

PROJECT SYCAMORE

ALUMNI PRESERVING NOTRE DAME'S CATHOLIC IDENTITY

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November 3, 2007

Rev. John I. Jenkins, CSC
President
University of Notre Dame
Main Building
Notre Dame, Indiana 46556

Dear Father Jenkins:

I write again on behalf of the officers and directors of Project Sycamore with respect to the faculty hiring issue. We believe sufficient time has elapsed since our letter to you of September 27, 2007, for us to conclude that we should not expect a response. We regret that we will not have the benefit of your views before publicly stating ours, but we think we should not delay any longer.

In sum, this is how we view the matter:

First, we infer that Father Sullivan correctly described the new hiring policy as one in which the goal is to hire annually a majority of Catholics overall. That is, anything over fifty percent will serve.

Second, we believe it demonstrable that this goal will fall far short of meeting the Mission Statement requirement of a Catholic faculty majority. Because of the heavy concentration of Catholics among retirees, it is obvious that in the short term a hiring rate just above 50% will not stem the decline in Catholic faculty. And our long-term projections show that, even in the unlikely event that the goal is consistently met, Catholics would soon become a dwindling minority and would not regain majority status within the 67-year time frame of our calculations. That is, for all practical purposes Catholics would never again be a majority.

Our projections are based upon information given to us by the University and available from other sources relating to such factors as Catholics retiring, the relationship between retirements and attrition for other reasons, the composition of the attrition cohort, and the growth rate. (We greatly regret that the University has decided to withhold data that would show the results of last year's hiring on the proportion of the

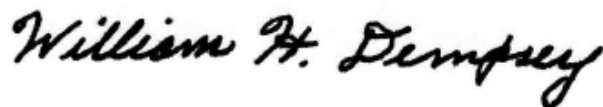
faculty that is Catholic.) We have offered to discuss with your staff our methodology and assumptions in light of whatever additional data the University may have, but this is evidently not agreeable. In any case, the essential soundness of our projections is confirmed by their correspondence with the actual Arts & Letters experience over the seven years ending in 2003-04. During that period, Catholics were hired at a rate of between 50% and 55% while Catholic representation nevertheless declined on average one percent a year. Any set of assumptions mirroring those results produces the long-term effects we have described.

Third, since the Mission Statement declares that the University's Catholic identity "depends upon" the "continuing presence" of a "predominant number" of Catholics on the faculty – a term that all agree means a majority – the new policy will predictably undermine the school's Catholic identity and lead in time to a substantially secularized institution.

Finally, while we cannot know why this goal, rather than one calculated to maintain Catholic identity, has been chosen, the most likely reason seems to us to be a desire to avert faculty opposition. The cost of preserving an authentically Catholic university might be a degree of faculty resentment and unrest. But the cost of faculty pacification -- the weakening and ultimate death of the Catholic soul of the University -- will be infinitely greater.

We are convinced that the point of no return is upon the University and that the choice that is made now will set the University's final course. We hope you will reexamine the likely consequences of the new hiring policy and modify it to the extent necessary to insure compliance with the Mission Statement. We remain prepared to discuss with your staff our projections and all relevant data.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William H. Dempsey". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

William H. Dempsey
President