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TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, LINDENWOOD COLLEGE

March 24, 1941

This, my first communication to you, is a personal statement rather than a report on the condition of the College with a review of work done and in progress.

Pursuant to my telegram, February 11, 1941 to your chairman accepting election to the presidency of Lindenwood, it is in order now to place on record my acceptance of election as formally communicated to me by Dr. MacIvor, January 4, 1941. You have honored me by an expression of confidence which I fully reciprocate.

In retrospect I realize that in the course of twenty-one years my attachments to Coe College and Cedar Rapids have become numerous and strong. I am in debt to the trustees of that institution. I placed final decision entirely in their hands. After considering my proposal for two months they agreed to receive and accept my resignation as president of Coe College to take effect June 15, 1941. This they did with some reluctance but nevertheless with unanimity and generosity.

Presently I shall be relieved of my official position and responsibility as president of Coe College. The ties that bind me to that College and its community will not be severed; the full measure of my responsibility for Coe will not be discharged abruptly on the fifteenth of next June. Coe's trustees are now considering the nature of my continuing relation to the institution. It is important for the trustees of Lindenwood to know in the very beginning of our personal and official relationship that I do not lightly take up and lay down responsibilities.



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I have accepted the presidency of Lindenwood as of March 1, 1941. Thus I am now acting as president of two institutions. In this difficult business I have had some experience. In transferring to Coe in 1920 I served for most of a year as president of two colleges, Huron and Coe. I am to this day an active member of the Board of Trustees of Huron.

When it was suggested to me by Mr. Cobbs that I might in similar fashion continue to serve Coe as chief executive while assuming executive responsibility at Lindenwood, the plan did not seem to me at the time to be practicable. Nevertheless it was the will of the trustees of Coe to proceed in that fashion. I hope it is a decision in which you will heartily concur.

During the period when I am dividing time between Coe and Lindenwood I have suggested that during March, April, and May and half of June I shall serve on half salary from Lindenwood and that beginning June 15, 1941 I shall go on full salary from this institution. If this informal agreement meets your approval I shall be glad to have your decision formally recorded.

In going to Lindenwood on your invitation I realize that there is a certain finality in my decision. You will have other presidents in succession to me. I shall never become president of another college. Here I shall come to the end and I hope the fulfillment of my professional career. Aside from practical considerations there is considerable sentiment surrounding my decision to accept your invitation to become president of Lindenwood. "My times are in His hands". In retrospect it seems that they always have been so. I have been singularly blessed by my friends and the confidence they have reposed in me. Each position I have occupied has come to me as a personal and sacred trust from a dear, wise and trusted friend. My teacher of Latin, a great man, professor J. O. Notestein,

"He knoweth the way that I take"



personally committed me, a boy fresh from college, to the tutelage of Dr. C. H. French with whom I joined hands in founding a college on the prairies of South Dakota. Later on a Sunday afternoon he informed me of the nature of a heart affliction from which he had begun to suffer, asked me to return to his side and be prepared to take the helm when his hands should fail. In that way I first became a college president. My work at Huron was entirely a fulfillment of Dr. French's plans and prophecies. This has been a source of personal as well as professional satisfaction to me. In June, 1920 Dr. John A. Marquis, my distinguished predecessor at Coe who had given the charge to the president when I was inaugurated at Huron in October, 1912, and who was then serving as General Secretary of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., called me to his office in New York and said, "Harry, I want you to become my successor at Coe and to commit you to the care of the saints in Cedar Rapids". He had received a similar trust from his friend, Dr. S. B. McCormick, who left the presidency of Coe to become Chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. McCormick and Dr. Marquis always supported me at Coe. In fulfillment of their hopes and building on foundations which they laid I have found my chief satisfaction and my only success during the last twenty-one years. I should add, too, that "the saints" in Cedar Rapids have never failed me. It is not my intention to desert them now. It is not necessary. In succession and continuity of leadership there is a useful idea suggested by reiteration of the names of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The presidency of Lindenwood comes to me as a sort of bequest from John L. Roemer. For at least ten years he had conferred with me about succeeding him in the presidency here. His last letter to me written within three months of his death ended with this sentence, "Of course, you know my desire to have you follow me in the presidency here." Later and following Dr. Roemer's death your chairman, Dr. John V. MacIvor

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reinforced Dr. Roemer's appeal to me. You may be interested to know that Dr. Roemer always said to me, "John MacIvor would be willing to have you follow me but he says you will never consent to do so". That I have consented to do so is entirely due to John Roemer and John MacIvor who stand in succession to C. H. French and John A. Marquis. My friends have never betrayed me, have never directed me down "blind alleys", and have never led me into a wilderness. They have only pointed the way of a hard steep road to a mountain's summit and have been loyal and helpful to me on the upward climb. Through these friends my times have veritably been in His hands. So my heart without any reservation is revealed to you today.

To you as to the trustees of Coe College twenty-one years ago I wish to say that we - you in calling me and I in accepting the presidency of Lindenwood - have exercised our best judgment. Our judgment, even at its prayerful best, is human. It is fallible and not final. Whatever the issues of our decision may be in an uncertain future we may be certain now that our mutual obligations as president and trustees will begin and continue and end with the exercise of friendliness and good will and in making all our decisions individually and collectively for one purpose only, namely, the welfare of Lindenwood College. Allow me at this point to remind you that identity of opinion is no adequate basis of friendship and cooperative endeavor. Assent without conviction is the way to weakness and divisive factions. Thomas Carlyle visited his close friend, John Sterling. The next day he wrote in his diary, "Spent nearly the whole day with Sterling, and in everything except opinions we agreed perfectly."

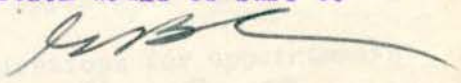
Democracy in practice is effective decision by the majority. Within the limits of that definition only a small portion of our lives can ever be controlled by democratic processes. We may, however, within this board employ and enjoy the democratic process. We may have government by discussion issuing in effective



decisions by the majority. This is the precious American way although there is precious little of that original Americanism left. Nevertheless, it is well to remember in this small but important group that we are Americans in theory and in fact and that Lindenwood is an American college and that our America and its institutions have grown great and strong by unreserved commitment to the principle of talking things over in public. So I shall give to you and seek from you frank expressions of opinion preceding all of our decisions. In an atmosphere of friendliness, motivated by good will and absolutely united by devotion to the Kingdom of God on earth and a province of that Kingdom on the Lindenwood campus, we may win for ourselves one of life's greatest goods, namely, the privilege of praise without flattery and criticism without injury.

Plato defined justice as the frictionless adjustment of the various orders of society. Social stability depends on justice. So does the stability of Lindenwood. St. Paul admonished the Thessalonians, "Study to be quiet and to do your own business". There is good administrative wisdom in those words. I see in them an admonition to quiet intelligence applied to the discharge of one's own duties for the good of all and the Kingdom as a whole. As president of Lindenwood I shall have duties to perform and a few responsibilities which I cannot delegate to others. These are duties and responsibilities which you have asked me to assume personally or to delegate to others. As trustees you have responsibilities which you must retain and cannot in the exercise of your trusteeship either legally or morally delegate to others. Much, perhaps most, of our work will be the result of joint decision and action.

It would probably be unwise to attempt to put in writing a precise and comprehensive definition of our respective duties. Such a definition would be sure to



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omit some essential item. We can work best by application of a simple principle to our procedure. Details of application will emerge with lengthening experience. A guiding principle ready to hand is, The Board of trustees is a policy making body; the faculty headed by the president is an administrative body. For instance, the decision to make Lindenwood a coeducational college would be a matter of policy for the board to decide. Means for such a venture would have to be provided by the board. The president and his faculty would have to execute the policy, use the means provided, and make accounting thereof to the board.

The board of trustees is wholly responsible for purely corporation business which is not directly connected with education save insofar as it provides financial stability through the years and annual income for plant maintenance and educational program. A part of the annual budget is a trustees' budget and is necessary for transaction of corporation business. All capital expenditures must be directly authorized by the board.

The operating budget including maintenance of plant, administration and instruction is a sum of money approved by the board to support the college during the academic and fiscal year. The president is responsible for making and presentation of the budget to the board. He is also responsible for operation of the college within the budget as revised and approved by the board. In the operations of the college - the educational program and campus activities - there should not be what is known as "dual control" which has afflicted many institutions. I am under the impression that Lindenwood has been especially happy in procedures followed in budget administration.

Many budget items provide for wages and salaries. Personnel is a reflection of the budget. Therefore, control of appointments to positions on the campus should follow control of services provided for in the budget. This applies to instructional staff and to all other types of service on the campus. Applications for appointments



should be made to the president. Where competent he should make the appointment directly. Otherwise he should present his recommendation for appointment to the board. There is possible trouble or inefficiency where a staff member in any capacity - instructional, administrative or maintenance - feels that he is not responsible to the president for appointment and tenure.


At some future but not distant date I shall confer with the board on procedure to be followed in appointments to the faculty and tenure of faculty members.

I have placed in your hands an address which I shall make to the faculty. In it you will notice that I have proposed a series of institutional studies. First in order of study should be institutional purpose. Statement of purpose is a matter in which the board is vitally interested. In the formulation and elaboration of purpose you may naturally care to have a part. Generally speaking I am sure that I can tell the faculty that it is your purpose to maintain and develop a four-year liberal arts college for women under religious influences. That purpose when amplified should be satisfactory in clarity, scope, integrity, and acceptance by faculty and trustees.

I shall also ask the faculty to study improvement of teaching. This study should follow study of purpose and its implementation by program.

Dr. Stumberg has conferred with me about the health program. He has some plans for improvement. I shall, therefore, wish to study the health program and its articulation with other services, particularly physical education and personnel.

Institutional costs and effective application of the budget require study. I am appalled and discouraged by the amount of the budget item for promotion. I can understand the item for grants-in-aid, called scholarships. That is a reflection of the distribution of national income to families. We cannot be criticized for what we do to aid students; we may be criticized for the way we do it.




With respect to the budget item for promotion it is a disease, an epidemic infections intercollegiate disease. Such institutions as Lindenwood are most susceptible to it. I know how to cure it. Cut the item from the budget in a single major operation. That would not actually kill the patient but would certainly impair its health for years to come.

What then can be done? My only suggestion is the improvement of teaching. One and another teacher of radiant personality and productive scholarship and conspicuous teaching ability developed or added to the staff would do two things to reduce budget for promotion. First, such teachers will hold students for four years and so reduce expense for recruiting. Second, great teaching will add to the prestige of Lindenwood and its drawing power. This will be a health building program in place of a debilitating major operation. It will be marked by slow and rather certain progress. Other than this I have no suggestion for the cure of a rather bad situation.

Several appointments to the instructional staff to take effect next September must be made. The appointment of an art and a language teacher may be an opportunity to make progress in the direction I have indicated. Concerning this I shall wish the advice of the board.

In the matter of institutional study I foresee the need of calling upon experts in certain lines of study. Such men are useful to study, diagnose and prescribe. Their services are most useful when they come in response to needs and problems of which an alert faculty has previously become aware. My present task is to learn as much as I can about the college and to stimulate in the faculty a state of mind which may be described as institutional awareness.

Will you give me authority to proceed in this direction?

*John*  




I shall depend on your help in all things. We must labor to increase our income bearing capital. Money to erect a chapel must be secured. I shall ask you for money for operating expenses, for the improvement of teaching. Probably I shall ask for more than you can appropriate. On that account I shall not complain. Maybe the asking will stimulate us to secure very substantial as well as small gifts for endowment. In any event I know and shall encourage your effort to preserve intact our financial foundations. Looking ahead ten years this may not be an easy task.

I shall keep the board informed about the operations of the college. You are entitled to information. Furthermore, I want your help. I need it. I cannot make progress without it and I know that the exercise of responsibility by boards of trustees follows the possession of information.

Respectfully submitted

H. M. Gage, President

