

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

January 25, 1937

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A regular meeting of the Trustees of the Institute for Advanced Study was held at the Uptown Club, 60 East 42nd Street, New York City, on Monday, January 25, 1937.

Present: Messrs. Louis Bamberger, Carrel, Flexner, Friedenwald, Hardin, Leidesdorf, Maass, Riefler, Straus, Veblen, Mrs. Fuld, and Miss Sabin.

Absent and excused: Messrs. Aydelotte, Edgar S. Bamberger, Houghton, Stewart, and Weed.

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Maass, presided.

The minutes of the regular meeting held on October 13, 1936, having been distributed, their reading was dispensed with, and they were approved.

The following report was presented by the Director and, on motion, was accepted and ordered to be incorporated in the minutes of the meeting:

The most important fact that I can bring to the attention of the Trustees is the continued enthusiasm and productivity of the staff of the Institute and of those who are temporarily attached to it as members. I have had abundant indications during the past few months that the Institute is by its own efficiency and eminence making its way in the scholarly world, and the enthusiasm and interest of the younger men who work with the faculty is something, the like of which I have myself never encountered in any college or university either in this country or in Europe. I can perhaps without undue pride give one or two examples.

I should perhaps mention, in the first place, that the negotiations with Princeton University regarding the transfer of a portion of the Golf

Course in exchange for the remodeling or moving of the Golf Club House have been entirely completed. Following the recent meeting of the Trustees President Dodds notified me of the final action after several committees and the advisory architect had also taken favorable action. This is the first time that the University has alienated any of the land which it has acquired for its use and protection. At the moment President Dodds is away from Princeton, but the matter will be in formal shape immediately upon his return.

In the course of December Professor Harlow of Stanford University was commissioned by President Wilbur to visit the eastern universities in order to obtain such suggestions for use at Stanford as might be adaptable. He spent a day at Princeton, of which several hours were devoted to conference and discussion with me. Before he left, I gave him a complete set of the Bulletins of the Institute. Under date of December 30, 1936, he wrote me a letter from Stanford University, from which I make the following two quotations, and I trust the members of the Board may realize that, in so far as these quotations apply to me personally, I attach little importance to them. I am incorporating them in this report in order that the members of the Board may realize the position which the Institute is coming to occupy in the learned world. Professor Harlow writes:

I read with keen interest the booklets you gave me on the Institute. Although I had known something of the work you are directing through the Institute, not until I had the booklets in my hand did I have a full comprehension of the scope and importance of the Institute. You deserve, not alone because of your present work but also for the distinguished service you have rendered higher education, to see the Institute become the most powerful force for advanced study in the world. Certainly the start you have made and the faculty you have assembled augur well for its future.

I found a warm interest in your Institute among those with whom I talked all along the way. American higher education gives you and the Institute its endorsement and wishes you well.

In my previous report I mentioned the fact that the Governor of the Bank of England, the Right Honorable Montagu C. Norman, had discussed the

possibility of sending to Princeton someone to confer for a period of several months with Professor Riefler in respect to problems of international finance. Originally, it was his intention to send Professor Henry Clay, but under date of December 22 Mr. Norman wrote me that it was at the moment not possible for him to spare Clay but that he was anxious to send in his place Mr. H. C. B. Mynors, who is the administrative head of the Economics and Statistics Section of the Bank of England and on occasion is Professor Clay's understudy. Professor Riefler and Mr. Mynors are acquainted with each other, and following Professor Riefler's suggestion I cabled the Governor of the Bank of England that we should be delighted to welcome Mr. Mynors. On January 7 I received the following cable:

Many thanks for your cable. Mynors sails on Berengaria  
January 13; due New York January 19.

Norman

This is, I think, in the academic world something quite unprecedented. Governmental institutions such as the United States Treasury and the Federal Reserve Board have of course long kept in touch with the Bank of England, but, as far as I have been able to ascertain, this is the first time that a high official from the Bank of England has come to an American institution of learning for the purpose of a prolonged study of international financial problems. It is our hope and expectation that in the autumn Professor Clay may be able to make a similar visit to the Institute. In this way Professor Riefler keeps in confidential and intimate touch with the world center of financial operations. Already in other respects there have been indications that American study and investigation in the economic field have tended to utilize the resources of the Institute as a kind of clearing house. While the School of Mathematics and the School of Humanistic Studies continue to be active, nowhere has there been greater and more beneficial activity than in Professor Riefler's office. Since this report was drafted, Professor Riefler has been asked to be American representative on the Finance Committee of the League of

Nations.

I am fortunately also able to quote a letter that has come to me from Professor Walter W. S. Cook, Chairman of the Fine Arts Graduate Center in New York University, in regard to a few lectures which Professor Herzfeld gave at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York on The Ancient Art of the Near East. Professor Cook writes as follows:

I might add that Dr. Herzfeld has more than exceeded all expectations. He is not only the greatest scholar alive today in his field, but has such a charming personality and is such a thorough gentleman that he has won the admiration and respect of all who have taken his course.

It will interest you to know that Mr. Winlock, Director of the Metropolitan Museum, asked two of his curators in the Egyptian Department to attend Dr. Herzfeld's lectures at the Museum, and they have reported to me that it is the first time in their experience that anyone has with authority discussed the ancient art of the Near East.

Finally, in the last few days Professor von Neumann has been invited by the Council of the American Mathematical Society to deliver the Colloquium Lectures at the annual meeting of the Society which takes place in September. This constitutes the third successive year in which Professor von Neumann has been invited by a learned body to present the results of his recent studies - a most unusual happening in the case of so young a man.

The members of the Board will also be interested in the effect of the grants upon institutions from which members come to work for a year or more at the Institute. For example, a grant covering half his expenses will be made during the coming year to Professor MacDuffee of the University of Wisconsin. In acknowledging the grant Professor MacDuffee writes as follows:

The President has given me permission to accept your offer of a year at the Institute, which I am very glad to do. He says he won't know exactly where the money will come from until the budget is adopted, perhaps not until next summer, but that he will get it somewhere.

This is precisely the effect which we hoped these grants would have, that is, that colleges and universities would be stimulated to raise new

money in order to give opportunities to their faculties, and in the course of time it is this effect which will perhaps enable us gradually to reduce or discontinue them. On this subject one of the members of the mathematical group has written me as follows:

The program of the Institute is to give its permanent members an opportunity to pursue scholarship unhampered by any of the handicaps which such an organization can reasonably be expected to eliminate. It is also its policy to give a similar opportunity for limited periods (usually a single academic year) to temporary members. Some of these are men or women who have recently attained the Ph.D. degree and who need not only the freedom of opportunity implied by their residence at the Institute but also inspiration and help from the professors. Some are mature scholars whose primary need is temporary release from routine academic obligations. In the second class of cases it is often possible to induce the university to which the scholar is attached to give him leave of absence and pay half his salary. Men of this sort derive a great deal of stimulus and help from their association with the younger group as well as from the Institute professors. The latter derive a great deal of stimulus in their work from both groups of temporary members. Indeed, many if not all of our professors will testify that they receive more from the visitors than they give.

The significance of this establishment, consisting of a permanent group of scholars year by year in contact with a steady stream of colleagues from all parts of the world, is already well understood throughout the academic world. It is increasingly well thought of as something which could not be diminished without serious loss to this world.

It would be hard to exaggerate the importance of the stream flowing through it to the Institute itself. If this stream should dry up, there would be danger that the "academic heaven" would approach the state of Nirvana.

In general, I may say that it is my great concern that no one shall be appointed to a permanent position who has not given evidence of very unusual productivity, and the Institute, as long as it adheres to this policy, has no need of permanent minor appointments. It seems to me that we can continue for many, many years to come working upon the same lines upon which we have worked up to this time. We need only the simplest possible equipment and buildings, but require the utmost that is procurable in brains. Administration should be kept at a minimum, as it now is, and neither rules nor precedents should be established. We should feel ourselves always in position

to do anything in any of the three schools now in operation which is of prime importance. All else we may safely neglect. Of course, it requires prudence and critical insight to hew to the lines as we have been doing. It means nothing to us to be told that this or that university finds it worth while to do this or that. The Institute is not a university and, though it must never hesitate to profit by university experience, it is under no obligation whatsoever to imitate university procedure. The one question we need to ask in reference to any specific proposition is: will it help our work or hinder it if we do this or that? If it promises to help our work, we should exhaust our ingenuity in finding a way to do it. If it is indifferent or likely to hinder our work, we should under no circumstances endeavor to do it. I trust that the members of the present Board and their successors may never lose sight of these simple but fundamental considerations. If we adhere to them, we will continue to maintain our present standing and, I hope, increase it. If we lose sight of them, the standards which have governed us up to this time will inevitably deteriorate. There are as a matter of fact only three other institutions, as far as my knowledge goes, which belong in the same general category as the Institute for Advanced Study: (1) the institutes founded by the Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft, which have, however, been largely ruined by the present German government; (2) the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, which for more than thirty years has been the leading influence in this country in medical teaching and research; (3) the College of France in Paris, which has a history of centuries of usefulness behind it.

The ends which I have described have been obtained in three fields by an expenditure which is so modest that few persons connected with academic affairs would believe it possible. The total budget of the Institute for the current year is approximately \$290,000.00. When one considers the budget of a university like Harvard or Columbia or Yale, which exceeds ten millions annually and is a larger sum by several millions than the total endowment of

the Institute for Advanced Study, we have every reason to congratulate ourselves on what we have obtained in the way of productive scholarship and training with the cautious expenditure of a very modest sum. The explanation is a very simple one. The Institute has been small and will, I hope, permanently remain small. It has now three schools, and there is no reason to contemplate an increase in their number. The faculty is eminent. It is made up of first-rate men, the best obtainable in their respective fields, and it cannot and must not include even excellent second-rate men, for the Institute differs fundamentally from other types of educational institutions. It is devoted to research and to the giving of opportunities to men who know how to take advantage of them. In other institutions research is to a greater or less extent also carried on, but there is a teaching and administrative obligation which is very absorbing and which constitutes a more or less considerable burden. Notwithstanding, however, the fact that the conditions of work in the Institute are extremely attractive, we cannot lose sight of the fact that the moment a person is called to a professorship in the Institute, the attention of other institutions is drawn to him, and his desirability to other institutions is greatly enhanced. From time to time these men will receive extremely tempting financial opportunities. Some of them, as has already occurred, will be told that they can receive relatively high salaries and earn considerable sums by outside work, which in the Institute is not countenanced. Others may be wanted by prominent institutions as stars to lend distinction to a department which is otherwise more or less undistinguished. We must never wait for these things to happen if we can foresee them, because, if we wait, competitive bidding will ensue which is very undesirable from the standpoint of the Institute and of universities and of scholarly work in general. At the present time, I confess that I have good reason to be uneasy in respect to two of our professors. I have discussed the matter with the Treasurer, and I find that these two salaries can be raised to the normal basis, on which we started, with our present re-

sources. I shall therefore submit in due course resolutions looking to the achievement of this end. This involves no change of policy on our part. In the very first report which I made to the Trustees of the Institute at the Organization Meeting in October, 1930, I used the following language:

Professor Seligman of Columbia University has recently said that the "outlook for brains in American universities is an ominous one". The sacrifices required of an American professor and his family are to a high degree deterrent. The conditions provided are rarely favorable to severe, prolonged, and fundamental thinking. Poor salaries frighten off the abler and more vigorous and compel the university instructor to eke out his inadequate income by writing unnecessary textbooks or engaging in other forms of hack work. I do not need to argue that, despite individual exceptions, American scholarship cannot be promoted upon an unsound and unsatisfactory basis. It is therefore of the utmost importance that we should set a new standard. We do not need a large faculty. We should endeavor to attract into the Institute a small number of scholars and scientists who will be free from financial worry and concern, who will live and work amidst conditions favorable to intellectual activity. A professorship can of course never be as remunerative as the practice of law or medicine or a successful career in business. It need not be, for it has much to offer that neither law nor medicine nor business can offer. But, on the other hand, the German universities long ago proved that adequate remuneration with sufficient leisure amidst attractive and congenial living conditions and associations are absolutely necessary to the upbuilding of an academic group. I hope therefore that in these matters, upon which our success depends, I may count on the concurrence of the Board, to the end that whether we invite persons to be associated with us temporarily or permanently, the inducement and the conditions will attract the most vigorous and the best endowed minds of our generation.

Our experience during six years has proved that this position is correct. The conditions in the Institute are in the highest degree attractive. We have in the past few months received applications for posts from two very distinguished scientists. In both cases my judgment was against favorable action because I did not believe that expansion was necessary, and I was not sure that they were precisely the men whom we should have asked. But there is another side to the picture which we cannot overlook. The cost of living has risen, and living in Princeton is higher than in certain other university towns. Finally, these men must make provision for the education of their children and for the future of themselves and their families beyond the annuity which is already



provided for them. There are indications that the quality of the Institute will attract financial cooperation from the great foundations, and already the Carnegie Institution of Washington has made known its desire to contribute annually towards Professor Lowe's work and the American Philological Association towards that of Professor Meritt, but to some extent we must rely upon our own efforts. In the present instance, the annual total involved does not exceed \$9,000.00, of which not exceeding \$4,500.00 will be required for the balance of the fiscal year. By taking this action as of February 1, 1937, we can, I am sure, ward off the consideration of any invitations from any source whatsoever and preserve unbroken and untarnished the rigid full-time system upon which the Institute is operating.

Following the reading of the report a brief discussion took place. Rigid adherence to the full-time plan was unanimously endorsed. Professor Veblen pointed out that, whereas there was some amount of competition between colleges and universities, it had already come to be recognized that the Institute competed with no institution, that its relations with Princeton University were of course extremely intimate but similar relations were developing between the Institute and other institutions and between the Institute and outside organizations. It was shown that the Institute occupied a somewhat unique situation and that the relations which are thus growing up are obviously just as useful to the staff members of the Institute as they are to the universities and colleges which participate in them.

Mr. Hardin, Chairman of the Finance Committee, stated that the report of the Finance Committee would appear in the report of the Treasurer.

The Treasurer reported that the assets of the Institute on December 31, 1936, were as follows:

Cash in bank and on hand	\$273,219.24
Due from bank - securities deposited for collection	11,750.15
Marketable securities - book value	7,428,436.37
Life insurance and annuity contracts	148,613.75
Mortgages receivable - past due	86,192.00
Land and buildings	231,110.72
Gest Oriental Library	102,800.42
Accrued interest income	61,280.10
Benjamin D. Meritt Fund	2,500.00
Furniture and fixtures	3,789.78
Sundry prepaid items	1,292.50
Total	<u>\$8,350,985.03</u>

On motion, the report of the Treasurer was accepted.

Mr. Maass, Chairman of the Committee on Buildings and Grounds, thereupon presented a report on behalf of the Committee which comprises two separate recommendations:

First, that the sum of \$1,000.00 be appropriated to be administered under the direction of Professors Veblen and Riefler and used for reforestation and transplantation of trees and other work which, in their judgment, is essential for the proper care and preservation of the property owned by the Institute.

Second, that in view of the housing shortage which exists at Princeton, it was, in the opinion of the Committee, essential that everything possible be done by the Institute to encourage the erection by members of the staff of their own homes; that a plan had been devised by Professor Riefler which involved the sale by the Institute of such parts of the land owned by it which were not essential for the Institute's requirements to persons who desire to erect homes for their own occupancy and that in some instances there might be a desire by members of the staff to erect homes on property not included in the Institute tract; that the plan presented comprehended that in addition to selling the ground, the Institute advance the cost for the construction of the home, such advance to be represented by the bond of the owner and secured by a first mortgage upon the land and dwelling, the mortgage to bear interest at four per cent per annum and to provide for monthly amortization payments which would retire the mortgage at the end of twenty-five

years; that in addition the owner would also secure the Institute by a policy of insurance on his life payable to the Institute, which policy would be in a sum equivalent to the mortgage, and would authorize the Institute to deduct from his salary, in monthly installments, a sum sufficient to provide the interest on the mortgage, the amortization payments, the taxes on the property, fire insurance premiums and the premiums on the life insurance policy. Each home would be planned by the owner through his own architect, the Institute to have no connection with such planning except to approve the same and the limit of cost thereof and the building to be built by a builder selected by the owner, so that the Institute would in no sense be either a builder selling houses or a landlord. Under the plan if the owner remained with the Institute for twenty-five years, the mortgage would be paid off by virtue of the amortization payments and he would own the house free of any mortgage lien, or if opportunity presented he might in the meanwhile refund the mortgage and pay off the Institute. If he severed his connection with the Institute before the mortgage was paid off, he would remain liable on the bond and if he died during the interval, the insurance policy would be sufficient to pay off any balance due on the mortgage, the excess to be refunded to the owner's family, who would then likewise own the home free and clear of any mortgage lien.

Mr. Maass stated that this was a brief summary of a very comprehensive plan which would yield to the Institute upon the money involved as favorable an income as it could secure through investment of a like sum in bonds or other securities and would in large degree solve the housing problem which now faces the members of the staff and which will be equally attractive to them, their families and the Institute.

The matter was variously discussed and Mr. Hardin related his knowledge of the experience of Princeton University in a like connection and stated his approval of the plan and his belief that the Institute should acquire from the owner the first option to purchase the premises in the event that the owner determined to abandon the same.

After complete discussion, it was thereupon, on motion, duly made, seconded

and unanimously carried,

RESOLVED, That a sum not exceeding One thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) be and hereby is appropriated to be used for the re-forestation, transplantation of trees and other work on the land owned by the Institute, said sum to be expended under the direction of Professor Oswald Veblen and Professor Winfield W. Riefler;

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the report of the Committee on Buildings and Grounds be and hereby is approved and that such Committee be authorized to proceed with the carrying out of said plan, provided, however, that before the same is consummated in any instance or instances, the same be submitted to the Executive Committee for its approval.

Due notice having been given, the following amendment to the By-Laws was adopted:

Article II

Sec. 1. The annual meeting of the members of the Corporation shall be held on the third Monday in April in each year.

The Director called attention to the fact that in January, 1933, the Institute had become a sustaining member of the American Mathematical Society for a period of five years by the payment of \$200.00 annually during that period and that the last payment would be made in January, 1937. As the American Mathematical Society is devoting its efforts to the cultivation of an increased interest in higher mathematics in American institutions of learning and to the publication of transactions too large for periodicals, he recommended that the Institute remain a sustaining member, whereupon, on motion, it was

RESOLVED, That the Institute for Advanced Study continue to be a sustaining member of the American Mathematical Society for a period of five years by the payment of Two hundred dollars (\$200.00) annually during that period.

On motion, it was

RESOLVED, That the budget for the remainder of the current year (1936-1937) be and hereby is modified by the addition of Four thousand five hundred Dollars (\$4,500.00) in order that the salaries of Winfield W. Riefler and Benjamin D. Meritt respectively may be increased to Fifteen thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00) per annum, effective February 1, 1937.

The Director stated that at a meeting of the Board held January 27, 1936, Professor W. A. Campbell was made professor in the School of Humanistic Studies for an indefinite period. Since this appointment was made, the archaeological work in which Professor Campbell was engaged has been put upon a six-year basis. After conference with Professor Campbell it has been agreed with him that his appointment with the Institute shall be upon the same basis. Thereupon, on motion, it was

RESOLVED, That the resolution of January 27, 1936, regarding the appointment of W. A. Campbell as professor in the School of Humanistic Studies be and is hereby rescinded;

FURTHER RESOLVED, That W. A. Campbell be and hereby is appointed field archaeologist devoting half of each year for a six-year period beginning July 1, 1937, to field work and research connected with the Princeton Expedition for the excavation of Antioch-on-the-Orontes and its vicinity, for which he will receive from the Institute Three thousand Dollars (\$3,000.00) a year, which is half his present salary.

There being no further business, on motion, the meeting adjourned.