

WEAVER, PROFESSOR PAUL

Professor of Classics 1967-

Knew about the Univ. of Tasmania before arrival because of ORR case, and Report of Royal Commission which he recognised as being work of Professor Trendall. "Fundamental reforms" came out of Commission. The divisions were still apparent while Prof. Isles was V-C. Job of the new V-C was to restore equilibrium.

030 One of the great issues was the role of the Professorial Board, and how professional staff was to be treated. After the R.C. the Council did not override the Board on academic matters - any academic material came to the Council via the Board and was referred back to the Board.

Suggestion that Sir John Morris as Chancellor participated too much in University affairs, yet really impossible for a Chancellor to know the various University departments closely. There is a need for the V-C to make deliberate effort to visit University departments, get to know staff. Sir George Cartland saw his role as healing breach between the University and the community - concentrated on influential business members of the community - the Council side of the University.

Did he involve himself much in the (academic) affairs of the Board?

070 Under Prof. Isles there was an elected chairman of the Board; under Sir George Cartland the V-C was ex officio chairman; now Prof. Caro has decided not to be ex officio chairman of the Board. Sometimes the V-C wants to take an independent line from the Board, and being ex officio chairman can make this difficult.

Sir George liked to be in the Chair, and with control of the agenda.

There were no (reclected) occasions when disagreements surfaced.

There were very few great rows at the Board except over Karmel. The Board was divided - Weaver was deputy chairman, Prof. Wendell Smith was pro-V-C, and "basically we agreed with what Sir George was trying to do".

105 There was very strong feeling, especially in the Arts Faculty, a feeling that one institution had no right to try to swallow another, and that the University hadn't gone into the matter of Univ/TCAE relations sufficiently.

WEAVER, PROFESSOR PAUL (contd.)

- 140 Was Sir George Cartland's regime a period of growth for the University?  
The University was expanding in the boom days of late sixties and early  
seventies. "He rode this out ... successfully ... by devolving ...  
allocation of new resources ... staffing formulae ...  
but now we've lost on formula ... the right of the strong prevails ...
- 165 Significant changes in leadership under Prof. Caro, who takes a  
detailed interest in application of budgetary affairs. He is  
introducing here what is basically the Melbourne scheme of departmental  
allocation of funds. BUT "There is not enough money and the units are  
too small". Suggestion that we are heading for days of "robber barons"  
- it's a numbers game, and certain departments may not be able to  
survive under a strictly logical application of the new numbers  
formula.
- Illustration of problem of small department; the Classics Department,  
which will go down from 9 to 4 or 5 under the new formula; which would  
not enable the department to survive. "We would not be able to afford  
to offer ... Latin or Greek" ... unless a differential applies in  
funding smaller departments. Modern Languages is in same situation.  
Staff of 6 is seen as minimum.
- Unwillingness to allow special cases - modern languages and engineering  
the only two that succeeded.
- Classics is funded at the same level for first year students as  
Political Science.
- No-one on the staff will admit to believing that Classics is  
irrelevant. But the contraction of funding makes all departments  
nervous ... and looking to their own interests.
- Survival of the fittest ... and numbers are the strongest weapon.  
Do people make a point that Classics should (a) be discontinued or (b)  
must continue? Answer: neither!
- 290 The free choice by students dictates what the University will provide.

WEAVER, PROFESSOR PAUL (contd.)

- 300 What was being offered in the Classics Dept. in 1967?  
 "Tas. was about 15 years ahead of anyone else in developing majors without languages" - the Ancient Civilizations course, initiated by John Elliott. An immensely popular course, rather similar to A.H. Macdonald's Ancient History course at Sydney University. The languages themselves were basically a service course for ancient and classical studies. The Univ. of Tas. was about the first to make this emphasis on studies rather than language and literature. Ancient History was the strongest element (4 out of 9 staff). Literature was an important but subsiding interest. The courses have been basically historical, with a very strong emphasis on art. Prof. Elliot and Mr R. Hood and G. Hetherington all particularly interested in Art - (and Near East also).
- 370 Greek Philosophy has now been handed back to the Philosophy Dept. - with reluctance. (As from 1980).
- 390 This "rationalising" is rather gloomy.
- 395 The quality of students:  
 Standards of entry have been eroded and the literary debate is real - this certainly true for those doing Ancient Civilizations course. First-class linguists keep on cropping up but more rarely now they cannot do Latin or Greek satisfactorily at school. Hence specialising, "international" level is much more difficult. Marcus Wilson 1st class Hons in languages and literature - an outstanding student. About one 1st class Honours person per year. Education Dept. studentships have often enabled good students to pursue classics courses. People do Classics for non-career purposes.
- 480 No resurgence of interest in Classics seen at present. Sociology courses have had impact on Classics numbers. Perceives Sociology as a postgraduate study rather than undergraduate. Seen as easy and relevant by students, but "not a substitute for the other basic disciplines ... you're getting the cart before the horse."

WEAVER, PROFESSOR PAUL (contd.)

The humanities are under pressure - History Dept. is also suffering from this.

"We do offer an introduction to all the basic humanities in one package, including Art.

530 General view of the University of Tasmania:

"Small can be beautiful. We hope against hope that the Univ. of Tas. will provide areas of excellence". "We cannot compete ... in research, ... but centres of excellence is something that would work to the advantage of this University in a few areas."

There are far too many tertiary institutions ... it will have to develop this way ...

You must attract postgraduate students from outside this state.

or "we'll be left basically as a teaching university ... providing raw material for postgraduates (in other centres of excellence e.g. Sydney or Melbourne).

625 There will be a scramble for recognition of departments as specialised first rate departments. "It is basically science that will survive in this University".

END.

Professor Weaver holds files on staffing formulae (Cartland) and Karmel - Cosgrove reports.