the year, with other assignments added that developed into regular beats of the city council meetings of both Atherton and Menlo Park plus any other general assignments given me by the city desk. There were at least two new things I learned while working for the *Times*: (1) some editors won't print "all the news" because they believe it is unethical to print something that may be detrimental to an innocent third party, and (2) organization charts may disclose information about the level of someone's job that will create employee dissatisfactions.

One afternoon I submitted a story and photos developed on my Menlo Park beat. The story originated with a complaint made to the city council by residents of a neighborhood objecting to a mechanic's rebuilding and testing a professional racing car in a residential zone. The confrontation had gone on for some time and finally the mechanic placed a large sign in his

yard, "House For Sale to Negroes Only." I took a photo of the mechanic and his car in front of the sign, with the wording quite visible and readable. The story explained the whole issue. Eleanor Coggeswell, the senior editor, reviewed the layout in which editor Paulson was intending to feature the story. She ordered the story killed. When I objected, she gave me a lecture that I shall remember all my life. She was correct, of course, but I had previously believed the most important criterion for news for a daily newspaper was that it was the truth. I maintained that my photos showed that what I wrote in the story was the truth. She argued, and won, that other newspapers might use the story, but the Palo Alto *Times* policy was not to run any story, true or not, which would hurt, in anyway, an innocent third party — and, as she pointed out, the Negroes, as a race, were not a party to the argument and were being used in such a way as to show the racial prejudice of one party to the argument. It was not a lesson I had learned in any class or textbook.

In another class at Stanford, "Human Relations In Industry," I was to complete a project involving in-depth interviews in which both a company's official and actual relationship charts would be compared. Gene Bishop, publisher of the *Times*, gave me permission to study the newspaper's organizational structure on the understanding that I would give him a copy of the completed report. This I did. I learned from publisher Bishop later that he had shared the report with key administrative personnel and that as a result the composing room foreman had asked for a change of title and a raise in salary to make him equal to someone on the editorial side who he discovered was higher up on the organization pyramid. As a result of this experience, at Cal Poly I advocated and implemented for years the use of organizational charts that are circular, with the boss in the middle, not at the top.

But the most important experience at Stanford was not in journalism but in education courses, taken as electives. In order to take graduate courses from Dr. W.H. Cowley, professor of higher education, I had to see him and explain why I wanted the course, since I was not one of his doctoral candidates. I convinced him that even though I was working on my journalism master's degree, my real interest was in the field of higher education, and someday I might be coming back to work on a doctor's degree. Until that moment I had never taken an education course nor seen any need for doing so. Dr. Cowley, I learned from some of his doctoral students, was the retired president of Hamilton College in New York and was one of the

nation's experts in the field of higher education. In one of the first classes I took from him I expressed some doubt about a point he had made in a lecture and proceeded to argue with him. At the coffee break in the two-hour class several of the Ph.D. candidates took me aside and said, "Kennedy, don't ever do that again. He doesn't like anyone to question his authority. He'll flunk you."

The first paper I turned in for the class came back with a notation on it to see him during an office hour. During that conference with him about the paper he expressed not only enthusiasm for my writing but said, "I like the way you argue with me in class. It was getting mighty dull in this course, because the other students seem to have no contrary ideas." Dr. Cowley and I became the best of friends and corresponded quite frequently. He was a commencement speaker at Cal Poly in 1950 and he was among my mentors even though I was unable to go back to Stanford to work on a doctorate.

Another Stanford professor who was a particularly strong backer of the Kennedys was Dr. H.B. McDaniel, professor of guidance and counseling, with whom I was unable ever to schedule any classes. He had been Mary's high school mathematics teacher, and I knew him best when he was chief of the Bureau of Guidance in the State Department of Education. He had been on the Stanford faculty since 1946 and had helped counsel us about doing graduate work at Stanford.

The work I took from Dr. Cowley in higher education courses gave me a new perspective in the field of education and changed my conception of my work from that of just a job to that of a career in an exciting field where there was great opportunity to be of service to young people and to society. While Dr. Cowley was not a great believer in vocational education, he took the position that specialized (occupational) education had won the battle and that general (liberal arts) education would never again be the dominant or only worthwhile offering of institutions of higher education. Cowley and McDaniel both were of the opinion that President McPhee was a remarkable leader in the field of education, and that I was fortunate to be associated with him in the building of an unusual college.

The 15 months the Kennedys spent in Los Altos were happy times despite the lack of funds for anything except essentials. Mary remarked several times in later years that "we lived on lamb neck," the most inexpensive meat cut she could find, and the "clothes we brought with us were patched and worn because we couldn't afford new things." While we did not have to pay my mother rent, we did pay for having the driveway surfaced and

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we did pay the taxes. The hardest bills to pay seemed to be my quarterly Stanford tuition payments. In 1948 and 1949 the tuition was only \$200 per quarter, yet I never had that much cash at the time the payment was due. Each time I had to sign a note and pay the tuition in installments with money earned from the *Palo Alto Times*.

Bobby and Maridel liked their Los Altos elementary school and their classmates. Steve, who had an early speech impediment that made it difficult for anyone in the family except Bobby to understand him, started taking speech therapy classes at Stanford University. I would take him to the campus with me, stop in front of the speech building, and he would bravely, at age three, march right into the office where he had been told to go. Whether it was the Stanford University therapy or a continuation with Mrs. Bright in San Luis Obispo when we returned that broke the barrier, he lost any semblance of a speech impediment by the time he was in the second grade.

My aunt, Chassie Orr, who lived in Mountain View, loved to baby-sit the children, which gave Mary and me opportunity on occasion to leave the house together, usually when I had to cover some lecture or similar activity on the Stanford campus for the *Palo Alto Times*. Aunt Chassie's son Mark, a PanAmerican pilot, lived in Palo Alto with his wife, Maxine, a former PanAm stewardess and nurse.

On one occasion when Mark was home from a trip, the four of us spent an evening in San Francisco. On the way home in our station wagon, we got so busy talking about the future that none of us noticed where we were until we were almost in Santa Clara, miles south of the turnoff to Palo Alto. We laughed about that, but Mark and Maxine didn't think it was a laughing matter that his mother, on the basis of her experience baby-sitting our kids, kept needling them about not having any children. Mark said, "She told me the other day that if we didn't hurry up and have some children, she'd be dead before she had any grandchildren." Some years later Chassie became a grandma twice. We always felt close to the Orr family, and in later years met them at Big Sur for joint family outings.

Another Los Altos resident we saw once or twice during our short stay was Frank Taylor, a freelance author who had written "Take a Cow To College," a story first published in *Country Gentleman* and later reprinted as a *Reader's Digest* condensation. I had provided the photo illustrations for the story, for which I received a check from the Curtis Publishing Company for \$150. I raised the issue with McPhee about whether the money belonged to

me or to the college, and he said, "Keep it, you earned it." He was not usually so generous with his interpretation of what the academic world considers a normal and ethical activity in earning extra money but which McPhee frequently classified as "unethical moonlighting." He was particularly concerned with agriculture faculty who traveled on state expense accounts and then received honorariums for judging livestock at fairs.

A few weeks before we were due to pack and return to San Luis Obispo, I received a phone call from President McPhee, who said he and Mrs. McPhee were in San Jose and would like to stop by and visit with us. The visit was most friendly and they both proceeded to bring us up to date on news of San Luis Obispo. The biggest news, as far as McPhee was concerned, was the recent gift of an 800-acre Arabian horse ranch from W.K. Kellogg. It was going to give Cal Poly an opportunity to expand our Southern California operation; he said that was a public relations activity I would get involved in upon my return.

The new library building at San Luis Obispo was nearly completed and the books would soon be moved. Horse racing had been very good in California in 1948-49 and Poly's share of the pari-mutuel betting funds had been more than \$3,000,000. He said enrollment was increasing, and that the state board had approved Poly for the general secondary teaching credential in a half-dozen fields and would soon approve a master of arts degree in a similar half-dozen fields. He reminded me that he had resigned as state director of vocational education on January 1, 1949, turning that post over to his assistant, Wesley P. Smith, and that for the first time since 1933 he would be able to devote full-time to being Cal Poly's president. He thought Boyd Haight had done OK in journalism and publications, but he was anxious for me to get back, as there was lots to do in public relations. He said he liked the June, 1949 yearbook, and particularly the fact that the students had dedicated it to me in my absence with a big photo and article about how my "success in publicizing the college was based on [my] belief in its students and a faith in its objectives." He liked that, he said. Then he said, "I am going to do an administrative reorganization. Do you want to be the head of the new department of agricultural journalism, the public relations director for both campuses, or assistant to the president? Which do you prefer?"

I looked at him and smiled and said, "I don't care which. I just don't want to try to be all three at the same time. You decide which one you want me to be."

He said, "I want you to be the assistant to the president as soon as I get the position approved. So the first thing you can do when you get back on the campus is to start recruiting candidates for the job of ag journalism department head. After that you can recruit someone to replace you as public relations director."

Before we left Los Altos to return to San Luis Obispo, my mother sold the Marvin Avenue house for a small profit to her sister-in-law, who said she'd fallen in love with it when she'd visited us one day some months earlier. When we returned to San Luis Obispo, we moved back into our home at 17 Mt. Pleasant Drive. This house, which we had first rented in 1942 but had not purchased until several years later, had gone through several remodels. The first project had been a partition in one bedroom with a built-in bunk bed in what had originally been a wardrobe closet so that Bobby and Maridel would have separate rooms. The second remodel involved the addition of a third bedroom, moving the garage from the back of the lot to the front, and the building of a concrete brick wall to create an enclosed patio and a new utilities-laundry room.

All this we did ourselves, after having received instruction in bricklaying. My instructor was Jim McGrath, a Cal Poly graduate who had gone through the Baatan Death March, a Hell-ship sinking, and four years of being a prisoner of the Japanese, and had returned to become an engineering faculty member. I enjoyed bricklaying, and found it had great therapy benefits when your normal job effort is primarily mental, not physical. On one part of the major remodel we had the help of Andy Anderson, a Cal Poly maintenance man who built fireplaces on a moonlighting basis. Mary tended to want to make changes in the project as we proceeded. Once when Andy and I were both on the roof he said to me, "Pull up the ladder." I asked why. He answered, "So Mrs. Kennedy can't come up here and give me any new directions — we're too far along to change anything now."

Quiet, little-traveled Marvin Avenue in Los Altos had been a pleasant and safe place for the children. Back in San Luis Obispo we discovered what we had forgotten: the Foothill Boulevard area at the intersection of what is now Chorro and Broad was very busy and becoming more so with every increase in the size of the Cal Poly student body and the population of the city. By fall, 1949, the enrollment at San Luis Obispo had risen to 2,909 students and the city's population was at or near 14,000. Cars going to and from the campus whipped around the corner in front of our house, often with screeching brakes, reminding us how dangerous it was for a 10-year-old boy

IS THE GRASS GREENER HERE OR THERE?

on a bicycle, a 7-year-old girl on a tricycle, a 5-year-old boy with a wagon, and a 3-year-old toddler. They couldn't be watched every second nor locked safely in the yard.

In 1942 we had bought a lot in the Escuela Alta tract, near the junior and senior high schools, but had not built because of the war. Now our thoughts began turning to this more quiet residential area where we eventually wanted to live.

In Los Altos we had seen the kind of redwood frame houses that were attractive to us, but saw no evidence of similar homes being built in San Luis Obispo. While driving around Morro Bay one day, Mary exclaimed, "Look at that cute little redwood bungalow. Stop. I want to ask who designed and built it. The lady who answered the door was flattered and told Mary, "The house was designed and built by a young Cal Poly student named Don Smith. He's an architecture student."

We found Don Smith without difficulty. Giving him the financial limitations within which we felt we had to operate, we commissioned Don to design us a home that would accommodate a family of two adults and four small children, so that each person had his or her own room, and father had a room he could call his den. The design, a post-and-beam house built all of redwood, was so unusual in appearance, with great plate glass windows (which Don said were cheaper than walls), that it was featured in several publications as the most "modern" house built in San Luis Obispo in 1950.



*Bob and Mary with their four children in the patio of their new home, built in 1950. The children are, from left, Bob Jr., Maridel, Susan, and Steve.*

#### LEARN BY DOING

We sold our Mt. Pleasanton house and moved into the home at 1385 Cazadero St. just before Thanksgiving, 1950. And we live there today!

In our first decade at Cal Poly and San Luis Obispo we had seen many changes, and now we felt we were prepared for a second decade or more. During the time I had worked for the Palo Alto *Times*, I had been assigned frequently to do stories of conferences, workshops, and special events held at Stanford. Such assignments brought me into close contact with Frederick Glover, Stanford University public relations director. Before we left to return to San Luis Obispo, Fred told me he was being promoted to assistant to the president and would recommend me to replace him as public relations director, if I were interested. Mary and I talked it over and she expressed her opinion by saying, "Cal Poly needs you more than Stanford does." For the first time since 1940 I felt that Cal Poly was definitely my career, and I intended to do my best to prove Mary was right.

**LESSON EIGHT** *To express a contrary opinion, especially to powers above, may not seem to be very smart. If you truly believe your viewpoint is valid and express it sincerely, you may find it is accepted as a welcome addition.*

THE FOREST GETS IN THE WAY OF THE TREES

WE HAD THE BIG LOOSE-LEAF NOTEBOOK spread open in front of President McPhee. It was obvious that he was not happy with our presentation. There were just the three of us in the large conference room the President used as his working office in preference to the more formal office located just a few steps away through the doorway that also led to his private restroom on one side and a convenience kitchen on the other side. McPhee was a working president, sitting there at his desk with his shirt sleeves rolled up, smoking a cigarette and frowning through a smoke cloud he had just blown. This conference room office was long and narrow, probably about 15 by 25 feet, with a row of high windows across the east end. The President sat with his back to the windows through which streamed the morning sunlight in stripes matching the venetian blinds. It was hard to see his eyes because of the light behind him, but I just knew that they were narrowed, and snapping black at the moment. Dave Cook, curriculum coordinator and assistant to Dean McCorkle, was sitting at the end of the conference table nearest to where it was butted perpendicularly into the president's desk on the south side. I was sitting directly across from Dave and had in front of me a notebook identical to the one the President had in front of him.

"I thought I told both of you months ago that I was not going to approve this year's catalog unless you deleted as many old courses as the faculty are proposing new courses," McPhee practically yelled at us.

Cook looked at me, raising his eyebrows as though to say, "It's your baby, not mine." It was true that as the public relations director I was also the publications manager of the college, which included being responsible for the printing of the college catalog. I said nothing, just raised my eyebrows as I looked at Dave as though to say, "You and your boss, McCorkle, are responsible for curriculum." McPhee, observing our mutual silence, said, "Well, Kennedy, didn't I tell both of you that last fall?"

Now the ball was definitely in my court. "Yes, you certainly did, and our summary of courses added and courses deleted indicate that we almost achieved that objective. But enrollment this fall is higher than it has ever been

and the faculty insist they are justified in adding new courses they believe are essential 'to keep abreast of the times.'" I added that last cliché because I knew McPhee was a great believer in the need for a polytechnic college's keeping its occupational curricula abreast of the times. But the argument didn't work.

"I'm tired of your defense of the faculty. And you, Cook, what have you and McCorkle been doing to see that my orders are carried out?" McPhee demanded. Dave pulled back, took a deep breath and answered, "It's not easy dealing with 175 faculty members, all of whom have ideas for new courses they think are essential."

"Have you ever tried telling them how hard I'm working to convince the governor, the legislature, the state department of education, and the department of finance that we are running this college efficiently and economically? It costs more to run a technical college than a liberal arts college. All that equipment, all those labs, all those small lab classes of 18 instead of 24 students make our costs go up higher than any other campus. Despite that, I'm able to show, year after year, that our average cost per student is right in the middle compared to the other nine campuses. But if it weren't for the fact that the state college system now has three new campuses with low enrollments, we'd probably be listed as the most expensively run campus in the system."

Cook and I had heard the President set forth this rationale for keeping costs down every year. He not only used the argument with us, he used it with the deans, with department heads, and at least once a year when he talked to all the faculty. The faculty, of course, could never see the "forest for the trees," as McPhee was prone to claim. The "forest" McPhee was trying to find his way through each year was the "jungle" of state agencies in Sacramento, each one of which seemed to have some kind of control over the operation of state colleges. As McPhee had explained it to me more than once in private tutoring sessions designed to make his public relations director "smarter" than those at the other state colleges, "Don't stick your head over the top of the trench unless you want to get it shot off." His theory, which seemed to work very well, was simply, "keep Cal Poly in the center of any statistical summary, whether it is 'average cost per student' or any other comparison of operational costs. If you are 'the most expensive' the agencies will 'attack' and if you are 'the least expensive,' they'll think there's something wrong and start looking for it." That was "educational philosophy" according to McPhee.

#### THE FOREST GETS IN THE WAY OF THE TREES

I didn't hear Cook's first comment to McPhee's lecture on costs but the next few words were to the effect that he didn't think "increasing the number of courses in the catalog costs the state any more since the only true measure of costs is the 'teaching load' carried by each faculty member." Cook knew exactly what he was talking about when he concluded by saying, "Every Cal Poly faculty member is carrying a heavier load than the system staffing formula requires. We are basically understaffed because you don't release all the positions that are in our approved budget. That's why we look economical. It's not how many courses are in the catalog, but how many faculty members are in the classrooms that determines our costs."

McPhee practically jumped to his feet, bellowing at Cook, "Are you trying to tell me how to run this college?" Putting both hands on the open loose-leaf notebook that contained all the pages of the original catalog manuscript that I hoped to take to the state printer in Sacramento as soon as I got McPhee's signature, the President gave one mighty push away from him. The notebook went sliding down the full length of the 15-foot-long conference table, off the far end, crashed against the wall, and fell to the floor. The rings had opened when the notebook hit the wall, and the pages went flying.

Stunned by the President's action and not wanting to sit and face him, Cook and I both pushed our chairs back, moved quickly down our respective sides of the conference table and dropped to our knees and started gathering up the scattered pages over which we had both slaved for several months in preparation of this day and its presentation to the President. As we began picking up the pages, we looked at each other under the table. It was a ludicrous sight, even to us: two 35-year-old college executive types on our hands and knees like a couple of kids playing games. We both started to snicker; the snickers grew into chuckles and then into laughter we couldn't control.

When the President let fly with the notebook, he had moved quickly toward the door as though to go into his other office. We had thought he had left the room. Suddenly he roared, "What the hell is so funny?" I looked up and he was standing practically over me, with his hands on his hips looking down at his two junior executives as we tried to put the pages back into the notebook in the proper order. "Damn it, give it to me. I'll sign it. And then you two get the hell out of here."

McPhee knew that Cook was correct, but he didn't lose arguments easily or gracefully. In fact, not many staff members were willing to subject themselves to the Chief's anger, so debate, particularly when more than two

#### LEARN BY DOING

people were present, was not frequent. McPhee appreciated Cook's knowledge, his high principles, ethical standards, and frankness, as long as he wasn't confronting him in front of others with what would appear to be "insubordination." The fact that this confrontation took place in front of me was different: I didn't count. McPhee had already decided that I was his alter ego. It was OK for Kennedy to be present; it was part of the process of "tutoring" me for future responsibilities.

Ever since I had returned to work from the 15-months' leave at Stanford University, the President had been dealing with me differently than he ever had before. For one thing, the situation for him was different. Now, in 1949, he was for the first time in 16 years not burdened with two jobs, only one. He no longer had to deal with national and statewide agricultural or vocational education problems as he had when he was not only Cal Poly's president but also chief of the State Bureau of Agricultural Education or State Director of Vocational Education.

His concentration on Cal Poly was both good and bad. In earlier years he had been forced to trust the day-to-day operations of Cal Poly to C.O. McCorkle, who had functioned for years as both dean of instruction and assistant to the president. Now McPhee had time to deal with details and he was doing it with vengeance. He would get to work before 6 A.M. almost every morning, sometimes as early as 4:30 A.M. By 11 A.M. he would have accomplished as much as some executives do in an eight-hour day. He said those early-morning hours, before anyone else was up and around and before the telephones started to ring, were the hours when a man can get some basic thinking done.

In fact, he made lists in those early morning hours, lists of things for other people to accomplish. Sometimes the lists were superficial "house-keeping" items that he saw around the campus. Other times the lists contained very basic problems about our multiple-campus operation. They frequently included some imponderables about the future of agricultural production practices in America, or the direction engineering education ought to be headed in the last half of the 20th century. He often would call me into his office just before 11 A.M., give me a note from a small scratch pad on which he had scrawled in tiny, almost illegible handwriting several items, the last of which said, "Get these done by 3 o'clock."

He would leave for home, driving his state car from his reserved parking place right outside his office up the hill three blocks to the president's house on campus. Mrs. McPhee would have an early lunch for him, since

he had eaten a breakfast he had fixed for himself some five or six hours earlier; he then would lie down and take a nap. He would return to the office about 3 P.M., full of vigor and ambition, calling for individual meetings with all the various people to whom he had given assignments before noon.

Frequently I would skip lunch in order to complete assignments, and find myself called into his office just before 5 P.M. for a session that could last until he was ready to go home for supper at 7 P.M. Mary, in desperation sometimes, with a supper that was spoiling, would drive up to the campus with one or more of the kids and send one in to "find Daddy and tell him to come home now, dinner is getting cold." When one of the kids, like six-year-old Maridel, would wander into the president's inner office through unlocked doors where outer offices were no longer manned by secretaries, we would hear her calling, "Daddy, are you in there?" Invariably McPhee would jump to his feet, reach in his pocket for a stick of gum to give to the child, and say, "I'm sorry, I didn't realize it was so late."

I was still officially the public relations director, not the assistant to the president, but McPhee had begun hinting in the fall of 1949 that "as soon as I get the administrative organization straightened out and some new positions in the budget, I'm going to promote you to assistant to the president." Having said that on several occasions when we were alone in his office, he would begin what I could best describe as the Oxford tutorial system. He would give me a specific assignment of writing a letter response for his signature to some complicated problem that had been raised by some administrator in the state department of education, the department of finance, the legislative auditor's office, or by the chairman of some legislative committee. He would hand me the correspondence that required an answer, ask me to read it, then explain the direction he thought his answer should go, and say, "Check with Nelson [or Chandler or Wilson or McCorkle or whomever] and get the facts, then write a draft of a response that gives all our arguments as to why we do it like we do or why we don't want to do it the way they want us to."

Sometimes the letters were complaints from parents of students enrolled, or legislators asking favors on behalf of some constituent. The tutoring didn't end with my writing a response. McPhee would critique my draft, tearing into anything that he thought didn't adequately defend his major premise that Cal Poly was a polytechnic college, not a liberal arts college, and as such it had statewide, not regional service responsibilities; it had a right to be different in all respects from the other state colleges, a right

guaranteed by the law as found in the 1901 Enabling Act. Furthermore, he frequently made me stand at the blackboard in his office-conference room and make presentations in defense of the budget or new program proposals. Once, while making such a budget presentation I glossed over some point and when he raised a question, I said, "But you know the answer to that, Mr. McPhee." He retorted, "I'm not McPhee, I'm Roy Bell, the deputy director of finance, and I want to know all the details. Now tell me the answer to my question."

Sometimes letters of complaint came from loyal alumni who could not understand why our football teams after the war weren't as good as the ones before the war. "You've got more students than you ever had, more money than you ever had, and worse teams than you ever had," read one letter. When McPhee handed it to me to read he said, "I've asked myself the same questions over and over. You are close to the coaches. What's the problem and what's the solution?" I was certainly less close to the coaches than I had been before 1947, when we hired John Healey to be my colleague in handling journalism, publications, and publicity. I had turned over all sports publicity to Healey and really didn't know anything more than what Healey had been telling me since I came back from my leave of absence in September, 1949. When I reminded McPhee of this change in my contacts, he said, "What does Healey tell you is the matter?"

"Do you really want to know? You won't like it," I said.

"I insist. Tell me," McPhee replied.

"John tells me that no one on the football coaching staff knows how to recruit athletes and furthermore they don't really believe in it. They think we ought to be able to do about the same as Howie O'Daniels did in the early 1930s: play with the guys who show up the first day of practice. They don't want anything to do with trying to raise money for athletic scholarships. Without scholarship funds and a vigorous recruiting program, we're never going to have more than a mediocre football team — that's what Healey says, and I agree."

McPhee leaned his chair back from his desk, reached under the top drawer, and pressed a button. In a moment McGrath, administrative assistant, came in. McPhee said, "Sit down, Jim. I've got an assignment for you and Bob." The assignment was this: Without telling anyone where we were going or why, the two of us were to leave within the week and tour the state, looking for good candidates to fill a combined athletic director/head football coaching position. McPhee had made it very plain with his comment,

"I am tired of having Cal Poly be the doormat of the California Collegiate Athletic Association conference. The last four seasons have been disasters. I don't want our team to be the conference champions, necessarily, but I'm tired of being ribbed by my fellow college presidents and criticized by the alumni. Get me a man that will get us out of the basement and in the winner's circle at least half the time."<sup>1</sup>

McGrath and I decided that the only way we could keep the objective of our mission secret was to travel for some other obvious purpose. I had told McPhee I thought our best sources of information on winning coaches were the sportswriters of California newspapers. "They know every coach in their circulation areas, and they know which are the good ones and which are the not-so-good ones. Let's make a tour of California newspapers so that I can renew my contacts with editors, and if anyone wants to know why, we can tell them we are planning a future series of alumni tours for the President and we're gathering data on how far we should travel each day, where to stop, etc."

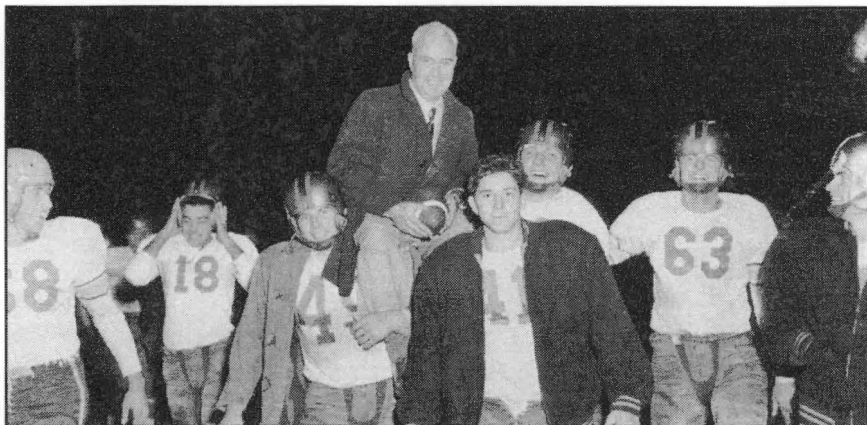
I had already broached that subject with the President and he had been lukewarm, saying he didn't want to subject himself to answering questions from the alumni until he had better answers, particularly on sports.

I drew up a list of towns with community colleges or senior colleges as well as high schools. The sports editors were listed in a California Newspaper Association directory. I called them, got the best time of day to see them, and said I would drop in within a week to talk to them about local area coaches.

Jim and I decided we would make no San Luis Obispo County contacts and drove on our first day to Taft and Bakersfield. The plan worked fine. We got good cooperation and lots of evaluative comments about football coaches. We drove up the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys and through the Bay Area, the Peninsula, and San Jose. We decided not to interview any closer to home than King City. Walt Gamage, sports editor of the *Palo Alto Times*, gave us the lead on Leroy Hughes, head football coach at Menlo

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1. The 1949 football season under Chuck Pavelko was one of the disasters, not so much because of the total season, which ended with six losses and four wins. But Cal Poly received a lot of negative national sports publicity because of one game: an 80-to-0 loss to College of the Pacific. Going into that game, COP's quarterback, Eddie LeBaron, needed 80 points to set a national record, a fact that had been well publicized before the game. LeBaron went on to a very successful professional football career, which was his objective and that of his coach.



*Roy Hughes, appointed head football coach in 1950, promised to bring Poly a winning season in three years. His 1953 team went undefeated: 9-0-0.*

*Quarterback that year was Bobby Neal, now a SLO businessman.*

College, who was running the program there as a farm school for the Stanford University football program. Our interview with Hughes convinced us that he was the best prospect, the most knowledgeable about recruiting and fund-raising, and had the most impressive win/loss record. Our recommendation to McPhee was all it took. He interviewed Hughes and made the offer, which Hughes accepted starting with spring practice, 1950. Hughes told McPhee, "Give me three years and I'll give you conference championship." Not only did Hughes almost accomplish what he promised, his 1953 squad went undefeated, untied, and, in a number of games, unscored-on. It started a long series in which Cal Poly's Mustangs were no longer a doormat.

Going back to Palo Alto and talking to Walt Gamage had reminded me of the hectic but educationally profitable 15 months I had spent at Stanford and working for the Palo Alto Times. While in Palo Alto I looked up my former professor, Dr. Cowley. He made it known to me that he would be available to be a commencement speaker, if we should have such a need. When McPhee was congratulating McGrath and me on our "luck" ("or was it skill?") in finding a new football coach, I broached the subject as to whether he had made a decision about the June, 1950, commencement speaker. He said, "No, do you have a suggestion?" On some subjects that is all that it took, a suggestion; but on any subject that he thought might affect Cal Poly's future it took a lot of careful research, presentation of data, and recommended alternative solutions. In fact, McPhee's most commonly used words relating to the presentation of any proposal were, "I want a complete package." Sometimes in working up those complete packages, I did so much research

and writing that what was left over could have been the basis for major articles on education — which I never seemed to have time to write.

Cowley was our commencement speaker in 1950, but his speech was “too academic” and “too much like a textbook” to please the graduating class, the parents, or McPhee. He told me afterwards, “Next time you suggest a commencement speaker, get someone who can entertain the crowd, not educate them, or they’ll all fall asleep.” I had copies of Cowley’s commencement address printed and multiple copies sent to him. In his thank-you letter, Dr. Cowley asked me if we had yet offered Dave Grant a position. I had met both Grant and Ken Young in one of Cowley’s classes and was impressed with both of them. Immediately upon returning to the campus in September, 1949, I recommended we hire both Grant and Young. By December, 1950, Grant, hired to teach English, had been promoted to head of the English department. Young, with publicity and journalism experience at San Francisco State, was added to the Cal Poly journalism department in the fall of 1950.

McPhee had asked that I stop teaching, except for an occasional class in public relations, and devote full-time to public relations and his special assignments. My first special assignment had been to get the new program in agricultural journalism approved by the State Department of Education, which I did immediately. I was surprised how quickly the approval came. The second part of that assignment was to recruit and recommend a candidate to be the head of the new agricultural journalism department.

I found Ken Kitch, then editor of an agricultural magazine in Texas, and gave my affirmative recommendation to McPhee. He said, “Good, I know Ken Kitch’s brother, Don, who is the chief of the Bureau of Occupational Information and Guidance in Sacramento. If Ken’s half as smart as his brother, you’ve got a real find.” Ken, it turned out, was maybe even smarter than his brother, and by the spring of 1950 we had a new journalism major department with three faculty members: Ken Kitch, John Healey, and Ken Young. I was no longer listed as a member of that faculty, although I continued to teach the public relations course until after the spring of 1953.

Enrollment in fall, 1949, had reached 2,909 men, which was over the master plan ceiling for men set at 2,700 by the Strayer Report, but it didn’t exceed our total which was to include 900 women. We hadn’t yet enrolled any women, not since 1930, and had no immediate plans to do so. According to McPhee, the college wasn’t technically guilty of exceeding our master planned capacity of 3,600 FTE. But we certainly had exceeded the ability of

both the campus and the community to provide adequate housing. The immediate solution had been to get the cooperation of the state National Guard and the U.S. Army, which made available the hospital area, including the psychiatric ward, of Camp San Luis Obispo. With school buses providing transportation to and from the camp, the male students seemed to find army hospital housing quite acceptable, and very reasonable.

On June 27, 1950, President Truman ordered U.S. forces to aid South Korea, which had been invaded by communist North Korean forces. The reserves began to be called up and draft registration of 18-year-olds began in earnest. In July I received a letter from Fred Glover, assistant to the president at Stanford University, who renewed his proposal that I leave Cal Poly and join the Stanford staff. He was being recalled to active duty in Naval Intelligence and wanted me to temporarily fill his assistant-to-the-president position. He said he recognized that I might not want to give up the job when he returned, but that was a condition of acceptance: that I would at that time become Stanford's public relations director. I had turned down the PR job offer in August, 1949. I responded that I appreciated their confidence but was obligated by the conditions of my 1948 Cal Poly leave to work at least another year at Cal Poly.

That summer of 1950 I worked for the *Telegram-Tribune* for only one week, as I recall, since we were in the middle of the construction of our new home at 1385 Cazadero St. Our student architect, Don Smith, was supervising and inspecting the work of the carpenters on the job for the Wilson Construction Company, all of whom admitted they had never before built a post-and-beam house, and willingly listened to Don, who was experienced at that type of construction, even though young and a student. The Kennedy family, including all the kids, did daily cleanup so that the workers would have nothing to fall over or impede their progress on each subsequent day. Selling our home on Mt. Pleasanton Drive, a necessity in order to have cash for the new home, was easy, but Mary made the mistake of becoming sympathetic to the needs of the new owner, who asked that certain items of furniture be thrown in to make the deal.

When the fall quarter opened in September, 1950, we began to see the serious impact the Korean conflict was going to have on enrollment. Enrollment dropped to 2,767 men, 142 fewer than the year before. By the winter quarter, 1951, it had dropped to 2,342, an additional loss of 421 students. Camp San Luis Obispo had been reactivated, and the Army had requested we move our students out of the hospital facilities as soon as possible.

#### THE FOREST GETS IN THE WAY OF THE TREES

Despite the fact that enrollment had dropped from 2,909 to 2,342 and we anticipated a further drop in the fall of 1951, President McPhee was successful in his pitch to the legislature for emergency funds to build dormitories, using a plan developed by our master plan architectural firm, Allison & Ribble, for the Claremont Men's College, which we'd received permission to copy. A total of \$1,232,000 was appropriated for five dorms; construction began immediately on what were subsequently called the North Mountain dorms.

The Monday after the April, 1951, Poly Royal, President McPhee received a telegram from the State Department of Education notifying him that the governor and the Department of Finance had directed a reduction in teaching staff from 172 positions to 147 positions, with proportional reduction in support staff. More than 50 faculty and staff members had to be identified and notified prior to the effective date of July 1, 1951. President McPhee did not call a faculty meeting or consult with the newly formed College Council or any other group of employees before making the decision as to which faculty and staff members were to be notified. He called on each instructional division dean and each nonacademic division head and asked them to give him the names of persons to be laid off. The criteria he used for being retained, he said, were, "are they loyal, cooperative, [and] supportive of Cal Poly's philosophy of teaching?" He personally made the final choice of those to be laid off, which did not in all cases agree with the recommendations submitted by the deans and division heads. His response to critics was, "It's a wartime emergency with no time for academic debate."

Once, when I was sitting next to Mr. McPhee at an annual meeting of the Western College Association, we listened to Dr. Benson, then president of Claremont Men's College and also president of WCA. Benson was giving a report on the association's accreditation work during the past year. In describing the differences in size and philosophy of the institutions that had been visited for accreditation purposes, Dr. Benson said something like this: "They vary from a very small, church-affiliated liberal arts school whose chief administrator's management style is an extreme form of participatory democracy to a large, tax-supported, multipurpose state college whose chief administrator is a benevolent despot." McPhee leaned over and whispered to me, "Benson's talking about me, but I'm glad he said 'benevolent'."

On several occasions after this incident, McPhee told this story on himself before small groups of college administrators. I too told the story to others, because I thought then, and still do, that his acceptance and applica-

tion to himself of Benson's comment illustrates very well McPhee's sense of humor and tolerance for opinions of others. Unfortunately the story seemed to reinforce the prejudices of some of our more liberal-minded faculty at the southern campus. In fact, the late history Prof. Donald Pflueger, in a manuscript about the development of the Kellogg campus, quoted me as though I believed President McPhee was a "benevolent despot." I thought he was tough and demanding, but I never knew him to make a decision he didn't think was in the best interests of the people affiliated with the organizations for which he was responsible.

While McPhee and I frequently disagreed about management style, he never made important decisions without asking for and reviewing the opinions of those he believed to be the most knowledgeable advisors available to him. He opposed establishing an academic senate because he believed, with much supporting evidence, that such senates at other campuses were dominated by campus politicians. That expressed belief by McPhee made him the target of much faculty criticism, especially at the southern campus.

Since its postwar reopening in 1946, the Voorhis branch's dean in charge had been Harold O. Wilson. His part in helping President McPhee acquire the 800-acre Arabian horse ranch in 1949 from W.K. Kellogg, the cornflakes king, had been a major accomplishment. It was just the beginning of the effort that was going to be expended in planning and financing the building of a major Cal Poly branch on that beautiful property.

Wilson had cornered me several times when I was on the Voorhis campus, even before we had acquired the Kellogg property, and expressed concern that the southern campus wasn't getting adequate publicity. He said that when he had talked to McPhee about it, the only response he got was, "Talk to Bob Kennedy, he's in charge of public relations for both campuses."

Dean Wilson wanted to know what I was going to do about it now that we had the Kellogg property and would need "lots of publicity if we are to get the support we need to develop college facilities on that property." I replied, "We need to sell McPhee on the idea that you need a public relations person on your staff here; we can't do it from San Luis Obispo. I'll work on it, but you need to work on him, too."

The battle to develop the Kellogg campus was just beginning. It was not easy to obtain funds for capital improvements in competition with all the other state colleges that were being developed to meet the postwar demand. In fact, at one point Sen. Ben Hulse, of Imperial Valley, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, refused to let a bill for Kellogg building



*A 1949 press preview of the Kellogg campus is attended by President McPhee, Assemblyman Ernest Geddes (right) and Charles Voorhis (in hat), being interviewed by Tom McGrath, Voorhis campus faculty member.*

funds out of committee until President McPhee agreed to design facilities and develop a program for a branch of Cal Poly to be built on land in Imperial Valley which would be donated for that purpose. We sent a team of San Luis Obispo architectural faculty members to Imperial Valley to survey the identified land and design the facility; faculty members were assigned to develop curricula for such a school. I personally participated in the preparation of the final package presented to Senator Hulse.

Friday of the week I was working on the final draft of the report to Senator Hulse was the day Mary said we needed to leave for Pasadena to attend the wedding of one of her favorite nephews, Richard Vetter. The report wasn't due in Sacramento for a couple of weeks, and there were some additional facts that the staff at KV had yet to submit to me, which they had promised by phone would reach me on Monday or Tuesday. This was an assignment that President McPhee had given me and about which he was very nervous, since, he said, "The whole future of our Kellogg campus development may depend upon Senator Hulse's reaction."

Knowing I couldn't do any more on the report that week, I turned in an official vacation request form for Friday and left it with Leona Boerman

#### LEARN BY DOING

for the President's signature. Several times on Thursday afternoon, I called Leona and asked if my one-day vacation request had been approved. She kept telling me, "No, he hasn't signed it." About 4:30 P.M. I walked in and said, "I've got to make this trip to Pasadena. I don't want to be guilty of being AWOL — but I intend to go whether he signs it or not."

Leona looked up at me and said very sweetly, "Why don't you go in and tell him that, Robert?"

I marched in and stood in front of his desk while he continued to sign some papers. When he looked up, he said just one word, "Well?"

I explained what I was there for, and he said, "Where's the report to Senator Hulse?"

I then explained that even if I stayed and worked on the report all day Friday, Saturday, and Sunday I still would not be able to finish it — but only because there was essential material promised by the assigned KV staff that was not yet in my hands. As soon as I had that material, the report could be completed in two or three days. We still had over a week and a half before the deadline.

He looked up at me, reached into his outbasket, picked up my vacation request form, which he'd already signed, and said, "Why didn't you say all that on a note attached to the request? You would have saved yourself a lot of worry."

I felt just like the kid whose father has said, "You can't go out to play till you finish doing the dishes" — and then says, "Oh, heck, go ahead, you can do the dishes later."

There was no question that McPhee always put duty before pleasure — at least for anyone on his immediate staff and for himself.

After Senator Hulse received the report, he kept his agreement and permitted the bill out of his committee with a "do pass" recommendation that in September, 1953, provided for an appropriation of \$1,000,000 per year for three years for Kellogg campus development. Permanent sites for buildings had to be selected by November 1, 1951, to meet conditions of the 1949 grant deed from Kellogg. Some four months earlier three State Department of Architectural staff members had begun a survey of the Kellogg ranch to identify ideal sites for buildings.

Cal Poly met all the conditions of the gift from Kellogg, but W.K. Kellogg died in October, 1951, before even the sites for buildings were selected. Senator Hulse died before he could move forward on his Imperial Valley Cal Poly branch plan.

#### THE FOREST GETS IN THE WAY OF THE TREES

A few years later, 25 legislative bills were introduced in one year proposing new state colleges to be built in the districts of the authors of the bills. That lack of coordination inspired the Legislature to fund the study that gave us the 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education — and that's part of the story yet to come.

LESSON NINE *If you are the boss and want all employees to put duty before pleasure, you must visibly work harder, maybe even longer, than any subordinate. What one does as a model is more effective than any lecture.*



## ON BEING AN ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

“GO TALK TO DON NELSON and find out what kind of criteria he used to make that decision.” It was an order, not a suggestion or a request. The President was irritated and I knew it, but I also knew that the business manager was going to be even more irritated at me when I, the public relations director, asked the questions necessary to get the answer the President was demanding.

President McPhee had just told me about a telephone message he had received from a local Kiwanis Club member. It was a complaint against the business manager, who was alleged to have told the Kiwanis Club it could not use Poly Grove, a campus picnic area, for a barbecue luncheon. The Kiwanis Club member told Mr. McPhee that he knew that “Mr. Nelson, a Rotary Club member, gives the Rotary Club permission for such a meeting at least once a year.”

I liked Don Nelson and knew him to be a fair, reasonable person and probably the best business manager of any of the state colleges. I responded to McPhee’s statement about the complaint by saying, “There was probably a conflict with the date.” But McPhee answered, “The Kiwanis Club had asked for any Wednesday afternoon in the next two months; surely Nelson could work that out.” At that point I was glad I was no longer a Rotarian nor a member of any other service club. I had belonged to Rotary, along with a half-dozen other Cal Poly faculty and staff members, since 1942, but had resigned when I went on leave of absence to Stanford in June, 1948. I had not rejoined because I knew if I did I would get reassigned to be *Rotary Bulletin* editor, a job that had taken too much time each week for the several years I did it. When I had decided not to rejoin, I had mentioned it to McPhee, actually raising the point as a question: “Do you think I ought to rejoin Rotary Club for the contacts it gives me with community leaders?” That’s when he gave me his two-point lecture on college-community relations. The first point was: (1) “As the public relations director you need to deal with all groups equitably, and so it is better if you don’t belong to any local groups.” He implied that was the policy that he followed, although I knew he belonged to the Elks Club. I suppose he figured that was some-

how not the same principle as belonging to the Rotary Club. But since I had already decided I couldn't afford the time nor the money it took to belong to Rotary, the principle was acceptable to me. The second point was: (2) "You spend too much time getting local publicity on the radio and newspapers and working on community projects like publicity campaigns for the Boy Scouts, Red Cross, and Community Chest. We need to concentrate on the whole state, with more emphasis on the southern part, particularly the Pomona Valley."

I understood this last point very clearly and took the opportunity right then to suggest that we could improve that situation very quickly by transferring Ken Young to the southern campus to teach English and journalism and handle publicity.<sup>1</sup> I said I had watched Ken carefully since he had been on the San Luis Obispo journalism faculty and was convinced he could do a fine job, with Wilson's and Gibson's day-to-day supervision and my periodic evaluation of his work. That was all it took, and the problem that had been bothering Dean Wilson was solved.

What I found out from the business manager was my guess had been correct — there was a conflict in dates. Poly Grove was scheduled far in advance by all kinds of groups, and the business manager correctly gave priority to student organizations, of which there were many. When I asked Nelson for a copy of the policy to show the President, he said, "It isn't written down anyplace, just in my head." Someplace early in my growing concern for communications I had run across a slogan on a scratch pad distributed by a San Diego printing firm I had done business with when I was advertising manager at Hamilton's Ltd. It had simply stated, "Don't Say It, Write It." My college experience, too, had convinced me that "writing with a purpose" was the best way of persuading people to follow a particular course of action. My confidence in what could be achieved by written communication was almost obsessive and my later experience proved much of my conviction was naive. But at this point I began actively working on McPhee to get his approval for two continuing projects: (1) a weekly information bulletin to all staff, and (2) an employee policy and procedure manual

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1. Ken Young went to the Voorhis campus in 1951 as journalism instructor and publicity man, got his Ph.D. from Stanford in 1953, was promoted to curriculum coordinator and then acting head of arts and sciences just before the move of the Voorhis operations to the Kellogg ranch in 1956. He left Cal Poly in 1957 to become dean of faculty at the University of Alaska. He became executive vice president of the University of Nevada in 1960 and president of The State University of New

that would bring "equity" to the decisions being made within the bureaucracy our growth was creating.

The first issue of the *Staff Bulletin*, published December 16, 1950, made it plain that its editor was "Robert E. Kennedy," and the editorial office was my office, room 172, Administration Building. Reporters representing six organizational areas were listed: Messrs. J. McGrath, administration; O. Servatius, nonacademic; J. Jones, student affairs; T. Zilka, engineering; E. Bloom, agriculture; D. Cook, liberal arts. That first issue also contained a notice that the President had approved publication of an Employees' Handbook to be developed by a campus-wide committee chaired by the public relations director. That handbook, the president stated, was to contain all operational policies and procedures currently in effect, and would be updated at least every year. The title eventually was changed to Campus Administrative Manual (CAM), the name by which the monumental policy and procedure manual was henceforth known. It was a major project in 1951-52, taking considerable time of the public relations director and his secretary, Mary Johnson, whose desk was located across the corridor from room 172 in the back corner of the general office, easily accessible to the public relations director. But that arrangement maintained the appearance that the position was not important enough to justify a private secretary, a perk authorized for very few Cal Poly employees before the mid-1950s.

Although those two projects, *Staff Bulletin* and Employees' Handbook, were time-consuming, there probably could not have been conceived any better way to give me a complete and continuing education about *all* functions of the college. Combined with my existing responsibilities for the publication of the Catalog and the Annual Report and the gathering of information to be used in brochures and publicity releases, these new projects were making me better-informed about Cal Poly than even the President, although I would have been the last to tell him that and he would never have believed me anyway. What I was not learning by communicating with staff personnel for inclusion in the various publications McPhee was teaching me on an almost daily basis in tutoring sessions in his office-conference room.

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York campus at Cortland, N.Y., in 1964. In 1968 he became vice president of the American College Testing program, with an office in Washington, D.C. He retired in 1989 after serving about five years each as head of three different national organizations: the Council on Professional Accreditation, the National University of Continuing Education, and the Institute for Learning in Retirement. He and his wife now live in Lexington, Virginia.

One of his growing concerns was about Cal Poly's organizational structure and the selection and assignment of key personnel to administrative positions. At one tutoring session he stood at the blackboard and wrote these words: "organization," "budgets," and "hiring, promoting, and firing." He then said, "Those are the essential powers that a college president must retain. You can delegate everything else to other people, but if you lose the ultimate authority to control those three categories, you've given up your ability to control the direction and objectives of your organization." It was rather a strange phenomenon to listen to McPhee talk management strategy that seemed frequently to be even more basic and fundamental than one could find in any educational administration textbook. His concepts and insights came, I'm certain, only from experience; he did not read management books. I had the feeling that I was the only member of his staff with whom he talked so frankly about management. Soon he was using me as a sounding board for his ideas on organization, sometimes giving me an assignment to design charts to illustrate the arrangements he had discussed with me. Some of that motivation and interest in organizational charts came from a Department of Finance management analysis report published on September 1, 1950. The author was Everett Chandler, State Department of Finance management analyst, who had visited all the state colleges in 1949-50 gathering data for the report, which made a number of recommendations. The Department of Finance could insist that those recommendations be met by any college at the time its budget was being reviewed.

Not only was there a "Chandler Report" on the system as a whole, but there was one for Cal Poly itself. One recommendation proposed a new body, a President's Council, to be made up of seven key administrative people, advisory to the President, to be established by January 1, 1951. It also called for the development of a College Council, which had something of the same consultative character as the University of California's Academic Senate but without that body's power.

McPhee had been impressed with Mr. Chandler when he visited the campus, and was further impressed by the "reasonableness" of his report. At that point McPhee exhibited a characteristic he had shown previously and which became almost his trademark. As he said to me, "When a person in a Sacramento control agency gets to know as much about your operation as you do, it's time to offer that person a job."

That's exactly what he did, hiring Everett Chandler as dean of students effective January 22, 1951. McPhee had some years earlier robbed the



*Everett Chandler and his wife, Arlene, are greeted by Mary Kennedy. Dr. Chandler was dean of students from 1951 to 1977, when he retired.*

Department of Finance to get Don Nelson and later Jay Scheurman as business manager for the Kellogg campus. We enticed George Clucas from the Legislative Analyst's office to become dean of finance and development. Of course McPhee had moved people around between the college and the Bureau of Agricultural Education so often it hardly made a news item. That had been the case when Harold Wilson, then a regional supervisor of the Bureau, was offered the position as dean in charge of the Voorhis campus in 1946. J. Corder Gibson had succeeded Wilson in 1946 as regional supervisor in the Bureau's Los Angeles office. In 1949 Wilson and McPhee had convinced Gibson to leave the Bureau and become assistant dean at the Voorhis campus.

I do not know if the Chandler Report of September, 1950, inspired it, or whether McPhee had already made up his mind to use the newly created state college position of "executive dean" in a way not identical to the way the position was being used in other state colleges. Three months after the Chandler Report was issued, McPhee announced in the December 16, 1950, *Staff Bulletin* that Wilson was being moved to San Luis Obispo as the new executive dean and that Gibson would be promoted to dean in charge at the southern campus.

## ON BEING AN ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

In some of our chart-drawing tutorial sessions, McPhee had seemed almost obsessed with the idea that there had to be a way in which he could be relieved of all the paperwork that flowed into the President's office. And yet he was equally obsessed with a fear of delegating too much authority and thereby losing control. Wilson was one staff member with whom McPhee had a great deal of empathy. As a former high school vocational agriculture teacher, former Cal Poly agricultural division faculty member, former regional supervisor of the Bureau of Agricultural Education, successful administrator of the Voorhis campus, and key player in the acquisitions of both the Voorhis and the Kellogg properties, Wilson knew how to read McPhee's moods and McPhee knew how to inspire Wilson to work like a Trojan on any project the Chief outlined. When Wilson arrived on the San Luis Obispo campus to take over his new duties as executive dean, there was no suite of offices available; besides, McPhee had decided that the executive dean was going to function like the executive officer on a Navy ship. McPhee assigned Harold his working office-conference room, and moved himself into his formal office, in which he was not used to working, only greeting official visitors. He was not comfortable in that office, and it began to show. He ordered his secretary to give directly to Wilson all incoming mail, phone calls, and any other business that she would normally have directed to the president, internally generated communications as well as those from outside. By his own order, McPhee had literally cut himself out of the game and was now sitting in his formal, less comfortable office waiting impatiently for Executive Dean Wilson to find something that he couldn't handle or that would require the signature of the president. It was an overwhelming mass of incoming material, much more than Wilson was used to at the Voorhis campus. He was a careful, deliberative person, but better at face-to-face personal communications than at paper-shuffling.

On the other side of the west wall of both the president's conference room and his formal office was a long, windowless central file room that opened into the general office. One early assignment given me by McPhee had been to develop a numerical filing system to be used by all offices at Cal Poly, making it possible, McPhee felt, to move secretaries from any office to any other office, eliminating the confusion of unfamiliarity with an existing filing system. Drawing on my past experience with the Dewey Decimal numerical book-classification system used in the library, I developed what he wanted. In the process I investigated the systems used in various offices and actually spent time checking out every file cabinet in the central

file room and in the file storage room in the basement. I learned, for example, that in 1949 we still had a five-drawer file cabinet in the basement in which every invoice for the purchase of sawdust since 1901 was still being preserved — for no earthly reason. In my recommendation on the use of the new standardized numerical file system, I also recommended the elimination of the central file room as unnecessary. McPhee immediately saw a better use for the central file space; he authorized a minor construction project that created two adjoining offices that would have doors to the outside corridor and to the president's conference room and office. It was to be Dean Wilson's new offices, his and his secretary's. The move gave McPhee back the only office in which he was comfortable. He soon decided the "executive officer" concept wouldn't work; it delayed action.

The change gave the executive dean responsibility for the building program, as at other campuses. At Poly the position always had additional jobs attached to it, sometimes student affairs or public relations, but always a hands-on involvement with legislative advocacy, less delicately called "lobbying." At this work Wilson soon became almost as expert as McPhee.

This experience with trying to use an "executive officer" concept made McPhee suspicious of what he called the "short-circuiting" of information that the president should be receiving directly and not after it had been screened by other administrators. His attention was then focused on the instructional area. His three division heads were all located in offices adjacent to one another and to the dean of instruction, C.O. McCorkle. The physical layout of that complex was such that McCorkle's secretary appeared to be the supervisor of the other three deans' secretaries in an "instructional deans' pool." In fact, no one could come or go into any of the three instructional deans' offices without McCorkle's or his secretary's knowing what was going on, in McPhee's opinion.

McPhee's 1950-51 organizational chart showed that nine people reported directly to him, including all three of the instructional deans as well as the dean of instruction. And yet, in practice, McPhee had been in the habit of dealing only with McCorkle when he wanted to know anything about or give direction to anyone on the instruction program side of Cal Poly operations.

He began talking to me about how this had to be changed, and, without the knowledge of the deans involved, we worked out a sequence of potential room moves that McPhee felt would solve the problem of what he called "McCorkle's domination" of the instructional deans. I expected

that he would call in each of the four men involved and explain what was going to be done, why, and when.

He had me prepare a memo that described the moves, and also an announcement for the *Staff Bulletin*. The March 12, 1951 *Bulletin* announced that Dean McCorkle's office was moved to the library, and that the three instructional deans' office complex was moved to the south wing of the Administration building. McPhee had ordered the maintenance department to make the physical move of all furniture, files, pictures, etc., over a weekend, with new locks and keys. He had not told the people involved and they learned of the change on Monday morning when their keys would not open their old office doors. It was a blow to Dean McCorkle more than to the other deans, as it was the first inkling he'd had that the President was somehow disenchanted with him.

At the time the move was made, McPhee changed the title of Dr. Hubert Semans, who had been called a division dean, to "acting dean, liberal arts." In less than six months, Semans accepted a State Department of Education position as "Specialist in Higher Education." At the time Semans left in September, 1952, McPhee gave Dean of Instruction McCorkle the additional title of "acting administrator of the liberal arts division" and assigned Dr. Robert Maurer, a faculty member, to assist him.

McCorkle actually continued as the man McPhee held responsible for that division, but for the next five years, until April, 1957, Dr. Maurer was the actual administrator of the division, and so considered by everyone, with the possible exception of McPhee.

The rate at which McPhee was involving me in activities that were more assistant-to-the-president than public relations jobs had been increasing. Looking for some relief, I talked Ken Kitch into taking on the editing responsibility of *Green & Gold*, the alumni magazine, which the college published at no expense to the alumni association. Kitch accepted the responsibility on the basis that it was a good "learning by doing" experience for ag journalism majors. I heartily agreed. A new state commission had been established by the State Department of Education to recommend state college expansion into the fields of journalism and radio. McPhee named me to the journalism panel and Kitch to the radio panel in January, 1951, despite my protests that I had too much to do. McPhee said, "You'd better be on that group if you want to protect the journalism program you developed." He was right, but I had very little trouble protecting our vested interest in the field of ag journalism. No one else was interested.

I remembered distinctly McPhee's admonition that we try to get future commencement speakers "who can entertain as well as educate." When he asked me for a suggestion in 1951, I suggested we put together a panel of possible future commencement speakers that we could develop with the help of the dean of students, Everett Chandler, and that in the future we could let the senior class review the list and give the President a priority order from which he could issue an invitation. When we used that system in 1951, the graduating class officers selected as their No. 1 choice Paul C. Smith, former editor of *Colliers Magazine* and then the flamboyant editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. At that June commencement Smith gave an inspiring, humorous, entertaining, and educational speech, completely ad lib, which was received by the graduates and their parents with thunderous applause. General Douglas MacArthur had been relieved of his command by President Truman on April 11, 1951. Smith, a former Marine, was one of the first to quote Gen. MacArthur's famous statement, "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away."

Ordinarily I had dealt with commencement speakers on behalf of the President, inviting them, if they wished, to a dinner after the exercises at which we would have all the college VIPs present. When I had suggested such a dinner to Smith by telephone several weeks earlier, he had said, "No, I prefer to just go back to my room and rest, without any contact with VIPs or anyone else." I had passed this information on to President McPhee, who greeted it with enthusiasm, since he, too, preferred to rest after the strain of commencement.

But a strange thing happened. After the commencement exercises I introduced Smith to Mary before taking him back to his motel room. She graciously and unexpectedly said, "Would you like to come to our house after you have rested, and we can have a simple family dinner?" This most eligible San Francisco bachelor looked at my wife and said, "No, you get a baby-sitter and I'll come by in an hour and I'll take you both to dinner at a place in Pismo Beach that I have heard about." When Editor Smith came by our house it was more like Playboy Smith: He was driving a red Cadillac convertible. En route to Mattie's in Pismo Beach he drove as if he was immune from speeding tickets. As we approached a Greyhound bus he wanted to pass, he pressed a button and a siren came on loud and clear, and the bus pulled over; Smith went roaring by, waving his hand over his head at the dumbstruck bus driver. After he returned to San Francisco, he wrote us and told us what a "delightful time" he had had, and how lucky I was to have

such a beautiful, talented, lovely wife. He included a very artistic photo of himself, autographed primarily, I think, for Mary's benefit.

The yearbook for the 1951 graduating class featured some new faces and new titles on old faces in the administration section. Wilson was prominent as executive dean and Ralph Priestly, formerly head of the architecture department, was now dean of engineering. Roy Hughes was listed as both athletic director and head football coach. I felt responsible for his being at Poly, and yet the record was not comforting: Cal Poly was at the bottom of the CCAA conference standings with a 3-win, 6-loss record in football.

That summer we were living in our newly constructed home, and I had worked summer relief at the *Telegram-Tribune* for most of my vacation, with just one camping trip with the family to Big Sur. But I was apprehensive about Cal Poly's enrollment: It was still going down because of the Korean conflict. I knew we were going to have to get a student recruitment program going, and the best bet was to start with our alumni, who could make contacts in their hometowns that would give us statewide coverage if we could just develop the right news pegs. Sure enough the fall, 1951, enrollment was down to 2,153.

I began talking to McPhee again about involving him in a series of President's Alumni Tours up and down the state, holding luncheon and dinner meetings with alumni in different towns, and getting lots of newspaper coverage. Alumni could be encouraged to bring potential future students as guests to those banquets. I had gathered information from American College Public Relations Association publications that indicated that other colleges had found these kinds of president's tours to be effective in getting alumni support for whatever campaigns were being mounted, whether fund-raising, student recruitment, or athletic programs support. McPhee was never much interested in copying what any other colleges did, always wanting to be different and original. With the help of John Jones, the placement director, I finally convinced McPhee that we could plan a President's Alumni Tour that would be different: We would concentrate on visiting the places of employment of our graduates to find out from them and from their bosses just what were the strengths and weaknesses of a Cal Poly educational experience.

On the basis of the public-relations experience of others with whom I had shared information as an active member of ACPRA since 1940, I finally convinced McPhee we needed to do more with and for our alumni. The alumni association had never received enough support from the college and

as a result it wasn't a strong, viable organization available to the college administration when needed. McPhee's contrary arguments in the past had been, "I don't want a strong alumni association. It will try to tell me how to run Cal Poly, and specifically how to run the athletic program." With Carl Beck, Poly Royal adviser and now alumni association adviser, assigned to help Placement Director John Jones work out a week-long trip for the winter quarter of 1953, I figured I had won the debate.

The next scheduled ACPRA midwinter conference for all college and university public relations personnel in District 12 (California, Nevada, and Hawaii) was scheduled for Stanford University, February 5, 1952. My friends in the Stanford public relations office were handling the program and asked me to see if I could get President McPhee to participate on a panel of three presidents. The other two were Robert Gordon Sproul, University of California, and Lynn White, Mills College. They figured they had one UC representative and one private liberal arts college representative, and they wanted one state college non-liberal arts representative. When I asked McPhee to do it as a favor to me, he said, "Only if you write the speech for me."

Not only did I write the speech for him, but I included in that speech all the things that every college public relations director would hope that his president would say or believe. McPhee had started having me attend all the meetings of the President's Council, for example, in order that I could give the public-relations reaction to any proposed actions and at the same time have firsthand knowledge of any administrative policy decisions in the offing that might create waves when announced. Not only did the speech advocate a high level of administrative involvement for college public relations directors, it also chastised public relations directors for spending too much time publicizing the sizzle instead of the steak. This, the speech stated, was measured by the amount of coverage given to sports, music, drama, and fraternity and sorority Greek Week bacchanalian drinking festivals compared to that given to activities inside the classrooms and labs where the students were being educated. Because McPhee liked the script, he read it with feeling and conviction. He received a rousing ovation from the large audience. By comparison the ad-lib presentations of both Sproul and White were received politely but without enthusiasm. At the conclusion of the program I was elected chairman of District 12, which put me on the national board of directors of ACPRA for two years. My acceptance of the chairmanship meant that Cal Poly would host the next midwinter conference scheduled for February 6-7, 1952.

ON BEING AN ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

The next major speech I was asked to write for McPhee was a commencement address to be given at Armstrong College in Berkeley on April 11, 1952. The speech I wrote, titled "Tragedies of Education," was admittedly "heavy" and did not fit McPhee's definition of an entertaining commencement speech. However, he accepted the draft, and we worked it over to make it fit his style of delivery. He seemed satisfied, but I knew he was worried about the presentation. He had been notified by Armstrong College that he would be presented with an honorary degree of doctor of laws. I do not know whether it was concern over the "heavy" speech or concern over the honorary degree, but I got a phone call from Mrs. McPhee from San Francisco the morning of the day Julian was to give the speech. She said he was deathly ill and could neither give the speech nor be present to accept the honorary degree, and that the President wanted me to go there and substitute for him. I drove to San Francisco, went to the hotel, and saw only Mrs. McPhee, who handed me the speech.

The Armstrong College president told the audience that President McPhee was "seriously ill" and that "his" speech would be presented by the Cal Poly "Assistant to the President" a title he later said Mrs. McPhee had given him in her telephone conversation reporting McPhee's illness. In that speech I labeled college students of the 1950s as the "silent generation" and admonished them to "speak out." What irony. I was telling them this not a stone's throw from what would be the birthplace, in 1964, of the "free speech movement" that eventually rocked most of the nation's campuses with students demanding their points of view be heard on every issue from the menu in the dining hall to the Vietnam War. Back home in San Luis Obispo several days later, McPhee thanked me for pinch-hitting for him and said his illness had been "upset stomach with diarrhea."

Within a month, on March 4, 1952, it was announced that Dean Priestly was being replaced by Harold Hayes as dean of engineering, and that C.E. Knott would continue as assistant dean of engineering. A week later I went to Sacramento with a group of student leaders representing the student body and Poly Royal to present to Gov. Earl Warren two gifts: a pair of cowboy boots and a cowboy hat, both of which made photo opportunities for the press with the Poly Royal queen. While that was going on in Sacramento, at home Mrs. Kennedy, as president of the Cal Poly Women's Club, announced the addition of \$900 to the student scholarship fund as the result of a successful "Trash and Treasures" sale, more commonly known as a rummage sale. The next month President McPhee distributed the first copies

#### LEARN BY DOING

of the new Employees' Handbook to all department heads and other administrative personnel. It was Cal Poly's first effort at formalizing its policies and procedures. That first edition was not nearly as large as its successor publication, the Campus Administrative Manual, but it was about as big as the local telephone directory.

On May 19 Cal Poly representatives attended the funeral of Aubrey Douglass and learned that State Superintendent of Public Instruction Roy Simpson had named Guy West, Sacramento State College president, as acting associate superintendent while a search for a permanent replacement was underway. On June 11 it was announced that the U.S. Army had approved an ROTC unit for Cal Poly.

As the summer of 1952 approached, President McPhee made several comments to me about the need for me to start searching for someone we could hire to replace me as public relations director because he was certain that he would soon have permission to appoint an assistant to the president. That he was really serious came across when he invited me to take a "working vacation" with my family during the month of July at the Manor House on the Kellogg campus. The Manor House, one of the original Kellogg family residences, was large enough that the administrative staff had been using it for guest quarters for as many as six or more staff members at a time. McPhee had converted the master bedroom and bath into private quarters in which he and Mrs. McPhee could stay comfortably when he was working there. The remaining facilities could easily accommodate a half-dozen or more persons quite comfortably. For part of July, 1952, the Kennedy family enjoyed not only the Manor House and its swimming pool, but also the privilege of riding Arabian horses and, in the case of the children, several beautiful and gentle Shetland ponies. On one weekend we had a picnic on the Kellogg grounds for all our Southern California relatives from San Diego, San Gabriel, and Long Beach.

When the fall quarter began at San Luis Obispo in September, 1952, enrollment was up slightly, to 2,259. J. Burton Vasche had been selected to replace the late Dr. Douglass as Associate Superintendent in charge of State Colleges. I immediately contacted him and asked him to be the featured speaker at the midwinter conference of ACPRA to be held at Cal Poly on February 6-7. He agreed. In October the Council of Presidents met at Cal Poly, with President McPhee as host. I was in charge of arrangements for the meeting which involved not only the ten state college presidents but also Dr. Simpson, Vasche, and Joel Burkman, assistant superintendent.



*President McPhee sometimes took time to ride the Arabian horses at the Kellogg campus, and loved to have young people like Bob Jr. join him.*

Roy Hughes had a better season in 1952 with a 5-win, 4-loss, 1-tie record. McPhee was asked to head up the governor's statewide conference on educational television in Sacramento in mid-December, 1952. The first annual President's Alumni Tour, which Messrs. Beck, Jones and Kennedy had planned for McPhee, was held over a seven-day period starting February 27. We toured Central and Northern California and the President classified the tour in retrospect as "highly successful."

For several months I had devoted considerable time to screening potential candidates for my replacement as public relations director. My choice, to which President McPhee agreed, was Dr. Douglas Miller, formerly journalism professor at Syracuse University and currently public relations director at Case Institute of Technology. He had a national reputation both as a journalism teacher and a public relations expert. I felt fortunate when he accepted our offer.

On April 14, 1953 the *Staff Bulletin* carried the announcement that I was being promoted to assistant to the president and would be succeeded by Doug Miller as public relations director effective April 20, with Miller's arrival on campus. The announcement stated that I would remain in Adm. 172,

## LEARN BY DOING

and that my secretary, Mary Johnson, would move into room 171, which she would share temporarily with Dr. Miller. The same *Bulletin* announced the appointment by President McPhee of a new subcommittee of the President's Council responsible for long-range planning, to be chaired by Kennedy. The other members were McCorkle, Nelson, Brendlin, and Chandler.

What the announcement did not say was that we would immediately undertake the solution of the "list of 70 items" McPhee had been developing over the past year or so in his uninterrupted early-morning meditation sessions. We soon discovered that the President could add items to the list faster than we could take them off.

My dilemma, I knew, in accepting the job as assistant to the president, was in communicating effectively with the President so that he would feel confident that the projects he wanted handled were indeed getting attention from the proper people and that acceptable action would occur. What McPhee really wanted was someone to take off his desk everything, handle it all just exactly as he would have handled it, and provide memos announcing or describing decisions made or actions accomplished that he could then merely sign to implement. Getting a task at hand done was important, but he also wanted whatever it might be handled in such a manner that he would receive credit for the solution or the creative idea initiated. To state this so bluntly makes McPhee appear some sort of rascal to want this kind of staff work accomplished. Actually, every wise chief executive officer wants his organization to operate in that manner.

LESSON TEN *Effective two-way internal communication is frequently the key in any large organization to both employee satisfaction and profitable production.*

## II

### ON RUNNING HOT AND BEING COOL

“WHAT’S THIS LUNCHEON ALL ABOUT that you’re so anxious for me to attend?” It was President McPhee’s reaction to my invitation to him to attend an informal luncheon of staff members where he would be a guest but wouldn’t have to make a speech. I really didn’t want to tell him very much because I was afraid he might get miffed and decide not to attend — and without him the party wouldn’t be nearly as much fun. The group having lunch included all the deans, other division heads, and members of the President’s Council and the Foundation board of directors. We were going to honor the last several people who had become members of the Explorers’ Club, and listen to their ad lib responses to my description of the specific feat each had accomplished to make them automatic members. It was to be our first such meeting, and if the President took umbrage at our high jinks, it would be the last. I knew it would have been better if what we planned was all a surprise to the boss, but I figured now that I had to explain and confess my nefarious role. I had created the Explorers’ Club, using it to diffuse some anger and resentment that arose periodically among the administrative staff when they individually had become the target for the President’s criticism over something done or not done. It happened so frequently and was so widespread among the administrative staff, with no one exempt, that a certain camaraderie developed between the most recently initiated into this special category of sufferers. I more than most understood the feeling, since as assistant to the president I was the handiest target and the most frequently involved in actions that were observable by the President.

The inspiration for the Explorers’ Club came to me when Emmons Blake, a former student and then a successful owner of a local printing plant, sent me a copy of a clever cartoon printed as a poster. It showed a geologist-explorer hanging from a cliff by his pickax with a coiled rattlesnake on the ledge directly above him. It was a precarious position, with the possibility of death threatening from above and below. There appeared to be no way out. I think the first person I sent a copy to was Bob Maurer, acting head of the liberal arts division. With a copy of the poster I sent a notation that

CAL POLY EXPLORERS' CLUB\*



**have  
faith..**

**keep  
smiling..**

**BLANK PAPER**

1954-1955 Year - Volume 100-0  
and 1956 Year - Volume 100-0

**\*No initiation fee, no dues. This  
is not a secret society—everyone  
seems to know when you join.**

*This was the card Cal  
Poly administrators  
received when they were  
notified that they had  
become members of the  
Explorers' Club.*

he had just been accepted into the Explorers' Club for having survived a situation that would have devastated a less hardy fellow. I'm not certain now which situation was the justification for Maurer's original membership — he often renewed his membership, as did many of us. Probably it was the occasion of the budget hearing at which he proposed that several student assistant positions be established for use in the chemistry and physics labs to clean up and put away materials and equipment after each lab session. McPhee exploded, "That's a terrible waste of taxpayers' money. Even kindergartners are taught to clean up after themselves. Request denied."

I watched President McPhee's eyes closely as I explained in some detail what the Explorers' Club was all about. He lit a cigarette and blew a smoke ring. That was a good sign. I kept on with my explanation, expecting any minute to hear him say something like, "Kennedy, that's another one of your bum ideas." He began to smile and I knew the danger was over. "OK, I'll go. But you can't expect me to just sit there and say nothing. When you're at the end of your program, call on me. I'll think of something to say; maybe it will be, 'You're all fired.'" Needless to say the program at the luncheon was a huge success, and from that point on it was an honor to get an Explorers' Club membership notification from the assistant to the president, which always said, "Hang in there."

I knew that I had been taking a chance that President McPhee would not appreciate my attempt to lessen the tension caused by his method of criticizing staff members. I was counting on his sense of humor. Over the more than a decade that I had been working very closely with McPhee I had seen him laugh at many situations where someone had caught him in a gaffe. I knew he could take a joke about something personal, but whether he would accept as a joke a rather blatantly negative reflection on his management style was a gamble. He accepted it in good humor, but it didn't change his management style. After 25 more years of administrative experience, I must admit there are times when indirect criticism through a third party may be the best policy. It worked fine for me in 1964, a story yet to come.

Not everyone appreciated the humor of Explorers' Club membership. One faculty member who shall remain nameless blamed me for getting him into the trouble that made him eligible for the club. When I sent him an Explorers' Club poster he stopped talking to me for at least a decade. The man was a former vo-ag teacher from out of state hired by President McPhee personally as a potential dean or department head and invited immediately to attend a barbecue during the vocational agricultural teachers

summer conference. The man came into my office, told me that he and his wife were moving into their newly rented house, and he didn't want to attend the barbecue "unless he had to." I told him that it was up to him. "The President invited you as a courtesy, I'm sure, but if you have more important things to do, I'm sure the President will understand." I was wrong. The President didn't understand. McPhee had the newly hired potential dean or department head into the conference room several days after the vo-ag conference was over, with me also present as a normal procedure. In the course of the conversation, McPhee said, "I missed seeing you at the Sunday afternoon vo-ag barbecue. Didn't you get an invitation?" The man turned white, then red, and blurted out, "I specifically asked Kennedy if it was necessary for me to attend. He said no, so I didn't go."

McPhee turned to me and said, "Did you tell him not to go?" I replied, "Of course not. I told him it was up to him. It wasn't a command performance, only an invitation." With that the gentleman jumped to his feet and yelled at me, "You're a liar." He practically turned his chair over and rushed out, slamming the door behind him. McPhee looked at me and said, "My, he has a short fuse, hasn't he. He wouldn't make a very good dean." And while he was never appointed to a dean position, he did become one of our best and most popular department heads in the agricultural division. While he didn't speak to me again for at least ten years, eventually we became good friends — I think.

Another effort to get President McPhee to be more positive in his evaluation of his administrators resulted in the development of a rather elaborate performance evaluation form. I continued to use the form after I became president; it may still be used at some other institutions that learned of it through the chancellor's office. Sometime in the mid-fifties McPhee began insisting that there be a standard form for the annual evaluation of nonacademic staff as well as teaching faculty. Two such forms, one applicable to teachers and one to nonacademic staff, were available from the personnel office of the State Department of Education. They were both short, one-page checklists on which performance could be rated by category. They were adapted to Cal Poly's needs and were used by department heads to back up recommendations for retention and promotion. No such document was available for administrators. McPhee really wanted one that would provide space for "number grades" to be placed after each of a number of performance categories, with a total that could be used to determine if the person was "passing" or "failing." He kept telling me that such a system was

used in the Bureau of Agricultural Education to rate the effectiveness of vo-ag departments in high schools. He wanted me to develop such a form to be used for administrators. I convinced him that we had experts on the faculty who should be given the assignment. He had experimented with bringing in individual faculty members as administrative assistants to work on special assignments for periods of six months to a year in what we referred to as "bootleg" positions. They were not administratively budgeted positions, but the President could use unfilled faculty positions to accomplish certain short-term administrative goals. Some faculty who had served in this way were Jim McGrath, Howie O'Daniels, Owen Servatius, and Gene Rittenhouse. Gene didn't go back to the industrial relations section of the Social Science department but was made placement director at San Luis Obispo when John Jones, longtime placement director, was transferred to the Kellogg-Voorhis campus to start a placement office there.

To work on various personnel policy items McPhee brought in Ed Rogers from the industrial relations faculty. Ed had been a personnel director at Lockheed Aircraft before becoming a teacher. Rogers and Kennedy were assigned by McPhee to develop the performance evaluation form for administrative personnel. We did considerable research and eventually developed a multiple-page form that was more comprehensive than anything either of us had ever seen before. We did convince McPhee that he should give the form a trial, following a procedure we recommended. A copy of the form was to be given a week in advance to the administrator being evaluated. His instructions were to fill it out, evaluating himself, and bring it with him to the evaluation meeting scheduled with the President. Meanwhile the President also would have filled out a form on the individual. During the meeting, they reviewed the rating of performance in each category and any difference in rating between the individual's own perception of his performance and the President's perception. It worked. We had listed every conceivable kind of performance category, describing each with a short paragraph and providing a range of four or five levels of performance, from "not acceptable" to "excellent," varying the descriptive terms to prevent monotonous repetition. While we did not explain this to the President, there was no easy way in which he could add up a column of numbers and get a score below which a person should be fired.

Administrators in the California State College system did not then and do not now have the protection of tenure. They can be fired for cause, but usually they are reassigned to nonadministrative teaching positions from

which they probably came in the first place. This was certainly true at Cal Poly, and the movement of administrators in and out of executive positions was frequent as the President experimented with different combinations and alignments. It seemed a rather strange coincidence that most of the shifts were announced by the President at or near the end of the winter quarter. In other words, he would have observed the individual during the two preceding quarters and would want to make a shift before the summer. It became a commonplace saying among Cal Poly administrators to "Beware the Ides of March." Most announcements of administrative reorganization came on March 15, about the time Federal income tax returns used to be due. When the IRS changed to mid-April, so did McPhee. The last few major changes he made in the organization came in mid-April.

One of the significant ways in which Cal Poly was different from other state colleges was in the matter of tenure. We did not have tenure. President McPhee was opposed to tenure, for all the commonly used arguments that lay people use against such permanency of appointment. Yet the lack of tenure provisions at Poly probably kept some people on the faculty who would not have been retained had the personnel decision that had to be made been either "tenure" or "nonretention," better known by most people as being fired. Since McPhee could put off a final decision regarding nonretention and not have it result in automatic tenure, he frequently did postpone such decisions, and for any number of possible reasons, including "He's got a nice family." However, whenever some faculty member was released, even when McPhee's decision was merely in support of recommendations of a department head and dean, it often drew criticism from the rank and file or from an employee organization, or sometimes even the personnel office of the State Department of Education to which the person released had complained.

By late 1953 there had been enough dissatisfactions expressed by the faculty over lack of tenure opportunities that the issue was being studied by a joint committee made up of representatives of the California State Employees Association, the College Council, the President's Council, and the Faculty Club. McPhee, recognizing finally that he was fighting a losing battle, decided to give in — but not completely. He proposed a four-year appointment system, which actually was eventually implemented.

The four-year appointment system had some advantages over the tenure system, in that no one was ever "permanent" but everyone who qualified had considerable protection from being dismissed for anything less than a very serious charge. It operated for a number of years at Cal Poly until the

overwhelming weight of the system's desire to have uniformity in all campuses' personnel policies forced the adoption of the standard tenure program.

On July 27, 1953, the Korean War ended with the signing of an armistice. Occupation troops were still to remain. We anticipated an increase in enrollment starting the following fall. While I worked for some of the summer as vacation relief at the *Telegram-Tribune*, we did take the family to Yosemite Valley for the kind of vacation the kids liked, staying in a tent cabin on the floor of the Valley, where there were lots of other kids to play with.

In August Byron McMahon, chief of the State Bureau of Agricultural Education, was ordered to move his headquarters from the Cal Poly campus, where it had been since McPhee brought it there in 1933, back to Sacramento, where it had been originally. When McMahon told McPhee of this order and that he didn't really want to go, McPhee promptly phoned Wes Smith, state director of vocational education, and tried to persuade him to let the Bureau remain headquartered at Cal Poly, where it had been operating successfully for the past 20 years. Smith said, "I want all my bureau chiefs close to me here in Sacramento." McPhee was very upset with Smith over that decision and remarked to me several times how "ungrateful" Smith was for the fact that McPhee had "made him" the State Director of Vocational Education. McPhee always felt that anyone he had promoted or helped to get a higher-level job owed him enough that they should be willing to listen to him and do what he wanted even if they were no longer under his supervision. Maybe all authoritarian bosses feel that way. It is not much different from the way some parents act when their teenage kids grow into maturity.

The move of McMahon opened his two offices across the hall from the president's office. Wilson and his secretary moved in, and Kennedy and his secretary moved into the suite of offices vacated by Wilson. Grace Arvidson, McMahon's secretary, did not follow him to Sacramento. She took a month's vacation to Hawaii. On her return to San Luis Obispo she was assigned to the general office and from there she was called a number of times between October and December to go into the president's office to take dictation. In December, 1953, she became the No. 2 secretary in the president's office, working under the supervision of Leona Boerman, the president's secretary. Grace Arvidson worked in the president's office as administrative assistant until she retired in August, 1991, having set some kind of system record serving three presidents over a period of 36 years.

President McPhee had been trying hard for several years to find some

way in which Cal Poly could become the publisher of teaching materials that would be used in the state's vocational agriculture classes. He knew from his experience as Chief of the Bureau that the vo-ag programs needed a continuous flow of good, practical teaching aids, and the Bureau, when located at Cal Poly, had been able to get the cooperation of certain faculty members to help develop such things as plans for various ag mechanic projects, hog pens, small trailers, etc. But McPhee saw no reason we could not be the source for movies, film strips, and teaching manuals.

When we hired John Heinz, formerly of KQED, he said to me, "You talk to John and get him going on the production of those various kinds of audiovisual aids that the ag teachers know are needed in the high schools." I talked to John and he understood, but he also had more work than he could do just handling the audiovisual demands of our own faculty for our own classes. I eventually told the President that if we didn't hire a "ramrod" and give him the production of vo-ag teaching aids as a full-time assignment, I didn't think we would ever get off the ground with the program he visualized. He said, "Do it, get someone who knows what is needed and how to get the cooperation of other people."

I thought I knew just the person: a fairly new addition to our ag teacher training department, Dale Andrews. He had been the vo-ag teacher at Arroyo Grande High School until we hired him for the education department as a master teacher trainer in 1950. Getting Dale to reduce his teaching load and take on this special assignment was not difficult, as he was a very enthusiastic person when it came to finding better ways to teach. He took on the project and it bloomed, but in the first few months before any projects were completed, we were hard put to provide the Bureau with anything they could send out to high schools. I had talked to Byron McMahon about our new emphasis on developing teaching aids and he, too, was enthusiastic; he wanted to publicize what we were doing in the monthly Bureau newsletter that went to high school ag teachers.

I was still concerned about our enrollment and wanted to use every opportunity to reach out to the high schools with anything that put a positive light on the Cal Poly name. I encouraged Spelman Collins, sheep specialist in the animal husbandry department, to take excerpts from a manuscript he was preparing for publication as a textbook, and put it in the form of "hints on profitable sheep production." The material was duplicated as "a publication of the Cal Poly Instructional Materials Program" in time for me to pack a bundle of several hundred copies into the back of a state car I was

driving to Sacramento, with both McPhee and Wilson, to line up some approvals from various state agencies on a multitude of projects.

It was definitely "a dark and stormy night" when we left San Luis Obispo and the storm got increasingly fierce as we got further north. Our usual route to Sacramento was on Highways 101 to 46 to 33 to 99. Highway 33 was just two lanes across some of the most desolate country in the state. I was driving and talking to McPhee about all the progress Dale Andrews was making with the new IMP program. I said I was taking a carton of materials to give to McMahon for distribution in a few days with their monthly newsletter mailing. He asked what the material was and I told him it was excerpts from a new textbook by Spelman Collins. He began lecturing me that I should never encourage any of our faculty members to write and publish books.

"They're only doing it for a profit, and they write in their offices using state time, state material, and information they gained as teachers at a state college. If they publish, the profit should go to the state," he said.

Wilson was sitting in the back seat taking it all in, but he remained very quiet. I threw out a rebuttal that the President was being "unrealistic, that writing and publishing textbooks was a time-honored part of the profession of teaching and should be encouraged in every way." The debate got warmer and warmer and I started using my arms to give emphasis to my arguments. Wilson spoke up, "Watch where you're going, this is a narrow, slippery road. You'll put us in the ditch."

McPhee began to get personal in his arguments, said he suspected some agricultural division faculty were making "all kinds of money on the side, running livestock, dairies, poultry farms, and showing fancy breeds of sheep at fairs for prize money." His last remark was aimed, I knew, at my friend Spelman Collins. I took my foot off the accelerator, began applying the brake slowly, and pulled over as far as I could by the side of the road. It was still pouring rain. Wilson said, "Do you want me to drive?" I replied, "No, I'm just getting out so I can get Collins' free contribution to our IMP program out of the trunk and then I'm going to throw the whole package in the ditch." I opened the door and put one foot out.

"Get back in here. You're crazy. You'll get sopping wet." Those were McPhee's last words to me for the rest of the trip. The next day, as we left the hotel to walk to the State Department of Education building to see several people, including Byron McMahon, McPhee said to me, "Where's the package you're supposed to give McMahon?"

#### LEARN BY DOING

"It's in the back of the trunk of the car where it will remain until we get home," I responded.

"You're sure stubborn, Kennedy. Go to the garage, get the package, and I'll meet you in McMahon's office. And hurry up," McPhee said with a laugh. "I might change my mind."

He did change his mind about one thing: He never again argued with me about whether it was OK for faculty members to write books.

The summer of 1955 was the date the Kennedy family finally broke down and bought a television set. I had tried to put it off by bringing home a movie projector and films borrowed from the audiovisual department over weekends. One film I remember very well, *On Foot in the Yukon*. It was a colorful, sometimes spectacular documentary of a 1,000-mile hiking trip by an outdoorsman-type father with his two Boy Scouts-age sons. After crossing a raging torrent on a raft built from logs sawed from trees with a coiled Swedish saw blade and cooking meals in a lean-to sheltering the three from a storm, they were finally picked up at an appointed time and place by an Alaskan bush pilot. We had all the kids in the neighborhood in for the show. At the end I turned to my younger son, Steve, then ten years old.

"How would you like to go on a trip like that?" I asked.

He answered, "Fine, if I could go with that guy." Boy, did that hurt.

Although President McPhee had no sons to keep him humble, four of his six daughters were of college age or older and at least one, Helen, was married. His two youngest daughters, Carol and Judy, were still in local schools, but the others had the experience of going away to college and returning to discuss with their dad their own ideas of what a college education should be like. He was getting closer every year to a decision about admitting women to Cal Poly, but still passed it off with a joke when asked "When!" "Not until my last daughter is married," he would jokingly respond, not realizing how irritating that answer was to his wife and daughters. To many it was clear evidence that he held male chauvinistic ideas.

But Julian McPhee was above all else a family man and he took great pride in setting his priorities in this order: "God, country, family, and job." Many times I suspected he really meant it in reverse order.

Yes, Julian McPhee was dictatorial. He was authoritarian. He was downright ornery at times. But deep in his heart and soul he had a feeling for the concept of family that went beyond his natural family of wife, daughters, brothers, sisters, and other blood relatives. He was paternalistic toward Cal Poly students, his faculty, his administrators, and the 10,000 or so Future Farmers kids scattered over the state.



*President McPhee more than once told others, "As long as Kennedy is worried, I don't have to worry." Kennedy wore the look often.*

He liked to hold meetings of key administrators at the Voorhis or Kellogg campuses, bringing not just administrators from San Luis Obispo to join those of the southern campus, but arranging for them to bring their wives and kids, too. At one such joint meeting of the President's Council and the Foundation Board at the Voorhis campus, even before it was used as a con-

ference center, a banquet for the entire group was held in the quite elegant Voorhis dining hall during the Christmas vacation. At the head of the banquet table stood one chair that had a higher, more ornate back than any of the rest of the chairs around the long table, which was already heavy laden with Christmas dinner for some 40 people. President McPhee, acting as host, had invited everyone to be seated and was himself now seated in the high-backed chair at the end of the table. My younger daughter, Susan, age four, pulled her hand away from her mother who was trying to get her to sit with her in the center of the banquet table. In a voice loud enough to be heard by most of my colleagues, little Susan said, "I don't want to sit here, I want to go down there and sit next to the King." Even without a crown, the man at the head of the table was obviously the boss — apparent even to a child.

I missed going on the second annual President's Alumni Tour, February 1 to 7, 1954. Carl Beck and John Jones went with the President on the tour to the Los Angeles area. They were joined for the various luncheon and evening banquets by Dean Gibson and Henry House of the southern campus. It was decided by the President that I should stay home and take care of the business of the president's office. His last words when he left were, "I don't want to see a pile of papers on my desk when I get back." A few months later Dean McCorkle was selected by the U.S. Office of Education to represent vocational education in a survey of South Korean education.

One day at lunch Dave Cook asked me what I was going to do on my 1954 vacation. I said, "The kids had so much fun at Yosemite, we plan to go back again." When he found out that I was just talking about renting a cabin on the floor of the Valley he said, "You haven't really experienced the greatness of Yosemite until you've gone up the old Tioga Pass road and camped at Lake Tenaya and explored the high country around Tuolumne Meadows." Thinking back on my son Steve's negative opinion of hiking the wilds with his father, I decided I would just show him, and the rest of the family, that roughing it with father could be an adventure we would all remember. I proceeded to borrow from my friends and neighbors the paraphernalia it would take for this High Sierra trip, including a tent, extra canvas for windbreaks, the containers needed to pack water in from a nearby spring, a butane cookstove, and gasoline lanterns. With all the gear assembled, Mary added the canned and packaged food it would take to prepare 21 meals during the seven-day trip. After packing it all securely into the back of our station wagon, I assured myself that the four kids had packed everything they needed in the way of clothing and sleeping bags. I then said to Mary, "Well honey, we're all packed. Let's go."

ON RUNNING HOT AND BEING COOL

"I've changed my mind. I'm not going. You go ahead. Take the kids. I'll stay home and read," all this said with absolutely no rancor by a wife who had never before backed out of anything and was the greatest advocate of family unity I had ever known. The kids set up a great howl. I thought at first their only concern was that I would use Mary's decision as an excuse for not going. Then I found out that it was more than that. If she didn't go, they didn't want to go either — it wouldn't be any fun. Finally I said, "Mary, I promise if you will just get in the car, bring your book, you won't have to cook a meal, wash a dish, or turn a hand for the entire seven days."

She said, "That's what I was waiting for. Let's go."

It was a memorable trip. Mary read and rested and looked at the beautiful Lake Tenaya and Toulumne Meadows scenery. Dad cooked, washed dishes, made campfires, burned holes in the bottom of our sleeping bags with hot rocks wrapped in too little aluminum foil, and was exhausted at the end of seven days. Bears destroyed the ice chest of the family camped next to us, and a cold wind blew in off the lake every night.

One morning a ranger walked into our camp and asked for "Mr. Kennedy." I admitted I was the person he wanted, expecting I had violated some national park rule. He said they had received a phone call from a Mr. McPhee who said it was important that I return his call immediately. I drove about ten miles to the nearest pay phone and made the call. Expecting some serious problem, I was relieved when McPhee started his conversation, "How is the rugged mountaineer?" I knew he had been talking to Dave Cook. I felt like asking, "What's up, Doc?" but restrained myself. It seems that everyone had decided to take a vacation in July, and I suspected he didn't have anyone to talk to about "problems." He said he wanted me to consider some solutions he had worked out for several of our "listed problems" and be ready to talk to him about them as soon as I got back to work. He described his proposals and I took some sketchy notes. It was typical of McPhee. He never stopped thinking about Cal Poly, and he expected that all his administrators felt the same way about it. When I got back to camp, Mary couldn't believe that it wasn't some serious emergency that he had called me about. "Imagine getting a park ranger to find us and deliver a message just so he could tell you to use your spare time during your vacation to think about some problems that are not even new problems." I had explained to Mary that the three items he had discussed on the phone were items that had been on his list of "70 long-range planning items" for months and were on the agenda of the special subcommittee of the President's Council and probably couldn't be handled very well until after all the com-

mittee members had returned from vacations. He just wanted me to think, and I did, while I was doing dishes.

In the fall of 1954 enrollment went up to 2,745 at San Luis Obispo and reached 380 at Voorhis. The third annual President's Alumni Tour to Central and Southern California was held February 7-12, 1955, and I was back in the entourage as "assistant to the President" but more so as official photographer. McPhee had discovered after leaving me home on the second trip, that the *Green & Gold* alumni magazine coverage of the trip was very scanty, with practically no photos. Neither Carl Beck nor John Jones felt qualified as photographers and were too busy with other chores to act as reporters of the event.

The same day the tour ended, the nation's newspapers announced that President Eisenhower had sent U.S. military advisers to train units of the South Vietnam army. We did not then dream nor could we have imagined just what that action was eventually to mean to the United States and the impact it would have on the conduct of tens of thousands of the nation's college students in the years to come.

The summer of 1955 I was no longer working part-time for the *Telegram-Tribune*, now being on a 12-months salary basis and using all my vacation time for trips with the family. In July of 1955 we visited the Manor House at the Kellogg ranch again, getting in some riding of Arabian horses and using it as a base for visits to Disneyland, Marineland, and other Southern California entertainment spots. The Kennedys were enjoying life. Enrollment at San Luis Obispo in fall, 1955, was 3,161, the first time it exceeded 3,000.

The fourth annual Alumni President's Tour in February, 1956, was just as successful as the three prior tours.

Just before the Ides of March, President McPhee announced on March 6, 1956, a new reorganization that called for an integrated, coordinated two-campus operation. McPhee's main concern was to coordinate the development of both campuses, hoping they eventually would be mirror images of each other. The announcement stated that the president had appointed three administrative deans who would jointly administer the San Luis Obispo and Kellogg-Voorhis campuses. The three deans were C.O. McCorkle, administrative dean, instruction; Harold Wilson, administrative dean, student and college affairs; and George Clucas, administrative dean, finance and development. McCorkle and Wilson were familiar faces to everyone at both campuses, having held numerous positions with both the college and the Bureau of Agricultural Education dating back to the early 1930s.

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George Clucas was a new face, known only to a few Cal Poly administrators who had occasion in the past to deal with the California Legislative Analyst's office. Clucas, senior budget analyst at the Office of Legislative Analyst, Sacramento, had specialized in investigations relating to higher education in California. He knew the state college system's fiscal problems probably better than some of the business managers of the ten state colleges.

The notice in the *Staff Bulletin* indicated that "Kennedy would remain as assistant to the President at San Luis Obispo" and that a similar post would soon be filled at the Kellogg-Voorhis campus. We had already determined that Tom McGrath, a former Voorhis faculty member and counselor who had left to work in the Naval Electronics Research Lab in San Diego, was the ideal man for the job — but Tom had not yet agreed to take the position. McPhee and I met Tom in Los Angeles, took him to dinner, and spent the whole evening trying to convince him to join us. He finally agreed and on March 20 his appointment was announced.

The system of having three administrative deans shuttling back and forth between the two campuses, each being required to live in the Manor House for two weeks at a time and while on that campus to act as the "dean in charge," was doomed to failure. I was amazed that the three deans were able to make it work for the three years that the arrangement functioned; it worked only because they worked extremely hard to coordinate their efforts. They got in a lot of travel time on Highway 101 and also into a lot of trouble with McPhee, who was never satisfied with any arrangement he ever conceived of for administering the southern branch.<sup>1</sup>

Enrollment at San Luis Obispo increased in the fall of 1956 to 3,767 and at the Voorhis campus it went to 506. The fifth annual President's Alumni tour went to Northern California for a week starting February 11, 1957. This was the last tour I took with the President as his assistant. Dr. Ken Young had been so successful at the Voorhis campus with his teaching and public-relations assignments that he had been promoted to acting dean, arts and sciences. On April 9, 1957, Ken resigned to take a position as dean of the

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1. The nearest McPhee came to being pleased with the southern campus operation was during the period immediately after the war, between 1946 and 1956, when Wilson and then Gibson were the deans in charge. After McPhee set up the "administrative dean" system, he brought Gibson to the San Luis Obispo campus to strengthen the agricultural teacher training program. Subsequently Gibson became assistant dean of agriculture and then dean of agriculture in 1968, retiring in 1976, having served eight years at KV and 19 at SLO.



*State Director of Education Roy Simpson, left, an elected official, was for 17 years President McPhee's immediate boss. McPhee publicized him whenever possible. With McPhee and Simpson at this 1949 event at the new Kellogg campus is Assemblyman Ernest Geddes, of Pomona.*

college at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. Dr. Robert Maurer, acting head of the arts and sciences division at San Luis Obispo since September, 1952, was transferred to a similar position at Kellogg, where the southern campus operation was now operating in a newly completed combination classroom-administration building. McPhee's announcement in the *Bulletin* stated that "Robert Kennedy, a member of the Cal Poly faculty for the past 17 years and Assistant to the President since 1953, will assume the position of Dean of Arts and Sciences Division on this campus effective July 1, 1957."

During the four years I actually held the title assistant to the president, and the nearly four years prior when, as public relations director, the President had increasingly given me assignments as though I was assistant to the president, he had been tutoring me for what he said were "bigger responsibilities." On two occasions during this period he became concerned that I might leave Cal Poly. Dr. Roy Simpson, McPhee's boss as state superintendent of public instruction, offered me a position as his administrative assistant and told McPhee that he had done so. McPhee's immediate reaction

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was to counsel me that any job with Simpson would end at the moment he was not reelected. He began telling me then, "I've got plans for your future."

About 1955 Dr. Malcolm Love, president of San Diego State University, my alma mater, was meeting with McPhee on the San Luis Obispo campus in Love's capacity as president of the Western College Association, through which we received our general accreditation. Love had his wife, Maude, with him. During their meeting, Dr. Love told McPhee that he was going to offer me the assistant-to-the-president position at San Diego State, but he wanted to warn McPhee in advance. Love did offer the position to me, adding that he knew from talking to our mutual friend, Armistead Carter, that my mother and Mary's family were all anxious for us to return and live in San Diego. As I was bidding the Loves good-bye, Mrs. Love said, "I've talked to Mary, I think she would like to move back to San Diego." That evening I discussed the offer with Mary and her only comment was, "McPhee needs you more than Love does."

McPhee's reaction was to tell me that he wanted me to stay at Cal Poly, that he hoped someday that I would succeed him as President, and that he needed to promote me to a position where I would have "line" responsibility — that my experience so far had only been as a "staff" officer. With the resignation of Young and the transfer of Maurer, McPhee had found the opportunity to give me line experience.

LESSON ELEVEN *There is more than one way to get your way, and often the most effective strategy is to use humor and the passage of time.*

# LEARNING HOW TO BE A GOOD OLD DEAN

I WALKED INTO ROOM 206, the Library conference room, where I had been told the budget hearing would be held. I was very familiar with the room, since it was the conference room in which I had since July 1, 1957, held weekly meetings with the 13 department heads of the arts and sciences division council. My arms were loaded with heavy loose-leaf notebooks in which I had all the data to support my budget request for the year 1958–59. I had some difficulty negotiating the door, but finally squeezed in without dropping anything.

I expected to see the usual furniture arrangement: a head table butted perpendicularly against a long conference table around which would be a score or more comfortable chairs. I was startled to see that all the furniture was gone except one table with three chairs placed near the west wall and one lonely, straight-back chair in the middle of an otherwise empty room. Sitting at the table were President McPhee, Business Manager Don Nelson, and Administrative Dean, Finance and Development, George Clucas. McPhee looked at the large clock on the wall and said, "You're two minutes late, Kennedy. Sit in that chair in the middle of the room."

I said, "I need a table on which to put all my notebooks."

"Just put them on the floor, Kennedy," McPhee said and added, "you won't have time to look up anything anyway. If it isn't in your head, we won't have time to wait for you to find it in your notebooks."

I sat down facing the three men and wondered just what was in store for me, since this introduction to a budget hearing was different from any I had ever experienced before. Since 1953 I had sat in on every budget hearing, at the right hand of the President, providing him with the questions he needed to cross-examine deans and division heads whose answers to the President had not been satisfactory. We had always held the budget hearings in the president's combination working office-conference room, with lots of table space, and even coffee and doughnuts for everyone involved. I noticed no such amenities and wondered if this set-up was designed to give the new dean an inferiority complex. None of the three men were smiling, so I assumed it was not some kind of joke but a serious attempt to put me on the defensive. If that was what it was, it succeeded.

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Almost immediately McPhee said, "Kennedy, I notice you are proposing funding so that members of the education department can be reimbursed for mileage if they use their own cars to visit schools in the tri-county area where we have teacher interns assigned. Why aren't they using state cars to make those trips?"

I was prepared for that question and quickly responded, "The education department doesn't seem to have a very high priority rating for use of state cars and frequently there are none available when they need to make a trip. So they take their own cars, even though they cannot be reimbursed because they are not authorized to use their own cars and we do not have budgeted funds to reimburse them. A budget allocation and authorization for them to use their own cars will solve the problem and eliminate an inequity."

My reference to "inequity" I thought would be a key argument but the President was ready and responded, "The only person at this college who is authorized to be reimbursed for the use of his own car on official business is the President. To give that privilege to the education department would open Pandora's box and faculty members in many other departments would want the same privilege. Tell your education department faculty to plan ahead." Looking straight at me he added, "Request denied!"

I must admit that the rest of the budget hearing went better than the first case the President had selected to discuss. Despite that fact, the experience awakened me to the fact that the President was no longer treating me like I was his favorite graduate student. My first intimation of that fact had come before the budget hearing, but it had been overcome quickly.

Now I was reminded of that first or second day on the job as dean of the arts and sciences division when I had jauntily walked down the hall, turned into the President's outer office, said hello to Leona Boerman, the secretary, and asked the question I had put to her at least once a day for the prior four or five years. "Is he alone or is someone with him?" If her answer had been, "He's alone," I would have opened the inner door, walked through his formal office, through the small hall into his "working offices" to greet him with some friendly remark like, "Good morning, Mr. McPhee, I've got a question I need to ask you."

On that day soon after the 4th of July, 1957, Leona had quickly responded to my oft-repeated question with one of her own. "Did I make you an appointment for this morning, Dean Kennedy?" She knew she hadn't, and I knew she hadn't because I had never thought to ask for one. I responded, "No, Leona, I didn't think I needed one." "I'm sorry, Mr. Kennedy, but the

President told me that after July 1 you were to be treated like any of the other deans, which means you have to schedule an appointment and give me some advance indication of what the subject for discussion will be."

"You know," she added, "that he always insists on having the background material in front of him on any topic to be discussed — and in advance, so he can make himself familiar with the subject."

I nodded to indicate my agreement to a practice that had often caused me to have to drop everything I was doing to help gather up relevant background material for the President, especially when he was preparing to attend a meeting off campus. In those cases, which were very frequent, there would be a last-minute crisis while Leona would be packing McPhee's briefcases (not one but several) and she would be unable to find a folder covering the topic of some item on the agenda of the upcoming meeting.

"I understand, Leona, and I shall call in advance hereafter and give you the necessary information and take my turn with the rest of the deans," I capitulated. But I had not given up entirely. I added, "But can you ask him now if I can see him about a public relations problem?" She smiled at me, pressed the intercom button on her phone, and said, "Mr. McPhee, Bob Kennedy is here and wants to see you about a public relations problem." She smiled at me again, and said, "You can go right in."

Whatever the question I intended to ask originally was forgotten as I explained to the President that Leona had told me I was to be treated exactly the same as any of the other deans or division heads. I immediately added, "I understand the need for that policy and I agree." Then I added, "But we need to explain to the other deans and division heads about the second half of the assignment that you have given me. If I am to have the line responsibility for the public relations operations at both campuses, in addition to being dean of arts and sciences at SLO, then the other deans will understand on occasion my contacts with you may require instant access. Can you fix that with Leona?"

He fixed it. I could see him instantly if it was a public relations matter for either campus. Otherwise for the next two years I was out of the main stream of over-all administration policy making. I served on the President's Council, of course, but I was not involved with the President as I had been as assistant to the president in consideration of total budgets, building program, legislation, and relationships with such state agencies as the Department of Education and Department of Finance. I no longer traveled with him. More important to that previous close relationship was the fact that

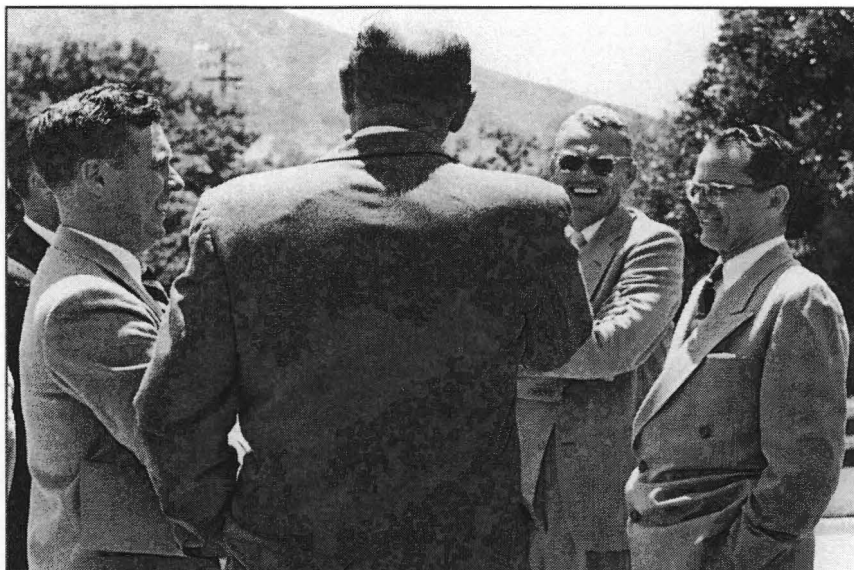
he was no longer acting as a tutor would to a graduate student.

I had gotten used to those tutorial sessions in which he would actually stand at the blackboard in his working office and draw organizational diagrams, or list budget or enrollment projection figures while pounding into my head his philosophy of administration. I believed, originally, in the period 1951-1955, that he was educating me so I could reflect his point of view in the speeches, letters, and reports that I was asked to write for his use or signature. Sometime in 1955 he began talking to me about training me to be his successor. The first time he said it I laughed and replied, "I'm flattered, but it can't happen. The State Board of Education will make the decision based on criteria they've established for selection of all new state college presidents." He answered, "Not for Cal Poly. My friend Roy Simpson will recommend to the Board whomever I ask him to recommend. As you know, Roy already thinks highly of you." It was true; Dr. Simpson had offered me a job as his assistant, which I had refused as gracefully as I could. Despite McPhee's confidence that Simpson would recommend anyone McPhee wanted as his successor, I was convinced that the State Board of Education would never accept a candidate who did not have an earned doctorate.

I was so convinced I was right and he was wrong that I wrote him a memo on the subject in 1956. It began:

You will recall our conversation Monday evening, October 8, in which I explained rather superficially the dilemma which confronts me in planning my personal program, particularly as it relates to pursuing further graduate studies. I am not at all sure that I expressed myself clearly enough at that time for you to understand my true feelings on the matter. For that reason and because I find it easier to write than to talk, I am going to presume further on your good nature and ask that you help me evaluate, from your point of view, this personal problem and my proposed solution to it.

Then I proceeded to write a five-page, single-spaced typed memo that outlined a plan by which I could take another leave of absence for a period of five quarters to complete the coursework Stanford's Dr. Cowley had outlined for me. McPhee gave me his point of view several days later in a quick interview in which he said, "Bob, I cannot, at this time, grant you another leave, since I depend upon you to help me solve the problems we have at both campuses. Be patient. You don't need a doctorate for your present job or any other job at Cal Poly." I could have argued, but I didn't.



*When deans get together, they often see the funny side even of graduation ceremonies. From left: Harold Hayes, Vard Shepard, Carl Englund, and REK.*

He believed that what I needed more than a doctorate was experience in a job with "line responsibility." That he had arranged when he promoted me to the position of dean of the division of arts and sciences. It had been called "liberal arts" under Dr. Hubert Semans and Dr. Robert Maurer. McPhee continually expressed to me his dissatisfaction with that division title, which he felt did not represent factually the breadth or the nature of the academic departments he wanted administered in that division. At the time he announced the administrative reorganization on March 6, 1956, when he named the three "traveling" deans who would operate between the two campuses, he also changed the name from "liberal arts" to "arts and sciences." It was a change made without consultation with any of the department heads or faculty of that division, only with Dean McCorkle, Bob Maurer, and me.

After I had been in the dean's job less than two months, I realized that the extra duties of supervising public relations and publications at both campuses were taking more time than I could afford. It was either talk McPhee into relieving me of those responsibilities or talk him into authorizing an assistant dean for that office similar to the one he had authorized years before for both the agriculture and engineering divisions. Because McPhee had held Dean of Instruction C.O. McCorkle basically responsible for the liberal arts division, he operated as though Bob Maurer was an as-

sistant dean. With both McCorkle and Maurer now at the Kellogg campus, it was obvious that I was doing the dean's job alone. I knew a number of faculty members who would have liked the job of assistant dean but I also knew that I needed to recommend someone who would be capable and willing to do the things I didn't like or didn't want to do. Furthermore, the person had to be someone who McPhee knew and would have confidence in. My choice was Roy Anderson, a member of the social science department's accounting and business faculty. He had been hired by McPhee in 1949 on recommendation of the then State Director of Finance. I made the proposal on the basis of the extra public relations load I was carrying and not on the basis of making the organizational structure of the dean's office equal to that of agriculture and engineering. Anderson agreed to the assignment and McPhee made the appointment on September 17, 1957.

That announcement came at the same time as McPhee's new reorganization of the committee structure of the two campuses. There was to be a Cabinet (college-wide) and two Executive Councils, one for each campus. There was to continue to be just one Foundation Board, which would supervise Foundation operations at each campus, and I was named to that Board. Harold Hayes, dean of engineering, was chair of the San Luis Obispo Executive Council, and C.O. McCorkle, dean of instruction at Kellogg-Voorhis, was chair of the southern campus Executive Council. A week later it was announced that there was to be a "special studies" staff that would act as staff to the Cabinet considering all college-wide (meaning all three campuses) matters. Named to the special studies staff were George Clucas, Clyde Fisher, Chet Young, Tom Dunigan, and several others. Harold Wilson, executive dean in charge of the building program for both campuses, was to head that group. Each of the academic deans met regularly, usually once a week, with the department heads of their respective divisions. During the ten year period 1940-1950, I had been meeting regularly as head of the journalism department with other department heads in the same division, originally called "related subjects" division to differentiate them from the agricultural or engineering (originally called industrial) divisions.

Because I knew all the heads of the 13 departments I was to supervise in the arts and sciences division as colleagues, I soon learned from them that they looked upon my appointment as their dean somewhat differently than I did, and certainly differently than the President did. In the first place, they all assumed that because I had a close working relationship with the President they would get better consideration for their proposals than they ever

had in the past. The President, on the other hand, expected, because I understood his administrative philosophy and the college's financial problems, that I would be able to keep them all in line and under control. For example, he had a philosophy that the only safe place for Cal Poly to be financially was at the median position of a cost-per-student list of the then (in 1957) 12 state colleges. That meant that since both agricultural courses and engineering courses as taught at Cal Poly, with their abundance of field and laboratory work, cost far more than the almost-exclusively lecture classes taught in the other 11 colleges, we had to make savings someplace else. The "someplace else" was arts and sciences. In fact, during this period I heard myself being identified as one of three deans: "dean of ag, dean of engineering, and dean of everything else."

The division of arts and sciences included 11 instructional departments and two service departments, the library and audio-visual. When I met weekly with these 13 people I was meeting mostly with people who considered me an O.F. (Old Friend). In only two cases were they people who had been on the faculty before I came in 1940: Harold P. Davidson, head of the music department, a non-major service department, who had been at Cal Poly since 1936, and Eugene Bowls, head of the physical science department, who had arrived in 1937. Some I had had a hand in recruiting and recommending for appointment: Ken Kitch, head of agricultural journalism, who came in 1950; Dave Grant, head of English and speech, whom I had met in Cowley's class at Stanford and recommended be hired in 1950; John Heinz, head of audio-visual, formerly of KQED television, whom I had interviewed and recommended in 1953. Several others who came between 1946 and 1950 I had known mostly as colleague department heads. They included Glenn Noble, biological sciences, 1947; Art Butzbach, education, 1950, replaced in 1957 by Walter Schroeder; Marjorie M. Elliott (who later became Mrs. Martinson), who came in 1955 to set up the program in home economics to accommodate women students re-admitted in 1956 after the 26-year period in which Cal Poly was an all-male school; A. Norman Cruikshanks, social sciences, 1947; Milo Whitson, mathematics, 1947; Francis Allen, librarian, 1946, promoted to head librarian, 1960; and Robert A. Mott, athletic director and head of physical education, 1946. The fact that athletics was a part of the physical education department meant that the dean was also responsible through the department head for the conduct of the coaches in all sports in which we competed in the California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA) conference. And last but not least was the new

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department called ROTC, in which the college had only a minor role in the selection of the man the Army designated as ROTC commander and department head. At the time I became dean the man in command of ROTC was Col. Posford Loiselle, who soon was replaced by Col. Wolford Voehl, a very dedicated Army man who was, however, very cooperative with college officials.

One day my secretary announced that Dr. Glenn Noble was in the outside office and wanted a few minutes of my time. I greeted Glenn as an old friend and asked him what he wanted. He asked, "Bob, can I be very frank and tell you what none of the other department heads are willing to tell you?" It sounded as though I might have halitosis or at the least body odor. I responded, "Please do," although I was very apprehensive. He said,

When you meet with us as the Arts and Sciences Council you are very good at communicating what President McPhee, the Cabinet, and the Executive Council have decided regarding policy matters. What we are not sure about is whether you are listening to our reactions and taking those reactions back to the President, the Cabinet, and the Executive Council. We think your major job is to provide that communication link. It has to be a two-way open-line. It cannot be just a one-way street. We need to have reassurance that you are acting on our behalf, not just on the President's behalf.

I reassured Glenn that I understood my role to be what he had described, but I wanted him to understand that I could not be effective in that role if it ever were to appear to the President that I was being critical of him or his decisions in front of a group of people.

What I do, Glenn, is to use the input I receive from you department heads, as you relay that to me from your faculty and students, at a time, place, and manner that I think will be the most effective in influencing a change in an existing policy or in a new policy. That can best be done, I believe, with Mr. McPhee especially, on a one-to-one basis, when any implied criticism is not being publicly exhibited in some kind of confrontational format. That's the way I operate, Glenn, and I believe it to be in the best interest of the Arts and Sciences programs. I'll do battle with the other deans and even the President, but it won't be a public display that would make me a very temporary hero. I'm in it for the long haul. Trust me, and tell your colleagues to be patient.

I know that Glenn passed the word appropriately. I never heard any more on the subject from Glenn or any other department head. In fact, the concept was one I followed all the remainder of my years in other administrative positions in dealing with the Chancellor, Trustees, legislators, et al. I believe people who make a scene out of standing up to authority may occasionally accomplish their mission, but usually there is a more subtle and effective way of reaching an agreement than by confrontation.

The first Annual Report (1957-58) after I became dean showed an increase of almost 40 percent in enrollment in the 10 occupational fields offered by the division. The enrollment of women students, of course, caused most of that increase, as I had been predicting for years would happen. The division had in that year 683 majors, with all departments having had an increase in excess of the general rate of college enrollment growth. Elementary education jumped from 77 in 1956 to 120 in 1957. Home economics increased from 36 to 64, social science from 79 to 102, mathematics from 53 to 89, and physical education from 72 to 197. In addition to serving our own majors, we provided the general education courses for the other two divisions, that is, English, basic math, etc. This gave the A & S division a total of 2,456 FTE (full time equivalent) students, with a faculty that was larger than either of the other two divisions.<sup>1</sup> The total FTE student enrollment for San Luis Obispo was 4,201, of whom 3,757 were men and 444 were women.

When President McPhee read that 1957-59 Annual Report and discovered that the arts and sciences division was growing faster than agriculture and engineering, he was upset, to put it mildly. He called the three instructional deans into his office for a discussion of enrollment projections for the next year. He was concerned, he said, that "you have lost track of our basic philosophy of enrollment growth." He added, "We are a statewide polytechnic college. Emphasis shall always be on agriculture first, engineering second, and arts and sciences last."

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1. Full-time equivalent (FTE) is a theoretical normal course load equal to 15 units per term. It assumes a student will complete a bachelor degree program in four years at 15 units per term. FTE enrollment figures are still used throughout the CSU system to calculate enrollment targets, budgets, etc. The average Cal Poly student takes from 14 to 14.5 units per term, which means the headcount is always somewhat larger than the FTE. The concept confuses even some faculty since another system concept states that a full-time student is one who takes 12 units or more per term. Master plan enrollment limitations on each CSU campus are stated in FTE figures, but actual number of students enrolled may exceed that number by hundreds or even thousands.

#### LEARNING HOW TO BE A GOOD OLD DEAN

Before he asked for an explanation of the enrollment increases in the A & S division, he said he feared my college-wide supervision of public relations had given arts and sciences an unfair advantage in publicity and publications. Both Dean Vard Shepard, agriculture, and Dean Harold Hayes, engineering, disagreed, saying they believed the PR program had actually favored agriculture and engineering. I told McPhee that he had forgotten how the addition of women students in 1956 for the first time in 26 years was impacting the A & S majors. He accepted our joint explanation, and I was pleased with the support I had received from Shepard and Hayes.

There was another factor involved that I didn't share with the President because it would have made him unhappy with the other two deans. Each year the State Department of Finance, an arm of the governor's office, would issue updates on their long-range demographic studies, including predictions of state population growth by age group, on which school districts and the State Department of Education relied in making building and budget provisions. Part of the statistical study applied to college-age populations and was routed through the State Department of Education and came to state college administrators as estimates of what each of the then-12 state colleges could expect in total enrollment.

Since the Department of Finance played such a key role at that time in recommending on behalf of the governor what would be approved as the basis of a budget request, we began to think of these figures as "targets" to be achieved in support of those budget requests. The three instructional deans would meet, usually without even assistants or other staff present, and divide the total target three ways.

In keeping with the President's priority concept, the dean of agriculture would be asked how much of the target figure he wanted for the next year. Then Hayes would answer the same question for engineering. Both Shepard and Hayes were very conservative for fear that if they listed the enrollment targets for their respective divisions too high for the next year they might not make the target, and the President would be critical. Since I figured the total figure was an important factor in the way the Department of Finance made its budget recommendations to the Governor, we should always make the total target. So my response to the question was, "I'll take the rest." A & S division targets always brought the total to the figure the Department of Finance had issued for us. So A & S was growing faster than the other two divisions, which the President did not like.

By the fall quarter, 1958, total San Luis Obispo campus enrollment had

dropped from the 1957 high of 4,040 to 3,942, only about 200 FTE; but that meant a reduction in faculty of about a dozen individuals. The engineering total dropped from 2,302 to 2,060, with only nine women enrolled. The agriculture division dropped from 1,036 to 997, with only 24 women. But the arts and sciences division increased from 662 to 885, of which number 358 were women. There was nothing going on in 1957-58 in terms of war, drafting students, etc. which could account for the rather serious drop in engineering students. As Dean Hayes had pointed out on more than one occasion, enrollment in engineering is always subject to cycles of ups and downs depending upon what is being predicted by economists and business and government leaders. When there is no actual war or war on the horizon, the government cuts back on military spending, and that affects many industries, particularly in the aircraft industry in California. Dean Shepard also had facts to support his contention that agriculture enrollment is also subject to ups and downs related to the economy. Invariably the students' choices of majors or whether they will attend college at all are affected by the current economic/business conditions reported by the media. Their choices may cause shortages of trained personnel four or five years down the line when the economy has an upsurge and demand for trained personnel increases.

On the other hand, the enrollments in arts and sciences (and/or liberal arts) are not so directly affected. In 1958, when for the first time the A & S enrollment almost equaled that of agriculture, the President had much to say to the deans, particularly to me. My answer, in a private session, was that the other two divisions needed to participate in a more active public relations and recruitment effort, particularly to attract women students. But both Shepard and Hayes were opposed to that idea and their faculty members even more so. Many of the older faculty in agriculture and engineering had expressed opposition to the proposal in the early 1950s to readmit women students, not, I believe, because they were male chauvinists, but because they truly believed to do so would change the character of the college. And it did, fortunately for Cal Poly. But even now many women students at Cal Poly still believe they are not very welcome in some engineering majors. The agriculture faculty, on the other hand, have learned from experience that women can be just as good, if not better, than men in many fields of agriculture. However, faculty in both fields point out frequently that employment opportunities for women graduates in those fields are not as numerous nor as remunerative as those for men.

#### LEARNING HOW TO BE A GOOD OLD DEAN

Since in 1958 the arts and sciences division's major function was to provide all the general education courses for all majors in all three divisions, this meant that more FTE students were taught in A & S departments than in either of the other two divisions. It is the FTE taught that determines the size of the faculty. So despite the fact that there were fewer majors in A & S departments, A & S was teaching a large percentage of the support subjects taken by ag and engineering students as well as our own majors. That caused the A & S faculty to be larger than the faculty in either of the other two divisions. Add the fact of Cal Poly's increasing popularity with women students, most of whom enrolled in A & S majors, and you had in the period after 1956 an A & S growth that exceeded even our own estimates. My prior-year prediction for enrollment in A & S for the fall quarter 1958 was exceeded by about 80 students. Every A & S department had exceeded the estimates. That raised a spectre in President McPhee's mind and caused him to attempt a tighter control of enrollment in what he referred to as "non-emphasis" fields. That effort and that phrase created a subsequent problem of major proportions in the early 1960s, about which more will be said later.

When Roy Anderson had accepted appointment to the position of assistant to the dean in September, 1957, he had requested that he be permitted to continue officially something he had been doing unofficially. He wanted to continue developing a curriculum for a major in business, with the objective of developing a business department separate from the social science department. I had discussed Anderson's idea with President McPhee as part of my proposal to get authorization for an assistant. McPhee was enthusiastic, since he thought to continue teaching business courses in the social science department tended to make them less practical.

I had delegated to Roy the responsibility for dealing with division problems related to budgets, students, parents and his business curriculum proposal. I dealt primarily with relationships with faculty, department heads, the President, and public relations — in the latter case, not just the division's, but the entire college's, on all three campuses. We had in 1956 moved most instruction at the southern campus to the newly acquired (1949) Kellogg campus near Pomona. But we were working hard after 1956 to develop the Voorhis campus into a continuing education center, and anticipated financial support for that effort from the Kellogg Foundation in Battle Creek, Michigan.

That effort eventually succeeded, but the Kellogg Foundation insisted the continuing education center be established in facilities at the Kellogg campus, where it now operates very successfully. As a result the Voorhis

campus, with permission of Jerry Voorhis, was sold by the state some time after the Kellogg campus became a separate state university in 1966.

Roy Anderson's work on the business curriculum proposal resulted in a formal application that was approved by the State Department of Education in 1958. (It soon was a department in its own right, and eventually became the school of business, and later the college of business. Roy Anderson eventually served as its department head, later its dean.)

In the 1990s Cal Poly's involvement in applied research projects is not only an accepted fact but a frequent topic the university president discusses with pride in the media. In the 1950s it was one of the concepts which President McPhee alluded to as the reason many colleges and universities were not doing a good job teaching undergraduate students. Not only was he opposed to faculty spending time on research, he objected to the time they might take from teaching to write articles for academic journals or to publish textbooks. In fact, he often stated that it was the "publish-or-perish" policy at many colleges and universities that was eliminating the best classroom teachers in preference to those who "could write about superficial research."

I knew his position very well, having included some of his thoughts on these issues in speeches I had written for him to give when he was national president of the American Vocational Association. I'm sure he trusted me completely to pass along and sell his ideas to the department heads and faculty in the arts and sciences division.

Sometime in 1958 Glenn Noble brought into my office Richard Pimentel, biological science faculty member, and Gene Brendlin, Foundation manager. I listened carefully to a proposal that would give a number of biological science undergraduate students some very good, if temporary, jobs in the field. Brendlin, in addition to being Cal Poly's very talented and trustworthy Foundation manager, had been appointed by the governor to a regional water quality control board. He explained that his colleagues on the board were ready to spend considerable state money to find out just how serious oil spillage in the Nipomo mesa oil fields and refineries was affecting marine life in the adjacent beaches and shores of the Pacific Ocean. He said Dr. Pimentel had put together a proposal by which his students would count the number of live marine animals in specifically marked-off areas and compare those numbers with numbers they would count in other identically sized marked-off areas on nearby beaches and shores where there was no pollution. The project would provide jobs, which students needed, and

the Foundation, Brendlin said, was anxious to have the contract, which included overhead administrative cost provisions that would more than offset all our costs. It sounded like a great deal to me, so I signed the contract, and we were in business.

As soon as Pimentel's students got to work on the project, the press picked up the story from the Water Quality Control Board press release, which unfortunately didn't call it a "job opportunity for students," but called it "research." When President McPhee read the story, I received a summons. My explanation fell on deaf ears. "You should know the newspapers would call it 'research' even if you don't," he said. His major concern was not that we were doing that particular job, nor that I had signed the contract that authorized it. He was concerned, he said, that it would be interpreted by all the faculty as a breakthrough on research activity, a precedent to be quoted every time any such study was proposed. His attitude again was not anger, but disappointment that his "graduate student" hadn't learned a principle basic to his administrative philosophy.

One thing the President was pleased about was the progress we were making in producing and marketing to high school vocational agricultural departments original audiovisual materials. It had been his idea many years earlier, but until I had reassigned Dale Andrews from his position as a member of the education department to coordinator of the Instructional Materials Production (IMP) program, there had never been any significant progress in AV production. Under Andrews' prodding, faculty in 1958 developed seven teaching aids that were on sale to vo-ag departments in high schools nationwide. Even more impressive was the report that there was 51 more teaching aids partially completed. This success, based on Andrews' drive, impressed both the President and me as to Dale Andrews' ability as an administrator, a fact that led Dale away from the classroom into full-time administration at Cal Poly.

As part of the public relations responsibilities that I had retained I supervised Doug Miller, public relations director at the San Luis Obispo campus, who was now producing, among other publications, the Annual Report to the State Board of Education, a task I had inherited in 1940 and continued to handle until Dr. Miller took over in 1953. The publication does perform a public relations function, but also has great value as a historical record. No place else in the institution's files at that time was so much authentic factual data to be found. The statistical information the Annual Report formerly carried has been issued since 1961 in special reports from

#### LEARN BY DOING

the institutional studies section, established after Lowell Dunigan came from the State Department of Education to Cal Poly in 1961.

In the introduction of the 1958-59 Annual Report President McPhee signed the following:

Our building effort has been far flung. It has concerned physical plant, faculty recruitment, curriculum, and administrative procedure and organization. Actual physical construction reached a new high for the history of Cal Poly with more than eleven million dollars worth of buildings currently in progress on the San Luis Obispo campus alone. On the Kellogg campus a complete new college plant is rising. One phase of our building was the creation of a group of long-range planning committees. Seeking to probe the future, these committees have been concerned with Cal Poly's place in California education, the types of students the college wants, instruction and instructors the college wants, instruction costs, and the whole field of grants, fellowships, scholarships and loan funds. Increasing the offerings of the college, seven new majors were introduced at the KV campus and additional years of work were offered in each of the six majors added in 1957-58. At San Luis Obispo, preparations were completed for offering majors in food processing and metallurgical engineering in the fall of 1959. Administrative organization has been streamlined during the year to deal more effectively with the operating problems created by the three-campus structure of the College. A vice president has been named as chief operations and coordinating officer for all campuses. A dean of the college has been appointed at the San Luis Obispo and at the Kellogg-Voorhis campus. Each has responsibility for all activities on his respective campus and will report directly to the vice president. The administrative deans have been replaced by a dean of student and college affairs, a dean of finance and development, and a dean of educational services and curriculum development, who are staff officers to the vice president.

On March 3, 1959, McPhee had announced that the vice president was to be Robert E. Kennedy, effective immediately. It was McPhee's practice to promote staff to higher administrative positions even before he had the actual budget position. This was no exception. The salary increase came much later.

Cal Poly's ability to get funds for new positions as well as for its largest physical facility expansion in its prior history was due to a number of factors. Everyone, including Dr. Simpson and the State Board of Education,

believed it was due in large part to President McPhee's long experience and effective methods of dealing with key California legislators, governors, and especially personnel of the State Department of Finance. McPhee had a reputation for being "practical, realistic, and conservative." Even though he was a registered Democrat, he kept his partisan opinions to himself and most Republicans assumed he was one of them. He was the only president in the state college system who made a practice of keeping a small percentage of the authorized faculty positions unfilled during an academic year in order to give back to the Department of Finance unspent funds at the end of a fiscal year, on June 30th. That practice so impressed the Department of Finance decision-makers that McPhee's faculty staffing requests each year were almost always approved just as submitted.

An even more important factor that affected Cal Poly's ability to obtain adequate funding during this period was the state's and the nation's general prosperity. Continuing heavy defense expenditures by the federal government underwrote a large share of California's postwar construction and its prosperity. Defense activities that had been canceled after World War II were renewed as a result of the Korean War. The end of that war on July 27, 1953, brought no real peace in a troubled world. The United States was at its peak of a general rearmament effort between 1951-53, spending almost five times what had been spent on military appropriations during the previous five years. The new communist dynasties in both the Soviet Union and Red China seemed dedicated to expansion, and this dual menace forced the United States, fully awakened by the Korean War, to take on the burden of permanent military preparedness. The new Cold War centered as much on production of new weapons of destruction, the means of delivering them, and the scientific developments and testing of guided missiles and other electronic devices, as it did on equipping expanding military manpower. California became the largest complex of military production in the nation. Civilian employment in California manufacturing plants almost doubled between 1950 and 1955. From 1955-60 the state increased its percentage of the nation's total personal income from 9.8 to 10.8 percent while other large states decreased.

When President Eisenhower called Gov. Earl Warren to Washington in 1953 to become Chief Justice of the United States, Lt. Gov. Goodwin J. Knight became governor. Knight remained in office for five years, until 1958. He had never been as liberal a Republican as Warren, but he did become more moderate after becoming governor and sought political support from

## LEARN BY DOING

organized labor and supported such social measures as increased unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation insurance, aid to the aged, new health and mental hygiene facilities, and expansion of educational facilities. There had been no new state college campuses added after 1949 until Governor Knight approved three: Fullerton and Hayward in 1957 and Northridge in 1958.

Continued water development had put more than 6½ million acres under irrigation in California by the early 1950s. In 1954 there were 123,074 farms in California comprising nearly 38 million acres and employing almost a half million people. California's cash farm income in 1956 was \$2,837,000,000, the highest of any state in the Union. By 1959 it topped \$3,000,000,000 — again more than any other state. Yet California had only 1½ percent of the nation's farms and just over three percent of its farm land. It was and still is the leading agricultural state because of its climate, soil, and use of modern technology.

California had become a great industrial state without ceasing to be a great agricultural one. Its reputation as a state where job opportunities were abundantly available caused a population explosion after World War II. In the decade 1950–60, the state's population increased by more than 50 percent. The federal census of 1960 confirmed that California's population growth accounted for nearly 20 percent of the total USA gain in the previous decade, 1950–60. It was growing by about a half million people a year, more than any other state. By July 1, 1961, California's population was 16,445,000.

All that growth created a need for about 500 new jobs every day, expanding schools and colleges, constructing highways and water delivery systems, and raising taxes to meet the rising costs of infrastructure and government.

As the 1960–70 decade began, Cal Poly was riding a wave of prosperity and expansion.

**LESSON TWELVE** *A chief executive's success is not based exclusively on his own talents nor even on the collective talents of all his subordinates; circumstances beyond local control such as war, peace, prosperity, and even the weather may be equally responsible for success or failure.*

VICE PRESIDENTS HAVE WORK TO DO

SINCE MARCH 3, 1959, I had been sitting in the first office off the lobby of the administration building, across the hall from the president's office. It had a great view west toward Bishop Peak, which was silhouetted each evening by the setting sun. In my new job as vice president I didn't have much time to gaze with rapture at beautiful sunsets.

When President McPhee made the public announcement in the *Staff Bulletin* that I was the one and only Cal Poly vice president, he made it clear to me that I was responsible for all operations at all three campuses, San Luis Obispo, Pomona and San Dimas. Although he didn't use the word, I also believed I heard him say, "I expect a miracle."

He always was very optimistic at the outset of any of the many administrative organizational changes he engineered in his 33 years as president. In this latest model of efficiency, he anticipated an outcome that was impossible, but it was such an idealistic concept that I didn't have the heart nor the diplomatic words to describe the obvious pitfalls.

"I want to be rid of all day-to-day decision-making responsibility. I want to concentrate only on long-range planning." Those were approximately the words he used in telling me what he expected of a vice president. It was a new position. We never had one during McPhee's tenure, and technically we didn't have it in the budget yet; I would continue in the dean position until the pay classification of a vice president position was approved and budgeted.

I knew there was a big difference between the words he used and his unconscious anticipation of a result. He had told me many times when I was assistant to the president that he had to be careful in delegating authority to deans and division heads that he didn't "lose power." He didn't use those words this time, but what did he mean when he used the words "final decision-making authority?" Now he was telling me, as vice president, that I had "final decision-making authority" on all operational matters for all three campuses. Years before he had warned me, that a president should never give up final decision-making authority in four areas of operation: (1) organizing the administrative structure, (2) hiring faculty and staff,

(3) granting promotions, and (4) approving budgets. But now he said he was giving all those decisions to me.

Of course, the first of those four items I knew he considered part of long-range planning, which he was not delegating. But this new delegation of authority came with this proviso: "I know you'll keep me informed of any matter that is so important that I ought to know about it." While the thought was obviously blasphemous, I could not help wondering if accomplishing that would be any easier than interpreting the Lord's Prayer phrase, "Thy will be done." All I could promise the President was, "I'll try to keep you informed in advance of any issues that might be of concern to you." Of course, I knew that there was nothing about the operation of any of the three Cal Poly campuses that was not of concern to him. I could not help but remember that in 1953 he had developed a list of 70 items that needed to be "fixed" by the Long-Range Problem-Solving Committee over which he had made me chairman. As fast as we came up with a solution and wiped an item off the list, he added a new item.

The new office I had moved into was the former office of Byron McMahon, McPhee's assistant who succeeded him as chief of the State Bureau of Agricultural Education. McPhee had given up the Bureau position in 1945 when he became State Director of Vocational Education. When in 1949 McPhee decided he needed to spend full time as Cal Poly's president, he had turned over the State Director of Vocational Education position to another of his former assistants, Wesley P. Smith. As mentioned earlier, when Smith decided in 1959 that he wanted all his Bureau chiefs located in Sacramento, he ordered McMahon to move. McPhee tried to reason with Smith that the Bureau of Ag headquarters had worked well since 1933 on the San Luis Obispo campus and that it should not be moved. When Smith refused to change his order, McPhee became very angry.

His comment to me, made more significant because of my recent promotion to vice president, was, "When you have been instrumental in the promotion of someone like Wes Smith, is it too much to ask that he be loyal to you and abide by your wishes in matters like where the Bureau headquarters should be?" I wondered how long it would be before I made a decision that the President would consider important and I didn't.

One afternoon my secretary, Mary Johnson, buzzed me on the intercom and said, "Gov. Pat Brown is on the line." I punched the button and said, "Yes, Governor, this is Bob Kennedy." I had met him, but I knew he wouldn't remember me; and he didn't.

#### VICE PRESIDENTS HAVE WORK TO DO

"I tried to talk to President McPhee, but his secretary said he was out of town. She said you were the vice president and suggested I talk to you."

I knew McPhee was not out of town; in fact, I had seen him in his office only a few minutes earlier. I figured McPhee had given his secretary, Leona Boerman, an order to implement the new organizational setup by referring any potential problem call to me. Leona must have figured a call from the governor was a potential problem call.

It was. He was very diplomatic, but very insistent.

"You've got a rule that needs to be reviewed. A friend of mine is the mother of a young man who is registering as a student at Cal Poly. She is divorced and lives with her son in Los Angeles. The admission papers require a student to list the name of the father and the father's address. The father lives in Phoenix, Arizona. The boy wrote that on the admission form. Now the mother has been notified the boy must register as an out-of-state student and pay out-of-state fees. The mother thinks it is outrageous, and so do I. What is your answer?"

"My answer, Governor, is you are right. It is outrageous. We shall see that it is corrected. Give me the name of the student, and I'll take it from there."

Believe it or not, it was easy to make an exception for the boy in question, but it was not easy to get the State Department of Education legal staff to change the way in which it determined that a student applicant's residence was based on the residence of the father even if the applicant lived with a divorced mother at another address. But we persevered and it was eventually reworded to eliminate the problem. System-wide problems were not uncommon, but generally, under the State Department of Education, there was little overseeing of the state colleges, and that's the way the presidents liked it.

In 1959 there were 12 state college campuses, from Humboldt in the north to San Diego in the south, and many citizens and business people throughout the state had the same thoughts that Myron Angel had had in 1897 about the value of a state school to a neighboring town. State legislators had introduced 25 bills in the legislature to establish new state colleges in their respective districts. The legislative analyst, Allan Post, and the Department of Finance were concerned, as was Gov. Pat Brown. The amount of coordination and control that the State Board of Education could impose on state legislators was nil. It was obvious that a master plan study was needed. The person who provided the necessary first step was Assembly-

woman Dorothy Donahoe, of Bakersfield, who authored Concurrent Resolution No. 88, passed by the Legislature in 1959.

That legislation called for the establishment of a Survey Team to prepare a master plan for higher education in California. Dr. Arthur G. Coons, president of Occidental College, chaired the Master Plan Survey Team. The representative of the state colleges was Dr. Glenn Dumke, president of San Francisco State, a former Occidental College history professor and the newest of the state college presidents.

President McPhee was concerned with what he called "private-college domination" of the Master Plan Study Team. He was equally concerned that the result would not only favor private colleges, but would ignore the needs of all but liberal arts colleges. When the report was completed it was implemented by the 1960 Donahoe Higher Education Act. While it was in the form of a proposed legislative bill, President McPhee went up and down the state, visiting Cal Poly alumni at luncheon and dinner meetings. His talks to the alumni included his "apprehensions" and "warnings" to alumni that their alma mater was in jeopardy.

"This new plan," he said, "will unify and standardized each campus within the system. They will try to make us a liberal arts college."

He told sympathetic alumni that he had spent nearly 30 years trying to develop the concept that Cal Poly was "different" and an "exception" to every system-wide regulation. On occasion he would say, "If we don't like what they finally come up with, I'll pull out of the system."

The first time he said that within my hearing, I asked him, "Where are we going to pull to, boss?"

He replied, "We'll become a special school, like the Maritime Academy."

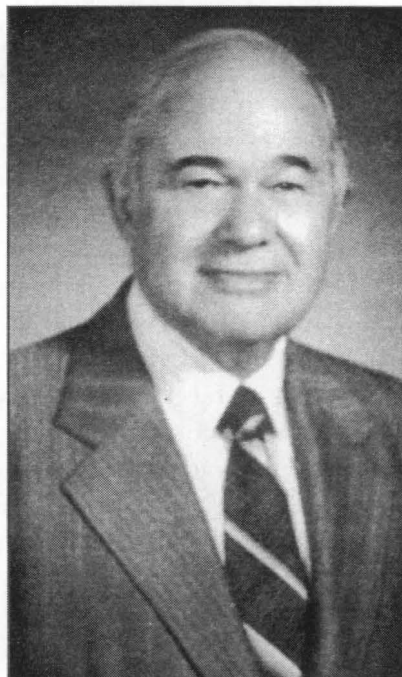
I was opposed to that idea, especially since I knew that the Maritime Academy had a continual struggle to survive.

Many of the provisions of the Master Plan appeared to be as favorable to Cal Poly as to any of the other campuses, but on several items I was in 100 percent agreement with the President that we had to get amendments to the proposed Donahoe Act. With the field work of Harold Wilson, executive dean, who handled relations with state agencies, we succeeded in amending the legislation in two significant areas. We rewrote one section that would have given the University of California exclusive rights among state-supported institutions in the field of professional architecture. We already had a successful architecture engineering program at San Luis Obispo that we would have lost had the bill not been amended successfully. We did

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not touch UC's exclusive right to offer instruction in law, medicine, and veterinary medicine. We also amended the original act, which in support of community college programs would have eliminated Cal Poly's right to continue offering less-than-degree programs in vocational agriculture, which we had been doing since 1933 in offering two-year vocational certificate and three-year technical certificate programs. We believed such an exception was justifiable. Only three of the more than 50 community colleges — Hartnell, Modesto, and Pierce — had the lab and field facilities and farm land we believed were needed to operate an effective college-level agriculture program. We argued that Poly's farmland and equipment were not fully utilized by our degree students, but more importantly we wanted to continue offering a three-level agricultural program that enabled some students to concentrate on practical and technical skills, returning to the family farm whenever they had achieved the level of competence they or their parents felt was needed. We claimed that students in the two-year vocational and three-year technical programs could transfer into a degree program, if that seemed desirable, without the students' losing valuable time. An argument we did not use was that the three-level program gave us some students in agriculture who would not have met degree program entrance requirements. And that last point was the issue on which the community colleges attacked. Fortunately for us, they made the mistake of arguing that we kept these non-degree programs in order to recruit athletes who otherwise would have played for community colleges. Legislators were not sympathetic to that argument.

Our 1959-60 Annual Report was the last one addressed to the State Board of Education as the sole authority over Cal Poly. The next one, 1960-61, was addressed to the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, and the new Board of Trustees of the State College system; all three had some degree of administrative authority over the state colleges during the transition year of 1960. When the Donahoe Higher Education Act of 1960 was passed, Governor Brown had the opportunity of appointing 16 new Trustees. While the Trustees ordinarily would serve eight-year terms, the first appointments were for staggered terms, so that in the future no governor would have the opportunity to name a whole new Board. Even so it gave Governor Brown the opportunity to name all but the five ex-officio members, of which he was one. The other four were the superintendent of public instruction, the lieutenant governor (who presides over the State Senate), the speaker of the Assembly, and the Chancellor.



*Louis Heilbron served eight terms on the first CSU Board of Trustees, and was chairman for three terms, 1960-63. He liked Cal Poly.*

The president of the State Board of Education at the time of the passage of the Donahoe Act, Louis H. Heilbron, was a prominent San Francisco attorney who had been active in Democratic politics since the days of the Depression. He was appointed by Governor Brown to serve a full eight-year term as a Trustee. His fellow Trustees unanimously elected him to serve three terms as chairman of the Board of Trustees, 1960-63. Heilbron remained on the Board until 1969; his term coincided with the formative years of the California State University system, and he became a great friend of Cal Poly's. At the outset, however, President McPhee was as suspicious of him as he was of most of the Trustees. With the exception of Paul Spencer, a building contractor who lived near the Voorhis campus, McPhee believed most of the Trustees would change Cal Poly into a standard copy of every other state college if they could.

One of the first actions of the new Board in 1960 was to appoint an interim chief administrative officer to work with Board members in setting up the machinery by which they eventually would select a permanent Chancellor and headquarters staff. Donald B. Leiffer, Ph.D., a professor of political science at San Diego State since 1948, was the Board's and the

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governor's choice for interim chief administrative officer. He was placed on leave of absence from San Diego State and set to work immediately to eliminate any existing laws or regulations that would, in his opinion, interfere with the proper functioning of this newly established state college system.

Like so many changes in government, especially where a political advantage is possible, the new incumbents publicize their actions as though everything they do is new and improved. Despite the revolutionary appearance of the changes brought on by the Donahoe Act, there had been a state college system before. It is true that during the period from the establishment of the first state normal school in California in San Jose in 1862 until the Legislature in 1921 renamed the then-seven normal schools "teachers colleges," all were administered by local boards. A legislative act in 1935 changed the "teachers colleges" title to "state colleges" and the seven schools were administered by the State Department of Education as though they were a part of the public school system of the state.

We know from the early history of Cal Poly that its destiny had been altered by actions of people occupying the position of state superintendent of schools. It had not been considered one of the state colleges until the 1940 approval by the Board of degree-granting authority. By the time I began going to Sacramento to get approval for the contents of a new catalog, it was very obvious that there was a "system" and that men working for the state superintendent of public instruction had authority over each president, thereby controlling and coordinating certain aspects of the operation of the seven campuses. (The addition of Cal Poly only temporarily increased the number to eight campuses because the 1942 Legislature permitted Santa Barbara State College to be taken over as a branch of the University of California.) Dr. J. A. Burkman, assistant superintendent, had considerable authority over the division of state colleges and teacher education.

The seven presidents met with him regularly as a Council of Presidents, considering issues and taking action that controlled and coordinated the system. Dr. Burkman kept the minutes, which, when circulated to the presidents, constituted the basis of approval on which they could act. I recall President McPhee complaining, on occasion, that "Burkman has changed the minutes; that is not what the presidents agreed upon." McPhee would then get on the phone to Burkman to complain. Burkman's response usually was, "I took the matter up with Roy [Roy Simpson was for 17 years or more state superintendent] and he objected, so I changed the minutes to agree with his opinion. Any further complaint?"

## LEARN BY DOING

The Legislature in its 1947 session, fully aware of the post-World War II pressure of increased population on existing facilities in higher education, authorized a survey of the needs of California in higher education. The report, published in the spring of 1948 and commonly called the Strayer Report, after its principal author, Dr. George D. Strayer, professor emeritus, Columbia University, found fault with the way the division of state colleges was administered. By 1947 there had been two more state colleges added: Los Angeles and Sacramento. One of the members of the Strayer study team had been Dr. Aubrey A. Douglass, associate superintendent of public instruction.

As a result of the Strayer Report, Dr. Douglass was to "organize the state colleges in a state-wide manner rather than as nine single college units scattered about the state." One criticism was that the presidents were establishing all of the rules by which they were "controlled and coordinated" and they did it through the operation of the Council of Presidents. President McPhee was the last chairman of that Council, which reported its actions as a *fait accompli* to Dr. Burkman, Dr. Douglass, and Dr. Simpson. Dr. Simpson appointed J. Burton Vasche to head up the division of state colleges, and notified the presidents that henceforth they would operate as "staff" to Dr. Vasche.

At the time the transition from State Department of Education to the Trustees was being made, President McPhee was chairman of the presidents committee on legislative matters. It was obvious that one of the first actions Dr. Leiffer would have to take would involve legislation to implement the Donahoe Act. McPhee phoned Leiffer and volunteered to help him "draft and process through the legislature any necessary bills."

McPhee told me immediately after that call, "Leiffer says he doesn't need any help, so we are going to have to watch very carefully any bills that get into the hopper."

That process was one that I was familiar with, but by this time, Harold Wilson, executive dean, had been assigned that responsibility.

In the archives of the Cal Poly library is a copy of a document called "The President's Letter" No. 5, March 21, 1961. It is addressed to all faculty and staff at both the San Luis Obispo and Kellogg-Voorhis campuses. It gives a full report of our efforts to dissuade the Trustees and Dr. Leiffer from their determined effort to eliminate Cal Poly's Enabling Act, passed in 1901. Dr. Leiffer had moved to eliminate any laws that pertained to individual state colleges, stating that there should be nothing on the books to hamper the

desire of the Trustees to administer the system.

President McPhee's message referred to the Enabling Act as a "beacon light" that for "more than 60 years" guided Cal Poly in its struggle to find its proper niche in the state's educational system. "As your president," he wrote, "I am prepared to fight hard to preserve our Enabling Act which is, I am convinced, our only safeguard that Cal Poly will be able to continue offering occupationally-centered educational programs for which it has gained such a high reputation."

It was Dr. Leiffer's contention, and that of the majority of the Trustees, that the Donahoe Higher Education Act that implemented the Master Plan for Higher Education made our Enabling Act redundant. The majority of our faculty and administrative staff felt otherwise and had so expressed themselves by vote. All our arguments seemed to fall on deaf ears or were countered with the stock phrase, "Don't you trust us to protect your best interests?" That's a hard question to answer honestly when it is asked by someone who is in a position to retaliate.

In preparation for an April 6, 1961, meeting of the Trustees Educational Policy Committee in Sacramento, President McPhee, Harold Wilson, and I had an early breakfast meeting with a small group of key state senators. During the course of that short breakfast gathering, Senator Vern Sturgeon, Paso Robles, asked President McPhee to explain the difficulty we were having in protecting Cal Poly's special role in higher education. These key state senators proceeded immediately to pass the word around the corridors of the Capitol that Cal Poly might need some help in convincing the Trustees of the validity of our position on the Enabling Act.

The three of us then went to the Trustees Educational Policy Committee meeting presided over by Louis Heilbron. The agenda included the item calling for the elimination of the Enabling Act. Dr. Leiffer presented the reasons for the elimination. Mr. Heilbron called on Mr. McPhee, who said, "Mr. Leiffer does not understand that our Enabling Act is very important to Cal Poly since it states clearly our objectives are not necessarily the same as are those of the other state colleges, which the system is now classifying as 'liberal arts colleges.' Cal Poly is a 'polytechnic college' and intends to remain so."

One of the Trustees spoke up and said, "I don't see how we can make an exception for one state college when we are eliminating any special legislative acts that apply to other state colleges. I move we go ahead and accept Mr. Leiffer's recommendation."

#### LEARN BY DOING

Before anyone could second the motion, Lt. Governor Glenn Anderson spoke up and said, "I have news for the Trustees. The leadership of the Senate has told me that if you delete Cal Poly's Enabling Act, your budget bill will not pass. So I suggest you do not do what Mr. Leiffer is proposing to do."

Mr. Heilbron declared a short recess. He and several other Trustees came up to President McPhee who was standing with Harold Wilson and me in the hallway. Mr. Heilbron said, "Mr. McPhee, do you have a proposal for what we should do?"

Mr. McPhee turned to me and said, "Bob, give Mr. Heilbron the resolution which proposes a way to reconcile the problem."

The resolution passed that same day by the Trustees stated:

Resolved, That the Administrative Officer and the Administration of California State Polytechnic College confer with a view toward bringing up-to-date the California State Polytechnic Enabling Act so as to reaffirm the original intent of the Act and so as to make the Act consistent with the legislation establishing the Board of Trustees.

We wasted no time on the conferring. Dean Wilson remained in Sacramento and met the next day, April 7, with Don Leiffer and members of his staff to work out an amendment to the existing Cal Poly Enabling Act. The amended act was subsequently passed by the Legislature in this form:

24751. In addition to the functions provided by section 22606 the California State Polytechnic College shall be authorized to emphasize the applied fields of agriculture, engineering, business, home economics and other occupational and professional fields. This article shall be liberally construed.

The 1901 act had said about the same but had included the phrase, "...and such other branches as will fit the students for the nonprofessional walks of life." If you look at the Education Code today you'll find Cal Poly's Enabling Act almost as written by Myron Angel, founder of Cal Poly, with a slight amendment authored by Messrs. McPhee, Wilson and Kennedy.

About the same time this action was taking place, the Trustees announced they had selected from a field of 180 candidates Dr. Buell G. Gallagher, then president of City College, New York City, as the new Chancellor of the system. He was to start July 1, 1961, the effective date of the system's legal existence.

#### VICE PRESIDENTS HAVE WORK TO DO

Before these Master Plan actions were taking place, a number of events had occurred in 1959 and 1960 that had impacted the personal as well as the professional lives of a number of administrative staff members, including President McPhee.

At the time I was promoted to vice president, Dean C.O. McCorkle, who had been McPhee's right-hand man since 1932, especially as a curriculum expert, was assigned to the position of dean of the college in charge of the Kellogg campus, Pomona. That was a change that required a move from the San Luis Obispo home where he and his wife, Avis McCorkle, had lived for 27 years and reared their one son, Chet Jr. (Chet Jr. eventually became chancellor of the Davis campus of the University of California and later vice president of the UC system.)

The change placed Dean McCorkle in a position that reported to me, a reversal of roles that was handled very gracefully by McCorkle and his wife. President McPhee had his own reasons for doing things, but I always felt that McCorkle should have been promoted to the vice president position, not me. McPhee's reasoning was that McCorkle was only a few years younger than he was and therefore would not be able to continue as an active leader much beyond McPhee's retirement. In fact, McCorkle did retire soon after McPhee, in 1966. He died in July, 1979, and I gave the eulogy at his funeral; I admired him greatly and considered him the "dean of deans" in our system.

Dean Harold Hayes, dean of engineering, was promoted by McPhee to the other dean of the college position, in charge of the San Luis Obispo campus operation, on March 3, 1959, the same time I became vice president and his immediate superior. By September, 1960, he asked to be returned to the dean of engineering position, on the basis that the engineering program needed him to help them prepare for accreditation by the Engineering Council for Professional Development. His request was granted.

Dr. Clyde Fisher, former dean of educational services and curriculum development, was promoted on or about September 19, 1960, to be dean of the college in charge of San Luis Obispo campus operations. Dean Harold Wilson on that same date was asked to continue his prior responsibilities and also assume college-wide responsibilities for educational services, formerly handled by Dr. Fisher. Dr. Dale Andrews was assigned the position of coordinator of special educational services, coordinating workshops, conferences, seminars, summer meetings, etc., but not relieved of his work as a ramrod for the instructional materials program.



*Julian McPhee was proud of his family. It was the only thing that took priority over Cal Poly. Alma is in the center and Claire Lavelle is the adult at the extreme right in this 1951 photo, with ten of the McPhees' grandchildren.*

President and Mrs. McPhee suffered a blow when their 33-year old daughter, Claire, died of leukemia on March 18, 1960, in San Francisco. She was one of the McPhee's six daughters. Claire had married Richard Levelle, who graduated from Cal Poly's Naval Flight Preparatory School in the mid-1940s; he later became a physician. They had six children. Almost immediately after the funeral, which Mary and I attended, we drove with the McPhees to Eureka to attend a meeting of the State Board of Education. Mrs. McPhee wept most of the way.

Back in San Luis Obispo in October, 1960, I was presiding over a church meeting on Saturday afternoon of the Columbus Day weekend when I was interrupted by a person who handed me a note. I was told I was wanted on the phone, and that it was an emergency. I left the platform and went to the phone. The message from a reporter at the *Telegram-Tribune* was simply, "Your football team has been in an airplane accident in Toledo, Ohio." The reporter had no further details, merely having seen a flash on the wire service teletype. I went immediately to the newspaper office so I could learn whatever details would be coming in on the wire. The team was returning from a defeat at the hands of the Bowling Green University team, flying in a chartered C-46 plane owned by the Arctic-Pacific Company. It had crashed on takeoff when one of the two engines failed. Twenty-two were dead and

#### VICE PRESIDENTS HAVE WORK TO DO

26 seriously injured. I called various college officers, gave assignments, and then called President McPhee, who was in Washington, D.C., with Mrs. McPhee. They were about to fly to New York and then on to Europe for a long-postponed 30-day vacation. I advised him that he should cancel his trip and, with Mrs. McPhee, fly to Toledo and see the injured players in the several hospitals where they were being treated. President McPhee agreed, and they took those actions immediately.

I told the President that Dean of Students Everett Chandler was already en route to Toledo to see the survivors and to make arrangements with funeral homes for the shipment of bodies. We got firsthand information by phone from Sheldon Harden, line coach, who was in the back of the plane and who, with very few others, had escaped injury. He gave me a list of the dead and injured. I divided the list equally, giving half to Dean Fisher and keeping half for myself. We made phone calls to the parents of the deceased and injured students, probably the toughest job I ever had or ever hope to have.

I also phoned Dr. Roy Simpson, State Director of Education, and reported what had happened, what we were doing, and what we might expect as repercussions. He advised me that there was a State Board of Education meeting that was scheduled to be held at the School for the Blind in Berkeley within a week, and that I should plan to be there to make a report. He called me later to tell me that the Board members were concerned about the use of charter airlines and I should be prepared to explain why we used a charter plane and not a scheduled airliner. I met with the Board, made my report, and listened intently as they took action that prevented any school under their jurisdiction from transporting students by "supplemental air carriers or military transport." In the spring of 1961 the State Board of Education accepted a report on student travel. While it did not mention the reason behind subsequent Board action, everyone who read the report knew it had grown out of the Cal Poly air crash. The Board acted to establish a statewide policy to control travel of official student groups connected to any state college co-curricular or extracurricular program, i.e., athletics, music, debate, etc. It continued the ban on use of supplemental air carriers and military transport, requiring all such air travel to be by regular scheduled airliners.

By late October, 1960, we had set up a Memorial Fund Committee to accept charitable contributions not only to help families of the deceased players, some of whom were married with children, but also the injured, most of whom had no disability insurance. The Memorial Fund Commit-

#### LEARN BY DOING

tee, which Dean Fisher eventually chaired, operated for several years, distributing many thousands of dollars collected not just from voluntary contributions by individuals but also from such activities as a charity football game between Bowling Green and Fresno State played in the Los Angeles Memorial Stadium. Before that game, Bowling Green University had donated all proceeds from a November 5 game they played against Southern Illinois University.

Just prior to the trip that had taken the McPhees to Washington, D.C. where they were at the time of the air crash, they had been visiting continuing education centers at such universities as Nebraska, Chicago, Michigan State, Georgia, and Oklahoma. The trip had been arranged by Dr. Emory Morris, director of the Kellogg Foundation, which had financed the building and operation of a number of university and college continuing education centers. The trip was a follow-up to a survey that Ken Kitch, head of the journalism department, had made while on a six months' leave of absence from the San Luis Obispo campus, a leave taken at the President's and vice president's request.

Soon after Kitch returned and wrote his report on the kind of continuing education center the Kellogg Foundation might finance at the Voorhis campus, he was appointed assistant to the president with an office adjoining the president's office on the Kellogg campus. His major responsibility was to be in charge of the Voorhis campus and to develop at that campus a series of continuing education programs that we could point to in a presentation to the Kellogg Foundation requesting funding for expansion and support. Kitch did a good job, but eventually it was Dr. Morris' decision not to invest in anything at the Voorhis campus, but instead to underwrite the development of a Kellogg Continuing Education Center at the Kellogg campus, a center that is now one of the finest continuing education centers in the state and nation, operating to the great advantage of Cal Poly, Pomona.

Just prior to the air crash, we had received word that Governor Pat Brown was coming to the campus on October 14 to participate in a rally on behalf of John F. Kennedy, then a candidate for president of the United States. Officers of the Young Democrats Club, the student organization sponsoring the governor's visit, wanted President McPhee to be present at the rally and introduce the governor. President and Mrs. McPhee were out of state and so the student officers reluctantly turned to me. I agreed, anticipating an opportunity perhaps to take the governor on a campus tour. The gover-



*Just before the November, 1960, election of his brother, John F. Kennedy, to the presidency, Ted Kennedy visited Cal Poly and was shown around the campus by REK and his daughters, Maridel and Susan.*

nor did not show up, but in his place was candidate John Kennedy's youngest brother, Ted. I had both my daughters, Maridel and Susan, with me in anticipation of introducing them to the governor. While I was disappointed when the governor did not show, they were delighted to meet the handsome young brother of the next President of the United States.

Headlines on most California newspapers had been about the Democratic Party convention in Los Angeles at which John Kennedy, following politically astute strategies directed by his other brother, Robert, won the nomination. After that the headlines in California papers were dominated by the battle between California's native son, Vice President Richard Nixon, and the Massachusetts native, Sen. John Kennedy. Kennedy won with 303 electoral votes to 219 for Nixon, but the difference in the popular votes represented only a 0.2 percent margin for Kennedy. At 43 Kennedy was the youngest man ever elected president, and the first Catholic.

Governor Brown had been making some headlines of his own in 1959-60. One of the first bills proposed by Brown that was passed by the Legislature and got his signature was a law to raise the 55 m.p.h. speed limit to 65. Not so easily changed was the state's infamous loyalty oath law, which required loyalty declarations from all persons claiming property exemptions. Another aspect of the loyalty oaths was the state's regulation requiring all state employees, including University of California and state college faculty

and staff, to sign them in order to be paid. Many objected on the basis of principle, not because they were sympathetic to the communist cause.

Despite anticommunist feeling in the United States, Cold War hostility between the USA and the Soviet Union was somewhat reduced by 1959. One of the early breaks occurred in September, 1959, when Soviet Premier Khrushchev visited the United States. In his travel from San Francisco to Los Angeles to visit Disneyland, his train hesitated momentarily so he could step onto the platform at San Luis Obispo and wave to the locals gathered to get a glimpse of the man. There was only one demonstrator with a sign on the platform. He was a member of the Cal Poly audiovisual staff who also demonstrated on occasion about environmental pollution and other controversial issues.

Alaska had become the 49th state on January 3 and on August 21 Hawaii joined the Union as the 50th state. In California the State Board of Education authorized the establishment of the 14th campus, Stanislaus, and named J. Burton Vasche, formerly assistant superintendent of public instruction, as its president. Population in the United States reached nearly 180 million in 1960, with a rate of growth highest in the last 50 years. In California the rate of population increase was faster than that of the nation; Los Angeles was listed in 1960 as the third most populous city in America. One of the last actions on behalf of the California State College system by the State Board of Education was to approve in 1960 the establishment of three more campuses: Dominguez Hills, San Bernardino, and Sonoma, bringing the total to 17. On the San Luis Obispo campus six red brick dorms were completed in September, 1959. We named them Trinity, Santa Lucia, Muir, Sequoia, Fremont and Tenaya. They joined five other dorms built in 1953, which we called the "mountain" dorms and named Shasta, Diablo, Palomar, Whitney, and Lassen.

**LESSON THIRTEEN** *No matter how firmly an executive believes in the importance of group consultation and employee participation in decision-making, he is foolish if he does not retain final authority in such critical areas as organizational structure, employment of key people, promotions, and budgets.*

VICE PRESIDENTS CAN GET INTO TROUBLE

MARY JOHNSON, who had been my secretary ever since I returned from my leave of absence at Stanford in 1949, opened the inner door just wide enough to stick her head through.

"The Chief wants to see you in his office immediately."

Mary, like many old-timers at Poly, often referred to President McPhee, outside his hearing, as "Chief," because of his long-held job as chief of the State Bureau of Agricultural Education. Although many of his contemporaries called him "Julian" in his presence, despite 26 years of close working relationship I never assumed that intimacy. When others were present, I always called him "Mr. McPhee." When we were alone and in good rapport, I often called him "Boss," which title he seemed to like. When I was not certain of his good humor, I addressed him as "Mr. McPhee." Many of his acquaintances outside the educational field called him "Dr. McPhee" because they believed any college president would have earned a doctor's degree.<sup>1</sup>

I didn't ask Mary what he wanted to see me about, since I knew from long association that it was not his habit to tell a subordinate in advance what would be discussed at one of these command performances. He particularly would not tell a secretary more than was necessary; and what was necessary in this instance was simply, "The president wants to see the vice president."

I found him, as usual, sitting behind his big mahogany desk in the inner office, in his shirt sleeves, leaning back in his swivel chair, with his fingers locked behind his head, while he stared at the ceiling. He was in the process of giving up smoking, not easy for anyone addicted for as long as he had been, and I could see he was chewing the licorice drops he substituted every time he had the impulse to light up. I knew they were the usual licorice drops because of the black lines dribbling from each corner of his mouth.

1. McPhee never corrected anyone who called him "doctor" because he actually had received a very appropriate honorary doctor of laws degree, awarded by Armstrong College in Berkeley in the early 1950s. And he certainly had earned that title as a doctor of all laws that affected Cal Poly.

Thinking I could start the conversation off friendly-like I said, "Boss, your licorice is showing."

He knew exactly what I meant, since I had been giving him a signal from time to time during meetings when it was important for him to use a tissue to wipe the corners of his mouth. That's what he did now, as he took his hands from behind his head and reached into a bottom drawer for a tissue. With personal hygiene out of the way, he told me to sit and listen.

"Despite having McCorkle in charge at the KV campus, I'm still worried about the future relationship between Cal Poly's three campuses," he said. He then went on to discuss at length what he felt was the cause of continual unrest among the faculty at the southern campus.

"There's just too many liberal arts guys down there. They don't have a long-enough heritage of basic 'hoof and horn' agriculture. We need to be expanding the agricultural programs and moving forward faster in the engineering fields. We will never be able to expand the acreage beyond the 815 acres Kellogg gave us — it is too expensive to buy anything in the Pomona Valley. What I want you to do, is think about a long-range solution to our problem. I want you to concentrate on it. Don't think about anything else for a week. In fact, I suggest you have Mary Johnson tell anyone who calls that you are out of town. Then lock yourself in at home in front of that typewriter of yours and write me a report on your recommendations." He added, "It must be a confidential report, for my eyes only, on how to solve the growing relationship problems between the Kellogg-Voorhis campus and the San Luis Obispo campus. Now go do it."

It was really the kind of assignment I liked. I had been writing these kinds of reports to him and for his use for at least ten years. He thought I was good at it, but somehow he believed that the key to it was my ability to type. After reading one report that he particularly liked he said, "I wish I had learned how to type so I could write reports like this." I thought at the time that he was just pulling my leg, but not long after that he had a typewriter brought into his inner office and asked his secretary to teach him how to type. The activity didn't last more than a few weeks before he gave up in disgust.

My den at home was really an office I could shut off from the rest of the house, separating myself from any noise or activity created by a wife and four kids. It didn't take me very long to do the so-called creative thinking required; I had been thinking about the problem more or less continuously ever since 1953, when Sen. Ben Hulse had demanded a report on how Cal Poly could "father" another branch campus in the Imperial Valley.

#### VICE PRESIDENTS CAN GET INTO TROUBLE

My personal assessment was that the Kellogg faculty was discouraged over lack of opportunity to participate in decision-making. I wrote that KV faculty members believed that all important decisions about their future were being made in San Luis Obispo without opportunity to voice their opinions. In my usual presumptuous manner, I used an analogy of the American Revolution. I suggested that if we didn't take the initiative to change the concept that compared the absentee president to King George, we could expect the colonists would soon throw the tea in the harbor.

My solution was to project the date on which McPhee expected to retire (which had to be on or before 1966, when he would reach the then compulsory retirement age of 70) and propose a separation of the two campuses on that date with appropriate legislation. In the meantime, we would announce a five-year plan for more and more authority to be granted to the local campus administrators.

After President McPhee read the report he called me into his office. The conversation was one-sided but the gist of it went like this: "Is this the only copy of this report?" When I answered, "Yes," he replied, "Good, now forget you ever wrote it. I don't want you to mention it again, to me or anyone else. I will implement it, but not in the exact manner you propose."

And he did! How and when he did it is a story that comes a little later.

Not all problems laid on the vice president's desk were problems having to do with relationships between the two campuses. Sometimes it could involve an issue that required an interpretation of a college-wide regulation, one that applied equally to both campuses. Such a matter was referred to me in January, 1961, by the San Luis Obispo dean of the college, Dr. Clyde Fisher. Sometimes the issue had the potential of rising to the U.S. Supreme Court. The issue was generated by a very successful program sponsored by Christian student groups called "Religion-In-Life Week." The sponsoring student group wanted to make it possible for classes to be dismissed so students could attend Religion-in-Life sessions. My refusal to permit the request was interpreted by some faculty and students as antireligious. They came back with a counterproposal: "Let any faculty member who wants to, put the matter up to the class for a democratic solution." The proponents wanted the democratic process to consist of a show of hands in class in response to a faculty member's question, "How many of you would like to have a guest lecturer talk about religion at our next class meeting?"

In my response to that proposal I said that the number of class meetings are predetermined and are to be devoted to the topic of the class — not

## LEARN BY DOING

some other topic, especially one that is forbidden by law to be taught in a public college except as "literature in a nonsectarian fashion." I ruled that no classes could be dismissed and no guest lecturers could be permitted to talk on religion unless religion was the basic subject matter of that class. That decision was the basis of rumors that were passed on to me that intimated, "Kennedy is an atheist."

During a two-month period, March–April, 1961, I was very busy traveling numerous times the 240 miles between campuses as chairman of two committees, attempting to coordinate and finalize new policy guidelines on athletics. The air crash had revealed things to us that we knew had to be corrected to avoid future problems. I had set up the committees at each campus and had the President announce in late November, 1960, their creation, duties, goals, and deadlines. Each committee's membership consisted of students, faculty, and administration. The report was approved by the president on May 9, 1961. Some of the significant decisions were:

1. The athletic program at each campus is to be operated as an integral part of the instructional program, with the head of the Physical Education Department responsible for the athletic program as well as the physical education program. The Dean of Students will no longer administer the program as a co-curricular activity of the student personnel division.
2. The position of "athletic director" at each campus is eliminated, and an "athletic coordinator" substituted with the position filled by someone not a coach of a major sport.
3. A position of coordinator of intramural sports is established, with the intramural sports program intensified.
4. Limited competition shall be encouraged between the San Luis Obispo campus and the Kellogg campus in "non-contact" sports such as cross country, track, tennis, swimming, and diving. There will be no competition between the campuses in the sports of football, basketball, boxing, wrestling, etc.
5. No students enrolled in technical agriculture at San Luis Obispo will be eligible for varsity competition.
6. No Cal Poly athletic team will be permitted to travel out-of-state beyond the boundaries of a state "contiguous by land" to California. If any team or athlete is selected for inter-sectional playoffs with competition beyond those limits, special permission must be sought and granted by the respective Dean of the College, Vice President, and President.

## VICE PRESIDENTS CAN GET INTO TROUBLE

7. Junior College transfers who have had two years of JC competition will be eligible for only two years of competition at Cal Poly, even though the conference (CCAA) permits three. (This last limitation was already approved by all the state college presidents, despite the CCAA's broader interpretation.)

President McPhee was pleased with the report because he was worried that our sports ambitions were beyond our means. The fact that I had called every coach at each campus to testify before the two committees, causing them to have to answer specific questions on procedure by committee members, had not endeared me to the coaches. When the final report was out, the word that came back via the grapevine was, "Kennedy is anti-athletics."

At approximately the same time the faculty and students at each campus were being notified officially of the new athletic policy guidelines, I issued a final report to the faculty on new admission standards as submitted to the state college presidents for a meeting to be held at Chico State on May 10, 1961. For several years, starting probably when I was assistant to the president, I had been President McPhee's representative to a statewide committee on admission standards that reported to State Superintendent of Public Instruction Roy Simpson. This was a touchy assignment because President McPhee always wanted Cal Poly exempt from any statewide rule, particularly if it appeared to him to limit our ability to accept the kind of students he felt could best profit from a Cal Poly education. He believed that accepting any student who had graduated from high school was a hallmark of the Cal Poly democratic plan for giving every student a chance to try and either succeed or fail on his own — not depending upon any tests for admission or minimum high school GPA.

Of course this word, when transmitted around the state to school counselors and to high school and junior college faculty, resulted in their telling their best academic students not to go to Cal Poly because it had "no standards." What they told their not-so-good academic students was, "All is not lost, you can always go to Cal Poly, which accepts any high school graduate." I disagreed with McPhee's extreme position, and he knew it, but he also knew I would represent Cal Poly to our best interests.

I had told him many times that we could never improve our public relations image with other schools or even with industries or with businesses which hired our graduates so long as they thought the "raw products" we started with were the intellectual rejects of prior educational systems. He was afraid that if we became too restrictive it would work to the special

disadvantage of high school vocational agriculture students, who frequently turned out to be good students at Cal Poly even though they had poor grades in everything but their high school vo-ag courses.

Over a period of several years I had surveyed faculty at both campuses, using actual questionnaires, and learned that the majority of them, even in agriculture, felt we needed to raise our standards. They believed, as I did, that in the long run tougher admission requirements would not hurt enrollment. At meetings of the statewide admission standards committee after I became vice president, I voted several times for restrictions without voicing the usual request for an "except Cal Poly" clause. One State Department staff member, Dr. Dorothy Knoell, who knew and liked both Cal Poly and President McPhee, came to me after one session and asked, "Does President McPhee agree with your position that higher admission standards are OK for Poly?"

My answer was, "I don't believe he really does in his heart, but he knows that I am right in terms of what it means to Cal Poly's reputation in the long-term future." Then I added, "Don't worry about it, Dorothy. It's my job that's at stake, not yours. I'll either convince him or he'll fire me, but he won't hold it against you."

The biggest help I had in convincing the President was the continued existence of the two-year technical agriculture program, in which we could accept students who did not meet the regular college-level admission requirements. During the rest of McPhee's administration, and all of my administration, 1967-79, the technical agricultural program continued to exist at Cal Poly as a "door" through which some students who did not meet the normal degree-level admission standards could enter in order to take a two-year, skills-oriented program in agriculture. The idea that a student who proved himself or herself in such a program could transfer to a degree program became less and less feasible as the popularity of Cal Poly caused most programs to become oversubscribed by qualified applicants for admission. President McPhee was a pragmatist; he could adjust to the reality of changing times.

The big decision made in the early 1960s to join the other state colleges with admission standards that excluded high school students not in the top one-third of their graduating classes did exactly what I predicted to President McPhee would happen. "Make something easy to get, and many people will think it is second-rate. Make it hard to get, and more people will want it." By the late 1970s Cal Poly's entering degree freshmen had high

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school GPAs and SAT test scores that were the highest in the state, rivaling and sometimes exceeding those of students being accepted by Stanford University and UC Berkeley. Furthermore, the popularity of Cal Poly made it necessary to further increase admission standards for many of its oversubscribed programs. Trustees had to come back to an old expression, "except Cal Poly." In this case, the Cal Poly exception was that it was harder to get into than any of the other campuses.

While I was taking some risk in making decisions and then trying to convince the President after the fact, I had what I assumed was an ace in the hole. I had held a position as a full professor in the journalism department and according to Title 5, State Administrative Code, I had "retreat" rights to that position, should the president determine I no longer pleased him in an administrative post. In all the other state colleges at that time such retreat rights would be bolstered by the fact that any administrator who had come up through the ranks from the faculty and held a full professorship would have had tenure in the teaching position — not in his administrative position. At Cal Poly, being the exception to the rule, we did not have any form of tenure from its founding in 1901 to that moment in 1961.

During the time I was assistant to the president, I had heard from department heads and faculty about their dissatisfaction with their lack of security like that provided by tenure at the other state colleges. They might have been more vocal about this disadvantage except that some faculty realized there was one advantage: While McPhee was reluctant to give any form of tenure, he was also reluctant to fire a teacher. At other state colleges at the time, a faculty member had just three years to prove he or she had satisfied all the academic preparation requirements (such as an earned doctorate) and was fully acceptable to colleagues in the department whose tenured representatives of higher rank had the authority to vote on their promotions and tenure appointments. Our faculty knew that on other campuses many good teachers were never given tenure, which meant they were fired.

I had let McPhee know that lack of tenure was undermining an otherwise high level of faculty morale. We put a staff committee to work on a study of alternative tenure programs; I told the committee members I was convinced McPhee would never buy a traditional tenure program unless required to do so by the Legislature. McPhee had told me he believed he could win legislators over to his side if it were ever necessary, since they did not have tenure. Most of them, he believed, did not have much sympathy even for civil service, let alone tenure.

## LEARN BY DOING

The staff committee came up with the concept of four-year appointments renewable at the end of the third year; if not renewed, the candidate had a final year before he was separated. The proposal was more involved than I have described here, but it was accepted by the President some time in 1957, I believe. He sent me to Sacramento to sell the idea to Roger Monroe, personnel director of the State Department of Education. Roger wanted me to go back and convince Mr. McPhee to accept the traditional state college tenure system, because "it would be easier to administer." I insisted that he put the proposal on the agenda for a State Board of Education meeting, which he did. He said, "I'll recommend the proposal but you and McPhee will have to attend and defend the proposal, since I couldn't do it with any enthusiasm."

We did so, and the Board accepted the proposal, but requested we follow the same procedure as the other campuses in submitting for Board approval the names of those being given permanent appointments. As I recall, the first list consisted only of 21 department heads, whose four-year appointments would expire on September 1, 1962. The next year we went further down the list of the teaching faculty, and picked an additional 90 or so individuals whose appointments would expire September 1, 1963, unless renewed. To show Mr. McPhee's democratic leanings, he forced the issue and made provision for four-year appointments to non-rank and class personnel and support staff, including stenographers, janitors, et al. Of that group we included 50 with the Sept. 1, 1963 expiration date. We proceeded on this basis for several years, adding to the list and finally making provision even for administrators who had not come out of a teaching position by arranging for them to have appointments to specific instructional departments that would accept their expertise.

On March 21, 1961 the lead article in the *Staff Bulletin* announced, in President McPhee's name, the fact that we had sent to the State Board of Education documents that, if approved, would give four-year appointments to 498 persons (353 at San Luis Obispo and 145 at KV). President McPhee's statement read,

It is my purpose in recommending these appointments to provide tenure for four-year terms beginning June 30, 1961, for all employees at both campuses who will have completed three years of service on that date and who have been carefully screened and recommended by departments and division heads. In addition, I am recommending the extension of all

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existing four-year appointments regardless of expiration date in order that these employees may be transferred to the jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees with maximum personnel rights and benefits permitted under existing law.

We feared that soon after July 1, 1961, the Trustees would act to put Cal Poly under the same tenure program as all other campuses, and impose eligibility requirements some of our oldest, most experienced, most respected faculty might not be able to meet. The plan was to get all those for whom we wanted to have the benefit of traditional tenure placed in four-year appointments by the State Board of Education. Then we planned to have legislation passed that would "grandfather" all those individuals into whatever tenure program the Trustees insisted upon, without regard to such minimum requirements as an earned doctorate.

In the June 12, 1961, *Staff Bulletin* President McPhee announced that he had written to Gov. Edmund G. Brown on June 3 urging him to sign Senate Bill 921 (Sturgeon and Richards), which provided permanent tenure benefits for Cal Poly faculty and staff members holding four-year appointments. The President's message pointed out that both houses of the Legislature had approved the bill, which had the support of the State College Trustees and had no opposition. His message said,

"The bill will give to approximately 500 Cal Poly employees holding four-year appointments on June 30, 1961, the same personnel benefits and rights under the law that they would have had under the tenure law applicable to the other state colleges. This action is in conformance with the principles enunciated in the Donahoe Act."

He ended his letter to the governor, "I respectfully urge you to sign the bill."

Some faculty and staff who had not been given four-year appointments eventually raised a legal question about their rights. Since they had not held four-year appointments, they were not grandfathered into regular tenure under Senator Sturgeon's bill. The matter was reviewed by the attorney general, who issued an opinion that stated: "Those without prior four-year appointments are not covered by the law and must meet requirements for tenure consideration the same as new employees." I felt that our earlier concern as to what would happen without four-year appointments and without the law that grandfathered them into the regular systemwide tenure program was justified.

In trying to both implement and coordinate the development of the new

engineering instructional program at the Kellogg campus, we had asked Harold Hayes, dean of engineering at San Luis Obispo, to take on the project. One of the offices adjacent to the president's office was frequently used by faculty placed on special study assignments by the President. It was large and protected from casual drop-in visitors by the president's secretarial staff, who sat just outside the door. Its proximity to the president's normal path put the occupants into frequent contact with him. While Dean Hayes was on this special study assignment I saw him more frequently than I had when he was in his office down another corridor.

One day in mid-June, 1961, I hitched a ride after working hours with Harold so that I wouldn't have to call Mary and ask her to come get me. As he let me out of his car in front of our house he asked, "Are you going to sell your house or rent it?"

I said, "What are you talking about? I have no intention of doing either."

He tried to act as though he had accidentally let the cat out of the bag, which I knew he was too smart to do accidentally. He said, "Oh, I'm, sorry. I thought McPhee had already talked to you. I guess he will tomorrow."

In the house I told Mary what Hayes had just told me. Neither of us could figure out what was going on. Whether it was the next day or not I don't remember, but when President McPhee did call me into the office I was somewhat prepared.

He began talking about problems at the KV campus — lack of leadership, problems of communication, the perception that the branch campus always had to wait for orders from headquarters. He then added some additional dissatisfaction about San Luis Obispo campus operations. He couldn't communicate very well with Dean Fisher, who "doesn't talk my language." I knew what he meant. Clyde Fisher was a very smart mathematician whose very rational thought processes required facts that added up to a solution. He was not easily swayed by emotion or fear. If Clyde thought he was right about a issue, he stuck to his position until some facts proved he should alter his position. He never tried to persuade someone to change a position on the basis of anything except the most significant facts.

"I have given a lot of thought to how to solve a couple of problems, and unless you have some serious reservations I want you to do two things," McPhee said.

"One, I want you to move your headquarters to the Kellogg campus but retain your college-wide responsibilities for operations at San Luis Obispo, Kellogg, and Voorhis.

"And, two, I want you to find a way to move Fisher out of the dean of the college position without hurting his feelings or causing him any loss of money or respect by his colleagues."

I replied, "You may not realize it, Mr. McPhee, but Clyde Fisher is just as dissatisfied with his inability to communicate with you as you are with him. He has already asked me if there wasn't some way he could resign from the position without upsetting you. I'll have no problem with Clyde, if you are willing to put him in a new dean position as head of a division of sciences and mathematics. Roy Anderson and I have talked with Fisher about the desirability of splitting the arts and sciences division into two more compatible parts: (1) applied and liberal arts, and (2) science and mathematics. Roy is still only an acting dean. Make him a full dean and put Fisher in a new dean position heading up a new division. I'll write up the details as a proposal for your approval. Any objection?"

His response was immediate. "Great idea. That will accomplish everything — except who are you going to recommend to replace Fisher as dean of the college?"

I knew that he had acquired considerable confidence in Dale Andrews, our master teacher in the agricultural education department, who had recently been promoted to coordinator of educational services because of his communication ability and his drive in getting the instructional materials production program off the ground. Watching McPhee closely for his immediate reaction I said, "What would you think of a recommendation naming Dale Andrews to the job?"

He looked at me like I had been reading his mind, and said, "That's another great idea. Sometimes your ideas are not too bad, Kennedy." Then he got serious and added, "But you haven't reacted to my first suggestion about your moving to the Kellogg campus. What is your answer going to be on that proposal?"

"I've got a wife and four kids who I am going to let voice their opinions on whether we accept that opportunity. I need to consult with them before I say anything more, but I'll get back to you tomorrow or the next day with my answer. Is that soon enough?"

"Of course," he said. "Just use your most persuasive skill and convince Mary and the kids that it will open new horizons for them all." I wondered how persuasive I could be with those four kids. Bob Jr. would be no problem since he was already a student at Cal Poly, and he could live in a dorm. Maridel was just getting ready to graduate from high school and already



*The Kennedy family in 1961. Bob Jr. and Maridel prepare to move into Cal Poly dorms as Bob, Mary, Steve, and Susan prepare to move south to Claremont, where REK will headquarter at the Kellogg campus.*

had applied for admission to the Cal Poly home economics program. She would also be able to live in a campus dorm. Steve was just entering high school and Susan was just entering junior high. They might object to leaving their school chums with whom they had been pals since kindergarten. I figured they would listen to reason, if Mary was agreeable.

We had talked that first night after I heard about the possible move, considering it might be the answer to a problem that had been plaguing me since I began seriously considering that a college presidency was a possibility for me. Since McPhee had already told me a number of times that I didn't need a doctor's degree, he obviously would not have been willing to give me a leave of absence to attend a university that would take me away from my job in San Luis Obispo. Now he was offering me an opportunity I needed to follow up on immediately.

The next day I called the Claremont Graduate School, just a few miles from the Kellogg campus in Pomona, and talked to the dean of graduate programs and learned that with my master's degree from Stanford University and my experience in teaching and administration since 1940 he saw only one problem: "Our rules say we won't accept anyone for a Ph.D. program if they are past 45 years of age. How old are you?"

I replied, "I am now 45 years old."

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He said, "Send me your application and your letters of recommendation before your next birthday; when is it?"

I answered, "October 31—Halloween. I can have all my applications and letters of recommendation in within a month or so, which would make it sometime in August. I can start taking classes in September. Will that be satisfactory?"

He responded that it would be fine and said he would like to meet me after I arrived at the Kellogg campus.

When President McPhee had offered me the position of assistant to the president in 1953, I had been presumptuous enough to write him a letter with some conditions based upon my observations of the failure of some others who had attempted to fill that post. He had taken that letter as a contract that he did not violate. I talked to Mary and the kids; they all accepted the 1961 development good-naturedly if not enthusiastically.

On the basis of my previous experience with a letter of conditions, I decided an even more extensive and specific contract was needed so that my involvement in a doctoral program could not be jeopardized by a change of mind on McPhee's part. The letter I wrote made my graduate program proposal a commitment on the President's part as well as on mine. Also included was a provision for the state to pay moving expenses both ways, assuming I would eventually want to return to the San Luis Obispo campus. In the meantime Harold Wilson, executive dean, told me McPhee asked him to make the transfer too, taking over supervision of the extensive KV building program. We talked and agreed he should write a similar letter with conditions. Wilson wrote a letter with a provision that he be permitted to return to a similar position at the San Luis Obispo campus prior to McPhee's retirement. When George Clucas, dean of finance and development, took the budget officer position at the Chancellor's office in 1962, McPhee was happy to have Wilson return to San Luis Obispo as executive dean with almost the same responsibilities he had before going to Kellogg in 1961.

President McPhee not only accepted my letter as a contract, he responded in writing, agreeing to every condition and committing himself to supporting my proposed graduate program. One of the conditions that he might have balked at seemed to please him. I insisted that joint meetings of the five people on each campus responsible for total operations, called Cabinet meetings, be held on regularly scheduled dates in Santa Barbara, as near as I could come to a half-way spot where we could rent a hotel conference room for luncheon meetings. It meant that the five people from the



*President McPhee agreed to hold Cabinet meetings on a regular schedule in Santa Barbara. Half the Cabinet would drive north, half would drive south.*

Kellogg campus would have to drive about 150 miles, partially through L.A. traffic, while the San Luis Obispo car could make the 100-mile trip in less than two hours.

During the nearly three and a half years I was at the Kellogg campus, from July, 1961, through October, 1964, McPhee kept the contract quite carefully; only occasionally did he violate the spirit of the agreement. He knew I had only Saturdays and Sundays to read, study, and write reports for the doctoral program. Almost invariably on Saturday morning I would get a phone call at my home in Claremont; he would talk at length about some problem that was bothering him. He usually asked for my reaction in writing, and as soon as possible, preferably "next Monday." This was before the day of the fax machine, so my replies would be prepared and dictated over the phone to Grace Arvidson in the president's office in San Luis Obispo.

My five required letters of recommendation to the Claremont Graduate School were sent between August 9 and 17, 1961, by Dr. Roy E. Simpson, state superintendent of public schools; Dr. J. Burton Vasche, president of Stanislaus State College and formerly chief, division state colleges and teacher education; Dr. W. H. Cowley, professor of higher education, Stanford University; Dr. Malcolm Love, president of San Diego State College; and Julian A. McPhee, president of Cal Poly. Each sent me copies of his recommendation, which my secretary, Mary Johnson, opened, read, and placed on my desk. Attached to the one from McPhee was a little note: "Forget graduate school. With these letters, you could get a better job any place. M.J."

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We rented our home in San Luis Obispo to a faculty couple with whom we are still best of friends. We got advice from faculty members and deans at the Kellogg campus about the best place to live in the Pomona Valley, where the schools were good and the commuting was easy. With that information in hand, we went to a Claremont Realtor who found us a home to buy that was owned by a Pomona College professor who was moving into a better home, made available to him by the Claremont Colleges. We enjoyed the area, the neighbors, and the opportunity not only for me to complete a Ph.D. program within four years, but for Mary to attend some very stimulating programs offered the community by the Claremont Colleges. Not only did she get to attend these lectures, but she had the privilege of reading stacks of books on educational administration and writing short résumés for her spouse, who needed that extra help.

During the fall and spring semesters I took classes offered only in the evenings or after 4 P.M. In the summer semesters I took classes in the mornings while taking half-day vacations. I completed all the coursework between September 1961 and August 1964. I completed my doctoral dissertation after we returned to San Luis Obispo. The degree was conferred in June, 1966 — just in time to achieve the purpose for which it was intended.

While Glenn Dumke was vice chancellor of the system, he called me and asked if I would be willing to let him present my name to the Trustees for possible consideration for appointment to a state college presidency. I said yes but added, "I prefer to be considered as a replacement for McPhee when that time comes."

LESSON FOURTEEN *The more difficult it is to achieve some goal the more people are likely to think it is exceptional and therefore more valuable; make it easy and they may turn away.*

## HOW TO LIVE IN THE DOGHOUSE

THE UNEASY TIMES OF THE EARLY 1960S were not confined to the three campuses of Cal Poly. Nor were they confined to the nation's other college and university campuses, although some conservatives talked as though student unrest was a new phenomenon. The "Silent Generation" of the 1950s had begun to speak out in the 1960s, and college students had things to say about our international involvements.

Our youth were not the only ones who were worried. President Eisenhower, in his Farewell Address on January, 1, 1961, warned of a new danger to the nation's well-being, the rise of the "military-industrial complex." In his Inaugural Address that same month, the new, young U.S. president, John F. Kennedy, challenged his listeners to "Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country." One of President Kennedy's earliest and most lasting accomplishments was the establishment of the Peace Corps. It gave young Americans an opportunity to "act, not just talk" about the things they were most interested in: peace and helping the suffering poor of the world. Within six months after the Peace Corps was funded by Congress some 500 Peace Corps volunteers were overseas.

But the new president's ambitions for peace seemed ambiguous. Within months he had involved the nation in the Cuban Bay of Pigs disaster; at first denying any U.S. government involvement, he eventually accepted "sole responsibility." He then altered U.S. policy of limiting military aid to South Vietnam to money, arms, and advisors by sending direct support: U.S. Army helicopter units plus 18,000 men.

On the domestic front, the president's brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, sent U.S. marshals to restore order in Alabama when "freedom riders," determined to integrate bus terminals in the southern states, were injured by attacking mobs.

In California the new Democratic Gov. Edmund "Pat" Brown began his first term with proposed legislation almost as liberal as that on President Kennedy's agenda. Governor Brown declared the improvement of education "the No. 1 goal of my administration." But one of his earliest actions

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made it necessary for students at all state colleges, including Cal Poly, to pay for the privilege of parking on campus. Poly students demonstrated against this action when the governor spoke on the steps of the San Luis Obispo courthouse. Student protesters declared they were being forced to buy "hunting licenses not parking permits."

On the San Luis Obispo campus serious national and international unrest was not as apparent as the uneasiness generated by the parking problems and President McPhee's administrative assignment shifts.

A new instructional division of science and mathematics had been carved out of the old arts and sciences division and placed under the supervision of Dean Clyde Fisher, an action that was welcomed by most of the faculty in the chemistry, physics, biology, mathematics, and military science departments. What was left of the old division, now called "applied arts," remained under Roy Anderson, who could now drop the "acting" from his dean title, and continue receiving help from Assistant Dean William Armentrout. Included in this division were seven departments offering majors: business administration, English, home economics, physical education, printing management, technical arts, and technical journalism. The music department was included but only as a service department, without a major.

Nothing much had changed in either the divisions of engineering or agriculture. Dean Hayes had brought in Leon Osteyee to replace C.E. Knott, who retired in 1959, as assistant dean of engineering. Warren Smith, former assistant to the longtime dean of agriculture, Vard Shephard, had become dean and had brought in J. Cordner Gibson as his assistant.

President McPhee had approved the appointment of Dr. Dale Andrews as dean of the college in charge of San Luis Obispo campus operations. Since Andrews would report to me, even though I would be headquartered 240 miles south, I met with him before I left for my new office on the Kellogg campus in the summer of 1961.

"Since you are being assigned my former office, I suggest you consider accepting as your secretary Mary Johnson, my secretary for the last 12 years," I said. "She knows how this place operates and particularly how the President and the vice president tend to operate."

Dale took my advice and in later years thanked me for suggesting that Mary Johnson would help him succeed, which she did.

"Even though you are supposed to take orders from me and not the President, I also have a suggestion on that score," I told him. "When he walks

into your office, which is very handy to yours, anticipate that on occasion he will give you an order. Do not ask him, "Have you cleared that with Bob Kennedy?" Just call me and discuss it with me. We can together decide whether it is something we should try to change his mind about.

The first time that procedure didn't work was when the President became angry with repeated editorials in the college newspaper blaming him as well as the governor for the lack of parking space and the necessity for students to buy parking permits — which they continued to call "hunting licenses." He walked into Dale's office and told him to tell the college newspaper editor that if he published one more editorial critical of the president's and the governor's position on "pay parking" he, the dean of the college, would stop the use of the college printing plant to print the paper. McPhee was so overheated about the matter that Dr. Andrews acted too quickly.

When I got the phone call and the message that the threat had already been delivered to the editor, my reaction was, "You and McPhee will now wish that you had ignored the parking editorials, because the next few will be on the subject of freedom of the press and those will get a much more sympathetic reading by the faculty and the public, including maybe even the wire services."

My prediction was correct. It took some time before I could convince President McPhee that he should back off and let the student editors write whatever they wanted, letting journalism faculty advisers to the paper handle the matter by insisting only that articles and editorials be judged on whether they met professional, non-libelous standards.

President McPhee was already indicating to others that I was not living up to his expectations that I would be a "strong, authoritarian leader." He had used those words as criticism on more than one occasion in front of both Harold Wilson, executive dean, and George Clucas, dean of finance and development. Both men had told me of the remarks and said, "We think you are tough enough, but he doesn't." It was sometime in early 1962, after I moved south, that George Clucas was given an opportunity to go south also, to accept a new job as the budget planning and operations officer of the state college system with an office in Los Angeles (later, Long Beach). George had come to Cal Poly in 1956 from a position as senior budget analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office, in the State Capitol, Sacramento. McPhee, following a long-established personal policy, had made a job offer to George when he discovered that George knew how to make the system work for Cal Poly.

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Just a day before he was scheduled to leave for his new job, George walked into the office on the San Luis Obispo campus that I used when I was attending meetings there.

He said, "I just improved your reputation with the boss."

I asked, "How did you do that, George?"

He answered, "I said the main reason I was leaving Cal Poly was because you worked me too hard and that you are a real tough SOB."

I looked at him to see if he was serious. He was, and I believe he actually told McPhee what he told me. I said, "You're a real friend, George; thanks a million." And I meant it.

Where George Clucas was going was in a more unsettled condition even than Cal Poly. Dr. Buell G. Gallagher, new chancellor of the state college system and a recent arrival from New York State, was not unacquainted with California politics. He was an ordained Congregational minister, a former faculty member at the Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, and a nominee in 1948 for a Congressional seat from California's 7th district. Selected by the Trustees in April, 1961, his job became official on July 1, 1961, when the Enabling Act became effective. Some initial organizational actions had taken place under the guidance of the temporary chief executive officer, Donald Leiffer, who was on leave of absence from San Diego State, but Gallagher was starting with an almost blank slate.

A little over six months later, the Trustees scheduled a meeting on the San Luis Obispo campus at the invitation of President McPhee. As part of that invitation, Chancellor Gallagher was asked to give a convocation speech to Cal Poly students, faculty and staff on January 19. He did, and it was complimentary to President McPhee, although Gallagher slipped in a few comments, which may have gone over the heads of many in the audience, about the "error of provincial attitudes" especially in a time of such global concerns. I interpreted Gallagher's references to "provincialism" to include Cal Poly's attempt to be different by not accepting long-held standards for educational excellence, meaning, of course, doctoral degrees for faculty, etc.

Dr. Glenn Dumke, as one of the key members of the Master Plan Survey Team that had conceived the new system, had been appointed by the Trustees to the position of vice chancellor in charge of academic affairs. One of his early assignments from the Trustees was to develop an inaugural ceremony for Gallagher that would be, among other things, a colorful media event that would awaken the public to the importance of this new state college system. Dr. Dumke, recognizing that the event must come off suc-

cessfully if it was to have positive public relations value, knew I had been responsible for Cal Poly's public relations programs since 1940. He called me at my Kellogg campus office and asked that I come into his Los Angeles office to discuss a matter that he described only as "politically important" to the system.

Sensing that I ought to have a witness to whatever was going to be said, I asked, "May I bring Tom McGrath, our dean of students, who is an expert on the psychology involved in politics and public relations?" He knew Tom, who had been for a short time assistant to the president at the Kellogg campus before becoming dean of students. He responded, "Of course, bring Tom."

What Dumke wanted me to do was take charge of the details of planning an inaugural ceremony. He, Gallagher, and a Trustee committee already had decided the event would be held in Pershing Square, across from the Los Angeles Biltmore Hotel, which would function as headquarters for the event. The Biltmore was capable of housing the hundreds of academic delegates who would come from every college, university, and academic association in the nation, and perhaps from foreign countries too, according to Dumke's hopes.

I said, "Dr. Dumke if you want 100 percent cooperation and involvement of me and other members of our faculty and staff, you need to invite President McPhee to be somehow responsible so that he will then assign those of us you want on the job. I cannot just volunteer for this job. Furthermore, because of my graduate program involvement, it would be best if Tom McGrath was your liaison man; I'll help him, but I need to stay in the background." I could see that Tom was willing, but both of us had expressed concern when we learned that the activity was to be planned for Pershing Square, the Los Angeles hangout for soapbox political hotheads, homeless vagrants, and sexual deviates. We thought it would be safer on any of our college campuses, but Dumke said it was "impossible to show that favoritism."

On February 2, 1962, it was publicly announced that President McPhee had been named Inaugural Chief Marshal for the Gallagher inaugural to be held in the Los Angeles Philharmonic Auditorium on Monday, April 2. The announcement listed eight Kellogg campus staff members who would be handling arrangements with Tom McGrath as coordinator. No mention of Kennedy, thank you.

In the middle of the January 19 Trustees' meeting on the San Luis Obispo campus, Chancellor Gallagher motioned for me to follow him. He

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led me out onto a balcony just off the staff dining room where the Trustees were meeting. Alone outside, leaning on the railing, the Chancellor said to me, "Bob, the Trustees are about to name two men to presidencies of two of our newest campuses. You are not one of those being named, and I wanted you to know that in advance and not be disappointed."

"I didn't know that I was being seriously considered, and I certainly am not disappointed."

"Glenn and I and the Trustee selection committee want to keep your name available as a candidate to succeed President McPhee. Is that OK?"

"That's my preference, and I'm glad to know you will consider me as a candidate," I responded. "Does McPhee know that?" I asked.

"No, and we are not going to tell him, because he has already made remarks to Glenn that he does not consider you a strong enough, authoritarian leader to follow in his footsteps."

President McPhee told me the day after the joint meeting of the Trustees and the presidents on January 18-19, "Gallagher's days are numbered." He said, "Chairman Heilbron had to work hard at an executive committee meeting to keep some of the Trustees from demanding Gallagher's resignation." McPhee said some of the Trustees consider Gallagher too liberal. On January 20, it was announced that Gallagher had resigned and was returning to New York City College, from which he had been on leave of absence. I now wonder if some of the Trustees had discovered that Gallagher was a director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; some could have considered NAACP civil rights activities very liberal. His leadership role in the NAACP was a fact that may have been known by all the Trustees at the time he was appointed, but it was not widely known by others.

On April 10, 1962, it was announced that the Trustees had promoted Dr. Glenn Dumke to the position of Chancellor. Within a month, Dumke announced the revival of an organization that would again formalize the process by which the state college presidents would make recommendations on system-wide policy through him to the Trustees. He called the group the Chancellor's Council of State College Presidents. The group was to have an official presence at Trustee meetings. Faculty and students also would eventually be a part of that communications network. There had been a similar operation of the presidents in the old days, when there were just seven presidents making recommendations to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. At that time a legislatively established committee issued a report (the Strayer Report) that concluded in part that the Council of Presi-

dents had become "too powerful." Chancellor Dumke hoped to prevent that from happening by specifying that the members of the Council would not vote on issues, but would "develop a consensus" to be relayed through the Chancellor to the Trustees.

When George Clucas resigned to join the Chancellor's staff, it was necessary to assign someone else to direct the activities of the college-wide staff located at the San Luis Obispo campus. The solution involved Harold Wilson's returning to the San Luis Obispo campus, giving up his involvement with the building program at each campus. Keeping his executive dean title, he was now assigned to supervise all college-wide operations in business management, personnel relations, curriculum evaluation, accreditation, catalog preparation, relations with schools, publications production, and institutional research.

Dean Wilson would have one or more staff persons in each area to coordinate activities or prepare data necessary for decision-making. Also being transferred back to San Luis Obispo was James Landreth, assistant to Dean McCorkle, dean of the college at the Kellogg campus. Landreth would assume a new role as analyst of personnel and business affairs. Dr. Hugh LaBounty, Kellogg social science department head and teacher training coordinator, was promoted to executive dean in charge of the building program at both campuses, working directly under the vice president. According to the chart, Wilson would also work directly under the vice president. My advice to him had been the same as to Dale Andrews: "When the President decides he wants you to do something, don't indicate it is necessary to clear with me before you take action. If you have any doubts about the desirability of the proposed action, call me and we'll decide together whether we need to suggest some alternative course of action."

About the same time that Clucas resigned to join the Chancellor's staff, the Kellogg campus business manager, J. Claude Scheuerman, resigned to become fiscal specialist for the California Coordinating Council for Higher Education. This was the council developed by the Master Plan to provide coordination (and eventual control) over not only the three public segments of the Master Plan (community colleges, state colleges, and University of California) but also over the private colleges, by voluntary involvement. To replace Scheuerman, Cecil Jones, head of the San Luis Obispo campus accounting office, was promoted and transferred to the Kellogg campus.

At the outset of my appointment as vice president in 1959 President McPhee had said he wanted to be free of detail so he could concentrate on

"long-range planning." He knew that any long-range academic and curriculum planning was going to have to be processed for approval by faculty at both campuses. We did not have an academic senate. The "College Council" set up in the 1950s as a result of a report from the management division of the Department of Finance (the Chandler Report) had limited authority and was advisory only. It was that report that caused President McPhee to offer in 1951 the dean of students position to its author, Everett Chandler.

Two Long Range Educational Planning Committees composed of faculty and administrative personnel, one at each campus, were named by the President soon after the Master Plan was passed by the Legislature and a new Board of Trustees formed. Our early experience in successfully saving the Enabling Act made those who had been involved (McPhee, Wilson, and Kennedy) certain that we were going to have to educate the Trustees about our special role in higher education. We knew we could not be successful with the Trustees if there was widespread faculty opposition to any educational philosophy statement.

The President named me to chair both LREP committees since our objective was to have offerings at both campuses not necessarily identical but sufficiently coordinated that any duplication could be justified on the basis of statewide need. It was my job to convince the faculty representatives on each committee that our "polytechnic" role required an emphasis on certain occupationally-centered programs such as agriculture, engineering, business, architecture, home economics, and related and supporting fields. The Cabinet agreed that we needed to get on an early Trustees' agenda a report that would convince them that our "Enabling Act" emphasis mandate was as legitimate in the 1960s as it was in 1901.

By the end of April, 1963, reports of both committees had been completed and circulated to administrators and department heads, and had received input from the Faculty/Staff Councils. We then scheduled for the latter part of May, 1963, a presentation of the LREP reports to planning conferences at both campuses involving participation of faculty and executive council, and Cabinet members. The vice president was the principal presenter of information at the conferences at both campus meetings. Our objective was to get a consensus so that a progress report on the college's master curricular plan could be submitted to the Chancellor's office by a June 1 deadline.

Because some of the input we received was critical of the concept of "emphasis," primarily from those who felt the concept de-emphasized the

liberal arts, we felt we needed to get some support from the Chancellor before anything went to the Trustees.

On May 7 we were able to present with our LREP report a letter signed by Chancellor Dumke which basically supported Cal Poly's mandated responsibility for emphasizing certain specified occupational-centered programs. The letter was a compromise worked out by Ray Rydell, vice chancellor for academic affairs, and myself. President McPhee and I met with Dr. Dumke and Dr. Rydell in their Los Angeles office in early May. After considerable discussion, with some debating of the issues, Dr. Dumke turned to Rydell and me and said, "President McPhee and I are going to lunch. You two stay here and prepare a letter which I can sign that will achieve what President McPhee wants. I think Ray knows approximately how far I'm willing to go with the emphasis concept."

Ray Rydell, a very soft-spoken, low-key academic specialist, was also politically astute, having been for some years mayor of the city of Avalon, Catalina Island, where he lived. For approximately an hour and a half the two of us composed various versions; finally merging several into one final draft that we had typed, ready for the Chancellor's signature. When Dumke returned, he read it through once, signed it, and handed it to McPhee. The letter was used as part of the LREP report and circulated to our faculty at both campuses.

The publication presented to the Trustees in December, 1963, quoted the Chancellor's letter. Many of the faculty who had objected to the use of the word "emphasis" were disappointed that the Chancellor supported the concept. They were sure that it would be contrary to Dumke's educational philosophy. They believed he would reject the idea in favor of having Cal Poly "remodeled" into a standard state college. Dumke was very well aware of the support Cal Poly had from the Legislature and also from a growing number of the Trustees, who liked what they read in the publication we titled, "Emphasis for Tomorrow." With that publication as the foundation, President McPhee made a 20-minute presentation at the Trustees' December 5 meeting under the heading, "Cal Poly's Ten-Year Educational Master Plan." The report was accepted. The President was happy and so was I.

Chancellor Dumke must have gotten flack that prompted him to want to clarify his position on "emphasis" without using the word. In an October, 1963, Chancellor's newsletter, circulated to all campuses of the system, he wrote that he "wanted to settle" the argument between liberal arts on the one hand and specialized education for occupations on the other hand. "I support both," he wrote, "and want to exorcise this ghost once and for

all that one is better than the other." But the result of our efforts changed the words the Trustees used to describe the system. In 1961 the official definition was a "system of liberal arts colleges." By 1963 it was no longer true. Trustees called them "comprehensive" institutions. Faculty at most campuses agreed with Dumke's words that there should be support for both liberal arts and specialized occupational education.

At Cal Poly, "specialized occupational education" continued to be emphasized by student demand, if nothing else. In our American society, because of the influence of democratic processes, our government and our private business operations are driven to prioritize programs for the purpose of allocating resources. No matter what words one uses, there are some who believe that to emphasize one program is to discriminate against another. Perception is sometimes more important to those involved than reality.

As part of the Trustees' consideration and approval of Cal Poly future planning, the San Luis Obispo campus master plan for future construction was approved in late May, 1963. The plans, developed by an assigned master plan architectural firm, Falk & Booth, were based on a Trustee master plan maximum enrollment of 12,000 full-time-equivalent students. The year following that approval, San Luis Obispo enrollment reached 6,904, of which 5,211 were men and 1,693 were women.

At the Kellogg campus enrollment had not reached 5,000. The Chancellor's staff originally set a projected enrollment target of 20,000. When McPhee discovered that fact, he ordered me to negotiate the figure downward till it was less than the San Luis Obispo campus figure. Since the San Luis Obispo figure was now set at 12,000 FTE, I succeeded in getting the Chancellor's staff to reduce their official target for Kellogg to 10,000 FTE, although we all knew that the Pomona campus had the potential of growing larger than San Luis Obispo.

The Kellogg campus didn't have the central California coastal weather enjoyed by San Luis Obispo. In fact, by the 1960s smog often obscured snow-covered Mt. Baldy and the rest of the Coastal Range that formed the Pomona Valley. What we did have at the Kellogg campus was an 800-plus-acre Arabian horse ranch with beautiful citrus orchards surrounding residence halls and classrooms. With the San Bernardino Freeway skirting one side of the campus, it had great visibility on a daily basis to thousands of travelers. It was becoming well known, even internationally.

Angier Biddle Duke, chief of protocol for the White House and the U.S. Department of State in the 1960s, contacted my Kellogg office one day in the fall of 1963. He said, "We are planning a trip to the United States for the



*In October, 1962, Cal Poly Pomona presented an Arabian horse show to President Ibrahim Abboud of Sudan. Except for the Kennedys and the Landreths, all other people in the photo are State Department personnel or security agents.*

King and Queen of Afghanistan. They have indicated a desire to visit Disneyland and also visit your campus to see your famous Arabian horses," he said. I told Duke we would put on a special Arabian horse show for their royal highnesses that would be similar to the show we put on 24 Sundays a year as a condition of W.K. Kellogg's gift of the ranch to Cal Poly in 1949. We set the visit up for September 17, which was not a Sunday.

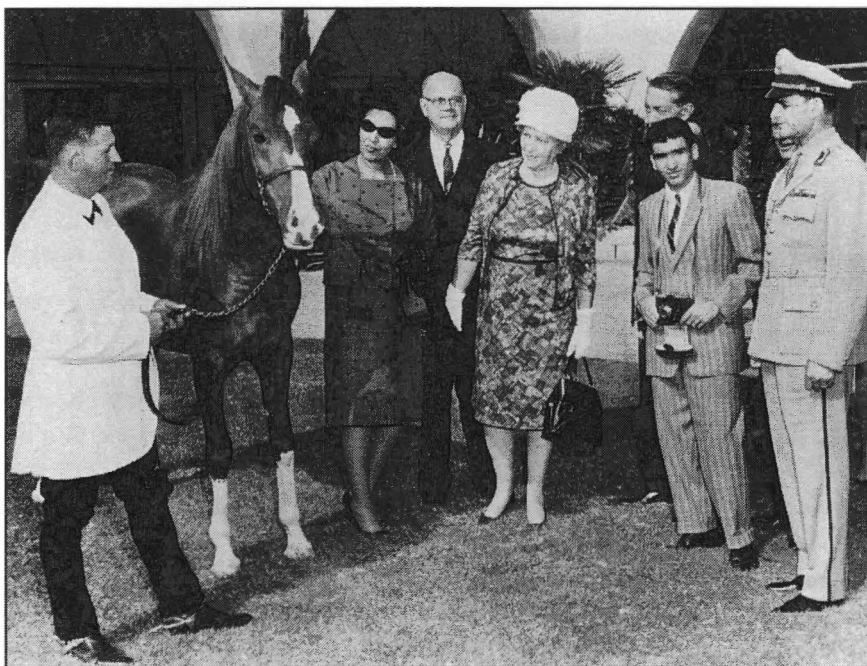
Anticipating a great deal of media coverage, I called President McPhee and suggested that he and Mrs. McPhee arrange to be on the Kellogg campus that day so they could officially host the King and Queen of Afghanistan. They and the royal party came as planned. We presented a horse show and gave a reception the guest list for which had been screened and approved by Duke. What didn't work out as originally planned was the King's presence. In some activity at Disneyland the previous day, he had strained his back and stayed in his Los Angeles hotel room while Queen Homaira led a

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party of some 30 U.S. and Afghan officials to all the activities, with TV and press photographers covering every photo opportunity.

When I said "led" it was intentional. Protocol Chief Duke informed us all, "No one is to walk in front of her, although alongside of her may be acceptable to the Queen. If the King were here, no one, not even the Queen, could walk closer than several steps behind him." At the end of the day, Duke told me that it was the best day of the tour, because the Queen obviously enjoyed being the center of attention. "She doesn't like to have to walk behind the King," he said.

President John F. Kennedy's third year in office was distinguished not only by lavish entertainment of important foreign visitors but by major accomplishments in the field of foreign affairs. He concluded a first formal agreement on fundamental issues between the United States and the Soviet Union; the termination of atom bomb tests being most significant. There was also proposed a "hot line" between the desks of the two leaders, a permanent and reliable medium of communication to avoid inadvertent disaster. President Kennedy was concerned with the huge demonstrations



*Queen Homaira of Afghanistan admires one of the Kellogg Arabians on a State Department-sponsored visit on September 17, 1963. The King was ill.*

in Washington, D.C., and reports of similar outbreaks of unrest in every major city with a sizeable black population. The president made it clear that an effective civil rights bill was high on his list of priorities.

Then came the shocking proof that a U.S. president can never have foolproof security protection. On a sunny street in Dallas, during a campaign motorcade — one of those pre-election rites that distinguish American politics — President Kennedy was struck down by an assassin's bullet, and died soon thereafter. Even the quiet competence with which Vice President Johnson fulfilled his ultimate role in that office could not quell the depression that pervaded the American people. The bullet struck on November 22 and Johnson was sworn in that same day aboard the President's plane, with Lady Bird Johnson and Jacqueline Kennedy looking on. Kennedy was buried on November 25 at Arlington National Cemetery following a formal processional ceremony attended by leaders from 92 countries and witnessed on international television by millions worldwide.

At the Kellogg campus student leaders asked me to speak at an outdoor memorial service honoring the deceased president. The remarks I prepared carefully and delivered at a gathering of thousands of students were quoted widely by southern California media, probably because of the coincidence of my name being almost identical to the name of the assassinated president's brother, Robert F. Kennedy. (My "E" initial was often dropped or even sometimes converted to his "F" by careless reporters.) Unfortunately, a similar memorial service at the San Luis Obispo campus received little attention by any but local media. A Chancellor's newsletter that should have mentioned the similar services held on all the state college campuses gave specific coverage only to my remarks at the Kellogg campus.

Just six weeks earlier, on October 10, Linus Pauling, already the recipient of a Nobel Prize in chemistry, was awarded the 1962 Nobel Peace Prize — after a year's delay because of his antiwar activities. He had been a vigorous proponent of a test-ban treaty. About four months after he received this second Nobel Prize, Pauling made his first major public appearance on a college campus. He had accepted an invitation from the Kellogg campus students, who asked me to introduce him at the assembly, which I did. The local news item, including my involvement, was picked up by the wire services, and the publicity upset some state legislators. They contacted President McPhee with their criticism. He called me and was critical at first, but accepted my explanation that a two-time Nobel Prize-winner should be able to express even controversial ideas.

## HOW TO LIVE IN THE DOGHOUSE

The first official word sent from a team of four Cal Poly faculty members on an educational mission in Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia (later named Zambia), was circulated on the San Luis Obispo campus as a 1963 Christmas message. Assigned to the College of Further Education as part of a two-year project funded by the United States Agency for International Development, the staff members (Robert Mott, Phil Bromley, George Furimsky, and Velma Bradfield) were pioneers in Cal Poly's overseas programs. Eventually Cal Poly was involved in many such efforts at international development because AID officials in Washington felt our "practical" approach would be a welcome contrast to the rather "academic" approach made by most other colleges they had called upon for help.

In the spring of 1964 the Kellogg campus Faculty Council made a recommendation to have faculty participating in annual commencement exercises wear caps and gowns in an academic processional similar to that at all other four-year college graduation exercises. When the President got the recommendation, which both Dean McCorkle and I endorsed, he responded, "I agree more faculty should attend commencements but it has been a tradition of 22 years not to have an academic processional for faculty. It was not an omission, but a deliberate policy decision. Request denied."

A month later the President issued a full-page statement to all faculty at both campuses objecting to the growing practice of deans' stating that a "doctor's degree is the minimum requirement for tenure and promotion to full professor." The statement ended with these words, "For many years I have fought for the Cal Poly program on the basis that our success or failure will depend upon how successful our graduates are, not upon how many people we have on our staff with earned doctorates or whether or not our faculty are called professors, or whether or not we have an academic processional at commencement. It is the education and preparation of our undergraduate students that is of prime concern. I want it clearly understood by all those involved that I feel just as strongly about this matter today as I ever have and that as long as I am president of the college I will do everything in my power to continue the Cal Poly program based on these principles."

This statement should have been a warning to me that "our agreement" that I could pursue a doctoral degree while working was likely to be considered null and void by him at any time. I didn't take it personally until President McPhee and Harold Wilson arrived at the Kellogg campus some weeks later. We were all scheduled to attend a meeting in Los Angeles, taking sev-

#### LEARN BY DOING

eral other staff members with us. Wilson came up to me and said, "I'll drive one car, and you should come with me." I said, "I prefer to drive one car and take McPhee so we can talk." He said, "No, Bob, he doesn't want to talk to you, and I need to tell you something outside earshot of anyone else."

What Wilson had to tell me was what the President had told him as they drove from San Luis Obispo to Pomona. He had told Wilson, "Kennedy is being influenced by all those liberal arts types at the Claremont Colleges. I've got to get him out of there. I'm going to order him back to San Luis Obispo immediately. If he refuses to accept reassignment because of his graduate program, I'm going to fire him."

I was shocked but I told Wilson that I appreciated his candor in telling me exactly what my current status was with the boss. I told Harold, "When he orders me back to San Luis Obispo, I will accept gladly. I have already finished all the necessary coursework. I can write my dissertation any place." Then I added a question, "Why, Harold, is he so upset that he would threaten to fire me?" Harold's answer was simply, "I don't know. He doesn't think you communicate with him as well as you used to. That's about it."

The 240 miles between campuses had prevented the day-to-day contact in which communication was face to face, not by memo or over the phone. Naturally, communication between us since 1961 had not been as effective nor as instantaneous. I welcomed the opportunity to return to San Luis Obispo, where I thought we could resume that relationship.

LESSON FIFTEEN *Freedom for the media to criticize administrative decisions may be hard for some executives to swallow, but any attempt to stifle that freedom will choke off one of the most effective ways for administrators to hear public opinion.*

IN THE DOGHOUSE STILL

WHEN AN OFFICIAL government version of "bad news" is issued, invariably it will have a spin on it so that a minimum of damage will be suffered by the administration. Executive Dean Wilson had already given me the maximum bad news without any spin on it: I might get fired if my answer was not what the president wanted to hear.

I wondered when and how the President was going to break the news to me: return to the San Luis Obispo campus — or else. I didn't have to wait long. As soon as the meeting in Los Angeles was over, McPhee announced to the group that he and Wilson were driving back to San Luis Obispo that night. He turned to me and said, "I want to talk to you alone for a few minutes."

He talked. I listened. What he said could be summarized about as follows: "Now that we have successfully completed the Long Range Educational Plan for the Kellogg campus, got it approved by the Trustees, published the 'Emphasis for Tomorrow' report and got Chancellor Dumke's blessing on it, and will shortly have the Kellogg campus facility master plan ready for Trustee approval, and have the Kellogg administration and faculty working together, there is really no further need for you to have your headquarters on the southern campus. I would like to have you return to the San Luis Obispo campus just as soon as you can. Will coming back now create any problem with the completion of your Ph.D. degree?"

Had Dean Wilson not tipped me off to the President's real opinion, I might easily have said, "It would be better if we stayed another year, at least, so I could finish my doctoral dissertation under the personal supervision of my graduate committee chairman. Furthermore, another year would enable our daughter, Susan, to finish high school at Claremont and not have to do a senior year at a school new to her. And it would also give us more time to sell our Claremont home so that we won't lose money on the deal."

I have a feeling that's the answer the President expected. When I said, "No problem. I've finished all required courses. I can write the dissertation nights and during the summer. I can get my mother to baby-sit the Claremont house while it is on the market to sell. I only need to stay long enough at the Kellogg campus to wind up the scheduled presentation of the Cam-

pus Master Plan to the Trustees at their mid-September meeting. Mary can return with Susan right after Labor Day and get our daughter registered for her last year in high school. I'll come as soon as possible after the Trustees act on the master plan."

The President was looking at me while I gave my little speech as though he was hearing something he hadn't expected. I then asked, "Is that soon enough to suit you?" He frowned but said, "Oh, sure. Take all the time you need."

The Kellogg Campus Master Plan, developed by our master plan architect and the campus master plan committee, which I chaired for three years, was approved by the Trustees on September 15, 1964. The plan called for a 10,000-student enrollment target and a long-range expenditure of nearly \$20 million in state funds and \$16 million in non-state funds. To be realistic, we included a footnote that the ultimate projected enrollment for that campus would be 20,000 FTE.

Some administrative position-shuffling was necessary when, about that same time, Dr. Robert Maurer, dean of the arts and sciences division, asked to go back to full-time teaching. Dr. Albert Aschenbrenner, on staff since 1947 as teacher of English, registrar, admissions officer, and associate dean of counseling and guidance, was appointed to fill the slot. About this time, Dean of Students Tom McGrath was asked by Chancellor Dumke to join the headquarters staff, which he did effective January 1. His replacement as dean of students was Henry House, who had served as associate dean of students in charge of the activities program.

My mother, Hazel, did agree to stay in the house after Mary and Susan left for San Luis Obispo. A tiny, 4-foot, 11-inch bundle of energy even at age 74, my mother loved the idea of showing the house and selling it. She had been a sales clerk in department stores in Portland, Oregon, and in Long Beach and San Diego all her adult life, starting before I was born in 1915. She knew how to sell and she sold the house within a month of the time we placed it on the market. My son Steve was on a graduation-present trip as an assistant to a relative touring Europe on a business trip. As the recipient of the Claremont High School most valuable athlete award, he had been recruited by Cal Poly's Kellogg campus athletic staff for both football and track. He was set for the next four years, and I'm sure he welcomed the news that his father was going back to SLO.

In San Luis Obispo in August Mary and Susan were graciously taken in by Harold and Rosalie Davidson, our Cazadero Street neighbors, while Mary supervised a major remodeling of our house, which had been rented the

three and a half years we were gone. I was able to get back to San Luis Obispo by mid-October with enthusiasm for a return to a former office and the help of a former secretary, Mary Johnson. There was no announcement from the President of my return to the San Luis Obispo campus and so I offered none to the public relations department.<sup>1</sup>

A little earlier it had been announced that the new San Luis Obispo campus administration building was complete and moves into the structure would occur between November 11-23 for most offices. However, a later announcement stated that moves into the fourth-floor offices of the president and vice president and college-wide staff would not occur until after December 10. When those moves were complete, I found myself on the other side of the large conference room, removed from the president's office, but not noticeably isolated from him.

I was not being asked into one-on-one meetings with the President, although I still met with the Cabinet and the Foundation Board of Directors, of which I was the elected vice chairman. Normal activities seemed to be taking place with my being present when the Trustees approved the San Luis Obispo Academic Master Plan on December 8, 1964. By the end of May, 1965, the Western Association of State Colleges had voted a five-year renewal of Cal Poly's accreditation.

The first real clue that I was still in the doghouse had occurred when I had asked Dean of the College Andrews to give me back Mary Johnson as my secretary, on the rationale that I had just loaned her to him while I was at the Kellogg campus. He said he was willing, but that the President, anticipating I would make that request, had told him he should not do it. So a series of young secretaries began working for me, and I began to realize that I was out of the mainstream and not nearly as busy as I had been in prior years. That fact eliminated, for the first time in 24 years, the necessity of taking home a briefcase every night filled with jobs that needed to be completed before morning.

What I was able to do with my newfound leisure was write a 364-page dissertation titled, "An Emerging Model for Effective Decision-Making in the California State Colleges." Upon completion of this dissertation the

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1. The first clue that I was back came in a *Staff Bulletin* item on November 24, 1964, that said I was hosting a visit to the San Luis Obispo campus of the president and a visiting group of deans from the Oregon Technical Institute. President McPhee was out of town or he would have done the hosting.

Claremont Graduate School awarded me the Ph.D. degree six months later, on June 4, 1966.

I was aware that the President had authorized the expenditure of some \$45,000 (as I recall the amount) to the Stanford Research Institution for a study of the future of agriculture in California as the basis for possible curricula changes in the agricultural division. That was about the last I had heard of the study until a copy was laid on my desk with a handwritten note from Mr. McPhee asking me to read it carefully and give him my opinion as to the value of the study. I read it and was shocked that the Stanford Research Institute would submit as a definitive study something that was not much more than a summary of interviews with our own agricultural faculty members. And to charge \$45,000 for it was outrageous. I said so in a note to the President. When the Stanford Research Institute team returned to the campus for a final exit interview with President McPhee, he called me in and asked me to critique the report in the presence of the research staff. I made no friends with the Stanford Research staff, but McPhee wrote me a thank-you note and said, "I may refuse to pay the bill."

About six months before the required 1965 annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the Cal Poly Foundation on the third Tuesday in May, a regular Board meeting was held, with nothing particularly debatable on the agenda; at least on the surface there appeared to be no highly controversial items. One item listed acceptance of a gift of \$10,000 from the Kellogg Foundation of Michigan. There was no detail attached to the item, which was unusual. When the item was presented, I asked Mr. Brendlin, the Foundation manager, to explain what the gift was for and what conditions, if any, were attached to its acceptance. It had always been Foundation Board policy never to accept gifts unless the conditions of acceptance were known. (We had, for example, in the past been offered a gift of thoroughbred race horses. When one of the conditions indicated an obligation to service the mare, at a price, to a particular stallion, we had refused to accept the gift.)

Mr. Brendlin nervously turned to President McPhee, who was presiding. "Do you want to explain the conditions, Mr. McPhee?"

McPhee looked grim, but said, "We have the check. It's a cash gift with no obligation to the Foundation."

To me that seemed like an evasion of the question and so I asked, "What's the purpose of the gift? What is the money for?"

He answered, "The Kellogg Foundation is in favor of the appointment of a very well qualified man whom they support for the vacant position of

vice president at the Kellogg campus. I want this man in that position, but he says he cannot accept it at the salary the state offers, even at an advanced step in the salary schedule. The money is to augment his salary."

I was not looking for a fight nor did I want to cause a confrontation even before a limited audience of a half-dozen Board members and several Foundation staff members. I thought perhaps the Foundation manager, not familiar with state personnel regulations, had misled the President into a position that could create embarrassment, at the minimum, and maybe a more serious charge by the state of an illegal personnel action.

I said, "Does Mr. Brendlin realize that the Foundation can't legally augment the salary of a state employee, no matter what the source of the funds? Title 5 of the Administrative Code includes a section that clearly states that state salaries cannot be augmented by non-state funds in order to further compensate a person for doing a job for which the state salary is full compensation. I do not believe the Foundation can use the Kellogg Foundation money the way it has been suggested."

Dean Harold Hayes, a voting director, said, "I move that we do not accept the check but return it to the Kellogg Foundation with the explanation that cites the state's specific regulations governing the situation." Someone, not me, seconded the motion, called for the question, and the motion carried.

President McPhee was not used to having one of his requests denied by the Foundation Board. He got red in the face. He said nothing but got up and walked out of the conference room through the door into his office, slamming the door as he left. We all sat quietly, awaiting his return as the presiding officer. After about ten minutes of aimless side conversations, Mr. Brendlin said, "I would like to complete the remainder of the items on the agenda. Mr. Kennedy, as the vice chairman, can preside in the absence of the President with or without notice to the chairman, if he chooses not to be present for a Board meeting."

I did preside. We finished the agenda and adjourned. The President did not call another meeting of the Board. When it came time during the month of May to hold a meeting required by the Foundation bylaws for the election of new members and officers, I called the meeting, which was held without Mr. McPhee's being present.

I never asked Mr. Brendlin what happened to the check, assuming that he followed Board action and returned it to the Kellogg Foundation. By October, 1965, Dr. Robert Kramer had accepted the position of vice presi-

dent in charge of the Kellogg-Voorhis operation of Cal Poly. He left a position as director, agricultural marketing and utilization center, at Michigan State University, East Lansing. The notice of his appointment by President McPhee stated that he would begin duties as soon as he could clear his responsibilities at Michigan State. Kramer came highly recommended by Dr. Emory Morris, president of the Kellogg Foundation. The appointment was approved by Chancellor Durnke and had been endorsed by both the Faculty Senate and the Staff Council at the Kellogg campus, according to the announcement by McPhee. Subsequently it was announced that he began his duties on November 1, 1965. Whether he had his salary augmented directly by a Kellogg Foundation grant of some kind was never disclosed, and I never asked.

It was some time before I learned from Grace Arvidson, one of President McPhee's secretaries and the one who took most of his dictation, that when he stormed out of the Foundation Board meeting he went directly home to his house on campus. The next day when he returned to the office, he told her that he broke out in hives all over his body, and had to soak in the bathtub in a solution of bicarbonate of soda. I felt terrible that I had caused him that much irritation when all I wanted to do was protect him from doing something that might be classified as an illegal act.

Sometime after the Foundation Board held its required meeting in May, the President sent a memorandum to everyone involved describing a change in administrative assignments to become effective September 1, 1965. The message was as follows:

The college-wide administration of the college will consist of the administrative vice president, Robert E. Kennedy, serving on a staff basis assisting the president on college-wide and state-wide matters, three college-wide staff specialists in the areas of institutional research, catalog policy and preparation, college-wide budget requests, curriculum, accreditation, publications, etc. Also on the college-wide administrative staff will be the director of the Voorhis Educational Center, director of extension services, Foundation manager, assistant to the president, and the director of developmental affairs.

The significance of the first paragraph, for those who understood Cal Poly's organizational power structure, was that Kennedy had been demoted from chief line officer under the President to a staff advisory role. The memo continued:

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On the SLO staff: Andrews, dean of the college; dean of academic planning, unfilled; administrative assistant, Chet Young; director of staff services, Executive Dean Harold Wilson; personnel and business management specialist, James Landreth; public relations coordinator, Don McCaleb; building coordinator, Doug Gerard; class scheduler and special services coordinator, George Beatie.

At the Kellogg Campus: C.O. McCorkle, dean of the college; dean of academic planning, unfilled; administrative assistant, Stan Smith; director of staff services, Executive Dean Hugh LaBounty; personnel and business management specialist, unfilled; public relations coordinator, Mr. Burdick; building coordinator, Harry Welch; class scheduler and special services coordinator, William McIntosh.

Not only was I in trouble but so was Harold Hayes. His motion to return the check to the Kellogg Foundation was one thing. Of more lasting importance was his recommendation that caused the President to do something that turned out badly, as will now be explained.

McPhee always opposed the concept of seeking national accreditation for specific programs, like engineering, because he believed the evaluation process was prejudiced toward whatever traditional, conservative methods were followed by "hidebound professors" from "old-line schools." Hayes had finally convinced him that Cal Poly engineering graduates were at a disadvantage because of lack of accreditation. So McPhee reluctantly signed the application early in 1965. By November of that year we had received the bad news: Engineering accreditation was denied by the Engineering Council for Professional Development.

The announcement by Dean Hayes of the bad news focused blame on other divisions, not engineering. Hayes was quoted as saying he believed the decision to withhold accreditation was based on "specific percentages of courses in science, mathematics, and humanities rather than on the success of Cal Poly's engineering program." It was not the fault of anyone except the engineering faculty, which had failed to require sufficient units of certain support courses in each engineering curriculum. It was not the availability of the courses, but failure to require them, that was criticized by ECPD. How this unfortunate situation was corrected is a part of the story that unfolds after 1967.

With President McPhee's 70th birthday coming up on February 7, 1966, some of us thought we ought to tie in the fact that he was going to retire in 1966 with a 65th birthday celebration for Cal Poly. I thought it best that I

should stay in the background, so I talked Bill Troutner, head of the crops department, into chairing a "65th Anniversary Celebration Committee." I knew Bill was one of McPhee's favorites, being a nephew of a former colleague on the Bureau of Agricultural Education staff. Bill was reluctant to take on extra responsibility. I told him I would help him plan the activities, get campus-wide cooperation, and write whatever needed to be written, if he would agree. By January, 1966, Bill and his committee had worked out all the details, which were listed in a two-page article in the January 11 *Staff Bulletin*. The list made it obvious that it was McPhee's retirement year and that we were celebrating that as much as his 70th birthday and Cal Poly's 65th birthday.

By this time we had been operating the Kellogg-Voorhis campus for over three months under the administration of Dr. Kramer, holding vice president position. But at the San Luis Obispo campus we had not yet made the change from "dean of the college" to "vice president." When McPhee had approached Chancellor Dumke with the idea that he would merely switch Dr. Andrews from the "dean" position to the "vice president" position, he was told he should use a more extensive selection process. The Chancellor wanted him, as a minimum, to circulate to key groups on campus the proposal to promote Dr. Andrews to the higher position, without changing his job responsibilities, and ask for their recommendation. McPhee always considered this kind of consultation to be an infringement on his authority, but the Chancellor insisted. The promotion as proposed by the President was circulated. There was no opposition except from one quarter: Dean Hayes had mounted a campaign of opposition among engineering faculty. Both Andrews and McPhee discovered the source of the opposition, and never forgave Dean Hayes. It did not, however, prevent the promotion, which was announced on February 15, 1966. Cal Poly now had three vice presidents.

At the time the San Luis Obispo campus was celebrating its 65th anniversary, an event took place that brought tears to the eyes of many old-timers. A memorial service was held in San Luis Obispo for Miss Margaret Chase, former English teacher, dean, vice president, and acting president of Cal Poly, who had died at 87 years of age at a Santa Clara retirement home. I particularly felt the loss because she had been a personal link to the past, one that made early Cal Poly history come alive.

I had convinced Bill Troutner that part of the 65th anniversary celebration should be a Founders Day event to be held on March 8, 1966, com-

memorating the date of the signing of the Enabling Act in 1901. We had not had a Founders Day celebration for as far back as either of us could remember, and Bill figured it was because McPhee didn't want to "remember" any "founders" before his time in 1933. In fact, the first Founders Day had been held March 3, 1906, and none had been held since. I told Bill I thought we could get Louis H. Heilbron, first chairman of the Board of Trustees and still a Trustee, as the main speaker. The letter of invitation was written for Bill's signature; a carbon copy was shown as going to me so that Trustee Heilbron would know he could contact me for background information. When Heilbron accepted, he did call me and asked that I send him as much background information as I could on the early founding, McPhee's background, and anything else I thought would be of help to him.

Heilbron's speech, to a packed audience in the Gymnasium, which seated several thousand, was called "Cal Poly — Right Side Up." It was so very complimentary, in most ways, that the few little suggestions for future improvement went unnoticed by most, and certainly didn't dampen the President's enthusiasm for Heilbron's description of McPhee's success. At one point, Heilbron asked whether this success was

[D]ue to the President's enormous personal activity and leadership in all of the areas mentioned; his intimate knowledge of the processes and pressures of the state government; [or] his famous arm-twisting, which was a fully developed technique by Mr. McPhee before Mr. Johnson ever employed it.

He answered "yes" but added "all these attributes were essential to the financing, growth, and the rising prestige of Cal Poly, but for those results to have been achieved — there had to be and still must exist more than the energy of a man, there must be the dynamism of an idea behind him and of its appeal to students."

McPhee was greatly pleased with the speech and its reception by the audience and the press. I'm not sure how well McPhee liked Trustee Heilbron's concluding thought:

The future of Cal Poly has already been chartered in a five-year plan, in a ten-year plan and in an imaginative speech of Vice President Kennedy's covering the period up to 1990, which was delivered over a year ago to your Fall Conference of Faculty and Staff. Vice President Kennedy prophesies that Cal Poly will always be in the vanguard of the latest educational techniques. He envisions that by 1990 Cal Poly will have become a house-

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hold word wherever men produce food, build schools, reshape cities, or construct factories and, in fact, that Cal Poly will have won a Congressional Medal of Honor for its part in preserving the peace. I hail the optimistic spirit of these predictions. Cal Poly's dreams usually come true.

One dream I had some five years earlier was eventually to separate the San Luis Obispo campus from the Kellogg-Voorhis campus; my three-and-a-half-year tour of duty at the southern campus had not altered that opinion which I had tried to sell to McPhee in 1961.

I told earlier how McPhee had reacted to the for-his-eyes-only report on how to solve the relationship problems between the two campuses. After he told me never to mention to anyone my recommendation on "separation," he had said, "I'll implement your recommendation, some day, but not in the manner you have proposed." I had recommended that he notify the faculty at the southern campus of his intention to separate, and then provide a five-year period in which we would give them more and more autonomy until they were capable of administering themselves without any help from SLO. In the meantime, I said nothing and he did nothing, unless sending me to that campus for three and a half years was part of his plan to implement separation — which I doubt. My assigned mission was to "keep them in line."

Now, in 1966, faced with retirement within six months and a Board of Trustees that did not favor having a "system within the system," McPhee took the steps necessary to bring about separation. I told him in 1961 that he could get credit for being perceptive, farseeing, and generous if he initiated the action then. In 1966 most observers felt he was doing it on orders of the Trustees and because he didn't believe anyone else was capable of doing what he had been doing since he acquired Voorhis in 1938 and Kellogg in 1949. He probably was right, and I, for one, certainly didn't want to try to prove he was wrong.

He wrote the legislation and got Senator Sturgeon to carry the bill that eventually separated the campuses. There was no one on either campus who opposed the separation. At the March 2-3 meeting of the Trustees a resolution was passed requesting the Legislature to establish Kellogg and San Luis Obispo as separate state colleges. Senate Bill 45 did not automatically separate the campuses even after the bill was signed by Governor Brown on May 17, 1966. The bill merely gave the Trustees authority to take that action, which they did on October 17, establishing the Kellogg campus as the 18th college

of the system. In his May 24th announcement about his action to separate, the President said, "The goal which we set in our own minds was that when the Kellogg Campus had an enrollment of between 4,500 and 5,000, it would be an appropriate time to separate." His use of the words "our own minds" meant only "his mind," since he had refused point-blank to discuss any sort of timetable for the separation.

That he was not entirely reconciled to the thought of separation was evident even after 1967, when Kramer and Kennedy were the new presidents at Kellogg and San Luis Obispo respectively. McPhee had notified his nephew, Ed Slevin, then president of the Cal Poly Alumni Association, that he, Slevin, should not permit the separation of the alumni association into its two logical groups. Despite Slevin's loyalty to his uncle, the mutual presentation by Kramer and Kennedy before an Alumni Board of Directors meeting in 1967 brought about the necessary separation of the alumni association. It was really McPhee's final attempt to preserve the concept that Cal Poly was one institution, not two.

An item in the April 5, 1966, *Staff Bulletin* appeared innocent enough on the surface. It announced that Vice President Andrews had assigned Dean Hayes to do a "full-scale review" of the future development of the SLO program of engineering education. It seemed a logical outgrowth of the accreditation failure. Andrews said, "A complete overall review of the college's engineering program had not been done since 1952 and that such a study would take the full time of Dean Hayes." He added that operational direction of the engineering division would be assigned to a temporary administrator. That occurred on April 12, when Andrews named John B. Hirt, a member of the business administration department who also had a degree in engineering.

Andrews had talked to me about the proposal to assign Hayes the "research project" before making the announcement; he said it had McPhee's blessing. Hayes was given an office on the second floor of the administration building and Hirt took over Hayes' former office on the third floor. After Andrews became acting president in July, he reassigned Hayes to full-time teaching in mechanical engineering, effective September 1. By September 27 Andrews announced Hirt was acting dean of engineering, and that a search was underway for a permanent dean. Hayes did not resign until some time after November.

Happier events were also being announced during this period of time. The students named President McPhee Honored Guest for the 34th annual

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Poly Royal. He was the first person ever to be given that honor twice. It was also announced that he would be the main speaker at the commencement exercises to be held the afternoon of June 18. On May 25 the President reminisced at a Staff Club luncheon, and then handed out three 25-year state service award pins to three faculty/staff members who had begun their Cal Poly careers together on September 1, 1940: C. Paul Winner, Spelman Collins, and Robert E. Kennedy.

On June 1-2 the Trustees held a meeting on the campus, making it possible for them to attend a private banquet held at the San Luis Obispo Country Club, where the program consisted of many tributes to Mr. and Mrs. McPhee, the honored guests.

At the business session, the Trustees identified \$2.9 million for San Luis Obispo buildings and \$1.8 million for Kellogg. The Board unanimously approved a resolution commending President McPhee for his 33 years of service to Cal Poly, and noted that his retirement would be official on June 30. The resolution recognized his role in establishing a philosophy of emphasis on the useful application of knowledge and his leadership in building "two great institutions of higher learning."

President McPhee was unable to give the commencement speech on June 18, having had emergency surgery to correct an intestinal blockage. He also was unable to attend the annual California Agricultural Teachers' Association banquet on campus. The program was to honor his long service to that organization as well as to recognize his contribution to all of vocational agriculture, both statewide and on a national basis. A telephone connection was arranged between his hospital room and the banquet room's public address system. McPhee was able to communicate to that audience despite his condition.

It was soon learned that McPhee had cancer. He began making trips to San Francisco to take treatment at the University of California Medical Center, which had special facilities and medical treatment for intestinal cancer. The treatment was to no avail and he died November 10, 1967, less than a year and a half after his retirement.

I could not help but remember a time when we were sitting together in the lobby of the old Senator Hotel in Sacramento, waiting to meet some legislators, when he said to me, "Today I was told of the deaths of three men I knew and worked with for years. In each case, they died less than two years after they retired. I don't think I'm ever going to retire." This thought must have been in his mind more than once after he was diagnosed with a

fatal disease less than a month before his retirement was to become effective. Self-fulfilling prophecies come to mind.

On or about the middle of June, before we knew of McPhee's illness, I was contacted by telephone from the Chancellor's office. I believe it was Mansel Keene, vice chancellor in charge of personnel, who talked to me. It was a message relayed from Chancellor Dumke. Because the campuses were not yet officially separated, Dumke did not want to name two acting presidents. He wanted the college to continue to operate with the two vice presidents then held responsible for their respective campuses. He did not want to say anything in such an announcement about the role of the college-wide administrative vice president, but wanted me to continue to function in that role, assisting both of the vice presidents in the process of smoothly separating the one college into two. I had observed that on many campuses the acting president got into much difficulty with the faculty in an interim period and often was not seriously considered for the permanent appointment. Dumke had made it clear to me, a year before he became Chancellor, that I was going to be seriously considered as McPhee's replacement, and so had Chancellor Gallagher, before he resigned. The spokesman seemed to be apologetic about not being able to tell me that I was going to be named acting president. Guessing that it was troubling him, I said, "I'm relieved that I don't have to be the acting president. I think the plan you have outlined is the right one."

The campus newsletters on July 12, 1966, carried an item about that decision under the headline, "VICE PRESIDENTS ANDREWS, KRAMER NAMED TO DIRECT CAL POLY FORTUNES." The full-page item set forth Chancellor Dumke's decision:

[V]ice Presidents Dale W. Andrews and Robert Kramer of Cal Poly's San Luis Obispo and Kellogg campuses, respectively, were asked by Chancellor of the California State Colleges, Glenn S. Dumke, to be in charge of operations at their campuses after retirement of the college's president, Julian A. McPhee, June 30. In the statement released to the college June 25, Dr. Dumke announced his request that Drs. Andrews and Kramer "be in charge of the operations at their respective campuses." Both assumed their new responsibility on July 1. Chancellor Dumke's statement indicated that the increased responsibility for Vice Presidents Andrews and Kramer would continue until a new president was selected for each of the campuses. The Chancellor, in deciding not to name acting presidents, pointed out the necessity for naming permanent leaders for each cam-

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pus at an early date. He added that this is an interim arrangement, pending such permanent appointments. "If there should be delays in naming a president for either campus, consideration will be given to the naming of an acting president," the Chancellor concluded.

At almost the same moment, C.O. McCorkle, dean of the college at the Kellogg campus, announced that his retirement would become effective on November 22. He had been an important part of the Cal Poly administrative staff at both campuses for 35 years and a member of the Foundation Board of Directors for 20 years. He had been one of McPhee's vocational agriculture students at Gilroy High School when McPhee taught there in the 1920s.

Although Dean McCorkle was soon to be stepping out of the picture, we wanted him to remain on the Foundation Board of Directors during a time we all knew would be difficult — separating the Foundation's assets so that the Kellogg campus would have some kind of head start on establishing its own auxiliary organization to handle things not easily handled by state procedures, such as the operation of a farm, dining halls, etc. When the Foundation Board held its required annual meeting, without McPhee present, the Board elected Kennedy president, McCorkle vice president, Dale Andrews treasurer, and Harold Wilson secretary. Gene Brendlin remained as Foundation manager, with John Francis remaining assistant manager at the Kellogg campus.

It was obvious to all of us that the first order of business should be the orderly separation of all Kellogg campus operations, but with an equitable division of assets so that the southern campus would have the necessary "grub stake" to get started as an independent nonprofit organization, operating such Kellogg activities as the campus store, the farm, etc. It wasn't until November 1 that McCorkle and Dr. Hugh LaBounty, Kellogg campus executive dean, resigned from the Foundation Board in order to participate in a new Foundation at the new Cal Poly, Pomona, campus. The announcement about McCorkle and LaBounty also stated that the Board had elected Andrews to replace McCorkle as vice president of the Board. It also pointed out that Hayes was still a member of the Board.

Another reassignment was necessary since Howard West, assistant to the president, no longer had a president to assist. A happy solution was found by Dr. Andrews. He named West "coordinator of overseas projects." He was to work with Les Vanoncini, director of extension services. Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, had overseas programs in Zambia and Tanzania, and was



*Chester O. McCorkle retired from Cal Poly in 1966, ending his 34-year career at Cal Poly as dean of the college, Cal Poly Pomona.*

about to begin a program in Guatemala, which was to be under the direction of Bill Troutner. All were financed by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Despite Mr. McPhee's illness he and Mrs. McPhee were able to stand in a reception line in early August to shake the hands of faculty and staff well-wishers. The customary retirement reception had been planned by the faculty and staff for June but had been cancelled when the President became ill. Mary and I attended and marveled at Mr. McPhee's fortitude; reception lines are a trial even when one is in good health. Even more amazing was the fact that when the faculty and staff held a similar reception for us after I had been named president in May, 1967, both Mr. and Mrs. McPhee were able to attend. He died less than six months after attending that reception. Man of power, indeed!

At the October 27, 1966, meeting of the Trustees the campuses were officially separated. The Trustees gave the two campuses these names:

California State Polytechnic College, San Luis Obispo, and California State Polytechnic College, Kellogg-Voorhis. The Trustees also named Bob Kramer president of Cal Poly, KV, and awarded the title of president emeritus to Julian McPhee.

So ends one era, with another yet to begin.

But things that were happening elsewhere in the nation were destined to impact Cal Poly whether it was ready to become involved or not.

In the summer of 1964 the U.S. Senate passed a resolution authorizing President Johnson to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States. The action was based on a report that North Vietnamese gunboats fired on U.S. ships in the Gulf of Tonkin. There were questions raised later as to the authenticity of the report, but by then the Gulf of Tonkin resolution was the basis for unlimited expansion of U.S. participation in the war in Vietnam.

This participation was the trigger that exploded the unrest of college-age students, whose reaction to the drafting of young people for military duty to fight a war that few people understood caused demonstrations, unrest, and even violence and death on campuses throughout the nation, including in California and the state college system.

By winter President Johnson had ordered air strikes against North Vietnamese targets on a regular basis. By summer the draft was taking 35,000 men per month, with the number of U.S. military personnel in southeast Asia increased from a prior 20,000 to 190,000. U.S. combat deaths totaled nearly 1,500 in 1964, compared to 200 during the prior four-year period. By 1966 U.S. troop strength in Vietnam grew from 190,000 to just under 400,000. The growth of the war increased public dissent. Students at various universities staged sit-in demonstrations to protest the use of class rank for determining draft deferments.

In California in November of 1966 the Republican party had won not only a big victory in the governor's race but had gained more seats in the state Legislature. When Ronald Reagan took office in January, 1967, most state college administrators anticipated we would experience tighter fiscal controls than under Pat Brown. Robert Finch, the new lieutenant governor, provided Reagan with a conservative helper; Finch was an Occidental College friend of both the CSC system chancellor, Glenn Dumke, and George Brand, editor of the San Luis Obispo daily newspaper.

In San Luis Obispo the Kennedy family had been occupied since returning from the Kellogg campus and Claremont with a house remodeling, and

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preparing for the marriage of their elder daughter, Maridel. The groom, John Salisbury, a native of the Sacramento Delta farming community of Walnut Grove, was about to graduate from Cal Poly's ag business department. Maridel had two quarters yet to finish in her home economics major, which she did as part of the agreement the bride's parents insisted upon.

The wedding, on December 4, 1964, was presided over by a priest at the Old Mission. The McPhees were in attendance and afterwards, in the kind of jovial mood Mr. McPhee often took away from the campus, Mr. McPhee said, "I always suspected that any Kennedy with four kids couldn't be a real Methodist but had to be a backslider from the Catholic church. Welcome back." A lot of people who filled the Old Mission chapel that day must have thought so too, but it was just our daughter Maridel who became the convert.

Our older son, Bob Jr., became a Presbyterian when he married a Cal Poly coed on September 7, 1963. By July 18, 1965, Bob and Mary were grandparents to Erin, born to Bob Jr. and Karen Kennedy.

LESSON SIXTEEN *When a large group of people in any organization honestly believes its opinions are neither sought nor considered, it is likely that group may become the nucleus of a revolutionary party demanding freedom.*

COLLEGE PRESIDENT HAS VISIONS

**I**T HAS BEEN SAID, "Familiarity breeds contempt." The man who first said that, Publius Syrus, in 42 B.C.E., also said, "It is a very hard undertaking to seek to please everybody."

Whether it was fortunate or unfortunate, most of the California State College Trustees in 1966 knew me by sight, and somewhat by reputation. From the time I was assistant to the president in the early 1950s until sometime in 1964-65, I had traveled with President McPhee to attend State Board of Education meetings and, later, Board of Trustees meetings. For one thing, McPhee was becoming increasingly hard of hearing and wanted me present, listening, taking notes, and instantly calling his attention to items about which he should be concerned. He seldom asked to be heard in any such meeting, preferring to contact key members during a recess period or even later to pass on any comment or warning. McPhee believed another of Syrus' maxims: "He knows not when to be silent who knows not when to speak." I found it a hard philosophy to practice.

During the nearly four years I was at the Kellogg campus, one of the Trustees, Paul Spencer, who lived at San Dimas as a neighbor to the Voorhis campus, came to my office frequently to talk about matters on the state college Trustees' agenda. Spencer, appointed to the Board by Governor Brown in 1960, was a general contractor who also lived on and operated a citrus ranch. He had known Harold Wilson and J. Cordner Gibson very well when those men had been in charge of the southern campus during the period 1946-56.

Trustee Spencer considered the Kellogg-Voorhis campus his special responsibility and represented us, sometimes better than we wanted to be represented. He was aware that one of my major responsibilities while at the Kellogg campus was to finalize both the long-range educational master plan and the campus building master plan. Spencer was a Trustee from 1960 to 1969, most of that time as chairman of or member of the committee responsible for on-campus planning and building. It was Paul Spencer who had initiated the idea of having George Hasslein, the head of the Cal Poly, SLO department of architectural engineering, work for the Trustees

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as a consultant responsible for developing a list of qualified California architects from which the Trustees could, with confidence and good conscience, select individuals to receive both "master plan" and "project" architect contracts. George operated with great integrity and the Trustees never had reason to question any list he gave them.

Trustees are quite used to being lobbied by college administrators who want them to support certain projects. Trustees, being human, can reverse the process on occasion. Paul Spencer, as an active member of the state association of general contractors, proposed that I include in the Kellogg campus educational master plan a curriculum that would graduate men and women qualified to hold responsible management jobs in the construction field. He wanted to call the program "construction engineering." I proposed such a program and got the Kellogg campus dean of engineering to include it in programs being considered for the future by engineering faculty. Since they had already developed a proposal and curriculum for civil engineering, they rejected the idea. Not wanting to tell Trustee Spencer the bad news, I talked to George Hasslein and asked him to consider it. He said, "We'll do it, if you can get the Trustees to approve."

When I told Trustee Spencer, he was pleased and saw to it that the item was placed on the agenda for the next Trustees' meeting. President McPhee avoided making presentation of specific plans to the Trustees and so vice president Kennedy was listed as the presenter. Ordinarily, I would have been very well prepared to make a presentation, but in this case, I thought Paul Spencer would have lobbied all his colleagues and very little would need to be said, other than that Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, wanted to offer, as part of an existing program in architectural engineering, an option in construction engineering.

Charles Luckman, appointed a Trustee originally in 1960 by Democrat Gov. Pat Brown and reappointed by Republican Reagan, was chairman from 1963-65. As a nationally-known architect and a great friend of Cal Poly's, Luckman was presiding the day I made that presentation. I read a very short statement. I expected Paul Spencer to make a motion and have approval occur instantly. Instead, Trustee Victor Palmieri, a brilliant, nationally-known lawyer who represented some very large development firms, asked a very logical question.

"Mr. Kennedy," he said, "would you please define 'construction engineering' for me?"

I did not have a definition of the term in any of the written materials,

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having assumed, incorrectly, that it was self-evident. I said, "It is a combination of several different disciplines. It is not civil engineering, nor mechanical engineering, nor architectural engineering, nor business management, but it is a combination of all of those."

Mr. Palmieri immediately reacted. "Mr. Kennedy, I did not ask what it was not, I asked what it was."

Realizing I was in trouble, I hesitated. Mr. Luckman saw my consternation and as Chairman addressed himself to me, "Mr. Kennedy, would you mind if I attempted to answer Victor's question?"

"Please be my guest, Mr. Luckman," I weakly replied. There was a general murmur among the Trustees which sounded to me like stifled laughter.

Mr. Luckman, a brilliant raconteur, as able to paint word pictures as to design skyscrapers, did a terrific job of defining "construction engineering." He ended by asking, "Does that satisfy you, Mr. Palmieri?"

Palmieri's response was a very subdued, "Yes, Mr. Chairman."

The program was approved.

Mr. Spencer was happy. Mr. Luckman was pleased with his part in the process. I was somewhat dazed. I figured Mr. Palmieri might not be happy. He served on the Board only from 1964 to 1967.

What other Trustees thought about my performance on that occasion was never brought to my attention, but I was apprehensive.

Back on the San Luis Obispo campus in the summer of 1966, Vice President Dale Andrews had taken over not as acting president but as chief executive officer in charge. The campuses had not yet been officially separated by action of the Trustees, so Chancellor Dumke had reasoned that you could not have two acting presidents of one college. Vice President Robert Kramer, in charge of the Kellogg-Voorhis operation, had no assignments for me since I was now located in San Luis Obispo. But Dr. Andrews, responding to Chancellor Dumke's request that all the state colleges complete Phase II of their Long-Range Educational Reports by March 31, 1967, with a preliminary draft by January 31, reappointed me to chair the San Luis Obispo LREP committee.

Another matter that had been bothering both Dale Andrews and me was the fact that all agricultural and engineering students were required to take courses to enhance their general education, but students majoring in other fields could graduate from Cal Poly without knowing the first thing about how food was produced, processed, or marketed. Neither did they

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know the first thing about how buildings or towns were planned, constructed, and maintained. Nor did they know how products were invented, developed, manufactured, and marketed. The question was, "Why?"

Dr. Andrews announced on November 29, 1966, after the campuses had been separated and he had been named acting president, the formation of an Inter-Disciplinary Task Force Committee of which I was to serve as chairman. The announcement stated that the nine-person committee was to consider the advisability of initiating a sequence of general education-type courses of such interdisciplinary scope that they would involve departments from all four existing divisions of the college. The chairman immediately asked *all* faculty to make suggestions.

I thought the basic idea was a sound one, but it was never implemented as effectively as it should have been. A course team-taught by experts from several different departments and divisions did not fit any of the existing methods by which faculty would get credit for time spent; on such technical details good ideas are often lost. Furthermore, not many of the liberal arts and science departments were willing to require that their students take general education courses taught in agriculture and engineering. To be implemented it would have had to be forced by an order from the top; neither Andrews nor I favored that idea.

Dale Andrews and I worked well together during what was obviously a transitional period in which neither of us knew what the future held for us. Andrews knew that his present role at Cal Poly was the result of a series of promotions from classroom teaching to vice president, each of which I had recommended. I knew and appreciated Andrews' qualities as an innovator and administrator. His assistant since the early 1960s had been Chet Young, Cal Poly mathematics professor and later a building coordinator, who was one of my closest friends since high school in San Diego and a college fraternity brother. The three of us talked frequently about the things that the acting president should accomplish during the transitional period.

I had been concerned for years about the manner in which President McPhee had accepted personal liability for the operation of the college bookstore. He was anxious to make certain that none of the store's profits would ever be utilized to finance any project except the construction of a new College Union building. To ensure that goal he didn't even want the store under the umbrella of the Foundation, an incorporated nonprofit organization that limited the liability of its directors but gave them authority to make decisions. McPhee operated the store as though he was the sole

owner, with only a small advisory group that he named. The Chancellor's legal staff agreed with me that his liability was personal and that the state could not adequately protect him should he be sued.

One of my first pieces of advice to Dale Andrews was to propose to the Foundation Board that it take over the management of the El Corral Bookstore. He made the proposal and the Foundation accepted. That formalization helped us obtain a \$3,000,000 loan from the U.S. Office of Housing and Urban Development for the construction of the SLO College Union, the construction of which we anticipated would start in the summer of 1967. President McPhee's conservative handling of El Corral's assets enabled the Foundation to pass on savings of about \$600,000 toward College Union construction.

At the same time, and for some of the same reasons, Dr. Andrews requested the Foundation Board to assume fiscal coordination of all overseas projects. The Foundation Board promptly approved, since it would be permitted to receive administrative overhead reimbursement from the Federal government. A few months earlier a team of three faculty — Warren Smith, dean of agriculture, LaVern Bucy, Ph.D. in animal science, and Harold Wilson, executive dean — had taken a trip to Bangkok to confer with Thai government officials and U.S. AID officials regarding Cal Poly's proposed involvement in an assistance program in that country. We already had programs in Zambia, Tanzania, and Guatemala, and had completed surveys for possible programs in the Sudan and Argentina. When the contract was signed for the program in Thailand, Warren Smith resigned his position as dean of agriculture to take the position as "chief of party" for the Thailand project. He served in that position until the project was terminated six years later.

On April 25, 1967, J. Cordner Gibson, assistant dean of agriculture, was named acting dean pending completion of the process of selecting and appointing a permanent dean.

During discussions about the future of Cal Poly's educational programs, Andrews and I reviewed some of the administrative organization setups at the other state colleges. Almost all of the other campuses identified their several instructional department groupings as "schools" and not "divisions." While we were not trying to copy other campuses, we knew that most of our faculty members were unhappy with that particular difference. I remember well a psychology professor saying to me once, "A difference that makes no difference, is no damn different." Whether they were called "schools" or "divisions" made no difference, except in the perception of the faculty — and that made a difference. On February 14, 1967, Acting President Andrews

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announced that the instructional divisions were being renamed "schools." It was a proposal easily approved by Chancellor Dumke.

Also approved was the separation of the chemistry element from the department of physical science, making it the chemistry department, to be headed by Dr. Bruce Kennelly. The February, 1967, announcement of the change listed current enrollment and leadership of the four divisions renamed "schools" as follows: school of applied arts, 2,398 (Dean Cummins); school of engineering, 2,339 (Acting Dean Hirt); school of agriculture, 1,674 (Dean Smith); and school of applied science, 1,329 (Dean Fisher). The total enrollment for San Luis Obispo was 7,740, an increase of 526 over the previous year. Annual increases had averaged from a low of 310 to a high of 594 in the seven years since the total of 4,713 in 1960.

At the same time the Chancellor's office had released Governor Reagan's budget for the system, making clear that it was a 12 percent cut despite an anticipated increase of 17,000 students for the system. The governor's budget made provision for a total of \$172 million of which it was proposed that \$18 million be raised by establishing a tuition fee.

Being undertaken at this time by the San Luis Obispo administration was a search for a new dean of engineering, following a procedure approved by the Chancellor. A decision by the Foundation Board of Directors started a search to fill a new position to be financed by the Foundation called "coordinator of research and development." The two words "research" and "development," the latter meaning "fund-raising," were concepts that would not have been seriously discussed during McPhee's administration.

During President McPhee's last few months as president, he told a number of staff and faculty that there was no one among Cal Poly administrators, including Kennedy, who was "tough enough" to provide the "strong, authoritarian leadership" needed to be Cal Poly's president. When Chancellor Dumke offered the faculty an opportunity to form a committee, including some administrative and nonacademic staff as well as teaching staff, to be advisory to the Chancellor, McPhee actually sent him a letter objecting to that procedure. But Chancellor Dumke ignored that advice and proceeded to form a committee with the one faculty member he knew best, George Hasslein, as chairman. Hasslein was head of the architectural engineering department (there was no school of architecture yet) and had been at Cal Poly since 1949. He knew better than most faculty members how the California State College system worked, and he was known by most of the Trustees because of his role as a consultant to Paul Spencer's committee on Buildings and Grounds.

## LEARN BY DOING

The committee called for faculty to submit nomination forms listing names of persons to be considered for the presidency. I was told, long after the process was over, that my name was the most frequently submitted. I was surprised, in fact, because I believed that the faculty might have considered me McPhee's hatchet man, who carried out most of the unpopular decisions.

Someone on the faculty thought the local community, alumni, and even student groups should get involved in the process. As a result the Chancellor's office began receiving letters of recommendation on my behalf from such groups and individuals as the SLO Chamber of Commerce, on whose board of directors I had served when I was public relations director; newspaper editors and publishers; and even legislators. I received a phone call from one of Chancellor Dumke's assistants who said, "Please call off the campaign." I explained that I had no part in organizing the support, did not know who was submitting such letters, and had no way of contacting unknown persons for the purpose of turning off a campaign. I only learned of the extent of the support after I was president and was shown the material.

I was interviewed by the campus committee, as were Dr. Andrews and a number of other candidates whose background papers, developed by the Chancellor's office, had been screened down to those whom the committee thought reasonably well qualified. Dr. Andrews told me years later, after both of us had retired, that he had written to Dumke in the early spring of 1967 and "withdrawn his candidacy in favor of Kennedy."

I was notified that I should attend a Trustees' meeting scheduled to be held at San Francisco State in the early spring of 1967. I was invited into an off-the-record session while the Trustees were being served luncheon. I was seated at the head of the table between Al Ruffo, chairman, and Don Hart, vice chairman. Also at the head table was Chancellor Dumke, who was conducting the session. A plate of food was placed in front of me, but before I could take the first bite, the Trustees were invited by the Chancellor to ask me questions on any subject. Chairman Ruffo then began calling on each Trustee in turn, going around the room in which the tables had been set up in a huge U-shape. I didn't eat my lunch that day.

Many of the questions had to do with my doctoral dissertation, titled, "A Model for Effective Decision-Making in the California State Colleges," a copy of which I had given Dumke in January. The system was having considerable difficulty communicating between groups of faculty, staff, admin-

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istrators, students, and Trustees. I proposed a "linking-pin" concept between groups as a partial solution. It turned out that Chancellor Dumke had read parts of it to the Trustees, and talked to them about it. Some of the questions were about the principles involved in establishing and utilizing consultative groups and consultative procedures. Some of the questions seemed based on an apprehension that my long association with McPhee would have tainted me so that my style would be the same as his had been — which they all interpreted as "dictatorial."

On the whole, though, I thought the interview came off to my advantage. At least that's what I reported to my wife, Mary, who had accompanied me to the Trustee meeting where she sat in our car in the parking lot most of the day. We had not been told whether her presence at the interview was expected or not. It was not, although had it been, I would have been even more confident of a positive reaction from the Trustees.

Some days later I received a phone call from Mansel Keene, vice chancellor, faculty and staff affairs, who said, "Bob, one Trustee who was not at the San Francisco meeting is very concerned about your long association with McPhee. He is a very outspoken Trustee who has considerable influence with other Trustees. He is a liberal lawyer. He is anxious to have a president at Cal Poly who will not be an authoritarian leader. Unless you can change his mind, he may change the minds of some other Trustees before the final decision is made."

Dr. Keene suggested I locate someone this liberal Trustee respected who knew me and would vouch for me in terms of my political orientation, if not my administrative style. I knew the Trustee in question was acquainted with Tom Braden, who had served on the State Board of Education for many years and later was Trustee from 1960–63. Braden, a newspaper columnist and TV commentator in Washington, D. C., was well known for defending the liberal point of view. When I was head of the journalism department, I had invited Braden to come to the campus to speak to our students. Braden had been the publisher of the *Oceanside Blade Tribune* in San Diego County and I knew that he was a friend of my friend Armistead B. Carter, who was often called San Diego's "Mr. Democrat." When I explained the situation to Carter, he called Braden. Braden called Mr. X, whose name must remain anonymous, and I got a call from Dr. Keene who said, "Mission accomplished. He's in your corner now." Never underestimate the value of a friend.

There was no further delay. I was notified to be at meeting of Trustees in Los Angeles the last week in April, 1967. Shortly after the luncheon break,

Mansel Keene told Mary and me to be at the plenary session, where an announcement would be made. The announcement was made by Chairman Al Ruffo, who asked that Mary and I stand to be recognized, which we did to embarrassingly long applause. The appointment as president of Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, became effective May 1, 1967.

We returned to San Luis Obispo just in time for the weekend of Poly Royal. The word of the appointment had preceded us. At a reception arranged by the administrative staff, I took Dale Andrews aside. I said, "Dale, for the next few months, through the summer at least, I want you to continue to handle all the operational details just as though you were still the acting president. I want to be free to consult with every school and every department about their visions for the future."

The May 9 *Staff Bulletin* includes an item listing a schedule of meetings starting that very day with various faculty and student groups. I was quoted as saying I would continue similar meetings through the remainder of the academic year, and during the summer months would arrange on-campus meetings with community groups, raising the same basic question, "What Can We Build If We Work Together?"

It was a theme I had taken from an article about the peacekeeping role of the secretary-general of the United Nations. At first some people thought I was talking only about material things, but eventually the concept was accepted for what I really meant: By working together we could accomplish whatever we agreed was important. The announcement also contained a thank you to the hundreds of people who had sent congratulatory messages. I concluded with, "I hope that I can be a catalyst in the process that can make Cal Poly a great institution."

At the very same moment I was trying to convince everyone that I would be initiating new procedures by which consultation would take place so their ideas could be considered in the decision-making process, I decided there were a few matters that needed to be completed while we were in the "honeymoon" period. It took a bit of finessing to write the announcement I made on May 9 that Harold Wilson was being promoted on an acting basis to fill the position I was vacating as administrative vice president and that Dr. Andrews would continue in the academic vice president position. I knew that some faculty wanted to go through the whole selection process for an academic vice president, but I argued that Andrews was already in that position — which was technically correct in a budgetary sense. However, McPhee had never identified the position as "academic" and



*Kennedy as the new president presides over the 61st annual commencement on June 17, 1967. Chancellor Glenn Dumke, Lt. Gov. Robert Finch, and Vice President Dale Andrews share the platform.*

Andrews' role had never been confined to a purely academic one. The beauty of the honeymoon was evident, since I never heard a contrary word from anyone.

On Saturday afternoon, June 17, 1967, before the commencement exercises in which Lt. Governor Robert Finch was to speak, we had a luncheon for the platform party and their wives. Chancellor Dumke, who was to introduce the speaker to the graduates, was sitting next to Mary at the luncheon, and I was sitting next to Dorothy Dumke. I could overhear the Chancellor ask Mary, "When are you planning to move into the president's house on the campus?"

"I don't plan to move into that house. It's old and run-down and not nearly as nice as my own home. The house on campus can be used for some other purpose," said Mary.

The Chancellor looked startled, then said, "But, Mary, you have to move into that house eventually; it is important to the system. We are supporting

legislation which would provide funds to build similar presidential homes on all the campuses. If the legislature and the governor were to learn that Cal Poly's president was not using the house built for that purpose, it would undermine the rationale we are presenting to support the concept."

He turned to me and said, "You have to fix up the president's house so Mary will want to move into it. You know it would be a death knell to our proposal for presidents' homes on all the campuses if you refuse to live in one of the few that we have."

"We don't have funds budgeted to fix it up," I said.

"You can either transfer funds from other categories or start a campaign in the community to raise money for that purpose," said the Chancellor.

"You don't know the Cal Poly faculty or the San Luis Obispo community," I said. "The honeymoon period would be over the moment I proposed transferring state funds justified for one category into a category earmarked to make living easy for the Kennedys. The community would feel the same way, I'm sure. But if you insist we live there, I'll figure a way to get that 1928 structure modernized to 1967 standards. I'll let you know how it can be done after I've talked to some staff about it." My last remark seemed to satisfy the Chancellor, but I didn't have the slightest clue as to how to accomplish what I had promised.

It probably was during this campus visit that the Chancellor let it be known that he wanted a campus committee to plan and carry out an inaugural ceremony that would be a clear message to the academic world that Cal Poly had become much more than the small, struggling technical school of past years. He said that the Kellogg campus already had completed plans for such an inaugural for Bob Kramer, to be held in October. By early October the San Luis Obispo campus had formed an inauguration committee of which Dr. Roy Anderson, former dean and then head of the business administration department, was chairman. When the Kellogg campus inauguration was held in late October, four San Luis Obispo representatives were present: Anderson, Andrews, Wilson, and Kennedy. The main speaker was Dr. Emory Morris of the Kellogg Foundation.

Despite his illness, President McPhee was present and also spoke in support of Kramer's new role. McPhee's months of medical treatments for cancer showed in his appearance and uncharacteristic slowness of movement and speech. Less than a month later on November 10, 1967, he died in a San Francisco hospital. His funeral was held in San Francisco, the city of his birth 72 years earlier. A mass was held for him in the Old Mission Catho-

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lic Church in San Luis Obispo and an outdoor memorial service was held on the Cal Poly campus on November 16. Students, faculty, and staff congregated on the lawn in front of the main steps of the 1949 Walter Dexter Library building, the second major new building built on campus during McPhee's 33 years as the college's sixth president. Rush Hill, an architecture student who later became a special assistant to Governor Reagan, spoke in his role as student body president.

The eulogy I wrote and presented as a representative of the faculty and staff was a sincere tribute to the man who had taken over a small technical school with a 1933-34 enrollment of 239 boys and no girls and built it into a three-campus coeducational institution with over 12,000 students when he retired in 1966. My remarks that day were printed in full as an attachment to the November 21 edition of the *Staff Bulletin*. Quoted below is a portion of that eulogy to the man who was more than my boss: He was my mentor, my teacher, my severest critic, and the person most responsible for my becoming his successor president of Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

Julian A. McPhee did not presume that he had found the answer for everyone — but the answer for his own life was a simple but strong belief in the effectiveness of the concept: "service above self."

He truly lived by that concept, giving little thought to his personal welfare — always giving of himself 100 percent to build organizations which would better serve the continuously changing needs of the young men and women of this state, this nation, and the world. He loved the paradox of his favorite expression: "The way to be selfish is to be unselfish."

His unselfish service to others brought to Julian A. McPhee, in his lifetime, unsought-for honors fit for a king. More important to him, it brought frequently expressed words of gratitude from former students who recognized the influence of this man's work upon their lives.

And the word "work" had a particularly important place in Julian A. McPhee's life. He had tremendous faith in work. He believed that a human being's work not only shaped his destiny, but provided him with dignity and justification and purpose.

No educator in this state ever understood so well the value of political strength and power — and he recognized these concepts in a practical rather than theoretical sense. He used strength and power and a charismatic leadership ability to build in California, in one lifetime, the strongest program of vocational agriculture education in the nation, a total system of vocational education for the state's high schools, and the only

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two polytechnic colleges in the California State College system. And he achieved these goals by overcoming obstacles placed in his way by powerful opposing forces and by disregarding the advice of men who said, "It can't be done."

Though he understood and used strength and power, he also recognized and struggled with weaknesses and insufficiencies — both in himself, in his colleagues, and in the system within which he had to operate.

He was a humble man who struggled to remain humble even when great honors were being bestowed upon him. He was a man who worked in his shirt-sleeves and was as friendly to stevedores and braceros as to men of high rank and great wealth.

This man we honor today counted authority and order as the necessary limitations upon man's great desire for freedom and liberty. He bore heavy responsibilities for the entire span of his adult life. But he bore those responsibilities cheerfully and willingly because he always carried with him a vision of how any present situation might be improved for the eventual advantage of society and the individual.

One of my regrets in life is that McPhee did not live long enough to attend the inaugural ceremonies that were held in my honor on April 2-3, 1968, almost a year after my appointment to the position of president. It would have given me an opportunity to have said while he was still alive some of the things I said at the memorial service. I think he would have liked the fact that representatives of 133 colleges and universities from all parts of the United States, including 27 presidents, were there to see what he had accomplished during his 33-year tenure. He might not have liked the fact that there was an academic procession with 460 persons in full colorful academic regalia. But he would have been pleased that Governor Reagan was the main speaker. On the other hand, I had been very apprehensive when the chairman of the inaugural committee first told me that the governor had been invited to be the main speaker.

Months before the inaugural the news media had made most everyone in California aware that students at the University of California in Berkeley had now elevated their original free speech movement into demonstrations against the war in Vietnam, the so-called irrelevance of much of higher education, and the arrogance of university administrators, who they claimed did not listen to their complaints. When student demonstrators refused to vacate a piece of university land on which they were camping, the governor called in the National Guard to move them out of what the students

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called the "People's Park." Television coverage vividly portrayed the students as innocent victims of police brutality, and students everywhere in the state began to demonstrate in sympathy, even at Cal Poly. Rightly or wrongly, most of the criticism was aimed at Governor Reagan.

About that time Roy Anderson let me know that the governor had accepted the committee's invitation to be the main speaker at the inauguration. Visualizing a major anti-governor demonstration, with outside demonstrators from every campus in the state, I called Chancellor Dumke and shared my concerns.

"Let's call the whole thing off," I said for openers. "It isn't worth the possible violent confrontations that can occur," I added.

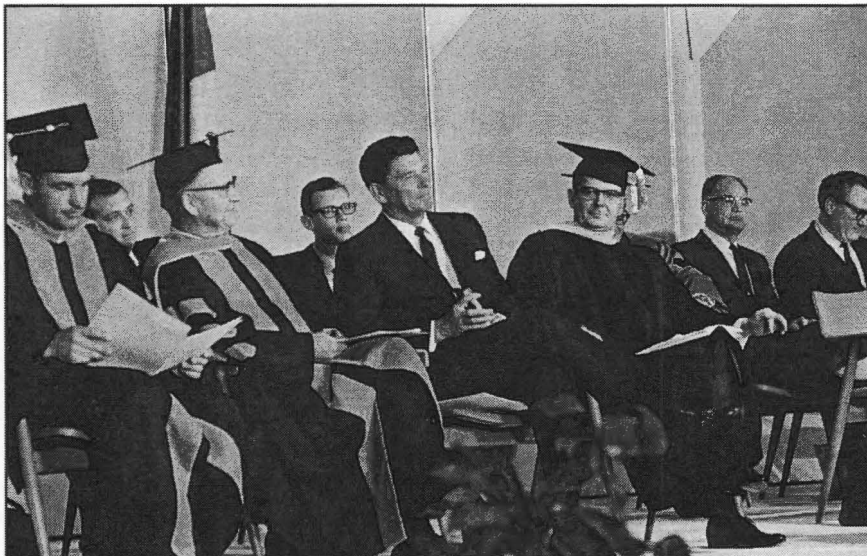
Chancellor Dumke, trying to calm my worries, only added to them when he said, "You've got a quiet, peaceful campus and people on your staff who know how to control such possibilities. Don't be intimidated. I have reviewed the committee's plans and they have a great program outlined. I have every confidence you'll have no trouble at San Luis Obispo."

The fateful day came, with college and university representatives from all over the nation descending on the community of San Luis Obispo, whose local historians wrote that "Nothing like it had ever been seen in this area before."

The *Telegram-Tribune's* April 2 story on the inauguration stated that Governor Reagan was due to arrive at the San Luis Obispo airport at 10:15 A.M. and he would join the academic procession at 11 A.M. Six members of the Board of Trustees were listed as platform guests and the story added that representatives of 41 learned societies would be in the procession. The story added that 280 faculty members "are donning caps and gowns for the occasion," which for Cal Poly was a first. Mrs. Alma McPhee, widow of Julian, was a platform guest and marched in the procession, representing the late president emeritus.

I had never seen a larger audience in the Men's Gymnasium for any event. As we took our seats on the platform, I was seated next to Chancellor Dumke, who presided, and Governor Reagan, who was much more relaxed than I.

What happened next gave me a completely revised opinion of the governor. I had always assumed that as an actor, he would have memorized speeches prepared by someone else. There were some dozen people who were on the platform, each prepared to speak for a few minutes as a representative of some group. The governor was listed as the next-to-the-last



*Governor Ronald Reagan waits his turn to speak at the inauguration ceremony for REK held April 3, 1968. Behind the governor is Rush Hill, student body president, who soon became a member of the governor's staff.*

speaker, and I was last. I had a speech to give that I had worked on for weeks, practiced for days, and was not certain about even at that last moment.

Governor Reagan took out of his inside coat pocket a packet of blank 5 x 7 cards and a pen with a wide felt tip that made heavy black lines. While we listened to the prior speakers (or, more accurately, waited for them to finish), Governor Reagan was making notes on a dozen or more cards. Those were the only notes he used for his major speech which was quoted the next day in the local paper under the headline, "Reagan stresses schools' role, costs in Poly speech."

He said, "If all the problems of finance could be solved tomorrow, there would still be cause for concern about the place of higher education in America." Turning to the subject of academic freedom, he said, "One thing we should all be agreed on is the college's obligation to teach, not indoctrinate." Never in history, the governor said, had there been such a need for men and women of wisdom and courage to absorb the knowledge of the past, plan its application to the present and future, and have the courage to make the hard decisions.

Advance coverage by the wire services made much of the fact that Governor Reagan, not an admirer of Sen. Robert Kennedy, then a candidate for president of the United States, was going to participate in the inau-

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guration of a president named Robert Kennedy.

After Chancellor Dumke and Trustee Chairman Merriam had administered the oath required of a president accepting the obligations of administering a state college, they hung around my neck a very attractive medalion, designed and created by a Cal Poly art department faculty member, Roger Bailey. At that point I was invited to respond in an acceptance speech.

My main thrust was to emphasize that many people working together — not one man nor even a few — “shall shape the character of this College in the future.” I reminded the audience, which included thousands of students and many townspeople, that

American colleges and universities have arrived at a position of uneasy balance which admits the need for both time devoted to educating a person for his role as a citizen in a free society and time devoted to educating a person to be a productive member of a profession or occupation.

I pointed out that colleges with names that include the word “technology” or “polytechnic” are suspect automatically of overspecialization. I said,

At this polytechnic college we may emphasize science and technology, but we shall strive for appropriate equilibrium between the knowledge man needs to reform his environment and the understanding he needs to live at peace with other men.

These purposes, I said, are not incompatible. In an aside, I reflected on a phrase made popular in that period by young students who sought “to do their thing.” I added, “Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, wants to be the best polytechnic college in the state and nation — and that’s our thing.”

I concluded by telling the audience, and particularly the Trustee representatives on the platform, what I looked forward to in helping Cal Poly carve out its niche in higher education.

I look forward to a Cal Poly which will not be afraid of dissent and freedom, but which will operate within a framework of standards that truly will make it a model of democracy in action.

I look forward to a Cal Poly which will match its technological strength with educational breadth; its fundamental practicality with creative vision; its traditional stability with dynamic innovativeness.

I look forward to a Cal Poly which will command respect because its educational processes are excellent and its democratic processes are effective.

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The evening before this ceremony, an inaugural concert was presented before a maximum crowd in the Little Theater. Sponsored by the Cal Poly music department, it featured the Cal Poly Little Symphony under the direction of Clifton E. Swanson, conductor, and duo pianists Ronald V. Ratcliffe and Rosalie Davidson.

The governor stayed for a luncheon after which he made a hit with some of my relatives, including my mother, by his complimentary remarks about "Bob and Mary" even though we hardly knew each other — as yet.

At a reception held in an outdoor patio on the campus, Mary and I were greeted by faculty, students, and community friends. The occasion was a relief from the heavy academic pomp and ceremony that had preceded it. Of the many comments I heard from handshakers, the only one I remember was the remark by J.I. Thompson, retired livestock specialist, who said, "Bob, I don't know what kind of college president you are going to make, but I know that Mary will make one fine first lady." That was prophecy, the truth of which was attested to by most everyone who attended the retirement dinner in our honor 12 years later.

I thought I was remarkably lucky to survive as president. One of the many California state college presidents who became a casualty of student unrest was John Summerskill, who lasted just two years, 1966–68, as president of San Francisco State. In his book, *President Seven*, he told of attend-



*At the inaugural luncheon Gov. Reagan entertained the guests with humorous stories. Some Democrats, like Trustee Don Hart, didn't laugh.*

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ing the inauguration at Cal Poly in which he marched in the order of his institution's founding in 1899. He wrote that peace on our campus was because "Cal Poly has an acre for every three students and an excellent reputation for instruction in mechanical, agricultural and other arts."

It was that reputation I tried to enhance.

LESSON SEVENTEEN *It takes hard work and considerable luck to live up to visions and goals so easily expressed in an inaugural speech.*

COLLEGE PRESIDENTS CAN WIN OR LOSE

I WAS SITTING in a back row of the assembly room on the second floor of an office building on Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, where the State College system was headquartered.

Someone came up behind me and whispered in my ear, "The Chancellor wants you to come to his office as soon as possible." I glanced over my shoulder to see the voice was that of the Chancellor's administrative assistant. He continued to whisper, "Get off the elevator at the 11th floor and walk up a flight to the 12th. Because the governor is in a meeting on the 12th floor, you can't get off the elevator there."

The meeting I was attending at the moment was one of the Trustees' committees, with nothing on the agenda that pertained to Cal Poly specifically, so I had no problem about leaving. I walked out, down the hall to the elevators, took the first one going up, and punched eleven. On the 11th floor I found State Highway Patrol officers, Los Angeles city police officers, and a Chancellor's security staff member, who identified me to officers guarding the stairs to the 12th floor.

Entering Chancellor Dumke's inner office I could see that there were two other state college presidents present: John Pfau of San Bernardino and William Langsdorf of Fullerton. Dumke was on the phone in a conversation that had his usual cool and collected appearance growing steadily more agitated. He motioned me to sit, which I did.

Shortly Dumke hung up the phone and said to the three of us, "It's worse than I expected. That was Bob Smith, acting president at San Francisco State. He was calling from a pay phone across the street from the campus. He says he cannot get into his office because of a student sit-in demonstration. He just submitted his resignation, and there was nothing I could say to make him withdraw it."

He evidently had alerted both Pfau and Langsdorf to a part of the drama that had preceded the phone call. He directed his next remarks to me: "Bob, the Trustee Committee on Faculty-Staff Affairs is having a closed personnel meeting in my conference room next door, and both the governor and the lieutenant governor are also attending the session. I left the meeting a few moments ago to take this call from Bob Smith, after I had assured the

governor and the other Trustees that we had the situation at San Francisco State under control, despite all the adverse publicity we got when John Summerskill told the press he had been fired. I told them he had elected to resign. I suppose technically he was right, because I said he could either resign or I would relieve him of his presidential duties and appoint an acting president. The governor and most of the Trustees were pleased that I took that action. But now I've got to go back in there and tell them that Bob Smith, acting president, also has resigned."

I wanted in the worst way to say, "Dr. Dumke, why are you telling *me* all this?" but I said nothing, expecting to hear something more very shortly. And I did hear something — something I didn't want to hear. The Chancellor went on:

"I have been talking to John and Bill about the situation and we have concluded that the only solution left is for us to send a committee of three experienced presidents, who have shown their ability to deal with students, to San Francisco State and have them take the actions necessary to bring order back to that campus."

Then he added, "John, Bill, and I agree you should be the third president."

I immediately said, "It's a bad plan, Glenn. The news media will take it apart in seconds. The headlines will call the committee a 'Russian-type troika' and the concept of a dictatorial group of carpetbaggers will be the focus of every news story and TV shot for the next 48 hours. It won't work, and furthermore, if you insist upon it, the three presidents you send will be persona non-gratas when they return to their respective campuses. I can't refuse you if you order me to go, but it would be with great reluctance."

Pfau and Langsdorf, who were very close to Dumke and considered by the other presidents to be his fair-haired boys, looked at me as if I had just committed treason.

Dumke said, "You may be right, but what other option do I have?"

"In my opinion, Glenn, you must take someone presently on the faculty who can communicate with students and who has enough leadership ability to get cooperation from the faculty. You were president there once, you must know people who could do it," I argued.

"I racked my brain for several days and came up with the name of Bob Smith — and now he quits in frustration. I don't have any other names that I can count on. If you three can come up with the name of someone who could do the job, I'll accept it. The Trustees are getting ready to go to lunch. We have just until 1:30 to find a solution. I want the three of you back here

in my office ready to go into the meeting when it reconvenes after lunch." Those were his final words. He stood up to dismiss us, and we left.

I had promised Mary, who was waiting for me at the nearby motel, that we would eat lunch together. I hurried to the motel, told her the story, and said, "Help me think of someone on the San Francisco State faculty who might be able to handle this job — or I'll be one of three sacrificial lambs."

She said, "I only know one San Francisco State faculty member and that is S.I. Hayakawa. Remember we heard him speak at a Claremont College seminar on student unrest. He is an internationally known expert on communication, is a racial minority himself, and was once editor of a Chicago black newspaper. Why don't you tell Dumke to appoint him?"

A quick bite of lunch and I went racing back to Dumke's office with what I was prepared to say was *the* solution. In the room with Dumke, Pfau, and Langsdorf I told them why I thought Hayakawa was the answer. I even recalled and reported to them the fact that Hayakawa had practically led the audience at Claremont in singing the song, "We Shall Overcome," as he had an emotionally charged audience holding hands and swaying back and forth as they followed his lead.

Dumke said, "You mean you think Sammy could do it?" I had never heard anyone call Dr. Hayakawa "Sammy" before, but that was what Glenn called him, and I figured it was a good sign. While we sat there, Glenn had his secretary attempt to get Sammy at three different numbers she was able to pry out of the San Francisco State telephone operator.

Glenn turned to me after there was no success, and said, "I'll stay here and keep trying, but the three of you will have to go into the Trustee meeting with the governor, which will still be an off-the-record executive session. Bill can tell them my plan to send the three of you."

I said, "Glenn, have your security man talk to the governor's driver, who is a senior CHP officer. He can call the Highway Patrol, get Hayakawa's car license number, and they can put out an all-points bulletin for him. Hayakawa may be driving someplace around the Bay Area. They'll find him if he is."

Langsdorf, Pfau, and I went into the executive session, where Bill explained Dumke's plan of sending the three of us to handle that campus as an administrative committee. Governor Reagan immediately spoke up, "That's a great idea. That's what we need; some administrative experience on that campus."

Langsdorf then said, "I think you should hear what Kennedy has to say, since he doesn't agree with Dumke's plan."



*Senator S.I. Hayakawa, former president of San Francisco State,  
greet Mary Kennedy at the April, 1978, Lincoln Day Dinner.  
Looking on is Judy Money, chairman of the event.*

I said to the Trustees what I had said to Dumke, stressing the bad press the "troika" concept would get.

When I was with Mary at noon she had told me that her sister had called from San Diego to tell her that their 90-year-old mother had just had a stroke and we needed to drive to San Diego immediately after the Trustees' meeting. I had agreed we needed to go there as soon as possible.

I addressed myself to the governor and the Trustees, saying, "My wife and I must drive immediately to San Diego because her mother has been taken to the hospital. I have given Dr. Dumke phone numbers in San Diego where I can be reached. If it is your decision to send the three presidents to San Francisco State, I will go if ordered to do so, but reluctantly. I can fly to San Francisco and be there tomorrow if necessary."

En route to San Diego, we were going through the town of San Clemente with our radio on a news channel when the word came that the Trustees had appointed S.I. Hayakawa as acting president of San Francisco State.

The rest is history, but not all of it ever made the printed record. Someone must have told Sammy that it was my recommendation that caused

Dumke to chase him down that fateful day. At the very next Trustees' meeting he found me at the long table assigned to the presidents, which faced the U-shaped tables occupied by the usual 16 or so Trustees. He sat down next to me and said, "Can you tell me the names of the Trustees?"

"Sure," I said. I made him a seating chart and filled in the names of each Trustee, including Governor Reagan, Director of Education Max Rafferty, Lt. Gov. Bob Finch, and Jesse Unruh, Speaker of the Assembly. At the next Trustees' meeting, Sammy sat next to me again, and said, "Tell me again the names of the Trustees." I made him another chart. We started going to lunch together and walking Wilshire Blvd. for exercise before the meetings resumed.

When Dr. Hayakawa jumped onto the platform and pulled the plug on the demonstrators' public address system, every paper in the nation ran his picture showing him wearing his trademark tam-o'-shanter. While he didn't wear that flat-topped cap while we walked Wilshire Blvd., people recognized him anyway. One day as we were walking past a barbershop someone recognized him and all the barbers and the customers, some wearing aprons, ran out and asked for his autograph. After we resumed our walk, I said, "Sammy, with that kind of recognition you can resign the presidency, run, and be elected to any office you want in California." It wasn't long after my comment that he ran for and was elected to the United States Senate.

Hayakawa was Cal Poly's commencement speaker in June, 1970. When we walked onto the stadium field at the head of the academic procession, we had to progress down the sidelines past the grandstand to reach the speaker's platform. Hayakawa, walking beside me, was being applauded by the crowd which began to stand, section by section, as we passed by. He began to smile, turned to me as we continued marching along and said, "They like me." As the procession moved slowly in front of the grandstand, Hayakawa responded to the crowd's applause as though he had just won a prize fight. He extended his arms over his head, grasped his hands, and shook them as a figurative gesture that he was shaking hands with everyone in the stadium. Then he asked me, "When the Trustees appointed me in 1968, did the governor really say what I've been told he said, 'If Hayakawa accepts the presidency of San Francisco State, I'll forgive him Pearl Harbor'?"

I answered, "You can't prove it by me, Sammy, I was en route to San Diego when it happened."

#### COLLEGE PRESIDENTS CAN WIN OR LOSE

Mary and I were in a much more distant place than San Diego when we discovered that Hayakawa had become more than a national hero — he had become an international hero.

In Bangkok, in early January, 1969, I was speaking before a group of Thai education officials and at the end of my presentation asked if there were any questions. The first question asked was, "Did President Hayakawa personally confront rioting students, or is that just U.S. press propaganda?"

I had been asked by the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) to make both an inspection trip of Cal Poly's AID-sponsored project in Thailand and add the "prestige" of a U.S. college president by presenting to Thai educational leaders the agency's policies on how to upgrade and improve both the teacher training program and the agricultural programs offered in 14 secondary schools.

I had been on the job about a year and a half when this second opportunity for international travel at the federal government's expense was offered to me. When AID had proposed a similar September, 1968, inspection trip of our Guatemala project, my wife, Mary, a longtime active member of the League of Women Voters, said simply, "I'm going too, as an official observer. I'm able to withstand any hardship you are and you need an assistant to keep track of the names and titles of all those people you'll be meeting. I'll pay my own expenses." She went, observed, and paid her way. She traveled the whole 12 years as the president's observer and assistant.

It turned out that arrangements for the trip to Guatemala had progressed a considerable distance through the federal bureaucracy before I announced that "my wife is going with me — at our personal expense." The first reaction I received was, "That's impossible, our plans are already made." When that didn't change my position, the answer was, "Sorry, but in Guatemala the customs are such that the presence of a female in many of the planned meetings and social activities would not be acceptable." When I told Mary the content of that last communiqué, I learned that my wife had somehow become a very vocal women's liberation activist. While her presence in Guatemala may have upset some bureaucrats in Washington, D.C., she was greeted with open arms by Angela Hinton, wife of the second in command at the U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City. Angela told us, "Until you and Mary insisted that she go with you wherever you went in the official tour of Guatemala, I had never been permitted to accompany my husband on any trip outside the city limits of Guatemala City." The fact that Mary

was going with me on our countrywide tour made it necessary, according to Embassy officials, that she be accompanied by a female companion, and because of our so-called social status level, that companion had to be someone of Angela Hinton's level.

Because we were going to pay for all of Mary's expenses on such trips, we decided we should adopt a policy of combining the schedule of such official trips with some vacation time, taken either before or after the official trip. The opportunities for such travel came several times during my 12 years as president, and we felt we both profited from the experiences. Not always were the experiences pleasant or without their frustrations, and sometimes there was even exposure to conditions hazardous to one's health.

The vacation portion of the trip began August 27 with a stop-off in Mexico City for four days before flying to Guatemala. Standing on the front steps of the Prado Hotel, so we could see a "revolutionary parade" going by on the boulevard directly in front of us, we were pushed around by demonstrators who somehow identified us as "unwanted capitalist gringos." I was startled to see as units of the parade a series of school buses, each with its plainly printed identification of "Mexico Polytechnic College." From the lowered windows of those buses protruded the heads and hands of students. Most of them were wildly waving red flags on which was the hammer and sickle of the international Communist Party.

Before we were scheduled to fly out of Mexico City to Guatemala City, I picked up an English language newspaper and read that the American ambassador to Guatemala had just been assassinated and that a state of martial law now existed in Guatemala City.

I phoned Howard West, Cal Poly's coordinator of overseas programs, and asked him to find out from Washington, D.C., whether they wanted us to abort the trip to Guatemala. West was due to join us in Guatemala, so the information was vital for him too. Several hours later I got the answer by phone from Howard, who quoted the AID official: "Proceed as though nothing extraordinary has happened. We wouldn't want Guatemala government officials to think we can be intimidated by terrorist actions." Ambassador Gordon Meen was the first U.S. ambassador to be assassinated by terrorists — so it was an extraordinary event, whether Washington believed it or not.

We arrived in Guatemala City in time to attend a meeting of all Embassy staff personnel and listen to Acting Ambassador Hinton's attempt to quiet staff fears while telling them how we should all act during the funeral

service the next day in the Union Community Church, which would be guarded by government troops and military helicopters. We attended the funeral, but could hear very little of the service because of the noise of circling army helicopters. Bill Troutner, Phil Bromley, Chuck Atlee, and others of the Cal Poly Guatemala project staff explained to us that the Guatemala government's requirement that you drive at night with your inside dome light on was not for the purpose of making the occupants targets but so military police at various blockades in the city could see who was in the vehicle as it approached a barrier.

Traveling with Angela Hinton in an embassy car with a Guatemala driver, and accompanied by other AID and Cal Poly staff in other cars, we first toured the northeastern corner of the nation, at one point taking a Coast Guard cutter the length of Lake Izabal to the city of Livingston on the Gulf of Honduras. Our schedule was known to many. Some complications on the trip caused us to alter the schedule and we skipped one planned stop at a *finca* (farm) where we were to have stayed the night. Later, back in the comparative safety of Guatemala City, we learned that terrorists had attacked the *finca* on the night we should have been there, and killed a number of native workers.

Just one month after our experience in Mexico City we read that on October 2, 1968, a few days before the Summer Olympics opened in Mexico City, Mexican soldiers fired on some 10,000 students and sympathizers gathered in the Plaza of the Three Cultures, killing hundreds and wounding thousands. The students were demanding more freedom from the government. An engineering professor described the event as a "horrible massacre."

The vacation portion of our trip to Southeast Asia began right after Christmas in 1968. About halfway to Los Angeles, en route to the airport, Mary announced, "I forgot a top coat, we have to go back; it may be cold in Japan." Figuring we did not have time to drive an extra 100-mile round trip to San Luis Obispo, I said, "Don't worry. When we get to Tokyo, I'll buy you the best overcoat they've got — but not a fur coat." On arriving in Tokyo we learned something about Japanese customs, one of which is to shut down all business operations, except those essential to tourist trade like hotels and restaurants, during the week-long New Year's celebration. There were no major department stores open, not even non-major ones. Mary shivered through a week of travel wearing just a light sweater. Of course going in one's stocking feet in and out of shrines didn't warm us up, either.

In Thailand in January, 1969, she didn't need a sweater. It was hot and

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steamy, and everyone dressed in short-sleeved sport shirts, except on very formal occasions; unfortunately there were a number of those scheduled by the AID officials. Again, as in Guatemala, they wanted a U.S. college president to add prestige to their development program by talking to Thai educational officials and participating in whatever activities the Thai officials had arranged. Our main inspection was of the program being implemented at the Bangpra Teacher Training College, where Warren Smith, chief of party, and our Cal Poly staff were busy promoting American-style vocational agricultural classes, with lots of practical, learn-by-doing activities.

Highlights of the Thailand trip included visits to the Mai Jo Agricultural College, the school of agriculture of the University of Chiang Mai, and a Buddhist wedding at the university at which I was asked to tie the actual strings binding together the hands of the bride and groom. I was the speaker at a college commencement exercise; apparently Thai students understand the kind of English used in a commencement speech as well as do students in the United States.

We returned to San Luis Obispo to be greeted by the "hundred-year rainstorm" of 1969. It began on Saturday, January 18. By Monday morning, more than 10 inches of rain had fallen on the county within a 48-hour period. In one 25-minute period near noon, Sunday, more than one inch of rainfall was recorded. Damage was extensive in the city of San Luis Obispo. On Tuesday, January 28, Governor Reagan officially declared San Luis Obispo County a disaster area, a first in local history. In the first 25 days of 1969 more than 33 inches of rain swamped the county. The entire state was eventually declared a disaster area by President Nixon.

On the Cal Poly campus the worst damage was to merchandise of the El Corral campus store stored in the basement of the College Dining Hall; a considerable amount of water reached that area through the connecting tunnel between the two buildings. Several buildings on College Avenue were without power for several hours Sunday. The almost-completed new dining complex next to the new Yosemite dormitory units, named Vista Grande, had a stopped-up drain at the loading platform area, causing a lake that overflowed into the structure, racing over the newly installed carpeting to exit the building on the west side down the stairway like a cascading waterfall onto Grand Avenue. Pumps in the Natatorium burned out, rendering the swimming pool unusable until they could be replaced. Several offices and classrooms across the campus had to have water and mud removed from them. Essentially all college operations were functioning by

the time classes resumed Monday morning. Cal Poly students formed work crews called "Operation San Luis Obispo" to help local residents and businesses hit hardest by the storm. Nearly 200 students participated in the operation.

The storm did no appreciable damage to the new, prize-winning dormitory complex, called Yosemite Dormitory, perched on the hillside above College Avenue, the main entrance into the campus. Completed some months previous for the fall quarter opening, the structures were designed by Corwin Booth & Associated Architects, of San Francisco, and were constructed at a cost of \$3.4 million of non-state funds borrowed with a federal government low-interest-rate subsidy. When local residents first viewed the new structures, which were quite different from the red-brick dorms farther northwest on College Avenue, we heard much criticism: "outlandish, terrible, look like Indian cliff dwellings," etc. The January, 1969, edition of *College and University Business* featured them in an article on outstanding examples of college building design. The 15 examples included in the magazine were selected from 1,433 examples submitted by colleges and universities throughout the country. Today those dorms are accepted as great architecture.

The study of architecture at Cal Poly was becoming more important after the department became a school in October, 1967. It was no longer just a department within the school of engineering, where it had been placed from its early creation after World War II. The consultative process for the selection of a dean for the school was one of the fastest and most efficient, and the result one of the happiest, in my experience. I met with the entire faculty of the school of architecture, approximately 45 individuals at the time. I suggested they could go through the very complicated, involved process of establishing a selection committee, advertising nationally for candidates, reviewing résumés, interviewing top candidates, and making a recommendation to me, which I did not necessarily have to accept but probably would. Or they could consider promoting the man who had been their department head for almost the entire period since he arrived in 1949.

We did form a consultative committee, which I met with. I suggested the first thing they should do was conduct a secret-ballot election of their faculty and find out which of the two propositions I had suggested was favored. The committee reported back to me that the vote was almost unanimous in favor of promoting George Hasslein to the position of dean, which I did with a public announcement to that effect on February 13, 1968.

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Very shortly thereafter Dean Hasslein presented the necessary documents supporting a request for professional accreditation of the architecture program by the National Architectural Accrediting Board. After a campus visit by a three-man committee of nationally-known architectural educators, the program was accredited in early 1968. In September, 1969, a survey of professionals by the American Association of Architects on the relative merits of three architectural schools in California resulted in these returns: Cal Poly favored by 80 percent; USC, favored by 11 percent, and UC Berkeley favored by nine percent.

Getting accreditation for the School of Engineering was not such a happy experience, although it eventually was very successful. When the engineering faculty went through the traumatic experience of being denied accreditation in the fall of 1965, many of them vowed they would never submit themselves to that ordeal again. President McPhee had opposed the proposal to seek professional accreditation and was talked into it by the former dean, Harold Hayes. The effort failed primarily because each of the engineering departments involved had refused to include what the visiting team believed was a minimum of supporting science and mathematics courses, and more specifically not enough general education and humanities courses. It was what McPhee had predicted and many of the old-timers were convinced it would weaken their programs to remove units of practical, specialized engineering courses to make room for more general supporting science and humanities courses.

Even before it became Trustee policy that each state college should seek accreditation for its specialized professional programs, I was convinced that Dean Hayes was right and McPhee was wrong. The consultative committee on selection of a new dean of engineering gave me their recommendation soon after I became president in May, 1967. I looked over their priority rating on the three recommended candidates. Their No. 1 choice was Dr. Archie Higdon, who was retiring as a brigadier general from the Air Force Academy, where he held a position comparable to dean of instruction. In a meeting with the consultation committee I expressed concern that their first choice was too old and probably too traditional to fit in with Cal Poly or my idea of what was needed to get the engineering school fully accredited.

The committee chairman pointed out something I had missed in Dr. Higdon's papers. After retiring he had taken an assignment from the Engineering Council for Professional Development (ECPD) to survey *all* of the accredited engineering schools in the nation to determine what if any

changes in ECPD's accrediting policies and procedures should be made. "Besides," the chairman said, "in our interview with Dr. Higdon we were all impressed with the energy and enthusiasm this 60-year-old man has toward work."

That convinced me, so I arranged for an interview with Dr. Higdon and his wife. I was equally impressed and made the appointment. Dr. Higdon arrived on campus to take over his new duties at the opening of the fall quarter, September 1967. In my first meeting with him after he arrived on campus, I said, "Dr. Higdon, you told me that you promised to work for at least five years. There is only one thing that I want you to work on in that first five years. I want you to convince the engineering faculty of two things: (1) that they need accreditation, and (2) that they can get it, with your help."

"Yes, sir," he responded very briskly, just as though I were a five-star general giving him an order. "I shall accept that assignment gladly. Both items are within our reach. I have one request of you, though, sir."

"What is that request, Archie?"

"I want you to attend a general meeting I shall call of all engineering faculty at an hour that they can all be present. I want you to tell them two things: (1) you want all engineering programs to have professional accreditation, and (2) you have assigned me the responsibility to reach that objective as quickly as possible. Will you do that for me, sir?" Higdon added.

"I'm not used to giving such short speeches, Archie, but for you I'll do exactly what you asked. Just call my secretary, Grace Arvidson, enough in advance that she can eliminate any conflicts in my schedule so I can be there."

Dr. Higdon had a national reputation as an engineering educator that was enhanced by the fact that he was the author of a very popular and definitive textbook on engineering mechanics used in most of the nation's university-level mechanical engineering programs. He also had a great personality, winning ways, and was very persuasive and effective as a speaker. But even those credentials didn't prevent some of the old-timers from mounting campaigns with alumni and industry employers to bombard me with letters claiming my demand for accreditation would ruin Cal Poly's engineering programs and its reputation as a practical college.

I soon was able to figure out who the ringleaders of the opposition were. I called each of the three individuals into my office, one at a time, and let them know that I got their message, and they need not pursue it further. I pointed out to them that the letters from the industrial representatives in-

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variably proved my point: Cal Poly was training men who had the skills needed for certain specific jobs in their factories. In other words, I said, we are training some square pegs to fit a limited number of square holes. We cannot continue to offer an education which limits opportunities for our graduates. Get on the team, or get off. All three changed their tunes.

On August 26, 1969, Dean Higdon announced that he had received word from ECPD that the curricula for all five engineering programs for which we had submitted applications for accreditation had been approved. I was attending a meeting of the Board of Directors of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities in Wyoming, at the time. Dean Higdon sent me a telegram with the message he received from ECPD that read: "Congratulations to you and the entire faculty of the school of engineering for achieving ECPD accreditation in all five of the departments which submitted application and were inspected by our review team." Then Dean Higdon added, "Achievement of ECPD accreditation was long overdue for Cal Poly. Today's achievement is recognition of our past success and an even brighter future." Archie Higdon completed his full five years before he retired, having achieved the "assigned objective."

It pays to have friends in high places. I had learned early from President McPhee that it is in a state agency's best interest to cultivate amiable contacts — not only with legislators, governors, state Board members, and Trustees, but even the secretaries of people in offices where decisions are made. Such contacts will affect an institution's long-term welfare. We frequently gave secretaries potted plants, properly identified as produced by the Cal Poly ornamental horticulture department, with printed instructions on how to take care of them. The cost was usually borne by the Foundation, although in later years we used gift funds identified for discretionary use.

Hardly anything beats having a Trustee happy with the education received at your college by a son or daughter. We had several such cases. A daughter of Don Hart, chairman of the Board of Trustees in 1967-68, successfully graduated. A son of Charles Luckman, who served two eight-year terms and who was chairman from 1963-65, graduated in architecture. The college's Poly Royal board of directors chose Mr. and Mrs. Luckman to be honored guests of the April, 1968, event.

A little over a month before the event, the young man in charge of hosting the honored guests came into my office, greatly agitated. Someone, he said, had failed to make a motel reservation for the honored guests and there were no rooms remaining at any of the acceptable places in the whole



*Alex Madonna, a good friend of Cal Poly for many years, was honored by the community on April 3, 1971. Kennedy reads a resolution of the State Legislature, which pleases Alex.*

county. They had wanted the Luckmans to stay at the famous Madonna Inn, but that was definitely filled. He asked, did I have any influence with Mr. Madonna? Maybe I could get him to cancel someone's reservation and give it to the Luckmans.

I approached Alex Madonna, definitely a longtime supporter of Cal Poly, with the problem. He said, "No problem. I'll build them a new room. We've got more than 30 days to do it." He built the room, a magnificent, rock-studded affair with big boulders stuccoed into the ceiling. When the Luckman's registered the day before Poly Royal, Mrs. Luckman walked into

the newly created masterpiece, smelled the new stucco, looked at the rocks in the ceiling, and refused to stay in the room.

"No problem," said Alex. "We'll switch you with someone who doesn't have such a keen sense of smell."

It was during 1969 that one of mankind's apparently impossible dreams came true: Astronaut Neil Armstrong planted his boot firmly on the soil of the moon and told 500 million listeners a quarter of a million miles away, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." The year 1969 now ranks with 1492 and 1776 as one of three dates every schoolchild must remember.

At Cal Poly the years of 1968 and 1969 are remembered for many things, including some that had lasting impact:

1. New programs included new bachelors' degrees in history, computer science, and speech; new masters' degrees in agriculture and business.
2. New departments were created, sometimes by the process of splitting the discipline off from a department like social science, which at one time housed a dozen different disciplines. Such were the new departments of speech out of English, and history out of social science. New creations were art/design and psychology.
3. A College Union Board of Governors was created with student, faculty, and administration representatives and a constitution and bylaws designed to ensure fiscally sound operation of the new College Union.
4. The instructional deans, once gathered as close around the president's office as possible to ensure ease of communication, coordination, and control, were decentralized in keeping with the new president's concept of delegation of responsibility. Each dean's office was relocated as close as possible to the major departments that office administered.
5. A new football coach, Joe Harper, was appointed upon the resignation of Sheldon Harden, who had survived the air crash and held the program together in a rebuilding period.
6. A minor change in a title of a publication had implications related to changes in the way people use words. The *Staff Bulletin*, established in the early 1950s as a media for communicating to all employees, had its name changed to *Cal Poly Report* in January, 1969. (The system had ruled that "staff" meant nonacademic employees, and the word did not cover the categories of "faculty" and "administration.")
7. The president continued his travels to meet with alumni in regional meetings throughout the state, covering the Sacramento Valley and South-

ern California in 1968 and 1969. Ignoring the advice of his close colleague, President Malcolm Love of San Diego State, never to give a speech, the new president talked about Cal Poly not only to alumni regional associations but to any group that invited him to speak. In the 12 years of his presidency, the speech file accumulated hundreds of major presentations, and a total of nearly 500 talks, some represented only by an outline on a 3 x 5 card.

On the personal side, the president discovered there was no longer time for the kind of vacations the family used to enjoy, often traveling to national parks throughout the West, with a preference for Yosemite, both the high country and the valley. But those kinds of vacations were not important now since the children had grown into adults. In 1965 daughter Maridel had married and joined her husband in 1966 at Ft. Knox, Kentucky, where he finished officer's training and became an Army instructor. Daughter Susan had married in August, 1967, and joined her husband in the Bay Area. Earlier, in 1961, Bob Jr. had married and eventually settled in Thousand Oaks. Youngest son Steve was rejected for his Army commission when a medical examination discovered a football injury to the spine had left its mark. In December, 1968, Mary's mother died at age 91. In October, 1969, Bob Sr.'s mother died at age 79.

So ended a period in which my greatest concern for Cal Poly was how to keep the peace when all around the nation students were revolting against any form of authority. College and university administrators had become targets for students' anger and frustration. Students, threatened with being drafted to fight an unpopular war, saw in college and university administrators symbols of the federal authority that could take their lives or maim them for life over a cause they questioned. Their reaction on many campuses was to do things that were illegal and destructive, including holding college presidents captive until demands were met. On liberal arts campuses the demands frequently were for "relevancy." Students claimed that the courses they were required to take were not relevant either to their needs or the needs of society.

At Cal Poly we had begun in 1967 to bring students into the decision-making process, including them on all faculty consultative groups. That action provided a process by which they could be heard. I believed 100 percent in the right of students to have a free press. I answered everyone's questions, not just the questions of reporters. I met on the Library lawn, at Chumash Auditorium, in the Union Plaza, wherever hundreds or thousands gathered. I was available. I moved the one military symbol on the campus,

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the annual full-dress military review of the ROTC unit, to Camp San Luis Obispo. We had no serious problems. No destruction. No violence. No hostage-taking. We communicated and the students reciprocated by being reasonable, rational, and courteous — usually. There wasn't a president in the CSC system who didn't think I was lucky.

LESSON EIGHTEEN *Fate, defined as an unearned result, often determines the success or failure of both men and institutions. Yet the slant given by the media to describe an action may influence public opinion in such unpredictable ways as to change the destiny of men and nations.*

KEEPING CAMPUS UNREST  
FROM BECOMING VIOLENT

WE WERE STANDING TOGETHER looking out the window on the southeast corner of the third floor of the Administration Building. We were not in the president's fourth-floor office but in a staff assistant's office that had been converted temporarily into a "command center." All of us could see the hundreds of students gathered on the lawn and street below us in front of the Administration Building.

"You were right, President Kennedy, that crowd is under control. It won't get violent unless there is some provocation. We are not going to provide it," said Sheriff Larry Mansfield of San Luis Obispo County.

"Do you think the demonstration leaders will continue to abide by your ground rules, President Kennedy?" The question was asked by Chris Money, then deputy district attorney for the county.

"So far the leadership of the SNAP organization [Students For New Action Politics] has done everything in accordance with the 'time, place, and manner' rules that the 'Trustees' legal staff established for such demonstrations. I encouraged them to do it 'right' by providing the speakers' platform, the public address system, security officers to protect their speakers in case some students with pro-war tendencies initiate a fight. I think they'll keep it peaceful. The test of my influence on the leadership will be after it is all over."

"How's that, President Kennedy?" asked Sheriff Mansfield.

"I told them part of the deal for my cooperation was for them to clean up the lawn area and not leave a mess for the grounds keepers," I answered.

That February, 1968, demonstration was against the Dow Chemical Company, whose employment recruiters were at that moment inside the first floor Placement Office interviewing students who would be graduating in June. Dow Chemical, manufacturer of napalm being used by U.S. military forces in Vietnam, had been the target of some violent student demonstrations on other college campuses. Our location in a rural area of California's Central Coast, away from the pressures of racial and poverty tensions, had given us lead time to plan ahead. I was aware that just a short while earlier, a Dow Chemical recruiter working in the placement office at Los Angeles State had barely escaped with his skin by climbing out a back window when angry students stormed the placement offices on that campus.

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Part of that advance preparation included a meeting I had held, with the cooperation of the sheriff's and district attorney's offices, with representatives of the California Highway Patrol and all the other law enforcement agencies in the county, which included the chiefs of police of a half-dozen or more incorporated cities surrounding the campus. By this time the problems at San Francisco State, Los Angeles State, Northridge, Long Beach, San Jose, Berkeley, UCLA, Claremont Colleges, and many other campuses outside California had given me an opinion which I shared with the law enforcement experts who attended the meeting.

"In every instance in which violence occurred, it appears from news media presentations to have been a reaction to some attempt on the part of the police using force to push people around," I told the officers. I knew it was not a very diplomatically worded message, but I was determined not to let it happen at Cal Poly. When I added the next statement, the atmosphere in the room became very chilly.

"If it becomes necessary for our Chief Security Officer, George Cockriel, to call for reinforcements, I do not want any law enforcement personnel on campus carrying guns."

Not only was there a general murmur of dissent, the sheriff took a show-of-hands vote. The question was, "If you are asked to send unarmed reinforcements, will you do it?" Not a single hand was raised in affirmation. The final verdict, agreed to by all the agencies present, was that on the date of the Dow Chemical Recruitment visit, the Sheriff's Department and the CHP would have riot-equipped officers stationed in vehicles at the California Division of Forestry station, just across Highway 1 from the campus back entrance, less than a mile from the center of the campus. The Division of Forestry station actually leased its ground from Cal Poly, so technically the reinforcements would already be on the campus in case of an emergency. I had made it clear to everyone that I was in charge and that no reinforcements were to be sent onto the campus proper unless I personally authorized it. When I used the words "personally authorized," I was reminded by the sheriff that in several of the cases where law enforcement was called in, the president of the college was trapped in his office by rioters with telephone wires cut. My response to that was that in our organizational setup we had a clear-cut line of succession to be used in the case of the incapacity of the president, and I would give a copy of that line of succession to the sheriff, just in case.

Probably the most effective preventive measure that we used would not have worked had we not had the cooperation of the faculty. About a week

#### KEEPING CAMPUS UNREST FROM BECOMING VIOLENT

before the scheduled visit of the Dow Chemical recruiters I called a meeting of deans, department heads, and faculty volunteers. I told them many psychologists are of the opinion that the single most pervasive cause of crowds becoming uncontrolled mobs is the feeling of anonymity that permeates a crowd and gives individuals a feeling that no one they know or care about will know what they have done should they decide to pick up a rock and throw it through a window. To prevent that feeling from overcoming individuals in a crowd, I proposed that large numbers of faculty members attend all such demonstrations and scatter themselves through the crowd, where they could be seen by students who knew they knew them. I know that at many campuses young faculty were identified sometimes as leaders of the demonstration. At Cal Poly that was not the case, and I received the full cooperation of the faculty. At this first instance, there was probably one faculty member present for every 25 to 30 students. The students did not know why the faculty were there, but they did know that they knew some of the faculty and that made them know their presence in the mob was not anonymous.

In the February 6 *Staff Bulletin* I issued a statement thanking faculty members for being present at the Dow Chemical Company demonstration. Later I personally thanked the leaders of the Students For New Action Politics (SNAP) for their adherence to the ground rules on which we had agreed in advance of the demonstration. One of the main issues was that they should not block the entrance to the Administration Building, through which people had to enter to go into the placement office. Our placement office at that time was administered by Gene Rittenhouse, and his operation had been evaluated by the Western Placement Association as the second most efficient placement operation on college and university campuses in the eleven western states. Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, was No. 1, and Rittenhouse's comment to me had been, "As No. 2, we try harder." Some people had asked me at the time why we did not cancel the scheduled Dow Chemical recruitment interviews. If I knew then what I know now, I would have.

The last event during that demonstration occurred when the head of SNAP asked if anyone in the crowd wanted to come up and use the microphone to address the crowd. One young man in cowboy boots, cowboy hat, and blue jeans jumped up on the platform, took the microphone and said, "I invite all of you to come out this Saturday afternoon to a jackpot rodeo at the campus rodeo arena." That ended the demonstration, with most of the so-called mob walking away with smiles on their faces. Then came an

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action none of the observers, including me, could believe. The SNAP leader handed paper sacks to a half-dozen of the organization's members who scattered out over the lawn, picking up every scrap of paper, including cigarette butts. It pays to communicate.

Another advance warning was given to me, this time by my wife, Mary, who witnessed at Pomona College in June, 1967, a demonstration that frightened her because our son Steve was one of the targets of the student demonstrators. Steve, a student at Cal Poly, Pomona, had joined the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) at Pomona College, since Cal Poly's southern campus did not have a military program. It was a cooperative arrangement, so that other four-year colleges in that area could obtain for their students the advantages of enrolling in an ROTC program. Steve could get a commission as a second lieutenant by serving in the senior ROTC program two years and attending two summer camps (not one) at Ft. Lewis, Olympia, Washington. In the final ROTC review before Pomona College and Army officials the cadets were put through their marching paces on the Pomona College athletic field.

The event occurred during the same week that Steve was to graduate, which was in conflict with graduation exercises over which I had to preside at San Luis Obispo. So father was not present, only mother, to witness both Steve's graduation and his final ROTC review. Students from the several Claremont colleges joined with Pomona College students to protest the existence of an ROTC unit at the college. Their method was to send a crowd of protesters to the athletic field as part of the audience, since the public was invited. At a strategic moment, on a given signal, large numbers left the stands, ran onto the field where the cadets were marching, and lay down in the path of the oncoming marchers. The protesters knew the cadets would have to walk over them unless their officers gave them an order to halt. That order did not come, and the cadets, trained never to break ranks, did walk over the prostrate protesters, usually stepping over them without damage, but not always. General confusion broke out, and violence erupted. Naturally the press was present, including television cameras. The event made the headlines, just as the protesters wanted. Mary was apprehensive of what could happen at San Luis Obispo, where I was scheduled in early June to conduct a Presidential Review of our ROTC unit in our stadium.

With that advance warning, I arranged to have our ROTC officials issue printed invitations to a list of guests, including the parents of the cadets, faculty, townspeople, etc., but not students unless they were part of a

family that was invited. The entrances into the stadium were handled the same way as during an athletic event — no admission without a ticket. That arrangement frustrated the protesters, who conducted their protest with signs outside the stadium — which was quite acceptable to me, since it communicated the basis of their objection to ROTC in a peaceful manner. However, there was some heckling of the uniformed cadets who had to arrive at the stadium through the ranks of the protesters.

My speeches at those ROTC Presidential Reviews were supportive because I believed our nation needed a civilian officer corps, not just an officer corps of men whose adult lives had always been under the authoritarianism of the military command. One student journalist, John Fitz-Randolph, came to my office after the 1968 Presidential Review and voiced great disappointment with me because of my support for ROTC.

A working journalist now in San Diego, he wrote me on April 30, 1990, after the riot that brought an end to Poly Royal. He said, "What in the world is going on with these beer riots at Poly? I'm sure you're as angry as I am that Poly Royal is viewed around the planet now as a place for drunken young people to battle police. It's a sickening, thoroughly disgusting display of animalistic nonsense." He ended his note with these words: "I recall the '60s at Poly with pride. Yes, we demonstrated, but peacefully and with a purpose. How can these kids (out-of-towners) justify their late-night barbarism?" President Warren Baker told me he felt the same way, and he saw it up close, at the scene.

Before any more Presidential ROTC reviews were held, I made a decision that was not applauded immediately by the ROTC officers. I requested that the reviews be held at Camp San Luis Obispo, where total security was possible and no heckling of cadets could occur. I asked that all military activities in which cadets wore uniforms should occur at the camp and not on the campus. Eliminating the visibility of the military symbolism eliminated the protests against the ROTC.

From the time the new Board of Trustees was formed to administer the existing and rapidly growing state college system, presidents were vying with one another to get the Trustees to hold their regular scheduled meetings on various campuses. The purpose, of course, was to give the hosting campus an opportunity to show the Trustees the facilities (or sometimes lack of facilities) and to give them tours and informational presentations so they would be more informed about a particular campus and its opportunities and problems.

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It was a great idea during peaceful times. Cal Poly had been at the forefront in making such invitations and in treating the visiting Trustees very royally. Our first experience at hosting a Trustees' meeting at San Luis Obispo occurred June 1-2, 1966, at the time President McPhee was being fêted as the retiring president.

Gov. Pat Brown seldom, if ever, attended Trustees' meetings. When Ronald Reagan became governor, he immediately started attending Trustees' meetings, where he was officially the presiding officer, although he usually turned over that duty to a current chairperson. When he attended, invariably the other ex-officio members also attended. Which meant that anyone wanting to protest a state government matter would be able to confront several "authorities" whom they wanted to influence.

To avoid what could have been dangerous confrontations, extreme security measures were taken whenever the governor was to be present. Our first experience with that situation had been at the April, 1968, inaugural where the governor's security people worked with campus security officials in advance. On that occasion the only untoward incident happened when a nonstudent attempted to hand out flyers without having abided by the proper "time, place and manner" regulations; he was hustled off the campus without observation by the press and with no subsequent publicity.

While I don't recall inviting the Trustees to hold a meeting on campus on March 26, 1969, it would have been done a year earlier to get the date on the Trustees' calendar. By March, 1969, I was wishing we did not have to go through the disturbance such meetings caused on a college campus — not from demonstrators, but just by the rearranging of facility use to provide meeting rooms, offices, reserved parking, etc. When you added the problems created by trying to provide maximum security for those in attendance, particularly the governor and other high state officials, it was daunting.

The governor's chief security officer, working in plain clothes, came on the campus in advance to inspect with our security chief, George Cockriel, all the buildings the governor would be entering, the streets he would travel, stops he would make, etc. I was brought into a meeting at the request of Chief Cockriel after the governor's man had said, "I will place plainclothes police sharpshooters on the roofs of the buildings looking down into the crowds we expect the governor will have to penetrate on foot to get into the Staff Dining Room where the plenary session is scheduled to be held."

Cockriel knew from past experience with me that I had refused to let the sheriff or the District Attorney's deputy bring armed police onto the

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campus to control potential disturbances. Cockriel had told the governor's security chief that he could not have armed police on the campus without my personal permission. I was not against having our own security men armed, since I was confident they were student-oriented and would not draw a weapon except in self-defense or to halt a felony in progress. In our conversation with our campus security officers, the Chancellor's security officers, and the governor's chief security officer present I asked several questions:

"What is the purpose of having sharpshooters on a roof?"

*Answer:* They can see down into a crowd better than a man on street level.

"If they were to see a person in possession of something that looked like a weapon at a distance of 100 yards, what would the sharpshooter do?"

*Answer:* Dr. Kennedy, you ask good questions, but I am responsible for the governor's safety. We would not have an officer shoot into a crowd.

"Then what is the purpose of a police sharpshooter on the roof?"

*Answer:* We think that they will be visible to any person who is thinking of acting violently against the governor. Their presence on the roof will be a deterrent because a terrorist does not know that our officers won't shoot and he or she is always planning the route of escape after the act and that is when police on the roof in radio communication with armed officers on the ground can direct movement to cut off escape. We hope that we can prevent the first act of violence by our obvious presence. If a first act does occur, we can prevent subsequent acts and escape of the criminal. Do I have your permission or must I advise the governor that it is not safe for him to come onto your campus?

I answered, "You have my permission. But make certain your officers understand your stated rationale for their role."

Fortunately, there was only the usual display of signs and some shouting of slogans by students — many of whom were not Cal Poly students but representatives of colleges and universities, public and private, who objected to the governor's hard-nosed attitude toward the demonstrators at UC Berkeley, where he had called out the National Guard to remove them from university property they'd named the People's Park.

Some time earlier the Trustees, concerned about the growing problem of student unrest on state college campuses, had passed a number of regulations aimed at giving campus administrators more legal authority to handle such problems. One such regulation stated it was illegal for anyone

to take an action "which would interrupt the normal academic processes." Chancellor Dumke was particularly concerned about the difficulty of providing both adequate facilities and security when Trustees' meetings were held on various campuses. He had been unable to get some of the Trustees to see his point, primarily because when Trustees asked the presidents whether they wanted them on campus, the answer was almost invariably "yes" for the obvious reason that "no" would sound ungrateful to a Trustee who wanted to become informed firsthand about a college.

At the beginning of each such on-campus Trustees' meeting the hosting president was given an opportunity to welcome the Trustees and take five or ten minutes to make whatever pitch about his campus he felt would be appropriate. The Chancellor came to me before that welcome was to be given and said, "Bob, do me and the Trustees a favor. Tell them honestly just how much trouble it is to host a Trustee meeting. They should be holding all meetings at the headquarters where we can guarantee safety as well as convenient and comfortable facilities."

I agreed with Dr. Dumke and pointed out to the Trustees that we could not assign facilities on a campus for the exclusive use of the Trustees with all the necessary arrangements for staff support, security and press coverage, without "interrupting the normal academic process" of the campus. I eased my own conscience by saying, "I'm only kidding when I say that your meeting is illegal because it violates one of your own rules, but I am serious when I say that there are better ways for Trustees to become acquainted with each of the system's campuses, since you have very little time during an official meeting when any of you can be free long enough to take a tour or talk to students."

Even though I was speaking against the short tour, I had such an opportunity to give the governor just that. His chief security officer came to me and said, "The governor would like to have you ride with him out to the airport; he wants to talk to you en route." I quickly notified Chief Cockriel what I was going to do and asked him to follow us in a patrol car, not for added security but because I needed a ride back to the campus. The governor's limousine was to be driven directly from the airport back to Sacramento, while the governor flew home. Leaving the meeting, I asked the governor for permission to direct his driver to take a back road. He said, "Fine, just get me to the airport on time." That was a joke, since it was a California National Guard plane that was waiting until he arrived. I was able to show him most of the farm operation as we left the central campus and

drove west toward our back-door entrance onto Highway 1.

That was the last plenary session of the Board of Trustees held at a state college campus, to my recollection. The Board arranged to have visiting committees of Trustees to inspect various campuses, but held all full board meetings at the Los Angeles headquarters, and, after 1976, at the new headquarters building constructed for them in Long Beach.

To Cal Poly students, faculty and staff I issued a statement of appreciation for the way in which they had hosted the visiting Trustees. Many students had served as official guides and hosts and in other capacities had made important contributions to the success of the event. I wrote,

The Trustees and the presidents of other state colleges who attended the meeting here have repeatedly expressed their admiration for this college's spirit of courtesy and friendliness. I particularly want to convey the respects of these officials, including the Governor of California, to those students who observed the arrival of the Board of Trustees in the area of the staff dining room and to those who were fortunate enough to attend the plenary session. The tolerance expressed for a few dissenters was also noted, as was the fact that dissent at this college at no time appeared to exceed the bounds of responsibility. Your colleagues, your parents and families, and the citizens of the State undoubtedly share with me this pride in the men and women of Cal Poly.

While preventing campus disturbances might not seem like a very efficient use of a president's time, the process of keeping the degree of student unrest at a minimum somehow involved the president whether he wanted to be involved or not. During the late 1960s and early 1970s students everywhere seemed to have two slogans that related to the problem: (1) "question authority," and (2) "see 'the man.'" They were basically opposed to any form of authoritarianism, particularly that which was represented by the military draft. And yet when they wanted to solve a problem, they did not want to deal with the democratic process, but wanted to go straight to the top, confront the top boss, put pressure on that couldn't easily be resisted, and enjoy the authoritarian's capitulating response. Part of what they seemed to want was nothing more than an audience with "the man" and an opportunity to debate an issue or at least make their views known to someone they felt could do something on their behalf.

My early years of experience at Cal Poly, not only as a classroom teacher but as faculty advisor for both the student newspaper and the yearbook, and

as a supervisor of students working as news bureau writers, photographers, and printers in the print shop, caused me to understand their problems, sympathize with them, and share with them whatever thoughts I had about solutions. I had also been closely associated with student athletes through my early responsibilities for athletic publicity. Neither the size nor the verbal ability of students gave me any concern. I was willing to debate with them in any environment on most any subject that pertained to Cal Poly. So I was not aloof from students. I tried not to hide behind a bureaucratic screen of obfuscation saying, "I can't take a position on that matter because it's delegated to the dean of students, or the business manager, or a vice president." Those people, and all the other administrators, knew I would not undercut them in any way by making commitments behind their backs — and they also knew they did not have to say, "I can't make a decision until I have talked to the president" — unless they knew it was a matter over which they had no delegated authority.

So I talked to students, in small groups, in large groups, and sometimes in crowds that filled the library lawn with thousands. On one such occasion, no one could have answered their questions satisfactorily: "Why are we fighting the war in Vietnam?" Even when I could not answer, they gave me credit for meeting with them and listening to them. At no time did I ever feel threatened by a mob of Cal Poly students — even when I was in the middle of one. That was not the case at many other colleges and universities, even some in the California State College system. The pressure and tension at some campuses caused presidents and acting presidents to resign so frequently that the Council of Presidents was having "retirement" parties for several of our colleagues every other month. Sometimes acting presidents served such short terms that we hardly knew their names while we were contributing funds to buy them "retirement" gifts.

A shock to the nation and particularly to college faculty and students throughout the nation was the killing of four students and the wounding of many at Kent State University in Ohio when National Guardsmen fired on demonstrators in 1970. None of those killed on May 4 appeared to have been active protesters. Protests of support for Kent students flared up on campuses throughout the nation, including many California colleges, and not excluding Cal Poly. By May 10 a student strike had closed down or seriously disrupted 450 colleges or universities. On May 15 police at the predominantly black Jackson State College in Mississippi fired on a crowd of protesters and killed two students. One student was killed and four injured



*Student protestors who wanted to close down Cal Poly in May, 1970, listen to a sympathetic president tell them why it won't happen.*

when a bomb exploded at a mathematics research center at the University of Wisconsin.

About the time of the Kent State disaster, President Nixon had ordered the bombing of Cambodia, which caused violent reactions from students and others throughout the nation. Governor Reagan, reacting to campus violence, closed all public colleges for a cooling-off period of four days. The order called for emptying the campuses of all students and faculty, and the blockading of entrances with security personnel cruising each campus to prevent looting, etc. When the order came, on May 5, Cal Poly was already greeting Future Farmers of America arrivals for the state finals judging contests and the 42nd annual convention of the state association, Wednesday through Saturday, May 6-9. FFA students were en route to the campus by school bus from all over the state. They could not be turned back, and by the time they arrived it would have been too dangerous for the drivers to have attempted an immediate turnaround for a 6- to 10-hour drive home.

I called the governor's office, talked to several of the governor's staff as persuasively as I could, and asked them to go tell him I wanted him to make an exception for Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. I said I would vouch for the safe operation of the campus if the FFA convention and state judging finals were

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allowed to continue, but I also did not want to dismiss classes. Within an hour I received a return call that notified me the governor had agreed and Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, was the only exception to his closure order.

We did put barriers at all campus entrances and posted security officers around the clock to prevent any unauthorized persons from entering the campus. I was concerned that students from UC Santa Barbara, learning that Cal Poly was exempt from the order, might try to do something just to prove we were not "exempt" from violence if someone smart enough wanted it to happen. We had no trouble over that weekend but students were getting spring fever and anxious to do something dramatic before the college year was over to prove to other college students they were not "apathetic," as they had been described by some visiting antiwar demonstrators.

In late February, 1970, students at UC Santa Barbara had burned down the Bank of America branch at Isla Vista, which caused a developer working with us on a proposal for married student housing to drop the project because banks were now leery about financing college student housing.

The violence perpetrated by demonstrators and the often overreaction of authorities as reported in all news media was making the general public



*Donald Wilson, chief, Bureau of Agricultural Education (left), listens as REK explains to two state FFA officers that it was the importance of the FFA State Convention on the campus that convinced Governor Reagan to make Cal Poly the only exception to his May, 1970, order to close all state college campuses for several days to avoid violence.*

both nervous and anxious to know more about the causes and possible remedies. On April 8, 1970, Governor Reagan and I shared the speakers' platform at the Ahwanee Hotel in Yosemite where we had been asked to talk to the Council of California Growers about student unrest and governmental reaction. In Governor Reagan's talk he gave me personal credit for running a peaceful campus. As I told the audience, "Some presidents get blamed for what they can't prevent, while I get credit when it is not deserved."

Many of the members of the Council of California Growers were Cal Poly graduates, and even more had sons or daughters who had graduated or were then enrolled. They naturally were curious about what was going on, and some already had heard the student opinion on the subject. I said, "We have a great student body, a dedicated faculty, and a strong and loyal administrative staff—all of whom are jointly responsible with me for carrying out the mission of Cal Poly—which is a serious attempt to provide an opportunity for an education which will produce leaders—both in their chosen careers and in the community-citizenship roles."

I talked for 30 minutes about what I believed were the root causes of student unrest and my opinion of what college administrators needed to do to cool the hot tempers of everyone involved. Governor Reagan had talked for about the same length of time, presenting the dilemma student and other demonstrations cause for governmental authorities. His talk was serious, even-tempered, and not inflammatory. The press representatives were not much interested in his speech and I don't think one word of mine made copy for any of the several newspapers that had reporters present. But they had set up a press conference for the governor when he left the platform, so he could answer their questions. They goaded him into a hot response to one question, and that was the answer that made the headlines: "If it is blood they want, it is blood they'll get."

While student demonstrations were shaking up college and university campuses and disturbing the equilibrium of governors and other authority figures, Mother Nature decided it was time to show everyone where the power really lay. Early in the morning of February 9, 1971, the worst earthquake to hit Southern California since the Long Beach quake in 1933 killed at least 42 persons, injured thousands, and caused 40,000 to flee from the path of a dam that was weakened.

Mary and I were en route by automobile to a Trustees' meeting in Los Angeles. At about the time the quake hit, 6 A.M., we were on the Ventura Freeway, but felt nothing in the moving car. The Trustees' meeting, held in

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the high-rise headquarters office building on Wilshire Blvd., continued though elevators and escalators in the building were not operational and many present were very nervous. At that meeting I received final approval to name the newly completed multimillion-dollar College Union building after Julian A. McPhee.

On March 6, 1971, with a crowd of some 1,000 people present inside the new Union building, we ceremoniously dedicated the new building and officially named it in honor of the late Julian A. McPhee in the presence of Mrs. Alma McPhee and her five living daughters and many of her 31 grandchildren.

In my remarks I told the audience of mostly students and faculty that President McPhee had talked for many years about the necessity of such a facility as headquarters for student co-curricular activities, such as student government, as well as a new home for El Corral student store, snack bar, etc. He had seen to it personally that many years of profits of the bookstore were put aside for the down payment on the building, which along with a Federal government loan, had made the structure possible without dependence on any state funds.

Those of us who worked closely with Julian A. McPhee during the last quarter-century of his life seldom saw him engaged in any activity that, by most people's standards, could be called "play." To him, however, just being with his lovely wife, his six daughters and their husbands, and his 31 grandchildren, *was* play — not a parental duty but a supreme pleasure. Play to Julian McPhee was also the co-curricular activities of the Cal Poly students. But his interest in co-curricular activities was not new. History professor Gene Smith wrote in his 1958 doctoral dissertation on the first 50 years of Cal Poly history, "To President McPhee the extra-curricular program was an important means of teaching students to accept responsibility and to learn to get along with their fellows." Smith believed President McPhee was determined as early as 1933 to encouraging more student participation and interest in the co-curricular events on campus.

McPhee saw in many co-curricular activities a way for students to get "learning by doing" experiences that augmented what they were getting in their vocational fields. President McPhee obviously enjoyed attending student body activities, athletic events, banquets, barbecues, dances, plays, and Poly Royal. Student leaders invited President McPhee to so many activities that accepting them he could be busy day and night, seven days a week. He would drive 500 miles round trip between Cal Poly campuses to attend a

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student activity — not just as a duty but because he thoroughly enjoyed being with students. To many of his colleagues, it seemed that President McPhee worked as hard at this kind of play as he did at work.

In responding to my remarks about President McPhee's interest in students and their co-curricular activities, Mrs. McPhee verified my observations that President McPhee was dedicated to helping students find "wholeness to life," not just expertise in a technical specialty. It was obvious from her remarks that President McPhee hoped that the new building, which he had helped to plan and finance, would help students in their search for the "what for" of existence — help them find how they relate to others, how they fit into a society that is interested not only in work but also play.

As I listened to Mrs. McPhee on that occasion, I heard a sadness in her voice. I'm sure that at times she must have wished for a simpler life, with less tension and frustration for her husband, with less travel for him away from home. With a family of six daughters, all very popular in those years when Poly was an all-male college, Mrs. McPhee had a full-time job at home. After the girls were grown, Mrs. McPhee traveled extensively with President McPhee back and forth to the southern campus, to Sacramento, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. Mrs. McPhee stood quietly behind her man, giving him support and encouragement to fight against great odds. Her husband taught me how to be a university president and Alma McPhee taught Mary how to be a "First Lady." Alma died at age 87 on May 23, 1982, 15 years after the death of her husband. In those years of widowhood she attended many Cal Poly functions, which she seemed to enjoy, especially those where she had contact with students. On one of those occasions she said to me, "Bob, don't you and Mary wait too long before you retire." We thanked her for her advice and for more than 40 years of friendship. We took her advice and retired February 1, 1979, after 39 years at Cal Poly.

On the Cal Poly campus several events with lasting impact occurred during 1970 and 1971:

1. The new school of architecture with George Hasslein as its dean was established with departments of architecture, architectural engineering, city and regional planning, landscape architecture, and construction engineering.
2. To the existing five instructional schools, two more were added: the school of business and social sciences and the school of communicative arts and humanities. Following the consultative process two new deans were appointed: Edward Baker, business, and Jon Ericson, communications.

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3. A half-dozen new instructional departments and curricula were added: economics, foreign languages, philosophy, art and design, child development, computer science, transportation engineering, and women's physical education. Also added was a master of engineering degree and a B.A. in political science. An ethnic studies program was established without adding any new courses, only identifying those offered in a dozen different fields. David Sanchez was appointed coordinator of the program.

4. Two fraternities and one sorority were officially recognized. A long-standing policy that had prevented recognition of any fraternal orders was set aside and policies and procedures governing official recognition were jointly developed by existing living groups and the administration. One of the agreements was that they would not keep alcoholic beverages in their houses and they would not serve alcoholic beverages at social events they sponsor. That prohibition against alcohol was forgotten by the time the original student signers of the agreement graduated.

LESSON NINETEEN *People over 25 do not question authority as do college-age youth. But as our most vulnerable citizens, college-age youth have a right to voice and lead opposition to any war they will be asked to fight.*

BECOMING A STATE UNIVERSITY ISN'T EASY

FOR WEEKS there had been publicity on the campus and in the town promoting attendance at the March 7, 1972, Founders Day celebration featuring Chancellor Glenn Dumke as the main speaker. It had worked. The gymnasium was packed with 4,000 spectators, half in the east bleachers and the other half in folding chairs on the floor in front of the speakers' platform. The Mustang Band had performed well as part of the opening ceremony, and our newest Trustee, Roy Brophy, had joined Chancellor Dumke in the chairs reserved for them on the raised platform.

The first inkling I had that trouble was brewing was when the president of the student body, Pete Evans, a very active antiwar protester, refused to stand for the flag salute. But then I thought maybe Dumke and Brophy hadn't noticed, although it was pretty obvious. When I introduced Trustee Brophy as a former Cal Poly student who had been one of my journalism students and editor of the college's weekly newspaper, *El Mustang*, in 1940-41, the applause of the crowd, mostly students, was very rewarding.

Just as I was concluding my introduction of Chancellor Dumke, I sensed movement of a large group of students occupying the chairs directly in front of the platform. I paused and raised my eyes to see some 50 or 60 students reaching under their chairs, then standing erect holding protest signs listing every slogan I had seen and heard from MECCHA, a Mexican-American student organization, during the period they had been working on me to improve the status of Hispanic students at Cal Poly. I thought, up to that point, that we had been making great progress.

They were jiggling the signs, all of which were faced toward the platform, supposedly for the benefit of the Chancellor, Trustee Brophy, and me. They were chanting "Viva Meccha!" Students behind them began to boo and it was apparent to me that we had the makings of a confrontation between liberal and conservative students. I had the advantage of the public address system. I addressed the protesting students saying, "I think the rest of the audience wants to see what you have printed on your signs. Please turn around and show them the signs. Everyone needs to know what you are advocating."

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The protesting students turned around, continuing to wave the signs wildly, and chanting, "Viva Meccha!" I waited a few more minutes, and then, addressing the students again, said, "Now everyone knows about your cause. Would you please be so kind as to place the signs under your chairs and be seated, so Chancellor Dumke can tell us about the founding of this college, which began 71 years ago." It was a gamble that paid off. They all put their signs under their chairs, were seated, and we never heard another word from them during the remainder of the program.

Both Dumke and Brophy were impressed by the willingness of the protesting students to listen to reason. They told the story to their colleagues at the next Board meeting. I told Brophy, "It was just Irish luck that they did what I asked."

We had provided Chancellor Dumke with all the material he could possibly need to tell the story of the founding of Cal Poly by the '49er Myron Angel, and all the struggles that the school went through in the years before Julian McPhee, and a considerable amount of information about McPhee's 33-year tenure as president. Dumke knew President McPhee personally for a period of 10 years, from the time Dumke had become president of San Francisco State in 1958 until McPhee's death in 1968. Dumke knew me for a little longer than that.

Dumke was one of the principal authors of the Master Plan, which, when translated into legislation in 1961, was the basis for the establishment of the Trustee-administered system. The Chancellor had a lot to say about the Master Plan, including this statement:

Julian McPhee never really accepted the Master Plan. He was convinced that Cal Poly was a unique institution, and he preferred to have it absolutely autonomous and independent. He was even wary of accreditation of Cal Poly's major programs for the same reason, because he was convinced that the unique characteristics of the Cal Poly curriculum simply were not traditional enough to engender favor in many parts of the academic community. As far as the Master Plan was concerned, I'm happy to report that he was wrong.

Dumke added:

And, in my opinion, just as I think the Master Plan is well worth preserving for the sake of the individual institutions within it, so also do I think that Cal Poly's "uniquenesses" are worth preserving. I share Julian McPhee's concern and President Robert E. Kennedy's concern that there

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be in California at least one or two institutions with the emphasis that Cal Poly has historically stressed. I shared with President McPhee, and I now share with Bob Kennedy, their pride in Cal Poly's accomplishments, its good citizenship, its contributions to the economy of this great state, and its vast numbers of loyal, active and productive alumni. Cal Poly has made its greatest progress under the Master Plan as it is presently constituted. There is no reason for this progress not to continue as long as the Master Plan maintains its present structure, so that the teaching-type institution which Cal Poly represents, and which is characteristic of the entire California State University and Colleges system, is given, as it is in California's arrangement, the opportunity to achieve academic parity with its research-oriented institutional colleagues.

It was this last issue, of parity between the University of California and the California State Colleges, that was a driving motivation behind Dumke's mission to make the "state colleges" into "state universities." He obviously did not want them to become a part of the University of California system, but he wanted the prestige of the "university" name attached to each campus that could come up to a minimum standard of excellence to be set by the Chancellor, his staff, and the Trustees.

Dumke's first victory in his campaign to achieve this parity was the passage of Assembly Bill 123, which when signed by Governor Reagan in a ceremony in Sacramento on November 29, 1971, changed the name of the California State College system to "California State University and Colleges." The bill also made it possible for individual colleges to be renamed "state universities," but it was not an automatic happening.

I was apprehensive about the process and the minimum standards that would be required of an individual campus before it achieved university status. I felt we had some control because it would require not only Trustee action but further legislative action to make it possible for an individual state college to become a university. As long as the Legislature and the governor remained in the act, we would have a hearing on our point of view.

Some faculty were not too sure where I stood. In November, at the time the name change bill was signed by the governor, I was quoted as follows:

The action was long-overdue recognition that the state colleges in California are by size and scope of programs, as well as by the quality of instruction in both undergraduate and graduate levels, equal to or superior to most institutions of higher education in other states and foreign countries."

In the *Cal Poly Report* of November 30, 1971, I pointed out that AB123 contained a provision that in the case of Cal Poly the name may become "California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo." I further pointed out that the retention of the word "polytechnic" in the new law was in keeping with actions taken by the college faculty on May 9, 1967, when it reacted to a name-change bill that was unsuccessfully introduced in the Legislature that spring. At that time the faculty recommended the college attempt to maintain the name "polytechnic" in any anticipated future name change.

The original name-change proposal for the system included a provision that each existing and each future new campus would bear the new name identification of "California State University at \_\_\_\_\_," listing in the blank, as part of its official title, the name of the nearest city, or in some cases the name of the county, in which the campus was located.

I objected to that concept on several grounds. First, we definitely would lose our long-held advantage of being considered a statewide institution, and the local area would begin to insist we meet only the needs of the region, not the state. Second, we would lose our equally long-held reputation as a unique "polytechnic" college, a reputation that made this campus specifically relevant to the needs of a technological society. And third, a very loyal alumni association, rapidly growing in size and political strength, might feel it necessary to split into sections "before" and "after" the name change.

Appearing before the Faculty Council, the forerunner of the Academic Senate, I discussed my concerns and asked that the faculty help preserve Cal Poly's distinctive personality by retaining the "polytechnic" portion of the name. I was afraid that if we accepted the uniformity of a standardized name, the Trustees would take the next step and legislate uniformity of offerings, even teaching methods.

Despite our earlier victory with the retention of the amended Enabling Act in 1960-61, I still did not trust the Trustees nor a governor's office to give the kind of independence to one campus that we had enjoyed in the past, if they had an opportunity to "improve efficiency by uniformity." The faculty voted in favor of maintaining the word "polytechnic" in any new name and recommended that I fight to maintain the concept in the future.

Although Chancellor Dumke's original name change for the system in 1967 failed, it was not because of Cal Poly's resistance but mostly because of University of California pressure on the legislators, many of whom, including our then senator, Vern Sturgeon, suspected Chancellor Dumke



*Senator Sturgeon's guess about the CSU's hidden agenda was on target.*

of wanting to do basic research and offer doctorates in competition with the University of California.

At a reception sponsored by the state college system in Sacramento for the purpose of improving relations with legislators, Chancellor and Mrs. Dumke were in a receiving line. Each president was escorting one or more of his region's legislators through the line. I had only one present, Senator Sturgeon. A very straightforward, burly dairy and milk products distributor from Paso Robles, Senator Sturgeon shook the Chancellor's hand and immediately asked, "How long will it be before you are back asking us to approve research and doctors' degrees?"

I was as startled as the Chancellor, who scowled at me before answering the senator. "Don't worry, Senator, I promise we will never propose that. We just want recognition for what our colleges are now — universities in every respect of size and scope."

While it might be true that contacts with key legislators by myself and Harold Wilson, administrative vice president responsible for relations with all state agencies, could have indirectly influenced the negative vote on that first 1967 name change bill, we certainly didn't take any credit for its failure. Senator Sturgeon's remark that evening added to the Chancellor's suspicion that Cal Poly had more than a little to do with the bill's failure. He had first become suspicious when I had opposed one of the criteria proposed by his

staff as a minimum requirement for any campus to become a university: A minimum of fifty percent of the faculty must hold earned doctorates. In 1967 Cal Poly could not have met that criterion because of the large number of faculty in agriculture, engineering, architecture, and other applied fields where the doctorate was not considered as important a qualification as a professional license and practical experience in the specific field.

We could have met all the other minimum standards proposed, none of which would have had the same negative impact as being unable to meet what the Trustees would have declared was the basis for evaluating the qualifications of faculty.

I believed that a college as old and established as Cal Poly had to be in the first wave of campuses to receive the name "university" or its reputation would be damaged. There was no alternative but to pass the word that the 1967 bill did not protect Cal Poly's interests.

In the meantime, a gerrymandering of California senatorial districts had disturbed the balance between San Luis Obispo and Monterey counties, causing Senator Sturgeon to lose the seat to Sen. Don Grunsky of Monterey. By 1971-72 Senator Grunsky was chairman of the Senate Education Committee and chairman of the Senate's Subcommittee on Finance handling educational institutions. Any proposed bill affecting the state college system would first have to survive those committees and be sent out with a "do pass" recommendation if it were to receive normal consideration on the floor. Senator Sturgeon was appointed by Governor Reagan to be his legislative liaison. In that role he had influence on the passage of bills and the governor's reaction to them.

When Senator Grunsky temporarily held up the 1971 name change bill, the Chancellor became concerned and asked me, "What will it take for you to influence your senator into taking a 'do pass' action on our bill?" I told him that we had already solved the problem of including "polytechnic" in the name, and the only other thing we wanted was an exemption for "agriculture, engineering, architecture, landscape architecture, and other applied fields" to the standards he was recommending to the Trustees that fifty percent or more of the faculty of each campus must have earned doctorates.

We already had done a calculation on the faculty having doctorates and knew that the exemption we were requesting was all that was necessary for both Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and Cal Poly, Pomona, to be included in the first wave of campuses to be named "university." Dumke gave orders to his staff, the standards were amended as suggested, and, magically, AB123 went



*Sen. Don Grunsky (left) held up the 1971 name change bill pending revision of criteria; Assemblyman Bill Ketchum (right) agreed.*

out of the two Senate committees with "do pass" recommendations.

While President Robert Kramer was in favor of our actions, his staff was not as close to the action in Sacramento as was Vice President Wilson. No one noted, at first, that in the amendment to the bill pertaining to the name a campus might be called if and when it became a university, we purposely had made a slight change between the two Cal Polys. One is officially "California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo," and the other is "California State Polytechnic University, Pomona." It is not just the name of the city that is different; our acronym is CPSU and theirs is CSPU. They had both been the same when called "California State Polytechnic College." Wilson and I decided at the last moment that it sounded better if the words "State University" were at the end rather than "Polytechnic University." President Kramer and his staff accepted the difference graciously.

In his December, 1971, message to all campuses in the system, Chancellor Dumke stated,

On November 29 I witnessed the signing of Assembly Bill 123 by Governor Reagan, and wish to convey to you my deep sense of pride that our

system will become "The California State University and Colleges." The Trustees and I — as well as many others, including Presidents and alumni — have pressed strenuously for this legislation for many years. The passage of AB123 by the Legislature and its signing by the governor, constitute recognition of the maturity and 10-year development of our system under the Master Plan for Higher Education. The name change for the system will become effective 61 days following adjournment of the Legislature, probably in February or March, 1972. The Bill authorizes the Board of Trustees and the Coordinating Council for Higher Education to establish criteria and to approve the renaming of individual campuses as "California State University, [location]," with two exceptions. The campuses at San Luis Obispo and Pomona would retain "Polytechnic" in their titles."

It only took a short while for several of the other older, more established state colleges to discover that the two Cal Polys had used politics to preserve their identities and to avoid the uniformity that none of them wanted. Three of the oldest and largest used the same pressure to keep their original names, merely dropping "college" and adding "university": San Francisco State University, San Jose State University, and San Diego State University. Two others received the same treatment on the basis that they were in rural areas where only the county name was significant: Humboldt State, founded in 1913, and Sonoma State, founded in 1960. All the rest went the way the Chancellor and Trustees wanted them to go. (San Fernando Valley State, however, became California State University, Northridge.)

By February, 1972, the Trustees had adopted five standards by which each campus was to be measured for university status. The standards and their method of application still had to be approved by the Coordinating Council for Higher Education, on which sat representatives from community colleges, state colleges, the University of California, and private colleges and universities. The Trustees had stated that for any state college to be eligible for university status it would have to rate higher on any four of the five standards than "half of a group of 22 accredited comparison universities," including the various University of California campuses and private universities in California, using published data for 1970-71.

In a February 1, 1972, statement circulated to the faculty and staff I predicted the standards would be approved by the Coordinating Council and expressed confidence that Cal Poly would be among the first to meet the standards and gain university status. I was quoted in the article as saying,

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"Cal Poly's qualifications in each of the five criteria areas place it well into the top half of the group of universities used for comparison in the name change considerations."

The statement pointed out that the fourth standard was based on the number of accredited programs, and the fifth on the need for 51 percent of the faculty to hold earned doctorates. With regard to the latter category, the statement pointed out that we had succeeded in getting a legislative mandate to exempt a good many of our applied fields. Had that exemption not been in place, our 281 faculty with doctorates out of a total faculty of 707 persons would have given us 37 percent. With the exemption in place we counted only 419 faculty, of whom 215, or 51 percent, had doctorates.

While the announcement was meant to eliminate any apprehensions on the part of faculty or students that Cal Poly would not be among the first of the state colleges to achieve university status, I meant it also as something of a warning to some of the old-timers among the faculty who didn't think advanced degrees were important and who had opposed the process of seeking professional accreditation. Had I not been successful in my battle with the Chancellor's staff on exempting architecture, agriculture, and engineering fields from the doctorate standard, Cal Poly would not have met the minimum required 51 percent. If the engineering faculty, under the leadership of Dean Archie Higdon, had not been successful in overcoming the foot-dragging of old-timers who were opposed to seeking ECPD accreditation, we wouldn't have come even close to meeting the number of accredited programs needed.

The Coordinating Council approved the Trustees' name change, procedures, and standards during the first week in April, 1972. I attended the meeting in Sacramento and heard one of the Council members, Charles Hitch, president of the University of California say, "There are many famous U.S. universities which do not meet the criteria which have been established for the CSC system.

In the March 7, 1972, *Cal Poly Report*, which came out just prior to the Coordinating Council action, we published the following statement on how Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, met the standards:

1. *Number of students enrolled:* Cal Poly enrollment was 11,497 full-time equivalent students.
2. *Number of graduate students:* Cal Poly had 949 graduate students and 351 graduate degrees had been awarded in 1970-71.

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3. *Number of degree programs:* Cal Poly offered 48 bachelors' degree and 10 masters' degree programs.

4. *Number of professional and academic programs accredited:* Cal Poly had 13 such programs.

5. *Number of faculty in disciplines in which the doctor's degree is the normal teaching degree:* This criterion applied to 419 Cal Poly faculty, of whom 215, or 51 percent hold the doctorate.

On May 2, 1972, it was announced that the Trustees had approved 13 of the state college campuses for university status, including Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. Subsequently the Coordinating Council took action that gave the university title to all 13 named by the Trustees, effective June 1, 1972. So ended a long, involved, and sometimes treacherous journey for Cal Poly, from the status of a small, struggling technical high school to the ranks of one of the largest of California's state supported universities — fulfilling a prophecy made by Myron Angel, "The Father of Cal Poly," just five years after its founding in 1901.

Seventy-one years after its founding, in his March 7, 1972, Founders Day speech, Chancellor Dumke had given Myron Angel much-deserved credit for his role in creating and nurturing the concept of a statewide polytechnic school in San Luis Obispo. He also gave proper credit to its first chief executive officer, Dr. Leroy Anderson, an animal science graduate of the University of Cornell, in New York, who had left a professorship at the University of California, Berkeley, to accept the position of "director" of Cal Poly. The Chancellor described how Dr. Anderson had established a three-year program, concentrating on agriculture, and begun the "learning-by-doing" concept. Dumke quoted Anderson's 1902 statement, "There should be sufficient bookwork to give mental discipline, but all bookwork should bear directly upon the practical work of the course the pupil is following." Dumke then quoted another of Anderson's concerns: "Not more than four hours per day should be expected of the student in manual labor." During Dr. Anderson's first year of operating the new Polytechnic in 1903, he began the practice of having students earn a part of their expenses. Students did all the janitorial work. Several worked as waiters in the dormitory dining hall, while others cared for the dairy herd and the school horses — a practice that was still going strong when I arrived in 1940.

Chancellor Dumke felt his Cal Poly audience would appreciate his final comment about Dr. Anderson's five-year directorship of the Polytechnic, and they did — they gave it a great round of applause. He told how Presi-



*Founders Day, 1972. Armistead B. Carter is recognized as a Cal Poly benefactor. From left: Trustees Chairman Roy Brophy, Carter, Dumke, REK, and Alumni Director Steve Riddell. Carter admonishes his former employee for an imagined slip-up in a 1938 political campaign.*

dent Benjamin Ide Wheeler of the University of California had "come sniffing around in 1907, ostensibly to see how things were going, but actually to raid the campus," and to hire Dr. Anderson back and give him the job of starting the institution which is now the University of California at Davis. The Chancellor interpreted the action thusly: "It gives me much satisfaction to report that Davis can therefore be considered an offshoot or branch of Cal Poly."

One of those in the audience who applauded loudly at Dr. Dumke's interpretation was Armistead B. Carter, the former State Board of Education member who had been instrumental in defeating, in 1940, a University of California effort to keep Cal Poly from becoming a degree-granting college. He and Mrs. Carter were present to take part along with the Chancellor in the dedication of the facility formerly used as the home of Presidents Crandall and McPhee to a new function and with a new name: "Poly House."

In June, 1967, Chancellor Dumke had told us to find funds "somewhere" and remodel the old president's house on campus to make it acceptable as a modern-day presidential home. Mary had told him that our own home in the city of San Luis Obispo was preferable to the almost 50-year-old structure, which had never been updated or even adequately maintained because President McPhee refused to use state funds on something that might be considered a "personal benefit." Dumke was concerned that if we did not

live in a campus home built for that purpose in the 1920s, his proposal to build similar homes as job inducements in recruiting new presidents would be denied by an economy-minded Legislature and governor.

In the meantime, unrest on college campuses throughout the nation and especially on state college campuses had changed some minds — especially among those college presidents who had become targets for much of the animosity of demonstrating students. When Dumke had asked at a meeting of the Council of Presidents for support for proposed legislation to get funding for campus homes, he received a negative response. This last development had occurred after we had found a source of funds and started a major remodel of the president's home.

Mary and I agreed that it was unwise to make a president's family a visible-24-hours-per-day and very accessible symbol of authority against which emotionally charged crowds of students could vent their anger at any hour of the day or night — even if at Cal Poly at that time it was only a possibility to be considered. So we began to analyze what the primary purpose would be to have a president live in a campus home. We concluded that on most campuses we had visited it was the focal point for the entertaining of important domestic and foreign visitors and a convenient meeting place for presidential staff members and other constituent groups the president wanted to deal with in a friendly, less business-oriented atmosphere than his office or conference room. The McPhees had seldom used the house that way, since they had six daughters and the house had only four bedrooms and two and a half baths, and no space or facilities set aside for entertainment — not even adequate outdoor patio space.

Our conclusion was that we should convert the newly remodeled structure into a conference center that would be used not as a residence, but to carry out official entertaining and as a comfortable, convenient place for meetings sponsored by various faculty and staff and Cal Poly organizations, including the Women's Club.

In order to furnish the facility as a conference center, I asked my former employer and mentor, Armistead B. Carter, a wealthy San Diego businessman and political leader, to provide funds for the purchase of furniture, which he did. He and Mrs. Carter were there to take part in the dedication of the facility as the Poly House Conference Center. A key speaker at the luncheon following dedication of the rebuilt and refurbished Poly House was San Luis Obispo Mayor Kenneth A. Schwartz, a professor and director of the Cal Poly school of architecture.

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It had been the school of architecture that had undertaken the remodel job — not only its design but also all construction (except plumbing) as one of the school's practical, learning-by-doing group projects for which it was widely acclaimed. To make that involvement possible we had held a meeting of statewide and local union officials, explained our goals and methods, and received their blessings, without which we would not have moved for fear of actions that could have shut down other construction projects on campus.

The funding for remodeling had come from "state share reserve funds," monies considered to be the Foundation's profit from operating such enterprises as the farm, which used state land on which little or no lease money was paid in advance. The state had worked out an agreement years earlier that provided that anytime the "profit surplus" reached more than \$90,000, the surplus over that sum would go automatically into the state general fund and be used as part of resources of the state, and would not come back to the college that earned it. Naturally, we tried to find legitimate campus improvement projects that could be financed by state share reserve funds so there never would be a return of such funds to the state's general fund.

There were limitations as to what the college could use this money for, but anything that improved the campus or was an "aid to instruction" would likely be approved by the Chancellor, Trustees, and Department of Finance — all of whom were in the approval chain. When Dean George Hasslein agreed the design and construction involved in the president's house remodel would be an excellent group project for the school of architecture, it was not difficult to get approval from all the agencies required. The school of architecture students under the expert guidance of a number of very dedicated faculty members did an excellent job. We had told them not to hurry because Mary and I were not anxious to move onto the campus during the days of student unrest.

After about six months of attempting to operate Poly House as a conference center, the Poly House Advisory Committee chairman, Howard West, presented a report that stated,

The only really successful activities have been those of a social nature ... other activities were less than satisfactory because of the inherent limitation of the facilities... the facilities, as presently structured, are not conducive to, and in fact, will not permit, full utilization of the facilities or complete implementation of the concept developed some 14 months ago.

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Part of the problem was that we could not afford to staff the facility with a full-time person who could be present all the time, making certain that schedule conflicts were resolved, furnishings and kitchen appliances properly used, and janitorial and maintenance work accomplished when needed. The direct involvement of the president and his wife in a number of activities scheduled in Poly House made us personally aware of the very great possibility that this "conference use" would eventually so deteriorate the newly refurbished structure that it could not be preserved as a residence for our successors, who, hopefully, would be administering the university in less perilous times.

So, after a lot of soul-searching and consultation with Chancellor Dumke and even our benefactor, Mr. Carter, Mary and I decided that we should become the "caretakers" of Poly House by moving in and making it our residence. We announced our decision in a *Cal Poly Report* on August 22, 1972. Our statement quoted part of the plaque that was unveiled during the dedication ceremony on March 7: "When Dr. Robert E. Kennedy was appointed President in 1967, he and Mrs. Kennedy expressed the hope that the house could become an educational, cultural and social asset for the entire campus community." The statement continued, "Mary and I are still dedicated to this hope and plan to utilize the facility in a way that this hope might be fully realized. In addition, we still intend to make the Poly Gardens area available for appropriate social activities approximately as originally planned several years ago." That last reference was to the large, very elegant, two-level aggregate-paved patio area, with adjoining catering kitchen and storeroom for patio tables and chairs and umbrellas. Adjacent to the house, the patio could be used for very large receptions or luncheons. The kitchen had been designed and paid for by the Foundation's food service division, which would be handling all food service for events held there.

When we Kennedys made the house the president's residence at the beginning of the fall quarter of 1972, American participation in the Vietnam War was within six months of ending. It was obvious that public opinion had finally come around in large part to agree with the position of the demonstrating students; the students could see it too and there was much less animosity of students toward "authority." We figured it was now safe to move onto the campus. Certainly it appeared that it would be more convenient for us, particularly since we had already been involved in hosting most of the official entertainment that had been held at Poly House even though we had not lived there.

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The first event we hosted at the president's house after we moved in was a reception for parents of new students on Sunday afternoon, September 17. The following Sunday afternoon, September 24, the president and his wife hosted all new faculty and staff members at a reception held in the house and the garden patio. So began our seven-year residence in the president's house, for which we paid a nominal monthly rental set by a state agency. It also began that period in our lives when we were most on display in the sense of sharing with others where and how we lived.

During the Week of Welcome (WOW) programs, groups of WOW students, usually 75 to 100 at a time, would come to the patio. Mary and I would sit surrounded by students and give them a welcome talk that included personal information about our family and what it was like to live on the campus. They were then permitted to troop through the house so as to feel that there was no mystery about where and how the president and his wife lived. The WOW leaders had posted student guards in the house, and student visitors were not permitted to go upstairs. But no other areas were off limits.

When parents came as part of the WOW program, we had a reception line and refreshments in the patio, frequently attracting several hundred parents on a Sunday afternoon. We permitted parents to inspect the house too. We stationed a few staff monitors around to answer questions and hopefully prevent the lifting of souvenirs.

On one occasion a lady returned from her inspection tour to the reception line, where Mary and I were still shaking hands with incoming parents. She came up to us and addressed herself to Mary and said, "I wish my husband was as neat as your husband. I looked in his closet and found all his suits and coats hanging on hangers, just as neat as pins."

Not everything the president did was considered "neat," however. And two things I did in 1972 were, in the opinion of the faculty, unpopular.

The first related to the university's affirmative action program. We had established an affirmative action program soon after I became president. It was to be implemented on a voluntary basis; deans and department heads were encouraged to recruit and recommend for appointment more women and minority faculty. In a February 8, 1972, statement to the faculty, I wrote,

Informal attempts to comply with the concept of equal opportunity during the past five years failed to produce sufficient improvement in the employment of women or of minority race members. This new college-

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wide formal effort is a specific response to the need to increase effectiveness in recruiting qualified and qualifiable people among ethnic minority groups and women to fill jobs in all areas of operations.

A week later I announced that I was putting a hold on the release of faculty positions to the extent of a two-percent reserve by schools to be used only when qualified or qualifiable minority persons or women were selected as candidates. My active role in insisting upon a formal affirmative action program did get results, but it was a slow process. Some criticized the basic concept of affirmative action. Others criticized the slowness of its implementation.

The second issue of disagreement with the faculty was over student evaluation of faculty performance — specifically my support of the concept that students were qualified to make a contribution to the data available to the administration on the performance of faculty in the classroom and laboratory. If ever there was an example of how a university president can get between a rock and a hard place when trying to support something students feel is important and rational, this was it. Somehow, even at Cal Poly, which prided itself on being different, innovative, and unique, a majority of the faculty seemed to support the age-old concept that a faculty member has absolute authority over what he or she does inside a classroom, and that any attempt to evaluate his or her performance by other than a sympathetic colleague is not only undesirable but an infringement on faculty rights.

In the mid-1960s and early 1970s students at many U.S. colleges and universities were publishing and selling highly controversial publications that in some cases looked like official class schedules. The content was usually purportedly developed by questionnaires filled out by students in every class offered. These questionnaires were not very scientific instruments, but they did give students an opportunity to rate each faculty member's teaching performance in the same way that faculty members rate students. This method also gave students an opportunity to respond to an open-ended question as to the general effectiveness of all teachers whose classes they were taking that quarter or semester. These editorial comments were often sarcastic, sometimes funny, often cruel, many times filled with the kind of obscenities popular at the time.

These so-called faculty evaluation publications were sold to students with the pitch that at the time they were registering for classes a glance at

the publication could help them avoid any faculty member who had a reputation as a poor teacher. Students who used them also said they helped them avoid any faculty member who had a reputation for being tough or grading hard.

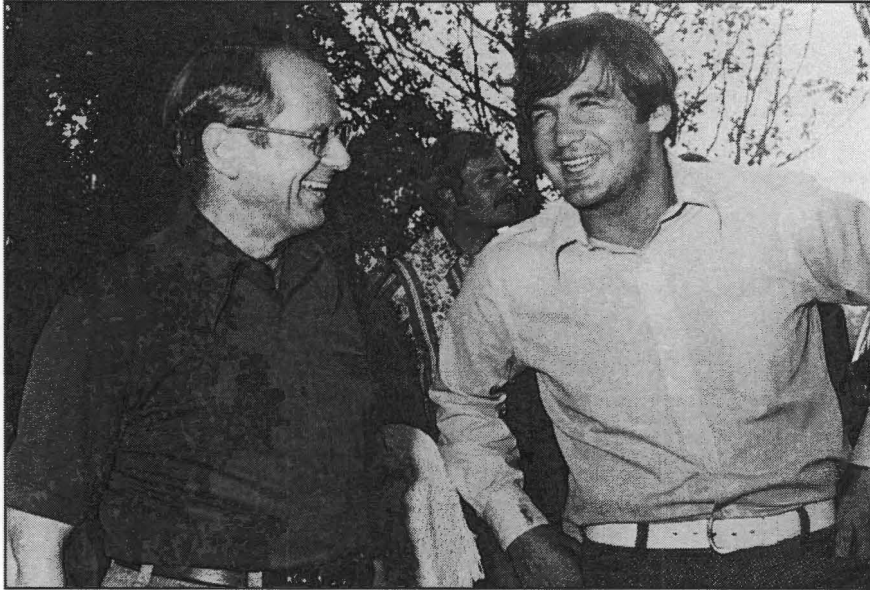
The examples I reviewed from several universities were, in my opinion, not only trash, but could have generated libel suits not only against their student editors but against college officials who permitted their distribution and sale on campus. When I asked administrators at other colleges why the students were permitted to distribute them on campus, they answered, "Our attorneys said it is a matter of First Amendment rights. We can control the time, place and manner of the distribution, but we cannot stop it legally when the publisher meets those requirements."

When some of our students began talking about publishing such faculty-evaluation booklets, I met with them and suggested we develop some kind of evaluation process involving students that had the support of the faculty and could be of aid to the administration in the difficult job of evaluation for retention, promotion, and tenure. The students agreed to put their original idea on the back burner and accepted the proposal to set up a committee of students and faculty that could develop a system that would give the students input but would not malign the professional reputation of faculty members.

The plan eventually agreed upon required pilot or trial systems to be developed in each school or department. Each school or department system was then to be evaluated by a faculty-student-administrative committee to determine the most effective procedures, and these would become guidelines for minimum college-wide standards to be included in each departmental or school system. It seemed like a good plan to me, because it avoided imposition of a system that would be uniform for every discipline and therefore inappropriate in some.

When I sent a memorandum to deans and academic department heads to authorize them to develop these trial systems, the Academic Senate misinterpreted my words. On May 16, 1972, the Academic Senate said it "opposed the administration's proposed imposition of a college-wide student evaluation procedure" which an observer said was based upon a reading of my memorandum.

In the May 23, 1972, *Cal Poly Report* it was reported that I had written to the deans saying,



*Robin Baggett, 1972-73 student body president, jokes with REK about a softball game between student leaders and administrators.*

It makes no difference now how that erroneous information was circulated — it is obvious that I am entirely to blame for my failure to communicate accurately. I am extremely sorry and I apologize to everyone who has been upset by the mistaken impression that I was ordering such a course of action.

On the day the Academic Senate met I was in Sacramento seeking legislative support for salary increases, additional EOP funds, increased funding for equipment, and more capital outlay funds. That the Academic Senate, knowing I could not be present to clarify the matter, took the negative action it did caused me to write the tongue-in-cheek apology. I did not believe for one minute that the “misunderstanding” was my “entire fault.” It was obvious to me that a group of faculty who had opposed the students’ initiative on student evaluation of faculty from the very beginning had been able to convince their colleagues that any system of student evaluation of faculty was not and could not be acceptable to them.

Eventually the student leaders in this movement began publishing evaluation booklets based upon evaluation only of individual faculty members who volunteered to be evaluated. While it was a sizeable number who

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volunteered, many students concluded erroneously that any faculty member who refused to be included was in fact a poor teacher by his or her own admission.

While I was not doing so well in my relationships with the faculty during the spring of 1972, on the national scene President Nixon's relationship with the American people seemed to be improving. He had been reelected in November, easily beating his Democratic opponent, George McGovern. Just before the election, on October 26, Henry Kissinger had concluded secret peace talks with his North Vietnamese counterparts in Paris and proclaimed that "peace is at hand." After the election, he announced that peace talks would resume on January 8, 1973. During the year Nixon won considerable acclaim for dramatic and apparently successful overtures toward China and the Soviet Union, nations he had condemned throughout his political lifetime.

Although Nixon had assured the American people that he was seeking an honorable end to the Vietnam War, in December he ordered the heaviest bombardment of North Vietnam of the entire war. Fifteen U.S. B-52s were shot down by December 30 at a cost in planes alone of \$120 million. Also that December, the last of the Apollo manned moon missions put astronauts on the moon to gather rock and soil samples.

On December 26, former President Harry Truman died in Kansas City, Missouri.

At Cal Poly much was accomplished, and much remained to be done.

**LESSON TWENTY** *The ability to influence the passage or defeat of legislation, often referred to as lobbying, is not a science but an art form called persuasion. No state university president can protect and advance his institution without personal involvement at numerous levels in the lobbying process.*

## A TIME OF TRANSITION

IN TERMS OF WHAT WAS HAPPENING and not happening during the period 1973–75, I felt it was a welcome relief to have “A Time of Transition,” although it also could have been called “A Time of Contrast,” a title I did use for a 1975 speech.

At least in three areas of operation, the concept of transition was apparent. One of the most conservative governors in recent California history, Republican Ronald Reagan, was ending his second four-year term of office. The year 1975 began with a new governor, Democrat Edmund “Jerry” Brown Jr., son of former Gov. Edmund “Pat” Brown. It was not just Jerry Brown’s rhetoric but his family background that had given him a reputation in advance as a liberal. But those of us who were hopeful that Jerry Brown would follow in his father’s 1959–66 footsteps as one of the most educationally supportive and financially generous of California’s governors were in for a rude awakening.

Thirteen of the 19 campuses of the California State Colleges had moved from college to university status and were adjusting to whatever changes that “promotion” meant to students, faculty, staff, alumni, prospective students, trustees, legislators and taxpayers. To some it was just a change in name but to others it meant hoped-for new horizons in advanced degrees, research activities, and prestige. At Cal Poly we had fought hard to maintain the “polytechnic” portion of our name and independence from regional limitations. We seemed more interested in maintaining the reputation that we had achieved as a practical college than in emulating the scope of research-oriented, traditional universities. We were less uncertain of our mission than some of our sister institutions, but we could not escape the sense of transition.

Students, faculty, and administrators all seemed anxious to reduce campus unrest and get on with the serious business of acquiring and dispensing knowledge through the educational process. The major source of that unrest, U.S. participation in a 13-year war defending South Vietnam against communist North Vietnam, had ended with our defeat — the first in U.S. history — and the conquest of South Vietnam by North Vietnam and a

cease-fire on January 27, 1973. But on Cal Poly's campus the students had learned the effectiveness of demonstrations.

The Vietnam peace treaty gave time and opportunity to make the transition from antiwar protests to racial- and gender-equality protests. But just as the end of the war did not bring peaceful apathy to the campus, neither were the years 1973-75 calm and serene on the national scene.

As the Watergate affair began to unravel, televised Senate hearings disclosed the "dirty tricks" of some government officials. Vice President Agnew, faced with criminal charges based on bribe-taking and income tax fraud, resigned. Then President Nixon resigned because of his part in the Watergate cover-up and a possible impeachment by Congress. This resignation of the president was a first in American history, as was the selection of his successor by the outgoing president and Congress. The transition from Nixon to President Gerald Ford was traumatic for the nation, and Ford's unconditional pardon of Nixon before any conviction occurred was politically harmful to the new president. Only by luck did President Ford escape assassination in two attempts on his life that occurred in California in September, 1975.

In California in 1974 headlines were captured by Patricia Hearst, 19, daughter of Randolph Hearst, publisher of the San Francisco *Examiner*. She was kidnapped February 4, but on April 3 she recorded a message that she had been converted to the radical beliefs of her kidnappers, the Symbionese Liberation Army. On April 15 she was photographed in a bank holdup as one of the active robbers. About six months earlier her uncle, William Randolph Hearst Jr., chairman of the Hearst newspaper dynasty, had enrolled his son, Austin, in Cal Poly's landscape architecture program. After the kidnapping of Patty, he and his wife, Austine, came immediately to the campus and contacted me personally with a request for help in moving Austin into a residence with no address or phone listing in any University records. The move was made and all of Austin's attendance records were made as secure as possible, with no listing of any kind available to the public.

Patty was captured safely on September 18, 1975, after the destruction of all her captors by police. Patty was tried, convicted, and sentenced to prison. Her cousin, Austin, graduated from Cal Poly with a B.S. degree in June, 1978. His father, who died in 1993, and his mother, Austine, who had died about a year earlier, had become substantial benefactors of Cal Poly, providing sizeable scholarship funds. The Hearsts were frequent visitors to the campus and to San Luis Obispo County, where they owned an Arabian



*William Randolph Hearst Jr. gave a convocation speech on January 8, 1972 and less formal talks to journalism students. He is seen here (at right) at a luncheon with Mary Kennedy, John Healey, then head of journalism, and Louisiana Dart, one-time curator of the San Luis Obispo Museum.*

horse ranch adjoining the Hearst Castle property. That famous castle was designed by architect Julia Morgan over a period of twenty years of working closely with William Randolph Hearst Sr. at the San Simeon ranch he had inherited from his father, George Hearst, who had come to California in 1849 in search of gold — and found it, and also silver, lots of it.

By the time George and Phoebe had their first and only child, William Randolph Hearst, on April 29, 1863, the Hearsts were wealthy enough to give Will anything he wanted — and they usually did. In fact, George gave his son the San Francisco *Examiner* as a gift after Will age 24, showed interest and talent in journalism by editing Harvard University's humor magazine, the *Lampoon*. He made the paper a success, bought more papers, and began a 65-year career in which he created a journalistic dynasty. Will and Millicent Willson married in 1903 and had five sons between 1904 and 1915. The second-oldest, born in 1908, was William Randolph Hearst Jr., who was editor in chief and chairman of the board of the Hearst dynasty by the time his son Austin was studying at Cal Poly. Construction of the complex of buildings surrounding the Hearst Castle began in 1919 on a hilltop of the



*Ronald Reagan, shown looking over the crowd, was the first (and to date the only) governor to give a commencement speech at Cal Poly.*

San Simeon ranch the Hearsts had since 1865. Construction continued almost continuously until 1947, when Will Hearst was encouraged to move closer to medical facilities in Los Angeles. He died in 1951 at age 88. The fabulous Hearst Castle was deeded to the State of California as a memorial gift in 1958. Since that date it has become the most-visited and most profitable of all California's state parks. And Cal Poly's university archives department of the Robert E. Kennedy Library has become the proud possessor of Julian Morgan's architectural drawings. They are works of art.

Another less frequent visitor to the campus than the Hearsts was Gov. Ronald Reagan. When he was the commencement speaker, in June, 1974, my introduction of him included the fact that in the previous 67-year history of Cal Poly there had never been another California governor who had accepted an invitation to make a commencement speech to a Cal Poly graduating class. (I did point out, however, that four other governors had visited the campus and talked informally to small groups. They were Governors Merriam, Warren, Knight, and Pat Brown Sr.) That 1974 appearance on campus of Governor Reagan was the third time in his eight years as governor that he had visited the campus, and the second time he gave a major speech. His successor, Jerry Brown, made a brief appearance on the campus to deliver a short message to the high school students attending the state Future Farmers convention in 1978.

The differences in political and economic positions of Governor Reagan and Gov. Jerry Brown were just as pronounced as their differences in personality and styles of dealing with people. During the last year of Governor Reagan's administration and the first year of Brown's term of office, I was chairman of the Council of State University and College Presidents. The Council was advisory to Chancellor Dumke and to the trustees. During most of this period the system headquarters were in a high-rise building on Wilshire Blvd., in Los Angeles, where Trustees' meetings were held in a large auditorium on the second floor. Chairs for the 19 presidents were arranged at the open end of a U-shaped table arrangement where the 16 appointed trustees and five ex-officio trustees sat facing the presidents. As chairman of the Council, I was seated at the center of the presidents' table. My primary functions at Trustees' meetings was to respond on behalf of the presidents when the trustees asked for our opinions, and to raise questions when appropriate. I had been elected and then re-elected to the chairmanship because of my seniority as a president and because I had been with the state colleges longer than any of my colleagues. However, some of my colleagues had tried to flatter me by saying my selection was on the basis of my "opportunistic quickness of thought," a "certain glibness of tongue," and my purported "recognition of the value of political diplomacy." In other words, I tried to persuade people by quickly exposing key issues without criticizing previously expressed contrary arguments.

While neither Governor Reagan nor, later, Gov. Jerry Brown attended every Trustees' meeting, they were frequently present when the agenda involved items of concern to them. When a governor is present, his position is automatically that of president of the Board of Trustees; but usually Reagan and Brown both deferred the chair to the elected chairperson of the Trustees.

During the days of unrest, students on all campuses were questioning traditional ways of doing things. Elected student officers and student legislative bodies had their own statewide association of members, with each campus usually represented by the elected student body president. Thus what concerned one student body often became a system-wide concern, particularly when student leaders would determine that priorities on spending student body fees needed to be changed. This was a time when many student legislative bodies voted to eliminate or reduce drastically the support traditionally given to athletics, musical organizations, college newspapers and yearbooks, debate teams, etc. When they took such action, it elimi-

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nated the financial support needed to continue what educators believed was a "co-curricular activity" of great practical experience that reinforced the academic instructional program. For example, I was convinced that when the Cal Poly student body eliminated the financial support for a yearbook, it weakened the experience opportunity for many journalism majors. But that change was minor compared to the actions taken at some campuses, where student bodies eliminated support for major sports and even for the official campus newspaper in favor of supporting some type of alternative paper over which there was no supervision by journalism faculty.

Administrators looked for a solution, and with advice and counsel from our director of business affairs, James Landreth, and our dean of students, Everett Chandler, I took the lead among the presidents in proposing the establishment of a new state-required student fee to support "instructionally related activities." It took considerable political effort to get a bill passed by the state legislature when there was active opposition by many student government representatives, but we succeeded. However, the word that came down from Governor Reagan's office was that he would veto the bill because of student opposition and his desire not to increase the cost of education to students by increasing the fees they had to pay. I felt his position was somewhat contrary to his general support of Chancellor Dumke's idea that all students should be paying more for their education through an imposition of a tuition that could be used to support a percentage of the costs of instruction. But then my own position could have been considered inconsistent since I opposed tuition but favored this particular increase in fees.

When we got the word that Governor Reagan was going to veto our hard-won bill on the instructionally related activities fee, my colleagues among the presidents agreed with me that we should try to arrange a private meeting between the presidents and the governor at the next Trustees' meeting at which he was due to appear. At the meeting I caught him at a lull in the proceedings and said, "The presidents need to have an off-the-record short talk with you about a great concern we have over the rumor that you are going to veto the instructionally related activities fee. We need to talk to you about how important that fee is to all the campuses. Will you meet with us in the side room at the adjournment of this session?"

He answered, "Sure, I'll be happy to meet with the presidents, but I'll not make any commitments. I'll listen, because, frankly I don't understand that bill and what it will do or not do." When the regular Trustees' session was over, the presidents all went immediately to the side room and took

chairs that surrounded a table in the center of the room. I escorted the governor to the room. Except for some of his security personnel, who stayed just outside the door to the room, he took no staff with him. He casually backed up to the table, sat on the edge, and addressed the presidents.

"Bob says you fellows want to educate me about something. Here I am. Who wants to go first?"

The presidents had already asked that I make the presentation, because I knew the issue, felt strongly about it, and seemed to have some fellow-Irishman rapport with Governor Reagan that the others didn't have. Knowing of his background in sports and in sports radio reporting before he became a movie actor, I stressed the importance of the fee to support competitive sports, student newspapers, radio news broadcasting, and similar activities at a time when radical students wanted to put student body money into activities more in keeping with their own political beliefs.

He said, "No one ever told me how important the fee was to provide this practical experience students need. Of course I'll sign the bill." He did and the fee was established, but not without continuing problems related to the setting of priorities for the use of the funds generated by the fee.

In early 1975, after Gov. Jerry Brown had submitted the 1975-76 budget to the Legislature without accepting any input and advice from the CSUC system, the presidents had, through the Chancellor, asked in writing for an opportunity to meet with him and talk about the importance of certain support items and capital outlay projects. Governor Brown had refused to meet with us or talk to any CSUC staff about the budget. Our requests for a meeting actually had received no answer. At a Trustees' meeting at the Los Angeles headquarters at which Governor Brown was in attendance, I saw an opportunity to put the request to him personally. I left my chair in the center of the section reserved for the presidents, and walked around the U-shaped table arrangement to where the governor sat next to Chairman Robert A. Hornby, Vice Chairman William Weissich, and Chancellor Glenn Dumke. I knelt down beside the governor's chair so I would not be so prominent to the other Trustees and the audience. I looked up at the governor and said, "Immediately after this session, would be a very good time, Governor, for you to meet the members of the Council of Presidents so you could tell them your concerns and they could tell you theirs. It doesn't have to take much time, but it would be a very convenient opportunity for you to see them all at once and eliminate the impression the media is spreading about you being aloof and unapproachable." He looked down at me squatting beside him in the most subservient manner possible, smiled, and said,

"OK, right after this session adjourns. Where?" I told him, "That room to the left as you leave this room by the front door."

I got up and walked back to my chair and quickly wrote a note on the top of my yellow pad: "The governor has agreed to meet with the presidents immediately after this session in the meeting room to the left of the front door. Be there. REK." I sent the pad circulating quickly around the group. I felt pretty smug that I had achieved a meeting with the governor when all other efforts had failed. What I did not know until a little later was that the governor was being followed around for several days by Richard Reeves, a well-known freelance writer on assignment for the *New York Times Magazine*. He was getting a story on "One Day in the Life of a Governor" or something similarly titled. Governor Brown saw in my invitation an opportunity to stage something for his own benefit, nationally as well as statewide.

When the Trustees' session ended, the presidents got up en masse and moved to the committee room. Arranging chairs in a semicircle, we put one chair at the open end alongside a small desk. I stood at the door waiting for the governor and his security guards and staff to arrive. They did, and the governor asked, "Is it OK if Mr. Reeves comes in also? He's doing a story about me." I answered, "OK, but he needs to sit in the back and just listen to the discussion." And that's the way it went.

Governor Brown sat in the chair where we asked him to. I opened the discussion by saying, "Governor, the presidents are concerned that you haven't given them an opportunity to meet with your budget analysts to give them facts on which you can base your decisions. When can that happen?" The governor did not answer the question specifically, but countered with this comment and question: "I think my budget is adequate for the real needs of the colleges and universities, and lobbying my staff wouldn't change my mind on anything. What is your next concern?"

One of the presidents spoke up and said, "We need more facilities to take care of increasing enrollments."

The governor replied, "You have too many students already. You don't need any more."

Then Jack Frankel, president of Bakersfield State, spoke up and asked, "How many students do you think we have in the state colleges and universities?" The governor answered, "I don't know, but it is too many."

The presidents didn't know whether to laugh or cry about this last answer. We finally got him to agree to reconsider his position on the capital outlay budget on the basis that some campuses, like Cal Poly San Luis

Obispo, were offering programs not available elsewhere in the system. The governor had made comments at Trustees' meetings that the facilities problem could be solved merely by sending students trying to enroll at one campus with a facility deficit to any of the new campuses where there were facilities in excess of their current enrollment needs. Logical as that solution appeared to the governor, it didn't solve the problem of students' wanting to major in architecture, engineering, agriculture, printing management, or a half-dozen other fields not offered at the campuses that had excess facilities.

Later we briefed Chancellor Dumke thoroughly on our meeting with the governor. He was not upset about our procedure, although I was concerned that he might have been.

In fact, the Chancellor had shown support for our need to have the governor understand Cal Poly's particular situation. When Dr. Dumke met on the San Luis Obispo campus with faculty, students, and staff on February 18, 1975, he had heard many examples of problems caused by too few facilities and too many students. The Chancellor was aware also that Cal Poly was not only impacted by demands of students wanting admission, but that some students and some townspeople were wanting Cal Poly to stop growing. He met for 90 minutes with the students and told them among other things that as a result of my contact with the governor, it appeared that our proposed Life Sciences building would be restored to the governor's budget. He also answered students' questions about financing instructionally related activities, remedial English courses, and the involvement of Cal Poly in the growth/no growth controversy that had been in the headlines of the local papers in recent months.

I was present in the conference room with the Chancellor during the meeting with the students, but had stayed in the background and made no comments other than to introduce the Chancellor at the opening of the session. I noticed Keith Gurnee, a Cal Poly graduate in city and regional planning who was an elected San Luis Obispo city councilman, leaning over and whispering in the ear of a student. Very shortly that student asked, "Chancellor Dumke, why doesn't the college administration listen to the people of San Luis Obispo and reduce the enrollment target to 10,000 FTE instead of 15,000 FTE?" I knew it was Councilman Gurnee's question, since he had been pressing for that limitation on growth in his no-growth campaign. He frequently was quoted by the press as saying Cal Poly was the "engine of growth," causing San Luis Obispo to grow beyond its ability to preserve the quality of life its citizens wanted.

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After Gurnee's question was asked, I entered the discussion. "The University is a statewide institution which serves more than the county or city with a range of degree programs, including many that are not offered elsewhere in California." (Later the February 25 *Cal Poly Report* said, "Kennedy blamed the city planning commission and city council, which have a no growth attitude" for the housing shortage being experienced by Cal Poly students. It went on to say, "The city makes it difficult for builders to develop the kinds of housing units needed to help relieve the housing shortage.")

The Chancellor told his campus listeners, "President Kennedy several years ago requested the Trustees not to include Cal Poly in the group of CSUC campuses being assigned 20,000 FTE maximum enrollment ceilings, and received Trustee endorsement for the 15,000 FTE ceiling that has been used by the University for planning purposes for the past several years." He added, "The possibility of further growth restrictions on Cal Poly is complicated by the fact that it is one of the few campuses in the state that has a continuing pattern of growth." Chancellor Dumke's remarks were quoted a week later in the *Cal Poly Report*: "The Trustees are very interested in the impact of the University's growth on the community. President Kennedy has worked with the community to achieve a good understanding."

Soon after this meeting I invited the San Luis Obispo City Council members to come to the campus for a discussion of the growth issue with Trustee Charles Luckman, then chairman of the Trustees' Building and Grounds Committee. The meeting was held in the conference room on the fourth floor of the administration building, which has windows on the north side looking out over the campus and most of the 5,000-acre farm. Ken Schwartz, mayor and member of the faculty and administrative staff of the school of architecture, was present, as were key members of the Cal Poly administration. At one point in the meeting, Mr. Luckman rose to his feet, paced around the conference room table, and gazed out over the wide expanse of the adjoining University property. He turned to face the mayor and other City Council members and said:

You don't understand the problem. Here we have the most popular campus in the state. It offers programs for the benefit of young men and women which they cannot get at other campuses either in our CSUC system or UC or even private colleges and universities. You are proposing that we deny them the opportunity of the kind of career-oriented education which will make them, as graduates, very productive and essential citizens in a technological world. Furthermore, you are saying that



*Trustee Charles Luckman, architect-businessman and a good friend of Cal Poly's, knew how to help.*

your reason for your position is that you want to preserve the rural nature of this little community of San Luis Obispo. That is hardly a compelling reason in the minds of trustees, legislators, or the governor. Your responsibility is to find a way to maintain the atmosphere you cherish in your community without denying admission to that atmosphere for others who are not yet here. That is not a new challenge. It is the basis for everything that is taught in architecture and particularly in city and regional planning. If you do not know how to do it, you should hire those who do and take their advice. To do otherwise is simply to be an obstructionist not a planner. I suggest you all stand and take a look out these windows at the largest campus in the CSUC system, with more than 5,000 acres — probably 20 times larger than the average college campus in this state — and tell me that there is a justification for stopping the natural growth of this University. I personally favor the idea that the target enrollment for Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, be set at 35,000 — and I may make that motion at the next meeting of the Trustees.

When the meeting was over, Mr. Luckman went back with me into my office and sat on the couch. "Well, Bob, how did I do? Do you think they'll

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be pressuring you to reduce enrollment to 10,000 students like Councilman Gurnee proposes?"

I replied, "It certainly wasn't what they wanted to hear. They thought I was the villain, insisting that the target enrollment remain at the 15,000 FTE figure. Now you are the villain and they may join me in my effort to keep the enrollment from exceeding 15,000 FTE."

All formal actions at the February 26, 1975, meeting of the Trustees' Campus Planning, Buildings, and Grounds Committee constituted final action by the Board, since the full Board had at its January 29th meeting delegated that authority to the Committee. Just a week before our master plan presentation was to be made to that Committee, our master-plan architect, Wallace Arendt, of the consulting firm of Arendt/Mosher/Grant of Santa Barbara, died. Although Robert Grant of the firm was able to be present, our project had not been his responsibility. The trustees agreed to have the presentation made by Doug Gerard, executive dean, and myself. Not only was the University's physical master plan approved, the trustees reconfirmed the figure of 15,000 FTE as the official enrollment ceiling for the San Luis Obispo campus.

At the same time, on February 24-25, 1975, students at Cal Poly voted to retain at the current annual \$20 level the fee for support of instructionally-related co-curricular activities. The announcement stated,

Results of the election will serve as an advisory to President Kennedy, who, under provisions of AB3116, must recommend to the trustees of the CSUC system whether fees should remain at the same level or be lower. AB 3116 enables the state through a fee required from all students to provide funding for such activities as debate, drama, livestock judging, music, publications, and sports.

There had been a transition back from liberal student leadership in the late 1960s to a more conservative student leadership that began with the election of Robin Baggett as student body president on May 5, 1972. Baggett, an athlete and an agriculture student, defeated Pete Evans, the incumbent student president, who was the first student president in Poly history to attempt re-election. Evans, an aeronautical engineering student, also probably set a record as the most nonconformist student president in Poly history, having refused every invitation and request of the University president for a meeting on any topic.

Part of Baggett's platform was to improve relations between the student officers and the University administration, mainly the president's office and

the dean of students' office. He succeeded at that goal and was a good student president. He went on to graduate from law school, and I recommended him and he became law clerk for William Clark, then a state appellate justice, later to become state supreme court justice, and later still an appointee by President Reagan to several national positions of prominence. Baggett is now a partner in a very prominent San Luis Obispo law firm.

In the spring of 1973 Robin Baggett and Denny Johnson, president and vice president of the student body, launched a letter-writing campaign to forestall the Trustees' adopting a state college tuition fee. (At that time students were paying \$52 per quarter for state fees to cover noninstructional costs of student services, which could not by law be used toward such instructional costs as faculty salaries.) Dean of Students Chandler and I had supported their efforts with statements giving justification for opposition to tuition.

As a member of the 12-man national board of directors of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, I was familiar with an AASCU survey of some 300 state colleges and universities which showed that for every \$100 increase in fees to students, the institution lost 100 students who could not afford the cost. I was quoted a number of times, as was Dean Chandler in local area media. While I knew that Chancellor Dumke, with a long affiliation with a private college where tuition was the lifeblood of support, was in favor of tuition as an augmentation to state support, I didn't realize that he was convinced the CSUC system had to move in that direction immediately or suffer financial cutbacks. He knew I was opposed to that position, because it was an issue frequently discussed at Council of Presidents meetings. About this time the *Los Angeles Times* ran a front page article on the subject and quoted the Chancellor extensively. In juxtaposition with his supporting quotes, the article ran a quotation attributed to me that contradicted his position.

It was the first time that he ever called me when he was obviously irritated. When I told him, truthfully, that I had never been contacted for that story by a reporter and that the writer had merely dredged up a quote from some previous story, he was placated. He had thought that the reporter had told me what he had said and that my statement had been offered in direct rebuttal to his own.

The Legislature had consistently opposed tuition for the CSUC system. In fact, the current catalog still states, "Legal residents of California are not charged tuition." It's a questionable victory: All the state and non-state fees

have increased so that an undergraduate California resident pays over \$700 per quarter, or more than \$2,200 per academic year, in fees. Unfortunately that charge could increase annually. The objective, according to some trustees, is to raise fees until the students or their parents pay one-fourth to one-third of the cost of their education. When I enrolled at San Diego State in 1934, I paid a total of \$18.50 per semester in fees (that's \$37 per academic year). What a difference 65-plus years can make!

One answer given to those who oppose increased fees and tuition that some students cannot afford is that there is plenty of money available in student aid for deserving students. While the source of such aid, both in loans and grants, has dramatically increased in the last half-century, there is no guarantee that the Federal government will continue to fund grants or loans to help students attend college.

Back in early March of 1973 I was among a contingent of state college and university presidents who met with congressional leaders in Washington to urge their positive action on what was then becoming an emergency because of lack of support for a student aid bill. A June 5th news story gave credit to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities for convincing Congress to appropriate the \$872 million contained in the 1973 Urgent Supplementary Appropriation Bill.

While the students had shown signs of becoming more conservative and less demonstrative on issues of concern in 1973-75, they had not lost their talent for making their objections to proposed administrative actions known. The proposal to cut down a half-dozen dirty and potentially dangerous eucalyptus trees to make way for an expansion to a visitor parking lot next to the Administration Building brought out a crowd of protesters banging on garbage can lids, carrying signs, marching around the site, and shouting, "Save our trees!" They soon tired of the activity, and the project went forward without further confrontations.

More serious and more long lasting was some architecture students' objection to the plan to raze the old Agricultural Education building, which had for the last several years been used as classrooms and design laboratories for architecture students. The building was one of the three original classroom buildings constructed in the early 1900s. The other two already had been removed to make way for the tower building, completed in 1942. The main thrust of the architecture students' argument was that the building was an example of the design and construction style of its period and should be saved as an historical monument of sorts. The building, which

## LEARN BY DOING

was not earthquake resistant, was something of a fire hazard. An inspecting fire marshal had required the erection of freestanding fire escapes on either side of the building, which certainly did not add to the architectural beauty of the structure.

We finally had to obtain the services of an architectural historian, who inspected the building and issued a report. The report stated that the building was not a "good example of architecture of the period," and had no historic value worth saving. On June 1, the student committee protesting the razing had a hearing before the Campus Planning Committee at which time they were apprised of the consultant's opinion. The Campus Planning Committee recommended unanimously to me that the building be torn down to make room for the new architecture classroom building. It was completed without incident, and has been principal home for the school of architecture for the last 20 years.

While we were having some problems during the transition period in getting 100 percent cooperation in implementing the affirmative action program, one item of progress put us ahead of other colleges in California. A request made by the University to the Department of Army in the spring of 1973 brought approval in the summer in time to be implemented for the fall quarter. This meant that the ROTC program would begin admitting women to the ranks of officer candidates as a career opportunity starting that September.

One of the nation's best-known advocates of a woman's right to work right alongside men in careers sometimes thought of as being for men only was Adela Rogers St. Johns, famous newspaperwoman and author. One of her first reporting jobs, after she was hired at age 18 by William Randolph Hearst for the *Los Angeles Evening Herald*, then the biggest paper in the West, was as a sportswriter. We first met her when she was a guest at the Madonna Inn and Mary and I were invited by Alex and Phyllis Madonna to come meet her. Her association with Mr. Hearst, who lavishly entertained Hollywood movie actors and actresses at his San Simeon ranch and Castle, led her into a new career as a movie screenwriter. Soon she was a confidante of some of the most famous of movie personalities.

My wife, Mary, and Adela hit it off so well they became very close friends and remained so until Adela's death in August, 1988. Adela's daughter, Elaine, asked Mary to speak at her mother's funeral, which she did. In a New Year's Eve conversation at our house in 1972, Adela was telling us about all the famous women she had known in her long life time. Mary said she should write



*Adela Rogers St. Johns, famous journalist and author, was the June, 1975, commencement speaker at age 81. She received a standing ovation from graduates and audience, an infrequent reaction.*

a book about those women. Adela did write the book, *Some Are Born Great*, published in 1974. In the acknowledgements she wrote, "First acknowledgement of help goes to Mary Kennedy, First Lady of California Polytechnic State University, who insisted I ought to write about great American women I have known." Mary was able to convince Adela to be a speaker at a number of Cal Poly events, the last of which was the commencement exercises of June, 1975. She gave a speech that was not only inspirational to women, it grabbed the hearts of men as well. In all the years that I have attended graduation exercises, this was the first time that I ever witnessed all the graduates give a speaker a standing ovation at the end of the address. It brought tears to my eyes to realize how much her words meant to them. I only wish I had those words to quote, but she delivered it entirely ad lib, without outline or note.

As a result of that friendship we became friends with one of Adela's oldest Hollywood associates, Colleen Moore, who in the 1920s was one of the biggest female box office attractions in Hollywood. Colleen, whose late husband, Homer Hargrave, was a stock market executive who had taught

her how to make even more millions than she had made in the movies, had a ranch near Paso Robles. There she entertained the rich and the famous. She included the University president and his wife as dinner guests with such people as Lillian Gish and Claire Booth Luce. In one conversation between Adela and Mary, Adela asked how much time she spent being "First Lady" of Cal Poly. Mary said, "I've never tried to keep track, Adela." Then she went to her file and got a clipping from which she read about a survey in 1977 in which 246 wives responded to a questionnaire sent to 500 college presidents' wives. The survey showed the time a college president's wife spent on official duties averaged 59 hours each week.

The duties, for which a university president's wife is not compensated, include preparing the president's home for entertainment of official guests, planning meals for official luncheons and dinners, attending campus events, travel with the president when a wife's presence is socially required — including trips abroad — and general public relations. The survey found, she read, that most presidents' wives have a strong commitment to their official role, and perform their duties as a matter of choice even when doing so means sacrificing other interests that might be more personally rewarding.

I thought of suggesting Adela write a book about college and university presidents' wives, but refrained when I realized it could lead to a demand for pay equal to their husbands'.

We were invited to one of Governor Reagan's prayer breakfasts and thought Adela would enjoy the opportunity to talk with her old friend. An appointment following the breakfast was arranged in advance, so Mary and I had the opportunity to sit in on a most interesting conversation between these two old friends. The governor was able to put aside the problems of the office and talk about their mutual Hollywood friends. It was fascinating.

Cal Poly gained more strength in our Sacramento connections during this transition period, 1973–75. Vice President Wilson, on leave of absence from his Cal Poly position for five months in 1968, had served during that time as assistant to Vern Sturgeon, then legislative secretary to the governor. When Wilson returned from his leave, the governor appointed him for two terms to the State Board of Agriculture, from 1968–73. And Sturgeon was appointed to the Public Utilities Commission. Dr. Alex Sheriffs, a former vice chancellor at the University of California, had become the governor's educational advisor.

When Sheriffs left the governor's office to become vice chancellor for academic affairs for the CSUC System, with Reagan's blessings, the gover-

nor's office requested I give Wilson another leave of absence so he could accept an appointment as Reagan's educational adviser. I said it would put a big hole in our organization, but I would talk to Harold. Wilson, a staunch Republican, wanted to serve his Republican leader, but he had concerns about what the leave of absence might do to his anticipated retirement at age 65. There were about two years left in Reagan's term of office, so the leave was timed so that he could return to Cal Poly before retiring. Wilson and I both felt it important to cooperate with the governor.

Cal Poly was going to lose a very loyal, hard-working and effective administrator who was the best lobbyist in the CSUC system, but we were going to gain access to the governor's office at a level we did not then have. Wilson took the job; it worked out even better than I had hoped. He did come back to Cal Poly and retired on December 20, 1974, at age 65.

Another contact in the governor's office was a former student body president, Rush Hill, who had been there since the early 1970s. Hill was student body president in 1968 and spoke at my inaugural. The governor had met him on that occasion. I was aware that Rush Hill's family included some very prominent Southern California Republicans. When I got a phone call from the governor's office one day asking for the name of a student leader who could head up the governor's attempt at liaison with young people, particularly young Republicans, it was a natural to recommend Rush Hill. The governor had already seen Rush in action, so the appointment came rapidly. Rush not only worked in the capacity as liaison with young people, he became an architectural and interior design consultant officially for the governor and privately for Nancy Reagan's projects at the Reagans' Santa Barbara ranch.

Another student body president, Scott Plotkin, was elected in January, 1975, by his fellow CSUC student presidents to be chairman of the system's Student Presidents Association. As such he became spokesman for all the student presidents and thus the voice of 280,000 students on the CSUC campuses. My relations with Scott had been very good, and his description of our working relationship prompted the Student Presidents Association on two occasions to invite me to talk to them about how to improve relations and cooperation between college presidents and student presidents. After he graduated, I recommended him for, and he was appointed to, a position in the CSUC public affairs office in Sacramento, where he made his home, and where he assists in educating legislators on the need for support for (or opposition to) certain legislative bills.

## LEARN BY DOING

Though our rapport in Sacramento had been increasing all during Governor Reagan's administration, which lasted from 1967 to 1974, we faced the new year of 1975 with a new governor, Jerry Brown, whose first statement on spending money for capital outlay projects was, "The CSUC system is overbuilt and I will not approve any capital outlay for any campus until every campus is filled to its capacity." That was a challenge that we had to face as we moved out of the transition into the reality of dealing with a liberal Democrat who was a fiscal conservative. It was a challenge that occupied most of the president's waking moments and not a few of his nightmares for the remainder of his time as president.

*LESSON TWENTY-ONE Growth vs. no growth in a town or city is a political issue, sometimes grounded on economic theory, sometimes on ecology. In either case, it is an issue that negatively impacts a university's plans for future development if the university is seen as the local engine of growth.*

A TIME TO FIGHT AND A TIME TO QUIT

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS and many of their wives from throughout the United States had gathered on the evening of November 10, 1975, to attend a reception preceding the national convention of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities being held that year in Boston. The reception was being hosted by the AASCU Board, on which I had been a director for the past five years.

Mary and I were circulating among the guests, trying to read lapel name-cards in the rather dim light, and carrying out our hosting role while straining to connect faces, names, and institutions. We noticed one group of guests all of whom we recognized instantly as being CSUC presidents, some with wives, but most alone. We approached the group and Bob Kramer, president of Cal Poly, Pomona, immediately said, "Admit it, Bob, it was Mary who wrote the poem that appeared over your name on the front page of the *Christian Science Monitor*."

Mary and I knew what he was talking about because we had seen it when we picked up a *Monitor* from the reading rack on the plane as we were flying from Los Angeles to Boston. We were both surprised not only to see something I had written given such prominent display in a front-page box in a nationally circulated newspaper, but because it had been set in a poetic style, not by me but evidently by the editor, who had indented every other line of the short introduction I had used in a speech at the 1975 Fall Conference. Despite the indented lines, it was not a poem.

I tried my best to convince my colleagues that I, not Mary, was the author, but to no avail. Her reputation as a poet had been established, and they suspected, rightly, that I had no talent in that direction.

What I had written had been inspired by the first line of Charles Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." Even more inspirational had been King Solomon's thoughts in the Book of Ecclesiastes, specifically, "A time to be born, a time to die...a time to weep and a time to laugh...a time to mourn and a time to dance." To these Solomon had added a dozen more contrasts of the seasons of life, all of which have a polarity that suggests conflicts, contradiction, opposition — all at the extreme points.

What I had done in the introduction to my speech, "A Time of Contrast," was to list in juxtaposition of opposing ideas many of the issues I found troubling colleges and universities across the country in the year 1975-76. A few examples: A time for the individual, a time for society. A time for quality, a time for economy. A time for stability, a time for change. A time to employ more minorities and women, a time to lay off employees. A time to stress the humanities, a time to stress salable skills.

After listing a score of such items, I asked, "Are these issues more troublesome now than in the past?" The answer was "yes." Most colleges and universities considered a goodly number of these contrasting concepts to be at a "critical mass" stage with the future of many institutions not certain.

Many colleges and universities were dealing with declining enrollments in the early 1970s, a situation that was novel to many faculty and administrators who had only experienced growth since the end of World War II, except for a few blips on the charts caused by the Korean War and the Vietnam War. The early history of higher education in the United States could have taught us to be wary: Of the 516 colleges founded in 16 states before the Civil War, 412 did not survive, a mortality rate of 80 percent. In the remaining 18 states that had colleges before the Civil War, the rate was the same in 12 and better in six New England states.

Coupled with the declining growth situation in 1975-76 was a high inflation and a general taxpayer reluctance to support higher education. The situation was threatening to many institutions because in most of them recruitment of new faculty and future promotions were and continued to be tied to future growth. Without continued growth, promotions of faculty may not be possible under a percentage system until death, retirement, and resignation make promotion spots available. When, in some institutions, decline in enrollment stopped, but no growth occurred, the words "steady state" were applied. In California the forerunners of the CSUC campuses experienced steady state from 1915 to 1935. Those first eight campuses, originally normal schools, had a combined enrollment in 1915 of 7,789 students. In 1919 the Los Angeles Normal School became UCLA; that left seven campuses, which had an enrollment of 7,377 in 1935. When I joined Cal Poly's faculty in 1940, the system again had eight campuses, but only until 1942, when Santa Barbara State became UC Santa Barbara. Just before World War II the system had 12,141 students, but by 1945, because of the war and the draft, enrollment had dropped to 6,133, mostly women.

By 1975 it had become known that steady state was itself a myth and that the real threat was not equilibrium but recession. At that point, many

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faculty and administrators thought of steady state as a welcome relief from spiraling inflation, dropping enrollments, and layoff of faculty and staff. At the time I was addressing our faculty, on September 22, 1975, I was aware that President John Bunzel of San Jose State, one of our CSUC campuses with a 20,000 FTE target, had announced the layoff of 76 full-time faculty and prospects of further reduction if that campus didn't reach the 19,000 FTE for which it was budgeted. President Bunzel said the drop in enrollment at San Jose State was due only partially to a decline in birthrate and a depressed economy. He pointed out that the most significant problem was the reduction from an average student load of 12 units to 11 or lower, a fact that students claimed in a survey was due to the unavailability of required courses.

By contrast Cal Poly was starting the 1975 year with 45 new faculty positions. But I also pointed to the statistics that proved a downward trend in average student load during the past five years, from 15 to 14.5 units. I told the faculty, "If each student added one more unit, the result would be the addition of 60 full-time faculty members without adding one individual student to be housed, parked, transported, counseled, fed, entertained, exercised, disciplined, or WOWed." I tried to encourage faculty to continue the kind of dedicated service they had given in past years by stating, "The difference between Cal Poly and some other campuses may well be in the faculty's willingness to meet the need for opening new sections of courses, even increasing class size, and increasing faculty workload — seemingly necessary steps in a system that is financed on a statewide basis of 'show us the bodies and we'll give you the financial support.'"

While steady state at most campuses was a factor brought upon them by circumstances they could not control, at Cal Poly we were in a steady state by design. We were holding enrollment to an annual average of 13,800 FTE, and turning away thousands of applicants, because we didn't have adequate facilities to handle any increase above that number. In January, 1975, I had called a University Convocation of every official consultative group on campus as well as officers of all employee organizations. I presented a series of dilemmas pertaining to enrollment growth, facilities deficits, and building-program financing problems. We explored alternatives and asked for counsel and advice from all groups prior to a February 26 Trustees' meeting. It was practically unanimously agreed that we should set our 1975-76 enrollment capacity at 13,800 annual average FTE, work to get the \$6.5 million Life Science building, bring 15 trailers onto the campus for faculty offices, and hold to the 13,800 figure for three years, moving toward the

ultimate capacity of 15,000 FTE with 200 to 300 annual increases only after new facilities had relieved the extreme facilities crunch.

What was holding up financing of new facilities in 1975 was not the conservative Republican Ronald Reagan but the liberal Democrat Jerry Brown. We had to consider the possibility that the new governor's fiscal conservatism represented the feelings of many voters and taxpayers. A *New York Times* article attributed to Jerry Brown the statement, "I am going to starve the schools financially until I get some educational reforms." What educational reforms? He admitted he didn't know what reforms were needed, but in the case of the CSUC system he had made it plain he wanted a process that justified to his personal satisfaction every cent requested. This was not an irrational position, but he didn't make it easy, since he not only refused to meet with CSUC representatives, he discouraged his immediate staff advisers from listening to the arguments of our lobbyists.

With a serious facilities deficit, Cal Poly's main concern was getting our master-planned construction projects into the highest priority listing by the Trustees. That was not impossible, but the other 18 presidents were also busy trying to push their own capital outlay needs, even when their campuses were in a steady state. Projects on the Trustees' priority list were the only projects that could expect to get "do pass" recommendations from the Senate and Assembly committees handling capital outlay requests. We could approach legislators and provide strong arguments on behalf of Cal Poly projects, but the other 18 presidents could do the same, even though lobbying for any project not on the Trustees' priority list was supposedly verboten. California had given its governors line item veto power, which meant the governor could veto any item added by the legislature to his "bare bones" budget without much fear the legislators could mount a two-thirds favorable vote to override his veto.

The Trustees' budget request for 1975-76 had included \$75 million for capital outlay. Governor Brown cut \$60 million, leaving only \$15 million, which included one project for San Jose State, whose Assemblyman, John Vasconcellos, chaired the Assembly Ways and Means Subcommittee on Higher Education. The governor's final 1975-76 budget for all capital outlay in the CSUC system was \$22.9 million. It included Cal Poly's \$6.25 million Life Science building, but had cut San Jose State's allocation from over \$3 million to less than \$400,000. I had spent six months' effort getting our project back in the approved budget with the help of Senator Donald Grunsky (R-Watsonville); Harry Harmon, executive vice chancellor of the

CSUC; Dale Hanner, vice chancellor for business affairs, CSUC; and Scott Plotkin, Cal Poly student president and president of the CSUC Student Presidents Association. San Jose State's president, John Bunzel, was upset, but he lost his project primarily because of declining enrollment. Some other presidents were also upset, because in the process I had stressed to the Trustees, legislators, and governor's staff that the highest priority should be "facilities to meet enrollment pressure."

I was accused in a plenary session of the Council of Presidents on September 4 of having lobbied the Legislature to get our project approved, when at that moment seven other projects had higher priorities set by the Trustees. Those other projects were additional land for San Diego, Humboldt, and Chico, and facilities to provide "balanced campuses" at Bakersfield, Dominguez Hills, Stanislaus, and Sonoma. None of them could present justification based on enrollment need, and the Trustees knew my position because I had told them I believed the governor's policy would never permit support when enrollment need couldn't be shown.

The specific issue of contention was a letter I had written to 120 legislators, a fact I readily admitted. The letter, written in March, was designed to notify each legislator that Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, was forced to hold enrollment for a minimum of three years at the figure of 13,800 FTE because we lacked facilities to accommodate more, and that they could anticipate some of their constituents would be contacting them when their sons or daughters were among the thousands we expected to turn away. I made reference to the fact that when we had held enrollment at 12,000 FTE for two years (1971 and 1972), those qualified but not admitted complained to their respective legislators who, in turn, complained to me, usually by telephone.

I told my colleague presidents I was merely trying to avoid a repetition of that experience by giving all the legislators the facts in advance. I also told the presidents that it was naive of them to believe a legislator could be influenced by what was basically a form letter, but if they wanted to believe that I was that good as a persuasive letter-writer, they were welcome to the thought. And despite the appearance that I might have been at loggerheads with my colleagues, the Chancellor, the Chancellor's staff, or the Trustees, it was not so. I had just completed a two-year term as chairman of the Council of Presidents and was now serving as chairman of the Council's Committee on Capital Outlay and Finance. It was in that latter position that both Vice Chancellors Harmon and Hanner would request my assistance

in making systemwide presentations to legislative committees in Sacramento. It took time, but it gave me the opportunity to be present in my official capacity at the State Capitol building, where important decisions affecting Cal Poly were being made.

Two asides come to mind. As a result of the phone calls I was getting from legislators whose constituents' children were being turned away from Cal Poly, I began pressing the Chancellor and the Trustees to change the systemwide admissions policy. The admission policy at the time involved the use of a "random number" selection from the total number of minimally qualified applications. It was in fact a lottery among the qualified. Several of the parents had complained to their legislators, who complained to me, that they knew the system was unfair because they were neighbors of other families whose children had been admitted when theirs had been rejected, and the rejected children had been on the high school honor roll but the neighbors' kids had not.

It was hard to justify the existing system to a complaining parent, even harder to a complaining legislator. The system was changed, and eventually Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, was given special consideration to establish what are now considered the highest admission standards in the CSCU, causing some applicants to say, "It is easier to get admitted to Stanford or any campus of the University of California." (This may be their opinion, but it is not true.)

During his first year in office, Gov. Jerry Brown was getting a lot of negative press because of his "aloofness" and nonconforming political habits. He even made headlines in newspapers around the state when he refused to sign a certificate of appreciation for a young child who represented some level of unusual accomplishment. That knowledge made a particular presentation to me at the 1975 Poly Royal opening ceremonies even more a part of this period of contrasts. Trustee Dean Leshner, publisher of a chain of some 25 or 30 California daily newspapers, was a guest, invited to campus by the Poly Royal student leadership. What he handed me during that opening ceremony, with some very flattering remarks, was an artistically drawn framed certificate by Robert Reynolds, a member of the Cal Poly art faculty, which had been signed by Gov. Jerry Brown on March 28, 1975. The certificate stated, in language that I was told later had been written by my secretary, Grace Arvidson, that it was in recognition of 35 years of

meritorious (and sometimes hazardous) service, often above and beyond the call of duty in striving to achieve the goals of California Polytechnic

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State University, San Luis Obispo and in acknowledgment of his astute leadership, his high principles, his humor and humanity, his eagerness to communicate, his durability and stamina, and above all, his longevity.

Trustee Leshner told me after the presentation that he had been able to get the governor's signature primarily because Jerry Brown got a kick out of the humor of the message. So who has to be traditional or consistent?

When Governor Brown approved the budget in July, he sent a message to the heads of all state agencies announcing what he expected in the next budget presentation, for 1976-77. He wrote that it must reflect "in dollars and cents the philosophy of this administration." He added,

I intend to take every step possible to avoid a general tax increase... accordingly, new programs which cost money will require corresponding reductions in other programs. I have asked the Department of Finance to challenge vigorously all programs which:

1. Do not show results, or indicate only marginal performance.
2. Have substantially met the needs for which they were established (and can thus be discontinued).
3. Overlap significantly with other programs.
4. Benefit only the special interests which more properly should support themselves.
5. Ignore better alternatives.
6. No longer enjoy the support of the people.

The governor's message to all state agency heads concluded, "The basic fiscal policy of this administration is to redirect efforts without escalating costs. Every budget submitted must reflect this policy."

Consequently I felt somewhat ambivalent about the message I was giving the faculty and staff at the September, 1975, Fall Conference. It was pessimistic about the political and financial circumstances that existed for support of the CSUC system. But I was trying hard to be optimistic about Cal Poly's prospects — as long as we worked together against negative outside forces.

In respect to this sales pitch, I was using a strategy that didn't vary much from what I had heard President McPhee use over the 26 years I listened to him at the beginning of each academic year. In those early sessions in the 1940s, President McPhee would be talking ad lib to all the faculty and administrative staff gathered in a normal classroom seating about 40. It was an informal setting in which he always stressed the "forces" that were at work

in Sacramento to "eliminate" Cal Poly, and the struggle he personally had to make each year to "win the battle" by gaining support of legislators and the governor. McPhee's talks centered around the theme of "them" against "us," with himself as protector. He was very good at it. I remembered in those first five years at Poly, when I was working with too many goals and too few resources, going to those meetings with little enthusiasm, knowing that I faced another school year in which I would be overworked and underpaid. But I would leave the session fired up and make resolutions to myself to get better organized so I could help McPhee win battles.

Now, in 1975, I was addressing some 1,700 or more people gathered in Chumash Auditorium, and had no chance of making eye contact with every person in the room. But despite the basic difference in magnitude, I found myself doing the same thing McPhee had always done: talking about "them" and "us" and trying to generate enthusiasm for "fighting the battle together." But getting that togetherness with faculty was increasingly difficult, with statewide efforts being made to gain collective bargaining rights for faculty as well as nonacademic staff.

At the time the governor was demanding that the 1976-77 budget be developed without a tax increase, I had on my desk another message, this from a group representing faculty who were asking for a "decrease in faculty loads, increase in student assistant and secretarial time, increase in numbers of sabbatical leaves, increase in opportunities for professional development and involvement through additional travel funds, etc." I told the faculty that a realistic response would be "no" in 1976-77 on both campus and statewide because of the governor's budget policy. The Senate bill proposing collective bargaining for the CSUC system was amended so many times that it became unacceptable not only to the governor but also to the sponsoring employee organizations. Such a bill was destined to pass, but my immediate message to the faculty and staff was:

This particular campus has a long tradition of all its constituent groups working together for a common purpose, to support the institution's unique role and mission. No matter what form of governance this campus has in the future, whether it is with collective bargaining or without collective bargaining, I hope that all of you will strive to continue the tradition of planning and working together as men and women of goodwill — dedicated to a concern for students — which has always been the fundamental "emphasis program" at Cal Poly.

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While my 1975 message seemed to focus on material things like getting funds for new facilities, I included some heavy thoughts on measuring quality of programs and quality of teaching performance, with emphasis on our achievements in both general accreditation and accreditation by professional groups. I pointed out that the number of Cal Poly's accredited professional programs (14, with one pending) was surpassed only at San Jose State, the oldest and one of the largest universities in the system. I also pointed out that the Trustees had set a policy that every undergraduate program for which there is a professional accrediting agency should be accredited, or we would face the possibility of having the program withdrawn. I added,

It would seem to me that faculty in every department which can be accredited would move forward vigorously to achieve accreditation. In those disciplines in which there is no accrediting body, it would be wise to initiate a thorough self-study, following the basic format for such self-studies used by some of the accrediting agencies in other fields. During the three years we are in "steady state" our growth should be in quality not quantity.

Despite our best intentions to concentrate on quality, the quantity of students wanting to enroll at Cal Poly and the lack of quantity in our facilities was causing the administration to work harder than ever to convince decision-makers of our needs for more facilities. That meant dealing with the Chancellor's staff, Trustees, legislators, and key members of the staff of the State Department of Finance, who were basically on the governor's staff and advisory to him. To that last group we pounded away on the idea that Cal Poly met all the governor's criteria for financial support.

We were having some success at adding to our facilities. On July 1, 1976, Doug Gerard, executive dean, issued a memorandum on the status of 11 construction projects, most of which were minor, that did include three major projects:

- (1) Architecture classroom building (cost \$4,303,000), work started February, 1975, now 70% complete, scheduled for occupancy Fall, 1976;
- (2) Engineering West addition (cost, \$662,700), work started mid-September, 1975, now 32% complete, scheduled for occupancy February, 1977; and
- (3) Biological science classroom building, named by approval of the Trustees "Clyde Fisher Science Hall" (cost, \$4,845,000), work begun late June, 1976, completion scheduled for Spring, 1978.

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The first two had been approved by Governor Reagan with only the usual effort necessary. The science building had required Governor Brown's approval; we learned from that experience that any future approvals of facilities would require an all-out effort to win Governor Brown's signature.

In the Fall 1976 Conference talk on "Investment in the Future," I proposed a program of professional development with each faculty member investing time to become "an even better teacher than you now are." I also told them,

Cal Poly turned away some 3,000 qualified students this year and 1,500 last year while holding enrollment at 13,800 FTE, a plateau to be maintained through 1978.

Cal Poly faculty members are already carrying a heavier teaching load than they did ten years ago.

I agree with the Academic Senate that any faculty improvement program be voluntary and be controlled by the faculty.

It was becoming more and more obvious that Cal Poly was going to have to develop an active program of raising non-state funds to augment dwindling state support. I hesitated to start this money-raising effort because, like Julian McPhee, I believed that the state had an obligation through its tax structure to spread the cost as widely as possible in funding the legitimate needs of this and other state colleges and universities. In fact I felt then that for state supported colleges and universities to seek private funding was encroaching on the turf of private institutions, which had no place else to turn. Yet the struggle for adequate funding from the state appeared to be getting tougher, not easier.

We brought in two consultants from UCLA's development program, one of the most successful in the state. They talked to an assembled group of administrators and Foundation Board members sometime before the Fall 1976 Conference. One very positive recommendation was to start with an annual giving drive aimed at alumni. They believed that unless your alumni gave, no one else would. They said, "When you approach most foundations or even industrial tycoons, the first question asked will be, 'What percentage of your alumni give and how much do they give?'" They added, "Many donors will match what your alumni give."

On October 21, 1976, we announced in *Cal Poly Report* the beginning of a program of annual giving. The announcement stated, "Cal Poly is embarking on a new venture, one which will involve every alum, former student,



*Helping finance Cal Poly with private funding was inevitable. It began in 1976 with a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Armistead B. Carter, seen here with Mary Kennedy and President and Mrs. Warren Baker in 1981.*

and friend of the University, and seeks the active participation of the University's family and friends."

We began the campaign with a \$25,000 gift from my former employer and mentor, Armistead B. Carter, of San Diego. The gift paid for the administrative costs of running that first campaign to reach out to all alumni. The year's effort gained a little more than a return of the investment, about \$30,000. But each subsequent year, the program has grown, particularly so since my retirement in 1979. I believe it is now rated as the most successful fund-raising program in the CSUC system. One of the most unusual of the major gifts was the bequest of the late Al Smith, an alumnus who took journalism courses from me in 1940-41 and wrote a column for *The Mustang* about railroads. While going to Cal Poly he worked as a brakeman for the Southern Pacific Railroad and lost a leg in a railroad accident. He never lost his love for railroads, however, and the \$2.2 million ranch he gave to Poly includes a narrow-gauge railroad on which I have ridden more than once.

A small note in a November 4, 1976 *Cal Poly Report* took only four lines, but it hid a considerable effort that was in progress and involved what some people at the Chancellor's office had declared a "mission impossible." James Landreth, Cal Poly director of business affairs, stated,

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Included in the \$14.7 million capital outlay funds requested for Cal Poly are construction of a faculty office building and library, additional equipment for the new architecture building, and working drawings for rehabilitation of Crandall Gymnasium and Natatorium.

We had almost lost the first step in the construction of a new faculty office building when the governor's budget deleted the working drawing funds. But in 1973 we had sold a piece of long-held Cal Poly property, not contiguous to the campus, at the intersection of Santa Rosa Street and Foothill Blvd., and earmarked the proceeds solely for Cal Poly's use. That fund provided the \$83,000 needed for working drawings. As a result we hoped to get the governor's approval for construction funds, and to have a new building ready for occupancy by the end of the year 1978 — to relieve a critical shortage of office space.

Getting a new, much-needed library was going to be an even more difficult job, and we all knew it. Dexter Library had been built in 1949 when the existing master plan called for a maximum enrollment of 2,700 men and 900 women. An addition built in the 1960s expanded the facility so that it could serve a campus with a maximum enrollment of 6,000 students. Now, in the late 1970s, we had a total enrollment more than double that figure, and very inadequate library facilities. There had been a time when some members of the administration were convinced that a new livestock judging pavilion was more important than a new library, which they didn't think would be much used. It is interesting to note how times change. In a spring, 1991, *Library Update*, Dr. David B. Walch, then Cal Poly's dean of library services, wrote,

Cal Poly's Library circulates more items per student than any other library within the CSU system. During 1989-90 the library circulated more than one million items for an average circulation of nearly 64 items per student. The average circulation for students at other CSU campuses was less than one-half as much at 27 items per student.

Maintaining an enrollment plateau of any given number of students requires some expert predictions based upon several factors, but the most important is the accuracy of the historical record of the "show rate," or number of students who actually show up and enroll compared to the number of accepted applicants. In the fall of both 1975 and 1976 Cal Poly experienced exceptionally high "show rates." The sudden change was experienced throughout the country as well as at Cal Poly, even at institutions

that had been having an enrollment decline. The change did not create a hardship at most colleges and universities, but it did at Cal Poly, where facilities were already overutilized.

In 1975-76 the enrollment target of 13,800 FTE was exceeded by 430 FTE. In order to provide budgetary support for students currently enrolled, we asked for additional funding and made a request to increase the target plateau to 14,200 FTE. Both requests were approved by the Chancellor and Trustees. Justification given for the target enrollment increase to 14,200 FTE was the completion of new instructional facilities: the architecture classroom added 500 FTE and the Fisher Science building added 700.

When Governor Brown released his 1977-78 capital outlay budget, it included funds for several construction projects at other campuses, but the only major project was Cal Poly's Faculty Office building, which was to provide for 140 individual offices at a cost of \$2,651,000. Completion of the new building was scheduled for late 1978. The governor's capital outlay budget message included information on the prospects for the \$11,470,000 library which had the top statewide construction priority immediately after the Cal Poly faculty office building. The budget language indicated the library funding would be held up "pending review of up-to-date project scope data by the Department of Finance."

Unfortunately the same kind of review by Department of Finance staff during the late years of the Reagan administration had caused the library project to be put on the back burner. The review included an on-site surprise inspection of the utilization of Dexter Library. The Inspection Committee staff members arrived about 3 o'clock in the afternoon on a very warm Friday in May. Along with Dean Gerard I escorted the group, which consisted of team members representing the Department of Finance and the Legislative Analyst's office, to the main library reading room. That reading room, without air conditioning or even adequate ventilation, was extremely warm. There were practically no students in the room. I said, "You should have come on a cold, rainy Monday morning in January. The students are all at the beach today."

The committee's job was to report the facts, which they did, and our proposal for a library at that time was postponed. Now the postponement period was over, and we had another opportunity, but the Chancellor's office was very skeptical, having interpreted the governor as meaning what he said when he'd said, "No new facilities at any CSU campus until all of them are filled to capacity." More than half of them had capacity in excess of their

current enrollment. Under those circumstances no one expected the library project to be included in the governor's budget, and it wasn't. That made it imperative that we get both houses of the Legislature to include it in their version of the budget. The first step in that process was to get our Assemblywoman Carol Hallett (R-Atascadero) and our Sen. Robert Nimmo (R-Atascadero) to help us with the chairmen of the key committees, which they did. Hallett made an appointment for me with John Vasconcellos, chairman of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Higher Education, on the morning of May 9, the day before the item was to be heard by his committee. Assemblywoman Hallett went with me.

When John saw us enter his office, he asked, "Where's Mary?"

I replied, "She's back at the hotel."

He said, "Next time you come to Sacramento and don't bring Mary in to see me, I'll vote against whatever project you're promoting."

All this because John liked Mary's poems. He was a very humane person who let his female office staff keep their kids in playpens in the office. Two of the people who would be testifying before the Assembly Ways and Means Subcommittee the next day were Bob Gibbs, analyst for the Department of Finance, and Jerry Beavers, analyst for the Legislative Analyst's office. They were both very pro-Cal Poly people, but they had to reach conclusions that were not contrary to the policies set by their superiors — and those policies were often driven by budgetary considerations and sometimes even by concerns not relevant to a project under consideration.

We needed to know in advance of the meeting, if possible, what findings and recommendations they were going to report so I could be ready with a rebuttal or offsetting facts. But friendly as they were to Cal Poly, they could not legitimately tell us in advance what it was they were going to report.

When I explained to Chairman Vasconcellos how important it was for me to know what they were going to recommend at his hearing, he said, "That's a good idea. I ought to have a preview of that testimony, too."

He called the two men and set up a time for them to be in his office to preview for him what they were going to tell his committee. He then gave me the time and said, "You be here with pen and paper, and you can sit in."

I got to his office that afternoon a little earlier than the appointed hour. I was in Vasconcellos' inner office with him when Gibbs and Beaver arrived. They both looked at me and asked John, almost in unison, "Are you going to let President Kennedy hear our proposed testimony too?"

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Vasconcellos said, "Why not, he'll hear it tomorrow. Why not today?" They both looked at me and smiled, and Gibbs said, "You're the chairman, Mr. Vasconcellos. If it is OK with you, it's OK with us."

The two men made their entire presentation to the Chairman, and I took notes just as rapidly as I could. I asked them to go a little slower a couple of times, and they obliged.

That evening in the hotel, Doug Gerard and I prepared a rebuttal for every negative comment they included in their reports. I did not want to get the Chancellor's Sacramento lobbying staff involved in this action, so I did not go to their office in the morning to get my rebuttal typed. I went to the office of one of our graduates, George Soares, a former student body president, who was then working in the Department of Agriculture. He had my handwritten notes typed quickly and made five copies, and Gerard and I then went to the offices of Gibbs and Beavers.

I said to each of them in turn, "You were good enough to let me hear what your testimony will be this afternoon. I figured it would be only fair for you to know what my rebuttal remarks will be if and when it becomes necessary to make them." Both thanked me and said they appreciated the opportunity to read them in advance.

During the subcommittee meeting, Jerry Beavers did include several of his original negative comments and then said that we had met and I had satisfied him with answers that offset his doubts; he therefore recommended funding the project.

When Bob Gibbs testified, it was more difficult for him to make a positive recommendation. As a Department of Finance employee, he actually reported to the governor's office and took orders from an appointee of the governor, the Director of Finance. He had earlier told Gerard and me that the governor had said there were to be no additions to the CSU budget, and any that the legislature put in he would strike out. Chairman Vasconcellos and all the other members of the committee understood the cloud under which Gibbs would be testifying. They fully expected him to make a negative recommendation, and so did I. Instead, Bob Gibbs came out solidly in favor of a new library at Cal Poly with some words to the effect that "There is no other capital outlay project being proposed that is more needed or justified."

The Assembly Ways and Means Subcommittee passed the proposal in its original form, based on 15,000 FTE and \$11.5 million. It went through the Senate without a hitch. Now all we had to do was convince Governor Brown.

## LEARN BY DOING

I had learned from Roy Bell, Brown's original Director of Finance, that the governor did not always listen to his staff advisors. I decided that was a clue to use political pressure, not logic. Obtaining a list of all Brown's major campaign contributors, I then went to see some of the people whose names were on the list. I visited top executives of firms such as Union Oil, Standard Oil, Bechtel, etc., and told their executives of our dilemma. I asked them to write and phone the governor and explain that Cal Poly was producing the kind of engineers they needed.

I then went to officials of the AFL-CIO building trades, whose organizations had been big donors to the Democratic candidate. I explained that we were the "democratic" university, educating men and women for the working world, and that we could not wait until all the liberal arts colleges got filled before we asked for and got new facilities to handle the hundreds of qualified applicants we were turning away each year. Furthermore, I pointed out that an \$11.5 million dollar construction project, for which there was plenty of money in the offshore capital outlay building fund, was not to be sneezed at in terms of construction work for their union members. I asked them to write or phone the governor to keep that project in the new version of the budget the Legislature would be sending him.

One day in Sacramento, I fell in step with the governor's closest fiscal adviser and followed him down the hall toward the governor's office, selling him with every step on the importance of the library for Cal Poly. Just before we got to the door of the governor's office he stopped, turned, and said, "President Kennedy, we've got that message from a dozen different sources. You've made your point. Go home and relax, you're going to get your library."

I didn't know whether to believe him or not, but I didn't have long to wait. On July 7 it was announced that Gov. Jerry Brown had approved construction projects for Cal Poly totaling \$14.5 million — over half of the \$24,247,000 approved for all 19 campuses. It included \$11.5 million for the library, \$2.7 million for the faculty office building, and \$350,000 to equip the recently completed architecture classroom building. In signing the budget, Governor Brown specifically mentioned that he recognized the high-priority need for the Cal Poly library.

While they might not have influenced the governor as much as calls from some of his major campaign contributors, he was just enough of a nonconformist to have been moved by the efforts of Cal Poly students who were part of the campaign to influence him. On June 16, 1977, Student Body President Ole Melland, from Redding, and a contingent of student officers

presented the governor with a two-foot by three-foot book of 44 pages containing the signatures of over 7,000 students. In the form of a petition, the "Big Book" urged the governor to approve a new library. The date-due slip in the book was stamped "OVERDUE."

Not only had the students helped, so also had the faculty and staff. How many letters to the governor and arrangements for contacts by influential persons were promoted by individuals I'll never know. One example I do know about was the success Professor Starr Jenkins, of the English department, had in convincing then Congressman Leon Panetta to lobby his fellow Democrat, Jerry Brown, to not line item-veto the Cal Poly library allocation added by the legislature.

A groundbreaking ceremony was planned for St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1978, for what the announcement said was to be "construction of the largest campus structure in the 76-year history of Cal Poly." The Los Angeles firm of Robert E. McKee, Inc., was the lowest of six bidders for the job, with a bid of \$9,040,000. The Chancellor, his top staff, and the Trustees were all invited to the groundbreaking ceremony as were faculty, staff, and students.

A conspiracy of silence had kept me from knowing of action taken by the Academic Senate and other groups recommending that the library be named in my honor. The Chancellor added his blessings and sent the recommendation to the Trustees. During the groundbreaking ceremony, Trustee Chairman Roy Brophy handed me a gold-plated shovel to which was attached an engraved plate. At that point all my children, their spouses, and my grandchildren ran out from behind a fence where they had been hiding. They also were involved in the conspiracy of silence, their appearance having been engineered by my secretary, Grace Arvidson.

Chairman Brophy said to me, "Read the plaque out loud so everyone will know what it says." The tears in my eyes blurred my vision. I said, "The sun is reflecting off the plate, I can't read it." (I could read it, but didn't want to.)

Roy said, "Now we know why students can't read. Even the president of Cal Poly can't read." So he read it to the approximately 250 faculty, staff, students, and guests in attendance. Brophy announced that the Board of Trustees had authorized him by motion of intent to state that the building will be known as the Robert E. Kennedy Library. He said, "The motion of intent will be formalized by Trustee action in open session at the next meeting." And it was.

Just before the 1978 Poly Royal, at the end of April, I returned by plane from a trip to Sacramento after testifying before several legislative committees. While in Sacramento, I realized my right leg hurt and I was limping.



*President Warren Baker presided over a "Library Recognition Day" on April 2, 1981. The Alumni Association and Retired Faculty-Staff Club presented this "Bob and Mary" photograph to be hung in the library.*

Upon my return home, it was worse, so I went to my doctor, Larry Gaebe, at a local medical clinic. He called in three other doctors, two of whom were puzzled. But one, Steve Hansen, was certain it was a blood clot and ordered me to enter the hospital immediately.

Those ten days of hospitalization for treatment for phlebitis, with the doctors at one point discussing amputation, made me think more about

## A TIME TO FIGHT AND A TIME TO QUIT

retirement. I thought maybe episodes of cardiac arrhythmia, headaches, and high blood pressure might be reduced if there were less of fighting battles and more of peace and quiet. In February, 1978, I had notified Chancellor Dumke in a handwritten memo of my intention to retire within a year. He discussed it with Trustee Chairman Brophy and they both talked to me and requested that I not retire until after my 65th birthday. I said I would talk to Mary about it and let them know my decision.

About this time, I received a call from Alan Ostar, executive director of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. He said he was at a meeting of the AASCU nominating committee. They were proposing my name as candidate for president-elect of AASCU for 1979. I knew from my service on the Board of Directors that the commitment involved serving one year as president-elect, one year as president, and one year as immediate past president, with each office having a special function on the Board of Directors. I asked Ostar if it were possible for a person who was a president emeritus to serve any portion of the three-year term. He said, "Wait a minute, I want you to talk to Jim Cleary." Cleary, president of Cal State Northridge, was chairman of the nominating committee. He said to me, "You know our bylaws require a three-year commitment. Why don't you hold up your retirement?" I said, "I'll call you back after I talk to Mary." I did talk to her and she reminded me that in her own knowledge of AASCU history, several of the association's recent presidents had spent so much time on national issues that their health was adversely affected. I called back and said, "Thanks for the honor; I appreciate your confidence. The answer is still no."

It was nice to have been asked. I must give my wife, Mary, credit: When I retired on February 1, 1979, at age 63, I did so at a time when my reputation was at its peak. At the retirement dinner, the Chancellor, several Trustees, all the other CSUC presidents, state legislators, faculty, students, friends, and relatives all came and helped me enjoy the evening. Congressman Leon Panetta attended and liked so much one of Mary's poems I read that he published it in the *Congressional Record*.

LESSON TWENTY-TWO *King Solomon was right. There is a time for everything. A time to plant and a time to uproot. A time to search and a time to give up. The best time to quit is when you are ahead.*

## ✿ Epilogue ✿

Last scene of all, that ends this strange eventful history, is second childishness and mere oblivion, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.  
—Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, act 2, scene 7

**F**OR 39 YEARS I woke every morning thinking what I would do that day that would somehow make Cal Poly a better place. Then suddenly came the final scene: RETIREMENT! As Shakespeare would have described it, mere oblivion, sans everything.

It's "sans" a lot, I would agree. But "oblivion" is not the right word for the new status. It is a transformation that alters, modifies, and revamps one's goals, purposes, processes. No longer is one officially responsible for the welfare of an institution and all the wonderful people who make up the student body, the faculty, and the support staff.

As I look back at that 39-year career, and at working for one boss for 26 of those years, I wonder why President Julian McPhee hired me in the first place. I was probably the youngest, least experienced of the 40 applicants who applied in 1940 for the advertised position as a journalism teacher-publicity man at a polytechnic school that had just been approved to add a fourth year and give B.S. degrees.

This boss, who looked over my shoulder for more than a quarter of a century, giving both advice and criticism, saw something in a 24-year-old kid that caused him to promote me successively into seven different positions over a period of 20 years. Each time the jobs got tougher and so did the boss.

At the Alumni Homecoming in October, 1999, the class of 1949 was celebrating its 50th anniversary. The alumni committee had asked me to be the honored guest and grand marshal of the homecoming parade through downtown San Luis Obispo. Jack Spaulding, one of my former students, was my driver in his beautifully restored 1928 Model A Ford. At the luncheon in Vista Grande restaurant President Warren Baker wheeled in a cart that held an immense decorated birthday cake commemorating the combined October/November birthdays of Bob and Mary, which totaled 169 years.

As part of the program Wes Witten, alumni national president, presented me with a framed, enlarged reproduction of a two-page layout taken from the 1949 yearbook, *El Rodeo*, which featured a photograph of me with



*The photo of REK that accompanied the 1949 El Rodeo dedication.*

bow tie in front of a typewriter taken by a student photographer at our temporary home in Los Altos in the winter of 1949. I was on sabbatical leave, working on a master's degree in journalism at Stanford University and working half-time as a reporter at the Palo Alto *Times*. The layout, titled, "Dedication," included a three-paragraph editorial statement telling why the students dedicated the yearbook to me. It was the only Cal Poly publication since 1940 over which I had no influence, having been on leave since June, 1948.

As I reread the description of what the students thought of my contribution to Cal Poly in those first eight years, I suddenly realized what had motivated President McPhee and Mrs. McPhee to drive to Los Altos in late

August, 1949, to visit us. The year 1949 was the first since McPhee became president in 1933 that he was able to devote full time to the presidency. He had succeeded in 1945 in getting the State Board of Education to appoint his assistant, Byron J. McMahon, to be his successor as chief of the State Bureau of Agricultural Education. In 1949 McPhee followed with a similar action in getting his assistant, Wesley P. Smith, appointed as his successor in the position of state director of vocational education, which position McPhee had resigned to devote full time to Cal Poly.

First President McPhee began telling me the news about things that were happening at Cal Poly, including the acceptance of a gift of the 800-acre Kellogg Arabian horse ranch near Pomona. Then he began telling me about his visions of expansion of the southern campus and what it meant in terms of additional support in the state Legislature. Finally, and rather casually, he asked, "When you return to Cal Poly in a few weeks, what do you want to be? The head of the new journalism major you developed, or the public relations director, or assistant to the president — which position do you want? My answer was simply, "Whichever position you want me to be in." His instant reply was, "I want you to be assistant to the president."

I'm convinced now, although I did not recognize it at the time, that the dedication of the 1949 yearbook to me and the statement about my "talents, energy, and faith in Cal Poly's objectives" convinced McPhee he should start training me to be his successor, as he had done successfully with McMahon and Smith. McPhee was just enough of a romantic and idealist to believe students who knew me as their teacher and advisor would have correctly evaluated my potential.

Here's what they wrote in that dedicatory editorial:

TO THE MAN who is always publicizing and rarely publicized himself, the 1949 *El Rodeo* is dedicated. Bob Kennedy, young and friendly with a sharp wit and an inexhaustible fund of energy, has put eight years of untiring effort into Cal Poly publications. His advice and encouragement have enabled students to produce yearbooks which have ranked among the best in national competition and a weekly newspaper which has continually increased in size and quality. Other publications including the Frosh Handbook, the *Poly Royal Pictorial* and the yearly catalog, owe their excellence to his talent.

That Cal Poly draws students from all parts of the United States and that it is known and respected both in this country and abroad can be directly credited to his far-reaching public relations program. Such phrases

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as "learn by doing" and "earn while learning" are now familiarly associated with the college because his news releases and feature articles have been widely printed in newspapers and magazines of the nation.

Back of his aid and encouragement to school publications and his tremendous energy in publicizing the college, is a belief in its students and a faith in its objectives. In 1849 men came West seeking gold and adventure. In 1949 they come seeking new opportunities and new lives. Bob Kennedy is one of the men of the New West who draws them with his vital belief in Cal Poly, a western college. And while he is away on a sabbatical leave, *El Rodeo* salutes him and awaits his return.

Oh, yes, during those 39 years one did have a private life apart from one's work, the job, the career. It was your family: wife, children, grandchildren, other relatives, friends. Retirement does not change those relationships — just provides more time to enjoy them. So retirement is a blessing, not oblivion. But what you concentrated your thoughts upon for 39 years cannot be wiped off the blackboard so easily. You can't hide from your memories.

Some Trustees and college presidents in those final days before my retirement asked, "Where are you and Mary going to move to when you can live wherever you want?" My answer each time was simply, "We don't know of any place we would rather live than San Luis Obispo." We are still living in the home we built in 1950 (and remodeled at least three times) in a neighborhood where our kids grew up and went to school. It is handy for them to come back and visit and they do so frequently. Why would we want to move?

"Don't you think you'll be uncomfortable living in the town where Cal Poly will always be in the news and someone will always be getting credit for new ideas and improvements?" was the candid question of one fellow president. He might have added but didn't, "Will you be able to resist picking up the phone to give President Baker your opinion on every controversial issue that makes the news?"

I've never been uncomfortable when other people got credit for Cal Poly improvements because in most cases improvements are generated by many people working together — not by one individual. In the 22 years since I retired I've only been tempted to give President Baker my opinion on a couple of issues and I honestly believe he appreciated my concern. I did accept appointment to the college of liberal arts advisory board and served several years before I retired the last time, satisfied that the dean and his faculty were not embarked on a campaign to eliminate the polytechnic emphasis and make Cal Poly a traditional liberal arts university.

I can honestly say I am very happy with President Baker's team, which is leading Cal Poly to an ever-increasing popularity and improved reputation. It is an honor to be associated as emeritus president with a university that has achieved what I said in my inaugural speech was my most important goal: to make Cal Poly the best polytechnic college in the nation. I doubt that anyone else watched as closely as I did to the changes a new administration was making in Cal Poly's programs during the first decade, 1980-1990.

Certainly, I had concerns when I read that the major program in home economics was to be eliminated. I even met with President Baker when a *Mustang Daily* article quoted the former academic vice president's avowed decision to eliminate the journalism major. During the past two decades Mary and I have attended almost every luncheon meeting of the Retired Faculty-Staff Club. In the socializing period in many of those early meetings old-timers often started conversations by expressing concerns that Cal Poly was changing and would end by asking, "If you were still president, you wouldn't do that, would you?"

My response was always, "I don't know what I would have done, given the changed circumstances of the present time. I might have made exactly the same decision President Baker made." I am almost certain that had Julian McPhee lived a healthy life for the 12 years I was president he would have found it difficult to resist the temptation to criticize his former assistant for some of the changes I approved during the period 1966-1979.

His daughter, Carol McPhee Norton, who sat beside me as one of the seven panelists at the Colloquium program commemorating Cal Poly's Centennial Celebration on March 8, 2001, told how her dad wanted no potential student to be denied admission to Cal Poly because of poor high school performance in academic subjects. He wanted each applicant to be admitted so that student could prove he could succeed at Cal Poly. McPhee was indeed a democrat with a small "d."

In his retirement McPhee would have been increasingly upset with my decisions to obtain from the Trustees approval to raise Cal Poly admission requirements to be more restrictive than other CSU campuses. As his executive vice president I had voiced my objections to his "open door" policy on public relations grounds — a subject on which he listened to me more intently than on educational theory. I had told him many times that his insistence on minimal admission requirements had given Cal Poly the worst academic reputation of any California college. High school and junior college counselors directed their best students elsewhere. McPhee knew I was

## EPILOGUE

right. But he also had years of evidence to prove that given a chance at a practical, learn-by-doing educational experience, many C and even D students graduated and became successful farmers and industrialists with great loyalty to their alma mater.

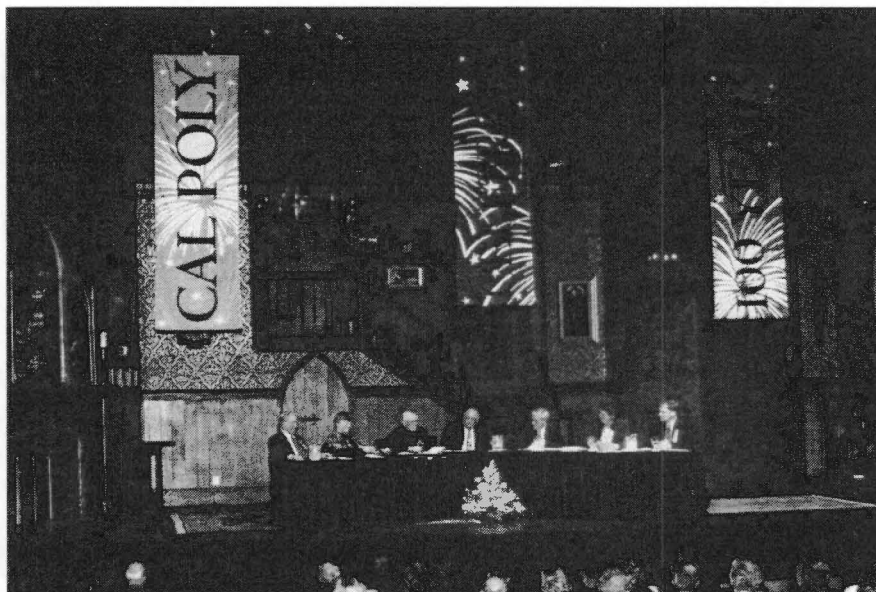
President McPhee would also have objected to my insistence that we apply for accreditation from appropriate agencies for all of our engineering and other professional programs. He was afraid that Cal Poly's unique, sometimes unorthodox methods would never be accepted by representatives of traditional, conservative accrediting visitation committees. He was wrong. We succeeded in getting more programs accredited than any of the other CSU campuses — even those with twice the enrollment and many more major programs.

But despite these and some other differences between the Cal Poly of Julian McPhee and the Cal Poly of Bob Kennedy, I told a packed Little Theater audience during that March 8 program, "Julian McPhee was the savior of Cal Poly. If he had not become president in 1933, Cal Poly would no longer exist." I meant it and firmly believe that statement to be true.

The *Mustang Daily* gave good coverage to the March 8, 2001, "History Day," particularly concentrating on the remarks of the seven panelists of the Colloquium. Unfortunately, there was no panelist present who had any personal connection with Cal Poly prior to 1933. The moderator, history professor Dan Krieger, told about the real founder of Cal Poly, journalist Myron Angel, who more than anyone else had a vision of what a polytechnic school could do for its students and for the community of San Luis Obispo. Our appreciative audience heard mostly anecdotes about Cal Poly's development during the administrations of McPhee, Kennedy, and Baker.

At one point I took the opportunity to mention something about each of the first five chief administrative officers: Anderson, Smith, Ryder, Riccardi, and Crandall. I failed to mention that I had met the first director, Dr. Leroy Anderson, and his wife, in February, 1941, when they participated in the "unlaying of a cornerstone" during the demolition of the original administration building to make room for the new clock tower building. After the ceremony we toured the campus and farm, and I interviewed Anderson about his role in establishing Cal Poly's hallmark "learn by doing" educational philosophy.

While each of those five early administrators played significant roles in the development of the polytechnic school, the early teachers and students made great contributions too. It was the early teachers who implemented



*Cal Poly celebrated its 100th birthday on March 8, 2001, with a History Day Colloquium in the Little Theater. The panel included Warren Baker, president; REK, president emeritus; Carol McPhee Norton, author; Daniel E. Krieger, professor of history; Robin Baldin, class of '54; Rita Hall, class of '71; and John Sweeney, class of '89.*

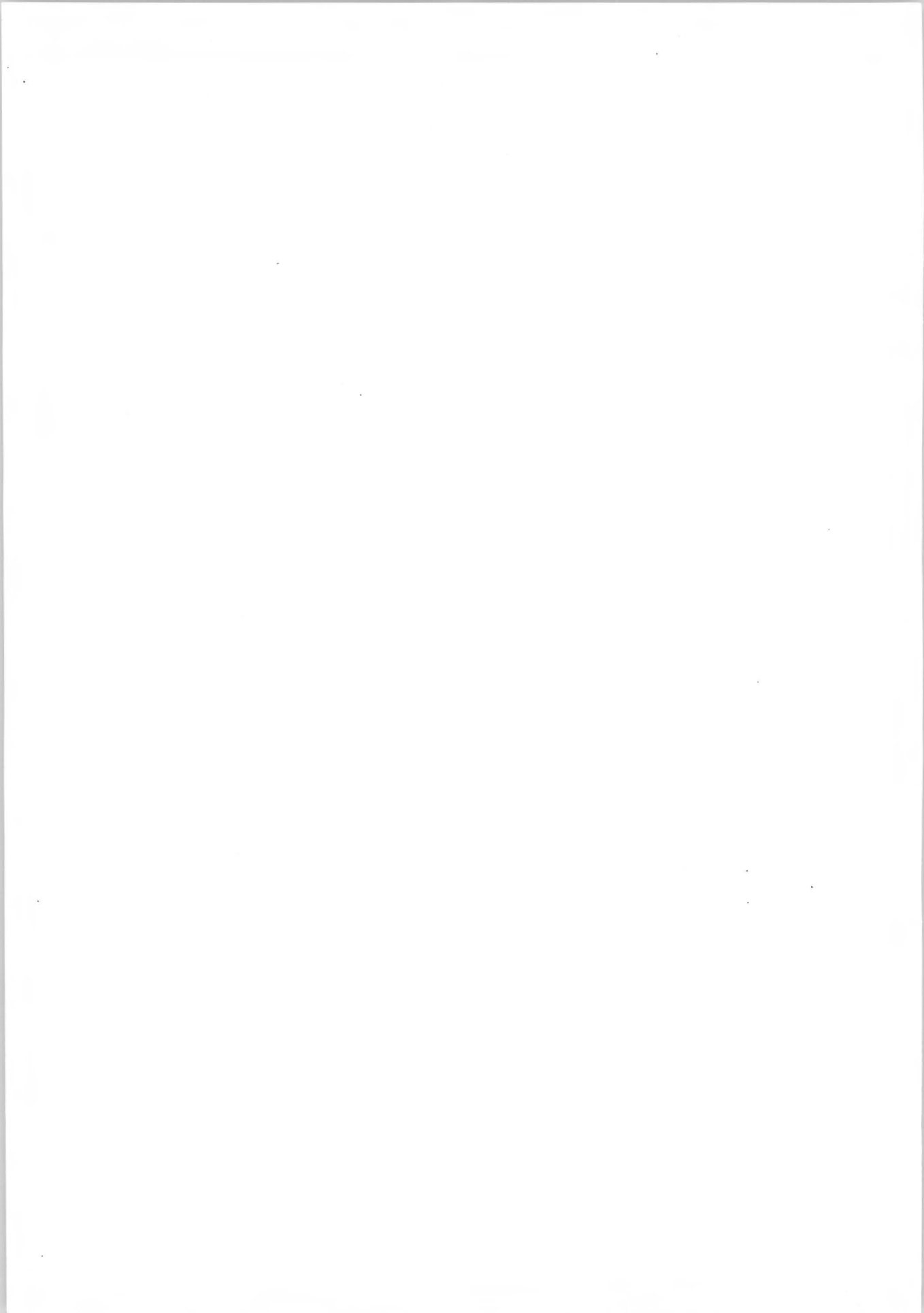
Dr. Anderson's "learn by doing" educational philosophy — not always a simple process. And frequently it was the work of students that provided creative and sometimes unusual applications of practical experience in laboratory and field classes. What students accomplished gave teachers satisfaction that their methods worked and gave inspiration for more experimentation with the learning process. It began that way in the early 1900s and it continues as a team effort in the 21st century.

A part of the Centennial Celebration on March 8 was the presentation of the first copies of a new book, *Cal Poly: The First 100 Years*. The book was written and coordinated by Nancy Loe, assistant library dean and head of University Archives. This book not only tells the story of Cal Poly's development in well-selected photos, helpful captions, and very readable copy, but it also contains President Baker's vision of the future and his promises that Cal Poly will retain its polytechnic mission, its undergraduate emphasis, its residential campus focus. His description of how Cal Poly will build upon its "learn-by-doing" educational philosophy gives confidence to those who wonder about the fate of higher education in a technology-oriented future.

## EPILOGUE

Old-timers, whether retired faculty, staff, or alumni, who wonder if "their" Cal Poly will survive, should get a copy of Nancy Loe's beautiful Centennial commemorative book, which illustrates and describes 100 years of changes at Cal Poly, and then bask in the reflected glory of having been a part of the "new and improved" Cal Poly. This presentation of Cal Poly's past, present, and future proves beyond doubt that it has become what its founder, Myron Angel, predicted in 1906: "The most useful and popular university of the future."

**FINAL LESSON** *There is no such thing as a "final lesson." We continue to learn by doing all our lives — until our final breath. But all our previous serious lessons do not outweigh the wise thought that the measure of success in life isn't money, fame, or power; it's whether the laugh lines on your face outnumber the frown lines.*



DESIGNED & COMPOSED BY SCOTT FREUTEL  
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA

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*Bob and Mary Kennedy at a retirement party in February, 1979. The gift of a custom license plate may have been intended to suggest that Kennedy drive off into the sunset. He didn't.*

"Bob Kennedy has reached into his skills as a former journalist and written a fascinating story of Cal Poly's struggles and triumphs. It's a rich labor of love that everyone should want to read."

—HERB KAMM *Former managing editor, New York World-Telegram & Sun; former editor, Cleveland Press*

"Every fan and friend of Cal Poly will love this new book by President Emeritus Bob Kennedy. And every reader who knows nothing about Cal Poly will discover why this different polytechnic university is consistently rated at the top of its class among schools in the western United States. A fascinating read by a leading participant."

—STARR JENKINS *Professor of English, Cal Poly, SLO, 1961-88*

"Dr. Kennedy has chronicled his nearly forty years at Cal Poly in a lively and engaging memoir that is sure to interest all who hold Cal Poly dear. A must-read for faculty, students, and friends of the university."

—NANCY E. LOE *Head, University Archives*

"Bob Kennedy pours his journalistic, educational, and administrative skills into a fascinating history of Cal Poly, his 39 years there from his first journalism class to the presidency, and his sometimes stormy relationship with Julian McPhee, his mentor and predecessor as president."

—GEORGE BRAND *Editor, San Luis Obispo Telegram-Tribune, 1963-83*

"*Learn by Doing* is a candid, highly readable, frequently humorous and insightful account of Dr. Kennedy's forty-year involvement with one of America's most remarkable public universities. He gives readers an unforgettable view of his boss and mentor, Julian McPhee, a master lobbyist in Sacramento working to build the once-endangered Cal Poly into a major player in California's system of higher education."

—DANIEL E. KRIEGER *Professor of History, Cal Poly, SLO*

*Published as part of the Centennial celebration*

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