

June 7, 1962

The Investigating Committee has been looking into several areas of serious complaints concerning the University of South Florida and certain staff members connected therewith.

It has been continuously engaged in this undertaking since April 10, 1962, and had received some of these complaints prior thereto. It has taken the testimony of many witnesses and has interviewed many others.

In conducting this investigation, it has been the purpose of the committee to protect the institution and innocent people from being subjected to false or unfounded charges. It is for this reason alone that we have conducted the investigation in executive session instead of holding public hearings. Unfortunately, and through no fault of the committee, the charge has been publicly made and reported in the press that the University of South Florida was a "campus of evil." In addition, accompanying this charge was a public report of some of the general areas of the investigation.

The Committee has made a "gentleman's agreement" with the Board of Control, the duly authorized body to administer the University of South Florida, under which it has agreed to conduct this investigation in executive session and make available to the Board the testimony gathered so that the Board may act where the evidence justifies action. The Committee expects to complete the taking of testimony this week. It will have looked into all the charges made known to it when the taking of testimony is complete. The testimony and the Committee's comments thereon will be turned over to the Board of Control as soon as it is transcribed.

It would not be proper, under the Committee's agreement with the Board of Control, for the Committee to comment specifically on its findings before the Board of Control had the opportunity to act.

The Committee feels constrained, however, to say that it would not have been engaged in this investigation if there were no evidence to justify the investigation. It has been reported in this morning's press that the Chairman of the Committee was quoted at a news conference on June 6, 1962, as saying the Committee had found "not much wrong" at the University of South Florida. The press has placed much emphasis on the above quote. In making this statement, the Chairman was speaking in reference to the overall charge that the University of South Florida was a "campus of evil." This statement was not intended and should not be taken to mean that the evidence does not disclose some serious and substantial matters which in the ~~xxxxxxx~~ opinion of the Committee requires and demands corrective action by the Board of Control and the University Administration.

It is the strong feeling of the Committee that there are such areas which require such action, but the Committee is definitely of the opinion that the charge that the University of South Florida is a "campus of evil" cannot be sustained by the evidence.

This ~~xxx~~ statement is issued in hope it will clarify the policies of the Committee in conducting this investigation and the general situation at the University of South Florida.

Charley E. Johns
~~xxxxxx~~ Chairman, Florida
Legislative Investigation
Committee