

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO
OFFICE OF THE FACULTY REPRESENTATIVE

Report #5

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE RIO PIEDRAS UNIVERSITY FACULTY

Colleagues:

At the meetings held on June 14 and 15, the University Board of Río Piedras studied the 1957-58 budget draft submitted by the Chancellor and the deans. The draft involves a total expenditure of \$18,356,554 for the University and all its dependencies, or \$1,984,986 more than the present budget. Only the program of expenditures for the Central Administration and the Río Piedras faculties was considered and approved—with amendments—at the meeting. These expenditures amount to nearly nine million dollars.

As submitted to us, the budget consisted of a multigraphed 144-page book entitled 1957-58 Budget; an accompanying pamphlet on new positions, promotions, salary increases, etc., another 45-page pamphlet on positions and their present incumbents, and a Budget Message from the Chancellor, addressed to the Superior Educational Council and dated June 12, 1957. All this material reached us two days before the meeting.

As it is customary in cases like this, frequent debates of a general nature took place; but they hardly affected the original proposals. A considerable part of the discussion revolved around particular cases and individuals and remained off the record.

My intervening in the discussion was limited to stating matters of principle. These proposals did not meet with any success. Among the questions I raised were the very limited intervention of the faculties proper in drafting the budget (cf. Act of the University of Puerto Rico, section 11) and the fact that instead of the customary—soundly customary—itemized appropriations, lump sums appeared in the draft, which made difficult its analysis, its detailed and thoughtful examination, and prevented our voting in an intelligent manner. A budget such as that of the Faculty of Humanities, involving an expenditure of \$557,260, was condensed into two pages (pp. 37 and 38 of the Budget). Another budget, that of the Faculty of General Studies, which involves a disbursement of \$727,437, was reduced to less than one-half of a page (p. 25). On the other hand, the salary of each teacher or employee appeared in the Exhibit on positions and incumbents—but not the present salary, which prevented a clear and rapid comparison between what is in force and what is proposed by the Administration of the University.

The question of the general salary increase for the faculty was hardly discussed during these meetings. The University Boards of Río Piedras and Mayagüez had already had a joint meeting (on May 22) to discuss this matter. At the beginning of the said meeting, the undersigned submitted a memorandum establishing the need for a general salary increase as a partial compensation for the high cost of living and proposing a specific plan to implement the increase. The Chancellor recommended separate payment of summer session compensation from and after the summer of 1958, and a postponement of the consideration of the general salary increase; but several members of both

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Boards spoke in favor of an immediate readjustment. Finally, in view of the almost unanimous agreement, it was decided to recommend the increase now and to give priority to the summer session payments when the 1958-59 budget came up for discussion. Several plans to implement the increase were discarded, among them the plan proposed by the Faculty Representative. As proposed by the Administration, it was decided to do so by classes, and provisional amounts were fixed, subject to subsequent revision. This was the state of affairs at the end of May. At the June 14 meeting of our University Board, these amounts were ratified, as recommended by the Chancellor. Instructors would receive an additional monthly sum of \$25; Assistant Professors \$35; Associate Professors \$45; and Professors \$60. The increase will include all regular teachers, whether their salaries are within or above the salary scale. It does not apply to visiting or part-time teachers. It does not apply to part-time lecturers, to those whose salary was fixed by contract between the lecturer and the University, or to teachers who have new contracts.

Contrary to my opinion, it was decided to make the readjustment effective on August 15, instead of on July 1, which is the usual procedure. This postponement means a saving of \$50,000 for the University, in a budget of more than \$18,000,000. It was stated that the total appropriation for salary increases for the teaching personnel of Río Piedras and Mayagüez should not exceed \$300,000.

On the other hand, salary increases for the administrative personnel shall become effective on July 1, as far as I know.

I abstained from voting on two of the questions: 1) approval of salary increases for several administrative officers—because the increases did not seem regular or systematic to me, inasmuch as they fluctuated between \$60 and \$1,200 per annum (page 21 of Exhibit #1); 2) granting of a series of special increases, in addition to the general salary increase, to some teachers of the faculties of General Studies, Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, etc. It did not seem fair to me that special concessions should be made when the effectiveness of the general increase had been postponed for reasons of economy.

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It is unnecessary to remind you of the fact that in these budgetary matters the decisions of the Board are not final, and that according to law they must be referred to the Superior Educational Council. It is the Council that reviews, ratifies, or revokes these decisions in the last instance.

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This report, like the preceding ones, is based on actual facts that are true and verifiable.

June 20, 1957

(signed:) Rubén del Rosario