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Visit with Wharton

'Not president who decrees or directs'

(Gail Morris, assistant editor in the MSU News Bureau, and Bill Mitcham, director of the MSU Photo Laboratory, interviewed and photographed the new University president, Clifton Wharton, in his apartment home in New York City for nearly two hours Sunday. Following are excerpts from their recorded conversation.)

Dr. Wharton: Let me make a beginning statement.

In my meetings with the various representatives of the press I have stressed the fact that I did not come to Michigan State with any set of preconceived ideas as to what the university ought to be doing.

I look upon a university of the size of Michigan State as being an organic entity, a human institution, which is made up of all its integral parts. And this means trustees, faculty, students, as well as the non-academic staff.

They make up the university, much more so than the buildings do and much more so than the president does. It is they who make the major decisions *together as to what are to be the future directions of the institution.*

I firmly intend to adhere to a policy that it is not the president who decrees or directs.

I look upon this task as an opportunity for me to provide the necessary support to the individuals in the university who have ideas or programs or projects or activities in which they are interested.

I think this is the only way a major institution of the size of Michigan State and with the divisions of Michigan State will be able to move ahead and continue to be an exciting institution.

* * *

Q. What do you consider the primary function of a university?

A. I think it was President-Emeritus Hannah who expressed the modern view of the land-grant university as a continuation of the notion of service. He felt that people were more important than things, and that education should be the handmaiden of the people.

This expression of the basic philosophy of a land-grant is very good and it is one that I subscribe to.

I have always been impressed with the tremendous success of the land-grant concept in combining teaching, research and extension for the service of agriculture in the rural areas of the U.S. This combination is probably responsible more than anything else for the tremendous burgeoning, almost explosion, of U.S. agriculture.

I think this combination might very well have some important lessons in it for some of the other activities in which the land-grant universities might be interested. I do feel any university in this day and age is an important engine of change; the way in which it differs, of course.



Clifton R. Wharton Jr.

Q. What do you think the university's role should be in looking toward our future highly urbanized society?

A. As I indicated before, this is not to be a unilateral decision.

I think the majority of people recognize that the problems of higher education today in our society are critical. We are going through a period of significant change, of social and political and economic turmoil in certain areas.

The university is one of the major institutions in our society and certainly it is going to be subjected to these forces and pressures as any other major institution would be.

How involved the institution becomes, how the institution chooses to view itself in terms of these forces, is something I think is already emerging at a number of different campuses, but I would rather leave this until the institution itself moves along.

It is not as though Michigan State is just starting from scratch. It has a tremendous tradition and history; it has excellent activities and programs and projects, and this is one of the reasons why I was attracted by it.

It is an exciting institution.

* * *

Q. What are your academic accomplishments as opposed to your administrative accomplishments?

A. You mean some of the professional things I have done which meet the test of my peers within the profession I have chosen.

Along this line, I have conducted a number of research projects, I have published a great deal in professional journals, and in addition, I have a book coming out in a month or two on "Subsistence Agriculture and Economic Development."

My research includes such topics as the motivations, values and attitudes of peasant farmers, the problems of monopsony (monopoly buying) in rural areas, international agricultural trade, the supply response of peasant farmers (an econometric study of how farmers respond to price incentives).

I also have done a great deal of research on the problems of international education, particularly the role of U.S. universities in foreign

agricultural development as well as the problems of curriculum reform in foreign universities.

* * *

Q. What courses did you teach while at the University of Malaysia and at Stanford?

A. I taught freshman principles of economics for six years. In fact, I have a textbook on economics for students from developing countries which is about 40 percent done. And I was about to start a sabbatical in order to finish it.

This was a result of the experiment I conducted with the course trying to make it more suitable to students in developing countries.

I also have taught, while at Malaysia, courses on Keynesian economics, advanced economic theory, applied economics and international economics/international trade.

While I was at Stanford, I taught the one semester graduate course on economic development and the graduate seminar on economic development.

* * *

Q. How would you describe your style of administration?

A. I firmly believe that what is frequently required is not a pronouncement of leadership but rather the encouragement of the individuals within the institution.

I like to see people get not only responsibility and authority but also recognition for what they are doing.

There's nothing to me more exciting than the person who's suddenly got an idea or a program or a project; he's got the ball and he wants to run with it.

I get a big bang out of this. I like to encourage people to do this.

This to me is what makes for a great deal of excitement in a university, what gives it its forward thrust.

If one proceeds to delimit, delineate the strictures and limits of an activity, this is a very stifling environment.

I like a situation in which people are able to, in the common parlance, "do their thing." This is something which I have always done. When one does move in this way, you get the best out of

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"I look upon this as an opportunity for me to provide necessary support to the individuals in the university . . ."

Not the president . . .

(Continued from page 1)

people. They are doing what they want and you are trying to help them and this is a marvelous way to push ahead.

* * *

Q. What do you suspect may be the most challenging part of your job or the greatest obstacle facing you in assuming the presidency?

A. I don't think there's any one that I would select. I think the job itself in its totality is a challenge. I'll do my best to try to be ready.

* * *

Q. Will you be visiting campus frequently before January 1?

A. Mrs. Wharton and I will be coming out for Homecoming Weekend, and after that there will be some short trips to get acquainted with key persons.

But I'm sure all of you can appreciate that it's going to take some time for me to find my way around campus.

In fact, I was thinking the other day it probably would have been better if I had been appointed perhaps in the beginning of September and I could have joined the freshman orientation class and taken the tour around campus.

It's going to take quite a time to get acquainted with the people in the University, but I'll get cracking on it just as soon as I can.

* * *

Q. What were your prime responsibilities as vice president of the Agricultural Development Council?

A. Well, as you know, it's a very small organization. There is a president with whom I've worked for 16 years, except for one year. We have a staff overseas, who are professionals, and in addition to my responsibilities as the number two person for the past four years has been the work we have been undertaking with American universities.

We had a program of making research grants to professors and organizing a series of workshops and seminars for professors from different universities to meet together, such as the one that was held at Michigan State in May of last year on African Development.

This concern was one of working on the problems of training students from abroad in the United States and how to avoid some of the problems they encounter.

It might be amusing to some of the people at Michigan State that the question of relevance has been raised by some of the foreign students related to the courses they are studying in the United States and the problems they will face at home. So relevance is not exclusively a concern of U.S. students.

* * *

Q. By small, what do you mean?

A. We have a staff now of about 12 persons working abroad. We provide fellowships to Asians — an average of 50 to 60 a year who come to the U.S. And we have since the beginning of the programs awarded about 260 fellowships to Asians. The program of research grants to U.S. universities totaled \$1.5 million and we made about 144 grants. The workshops and seminars involved an unduplicated total of about 500 professors and professionals from all over the United States.

* * *

Q. You have stated you are "a man first, an American, second, and black, third." Are you aware that to put your

MSU's new first family



Standing: Bruce, President-elect Wharton; seated: Mrs. Wharton, Clifton III.

priorities in this order, you will run up against members of the Black Liberation Front who say they feel it is important to be black first?

A. I'm very proud of being black and of the accomplishments which my people have made in the United States. And if I can continue in my own small way to make a contribution, I will also be very pleased.

From my standpoint, there is a basic human question involved and from the standpoint of individuals who would like to have a sense of identity, because this has been denied to them, a different order of priority is quite understandable.

Naturally, if one looks at my background and experiences, one can perhaps get the impression that this has not been a critical problem for me.

But I'm not so sure that the analogy is exact in the sense that I think all American blacks, regardless of their level and experience, have had very similar experiences because of blackness. The activities one engages in, the movements which one participates in, and the contributions one tries to make may differ, but one of the things I have found is that when blacks are together, there is a very strong common bond.

One of the things which I find very gratifying is that today in the United States there is a far greater sense of unity among black people, and this

unity I think transcends the income level, the educational levels, the intellectual levels.

I think what is happening within the black community today is that the individuals who perhaps have been more fortunate than their brothers are joining hands with them and saying, "We will now work together as a united force."

This I think is much more important than the strict issue of the labels, as it were, because I think that while some of the labeling might be partly rhetoric, some of it is very necessary for particular parts of the black society.

I look at it very much as a process which required a very wide range of activities, wide range of approaches, because this has been a very serious and long standing problem in our society.

The most marvelous thing to my mind is the fact that all of us who have differing talents, interests, and abilities are now getting together and finding that we can work together in a joint fashion for the accomplishment of the objectives of all the constituents of the black community in the U.S.

* * *

Q. Do you feel that by your actions you will be accepted or repudiated by the black community?

A. I would very much hope that I would be accepted as I have been in the past.

I think one of the things which is very worthwhile emphasizing is that there are a number of black people in the militant movement, admittedly on the more intellectual side, who are very close friends of mine and have been for many years.

We grew up together and went to school together and have always been in touch and while I think each of us has proceeded in a different fashion, we all see that there are different ways of accomplishing objectives so long as we work together.

But I would also stress that I will do my best to be not just the president of black students at Michigan State or the president of the black faculty, but the president for the entire University.

* * *

Q. If MSU had been searching for a president five years ago, do you think you would have been considered?

A. I really don't know. I do know that since my return from Malaysia in 1964, I have been approached by four other universities for presidencies, all of them major universities in the North and two of them very large universities.

I was not interested in the others, but the Michigan State one I responded to very favorably.

He's known as 'quiet firster'

(Editor's Note: The following was prepared by the Agricultural Development Council, Inc., of which Clifton Wharton Jr. is now vice president.)

The career of Clifton R. Wharton Jr. as an expert on economic development in developing countries began some 20 years ago when Gov. Nelson Rockefeller hired him for one of his Latin American non-profit organizations. Today, Wharton is vice president of the Agricultural Development Council, Inc., an organization established by the Governor's older brother, John D. Rockefeller III, to work on the economic and human problems of agricultural development in Asia.

Wharton is a special type of Black pioneer known as a "quiet firster." For example, earlier this year he was the first Negro elected a Director of the Equitable Life Assurance Society, one of the 10 largest U.S. corporations. Characteristically, the event took place with little fanfare.

Wharton's record is filled with such quiet firsts. He was a founder of the U.S. National Student Association and was the first Negro to hold the office of national secretary. He was the first Negro to be admitted to the School of Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University in Washington, D.C., and the first to receive a master's degree from that institution. In fact, he ate, slept, and studied in the same building with other students right in the heart of Washington at a time when this was unheard of; yet he did it without fanfare or fuss, and graduated at the top of his class with "highest honors". He was the first Negro to receive a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Chicago in 1958. Now he is at the top of an organization which works on the economic and human problems of agricultural development around the world.

Wharton comes by his "quiet first" approach naturally. His father, Ambassador C. R. Wharton, used the same technique.

The senior Wharton was a career diplomat in the U.S. Foreign Service for 40 years until his retirement in 1964. Few white or even Afro-Americans know of him, yet the senior Wharton was the first man of his race to come up through the diplomatic ranks and become a career Ambassador. He was the first Negro chief of mission in a white country and the first Negro to be an Ambassador behind the Iron Curtain (Rumania). His final post was as Ambassador to Norway.

"The father and the son are different in one respect," according to a close friend of the family. "The father always shunned any publicity which focused on race; the son does not seek it, but does not avoid it. But both of them never

accept a job or a position if they feel that the offer was due to race and not their ability or competence."

As the younger Wharton puts it bluntly, "I like to express my militancy by meeting the competition totally on their ground without any special consideration. I have never in my career knowingly accepted a position or a job where race was the primary consideration; in each case, the situation was one where I could utilize and demonstrate a set of skills and competencies. Meeting racism and white competition on these terms - and beating it - is what I call positive militancy!"

Thus far, Wharton Jr.'s 20-year career shows promise of out-stripping that of his father. Upon graduation from the School of Advanced International Studies, Wharton joined the American International Association, for Economic and Social Development.

He began as an executive trainee so that he could learn as much as possible about all facets of philanthropic efforts devoted to foreign technical assistance. He quickly moved up and became the head of the AIA reports and analysis division, when he decided that he should go back to graduate school. Characteristic of Wharton's independent streak was the way he went about it. He decided upon economics and economic development as a field for study and then, even though he had never studied economics before, he tried to find the best - the University of Chicago. He applied for a job with Prof. Theodore W. Schultz who was about to embark on a major evaluation of U.S. technical assistance efforts in Latin America. With Wharton's strong background in Latin America and with his perfect command of Spanish picked up as a child in Spain, Schultz immediately signed him up. For



the next four years, Wharton worked part time on his doctoral degree program while he maintained himself and his wife plus baby son by serving on the Ford Foundation-financed project.

Before Wharton had quite finished his dissertation, Arthur T. Mosher who had been appointed Executive Director of the Agricultural Development Council (then known as the Council on Economic and Cultural Affairs) persuaded Wharton to join the ADC staff. Mosher had been associated with Wharton in the Chicago project and knew that Wharton's professional competence plus his previous acquaintance with the Rockefeller family philanthropic enterprises were an ideal combination for this new venture.

The Board of Trustees agreed and Wharton was immediately immersed in helping develop the Council's new program and trouble shooting the projects which it had underway in Asia.

Over the past 12 years, Wharton has continued to move ahead quietly

pioneering new accomplishments and firsts. From 1958 to 1964 the Council stationed him in Malaysia where he was responsible for their program in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Malaysia. He was a visiting professor at the University of Malaya and published many studies on the development problems of Southeast Asia. He served on the Board of Trustees of the Singapore American School and was president of the American Association of Malaya from 1963 to 1964. When he returned to the United States in 1964, he spent a sabbatical year at Stanford University as a visiting professor in the Research Center in Economic Growth and the Food Research Institute.

Returning to the Council's headquarters in 1965, he was appointed director of the American Universities Research Program, under which he



administered a \$1.5 million program of grants and seminars for academicians in U.S. universities. In 1966, he was appointed acting executive director of the Council, and in 1967, vice president. From 1965 to 1967 he was chairman of the Malaysia Council of the Asia Society, helping to set up this important group designed to facilitate and encourage greater understanding of Malaysia in the United States.

He is a member of the prestigious Council on Foreign Relations and has begun to add Africa to his interests in Latin American and Asia. In November of last year he participated in the African-American Dialogues in Nairobi, Kenya.

Wharton's involvement in U.S. foreign policy largely waited until his father retired in 1964. "The similarity in our names might have led to confusion, and I had no wish to embarrass my father since there were areas of U.S. foreign policy where we amicably disagreed," Wharton quietly pointed out. However, as soon as he indicated a willingness to lend his talents to the solution of U.S. foreign problems, he was tapped. When President Johnson asked Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman to lead a task force to Vietnam following the January 1966 Honolulu meetings, Wharton was selected. He was the only member of the 10-man mission who had repeatedly visited Vietnam over the years. His fluent French and previous intimate acquaintance with key Vietnamese agriculturists and government officers were invaluable to the Freeman group.

"I had been visiting Vietnam some three or four times a year since 1958, each time meeting with younger economists, extension specialists and university professors. The visits were professional ones to discuss mutual problems and ideas. When I arrived in Vietnam with Secretary Freeman, I was amazed to find many of these dynamic



young men in key government positions. Though I was on a U.S. government sponsored mission, they still responded to me as a friend and professional colleague."

The elder Wharton always wanted his son to follow in his footsteps and become a U.S. diplomat. With characteristic independence, the younger Wharton resisted. "I was naturally attracted to the international field, but I wanted to try something different than straight diplomacy." He decided to select a career in what was then in 1948 a new field, "technical assistance."

"When I graduated from Harvard in 1947, the main speaker was General George C. Marshall announcing the Marshall Plan for Europe. I was tremendously impressed and decided that the re-development of Europe and the development of the newly emerging nations was going to be a critical variable in international relations."

He has now entered the foreign policy field with enthusiasm and is in considerable demand for he represents a unique combination of a professional economist experienced in the problems of agricultural development and simultaneously skilled in international affairs and diplomacy. He is a member of the Department of State's Advisory Panel on East Asia and the Pacific, a member of the Executive Committee of AID's Southeast Asia Development Advisory Group, and a member of the Advisory Council of his alma mater, the School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, D.C. Most recently, he was appointed to the Development Committee of the U.S. Council of the International Chamber of Commerce and to the United Nations Association (USA) panel on World Population and the Quality of Human Life.

Wharton was born in Boston, Mass., but received his early education from his mother while with his parents abroad in the Canary Islands, Spain. When the Spanish Revolution was imminent in 1936, they sent young Clifton back to the U.S. to attend the famous Boston Latin School, the oldest public school in the United States.

Wharton is married to the former Delores Duncan of Danbury, Conn., and New York City. Mrs. Wharton is active in modern art and is a member of the Junior Council of the Museum of Modern Art. She is completing a book on the contemporary artists of Malaysia for the Asia Society.

He has a reputation among his colleagues as an indefatigable worker who rarely takes a vacation. During the past 10 years he has always had two full-time secretaries. His wife confesses that the only way she successfully gets him to take time off is to get a commitment a year in advance. "Once he gives me his word that he will take a vacation and specifies the dates, he sticks to it."

(Faculty News photos by Bill Mitcham)





Gail Morris questions President-elect Wharton.

To Harvard at 15

Bright, very bright

By GAIL MORRIS
University News Bureau

University president. It's a tall order, but the man who will take the helm of Michigan State on Jan. 2, 1970, possesses a distinct presidential bearing.

Clifton R. Wharton Jr., 43, was impressed with this university's efforts to attract disadvantaged and minority group students, and with MSU's modern interpretation and application of the land-grant philosophy.

His presidential qualifications include a long list of distinguished accomplishments in international development work. The Negro economist also wears his personal qualifications with an appealing dignity.

He impressed me as gracious, poised, affable, articulate and soft-spoken. And bright, very bright — so bright he entered Harvard at age 15. The school days at Boston Latin and Harvard are detectable in the inflections of words like "world" and "war," and the lowering of his voice as he approaches the end of a thought.

He and his wife, Dolores, and two sons, Clifton III (age 17) and Bruce (10), live on the seventh floor of an unassuming but comparatively modern 16-story apartment building in upper Manhattan.

Their apartment is tastefully decorated with Oriental objets d'art and furniture collected in their many travels abroad, including six years in Malaysia.

Wharton's office is one the 31st floor of a building downtown overlooking St. Patrick's Cathedral.

"I once remarked to a friend that after you've been in foundation work for a while, you begin feeling like God — handing out all that money," Wharton said.

"Yes," the friend quipped, "and you even have your own church."

A droll sense of humor goes along with a radiant smile that transforms the serious expression on his youthful face.

This lighter side surfaced when I asked the president-elect to recount his fondest memories of his own college days.

"Meeting my wife was number one," he said. Then they laughed. "It's a family joke," he said, clasping his hand over hers. Son Bruce was beaming, apparently looking forward to the prospect of hearing it again.

It was when he was a sophomore history major at Harvard, just 16, that he met the future Mrs. Wharton. She was still a high school senior, visiting a cousin at Radcliffe. The cousin matched them in a blind date.

"It's funny because I had a policy then of never accepting a blind date," he said. Mrs. Wharton added that she had a similar policy.

Shared fun is a characteristic of their family life. Young Clifton enjoys his parents' interest in the theatre, Bruce their interest in Oriental culture. He's taking Chinese at school.

"Bruce was born in Singapore," Wharton explained, "and by the time he is 25, it has been estimated that half the world's population will be Chinese."

His other favorite memory from student days concerns his "activist" role in founding the National Student Association. One of his good friends from those days is William Welch, executive director of the Democratic National Committee. Wharton nominated Welch to be president of NSA, and he himself was elected the first executive secretary.

His interest in Latin American development came about partly because of his bilingual fluency in Spanish, partly because he wanted to have a career apart from his famous ambassador father's.

Mrs. Wharton has never seen the MSU campus, but her husband was one of several speakers at a Winds of Change seminar, and in May he addressed a conference here on African Development sponsored by the Agricultural Development Council.

Board OKs budget request, Breslin, Kevern assignments

At its meeting last Friday, the Board of Trustees:

—Approved the additional title of executive vice president for Jack Breslin to the University and of the board.

—Gave approval to the naming of Niles R. Kevern as professor and chairman of fisheries and wildlife.

—Approved the University's 1970-71 budget request.

—Took under consideration a request that Oakland University be given autonomy from MSU.

—Approved a plan to make the first M.D. degrees available in 1970.

Breslin, a Michigan State graduate who has held several administrative posts here, will continue as secretary of the University and of the board. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from MSU, and is former placement director and assistant to the president.

Kevern joined the faculty in 1966 as associate professor of fisheries and wildlife. He had served as a radiation ecologist for the Oak Ridge, Tenn., National Laboratory.

* * *

The University's proposed 1970-71 budget asks for \$17 million more in state appropriations, including \$8.1 million for wage adjustments for all faculty and staff.

The adjustments provide for cost of living and merit increases to establish

faculty salaries for instruction, educational services and the Library.

The total proposed budget for the East Lansing campus is \$102,688,011. Other requests include \$7,683,365 for the Agricultural Experiment Station and \$8,352,185 for the Cooperative Extension Service.

A resolution presented by Chancellor Durward B. Varner asked the board to authorize Oakland University—MSU's affiliate for 10 years—to become independent by Jan. 1, 1971.

A committee will report on the matter to the board in 60 days.

The trustees also approved a plan to make it possible to award the first M.D. degrees as early as 1971. The plan would allow students transferring from MSU in 1970 to return the following year for their degrees. The four-year medical school was authorized this summer.

Wharton concerned for role's relevancy

A faculty member who nominated Michigan State's president-elect describes Clifton R. Wharton Jr. as a man who has concern for "the relevance and effectiveness of the University to meet the needs of the whole community — campus, local, state and the world."

Nicolaas Luykx, associate professor of agricultural economics, submitted Wharton's name to the All-University Search and Selection Committee.

Their paths crossed in Vietnam, where Wharton was running a marketing project for students at the University of Hue, and Luykx was doing field research. Luykx recalls that Wharton encouraged his Vietnamese students to do research that related to local problems.

"His career to date has been involved with the relevance of American higher educational institutions to the problems of the world," said Luykx.

Despite Wharton's background and personal interest in international agricultural development, Luykx feels that the new president's tenure will not necessarily signal a new heyday for international programs at MSU.

"Knowing his intellectual and moral fiber . . . he's going to be concerned with the full range of the university."

Luykx outlined four of Wharton's strongest characteristics: "his creativity, energy, resourcefulness and his resoluteness."

Wharton has an ability to gather information from as many sources as possible, reach a decision and stick to it once his mind is made up, Luykx said.

"This trait will give strength and stability to the University."

Wharton on TV

President-elect Wharton will be interviewed this week on WMSB-TV's "Assignment 10" program. Newsman Craig Halverson's filmed visit with the new president will be shown Friday (Oct. 24) at 7 p.m. and repeated Sunday at 12:30 p.m.

Abernathy slated in Issues series

The Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy will speak Friday (Oct. 24) at 3 p.m. in the Auditorium to open this year's Great Issues Program of the ASMSU.

An organizer of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, he became president of the SCLC following the Rev. Martin Luther King's assassination in 1968.

Also scheduled to appear during the fall portion of the lecture series is political columnist Max Lerner.

Czech Symphony set for Monday

The Prague Symphony will perform in the Auditorium at 8:15 p.m. next Monday (Oct. 27) as a Series "A" attraction in the Lecture-Concert Series.

The orchestra, now on its first American tour, features Czech musicians and music by two Czech composers.

Under its principal conductor, Vaclav Smetacek, the orchestra will perform "Symphonic Scherzo" by Karel Boleslav Jirak and "The New World Symphony" by Anton Dvorak.

Czechoslovakia's foremost cellist, Josef Chuchro, will perform Dvorak's "Concerto in B Minor for Cello."

The next Lecture-Concert attraction is the Series "B" performance by the Royal Choral Society next Thursday (Oct. 30) at 8:15 in the Auditorium.

MSU Faculty News

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