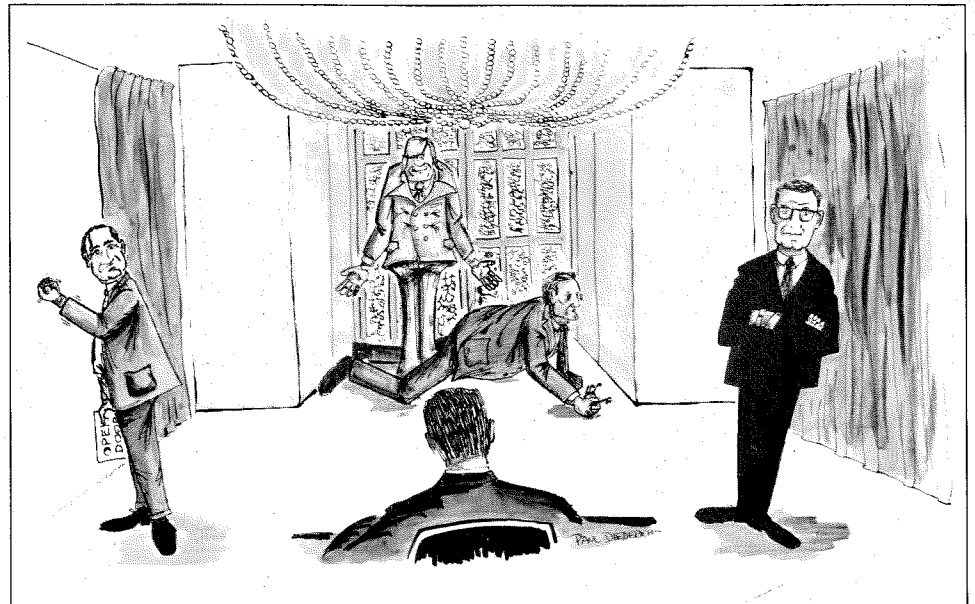


The Life in a Day with the Faculty Board

Ever wonder what goes on in higher academic circles? An exclusive inside report by C. J. Pings.



The first meeting of the Faculty Board for the 1971-72 academic year was called to order by the Chairman of the Faculty, GEORGE W. HOUSNER, in the Millikan Board Room at 3:05 p.m. on Monday, October 8, 1971. The call to order was delayed slightly while the Secretary of the Faculty, PROFESSOR DONALD HUDSON, moved to the back of the room to close the main doors to the Board Room. Present were various elected and ex-officio members and guests, including undergraduate and graduate student representatives and several faculty members having specific items on the agenda.

After approval of the minutes of the meeting of May 3, 1971, the chairman called on the president and then the provost for various announcements, which took perhaps 25 minutes in view of the accumulation of business over the summer months. The chairman then announced the appointment of several individuals to the Graduate Studies Committee, and separately the membership of the newly approved Student Housing Committee.

At this point the student body president, STEVEN WATKINS, quietly arose and left his place at the table.

HOUSNER: "I have one last announcement. Since two members of the Faculty Board, Professors Gell-Mann and Pine, will be away this year I should designate replacements."

WATKINS: *(returning to the middle of the room)* "Can anybody tell me how I can get out of here?"

There is a somewhat nervous silence while several people shuffle papers, and finally PROVOST CHRISTY replies curiously:

"Do I understand that you no longer wish to attend Faculty Board meetings?"

WATKINS: "No, I just want to get out of the room."

CHRISTY: *(relieved)* "Oh. That door is rather heavy; just give it a good push."

WATKINS: "I did. It's locked. And there's no handle on the inside."

CHRISTY: "There's a telephone in the cloakroom. You might call the librarian and ask him to have the door opened from the outside."

HOUSNER: "Perhaps we can get along with our business. As I said, in view of the absence from the campus this year of Professors Pine and Gell-Mann—"

WATKINS: *(returning to the room)* "The cloakroom is locked."

PROVOST CHRISTY and PROFESSOR INGERSOLL arise and accompany WATKINS to the back of the room. They push briefly and impotently at the door.

HOUSNER: "Perhaps while this is going on we can continue. I was suggesting again—"

The attending members are less than fully attentive as they all watch CHRISTY attack the cloakroom. The door is finished beautifully flush with the paneling of the entry hallway, and there is no protruding handle. However, there is a lock some 18 inches from the floor. CHRISTY is now down on his knees trying all the keys at a provost's disposal.

HOUSNER: "Perhaps while this is going on we can continue."

He is interrupted by CHRISTY returning to his seat, shaking his head in defeat. PROFESSOR ROBERT HUTTENBACK leaps to his feet.

HUTTENBACK: "I'll get us out of here."

He goes to the north window, shoves aside the drape, and begins pounding on the window. A student passes by. HUTTENBACK pounds more loudly, gets the student's attention, then waves his arms frantically. The student smiles broadly, waves back, and proceeds on up the stairs to the Millikan Library.

HUTTENBACK: "We're really trapped. They can't even hear us on the outside."

HOUSNER: "Perhaps we can proceed."

HUTTENBACK: "Yes, yes. Go ahead with the meeting. I'll get somebody's attention."

HOUSNER: "In view of the vacancies—"

He is interrupted by HUTTENBACK firmly pounding with both fists on the window as a group of three Oriental students passes by. They stop and stare, fascinated, at the Dean of Students and Acting Chairman of the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences pounding wildly on the window, with several other faculty members standing behind him.

HUTTENBACK: (*shouting in a loud voice*) "We're locked in. Get somebody to open the door."

He points in the direction of the locked back door. As he shouts louder—still unheard on the outside—and points more forcefully, the students nervously edge away and finally turn their backs on the whole proceedings and stride quickly out of sight.

HUTTENBACK: "They simply can't hear us. We need a sign."

VICE PROVOST PINGS turns over his copy of the agenda and scrawls on the back side in large letters: "OPEN DOOR." He hands this to HUTTENBACK, who holds it up to the window and waits expectantly for another passerby.

HOUSNER: "While we are waiting—" but he is interrupted.

PROFESSOR BERGMAN: (*rather nervously*) "Is it true there is no fire exit in this room?"

PRESIDENT HAROLD BROWN: "No . . . I guess . . . there is not. If we were really in trouble, I suppose we could throw a chair through the window and wade out through the moat."

HUTTENBACK starts pounding again as another group of three students, again principally from the Far East, comes into view.

HUTTENBACK shouts, pounds on the window, and points to the sign. The students stop, try in vain to hear HUTTENBACK, and with some interest look at the sign. They talk to each other, smile knowingly, and walk off, perhaps feeling that HUTTENBACK, the distinguished professor of history, is belatedly advocating a new foreign trade policy for the United States.

HUTTENBACK: "We'll have to put more information on the sign."

PROFESSOR SHAIR writes out a more detailed message which he hands to HUTTENBACK, who now holds both signs in the window and waits, only briefly, until an undergraduate emerging from the library passes by. HUTTENBACK pounds vigorously. Without really breaking his pace, the student nervously looks the situation over out of the corner of one eye, elects for non-involvement, and keeps moving with a determined step.

HUTTENBACK: "@#~/%&!"

PRESIDENT HAROLD BROWN: "Perhaps he has gone to tell other students, and they will make demands for our release."

HUTTENBACK: "Ah! I think I have somebody this time."

He begins to gesture and pound at two passing employees of Physical Plant. They respond quickly to the pounding, gesturing, and the sign, and move on—can it be?—in the direction of solving the problem.

HOUSNER: "I suspect that our problem will shortly be solved now and perhaps we can return—"

It is to no avail, as three or four board members arise and stand expectantly on the inside of the Board Room doors, and a somewhat excited random dialogue goes on in the background.

VOICES: "Well, even *they* may not be able to get us out immediately. The lock is some sort of an electronic device."

"Well, at least it wasn't the trustees that were locked in."

"Nice image for an engineering faculty, I must say!"

There is a babble of excitement at the door and then a sigh of relief from everybody in the room, as one side of the massive door swings open. Several step outside to inspect the door from the exterior, but it slowly starts to swing closed again. The resulting gasp in unison from everyone in the room causes somebody to grab the closing door, open it all the way, and firmly latch it in an open position.

WATKINS and several faculty members leave.

HOUSNER: "Gentlemen, it will come as no surprise to you that I am filling the Pine and Gell-Mann vacancies on the Faculty Board by the appointment of Professors Leverett Davis and James Gunn to serve for this year. Now that the announcements are out of the way, perhaps we can move to the next item of business on the agenda."