

Excerpts from Trinity College Board of Trustee Minutes (1915-1922)

June 21, 1915.

very serious. I think it proper to mention to the Trustees in this formal way the problem presented by the slow, but unmistakable, increase of the number of Jews at the College. Their presence is resented by the other students and has occasioned many protests from the alumni. There are not as many of them in College as some people seem to think, but there are enough to constitute a pretty definite problem, and if they increase the matter may easily become serious. It is my conviction that the College should do its share in educating these aliens, whatever their race or religion, who come to our shores. It is only by education that they can ever be assimilated and Americanized. At the same time we cannot afford to sacrifice any of the really higher interests of the college for the sake of a special class.

In this connection I might say that several times I have been applied to by colored boys who wished to enter Trinity College. In each case so far I have been able to avoid an issue by methods which savor somewhat, I fear, of insincerity; but which have been effective. I fancy, however, that the time will come when this matter must be faced and definitely decided.

Another matter which is of some concern is the ques-

Pres.
Flavel's
Report
to
Board
21 June
1915
p. 169

College Senate:

April 24, 1918.

To The Trustees of Trinity College,
Hartford, Conn.

Gentlemen:-

As members of the Trinity College Senate and constituting a special committee of that body, the undersigned were appointed at the request of the Faculty Committee on Discipline and Rules, to confer with the latter, as the result of undergraduate expression of feeling against the Jews. We beg to call your attention to a question which the undergraduates regard as extremely important and vital to the best interests of the College.

During the last few years the Jewish attendance at the College has increased so alarmingly that at present their numbers make up between twenty and twenty-five percent of the roll. The War is of course responsible for a larger percentage this year than last year. But that fact leads to one reason why the Gentile students find the Jews objectionable and resent their large attendance. Speaking in general terms, the Jews have not enlisted in military service while the Gentiles have.

The undergraduates appreciate the fact that the Jews maintain a high scholastic standing and are therefore worthy members of the College, from that point of view alone. We cannot, however, agree with some members of the Faculty; that as long as the students in question do come up to a satisfactory scholastic standing, they are acceptable as members of Trinity College. May we outline some of the reasons for this stand, from the undergraduate point of view?

The Jews come up to the College from the city, get all they can from the College, and give nothing to the College. They make little effort to take part in the collegiate activities. It is extremely difficult to make them support the activities financially. When such obligations as the payment of the Athletic Association dues, arise, the Jews evade them in every way possible.

Still more vital to the interests of the College, is the effect of the large number of Jews upon the efforts made to persuade men to enter Trinity. Such efforts are becoming only half-hearted. The College men are not inclined to urge their friends to enter Trinity when they cannot guarantee reasonably their associates in College. Undergraduates hesitate about showing friends around the College, when they are sure to be greeted frequently by Jews. Alumni have declined to give College catalogues to prospective men, fearing the effect upon the latter of the large number of Hebraic names listed in the catalogues.

Most of the Jews at Trinity are Russian. The undergraduates feel that a large element of that nationality in the College, cannot reflect the true spirit of the institution. It means that every class room has a Russian socialistic expression of opinion to take part in discussion.

April 27, 1918.

In short, the Gentile members of the College body feel that Trinity's position in Hartford is becoming like that of the College of the City of New York in New York.

We would be glad to furnish specific instances and proof of the above statements.

Respectfully yours

WALTER G. SMYTH
 HARMON T. BARBER
 EDWARD M. HYLAND, JR.
 EDWARD G. ARMSTRONG
 GEORGE C. GRIFFITH

VOTED: That the communication from the College Senate be laid on the table.

VOTED: That the matter of the **Hebrew attendance** at the College be referred to the President to report in full covering the period of the past ten years at the June meeting, 1918.

- **VOTED:** That the Secretary notify the College Senate that action
- has been taken by the Board on their communication.

The other matter left in my hands was a somewhat indefinite request to state the situation as regards our Hebrew attendance. I am not sure that the following tables give what the Trustees wanted, but nevertheless they are submitted. Beginning ten years ago the number of Jewish students in the college is shown in the following table, to which is annexed a statement showing what percentage of them received financial assistance while in college:

	<u>No. in college</u>	<u>% receiving aid.</u>
1907-08	5	100
1908-09	5	100
1909-10	7	100
1910-11	14	70
1911-12	9	56
1912-13	11	64
1913-14	11	82
1914-15	23	56
1915-16	26	65
1916-17	31	45
1917-18	25	28

It should be noted that each class contains men who came over from earlier classes so that the number is not at all that which would appear from adding up these figures. There have been during the past ten years seventy-seven (77) Hebrews in College, as to whom the following facts may be of interest:

Left after one term	5
Left after one year	27
Left after three years	4
Died	1
Received the degree of B.A.	5
Received the degree of B.S.	13
Now in College	22

Of these seventy-seven men, eleven, so far as is now known (May 28) are in the national service. Of honors and prizes, in which are included the valedictory, salutatory, fellowships, Holland Scholarships, other prizes, and honors at graduation, twelve have received such distinctions. Five of them have been placed on probation at one time or another and five others were dropped for deficiency in scholarship. On the whole their scholastic record is highly creditable to them. Four who gave notes to the college, aggregating \$697.97, when leaving or when graduating have not paid their notes.

Of course there is no question that the presence of Jews in the College is a source of annoyance to the Gentile students, and the fact that the Jews are much slower than the Gentiles to go into the national service has greatly increased their percentage in the college body as it now exists. Moreover their seeming reluctance to enlist does not please the rest of the College. I have notices with interest that usually there are a few of the Jews in College who, by reason of exceptional personal qualities, are cordially accepted as good fellows. The other students call them "White Jews." The problem is an exceedingly difficult one. For the last few years we have given them very few scholarships and last year scarcely any, - the 28% mentioned in the first table including for the most part men who came in earlier. They are good scholars and those who have come in lately have to pay their bills. Yet they are a definite hindrance to the growth of the College in other lines. I have an impression that the attendance might be somewhat reduced by this indirect method: Suppose the Chapel service is put later in the morning, following the first or second recitation, and that then all the students, resident and non-resident, be required to attend. I think that would probably produce some effect; though it might not, and I rather hesitate to recommend using the Chapel service for this purpose. Still I have thought of it.

26 April 1919

p. 320

The following communication from the student body was presented:

Student Movement for Americanization at Trinity.

Resolutions adopted by the Student Body to be presented through the College.

Senate to the Trustees at their April meeting 1919.

Be it resolved:

1. That German be abolished as a requirement for a degree.
2. That complete control of Athletics including absences allowed for athletic purposes, be put in the hands of the athletic advisory committee.
3. That there shall be compulsory residence in buildings owned or controlled by the college of all underclassmen, to take effect in the fall of 1919.
4. That the entire Athletic Assessment of ten dollars be put on the first term bill of each year.

Arguments.

- 1.a. Students feel Spanish is more important commercially than German.
- b. German no longer holds its place in the world as it did before it was disgraced. Same with German culture.
- c. Students ask only to make it an elective, not longer a re-

requirement, not to abolish it.

d. It is very distasteful for men who have fought Germans or who have spent the greater part of the last two years in preparing to fight them, to be compelled to learn their language against their will.

2.a. Sports are now under a graduate advisory committee which can deal only with finances and ratify schedules, but which is powerless to grant absences for athletic purposes to participants.

b. This control of cuts keeps the whole matter of sports in the hands of the cut committee and the students feel that they want more direct control.

c. Students will not abuse authority. Trust them with more authority in directing their own affairs and make more responsible men of them.

3.a. The undesirable element has increased from six to approximately 35 in 8 years while Christians have decreased at least 100 or more.

b. Compulsory residence will give opportunity to influence and Americanize all students which cannot be done to some of the students while living at their homes. We will then have no alumni over whom Trinity has had but little influence.

c. Fraternities have seen the danger to their existence if present conditions continue.

1. They will die from lack of material to maintain them unless some change is made.

2. They do not care or dare to lower their standard of membership for if that is done the national charters will be withdrawn and they will die anyway.

3. Before submitting to extinction from either cause they have united in this movement to struggle for their existence.

d. We realize the existence of a charter clause giving equal opportunity of education to all, but 90% of the undesirable element lives in Hartford, and would either be discouraged in attendance or else be under the direct influence of Trinity.

e. This rule would effect many of the desirable elements as well but the great majority of these would be glad to make extra sacrifices for the good of the college and the very existence of their fraternities.

4.a. Athletics are a recognized and necessary part of college life. The student should pay for their support just as he does for his courses.

b. The present system is inadequate because there are always some backsliders who don't contribute.

c. Other institutions are putting athletic fees on term bills.

The enclosed graph explains the student situation at Trinity

June 20, 1919.

Report of the Special Committee to the Board

Present at each meeting were the following members of the Committee:-
Dr. F.S. Luther, F.L. Wilcox and Samuel Ferguson, Trustees; Professors
Swan and Galpin, Faculty; I.K. Hamilton, J.H.K. Davis, C.A. Johnson,
Alumni; S.H. Edsall, P.C. Harding, M.R. Jackson, E.N. Sturman, and
S.W. Shepherd, Jr. Students.

Mr. Samuel Ferguson presided at both meetings.

Mr. C.A. Johnson was appointed Secretary.

The following resolutions were passed by a unanimous VOTE:-

1.
WHEREAS: The "Americanization" of our foreign population is a recognized necessity as well as a national policy, and
WHEREAS: A substantial contribution to this end must result from the associations of life in college.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That this Committee recommend to the Trustees the adoption of a rule requiring the residence in the college dormitories during their freshman and sophomore years, of all students of alien birth, and of all students whose fathers were of alien birth - such regulations to apply to students entering in September, 1919, and thereafter.

20 June 1919 Board of Fellows report, p335

3rd. The Board of Fellows concurs in the recommendations made to the Board of Trustees by the Special Committee appointed April 26, 1919, and urge their adoption and such further action as, in the judgment of your Board may be necessary to put an absolute stop to the influx to the Student Body of that particularly undesirable element which so seriously lowers the standing of the College in the eyes of that part of the Public to which it has always looked for support and which has unfortunately tended recently to the alienation of many of its Alumni.

25 Oct 1919

page 341

Professor Perkins called the attention of the Committee to sixteen cases where the rule requiring alien residence was applicable, and only three of these cases were Hebrews. It was voted that students of alien parentage residing in other towns than Hartford, may at the discretion of the Acting President and Treasurer, be exempted from the requirement of residence in College.

future. **17 June 1921, Pres. Ogilby report to Board, p. 396**

I ask for a reconsideration of the rule requiring sons of foreign born to live on the Campus. If the rule is intended to keep out the members of one single race, it is not honest and rules out too many good students who would otherwise be with us. The rule has caused bitter feeling in some quarters.

The number of students working down town has grown so large as to threaten undergraduate activities and influence scholarship. I like the idea of having a man work his way through college, but we have too much of it.

give the note of the college for the same.

18 June 1921, p. 408

VOTED: That the President be given discretion to

waive the **resident rule** in cases where it is for the welfare of the

College and report such cases to the Board.

The number of Jewish students has been a matter of interest to many of us and has concerned two or three. The percentage of Hebrews in the student body this year is lower than last year being a trifle over 9 percent against 10.55 percent last year.

The religious affiliations of the student body are as follows:

Episcopalians	35%
Roman Catholics	20%
Congregationalists	20%
Hebrews	9%
Presbyterians	5%
Baptists	3%
Scattering	8%
	<hr/>
	100%

28 Oct 1922, Executive Committee Report to Board, p. 441

At a meeting of the Committee held September 15th the President presented suggestions in regard to limiting the number of Hebrew students, which the Committee discussed without taking any action.