

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

October 9, 1933

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, October 9, 1933.

Present: Messrs. Louis Bamberger, Carrel, Flexner, Friederwald, Hardin, Leidesdorf, Maass, Stewart, Straus, Weed, Mrs. Fuld, and Miss Sabin.

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

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

The minutes of the annual and regular meetings held on April 24, 1933, having been distributed, their reading was dispensed with, and they were approved with the suggestion that the word, Trustees, on page one, fourth section of the minutes of the annual meeting, be changed to Members.

The following report was presented by the Director and, on motion, was accepted:

Since the last meeting of the Board the offices of the Institute were moved to Princeton about the middle of May, and the Institute itself began quietly and unostentatiously October 2. Out of scores of applicants seventeen were accepted by Professor Veblen, who passed on their qualifications. The theory upon which we acted has been explained in the Bulletins of the Institute and in the Reports of the Director. There are, to repeat, abundant opportunities in this

country for anyone who wishes to obtain a Ph.D. degree. Now that the German universities are in process of being wrecked, opportunities for workers, who have received the Ph.D. degree, have had a certain amount of experience, and have demonstrated their capacity as independent workers, are extremely limited. That is the field, therefore, in which the Institute can do a genuine service. The creative faculty, the possession of ideas, the ability to work more or less alone under the stimulus and guidance of real masters in a given field: these are the criteria which have been applied to those who have asked to be admitted to the Institute. Their success and influence will not depend upon numbers but upon quality, as has been emphasized from the outset. That we have not failed was obvious, even before the Institute was opened, from the character and experience of those who applied. Among them are associate professors from the Universities of Vienna, Copenhagen, Edinburgh, Moscow, Michigan, Chicago, Cincinnati, Rice Institute, etc. They have all given evidence of ability to do original work. They need, however, at this moment in their respective careers contact with older and wiser persons, to whom they may bring their problems for informal discussion and whose lectures or seminars they may attend in order that they may broaden and deepen their knowledge of mathematics and kindred subjects. Thus far they have consulted individually the professor, who is most likely to be of help to them, and have been advised to follow lectures or seminars, regardless of whether the professor belongs to the Institute or to Princeton University. A spirit of helpfulness has already developed, and the workers show plainly the feeling of release from the regular and severe routine to which they have been subject in the institutions from which they come. Their earnestness is evidenced by their lack of means. Their resources

are so limited that they are living in the simplest possible manner. We are, however, trying to make them feel at home and, as they are all poor, a fine democratic, yet highly intellectual, feeling has sprung up at the very outset. Already several of them have of their own accord joined forces in attacking problems in which they have found themselves mutually interested; and one of them - an associate professor of the University of Chicago - having discovered that several of the workers are interested in some work that he has published, has organized a seminar in the subject for his and their benefit.

I have been a good deal concerned about the publicity which Professor Einstein has received since he left America last spring, and I have endeavored by communicating with him and his wife to make them realize that notoriety may be a source of peril to him and certainly does not help his standing in the scientific world. My most recent communication from his wife would indicate that they have at last come to realize the soundness of this view. In consequence of having previously made engagements which he did not feel free to break, Professor Einstein will not arrive in Princeton until the middle of the month, but the name of the boat upon which he sails has thus far not been revealed. He will be called for at Quarantine and motored to Princeton as quietly and inconspicuously as possible.

The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on September 6, 1933, when distributed, will show that Professor Weyl of Göttingen, having completely recovered his health, has been invited to be a member of the faculty and has accepted; but he has asked me to keep the information absolutely confidential until he succeeds in getting his family safely out of Germany. At the moment of this dictation he has not yet accomplished this end, so that I beg the members of the

Board to regard this matter as confidential. His acquisition to the faculty will be a source of immense strength. He occupies the most famous chair of mathematics in Germany - the chair which for a hundred years has made Göttingen a great center of mathematics, now, alas, utterly destroyed. Professor Weyl is not a stranger in Princeton, for he spent an entire year there two or three years ago, and he has also lectured in other American universities. He will become an American citizen, and he has written Professor Veblen that he feels that he is beginning his scientific life a second time. Professor Weyl will spend October and November lecturing in Swarthmore, after which he and his family will take up their residence permanently in Princeton.

In view of the uncertain financial situation I am endeavoring to keep down expenditures, especially administrative expenditures, to the lowest possible sums consistent with the achievement of the ideals of the Institute. On the other hand, my mind is playing continuously about the next step to be taken when conditions, financial and other, are favorable. This is a topic which I shall bring to the attention of the Board somewhat later under the head of New Business.

I hope to arrange in the course of the autumn for the members of the Board to visit Princeton and to meet the members of the faculty.

I cannot close this report without an expression of my appreciation of the kindness and generosity of the new President of Princeton University, Mr. Dodds, Professor Eisenhart, Dean of the Graduate School, and their associates in other departments of the University. They have been kind, helpful, and cooperative in the highest degree.

Mr. Hardin, Chairman of the Finance Committee, stated that the Committee had had one meeting, that the members were in constant touch with each other, and that the report of the Treasurer would cover the subject of finance.

The Treasurer delivered an oral résumé of his written report, in which he stated the cash on hand, the market value of securities on hand as at June 30, 1933, the budget and possible changes which may occur therein. Thereupon, on motion, it was

RESOLVED, That the oral report be approved and that the written report, with schedules attached, of which the oral report constituted a summary, be placed on file.

The Director reported that Professor Felix Frankfurter had written him on May 1, 1933, that he desired to be excused from meetings of the Board and Executive Committee during his residence in Oxford, England, in the academic year 1933-1934. Thereupon, on motion, Mr. Frankfurter was excused from attending the regular and annual meetings as well as the meetings of the Executive Committee of the Institute for Advanced Study in 1933-1934.

The Director stated that the Executive Committee had held a meeting on September 6, 1933, and on account of the confidential item therein pertaining to Professor Hermann Weyl it was inadvisable to distribute the minutes of that meeting until Professor Weyl and his family had reached the United States. The Director reported that Professor Weyl had accepted the invitation to join the Institute as a Professor in the School of Mathematics and recommended that his appointment date from December 1, 1933, instead of January 1, 1934, as specified at the meeting on September 6.

On motion, the appointment of Professor Hermann Weyl to the School of Mathematics, beginning December 1, 1933, was ratified.

The Director reported that the Executive Committee on account of the distressing conditions in German universities had authorized the appointment of Professor Richard Courant of Göttingen to the School of Mathematics as Visiting Professor for one year, the Institute paying him \$3,000.00 and the

Rockefeller Foundation having agreed to pay him an additional \$3,000.00. Inasmuch as Professor Courant may accept a call from Cambridge, England, the Director requested that the sum of \$3,000.00, already voted for Professor Courant, be set aside to be used for a similar purpose. Thereupon, on motion, it was

RESOLVED, That the sum of Three thousand Dollars (\$3,000.00) be and hereby is set aside, in the discretion of the Director, to be used to invite some dispossessed German professor to the School of Mathematics as Visiting Professor for one year.

The Director reported that the Executive Committee at its meeting on September 6, 1933, had authorized the Institute to contribute to Princeton University at the rate of \$6,000 a year to show its appreciation of the privileges given to the members of the School of Mathematics in Fine Hall. Thereupon, on motion, the action of the Executive Committee was ratified.

The various items dealt with at the meeting of the Executive Committee on September 6, 1933, having been approved, the minutes of the meeting were accepted.

The Director recalled to the Board the previous decision to embark in due time on the development of a school of economics and politics and suggested that it would be helpful if from time to time the subject were considered and discussed. Thereupon various members of the Board stated their own views. On the whole, it seemed to be the opinion of those present that a historic approach to the fresh study of economic problems would be more fruitful than an approach upon lines hitherto pursued and that such procedure would involve beginning with young men who had shown distinct promise but who had not yet committed themselves too deeply and that persons of this type would probably be glad to join the Institute for periods varying from three to five years during which time their real powers would be disclosed. No action was taken, but it was understood that the subject would be brought forward again at subsequent meetings.

The Director called attention to the fact that the date of the next regular meeting would be January 8, 1934, and suggested on account of its proximity to the holidays the meeting be postponed to January 29, 1934, whereupon, on motion, the January 8, 1934, meeting was postponed to January 29, 1934.

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