IN MEMORIAM

CHARLES W. LAUGHTON

Charles W. Laughton, Professor of Social Work, died suddenly on January 8, 1975. He had joined the faculty of the School of Social Work in 1951, the second year of the School's existence. He served as Associate Professor of Social Work from 1951 to 1967, when he was promoted to the rank of Professor and appointed Associate Dean of the School. He continued to serve as Associate Dean from 1967 until shortly before his death, and was Acting Dean in 1972-73.

Professor Laughton was born in Quincy, Massachusetts, September 22, 1918, the only child of parents who had a history of public service. His father and mother worked in children's institutions in Connecticut. Professor Laughton's childhood experiences included playing on the sports teams of reform schools and other children's institutions where his parents worked. He received the B.A. degree from The American University in 1940, and worked briefly in the field of journalism. While serving as the editor of a church newspaper in Hartford, Connecticut, he met Martha Chapman and they later married. Martha and Charles were the loving parents of four children, Trisha, Kathy, Becky, and Stuart.

During World War II, Professor Laughton served in the Army Medical Corps and became deeply interested in social work. Following his discharge from service, he began professional study and received the Master's degree from the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration in 1947. After several years on the faculty at The University of Texas, he took a leave of

absence for doctoral study, receiving the Doctor of Social Work degree in 1963 from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University in St. Louis.

Prior to his coming to Texas, Professor Laughton had served as Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work at The University of Kansas in Lawrence. He had also worked with Community Studies, Inc., and the Family Service Association, both in Kansas City.

Professor Laughton's distinguished contributions to the field of social work were concentrated in Austin where he served in a wide variety of consultative, advisory, or volunteer positions. He was a staff consultant to the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health for almost twenty years. He helped organize the Community Council of Austin and Travis County in 1957, and served that body in numerous ways for the rest of his life. In only his last five years, he was a consultant or advisor to the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, the Texas Association for Mental Health, the Veterans Administration Hospital in Houston, the Texas Social Welfare Association and Texas United Community Services, the Advisory Committee for Welfare Reform in Texas, the Austin Council for Services to Teenage Parents, the Advisory Committee on Experimental School Programs of the Austin public schools, the Advisory Committee of the Southern Regional Education Board, the Texas State Department of Public Welfare, and The University of Texas Allied Health Sciences School in Galveston.

He also made significant contributions in the field of social work education. He pioneered the development of undergraduate education in social work when the emphasis was restricted to the graduate level; he served as a member

of the Program Committee of the Council on Social Work Education, made numerous presentations on panels to annual meetings of the Council; and authored significant articles for the Journal of Education for Social Work; he helped develop the first doctoral program in social work in Texas and provided leadership in the development of the Continuing Education Program at the School; he produced the first authoritative study of social work manpower in Texas.

At The University of Texas, he served in an advisory capacity for the rehabilitation counseling program in the Department of Special Education and for the Community Mental Health program in the Department of Psychology. He was a member of the Financial Aid to Students Committee, the Faculty Compensation and Promotion Committee, the Technical and Professional Services Committee of the Latin-American Institute, the University Council, and the Graduate Assembly.

At the School of Social Work, Professor Laughton's assignments and committee memberships were too numerous to list. One particularly notable contribution was his development of the Social Work Foundation and its Board of distinguished community leaders whose contributions have meant much to the School. Charles served the Foundation as Executive Secretary from its creation until his death.

Professor Laughton was an advocate for equal rights for women long before the present women's movement. He always made himself available to help people, bringing a calm approach to frantic problems that seemed to make trying situations less distressing. It was only natural that his concern for individual rights made him a strong supporter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Professor Laughton was an avid follower of new editions and opening occasions. He made it a point to get the first issue of any new magazine or journal. He

always tried to be present on the occasion of a new opening and was at the Faculty Center on its opening day when he was stricken by a fatal heart attack.

At a memorial service, Jack Otis, Dean of the School of Social Work, related the following anecdote:

> "Just before we moved into our present social work building in 1969, a decision had been made to destroy the red brick wall that serves as a privacy screen for the patio area. While I negotiated by phone on this issue, Charles quietly went to the building where he stationed himself between the wall and the bulldozer that we feared was on its way. Until this struggle was won, Charles stayed at the wall.
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> "Beneath Charles' phlegmatic exterior was a man of great passion who fought for many years--quietly and effectively--for a more humane and just society. It was our good fortune to know him and to benefit from the legacy of good works he left for us and others."

Lorene L. Rogers

Lorene L. Rogers, President of
The University of Texas at Austin

Bill D. Francis

Bill D. Francis, Secretary
General Faculty

This Memorial Resolution was prepared by a Special Committee consisting of George Herbert (Chairman), Louis DeMoll, and James E. Payne.