Senate Reference No. 90-14

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
Lloyd Wilson Smith
November 30, 1916 - November 1, 1990

Lloyd W. Smith was born in southern Illinois, in a small town called Herrin, not far from Indiana, Kentucky, and Missouri. His remarks about his early life were few but memorable, revealing ongoing challenges greater than most young people of his era experienced. Their design must have been appropriate to the development of a strong determination.

In the midst of the Great Depression Smitty "took" to Purdue University in a manner not unlike the relationship of a son to a father, and that emotion never left him. His fifty-five years of loyalty to that "father" is a large part of what this resolution seeks to record for posterity.

Fort Wayne happened to be where he began his early college courses, through both Purdue and Indiana universities, during the mid-1930s. His degree, Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, was earned on the West Lafayette campus in 1940, where he was also elected to the civil engineering honorary, Chi Epsilon. The work ethic took him through college at a time when almost the entire civil engineering faculty at West Lafayette were professional people with extensive previous construction industry accomplishment. His jobs included helping the faculty. From these experiences he developed a keen appreciation for student struggles and for what it might be like to profess to teach applied engineering. That appreciation was not forgotten while he went on to gain a diversity of practical experience and professional accomplishment, and he eventually returned to his first love, the campus. He began full-time teaching as a member of the Purdue faculty at Indianapolis but soon, in the fall of 1948, he was instructing where he had first enrolled as a student, back at Fort Wayne. Here he and his wife, Margaret, whom he had also met at West Lafayette, reared their family of three daughters. There are five grandchildren.

Besides his love for his family, one of Smitty's strongest characteristics was a deeply thought-out philosophy of concern for the student. He discovered the wisdom of placing the student as "number one," served by a faculty in turn served by the administrators. He "taught" himself and fellow faculty members that nothing is taught, just learned. His favorite faculty goal was "not to teach but instead to devise means of letting the student exploit the faculty, the university, and its facilities" toward that student's best development. He believed, advocated, and practiced this philosophy to the best of his abilities. He felt this could be accomplished only by the academician who was up to date as a practitioner. He was a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, registered in Indiana as a professional engineer and land surveyor, and often was employed professionally during the summer months.

As he progressed over the years to become an associate professor, he fought to advance the degree programs offered by his department from none at all to three, including the Bachelor of Science. He served as department chair or coordinator for a period, and on numerous intra- and inter-campus committees related to the future of these programs and their curricula. He taught many of the broad spectrum of courses regularly offered by his department in all three areas: construction, architectural, and civil engineering technology. An example of how he strove to remain in touch with current subject matter requirements should be related here. For courses involving extensive calculations, such as structures and hydraulics, he developed guideline handouts. Dubbing them "Cheat Sheets" initially, he later risked respectability with the title "Pro Forms," and ultimately converted them to computer programs for student use. His efforts to have the student exploit the technology available for making such computations evolved from mainframe program-writing assignments to the handheld programma-ble calculator and finally to the microcomputer.

Professor Smith was proud when all three degree programs, both day and night, became accredited by the national Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology in 1981, on the first attempt. And when he was

nominated in the Spring of 1989 to honorary lifetime board membership of the Purdue University at Fort Wayne Alumni Association, he permitted himself to appear in public to receive it. But he generally avoided and would not seek offices, awards, or public celebrations. Sometimes this was because he knew full well he could be overcome by emotion at a key moment. A greater factor, however, was the discipline imposed upon him by his
own teaching philosophy, a literate man, he almost never succumbed to opportunities, let alone pressures, to divert his energies to exhibiting his scholarship outside the classroom and off-Campus; and, in what was a paradox for some, he was strongly opposed to compulsory undergraduate evaluations of faculty. The true educator he strove to be was convinced that a true education ultimately alters beliefs, attitudes, and behavior, and that the only criteria by which education can be fairly judged are the attainments of former students, for which he was prepared to wait. If by his own standards it is early yet for his life's work to be judged, at least it may now be possible to offer a vote of confidence in his teachers of long ago.

Others came and went, but Smitty's intellectual and emotional devotion to applied engineering education on the Fort Wayne campus stayed on. He maintained contacts with and records of former students and alumni. He continued to keep students first. Knowing he would be forced to resign by a questionable rule of law, he did not stop developing computer programs for student use, and eventually returned to teach in his seventies as an associate faculty member. Many will attest that he did not fail to take part in the dialogue essential to the remarkable development of this campus, and that in the final analysis his loyalty never wavered. He will be long remembered.