



more letters

apology needed

Mr. Paul Robinson
Department of Philosophy
University of Toronto
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Mr. Robinson:

Although, in your letter to Professor Mardiros, you list your address as, "Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto," I have been unable to find your name listed in the Commonwealth Universities Year Book, 1965, among the members of that Department. Forgive me, therefore, if my letter does not address you properly.

Since there are so many errors in your so-called undeniable facts, it is difficult for me to know where to begin in an attempt to correct many of the false implications contained in your letter. Without implying anything concerning the validity of things about which I shall not write, I would like to correct certain mis-statements you have made concerning the tenure procedures at the University of Alberta.

After a study of procedures, lasting over a year, a committee consisting of members of the staff of the University of Alberta, and two legal representatives, made recommendations to our Board of Governors, recommendations which were adopted on March 4th, 1966. Among these recommendations, one finds the following recommendation concerning tenure.

"All members of the full-time faculty are first appointed for a probationary period, except in unusual circumstances. The normal probationary periods are as follows:

Professors—Two years

Associate Professors—Two years

Assistant Professors and Lecturers—

Two years, usually followed by an additional two-year period.

The probationary period shall normally begin with the effective date of the appointment. If appointment has been made at other than the normal effective appointment date, it shall be calculated from the next July 1st if the effective appointment date was January 1st or later; or it shall be calculated from the previous July 1st if the effective appointment date was before January 1st.

The faculty member shall be informed about six months before the end of the probationary period of the decision respecting the continuation or termination of his appointment. The decision is made by the Board on the basis of a recommendation made by an *ad hoc* tenure committee. The head of the department will initiate action at the appropriate time to appoint the *ad hoc* committee. This committee will usually be chaired by the appointee's Dean and will usually have as other members, his Head of Department,

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the time has come
to say good bye
to all our family,
on four pages yet!!

two staff members outside his department, and one member from his department.

In the case of professors and associate professors, the tenure committee may recommend:

- (1) tenure;
- (2) that the appointment should not be renewed;
- (3) in exceptional cases, extension of the probationary period.

In the case of assistant professors and lecturers, the tenure committee will be established at the appropriate time in relation to the end of the first two years probationary period and the recommendation of the committee will be either

- (1) extension of the probationary period for another two years—the normal case; or
- (2) that the appointment should not be renewed.

Provided, nevertheless, that, in exceptional cases, a tenure committee may recommend tenure at any time subsequent to the second year of probation.

It is the responsibility of a tenure committee to examine all aspects of the appointee's contribution and to assess his probable continued progress in his position and to make a

recommendation to the President based thereon. The appointee has the right to be informed promptly of the decision of the Board. If he has not been so informed before the end of January he should request the Head of the Department for information of the action which has been taken."

Other than the break of the four year probationary period into two periods of two years each, the new tenure procedures are in essence the same as, or similar to, those that have received acceptance at this University for many years. Indeed, the same or similar procedures have been used, over the years, to award tenure to about 1,000 people, and to deny tenure to about 100 people.

There is no question that there was no contravention of accepted tenure procedures in reaching the decisions concerning professors Williamson and Murray. In fact, there are no contraventions of the tenure procedure that were recommended for the future.

To label procedures that have received careful study, and have been satisfactorily used for many years, as "exceptionally loose and dangerous" is, I believe, a completely irresponsible statement. Indeed, I would be interested in a comparison between our procedures and those

used by the University of Toronto.

This does not imply that our University has nothing to learn concerning tenure or other procedures. Such matters will receive continuing study by our staff and students, and changes will be made as the need for change becomes apparent. This is the only way a responsible university can act, and one cannot abandon decision making, by accepted procedures, simply because the accepted principles of university government are in a state of flux.

The reason you gave for the tenure committee being reconvened is false. The responsibility for this action rested entirely with me, and the only reason for this action was because I received a request from the academic welfare committee that such a course be followed, not because any member of the Tenure Committee ever indicated to me a desire to reverse his initial decision.

Your statement that Professor Mardiros has acted wrongly throughout this tenure procedure is false. It is the duty of a head of department to state the things he knows to be true, and even to state the things he believes to be true. Otherwise, it is difficult for me to see how a tenure committee can "examine all aspects of an appointee's contribution and to assess his probable continued progress in his position."

In your letter you write, "This plan of a one-year terminal appointment is the crowning stroke of this whole bizarre business. You have slandered a man; now you want to buy his silence." For the sake of the record, these offers were made by the University of Alberta, not by Professor Mardiros, and no vow of silence was attached to the offers. The men involved are free to act in their own best interest as they see fit, and the offers will not be withdrawn because of any action they may take.

May I end this letter by paraphrasing some of the statements of your letter?

A person with Mardiros' reputation for honesty and integrity does not need a defence from anyone, much less from me. However, it is not possible for me to sit idly by and see a man slandered whom I

greatly respect. Nothing less than a public apology from you would fit the course of action a sincere and honest person would follow, in view of the many mis-statements that you have made.

Yours sincerely
Dr. Max Wyman
Vice-President (Academic)

a message

To The Editor:

In his recent letter to The Gateway, Paul Robinson of the University of Toronto refers to me as "disputing the evidence supporting Williamson's competence." This is a small point, but he is wrong in it, as he is throughout his diatribe.

I was commenting on a letter signed by 55 students, in which it was claimed that Professors Williamson and Murray are as good teachers as any in the Department. I pointed out that the majority of the signers of the letter could not support this claim since they had not taken courses from all or even most of the philosophers in the Department.

It should be obvious that comparisons made by persons who are not familiar with the philosophers they are comparing are not to be regarded as relevant evidence. But this is not obvious to Mr. Robinson, since, from his vantage point in Toronto, he makes comparisons of the same kind.

We have therefore reason to believe, on objective grounds, (1) that Mr. Robinson's powers of analysis, even at the simplest level, are not great, and (2) that his professional conduct, at least, is deplorable, and (3) that this university is fortunate that he won't be here.

Yours truly,
Ted Kemp
Assistant Professor of Philosophy

misleading

To The Editor:

Professor Mardiros' quote from me is extremely misleading.

1. It is taken out of context from a letter of reconciliation which I was asked by the Staff Association to write in this way in order that Professor Mardiros be made agreeable to a proposal to give Murray and Williamson another year at this university.

2. I made it crystal clear that my reasons for staying here were not at all personal loyalty to Professor Mardiros, but to the administration of this university.

3. It is true that I regret to have had to make derogatory statements about Professor Mardiros. Unfortunately they were all correct—they were all correct characterizations of Professor Mardiros's behavior.

I am also willing, if given the opportunity (which it seems that I am not), to do my best to help to build up particularly a good graduate program in our department. But surely I cannot pretend to have any respect left for the head of our department after the way he has behaved in the tenure case against Professors Murray and Williamson.

The most damaging incident occurred after the letter was written; I refer to the CKUA broadcast where Professor Mardiros, with all the evidence to the contrary in his possession, claimed that Professor Williamson's articles had been turned down by the editors of the journals to which he submitted them. It is very hard to see this statement as anything but a deliberate lie.

Herman Tenneson
Department of Philosophy

(Editor's note: In view of the fact this is the final edition of The Gateway for this year, we felt it imperative that Prof. Tenneson be given an opportunity to comment upon a quotation appearing in a letter from Prof. Mardiros on another page. Prof. Tenneson was not permitted to see any other part of the Mardiros letter.)

greystone singers

the taste of a review

To The Editor:

I do not know who you are, N. Riebeck, but I must protest your review of the Greystone Singers' concert last weekend (The Gateway, March 9). I did not take notes on Friday night, but my impression of the concert was quite different from yours.

What do you mean that you have "tasted their program before and . . . it was a little better the first time"? If you mean that you are so familiar with the program that it was boring, I have to admire your erudition. I have been an enthusiastic amateur musician for 15 years and I found the program far from shopworn: much of it was new to me. Even so, the program was not contemporary music; I do not believe any average audience would have any difficulty in comprehending anything that was presented there. In short, these were, for the most part, reasonably unfamiliar works written in quite familiar musical styles. The four 16th century pieces were certainly easy enough to understand. The Bach noted is not one of his most familiar choral works but is easily understood and did not, I contend, lose any of the audience unless they wanted to get lost. Of course, the untutored ear might not follow Bach in the same way as the mind which is taxed by Dr. Dootlittle might not follow Henry James, but that should not apply to any college audience.

The Milhaud was new to me but I found it unusually comprehensible on first hearing, for Milhaud. The Poulenc, was characteristic Poulenc, simple, direct, and melodious, and the American Negro songs offered no problem. So what was there to tax anyone's musical ear?

As for performance, I think you are a little unfair. You neglected to point out that this small group sang the entire program from memory (despite a few scattered scores for prompting) in four languages, and that the entire program was without accompaniment. The words were understandable almost throughout, which attests to the superior discipline of the group. Attacks, releases, and dynamics were very nearly flawless. Balance was superb, especially in the 16th century pieces and the Alleluia by Thompson. In some passages where the sopranos were required to sing in the upper register, an "edge" appeared in that section which was not desirable. But let us temper our criticism: minor flaws are terribly apparent when a chorus has no orchestra to hide behind! You are partly right though. There was a spot in the Bach when the tenors (as I recall) lost the pitch, and the solo passages in the Milhaud were not well done.

What bothers you about having three American Negro songs on the program? There is nothing wrong about 'classical' transcrip-

tions of folk songs. We don't complain about Schubert's transcriptions and we don't fault Charles Ives for using songs of the people. The fact is that a good song of folk origin is often improved by being transcribed by someone skillful in the traditions of Western music. Still, given that these songs are cliches it is not unpleasant to hear cliches if they are performed well, as these were. Certainly this program was much less cliché-ridden than many heard here recently.

I think you should have commented on the audience, Mr. Riebeck. Friday there were not more than 200 people present (excluding members of the Alberta chorus). This reflects a shocking apathy in a city (and university) of this size. Perhaps the hall was filled Saturday, but I doubt it. I suggest that you, as a reviewer, have an obligation to your readers to chide them for their lack of interest and to point out to them the opportunity they missed to hear a fine program of choral music presented with excellence. The Greystone Singers are good by any standard and superb by college chorus standards. It reflects a great deal of credit to the University of Saskatchewan and should make Albertans pause to consider what her sister university can accomplish.

James Christensen
dept. of pharmacology