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Mr. Frederick B. Wilcox

February 6, 1952

MADISON 3, WISCONSIN



February 6, 1952

As I was sitting across from Mr. Hammersley, I observed two fellows making quite a bit of noise and seemingly under the influence of drink. They were talking until they had come close then turned away. They straightened up and I observed something under his arm. He found a cushion. He said he took it from the Hasty Tasty for a joke. I asked for his fee card and took the cushion. I told him we needed it as evidence. I told him to report you between 7 and 8 January 26, 1952 and you would determine disposition of his case. I stopped at the Hasty Tasty and found a cushion.

Student Personnel Office

Mr. Frederick B. Wilcox
Supervisor of Operations
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin

Re: Receipt of Reports of Crime

Dear Sir:

On January 31 this office received a letter from you in which you stated: "Submitted herewith are two reports of investigations by University of Wisconsin police. I assume that if more information is required you will deal directly with Mr. Hammersley and the reporting officers." and enclosed two reports.

One is under date of January 24, 1952 by Officer Hammersley and reports that:

The first case reported is a case of grand larceny and the person "On January 24, 1952 about noon Don Schroeder, his address 117 Bierman House, reported someone stole a tire and wheel from his 1941 Chevrolet parked in Tripp Parking Lot. The valuation was about \$25.00 or \$30.00. On January 25, 1952 as Officer Grary was investigating the case he noticed a car parked in the Jones Lot with two extra wheels. The car belonged to Walter E. Barthel, 207 Richardson House. He picked up Mr. Barthel and brought him into the office where he admitted that he had a flat tire on January 21, 1952 and that he and a couple of other boys took the tire and wheel from Mr. Schroeder's automobile and put it on his. On January 26, 1952 Mr. Barthel appeared at my office where he again admitted taking the tire and wheel from Mr. Schroeder's car. He realizes that he has committed the crime of Larceny and has offered to make restitution. He is a graduating senior and is therefore no longer a student.

"The tire and wheel have been returned to Mr. Schroeder."

J. R. Hammersley

The absurdity of waiting an entire week to report a case of grand larceny to this office would appear to be a thinly

The second one is dated January 25, 1952 by Officer Gerald Reis and contains the following information:

February 6, 1952

disgraced "RUSSELL A. KNIGHT 406 Villan House" on decisions that should be made at the police level at the University. In other words "As I was sitting across from Ag. Engineering Building police I observed two fellows making quite a bit of noise and seemingly under the influence of drink. They were coming north. I waited until they had come close then turned the spotlight on them. They straightened up and I observed this fellow carrying something under his arm. Got out to investigate and found a cushion. He said he took it from the Hasty Tasty for a joke. I asked for his fee card and took the cushion, he wanted to take it back but I told him we needed it as evidence. I told him to report to you between 7 and 8 January 26, 1952 and you would determine disposition of his case. I stopped at the Hasty Tasty and told them the pad would be taken to your office and you would either return it or call them to pick it up. He informed me that since the first semester began he has lost nearly 1200 glasses and hopes something will be done to stop it. at everyone's suggestion would look absurd in attempting to bring either one of these cases to the attention of the court a week after they occurred. In addition, I understood the principal defendant, Walter E. Barthel, graduated at the end of last semester and had left the state before his case. The first case reported is a case of grand larceny and the person should have been immediately apprehended upon his admission of guilt to the officer and put in jail. The next morning the officer should have reported the case to this office and have been prepared to sign a complaint so that a warrant could have been issued and an arraignment had. University community.

From the facts of the second case there should at least have been a charge of disorderly conduct lodged although the facts seem to have warranted a larceny charge which could have been made with the assistance of the arresting officer the following morning.

The manner in which these cases were handled hardly measures up to what might even be remotely considered efficient police practice. It would further appear that the series of conferences which were held between this office and University officials were of no value whatsoever. It would further seem to bear out the statement made by Mr. Day of my office to Mr. Little in your presence that, if the University intends to operate its own police force on anything approaching a reasonably efficient basis, decisions on criminal matters should not be left to people devoid of legal or police experience as background.

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February 6, 1952

disguised attempt to pass the buck to this office on decisions that should be made at the police level at the University. In other words, if the University is desirous of maintaining its own police force, it should be operated as a police force.

It was my understanding as a result of our previous conferences that, when cases of larceny and other similar crimes were brought to the attention of the officers, they should be handled in the same manner that the Madison Police Department and the Sheriff's Department handle cases, and that in situations such as the above, the officer would make his arrest and then the following day take up the matter with this office with the issuance of a complaint and warrant. It is my urgent suggestion that somebody be placed in charge of the University police that has some idea of what law enforcement is all about. The ineptness of the present system is apparent from the manner in which the foregoing cases were handled.

It is my opinion that everyone concerned would look absurd in attempting to bring either one of these cases to the attention of the court a week after they were discovered. In addition, I understand the principal defendant, Walter E. Barthel, graduated at the end of last semester and had left the state before his case was even brought to our attention.

For the present I am not releasing this letter to the press in the hopes that a system can be worked out in the immediate future for a police system at the University capable of handling law enforcement among over 10,000 people in the University community. This procedure is based on the request of the Advisory Committee on University Police and approved by President Fred.

Very truly yours,

Richard W. Hardwell
District Attorney

AP:11
RWB/rf President E. B. Fred
Vice President A. W. Peterson
c.c. - Mr. E. B. Fred, President
Mr. Kenneth Little, Vice President
Mr. Bruce Weatherly, Chief of Police