

Memorial Resolution of the Faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison On the Death of Professor Emeritus Willard F. Mueller

Fritz was born in 1925, the great grandson of German immigrants who settled in Lebanon, WI in 1846. His parents experienced some of the hardships of the early 20th century. Fighting in France in 1918, his father suffered shell shock and gassing from which he never recovered. Then in 1932, the Great Depression resulted in his parents losing their family farm.

In 1940, Fritz's mother, who was the sole supporter of her two sons, decided to move the family to Menominee, WI so that Fritz's older brother could attend Stout Institute, now UW-Stout. For Fritz, the move was transformative. In his book, *My Growing Up Years*, Fritz says: "I discovered for the first time the pure joy of learning and participating in scholarly matters." His debate coach, Robert Mills, had an enormous impact. With Fritz as the only freshman member, the debate team won the state championship in 1941. The "whiz kid" debater was elected president of his junior class. Heady stuff for a kid who had flunked 3rd grade.

After the entrance of the U.S. into WWII, both Mueller brothers enlisted in the Navy. After 3 years in the Pacific campaign, Fritz enrolled in UW-Madison under the GI Bill. While he thrived in the intellectual environment of UW, he also found time for girls and sporting events. He met his wife, Shirley, at a Badger basketball game in 1947. They married the following year and remained loyal Wisconsin basketball fans for nearly 70 years.

After his bachelors and masters degrees at UW-Madison, Fritz went on to receive his doctorate in economics and law from Vanderbilt University under the distinguished economist, George Stocking. His field of industrial organization deals with issues of competition and monopoly and the social control of industry, especially via the antitrust laws.

The brilliance that was first ignited on the Menominee High School debate team became fully evident as Fritz moved quickly from faculty positions at the U. of California-Davis and Berkeley to UW-Madison in 1957. Then in 1961, at the age of 36, Fritz moved his family to Washington to serve in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. At the Federal Trade Commission, Fritz demonstrated that a capable and energetic economist, backed by a competent staff and with access to key policy makers, could play a central role in formulating economic-based legal rules for antitrust enforcement. Fritz's influence went far beyond the Federal Trade Commission to the White House Staff as well as members of Congress and their staffs. The 1960s is known as one of the most aggressive decades of antitrust enforcement in no small measure due to Fritz's initiatives.

Fritz's career blended the fields of applied economics and antitrust law to design policy prescriptions for limiting market power. Convinced of the central role that "market structure" plays in affecting competition, he devoted much of his career to studying empirically the forces influencing market structure and the competitive impact of market structure on market behavior. This focus was true for the last 30 years of his career at UW-Madison. During the 1970s and 1980s, Fritz led an 18 university consortium that produced several landmark studies of competition in the U.S. food system.

For his scholarly achievements, Fritz was named a Fellow of the American Agricultural Economics Association, which captured the essence of his economic philosophy when it said: "Friends and adversaries agree that Mueller is unintimidated by special interests, unafraid of controversial issues, and dedicated to making the American economic system perform justly as well as economically." The Association also honored Fritz (and several of his colleagues) with awards for Professional Excellence in "Policy Contribution" in 1980, "Quality of Communication" in 1985, and "Quality of Research Discovery" in 1988. In 2007, Fritz was honored as one of the major Pioneers of Industrial Organization in Europe and North America. Appropriately for a Wisconsin economist, his last major study was an

innovative analysis of price manipulation of the National Cheese Exchange in Green Bay, WI. It led to the replacement of that market by a new market at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

Throughout his career, Fritz was actively involved in the U.S. antitrust policy and enforcement. He was a frequent advisor to Congressional committees, members of Congress, and the executive branch. From 1960-1996, he testified 28 times before congressional committees.

Fritz most prized his role as a teacher, researcher and academic colleague. These resulted in his co-authoring over 20 books and monographs and a long list of journal articles. After his death, one of Fritz's students wrote: "Fritz was Wisconsin in its purest and most intellectual tradition. Robert M. LaFollette, Charles Van Hise, Richard T. Ely, Henry Taylor, and Willard F. Mueller fostered a love for the university, its role as a source of science and empirical insight into the operation of industries, and its duty to inform and lead public policies for the betterment of the common citizen." That was our colleague, Willard Fritz Mueller.

Fritz was also devoted to his family. His beloved wife of 62 years, Shirley, died December 8, 2010. Fritz is survived by three children, Keith of Madison, Scott (Ann Pfothauer-Mueller) of Middleton, and Kay (David Emerson) of Fall River, and two grandchildren, Nicole and Christopher Mueller of Denver, Colo.