

EDITORIAL

PART-TIME FACULTY

At its 1980 convention, the College Theology Society approved a resolution urging justice in the employment and use of part-time faculty in higher education. This was a timely resolution that demonstrated the Society's traditional sensitivity to questions of justice in academe.

The increase in the use of part-time faculty in higher education is apparent to all. For example, between 1972 and 1977, the rate of faculty growth was 50 per cent for part-time and 9 per cent for full-time staff. Part-time faculty now comprise 32 per cent of the total teaching force in higher education. Titles of recent articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* give some indication of the problems that have accompanied this development: "The Exploitation of Part-time Professors" (5/14/79); "The Overuse of Part-Time Faculty Members" (3/10/80).

Now there has appeared a very helpful and rather comprehensive report on "The Status of Part-Time Faculty" in *Academe* (February-March 1981, pp. 29-39), the *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*. One group of part-timers that is of particular concern to the AAUP's committee is, I believe, a group that CTS members also had in mind in 1980. These are that 30 per cent of the part-time faculty who would prefer full-time positions. They resemble full-time faculty in their commitment, in the duties they perform, and in their academic qualifications. They are also, states the AAUP report, the group "most susceptible to exploitation." They teach part-time—sometimes simultaneously at several institutions—simply because they cannot get full-time positions. "They are frequently paid a small per-course remuneration and have only those fringe benefits mandated by law."

In 1973, the Commission on Academic Tenure in Higher Education (jointly sponsored by AAUP and the Association of American Colleges) recommended that "institutions consider modifying their tenure arrangements in order to permit part-time faculty service under appropriate conditions to be credited towards the award of tenure, and to permit tenure positions to be held by faculty members who for family or other appropriate reasons cannot serve on a full-time basis." American, Colgate, Columbia, Cornell, Princeton, Rutgers, Stanford, Wesleyan, UCLA and Wisconsin are among the institutions known to have developed policies allowing tenure for part-timers. The AAUP report recognizes that distinctions need to be made regarding the varieties of part-time service, and recommends that colleges and universities consider creating a class of regular part-time faculty who would have the opportunity to achieve tenure. The AAUP "stands ready to provide

guidance to institutions wishing to develop such policies” (phone 1-202-466-8050). Commensurate pay scales and fringe benefit packages, as well as tenure, are mentioned in both the CTS resolution and the AAUP report.

The central thrust of the brief CTS resolution and the lengthier AAUP report converge remarkably, with the AAUP report making very helpful comments regarding the varieties of part-time service and the need to make appropriate distinctions. Such distinctions will not always be easy to make, though neither will they all be difficult. Academic administrators may have a tendency not to want to get into the time and trouble of processes which will make these distinctions. It will be tragic, however, if justice is denied significant numbers of part-timers because it is too much trouble to deal adequately with this issue. Both the College Theology Society and the American Association of University Professors are urging us on to greater justice in this matter. Such greater justice is also ultimately to the benefit of the academic enterprise as a whole.

—RODGER VAN ALLEN