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September 13, 1928.

My dear Mr. Greene:

Your letter of June 28th about the age limit for the trustees puts the case for indefinite tenure as well as it can be stated. On the whole, however, I belong definitely among those who favor the limitation. These are the chief reasons:

1. With rare exceptions men of sixty or over become fixed in their ideas, suspicious of new things, reluctant to undergo the pain of thinking (you remember the man who was described as not thinking but "rearranging his prejudices"). The age limit makes sure that this type will not go on beyond a certain point. The few exceptional people who keep flexible and imaginative will be available for consultation. You mention Mr. Rose, for example. It is quite understood that he will be only too glad to be consulted at any time and to give his best judgment about anything that may be submitted to him.

2. You speak of the need of courageously weeding out the inefficient. My experience is that no one really has the courage to do this. I have had considerable experience with boards of trustees and have known institutions in which there was practical unanimity of opinion as to the essential inefficiency of some member, and yet

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no one was willing that the man's feelings should be hurt. Groups usually have no courage and individual administrators can do almost everything except weed out the people by whom they are elected and to whom they are responsible.

3. Foundations are in particular need of new blood and new ideas. Banks, law schools, courts may possibly thrive under the traditional administration of old men, but if these big funds are not to become mere replicas of government red tape and bureaucratic stagnation they must have a constant inflow of imaginative, innovating people. With a board of trustees limited in size either by charter or by the requirements of efficient organization, the only way to get younger men in is to get older men out.

Now that the rule has been adopted I am sure there will be a disposition at least to give it a trial before suggesting any modification. The support for the regulation was pushed vigorously by Doctor Wilbur, who introduced the motion, and by most of the older men, including Mr. Rose and me. On your theory that old men are good counsellors, I hope you will give due weight to our senile wisdom!

Yours sincerely,

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V:DSB