

## MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

### JAMES T. WATKINS IV (1907 – 1982)

James T. Watkins was born in 1907 in San Francisco. His paternal great grandfather, a famous sea captain, had established the family in California. His mother and father were both physicians. In 1938 he married Elise Gettier, a Smith College alumna, who survives him, as do his brother, Dr. Sherman Watkins, and several nieces and nephews. He died suddenly on September 27, 1982 while in France on vacation.

Before enrolling at Stanford in 1925 Watkins graduated from the San Diego Army and Navy Academy. Having received his A.B. degree from Stanford in 1929, Watkins taught English at a high school in Japan for two years, and subsequently political science at the Central China College for another two years. He then returned to Stanford for graduate study, receiving his A.M. degree in 1934 and his Ph.D. degree in 1941. His principal mentor was Professor Graham Stuart, who remained a life-long friend. While retaining an interest in the Far East, Watkins focused on international relations and, more particularly, on international organization, which he considered to be a promising step in establishing a stable and peaceful community of nations. In pursuit of this interest he spent two years at the Graduate Institute of International Studies at Geneva, working on his dissertation on "China and the League of Nations." Prior to receiving his Ph.D. he taught at the University of Chicago (1938-41). From 1941 to 1943 he was on the faculty of Ohio State University.

Watkins' academic career was interrupted between 1943 and 1946 by his service in the U.S. Navy, in which he attained the rank of Lieutenant Commander. After attending the Naval School of Military Government and Administration at Columbia University, he arrived in Okinawa in March 1945 shortly after the invasion of the island had begun. In December 1945 he became Government Officer for the Military Government of the Ryukyus. He devoted himself to his work, which involved preparations for the establishment of an indigenous administrative organization, in the spirit of a patriot who expected from his country adherence to high standards. Jim was always proud of his endeavors during this period and of the friends he had made in Okinawa. Intending to write a monograph on this American experience in military government he amassed a great deal of material, but his intention fell short of fruition because of his untimely death.

In July 1946, Jim was discharged. On leaving the Navy, he was appointed Assistant Professor at his Alma Mater. He became a full professor in 1953, served as Executive Head of his department from 1950 to 1958, and chaired the International Relations Program from 1947 to 1971. He was a visiting professor at the University of Washington (1948), at the University of Tokyo (1950) and at the University of California at Santa Barbara (1951). He became professor emeritus in 1973.

Professor Watkins began publishing during World War II. He contributed two chapters to an Army symposium volume on Japan (1942) and while in the Navy wrote a monograph on Taiwan (1944). He also published articles in the *American Political Science Review* (1942) and *Social Forces* (1943). After the war he wrote on the settlement with Japan in *Commonwealth* (1950), and coauthored three prophetic articles on control of the Panama Canal in *Foreign Affairs* (1959) and the *Nation* (1960 and 1964). He coauthored a textbook, *General International Organization* (1956), and contributed a chapter to a book on *Control of Foreign Relations in Modern Nations* (1957). For many years he was on the executive committee of the Institute of World Affairs, occasionally serving as director of its annual meetings and contributing to the *Proceedings* which the Institute published. Left unfinished are the above-mentioned monograph on the occupation of Okinawa, and a manuscript on "Mysticism in Walter Pater's *Marius, the Epicurean*," which Professor Watkins considered his "main work."

Jim's life as student, teacher, and alumnus spanned more than half of Stanford's existence and in part explains his unique place in her history. He had known every President of Stanford, from David Starr Jordan on. The rest lies in his character, his values, and his style. Of no one is it truer that "style is the man himself." Patrician in bearing, language, and tastes, he was saved from pompousness by an enduring and endearing self-deprecatory wit. For whom else has a memorial service concluded with a serenade by the Leland Stanford Junior University Marching Band?

His values were distilled from the history of Western civilization, of which he was a life-long student. Deeply religious, and fascinated by Christian mysticism, he was not pious, and indeed to the pious might have seemed occasionally irreverent. He was a patriot, but a discriminating one, whose judgment of his country's conduct was tempered by idealism and by the historian's sense of the limitations of the current ruling dogma of national sovereignty in international relations. Innately conservative, he nonetheless realized that change is not only prudent but often necessary in the affairs of men and states.

His character was formed by adherence to the stern classical virtues, softened by the compassion of the later humanistic tradition, in whose literature through wide reading and remarkable memory he was at home. Demanding of himself, he was charitable toward the waywardness of others.

He thought of himself foremost and always as a teacher, and gloried not in the title of professor but in the opportunities it afforded him. Inspirational in the classroom, he was capable of lapidary and memorable language which countless numbers of his former students recall and quote. Proud of his most accomplished students, he was even more delighted when he succeeded in showing "under-achievers" how to reach their true potential. But he never equated good teaching simply with brilliant classroom performance. Without children of his own he, like the University's founders, thought of all Stanford students (not just those who had studied with him) as his children. No student in distress of mind, body or estate was beyond his concern or turned to him, as many did, without receiving his help; indeed, he quietly sought out those who needed it.

One fruit of these efforts is the James T. Watkins Discretionary Fund, established by some of his former students, and now to be perpetuated.

As an alumnus his devotion to Stanford transcended mere rational respect for it as an institution and surmounted every difficulty and disappointment in its daily life. Two beneficiaries of his efforts show his attention both to Stanford's past and to its future. After his retirement he was the moving spirit and founding president of the Stanford Historical Society, now flourishing. It is doubtful that any faculty member in his time was more constantly and deeply involved with the Stanford Alumni Association's activities in behalf of the future welfare of the University. For many years he was the director of the sparkingly successful Alumni Conference program, an early experiment in the concept of "continuing education" in which the Stanford Alumni Association has been a notable pioneer in American higher education. Near the end of his life he said half ruefully and half jestingly that he had finally concluded that he couldn't run Stanford. In truth, he had never tried to. But he never ceased in his efforts to sustain and advance it as a university of high degree.

Kurt Steiner, Chairman  
Robert A. Horn  
Robert C. North