

A FOURTH STATE UNIVERSITY

Another interesting situation developed with Bronson C. Harris, affectionately known as "Curley". Curley Harris was the alumni director for the University of Washington and their chief lobbyist at the Legislature and the handyman for the President of the University of Washington for many years.

I met him at a meeting in Seattle where I was speaking and, after that, much to my amazement, every time I spoke in Seattle, somehow or other, Curley Harris always showed up. Afterwards, we usually had a cup of coffee and he would have a libation; and we became very close and warm friends.

One time, after I conducted the Easter sunrise service at Seward Park in Seattle, he said to me, "Frank, I want to take you to breakfast because I want to talk to you." We had breakfast at the hotel just off the campus at the University of Washington and as we relaxed over a second cup of coffee, he said, "I want to ask you to do a devious, political task with me. The University of Washington needs a much larger allocation of state funds for its programs. As I thought about it the other day, it occurred to me that if a fourth school of higher education was promoted in the state of Washington by the President of the University of Washington and by you as President of the Washington Friends of Higher Education the idea would snowball and the Legislature would wake up and realize that there shouldn't be a fourth university but that the University of Washington

should receive more money. With that climate, we should be able to get a considerable increase in allocation of funds from the Legislature than we do now.

We discussed this at some length and every time we saw each other after that, we discussed it again. It got to be kind of a fun thing because it was sort of an intrigue in which we felt if we were able to get the idea afloat it would be beneficial to the University of Washington and it would bring about the results that Curley wanted.

He talked to President Odegard at the University of Washington and he was very much in favor of it; not that he was in on the intrigue but he felt that he would be crowded with forty or fifty thousand students if the enrollment kept increasing as it appeared it would, so a fourth school would allow them to have more leeway and a higher degree of selectivity. I talked about it as President of Washington Friends, not nearly with as much zest as Curley Harris did but with the idea that it would alleviate the educational problem in the State.

The idea was bandied about; Dr. Odegard spoke of it quite often; one or two legislators thought it would be fine, and much to our amazement, when it actually got before the Legislature, everybody wanted to be on the bandwagon and instead of them deciding to give the University of Washington more money, and particularly when President Odegard said he was going to have to limit the enrollment, no matter how much money they gave the University, all of a sudden it jelled and Evergreen College was started!

It was really started on a backlash from the plans of Curley Harris

to enhance the program of the University of Washington. It is interesting to remember this as we watch the development of Evergreen College and its difficulties, particularly in light of the fact that student bodies are diminishing rather than growing, and to speculate on whether or not it really was a wise plan to start it. I never did think it was and I don't think it is today, and I believe that sooner or later Evergreen College will be meshed into the capitol campus for state offices.

This is an interesting sidelight in the history of education in the State of Washington. While I was a part of the intrigue, at the same time, I never really believed that it would react in the establishment of a fourth institution.

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