

University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Faculty Council
Thursday, February 21, 2008
12:30 P.M. Rowe Hall
C.D. (Dick) Spangler, Jr. comments

I want to thank Professor Harris for responding to my request that President Friday and I be invited to your Faculty Council. It is most unusual for President Friday and me to do as we do today. We are here because of our high respect for this University and because we fear that football would damage your University's academic position. Chancellor, it is good to see you again.

I was thinking as I sat here, how much I enjoyed my 11 years working for the University. Being President of a good University is a good job, but it always seemed to me that you, the Faculty, had the best part because you are always among bright people - faculty and students, teaching and doing research at a great University.

This University is here because of the early efforts of one person - Miss Bonnie Cone. I knew Bonnie most of my life because we were members of the same church, the Myers Park Baptist Church. Miss Cone was the first woman Chair of our Board of Deacons. Those Baptist

deacons agreed unanimously on one thing only, and that was, there would be no unanimity on anything. That was good training for her leadership of an academic institution. Relatively speaking, those deacons made this faculty appear to be together all the time, on everything.

Being comfortable with controversy is a convenient condition for all of us in the academic world.

I remember when Bonnie Cone put together a few mismatched desks and chairs in the basement of Central High School on Elizabeth Avenue and called it Charlotte College. Bonnie had a vision and a voice. You are the vision she had for this University.

She was gentle and determined.

She put together a critical mass of support and went to see President Friday. She talked to him about her vision for this University and President Friday brought her vision into reality by recommending to his Board of Governors that The University of North Carolina at Charlotte be built. These buildings and the disciplines you teach are the result of Bill Friday's hard work and leadership.

Both President Friday and I would rather be talking to you today about academic matters and what you are doing in your classrooms, but we are here to talk about football.

As I think about it, however, we are here to talk about academic matters because the football committee's recommendations will divert resources away from academic affairs, away from what you do. There is a limited amount of available resources, both effort and money. The academic side of this University deserves these efforts and money not football.

You have copies of a recent Charlotte Observer article written by Karen Cimino. I quote from that article what the Chairman of the Football Committee said, Quote "We believe this university will have a difficult time reaching its full potential without a football program". End Quote. That statement is seriously wrong and as a member of this University community, I am offended by it.

Another statement in Reporter Cimino's article has the Chair of the Football Committee saying, quote, "... football could help draw better faculty . . ." end quote. I wonder what research supports that thesis. This could be big news for MIT.

President Friday and I know this Faculty a lot better than the Football Committee does. In the room here are two people I would like to introduce. Dr. Raymond Dawson and Dr. Roy Carroll; both tenured faculty members. They were the Senior Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs for President Friday and me. If you received your tenure between 1956 and 1997, President Friday or I recommended you. Your credentials during most of that time were brought to us by Dr. Dawson or Dr. Carroll who knew of your qualifications. President Friday and I know of your excellent credentials. To say that we would have better faculty here if we had had football is ample evidence that something is wrong, but it is not the faculty.

Now, I realize I am being too hard on the Football Committee. I do know the men on that committee, or most of them, and those men are honorable men. They are all honorable men. I suspect their report should not use the argument that football will draw better faculty to this campus.

I will say more later about university financing, but let me now introduce President Friday.

President Friday in addition to leading the University of North Carolina for 30 years, has also been Chairman of the Knight Commission on Inter Collegiate Athletics and has unique perspectives about these matters. The most important person in higher education, in North Carolina, in the 20th century, was President Friday. I inherited what he built and it is an awesome combination of 16 universities. I have three heroes - Thomas Jefferson, President Friday, and an archaeologist, Heinrich Schlieman. It is sort of unusual having a hero who is also a friend, but that is my great good fortune. --

President Friday