

UC (Berkeley)

September 1, 1950

Dear Bob- *Yates*

At your suggestion, Esther and I contacted Gian Wick here and had lunch with him a few days ago. He is very charming, and I am personally quite disappointed at UW's action relative to his appointment. So many issues have been injected into the "loyalty oath" situation here that it is difficult to keep track of them. This must be especially true at 2000 miles distance, and I wonder if President Fred has been able to keep close touch with the situation.

At any rate, the meeting of the UC Board of Regents last week clarified the issue considerably. The 31 professors who are about to be discharged (or permitted to resign with one year's severance pay !) were investigated by the Faculty Committee on academic privilege and tenure, were cleared of any Communist taint, and were recommended for reappointment. Last month, the Board voted to retain these men, but Mr. Neylan was able to maneuver a reconsideration at the last meeting, overruled Gov. Warren's contention that the reconsideration was illegal, and the Board now voted 12-10 to fire these men. For the first time, it was made clear that the possibility that these non-signers were Communists was not at all the issue. As Mr. McFadden (one of the 12) is quoted in the attached clipping : "It is not a question of communism but one of discipline". I think it possible that the administrative officials of UW might take a different view of this controversy after learning of this last meeting.

Wick is making other plans right now, but has indicated how much he would enjoy Madison, and I gather that he might respond favorably to any re-offer made fairly promptly. I do not know the factors which may have prompted the administration to reject his appointment, but on the face of it, it looks like a bad omen indeed for the future of academic freedom at Wisconsin as well as at our other universities.

We will have left Berkeley by the time you get this. We are going to some meetings at Columbus first, but will see you in about two weeks.

Sincerely,

Joshua