

To be learned is good if you pay your tithing

THE MONITORING OF BYU FACULTY TITHING PAYMENTS 1957–1963

By Gary James Bergera

SHORTLY AFTER HIS APPOINTMENT IN 1951 AS president of the LDS Church's educational flagship, Brigham Young University, Ernest L. Wilkinson (1899–1978) began scrutinizing his faculty's compliance to LDS teachings.¹ For a time, his attention focused especially on tithing contributions. All practicing Church members are expected to pay to their local congregations at least one-tenth of their annual income, though how this is defined and how faithfully members adhere to this expectation are considered personal matters between members and their local religious leader(s).² Members' church status is determined, in part, by their meeting their tithing obligations. Wilkinson himself paid his own tithing, and he expected nothing less from his faculty.

Wilkinson also understood that if he hoped to secure Church funding for BYU, the school's board of trustees, all members of the Church's governing hierarchy, might respond less positively if faculty were found to be less than full tithepayers. In fact, following the precedent of past practices at the LDS school, Wilkinson decided to use an individual's tithing history to help determine raises, promotions, and even continuing employment. However, some Church leaders and faculty members believed that Wilkinson's actions intruded into a very private matter, effectively undermining a member's relationship with his or her local Church leaders. Securing compliance proved to be challenging, as both Wilkinson and LDS authorities struggled to strike a balance between privacy and Wilkinson's desire to know.

GARY JAMES BERGERA is the managing director of the Smith-Pettit Foundation. From 1985 to 2000, he was Director of Publishing at Signature Books; from 1992 to 1998, he was Managing Editor of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*.

“YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED TO RETAIN
PERMANENTLY ON YOUR STAFF NON-TITHEPAYERS”

WILKINSON WAS NOT the first BYU administrator to address the issue of faculty tithing. Early 1910s attempts to automatically deduct tithing from BYU salaries were scuttled in the face of a chorus of faculty complaints. Young physics instructor Harvey Fletcher (1884–1981) “exploded” at the news, telling administrators “in no uncertain terms” that “under these conditions the tithing was not a donation, it was a tax.”³ While the automatic salary deduction was abandoned, LDS officials remained concerned and by mid-1915 had compiled a list of sixty-seven faculty members and the tithing each had paid.⁴ Of the sixty-seven, thirty-one (46 percent) had not paid a full tithe.⁵

By 1929, the payment of a full tithe had become virtually *de rigueur* for all Church-employed school teachers. “Those who cannot conscientiously do these things,” wrote LDS Commissioner of Education (and later apostle) Joseph E. Merrill (1868–1952), “should not, we believe, be encouraged to remain in the employ of the Church school system.”⁶ Two years later, at Merrill's urging, BYU President Franklin S. Harris (1884–1960) convened a special faculty meeting to discuss loyalty to the Church, including the payment of tithing. Enclosed with Merrill's request was a summary the Church's Presiding Bishop's office had provided of the tithing records of all faculty for the previous year. Of the 102 faculty identified, slightly more than half had paid a full tithing, 37 percent had paid a partial tithing, and 8 percent had paid no tithing. “You are not expected to retain permanently on your staff non-tithepayers,” Merrill subsequently reminded Harris.⁷

Despite repeated exhortations, 1934 figures reveal that, compared to 1931, the number of faculty paying a full tithing had actually decreased 19 percent, the number

paying a partial tithing had increased 2 percent, and the number paying no tithing had risen 17 percent.⁸ While this decline may have been due largely to the effects of the Great Depression, LDS leaders were still “dumbfounded” at what they saw as blatant disobedience. “As far as I am concerned,” Church President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945) insisted, “the Church is paying these people. If they haven’t enough loyalty to the Church to do their duty and pay their tithing, I want it recorded here and now that I want other teachers there.”⁹

Six years later, the situation had not improved. When, in 1940, LDS officials decided that salary increases were to be granted only to full tithe-payers, BYU’s acting president reported that “practically all members whom we intended to give a small increase cannot qualify under this new requirement.”¹⁰ Dismayed, the First Presidency responded bluntly: “No person who has not paid a full tenth of his Church compensation for the year 1939 will receive any advance in salary for the next school year; that is to say, the school year 1940–41. At the end of the next school year the question of advances in salaries can be given consideration to those who have fully tithed their Church compensation, and who are otherwise entitled, under the principles hereinafter set forth, to such consideration. The First Presidency feel that this rule must be mandatory.”¹¹ Franklin Harris remained reluctant, however, to second-guess a faculty member’s ability to pay tithing, and at the time of his resignation in 1945 (to preside over Utah State University), he had never disciplined a teacher for tithing-related concerns.¹²

“MATTERS OF PRIVATE CONSCIENCE”

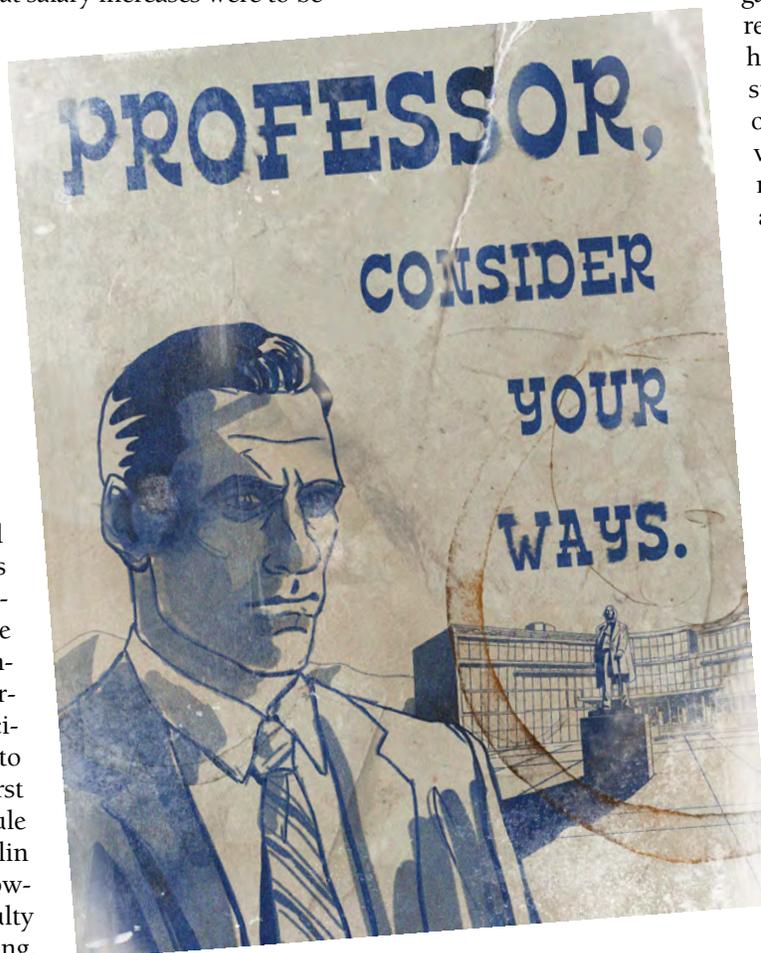
WITH HARRIS’S DEPARTURE, the emphasis on faculty tithe-paying decreased somewhat as attention shifted to other areas of campus administration, notably how best to manage the sudden growth of the student body following World War II. Thus Ernest Wilkinson was both surprised and chagrined to learn in 1957 that more than a few faculty members were not full tithepayers. BYU “must pay awfully low salaries,” he recalled several local Church officials

telling him, sarcastically.¹³ Alarmed, Wilkinson met immediately with LDS President David O. McKay (1873–1970) “on whether we should insist on payment of tithing by teachers at the BYU. President McKay shared my opinion,” Wilkinson reported, “namely, that . . . it was unthinkable that we retain on our faculty people who do not pay tithing. He authorized me not only to ask teachers what they do in this respect, but actually to find out what they do by checking with the Presiding Bishop’s office and let the teachers know that I know what their record is.”¹⁴

Wilkinson’s attempt to gain access to faculty tithing records proved premature, however, as Church policy stipulated that the “amount of tithing paid by an individual or by the total ward membership is confidential and should not be disclosed by the bishopric to anyone except to the stake president as requested and in confidential reports to the General Authorities.”¹⁵ And when McKay’s counselors in his First Presidency learned the extent of the information that Wilkinson sought, they decided to withhold from Wilkinson the exact amounts of tithing paid by faculty members. Undeterred, Wilkinson arranged to have the Presiding Bishop’s office identify for him any faculty who were partial- or non-tithe-payers, though without disclosing the exact amounts of tithing paid.¹⁶

This, Wilkinson believed, would allow him to double-check the data, if needed, with a faculty member’s local Church leaders. But the arrangement was not without its shortcomings. As Wilkinson discovered by the end of April 1957:

[I] had a conference with a faculty member, advising him that I could not promote him because the standards were that he should be faithful to the standards of the Church, and my understanding was that he was a non-tithe payer. Apparently, in this case the report I received from the stake presidency was wrong. It disturbed the member no little, as it should. In the evening he



brought to my home some cancelled checks for his tithing for last year. True, they were for only about 1/3 of what he should have paid, but at least he was a partial tithpayer and over the years was very faithful, apparently, and paid less last year than ever before.¹⁷

Wilkinson also decided to announce publicly that promotions and salary increases would henceforth be based, in part, on the payment of a full tithing. "When I am called upon this year," he promised his faculty five months later, "to pass on proposed promotions in academic rank for members of the faculty I hope I do not have to refuse any on the ground that the nominee does not adhere in practice to . . . the payment of tithing."¹⁸

Wilkinson's push for compliance did not sit well with some faculty, who had initially been employed at the university under a different set of assumptions. "These demands were seen by some," recalled R. Kent Fielding (b. 1920), who taught history,

as nothing more than Wilkinson's personal opinions and served only to alienate the President from the independent minded members of the faculty. Many of us believed that our faculty status was protected by the practice of tenure so long as we met the standards of our academic professions. Most of us accepted our prior experience as reason to believe that our religious beliefs and practices were matters of private conscience, providing we made no attempt to convert others or to subvert established orthodoxies. To others it seemed that further conditions of employment at BYU were being added without consultation. The opinion was frequently expressed that other standards of religious orthodoxy might be promulgated in the same manner and also required for faculty status unless some stand were taken against arbitrary decisions. The suggestion that any who disagreed should resign "as a matter of conscience," was taken as a warning of the consequences of disagreement with other teachings of the Church as interpreted by "authority."¹⁹

"This invasion of the sacred tithing records, using them to put pressure on the faculty," added J. Kenneth Davies (b. 1925), a member of the economics department, "was resented by a substantial portion of the faculty, including some of the most orthodox members of the church who were never interviewed for non-compliance. A number of prominent members of the faculty resigned in protest. I personally had no difficulty on the issue because my tithing records showed me in conformity with the law of tithing, a principle I firmly believed in and practiced. However, I was disturbed by what I perceived as a violation of Church procedures."²⁰

"THE POOR RECORD OF CERTAIN FACULTY"

IN MARCH 1958, when Wilkinson again requested a report from the Presiding Bishop's office on faculty members' tithing payments, McKay again ruled that Wilkinson "could be furnished information about whether or not they pay part or full tithing."²¹ Wilkinson, however, hoping for more, also asked for the names of any errant faculty and the exact amounts of tithing paid so that he did not have to rely solely on the statements of local LDS officials. "If you should decide that for proper administration I should have this information," the lawyer-turned-president pressed McKay,

you may be sure that I will keep it confidential. . . . I do not intend to disclose its existence to the teachers involved, but it will give me sufficient basic information that with respect to teachers who are derelict in their duty, I may call them in and by careful questioning obtain from them direct the facts. You will appreciate, of course, that I do not have time to interrogate all 500 members of the faculty on a matter of this kind, nor would there be any purpose in interrogating more than probably ten per cent of the faculty who, by their dereliction, are giving the University in the eyes of their own stake presidents and bishops, a bad name.

The Presiding Bishop already has the list of our faculty, and if you will just authorize him to fill it in with the amounts paid by each, I will then be in a better position to judge the faithfulness of the members of our staff.²²

McKay was not persuaded, reiterating that Wilkinson would get the names of teachers judged not to be full tithpayers but not the specific amounts of tithing paid.²³ Two weeks later, Wilkinson met with faculty members "who are not tithpayers (in all cases they claimed to be part-tithpayers, but I insisted there was not such a thing as a part-tithpayer; but that a tithpayer means one who pays one-tenth of his income). On the whole, the individuals to whom I spoke had a very fine attitude and I think will make a greater effort to pay a full tithing another year."²⁴

Wilkinson disliked having to work with incomplete information. "This was a day of almost complete frustration," he recorded early the next year.

I stayed at my home all day in an attempt to determine salaries for next year and evaluate the worth of some 600 faculty members. One of the difficulties arises from one of the criteria adopted by the teachers themselves for their appointment and promotion—namely, that they shall be faithful members of the Church, adhering to all its standards. The Presiding Bishop's office has this year given me a list of teachers indicating within certain limits their performance as far as tithing is concerned, and I

was very much distressed to find the poor record of certain faculty members. . . . it looks to me that no more than one-half of the faculty are full tithe payers and many of them have different ways of computing their tithing. . . .

“I have three alternatives,” Wilkinson argued.

One is to pay little attention to it, as has been too much of our practice in the past. If I do this, we become just another educational institution and this alternative must be rejected. The second is to let the teachers know that their jobs depend on performance in this respect. I have to reject this, because to make the payment a condition of being employed is to force the payment of tithing, in which event it ceases to be a voluntary offering. The only logical third alternative is to call the teachers in and say in effect, “One of the prerequisites for appointment to our faculty is the voluntary payment of tithing. I am not going to require you to pay it, because it ceases to be voluntary, but since you have not voluntarily paid, it would seem you ought to look elsewhere for a position.” . . . I know that a chat with many faculty members will bring them to their senses and have them pay a full tithing. My difficulty will be that I will never know whether they are paying it to keep their jobs or based on their own belief.²⁵

Wilkinson arranged to meet with McKay in his office a few weeks later. During the hour-long early morning conference, Wilkinson

told President McKay of the faculty having adopted as a criteria for promotion the fact that members of the faculty must live in accordance with the standards of the Church, and I could not administer this rule without knowing the tithing paid by the faculty members. He told me that he agreed with me. He thought I ought to know the details and he would take it up in a meeting of the First Presidency that morning. . . .

He told me that when I got permission he would permit me to share information with the deans as to whether or not teachers were non-tithe payers or part-tithe payers, but I should not inform the deans as to amounts. That I should hold confidential.²⁶

Wilkinson also reported that of the \$3.6 million paid in faculty salaries, approximately \$273,925 was returned to the Church as tithing (or about 75 percent of a full tithe); and that 73 percent of faculty paid a full tithing, 18 percent a partial tithing, and 9 percent no tithing.²⁷

During an afternoon meeting with the executive committee of BYU’s board of trustees the following week, Wilkinson found himself facing one of his more outspoken

trustees regarding the religious orthodoxy of some of the school’s faculty:

A few weeks previous Kent Fielding of our campus had admitted . . . that he did not have a testimony of the Gospel. In answer to the question of why he had become a member of our faculty when he had no testimony of the Gospel, he replied that while he was interrogated by [LDS Apostle] Harold B. Lee at the time of his appointment [to the history faculty in 1952], he was never asked whether he had a testimony of the Gospel. I had told Brother Lee about this at the time, and Brother Lee, whose main weakness as far as I can see is that he cannot accept criticism, had interpreted it as serious criticism on my part of him. So in this meeting, alluding to this situation, he said he had been disappointed that I had not gotten rid of about a third of the faculty who did not have a testimony of the Gospel. I told him that I thought his estimate was altogether too high. His response was that he thought I must be awfully naive if I did not know the large number of our faculty who did not have a testimony. He was smarting very much under what I thought was my criticism of him for not having properly interrogated Brother Fielding.

Out of this whole discussion, however, came the suggestion that I should not increase the salaries or promote any of our faculty who do not pay an honest tithing. Just how I am going to do this is still a mystery unless the Brethren give me a list of the amount paid by each faculty member.²⁸

Years later, Fielding recalled being asked during a brief interview with one of Wilkinson’s aides about some controversies in Mormon history, including Fielding’s study of the LDS Church in Ohio during the 1830s. Fielding replied that his “‘testimony’ of the ‘truthfulness’ of the gospel demanded a basic honesty about its origins and its early leaders and could not survive on the kinds of contrivances which appeared in the distorted histories and altered documentation.” Nothing more was said, Fielding wrote, and “I began to believe that my arguments were acceptable and that the matter might end without further consequences.”²⁹ Of his earlier 1952 meeting with Apostle Lee (1899–1973), Fielding added: “Apostle Lee was concerned with only two issues: ‘Brother Fielding, are you now or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?’ . . . ‘Have you ever been unfaithful to your wife?’ . . . Lee was adamant and stern as he required a direct answer. Once that was given, there were no more questions and the interview concluded as pleasantly as it had begun.”³⁰

Three days after his encounter with Lee, Wilkinson spent an entire Sunday “wrestling with the question of what to do with faculty members who were not faithful in the payment of their tithing. The best solution I came up with during the day,” he wrote,



was that they probably should be treated the same way as they treat the Lord—a new application of the Golden Rule. Under this application, if they paid no tithing they would get no salary increase. If they paid half tithing they would get half the salary increase contemplated. As I worked on this during the entire day I finally realized that if, for instance, a faculty member should have paid \$600 tithing but

paid none and was denied a proposed \$600 increase, the law of retribution worked even mathematically correct.

This still, however, did not seem to be the correct answer, but I went through and made out salaries for the entire faculty pretty largely on this basis.³¹

Wilkinson continued to grapple with the issue, and the following Tuesday, 28 April 1959, sought additional advice:

At 7 a.m. I called Brother Marion Romney followed by a call to Brother Hugh Brown on the question of what I should do with respect to faculty members who had failed to pay a full tithite. Brother Romney was the one who, in my Executive committee meeting last week, had proposed that there be no promotion or salary increase of any kind for those who did not pay a full tithite. I felt when I talked to him, however, that he had pretty much changed his mind on this, his feeling being that since tithing was supposed to be voluntary people would not get the benefits from it if they paid it under coercion. He proposed, therefore, that I go ahead and set salaries without much respect to tithing this year but that members of the Executive Committee come down and meet individually with members of the faculty who were deficient in this respect. Brother Brown echoed pretty much the same thoughts.³²

Early the next morning, Wilkinson met with McKay again to discuss the situation. “I told President McKay also,” he recorded,

that since he had authorized me to have information concerning faculty salaries, I had obtained the same and was shocked at the fact that apparently 100 members either were non or token tithite payers. He said he was shocked also. I told him that it had been suggested to me by Executive Committee that no salary increases should be given to those who were in that situation, but that I had my doubts that that was the proper way to handle it because that had the effect of requiring the payment of tithing when as a matter of fact it ought to be a voluntary matter. He said he agreed with me and that salary should be predicated largely on professional ability.

I then told him that obviously we must do something about it, and I proposed that he appoint members of the Quorum of the Twelve to come to the

campus and have individual conferences with all members of the faculty, those who were faithful as well as those who were not. I suggested they should, of course, commend those who were faithful and take up a labor with those who were not equally faithful, trying to persuade them to pay tithing as a voluntary matter. He wondered if the Executive Committee could not do this and suggested that I take it up with that committee. I agreed to do so.³³

When Wilkinson met with his board of trustees later that same day, they agreed that all teachers were to pay their tithing and to adhere to the Church's other standards. But the question of how exactly Wilkinson was to determine the faculty's obedience was, much to Wilkinson's frustration, deliberately left unaddressed.³⁴

Reviewing the question of salary increases with one of his aides the next afternoon, Wilkinson decided to give

primary consideration (almost exclusive consideration) to the professional competence and performance of the teachers rather than their adherence to the principle of tithing. We have firmly resolved, however, that beginning immediately every member of the faculty is to have a personal conference with a member of the Executive Committee for the purpose of commending those who are faithful and trying to persuade those who are not faithful in the performance of this duty, to become faithful. If by the end of this calendar year, we still have members on the faculty who are either non- or token tithepayers, my present feeling is that we should take some action to have them replaced on the faculty.³⁵

"A MATTER OF FREE WILL GIVING"

AS BYU OPENED that September 1959, Wilkinson delivered his second "forthright statement" (his term) on tithing. "Promotions should not be granted those who did not believe in and adhere to the principles and teachings of the Gospel," especially tithing, he announced at a special faculty workshop.

The question was then raised as to whether belief in and adherence to the principles and teachings of the Gospel, specifically the payment of tithing, should be taken into consideration in the determination of salaries for the coming year. Because no such direct policy had been previously announced, it was decided that the payment of tithing should not be taken into consideration for the fixation of salaries for the school year [1959–60]. But I was instructed [by the board of trustees] that adherence to this principle as well as others should be taken into consideration thereafter.³⁶

"A number of faithful members of the faculty came to me afterward," he recorded, "commending me for the statement. I know, of course, that there will be some members of the faculty who will disagree with it."³⁷

The next morning, following a panel discussion on an unrelated topic, BYU political scientist Robert E. Riggs (b. 1927) called attention to Wilkinson's comments of the day before. According to Wilkinson, Riggs

launched into a vigorous attack on the position I had taken to the effect that members of the faculty must pay their tithing to continue on the faculty. This was a real bitter attack in which he took me to task also for having been so long last year in answering a certain request which he made. As he went along in his attack, Francis Pray, Vice President of the Council for Financial Aid to Education, sent me a note stating in effect: "Every university faculty has some of that type on it." Riggs announced that because of this policy he would not be returning to the BYU next year.

As Riggs concluded, John T. Bernhard (1920–2004), recently appointed as one of Wilkinson's aides, countered that

Riggs had "brilliance but not wisdom." He [Bernhard] went on to point out that there would be no purpose in the continued existence of the BYU unless the Gospel of Jesus Christ were placed first in our minds; further, that Riggs' outburst was altogether improper and unwise because it did not even pertain to the subject matter of the panel discussion. He said that Riggs' outburst was something that should have been taken up with the administration. It could not possibly do any good in a public meeting of that kind. John gave rather an eloquent defense and at one time referred to Riggs' speech as "intellectual poppy-cock."

"My judgment," Wilkinson wrote, "is that from 20 to 25 per cent of the faculty applauded Riggs. John Bernhard, on the other hand, got pretty much of an ovation from the balance."³⁸

Later that afternoon, Wilkinson asked that the faculty hold "no hard feelings against [Riggs] for his outburst. While I did not agree with him," Wilkinson continued,

I defended his right to state what he wanted. I then went on to point out that the statement I had made with respect to the payment of tithing and other adherence to Church standards had been approved by the Board of Trustees. Riggs, in his speech, had quoted the Doctrine and Covenants that members of the Church should be long suffering and patient in trying to persuade others to conform to the standards. He had suggested this was the attitude we

ought to take with respect to the faculty rather than making compliance with Church standards a requirement. I pointed out that the Board had considered fully that viewpoint, but that that was the standard held up for us as faculty members to persuade our students to adhere to the Church standards. The Board felt that faculty members themselves must of necessity adhere to all standards in order that they could properly teach the students both by precept and example. I pointed out further that while I had used tithing as an example in my talk, it was only used as an example and what I said applied to all standards and principles of the Church. . . .

I am sure that my comments in the afternoon had a wholesome effect. In fact, after the meeting was over Bob Riggs came up, shook hands, and commended me for my statement. He even went so far as to admit that I might be right. He was somewhat chastened and had the best attitude I had ever known him to have.³⁹

For Riggs, the new policy was merely the tip of the iceberg regarding what he perceived as Wilkinson's authoritarian administrative style. "That afternoon," Riggs recalled more than thirty years later,

they had one of their open forum discussions, a panel discussion on the topic "What is a university?" They opened it up for comments. . . . I told how I had come to BYU fresh out of graduate school with high hopes for the kind of institution that it was and could be, and how I'd enjoyed my association with the faculty here, and with the students, but then one thing after another, I don't recall all the things that I mentioned, but I know I mentioned . . . President Wilkinson's unwillingness to consult the faculty, how we really weren't part of the enterprise in the sense that faculty ought to be and gradually I'd developed a great disappointment with what was going on here and now we had come to this tithing requirement and while I agreed that everybody here ought to pay their tithing, it ought to be voluntary for us, it ought to be a matter of free will giving just as it is for everybody else, and from now on my tithing was going to be one dollar short. I also said that because of the things that had happened I was tend[er]ing my resignation from the university, that I would be here throughout the year but I would not be here the following year.⁴⁰

True to his word, Riggs moved to another university at the end of the school year, teaching part-time at the University of Arizona, Tucson, while also attending law school.⁴¹

"THE INALIENABLE RIGHT OF EVERY CHURCH MEMBER"

WILKINSON CORRECTLY FEARED that Riggs was not his only faculty critic and quietly asked some of his subordinates to watch out for similar sentiments. Less than two weeks after Wilkinson's address, BYU's public relations director, Lester B. Whetten (1904–88), informed Wilkinson: "While you were in Europe, at one of our Deans['] Council meetings the matter of tithe paying was discussed at some length. I recall that I was quite surprised to hear some of the deans make statements of this nature, stating that some of their men felt this way. My memory could be in error, but as I recall Dean [Armin J.] Hill and possibly Dean [Leonard W.] Rice were the ones who advanced these ideas."⁴²

Following the Christmas break, Wilkinson met with Armin J. Hill (1912–1988), the fifty-seven-year-old dean of the College of Physical and Engineering Sciences, who, as Whetten had noted, shared some of Riggs's concerns:

One special thing I did [today] was to have Dean Hill in. I had received a rather impudent note from him stating that he had supported me in the past but implying strongly that if I went ahead, as he felt I was going to do, and examined the tithing of members of the faculty, that he would not support me. He wanted some assurance from me that I would not [examine the faculty's tithing records]. I called him in with Brother [Earl C.] Crockett and Brother Bernhard and told him that he had not such assurance from me, that I would not give it, and that what I did in a situation would be between me and the Board of Trustees. I told him I wanted to know if I did something he didn't want me to do, if I would still have his support. He backed down and promised that I would.⁴³

Evidently, Wilkinson's comments had reached LDS headquarters in Salt Lake City, and early that same January 1960, the Presiding Bishop's office reminded the Church's local leaders: "How much tithing a man pays is his own business, his bishop's and the Lord's . . . Privacy is precious, and the inalienable right of every member of this Church."⁴⁴ The First Presidency, too, explicitly informed Wilkinson that such confidential information was to be obtained directly from them. Sensitive to any hint of impropriety, Wilkinson sought to reassure McKay: "I asked if there had been complaints that I had been obtaining the information from local Bishops. He told me that they had received a letter of criticism to the effect that all secretaries in my office and other places knew the amounts paid by faculty members. I assured him there was no truth of any kind to that statement, that no one had the information except me. He said he had himself assumed that fact but that he was glad to have this assurance."⁴⁵

Early the next week, meeting with McKay and his two counselors, J. Reuben Clark (1871–1961) and Henry D. Moyle (1889–1963), Wilkinson stressed

that unless I knew what the faculty paid, I was in no position to know whether they were, in fact, full tithing payers. President McKay agreed with this and the First Presidency consented that I continue to obtain the information in that way.

I assured them that contrary to reports they had received, that this information was not available to secretaries and was not being broadcast around the campus.

I reported that I had, pursuant to their instructions of last fall [1959], informed Deans of particular faculty members who were short in the payment of tithing but that I had not disclosed the amount to the Deans. I was authorized to continue.⁴⁶

In the meantime, Humanities and Social Sciences Dean Leonard W. Rice (1914–1986),⁴⁷ the second of the two deans about whom Whetten had expressed concern, decided that, like Riggs, he could no longer remain at BYU, and informed Wilkinson of his intent to “resign and accept a job teaching in Rhode Island because he did not think he could conform to the standards which I set forth in my speech to the faculty in September of 1959. I have known for some time that Leonard was not orthodox in all matters, but he has been an outstanding teacher and administrator and I hope we can persuade him to come back. I cannot for the life of me understand why Leonard cannot conform to the standards set down.”⁴⁸

Wilkinson immediately arranged to meet privately with Rice, and for more than two hours the two men debated a variety of topics:

He [Rice] had taken some exception to my letter of last September in which I laid down the requirement that all members of the faculty must be loyal and faithful to the Church. I do not as yet know whether he will return. He particularly had grievances against Elder Mark Petersen and Elder Bruce McConkie. He just could not agree with many of their statements. I took the position that it may be that there are certain isolated statements made by different members of the General authorities with which some of us could not agree, but that it is incumbent upon all of us at the BYU to support these General Authorities in the performance of the functions of their various offices. He agreed with that.⁴⁹

Rice did not change his mind and left BYU for Rhode Island by the end of that school year.⁵⁰

“SELF-STYLED INTELLECTUALS”

WILKINSON SPENT MUCH of the remainder of February 1960 going over the partial information he continued to receive from the Presiding Bishop’s office. On the evening of the 23rd, he met individually with five faculty members who, according to the Presiding Bishop’s office, “had not paid tithing during the year.” He also talked with one of his deans, who thought

I ought to have one of the General Authorities come down and sit down with the non-tithepayers and try to persuade them. I recalled that I had personally once suggested this to my Executive Committee but they had turned it down on the ground that they would be undermining my authority, that I ought to do it myself. This particular Dean was afraid that there was an organized clique intending to make a cause celebre out of the present situation and force the Administration to give way on this tithing question or in the alternative to fire some of them, which would be the occasion for a big outburst.

From my conferences during the evening, I am convinced that if there is a clique of that kind it is confined to very few teachers in political science and history.⁵¹

Three days later, Wilkinson interviewed nineteen additional teachers. “Many of them,” he recorded,

admitted their carelessness or lack of faith, but promised to do better. There were, however, as would be expected, a few dissidents who took bitter exception to the fact that the administration should be concerned with what they considered an obligation between themselves and their bishops. These were generally the self-styled intellectuals who thought they could pretty much solve the problems of the world by logic and the spirit of the intellect. They were centered largely in three departments: English, political science, and history.⁵²

The next day, Saturday, 27 February 1960, Wilkinson and aide Earl C. Crockett (1903–1975) reviewed the records of approximately forty-five faculty members “who were deficient in the payment of tithing and decided on their salaries for next year. Generally, where they had made no payments on tithing, they got no increases. . . . However, where members paid a partial tithing and exhibited certain evidence of a desire to bear their share of Church responsibility, we tried to be lenient in salary increases. None of the 45, however, received the salary increase he would have received had he otherwise measured up fully in this particular.”⁵³

According to Kent Fielding, he was one of the nineteen faculty whom Wilkinson interviewed on the 26th. “I was determined to stand my ground . . . ,” Fielding recalled.

“Despite Wilkinson’s forthright declaration and his position of authority, it was my Church also and the source of my youthful values as well as the faith of my ancestors, my living relatives and most of my friends. I intended to retain my allegiance on my own terms, regardless of the outcome. Without risks, no change was possible.” As a result, Fielding and his wife had “determined to withhold any further payment of tithing and to refuse to reveal our offerings to any others.”⁵⁴ When the acting dean of Fielding’s college, Reed H. Bradford (1912–1994), subsequently “asked me to confirm the accuracy of my tithing record, which he held in his hand,” Fielding wrote,

I refused to look at the record. I declared that such matters were confidential to the parties directly involved and perhaps to God. He replied that President Wilkinson had been given permission to access the tithing records and to utilize this information in decisions affecting salary and promotion. I declared that such matters were now immaterial; it had become a question of conscience with me and I must be retained or fired on my own terms. He urged me not to take such a position, for it could not be supported by the administration. I charged him with irresponsibility in being an agent of coercion rather than in defending the academic freedom of his faculty. He said he could not fulfill his duties as a dean without carrying out the order of his administrative leaders. I declared that he should resign his administrative duties rather than to violate his allegiance to his academic profession.⁵⁵

As Fielding recalled, Wilkinson began their 26 February 1960 interview by explaining that “his concern was with my evident lack of religious orthodoxy which had the potential of disturbing the testimony of my students in the future.” Wilkinson then queried: “Do you believe Joseph Smith saw God?” “I have to believe he thought he did,” Fielding answered. “This interview continued for four hours,” Fielding wrote, “under circumstances which were never threatening; indeed, they seemed most congenial and understanding. The subject of tithing was never mentioned.” Later, however, Fielding concluded that the decision to terminate his employment—reached on 27 February and delivered to Fielding during a meeting with Wilkinson on 3 March—had been made prior to his interview, that “I was the victim of an elaborate charade, designed to give me a sense of fair treatment.”⁵⁶

During a 2 March 1960 meeting with his board of trustees, Wilkinson was pleased to report that his efforts were bearing fruit, and that, in fact, the amount of tithing paid by the school’s faculty in 1959 was considerably more than what had been paid in 1958.⁵⁷ Wilkinson continued his interviews of faculty members, and in early May 1960 informed trustees that a total of thirty-nine teachers were being released, to be “replaced by faithful and highly educated men.”⁵⁸

“WE DO NOT INTEND TO FORCE FACULTY MEMBERS TO PAY TITHING”

AS 1961 BEGAN, Wilkinson again faced the task of reviewing the tithing payments of his faculty in determining adjustments to salaries. “This is a most difficult assignment,” he reported on 26 February.

Actually, what ought to be done with respect to those who do not pay tithing is to release them from the faculty because no one should pay tithing in order to stay. I am happy to report that, whereas a few years ago there were quite a number of faculty members who paid only a token tithing, so far this year I have found only about three. Now the main difficulty is in the interpretation of what constitutes tithing. I find that many fall in the upper brackets; that is they will pay about 80% or 85% of what is really a full tithing.⁵⁹

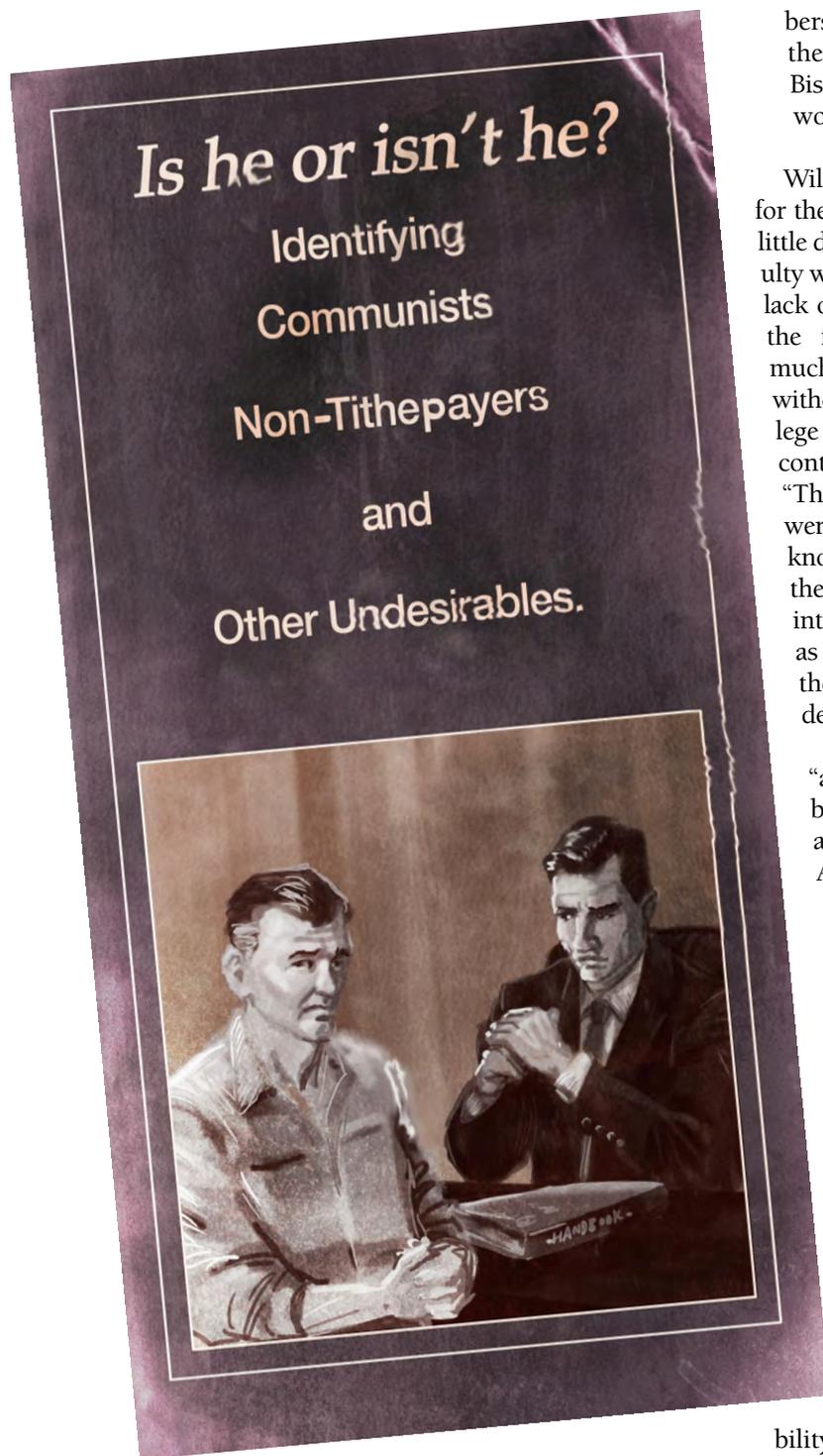
A month later, still reviewing faculty tithing information, he reported:

The day before yesterday one teacher reported to me that while he knew the record showed he was a non-tithe payer he had paid his full tithing after the end of the year, but too late to get on the record for the year. Yesterday in checking with the bishop to confirm his story, about which we were rather suspicious, we found that immediately after having had his interview with me, he went to the bishop and paid the tithing. The bishop commented, “He is a peculiar duck. I could not understand why he was so insistent that I accept a check yesterday for last year’s tithing.”⁶⁰

Following a meeting with his executive committee that May, Wilkinson complained to Henry Moyle about a lack of timely cooperation from the Presiding Bishop’s office. He also thought Church authorities need to issue

some authoritative definition of what constituted full tithing, particularly that it should be paid before the payment of taxes. He [Moyle] thoroughly agreed with my viewpoint, but said as long as President McKay and President [J. Reuben] Clark were in the First Presidency there was no chance to get any authoritative interpretation. He informed me also that President [Stephen L] Richards, and he thought Bishop [Thorpe B.] Isaacson, only paid their tithing after the deduction of taxes and that there was not a chance at the present time to change that situation.⁶¹

By the end of that month, Wilkinson, during a meeting with McKay, pointed out



that, although bishops in the Church were supposed to have their reports in by the middle of January, there were some reports from some bishops this year which did not get in until well after the first of March. This had hindered us in getting the reports as quickly as we should have the facts in order to determine the eligibility of faculty mem-

bers for reappointment, etc. I suggested that if there was some way of having the Presiding Bishop's Office get these records in on time, that it would be helpful to us.⁶²

Wilkinson continued to face similar difficulties each year for the next two years. In early 1962, he recorded being "a little discouraged to find that approximately 150 of our faculty were not paying full tithing. . . . this lack of loyalty and lack of assuming their share of financial responsibility for the financing of the Church disappointed me very much."⁶³ The next year, he was surprised to find that without his knowledge, two of his aides had assigned college deans to interview faculty members whose tithing contributions were reported to be less than 100 percent. "These deans merely called some in and told them they were short," Wilkinson reported. "The deans do not know the full facts; and since I am the only one knowing the full facts, it would have been better had I done the interviewing. Some faculty members were furious, but as generally turns out to be the case in these situations, they had made bad mistakes in either computation or definition of what constitutes tithing."⁶⁴

Wilkinson believed that he had the appropriate "authority to check the tithing of all faculty members."⁶⁵ However, the Presiding Bishop disagreed, and raised the matter with McKay the next month. As described by McKay:

Bishop [John H.] Vandenberg of the Presiding Bishopric explained that the information about tithing paid by members of the faculty of the Brigham Young University has been requested, and asked whether or not it should be released. Limited authorization formerly given President Wilkinson was considered. I said that we do not intend to force faculty members to pay tithing, nor do we intend to release information about tithing they pay. Special permission was given on one occasion, but it has not been continued regularly. Bishop Vandenberg said that it is the Bishop's prerogative to interview the person, and the responsibility rests with the person paying tithing. Bishop Victor L. Brown suggested that President Wilkinson might be informed as to whether or not faculty members are tithe payers, part tithe payers, or non tithe payers. I indicated approval. Bishop Vandenberg said that accordingly they would disapprove of giving information about the amount of tithing paid.⁶⁶

"We have reviewed your request for information regarding the amount of tithing paid by the faculty members

with The First Presidency,” the Presiding Bishopric subsequently informed Wilkinson. “The occasion on which permission was given to provide you with this information as indicated by President McKay was ‘for that time only.’ The First Presidency has ruled that this information is not to be provided but rather we can give you the status of those employees as to whether they are full, part or non-titheayers.”⁶⁷

By the end of 1963, Wilkinson decided to pursue a long-time dream of running for public office and stepped down as president of BYU.⁶⁸ Following his defeat and return to the BYU presidency in late 1964, his absence together with changes in the composition of the First Presidency and McKay’s failing health combined to end his surveillance of faculty tithing payments. In fact, current BYU policy strictly prohibits the release of faculty tithing information to university administrators.⁶⁹

During the eight years of increased surveillance of the individual tithing records of BYU faculty members, some two dozen (probably more) teachers were dismissed or resigned specifically, according to Wilkinson, because of “religious problems,” “church problems,” or “disagreement with administration,” including “disagreement with President’s administrative approach.”⁷⁰ While these numbers may not seem to represent much of an impact on BYU generally, the effect of Wilkinson’s drive to enforce adherence to LDS teachings on the lives of the individuals who left, either voluntarily or involuntarily, cannot easily be overstated. For some teachers who believed the primary criteria regarding their employment centered on academic experience and expertise, Wilkinson’s emphasis on tithing was misplaced and irrelevant. Still others, appealing to Church guidelines regarding the confidential nature of one’s tithing history, viewed Wilkinson’s interest as inappropriate. For Wilkinson, however, BYU was an extension of the Church, and he was merely an agent of the Church’s general authorities. Not only did he see nothing wrong with having access to such information, he considered it essential if he were to successfully administer the affairs of the “Lord’s University.” That such tensions endured for nearly a decade underscores the challenges confronting a religion-sponsored university and its advocates.

NOTES

1. For Wilkinson as president, see Gary James Bergera, “Ernest L. Wilkinson’s Appointment as Seventh President of Brigham Young University,” *Journal of Mormon History* 23 (Fall 1997): 128–54. For Wilkinson’s personality and managerial style, see Gary James Bergera, “Wilkinson the Man,” *SUNSTONE* 20 (July 1997): 29–41.

2. “The amount of tithing and other offerings paid by a member is confidential. Only the bishop and those who are authorized to handle such contributions should know the amount” (*Handbook 1: Stake Presidents and Bishops*, 2010 [Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2010], 128).

3. Harvey Fletcher, “Autobiography,” 41, in Harvey Fletcher file, University Archives, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library,

Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

4. See “Tithing Record of the Faculty of the Brigham Young University for 1915, Exclusive of Those Who Discontinued Service June 30,” courtesy of the Smith-Pettit Foundation.

5. On the other hand, ten (15 percent) had paid more than 150 percent, and four (6 percent) had paid more than 300 percent. *Ibid.*

6. Merrill, Letter to Presidents of LDS Church Schools, 2 May 1929, in *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years*, 4 vols., edited by Ernest L. Wilkinson (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1975), 2:216.

7. Merrill, Letter to Harris, 1 March 1933, in *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years*, 2:217.

8. See Howard W. Pease, “A Chronological and Comparative Listing of Events of BYU, Church and State, and National History from 1847 to 1973,” 7 October 1974, in BYU Archives.

9. In *Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years*, 2:218.

10. *Ibid.*, 385.

11. In Franklin L. West, Letter to Christen Jensen, 9 May 1940, in Franklin L. West Papers, Perry Special Collections.

12. According to BYU’s official history, “Written records do not indicate precisely what President Harris did to handle the tithing problem, but some living faculty members remember that Harris interviewed faculty members who did not pay a full tithe, reporting special problems and extenuating circumstances to the First Presidency. Where there was any doubt, President Harris usually supported the cause of the faculty member” (*Brigham Young University: The First One Hundred Years*, 2:218, 414). See also Janet Jensen, *The Many Lives of Franklin S. Harris* (Provo, Utah: BYU Printing Services, 2002), 60–63. While BYU’s official history addresses Harris’s response regarding faculty tithing, it is silent on Wilkinson’s efforts to enforce compliance, even though Wilkinson was one of the authors of the official history. For a very brief treatment of Wilkinson’s monitoring of faculty tithing, see Gary James Bergera and Ronald Priddis, *Brigham Young University: A House of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1985), 68–70.

13. Wilkinson, “Notes for Presentation to First Presidency on ‘Tithing’ Problem,” 16 April 1959, Wilkinson Papers, Perry Special Collections. Unless otherwise noted, all such Wilkinson-related materials are in his papers at BYU.

14. Ernest L. Wilkinson, “Memorandum of conference with President McKay Today Re: Payment of tithing by teachers,” 8 April 1957.

15. *The Messenger* (distributed by the Presiding Bishopric of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), 16 (April 1957): 2. Using more or less the same wording, this was reiterated in subsequent editions of the Church’s *General Handbook of Instructions*.

16. Wilkinson, “Notes for Presentation to First Presidency.”

17. Wilkinson, Diary, 22 April 1957.

18. Wilkinson, “The Principle and Practice of Paying Tithing,” 25 September 1957, 24, Perry Special Collections.

19. Robert Kent Fielding, “Growing Up Mormon: Autobiographical Narratives and Related Papers,” August 1997, 20, in Robert Kent Fielding Papers, Special Collections, Marriott Library. Fielding graduated from BYU twice, in 1950 (B.A.) and again in 1952 (M.A.). Although Fielding may appear to figure more prominently than other faculty members in the following narrative, it would be a mistake to view him, or any other single faculty member, as a primary instigator of tithing-related controversies. Fielding was one of a number of faculty who disagreed with Wilkinson’s policies. If Fielding’s name appears more frequently than others, it is simply because he left an account of his involvement.

20. J. Kenneth Davies, “My Personal Odyssey,” 1998, 30, courtesy of the Smith-Pettit Foundation.

21. McKay, Diary, 3 March 1958, David O. McKay Papers, Special Collections, Marriott Library.

22. Wilkinson, Letter to McKay, 7 April 1958.

23. Wilkinson’s handwritten notation on *ibid.*

24. Wilkinson, Diary, 21 April 1958.

25. *Ibid.*, 13 March 1959.

26. Wilkinson, Memorandum of a Conference with David O. McKay, 16 April 1959 (17 April 1959).

27. *Ibid.* McKay’s diary reported only: “The question of whether President Wilkinson should have access to the tithing records of the faculty of the Brigham Young University. The faculty itself has already voted that compliance with Church standards is one of the criteria for promotion. This question was discussed at our meeting of the First Presidency today” (McKay, Diary, April 16, 1959; emphasis in original).

28. Wilkinson, Diary, 23 April 1959. Beginning in 1957, Fielding chaired an “Intellectual Climate Committee” to “foster the rational and intellectual side of Mormonism” (Fielding, “Growing Up Mormon,” 21). Two years later, he participated in an on-campus debate with LDS educator E. E. Erickson regarding the place of liberal Mormonism in the Church. When he learned of the meeting, Wilkinson recorded that it “apparently turned out to be the most vigorous criticism of Church tendencies and Church leaders that has been held on the campus since I have been here” (Wilkinson, Diary, 17–19 January 1959). Evidently, word of Fielding’s comments also reached Harold B. Lee, which prompted Lee’s exchange with Wilkinson.

29. In Fielding, “Growing Up Mormon,” 30.

30. *Ibid.*, 17. During the 1950s, Fielding pursued, and was awarded, a Ph.D. in history at Indiana University. His dissertation was on the LDS Church in Ohio during the 1830s.

31. Wilkinson, Diary, 26 April 1959.

32. *Ibid.*, 28 April 1959. Romney (1897–1988) had been ordained an apostle in 1951; Brown (1883–1975) had been ordained an apostle in 1958 and would serve as a member of McKay’s First Presidency beginning in 1961.

33. Wilkinson, Memorandum of a Conference with David O. McKay, April 29, 1959 (30 April 1959).

34. BYU Board of Trustees Meeting, Minutes, 29 April 1959, courtesy of the Smith-Pettit Foundation.

35. Wilkinson, Diary, 30 April 1959. Ray R. Canning (1920–94), who taught sociology at BYU, fumed over what he believed was Wilkinson’s intrusion into his private life. “That is the way Wilkinson operated,” Canning later wrote of Wilkinson’s inquiries into Canning’s tithing contributions; “he simply sent out his agents, and they got the information. . . . The more he knew, the more leverage and power he had over me, if he wanted to use it” (Canning, *My Continuing Quest: Sociological Perspectives on Mormonism*, edited by Stan Larson [Salt Lake City: Freethinker Press, 1996], 73). Canning left BYU in 1959 for a career at the University of Utah.

36. Wilkinson, “The Return of Full Value,” an address at the faculty workshop of Brigham Young University, 21 September 1959, Perry Special Collections; reprinted in Edwin J. Butterworth and David H. Yarn, eds., *Earnestly Yours: Selected Addresses of Dr. Ernest L. Wilkinson* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1971), 268–82.

37. Wilkinson, Diary, 21 September 1959. “In the emotional and sometimes heated discussion which followed the address,” remembered Kent Fielding, “it was many times repeated by Wilkinson that Brigham Young University had a Destiny which required faith and dedication. . . . In that context, all arguments to the contrary seemed pitiful and self-serving” (“Growing Up Mormon,” 34).

38. Wilkinson, Diary, 22 September 1959. In 1968, following his own disagreements with Wilkinson, Bernhard resigned to accept the presidency of Western Illinois University. From 1974 to 1985, he presided over Western Michigan University.

39. Wilkinson, Diary, 22 September 1959. Bernhard tried to persuade Riggs to stay, assuring him that there would be no administrative retaliation. However, Riggs was dismayed soon afterwards to learn that the administration had decided not to grant him a promised promotion because “of my public criticism of the University and President Wilkinson the previous fall” (Riggs, email to Gary James Bergera, 4 February 2011).

40. Robert E. Riggs, Oral History, 8 September 1992, 32, Perry Special Collections. Riggs later clarified: “I did, for instance, state that from then on my tithing would be ‘one dollar short.’ But in fact I immediately repented of that inflammatory statement. My tithing payments, both before and after the speech, have always been in full” (Riggs, email to Bergera).

41. Following a career teaching political science at the University of Minnesota, Riggs returned to BYU, now presided over by Wilkinson’s successor, Dallin H. Oaks (b. 1932), to join the J. Reuben Clark Law School.

42. Whetten, Memorandum to Wilkinson, 5 October 1959. Before coming to BYU in 1956, Whetten had served as executive dean of the Chicago College of Osteopathy, as superintendent of schools in Pagosa Springs, Colorado, as director of agriculture at Mesa College (Colorado), and as president of Snow College (Utah). In addition to directing BYU’s public relations, he was also dean of General College. From 1972 to 1973, he chaired the school’s Department of Indian Education.

43. Wilkinson, Diary, 23 January 1960. Hill remained at BYU as dean, first of Physical and Engineering Sciences, then in 1972 of Engineering Sciences and Technology, until his retirement in 1977.

44. *The Messenger* 45 (January 1960): 1.

45. Wilkinson, Memorandum of a Conference with David O. McKay, 3 February 1960.

46. Wilkinson, Memorandum of a Conference with the First Presidency, 9 February 1960.

47. Rice graduated from BYU in 1941. He then enrolled at the University of Washington. He served in World War II as a cryptographer. Following the war, he returned to Washington to finish his Ph.D. studies. He subsequently joined the BYU faculty, chaired the English department, and in 1957 was named Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences.

48. Wilkinson, Diary, 12 February 1960.

49. *Ibid.*, 16 February 1960. Petersen (1900–84) had been ordained an apostle in 1944; McConkie (1915–85) had joined the First Council of the Seventy in 1946 (and would be ordained an apostle in 1972). Both men were literally oriented LDS theologians.

50. In 1962, Rice was appointed thirteenth president of the Oregon College of Education (in Monmouth), where he remained until his retirement in 1977.

51. Wilkinson, Diary, 23 February 1960.

52. *Ibid.*, 26 February 1960.

53. *Ibid.*, 27 February 1960.

54. Fielding, “Growing Up Mormon,” 35, 37.

55. *Ibid.*, 37–38.

56. *Ibid.*, 39–43. Fielding was told he would be given a sabbatical leave after which he would be allowed to return only if he passed another interview with a member of BYU’s board of trustees. Following his leave, Fielding decided to hazard an interview with Harold B. Lee. But after Lee replied with “a cryptic and wholly unsympathetic letter,” Fielding “made no further effort to secure approval” (*ibid.*, 44–45). Following a career at the Graduate School for Teachers at Wesleyan University (Connecticut), the Utah Center for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, and the Connecticut Commission on Higher Education, Fielding retired in 1978.

57. BYU Board of Trustees, Minutes, 2 March 1960.

58. *Ibid.*, 4 May 1960.

59. Wilkinson, Diary, 26 February 1961.

60. *Ibid.*, 2 March 1961.

61. *Ibid.*, 11 May 1961. In 1960, Church members were told that tithing is “one-tenth of their interest (income)” (*General Church Handbook*, Number 18 [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1960], p. 59). Three years later, Church leaders were more explicit: “A tithe is one-tenth of a wage earner’s gross income; a tithe is one-tenth of a professional man’s income after deducting standard business expenses; a tithe is one-tenth of a farmer’s income after deducting standard business operating expenses” (*General Handbook of Instructions*, Number 19 [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 1963], p. 67, emphasis in original). In 1968, however, Church officials referred members, without elucidation, to the D&C 119 (*General Handbook of Instructions*, Number 20 [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1968], p. 102). Today, members are instructed: “The simplest statement we know of is the statement of the Lord himself, namely, that the members of the Church should pay ‘one-tenth of all their interest annually,’ which is understood to mean income. No one is justified in making any other statement than this” (*Handbook 1: Stake Presidents and Bishops 2010*, p. 125).

62. Wilkinson, Memorandum of a Conference with David O. McKay, 22 May 1961.

63. Wilkinson, Diary, 15 March 1962.

64. *Ibid.*, 29 March 1963.

65. Wilkinson, Memorandum to William E. Berrett, 13 April 1963.

66. McKay, Diary, 24 May 1963; emphasis in original. Vandenberg (1904–92) had been named Presiding Bishop in September 1961. When Ken Davies asked him about Wilkinson’s access to tithing information, Vandenberg “seemed shocked by the revelation of what was taking place on the campus and said that he would certainly look into it” (“My Personal Odyssey,” 30).

67. Presiding Bishopric, Letter to Wilkinson, 24 May 1963.

68. See Gary James Bergera, “‘A Sad and Expensive Experience’: Ernest L. Wilkinson’s 1964 Bid for the U.S. Senate,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 62 (Fall 1993): 304–24.

69. All BYU employees must undergo annual ecclesiastical endorsement interviews conducted by local LDS officials. “If an ecclesiastical endorsement is not granted for an employee, BYU does not ask the reason why” (Carri Jenkins, email to Gary James Bergera, 8 February 2011).

70. These figures come from two documents, courtesy of the Smith-Pettit Foundation. The first is entitled “Faculty members dismissed since 1953”; the second is not titled.