

# THE ALUMNAE NEWS

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## STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF HUNTER COLLEGE

It seems very simple to take a plant which has been used by the Navy for three years and divert it to the uses of still another government organization. If conditions were now still what they have been in wartime, we could have no objection which was more than an expression of sentiment. But conditions are not the same. On February 15, Governor Thomas E. Dewey addressed to the presidents of colleges in New York State a letter which summarizes the findings of the State Department of Education. This letter says in part: "In short, therefore, even if we should be able to fill to the limit every college in our State, there will still be at least 38,000 veterans or current high school graduates in our State who will be denied a college education because of the enormous accumulated demand caused by the sudden end of the war and the demobilization of the armed forces in a single year." The Governor then goes on to say that "our colleges need to expand the use of their educational facilities temporarily by at least 26%".

Meanwhile the American Council on Education, which represents all the major educational institutions of the United States, points out two additional facts. First, there are now enrolled in the special high schools of all states a very large number of discharged veterans and young armament factory workers who expect to be ready for college within the year. Second, the chances are that if selective service is terminated by Congress next spring, 200,000 additional students will seek to gain admission to the colleges. Already virtually every college is turning away more applicants than it can admit, and in most of the larger colleges for women the number of those who apply is five times as great as the number that can be accepted.

If, under the circumstances, the decision is still to close the Bronx unit of Hunter College, an estimated probable total of 5,000 students annually will not only be not admitted, but will be added to the already huge throng who cannot find admission. GEORGE N. SHUSTER

## RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE FACULTY OF HUNTER COLLEGE

WHEREAS, recent studies of the educational situation made officially by the New York State Department of Education, and unofficially by other groups, indicate clearly that an unprecedented demand for college facilities will arise during the coming four years, and that existing space allotted to college teaching in this state will be far from adequate; and

WHEREAS, the release of the Bronx Buildings by the United States Navy makes it possible for the first time to plan adequately a post-war educational program for Hunter College students who have

been deprived during the war years of vitally needed facilities for instruction in Home Economics and Physical Education, as well as campus life opportunities indispensable to social guidance; and

WHEREAS, at the present moment over 1500 Hunter College students are receiving instruction in an abandoned primary school building long since declared obsolete; and

WHEREAS, in the immediate past many other sites in the City of New York have been held entirely suitable for the purposes of the United Nations Organization; and

WHEREAS, it has been the general assumption that control of educational properties in the City of New York and determination of educational policy have been lodged in the Board of Higher Education and not in the Board of Estimate, be it

RESOLVED, that the Instructional and Administrative Staffs of Hunter College convey to the members of the Board of Higher Education their earnest concern over suggestions made for the use of the Bronx campus by the United Nations Organization for a period longer than that required for the first meeting of the Security Council in the United States, and their conviction that curtailment of educational opportunities for the residents of the City of New York would be little short of disastrous.

## STATEMENT BY THE ASSOCIATE ALUMNAE OF HUNTER COLLEGE

We, the Associate Alumnae of Hunter College, are gratified that part of the buildings and campus of Hunter College has been made available to the United Nations Organization for its first meeting in America. In the interests of higher education in New York, however, and particularly in the interests of the program of Hunter College, we respectfully submit the following facts:

1. Because of the needs of the national emergency at the outset of the war, Hunter College patriotically turned over the Bronx Buildings to the United States Navy for its war-time use.
2. The curtailment of essential facilities for Hunter College necessitated temporary adjustments in the conduct of the College and its courses, which it is highly undesirable to continue.
3. The Bronx site is the only campus available to the students for the development of a well-rounded college life.
4. Unless the Bronx Buildings are restored and put in condition in time for occupancy by Hunter College in September, as planned, it will be necessary to deny admission to eligible applicants, at the very time when local and national policy favors increased opportunities for higher education.

RUTH LEWINSON, President

### ALUMNAE BREAKFAST

Under the charming and able direction of Mrs. Louise Draddy, another College Birthday was pleasantly celebrated at the Hotel Commodore on February 12th. Despite the difficulties of travel and the uncertainty caused by the city-wide fuel-saving edict, Hunter graduates were again reunited in an afternoon of music, conversation, and good companionship.

After the invocation of Dr. Louis Pitt and an introduction by Mrs. Draddy, Dr. Ruth Lewinson, President of the Alumnae, conducted the program. Dr. Lewinson spoke briefly and forcefully of the needs of the Association: the necessity for encouraging leadership among the younger members; for arranging programs in the evenings to meet the changing times; for securing an executive secretary to insure full and accurate alumnae records; for promoting a realistic awareness of budgetary problems and their effects on staff and student morale; and also of the necessity for forming right judgments on such current questions as the proposed state university.

Dr. Lewinson read greetings from Dr. Ordway Tead, and announced with regret Mrs. Mack's inability to attend because of illness in her family.

Dr. Lewinson then welcomed Mrs. Annie Hickinbottom Mills, Professor and Dean Emeritus, honored at the Commencement last June by the Doctor's degree in appreciation of her generous and distinguished service to the College.

Mrs. Samuel Bitterman, whose War Bond Committee set a magnificent record, presented to the President the two citations granted the College by the Treasury Department and the War Finance Committee in recognition of our efforts in the Victory Loan Drive.

Dr. Lewinson then introduced President George N. Shuster, who spoke on "The Human Landscape of Europe". He told us of a continent of ruins,—its spiritual collapse symbolized by Paris and the silent desolation of the Champs Elysees, and its physical defeat by the ruined city of Cologne. He told us of people who "have lost the sense of being people", of the old, who feel only isolation and weariness, and the young, trained in sabotage and opposition, for whom the ways of peace have little meaning. He suggested a plan, in which Hunter might take a vital part: an effective system of student exchange, particularly during the next ten years; the opportunity for European teachers to come here for refreshment and new hope, and then to return to their work of bringing courage and wisdom to the old world; and the extension of our efforts to feed the children of Europe. The movement that decimated Europe, a spirit born of the union of envy and opportunism, can only be finally defeated by a movement dedicated to the brotherhood of man and inspired by charity and faith in human dignity.

Miss Christine Klauer brought the Birthday greetings from the Silver Anniversary class, a gift of current books for the library as well as a check for athletic equipment.

Miss Mary E. Riblet represented the Golden Anniversary Class in offering a gift to the College with the good wishes of her group.

A musical program of unusual charm included songs by Kathryn Ward with accompaniments by Elaine Odesser, pianist, and Helen Myerson, violinist.

The traditional customs of every Breakfast were very happily observed once more in the reading of Helen Gray Cone's "Valentine", in the presentation of the Birthday Cake by the children of Lenox Hill, and in the singing of "The Ivy Leaf" and "Fame" by the Alumnae.

MARGARET GRENNAN

### COLLEGE BIRTHDAY ASSEMBLY

On Wednesday, February 20, at the first Assembly of the new semester, Hunter officially celebrated her Valentine birthday. "The lady is seventy-five," said President Shuster; and now that the Jubilee year is over, he added, "we are looking forward to Hunter's hundredth birthday."

The weather, unfortunately, did not cooperate with Hunter this year; the severe snowstorm of the previous day prevented many a loyal alumna from attending the party. To those present, however, and to all members of the Associate Alumnae, President Shuster conveyed the sincere good wishes of the student body and the faculty. He reviewed very briefly the geographical and architectural history of Hunter, stressing the fact that the present modernistic building is on the site of the original ivy-covered Gothic structure—still dear to the hearts of many of our alumnae! Some day, he continued, we shall have the Bronx buildings restored to us. These are now going through extensive reconversion for occupancy in September, 1946. To the amusement of the students, President Shuster indicated that part of the beauty parlor used by the Waves will be kept for purposes of future experimentation. He also announced that the Home Economics Department will be installed in the Bronx "in great splendor", and that the tennis courts, which have always been an attraction, will be ready for use in May.

After a few comments on Brotherhood Week, which was currently being observed and which was receiving publicity through the movies and the radio, President Shuster announced the first number on the program, songs by members of the Hunter College Choir under the direction of Dr. Anders Emile: "Nobody Knows the Trouble I See", "The Moo Lee Flower", "French Folk Songs", and "O No John". This was followed by greetings from Dr. Ruth Lewinson, President of the Associate Alumnae, who delivered the Valentine message to the College. The fifty year class and the twenty-five year class, she reported, presented gifts to the College; the Alumnae birthday gift this year was a check to the Hunter College Library for books that could not otherwise have been purchased. Miss Lewinson urged "potential alumnae" to organize while in College, beginning with the freshman term, so



they may develop into active members of the Associate Alumnae after they are graduated. Mis Lewinson terminated her talk with the very apt comment that "only in so far as the Alumnae serves the College does the Alumnae really serve".

Birthday greetings were extended to Hunter, too, by students of the Elementary School, High School, and College.

Little Miss Irene Gordon summarized the activities of the Elementary School in the current drive for food and clothing for war-torn Europe. Six hundred and seventy-five cans of food were contributed by the children last semester, and pennies totalling ten dollars and twenty cents were collected in one day recently to purchase food for the children of Europe.

Miss Rhoda Ratner, speaking for the High School, mentioned the various war activities in which the girls of the school had participated. During the war they had been connected with thirty-eight different organizations; they had purchased \$311,000 worth of bonds and stamps; they had held auctions, sponsored fashion shows, and taken part in dramatic productions to raise \$5,000 for the National War Fund, American Red Cross, U.S.O., and various national relief agencies; they made afghans, sweaters, and mittens for the innocent war victims; they made scrap-books for the soldiers; some worked on farms during vacations; since the termination of hostilities they have purchased \$30,000 worth of bonds and stamps for hospital beds and supplies for the wounded veterans. Miss Ratner concluded her very informative talk with the promise of continued service by the students of Hunter High School, who are now helping to clothe and feed the children of the devastated areas all over the world.

The next speaker was Arline Feinstein, President of S.S.G.A., who presented to President Shuster a birthday check, the gift of the students to their College.

The program continued with the singing of two very charming songs, "Chestnut Tree" and "Philosophy", by the Jones-Buswell Trio, with Dorothy Steinmetz at the piano.

President Shuster, at this point, introduced the speaker of the day, Dr. Howard Kershner, Vice-Chairman of the Save the Children Federation. For seven years, Dr. Kershner has voluntarily applied himself to the task of alleviating the suffering of the children in Western Europe, notably in Norway, Holland, Belgium, and France. He mentioned first the fact that the children in the schools in those four countries do not look like our students. They attend school without having had breakfast; their faces are not clean because there is no soap or hot water; they are barefooted or nearly so—some wear shoes with wooden or straw soles, and a few wear felt slippers; they have no paper, crayons, or pencils—some write on pieces of slate that have fallen off roofs, using smaller pieces as crayons; their schools are half ruins; they have no coal, gas, or electricity; they have no books. The homes of these children are, in many cases, less comfortable than

the schools. Most of the houses were destroyed with all their contents. The people burn whatever they can find to produce a little heat for the shacks they occupy. In Holland, Dr. Kershner explained, a million people are homeless; four hundred schools were completely destroyed, and eight hundred more were damaged. It will take five years to restore the fertility of the soil, for now the fields are completely under water. Three or four families are crowded into one damaged house, where there is no glass for the windows and where rain comes through the broken roof. There are five thousand children living in camps waiting for clothing so that they may be sent to foster homes. Dr. Kershner was happy to report that just before he left Holland fifteen thousand pounds of clothing had arrived to be distributed to some of these children.

Although shortage of clothing is serious, shortage of food is much more so, and in Holland the children are living on four hundred calories a day. Little tots four years old, Dr. Kershner informed his shocked audience, weigh only fifteen pounds. In addition, they have no toys, crayons, books, or paper with which to be entertained. This is indeed a sad plight for innocent children! In Belgium and France conditions are about the same. In France Dr. Kershner saw small children faint in their classrooms because of hunger. In Marseille the chief medical inspector informed him that the thirteen-year-old boys and girls were three and an eighth inches shorter and weighed thirteen and a half pounds less than did the same age group five years ago, so serious have been the consequences of insufficient and poor food. Dr. Kershner summarized his findings briefly but very effectively: the weakest children in all history are facing the most difficult problems the world has ever known; to restore democracy throughout the world, we must first restore the schools; "if not for reasons of charity, which are reasons enough, then for reasons of self-interest we must save these children." The Save the Children Federation is shipping supplies to Europe as quickly as it can; it is sending money to individual children who are in desperate need; it is seeking sponsors to further its school program—one hundred and fifty dollars for small schools and two hundred and fifty dollars for large schools. This money is used to purchase the necessary supplies for the schools to function; it is used to restore health to the children and to provide shoes and clothing so that they may attend school. The organization is looking for sponsors for five hundred schools. Dr. Kershner expressed the hope that Hunter College will take care of forty or fifty of these schools.

So graphically did Dr. Kershner present his eye-witness account of the miserable conditions in Western Europe that compassion for the suffering children was increased manifold. It was therefore with tight throats that the audience joined in singing the traditional College Birthday Song and "Fame", and Hunter College began another year in its long and successful history.

CECILIA A. HOTCHNER