

SUBJECT TO SENATE APPROVAL

MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH PLENARY SESSION
OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

December 13, 1983

Professor Henry Wasser (English, Staten Island), chairman, called the session to order at 6:50 p.m. in Room 1800 at the Graduate School and University Center. Present were: Senators Amendolia, Barber, Baumrin, Baxter, Beheshti, Bohigian, Borneman, Brogan, Buianouckas, Cooper, Davidson, De La Campa, Donoghue, Early, Ercolano, Friedman, Galub, Gerardi, B. Gerber, Greenbaum, Grossman, Harris, Henderson, Hunte, Kadushin, Kirsch, Kolliner, Lekachman, Movasseghi, Muehlig, Otelsberg, Parkhurst, Picken, Plissner, Prince, Quinn, Reuder, Riley, Rodriguez, Rosén, Schneider, Seguine, Sohmer, Speidel, Spivak, Stroup, Trefousse, Valinsky, Wakatama, Waldinger, Walkwitz, Walter, Wedeen, Weightman, and Yousef; Alternate Senators Abrahamsen, Karan, McDaniel, and Strong. Senators Beilin, Cantwell, Lea, Loy, Moise, Siegel, Timoni, Waldman, and Zaneteas were excused. Professor Zeller, liaison member (PSC), and campus governance body head Professor Meyerson (Graduate School) also attended. Chancellor Joseph S. Murphy and Dr. Ellis, Executive Director, also attended. Present as guests of the Senate were Honorable Edith Everett, vice chairperson Board of Trustees, Trustees Baard, Gribetz, Kolodny, Lowe, and Polk, President Proshansky (Graduate School) and Mrs. Eric B. Wolf (Anthropology, Graduate School).

I. Approval of the Tentative Agenda: The tentative agenda was approved as circulated.

II. Approval of the Minutes of the 124th Plenary Session (November 22, 1983): The minutes were approved with the following addition: page 3, line 12 - insert "committee" following "Faculty Organization".

III. Communications from the Chairman: Professor Wasser welcomed members to the sixth annual dinner meeting and explained the special format of the session, i.e. that the business of the meeting was interspersed with the dinner. Professor Wasser then reported that former Senator James R. Levin (Special Programs, City) who had chaired the Senate's Evaluation and Search Committee in 1979-80 and 1980-81 had been named to the City Human Rights Commission by Mayor Koch.

The Chairman reported too that the University Student Senate Conference on CUNY '84 had been held, as noted in his written report. Chairperson Melvin Lowe and the organizers of the event should be congratulated, Professor Wasser said, on the success of the program. Of special interest to him, he continued, was the panel discussion in which he had participated. Presidents Lief (Lehman), Mancuso-Edwards (Hostos) and Smith (Borough Manhattan), Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs Barnett and Acting Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and Special Programs Corbie had been his fellow panelists together with Dean Rousseau (Kingsborough). The discussion had been lively as had been the question and answer period. The impression he had had was that the matter of articulation between the community and senior colleges was of major concern to students, and, he said, it was good to know that both the University administration, through the Chancellor's Task Force on Articulation, and the Senate, through its Articulation Committee, were giving close attention to that issue with a view to making positive recommendations on it.

Professor Wasser announced that President Leonard Lief would be the guest speaker at the Senate's 126th Plenary Session on January 17 and would discuss the new curriculum at Lehman.

Professor Wasser also reported that the preliminary report of the Presidential Task Force on Retention that had been discussed by Gene Maeroff in an article in The New York Times on Sunday, December 4 had been reviewed by the Senate Executive Committee and had been discussed with Chancellor Murphy by them. At present, he continued, the report was largely narrative and lacked the data that will appear in appendices to be distributed sometime in late January. Nonetheless, Professor Wasser said, the Executive Committee and the Chancellor had been able to exchange views not only on the approach taken in The Times but also in possible courses of action with respect to retention.

Professor Wasser then identified the Senate's guests and officers seated at the head table as well as the members of the Board of Trustees who had joined the dinner meeting as part of their effort to enhance their knowledge of the University and the views of its constituencies.

IV. Reports of Faculty Members of Board of Trustees' Committees: Professor Wasser reminded the members that these were available at the session in written form. (Copies of the reports are appended to these minutes.)

V. Chancellor's Report: Chancellor Murphy reported that he was close to making a recommendation to the Board of a candidate for the presidency of Medgar Evers College. The Search Committee which had included members of the college delegation to the University Faculty Senate had recommended three excellent candidates and he was now in the process of zeroing in on one of them - a difficult task in view of the strong credentials of all three. In an aside the Chancellor called attention to the fact that he had thus far avoided gender in his locution and he would continue to do so until it became apparent.

Chancellor Murphy then said that he did not intend this evening to offer an apologia with respect to his relationship with the Senate. He had done this in the past and more recently in discussion with Chairman Wasser and the Executive Committee and had agreed to attend every Plenary Session as well as all meetings of the Executive Committee. He intended, he said, to do better since he had the impression that Chairman Wasser would now grade him perhaps a "C+" but held the possibility of a "B" or "B+" by June if he did better in terms of attendance and, if he handed in a good notebook.

Instead, the Chancellor said, he wished this evening to comment on another subject. He wished to thank the members of his Board who were present and to note that this was the second or third evening in the week that they would have given over to University business. He was enormously impressed by the Board's level of support for him and the University and their dedication to CUNY. Their task as members of the Board was enormously time-consuming, the kinds of problems with which they were forced to grapple were difficult. But the Board members were uncomplaining even when they had to deal with waiting in the rain, getting their feet soaked as on a night like this. The University, he said, was enormously in their debt and he wished to acknowledge his personal gratitude to them for their devotion.

Chancellor Murphy said he had nothing else to report at this time save that he awaited the coming of the Baltimore Colts to the Queens Stadium on the Queens College campus as reported in the morning paper.

The Chancellor then responded to the following questions from the floor. 1) Professor Baumrin (Philosophy, Lehman) asked - "Is the report in this morning's Times of the cancellation of layoffs in the State applicable to CUNY?"/ I haven't seen today's paper yet. From what we know of our budget, however, though it does not hold out wealth, it is better than last year. We had no layoffs last year so we should be all right this year. In that connection I should report that we are hopeful that this year the City will agree with the State on a piece of legislation with respect to early retirement and that will ease our situation. 2) Professor Abrahamsen

(Judaic Studies, Brooklyn) - "Would you elaborate on that?" /There are some things the Union wants in the legislation, some things that I want, and we want to be sure that the Board retains some authority in this area but we are hopeful that a bill can be worked out. Professor Abrahamsen further asked whether CUNY was not a state agency and asked for clarification about the need for City agreement. The Chancellor explained that the collective bargaining contract is worked out with the City. He commented also that last year the State's early retirement option had generated far more retirements than anticipated or intended and that was a reason why caution was being exercised in developing this legislation.

V. Greetings from the Board of Trustees: Honorable Edith B. Everett: Professor Wasser then introduced Vice-chairperson of the Board Honorable Edith B. Everett and stated the appreciation of the Senate on behalf of the faculty for her commitment to her task and to the University. Mrs. Everett responded and said that she was happy to be present this evening and to have this opportunity to greet the faculty on behalf of the Board. The program, she continued, suggested that it would be an interesting and lovely evening. Further, she said, she wished to express the Board's recognition that the faculty were the mainstay of the University for it was they who stayed with the University and kept it for them. Therefore, she urged, it was the Board's hope that the faculty would stay with the University despite the many pressures on it from the City, the State and other external forces. The Board, she concluded, needed the faculty to make The City University the quality institution it is.

VI. Proposed Resolution on UFS Council of Heads of Campus Faculty Governance Bodies: Professor Wasser introduced the proposed resolution and explained that it represented not only a formalizing of an effort undertaken by the Senate over the past several years to provide a channel of communication among heads of local faculty governance bodies but also a response to a suggestion made by such governance heads last spring. Professor Wasser also explained the footnote which was intended to clarify the resolution since identification of local faculty bodies, given the heterogeneity of governance structures on the various CUNY campuses, could not be encompassed in any single phrase. A motion to adopt the resolution was made and seconded and, since there was no discussion, the motion was put to a vote. The motion was adopted with one negative vote and no abstentions. (Text attached to these minutes).

VII. Guest Speaker: Professor Eric B. Wolf, Distinguished Professor of Anthropology, Lehman College and Graduate School, "The People Without History": Chairman Wasser introduced Professor Wolf. He stated that Professor Wolf had completed his elementary and secondary education in schools in Austria, Czechoslovakia and England and had entered Queens College in 1940. He had received his bachelor's degree with a major in Anthropology from Queens in 1946 and his Ph. D. in Anthropology from Columbia University five years later. Before joining the CUNY faculty as Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at Lehman College in 1971, Professor Wolf had taught at several other institutions - the Universities of Illinois, Virginia, Chicago and Michigan and Yale University. Professor Wolf, Dr. Wasser continued, was a fellow of the American Anthropological Association and of the Royal Anthropological Institute as well as a member of the Permanent Council of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. He had served as a consultant to the Department of Social Affairs of the Pan American Union, as Director of the University of Michigan's project for the Study of Social Networks in the Mediterranean Area and was co-chairman of the Anthropological Section of the New York Academy of Sciences as well as continuing co-editor of Comparative Studies in Society and History. Professor Wasser noted also that Professor Wolf was a prolific researcher and any attempt to list his works would omit so many that it would be foolhardy to do so. He would mention only three: Sons of the Shaking Earth, published by the University of Chicago Press, 1959; Peasant

Wars of the Twentieth Century, Harper and Row, 1969; and his most recent work, Europe and the People Without History, University of California Press, 1982.

Professor Wasser concluded his introduction of the speaker by citing a paragraph from The London Times Literary Supplement review of that latest book:

Europe and the People without History is a work of powerful theoretical intelligence, but one informed by a lived sense of social realities. Behind Wolf's analysis, subdued in style but expressed with a notable gift for concise and lucid exposition, there lies a personal and intellectual trajectory which has taken the author from Vienna and the North Bohemian working-class communities devastated by the Great Slump, to the United States and the plantations and peasants of the Third World. Like all good anthropologists he is a "participant observer" -- in this case of the world history which is his subject. This book could only have been written by a "son of the shaking earth", to quote the title of one of Wolf's own works. It is an important book, which will be widely discussed. The centenary year of Marx's death is not over yet, but it may be doubted whether a more original work exemplifying the living influence of that great thinker will have been published in the course of it.

Professor Wolf's paper which is appended to these minutes was greeted with a resounding round of applause and Professor Wasser thanked the speaker and observed that the Senate's applause indicated -- perhaps more adequately than anything he might say -- the body's appreciation of Professor Wolf's willingness to share the fruits of his inquiries with his colleagues and the Senate's pleasure in having him as their guest.

A motion to adjourn brought the session to a close.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Ellis
Executive Director