

MAY 2 - 1968

76 East Linden Ave.
Englewood, N. J.
April 30, 1968

Miss Martha Petersen, President
Barnard College
New York, New York

Dear Miss Petersen,

My husband is a graduate of Columbia University, and I hold a Master of Arts from Teachers College, but it is as the mother of two girls presently attending Barnard that I am writing this letter. I know from the highly intelligent and civilized way in which you responded to the incident involving Miss LeClair that you are interested in the attitudes of the parents of the young women attending Barnard. And that is why I think it important to tell you that I very strongly oppose the position taken by Dr. Kirk in the current controversy at Columbia which very much affects my two girls.

I object most of all to his use of the police and force to resolve the situation. Aside from the fact that it appears to be the same kind of thing we find appalling in Poland, Spain, Italy and elsewhere, it is disquieting to think that the President of a great university would subject our sons and daughters to physical force and harm. And it cannot be denied that when the police are called the danger of physical violence is invited.

Also, I object to his 'hard' position taken in regard to amnesty for the students involved. In a position of authority, with maturity, balance, and experience on his side, certainly it was his responsibility, and the responsibility of all adults, to discover all possible ways to compromise. And especially in the present situation where the University has acknowledged error in regard to the gymnasium, and where there is so much student and public support for the University to sever ties with the I. D. A. The gymnasium construction would still be going on if the students hadn't 'revolted'. It is, further, my impression from everything I have read and heard from students and the Newspapers that no clear, unequivocal attempt to conciliate was made.

I have a great regard for Columbia, and I am very happy that my daughters are enrolled at Barnard, but even if this were not so I would write this letter because I feel the actions of Dr. Kirk were unenlightened, unfair, and contrary to the spirit and role of the university in the United States.

Very truly yours,



Christine Mee

(Mrs. M. John Mee)