

Gilchrist Replies To Six V S A Accusations

In a statement to the Board of Directors, President Gibb Gilchrist on Saturday morning answered the six specific questions asked by the Veterans Students Association at their Thursday night meeting. The complete text of Gilchrist's statement follows:

In connection with the present troubled situation at A. and M. College, I hope we may not be distracted from the main immediate issue, hazing. If this great institution is to reach the status and standing intended by the people of Texas who own and control it, hazing in all its forms must go.

In your investigation of hazing and in your deliberations you have reached a conclusion—in which I emphatically join—that such steps as may be necessary must be taken to insure that a student coming here can attend this institution and be governed only by the regulations and the Basic Policy of the College. You have ordered the President of the College and other officials to see that this is made possible, and we are taking steps to carry out your orders.

Since I have been made a focal point of attack in one of the efforts to divert the thinking of the people of Texas from the main issue, it is appropriate that I make a few statements that may be helpful to the members of the Board in answering inquiries.

I do not know of any employee of the College who has been placed under duress by the administration. The policies adopted by the Board in the Rules and Regulations adopted October 14, 1944 are clear and seem to be fair to the College and employee alike. These have not been changed but are in full force and effect. Under these rules every employee is given the freest and fullest opportunity for expression.

In the letter inviting me to address the A. and M. Mothers' Club at Dallas, I was asked to choose my own subject, which I did. I chose to talk about our building program, especially those plans for a Union building, a Chapel, and a physical education plant, and other important items in connection with the spiritual, moral, and physical welfare of our students.

On Mother's Day 1946, I was in Washington as Chairman of an Engineering Committee concerned with highway safety. I was appointed to this place by President Truman, and I felt it my duty to be there, as did the Board of Directors.

Blue Star

A complaint is made about the loss of the blue star by the cadet corps. The advanced course was not reactivated until February 1946. Inspection was made the latter part of April. I think it best to enclose a copy of a letter which I wrote to General Dewey regarding this report. Later it was decided that the best way to get back our rating was to a good job and the enclosed more recent report is evidence of what Colonel Meloy has done.

I fear, however, the effects of the present action of the senior cadets on the military rating.

Vets Question

Six specific questions came from the Veterans Association meeting Thursday night. These questions with their answers follow:

"1. Q. What has happened to a fund established prior to 1943 for a new classroom and laboratory building to augment the Science Hall, and why hasn't construction started on the building. This fund was in the amount of approximately \$200,000."

Ans. In September 1940, \$200,000 was set aside for the erection of a classroom building. \$140,000 was from local funds and \$60,000 from Pure Feed funds. Plans were prepared, but it was impossible to construct the building on account of the War. In July 1945, the Board of Directors found it necessary to transfer \$70,000 of this fund to current expenses pending the payment of fees by the Veterans Administration. In September 1945, the Board transferred the remaining \$70,000 of local funds to the student recreation account, which was allocated to a softball

diamond, intramural message center, outdoor slab, intramural football goal posts, tennis courts, handball field, and renovating of old consolidated School building.

In May 1946, the Board of Directors transferred the \$60,000 back to the Pure Feed Fund which was needed for operating and research purposes. During the same fiscal year, \$275,000 was added to the physical plant fund, and this remains available when it is possible to construct the building originally planned.

Farm Land Valuation

"2. Q. What was the basis of the purchase of a Brazos River Bottom farm at approximately \$78 per acre when adjacent farm land was, and still is, selling at approximately \$60 an acre?"

Ans. On January 8, 1944 the Board of Directors authorized Dean Kyle to secure options on the 2776 acres in the Brazos River Bottom farm and make recommendations to the Board at its next meeting. On February 19, 1944, on the recommendation of Dean Kyle, the Board authorized the purchase of this land at \$75 per acre, and all of the equipment and teams at a price of \$18,750.

This land was appraised by George C. Chance, M. W. Sims, and J. Earl Porter, all owners of Brazos River farms, at an average price of \$78 per acre, and separately by W. M. Einson, Chief Appraiser for the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company and a graduate of the College in 1926, at an average of \$76.34 per acre. The equipment and teams were appraised by representatives of the State Board of Control.

Exchange Store

"3. Q. Why should the College Exchange Store, located here on state-owned property be permitted to make a net profit last year of \$54,000 at the expense of the individual student and the Federal Government?"

Ans. The operating profits of the Exchange Store for 1945-46 were used as follows: \$18,004.64 (representing one-third) was retained by the store for operation. \$3,864.21 was set up to pay a 10 per cent dividend to students on sales slips signed and deposited. \$8,036.26 was transferred to a fund for student recreation. \$24,108.81 was transferred to the Union Building operating fund. This is considered a good business operation. Note that all profits go to student benefits.

Wind Tunnel

"4. Q. Why is the \$100,000 wind-tunnel located at Easterwood Air Field not in operation? Why was the survey and subsequent recommendation of Dr. A. A. Potter, of Purdue University, to spend not over \$25,000 on a wind tunnel ignored?"

Ans. The wind tunnel is not yet in operation because it has been impossible to secure electric power equipment and power line equipment. We hope that we may soon be able to buy this and put the wind tunnel in operation. Dean Potter made no such recommendation as indicated.

The first appropriation of \$60,000 was obtained from the Legislature in 1943 under the administration of Dr. T. O. Walton. It was understood that this would not complete the project, and the Legislature in 1945 appropriated an additional \$45,000 which is sufficient to place the plant in operation when the power units and power line can be secured and constructed.

Late we hope to add further refinements to the wind tunnel, such as a completely closed circuit and perhaps pressure facilities. This will likely be provided by returns from the operation of the unit now nearing completion. We are very proud of this installation and its possibilities.

Bryan Field

"5. Why did President Gilchrist refuse to accept the outright gift of Bryan Army Air Field from the Federal Government for the use of the Aeronautical Engineering Department?"

Ans. No such offer was made by the Federal Government. An in-

quiry from the College brought the information that the status of the field would not be determined until the Congress had determined future appropriations and authorizations.

Tenure

"6. Q. Why doesn't Texas A. & M. have a definite tenure system for the right of appeal for its faculty members?"

Ans. Tenure rules for faculty members have been discussed from time to time but it was felt any formulation of rules would of necessity be restrictive rather than liberalizing the present policy under which tenure is practically continuous except for cause. Rules and Regulations of the College as adopted by the Board of Directors in 1944 and now in effect provide "teachers and employees shall be subject to dismissal for cause at

any time by the President of the College, subject to review by the Board of Directors" and further "any employee, feeling himself aggrieved, shall have the right of appeal."

Since the President of the Veterans Association refused to answer questions and comment on the complaints, I make no attempt to answer some of the more indefinite accusations pending further information. In so far as I know, none of the specific questions have been raised with the College administration. We have always been receptive to veterans requests. Every man in supervisory capacity dealing with the veterans is a veteran himself.

Underlying Cause

I think the Board should inquire into the underlying cause of the veterans action. The charges which came from the meeting are

not such as to justify the call which went out, and we did not learn anything more yesterday. It is my own belief that the interest generated in the meeting and in the charges stems from the same old cause; namely, hazing, and the determination of the College administration to stamp it out.

I believe very strongly in constituted authority. The people of Texas have been very kind to me, and I have served them many years. These people through legal processes have created a Board of Directors to whom I am directly responsible and through them to the people of Texas.

I believe this College should be operated under the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Directors. It happens that the present Board has shown itself receptive to any suggestions, criticisms, or comments for the betterment of the

College. I hope the Board will take action at this meeting that will leave doubt in no mind that it expects to exercise its sworn obligations in the operation of this institution.

Investigation

The House of Representatives has provided for an investigating committee. I think the Board should welcome this investigation. I hope that such committee will be given sufficient funds and clothed with authority to summon witnesses, take testimony under oath, and to punish anyone refusing to testify, and to make transcript of testimony to the end that a full and complete hearing will be had.

Scholastic Standing

The statement that A. and M. is going backward scholastically is untrue. The Board can satisfy itself as to that by conferring with many of the forward-looking men

engaged in our work toward the betterment of the College. The whole program is being modernized and made more efficient. I do not think any Board has ever taken such a forward step as that taken by this Board in providing for the coordination of agricultural activities. We are making some real progress in getting outstanding men here.

The people of Texas deserve real service from this institution. We are on the move aggressively to achieve the objectives for which this institution was created. The opportunities in the fields mandated to us by the Constitution are limitless. Objectively we propose to make this institution second to none. Nothing should be permitted to stand in the way of this movement.

GIBB GILCHRIST
President

Texas A. & M. College

The Battalion

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'Board Will Not Hesitate To Make Environment Change'

The following statement was issued Saturday afternoon by the Board of Directors:

In view of recent statements and demands which have been made in

student meetings, in the press and in letters circulated throughout the State, the Board of Directors of the Agricultural and Mechanical College desire to place before the people of Texas this before the presidency of this institu-

tion is not an issue for controversy between this Board and the student body of the College. This matter is one placed legally in the hands of the Board of Directors and we recognize responsibility, within the limits of the exercise of our best judgment, only to the people of Texas.

The eradication of hazing at this College has been ordered by this Board. It is our firm belief that this not only is in compliance with the laws of Texas, but is necessary to the well-being of our College. The president and officers of the College have been directed by us to take the necessary steps to this end and are doing so with our full support.

In our opinion the authority and duty of this Board to determine the policies for operation of the College, and of the administrative officers appointed or approved by us to execute them, are clear. We accept this responsibility and are exercising this authority as charged by law.

No Facts Developed

We have held meetings of the Board of Directors to which students have been invited and urged to present any factual information bearing upon charges which include mismanagement, misuse of funds, and any other matter that would constitute a basis for charge against the proper conduct of the office of the president or any other administrative officer of the College. We have not been able to develop one single factual charge in these hearings.

President Gilchrist is carrying out the policies established by this Board, and as long as he pursues this course, has our complete and unqualified support.

The Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas belongs to all the people of the State of Texas, and they are the final authority for the laws under which it is governed.

By law, the people of Texas have placed the direction and the administration of the affairs of this institution in the hands of its Board of Directors, appointed by the Governor of the State. In turn, the Board is charged with the selection of the president and the establishment of policies under which its affairs are administered.

In view of these facts, the final decision on College policies must be made by the Board regardless of the approval of the student body. This Board is determined to develop a College second to none in educational opportunities and useful services.

One of the principal declared objectives of this institution is an environment for student bodies comparable to that which usually prevails in the substantial Texas homes from which these students come, superior instruction including requirements in the study of the national and state governments under which we live, with constant training in leadership, character, tolerance, clean living, and physical drill and development.

To bring this environment into being may involve future changes in policies and regulations which this Board will not hesitate to make.

It is our belief that the people of Texas desire the affairs of their Agricultural and Mechanical College administered by constituted authority in the manner provided by law. This we shall continue to do to the best of our ability.

This Board welcomes a complete investigation by the Legislature of Texas of any and all matters connected with the operation of the College.



COTTON QUEEN JOANN DOBBS in a solo pose. She was chosen by the Cotton Ball Committee to reign during the festivities of the Cotton Ball and Pageant taking place on April 18. Her court will include the eight runner-up Tessie beauties in the contest and a duchess from every club on the campus.

Cadet Seniors Go on Trial Before Boards of Officers

Trial of the senior cadets accused of flagrantly disobeying orders of Col. G. S. Meloy got under way Monday afternoon in Ross Hall, with sentences varying from removal from the corps to restrictions to campus and demerits.

Boards of officers, presided over by Col. G. S. Meloy, commandant, with Lt. Col. Bennie Zinn and three other officers participating, were in session all Monday afternoon, spending about twenty minutes on each individual case.

The Board of Directors, in session Friday and Saturday, issued a statement Saturday directing that this means be used in dealing with the senior cadets. The board explained this departure from a long-standing policy of non-intervention in operational affairs by the exigencies of the situation.

Sessions began Monday afternoon at 1:30 p.m. and were still continuing at deadline. A second board of officers, different except for Col. Meloy and Lt. Zinn, was scheduled to meet Monday night at 7:30 p.m. Two sessions are also slated for Tuesday, with the final meeting Wednesday afternoon at 1:30 p.m.

One hundred and forty-one seniors, practically the entire class except for three veteran cadet officers who agreed to interviews, are scheduled to appear.

McCormick Busted
Those receiving punishment as of 6 p.m. Monday included Bill McCormick, president of the senior class and prominent figure in the recent episode. McCormick was sentenced to removal from rank as cadet major commanding the engineer battalion, restriction to campus for the remainder of the semester, assessed fifteen demerits, and put on military probation.

Others removed from the cadet corps were A. O. Hamon, Mike Cuscurida, Moon Mullins, Oscar Jimenez, J. M. Pankonien, and L. W. Pollard. Dick Jones and Bob Sanders, who appeared before the Board of Directors Saturday, were also moved from the corps.

Punishments varying from removal from rank, restriction to

Comptroller Answers Room Rent, Mess Hall Complaints

Saturday morning the following statement was read to the board of Directors by W. H. Holzmann, comptroller of the college, regarding room rent and mess hall complaints:

This is with reference to the 'general' complaints filed by the Veterans Students' Association March 28:

On October 8, 1938 the Board of Directors fixed the room rent at a minimum of \$5 per student per month to provide for the payment of the principal and interest of \$2,000,000 building revenue bonds issued for the construction of twelve dormitories and a dining hall, in pursuance of Article 2063c Revised Civil Statutes. These bonds are secured solely by the net revenues of the twelve new dormitories, the old dormitories and the new dining hall. The room rent must at all times be sufficient for costs of operation and maintenance and bond service.

Due to a decrease in the enrollment and increase in costs of operation and maintenance the Board of Directors on March 10, 1945, deemed it necessary to increase the room rent to \$10 per month per student, effective June 1, 1945. On January 12, 1946 the Board of Directors reduced the room rent to \$7.50 per month per student effective February 12, 1946. This was made possible by the increased enrollment.

Present Rates
Effective September 2, 1946, the room rent was changed to \$7.50 per month per student for two students per room, \$5 per month per student for more than two students per room and \$5 per month per student for the College Annex at the Bryan Army Air Field. Since these dates did not provide sufficient revenue at the Main College to service the bonds and at the Annex to cover operating and maintenance costs they were changed, effective January 27, 1947, to \$7.50 per month per student, regardless

of the number of students per room and \$6 per month per student at the Annex.

Dining Hall

The dining hall has been charged for such items as ice, steam, heat and lights and power as far back as 1924 or longer. The rates charged at present were fixed by resolution of the Board of Directors adopted June 5, 1941, in pursuance of H. B. 338 passed by the Regular Session of the Forty-Seventh Legislature, covering issuance of \$1,220,000.00 building revenue bonds for the construction of five dormitories, a laundry building and equipment, and for expansion of the central power plant.

These bonds are secured solely by the net revenues from the five dormitories, the laundry and the central power plant and the rates charged must be sufficient to pay operating and maintenance costs and bond service. Since no State Appropriation is made for operating the dining hall, it must be self-supporting.

W. H. HOLZMANN
Comptroller

Engineering Students Plan Easter Trips

Engineering seniors at A. & M. will devote the first half of Easter week to field inspection trips, according to an announcement by the office of the dean of engineering.

Approximately 325 seniors, drawn from the departments of civil, mechanical, electrical, chemical, and aeronautical engineering, will form the various groups which will inspect industries and installations in the Houston-Galveston-Beaumont area, in the Dallas-Fort Worth region, and at Lufkin.

For the first time, the inspection schedules of the various departments have been coordinated so as to involve least loss of classroom time, it was stated.

Largest of the groups is the mechanical engineer contingent, 135 strong, which will visit the Lufkin Foundries Corporation Monday, March 31, and then be divided into two sections, one going to Houston for the next two days while the other visits Dallas and Fort Worth.

The electrical and chemical engineer parties will number approximately 70, and both will go to the Gulf area. Seven civil engineering seniors will visit Houston, while 30 aeronautical engineering students will go through the Luscombe aircraft factory near Dallas.

Purpose of the field trips, which will be emphasized in the future, is to acquaint the college student with industrial conditions which he is soon to face.

VSA Telegram To Governor, House Speaker

The following telegram was sent to Governor Beauford Jester and Speaker of the House W. O. Reed, Sunday night by W. S. "Bill" Andrews, President of the VSA:

"IN VIEW OF THE PREJUDGED OPINION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND THE PRESIDENT OF TEXAS A&M COLLEGE WE REQUEST THAT YOU EXERT YOUR INFLUENCE IN THE SELECTION OF AN UNBIASED, OPEN MINDED INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE THAT WILL WORK FOR THE BEST INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS."

Copies of the telegram were also forwarded to the press syndicate correspondents in Bryan.

Board Estimates \$250,000 Loss in Prairie View Fire

The Board of Directors estimated Saturday that it would cost \$250,000 to rebuild the main administration building at Prairie View State College. For sixty years the center of Prairie View's activities, the building was totally destroyed by fire Saturday morning at 5 a.m.

It will be necessary for the directors to ask the Legislature for an appropriation to cover the building and equipment cost, since Prairie View is a branch of A. & M. Nearby Waller and Hempstead fire departments aided the pajama-clad students fight the flames, but could do nothing more than prevent the fire from spreading to other buildings.

Dr. W. R. Banks, principal emeritus, estimated the building's value at \$50,000, but the directors gave \$250,000 as a replacement cost. The Prairie View administration building houses the offices of the president, treasurer, dean of men, social science departments, and the post office.

ROTC head, Col. W. A. Hamilton, supposed that the fire commenced in the post office, but no cause was learned.

Arrangements were already made Saturday to tear down the

burned walls to prevent a possible collapse and accident.

Discovered by a night watchman who immediately turned in the alarm, the fire was too far gone upon the arrival of the Hempstead and Waller fire departments. The volunteer fire department of the college was hampered when the first line put down burst.

Spring Recess Library Hours

According to Paul S. Ballance, librarian, the library hours for the Easter holidays will be as follows:

- April 3-4—8 to 5
- April 5—8 to 12
- April 6—Closed
- April 7—Regular