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HUNTER COLLEGE

LISTEN TO US

FOREWORD

by Ursula D. Mahoney, '54

All spring we read about student unrest. Campuses all over the country as well as abroad were the scenes of protests and demonstrations—some against the war, the draft . . . some demanding higher Negro enrollments, or Black courses. We saw the pictures, the posters, the police moving in. Then Columbia erupted in a violent outpouring of pent-up frustration.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of that particular demonstration, it did force many people who have long since graduated from college, to recognize that there is indeed a new breed of students today. They *will* protest. They *will* demonstrate. They *will* be arrested. They want a voice and a good, loud voice in running their lives. And as proved at Columbia, if they don't get the opportunity to have their say, they'll make the opportunity. Throughout all these campus rumblings there is a new phrase—student power!

Hunter's president, Dr. Robert Cross, was asked for his views on Columbia, and on students in general, during a radio interview on station WMCA last May. He acknowledged that colleges in general, including Hunter, have not given enough consideration to the uniqueness and individuality of the student and of his generation. There had been an assumption, he said, that faculty and administration were constant but that students "were kind of interchangeable parts that came in and should get what we are going to give them." He thinks this should change, that you have to listen to students, develop better faculty-student relations, open up channels of communication.

We had heard what President Cross had to say about students today. But we also wanted to hear what the students at Hunter had to say. We asked four student leaders to sit down with us one evening:

TONI ANTONUCCI, June '69; Student Senate President, '68-'69.

KATHY BORCHICK, June '70; Academic Affairs Commissioner, '68-'69.

DANNY HEERING, January '69; (Former) Academic Affairs Commissioner, '67-'68.

MARILYN MARCOSSON, June '69; NSA Commissioner, '68-'69.



MARILYN MARCOSSON



TONI ANTONUCCI



DANNY HEERING



KATHY BORCHICK



BETTY FOX



URSULA D. MAHONEY

With the Alumni Association represented by Betty Fox and myself, we asked them about their views on college today. At the risk of oversimplification, their presentation of the mood on the Hunter campus focused on two main areas: 1) the all-too-familiar problem of student apathy, and 2) once you got the students to listen, how to get the faculty and administration to listen? Clearly they were not satisfied with the channels of communication that now exist. The following is a much-abbreviated version of our conversation.

"...the only channel..."

MAHONEY:

We have gone through a spring where there have been student riots not only at Columbia, as President Cross has been talking about, but all over the country and actually around the world, and we have come to a period where they talk about violence in America. Where do you stand in this whole situation? Is the violence on the campus or is it as President Cross has suggested — society isn't moving fast enough? Either the schools aren't moving fast enough to meet the student needs or government hasn't gone fast enough to meet social needs. Just what do student riots mean on a campus?

MARILYN:

I don't think it's really proper at this time to call them student riots. I think that the phrase in itself has a lot of bad feelings attached to it that aren't, as I understand the situation from people I've talked to, the same kind of feelings that are the motivating factors for what is happening on the student campuses. The people who are participating in these demonstrations on the campuses are not out for willful destruction of property. They are not out for physical harm to come to anyone. As I understand from my own experiences and from people I know at Columbia, it was what they felt was the only responsible answer they had to an oppressive administration. And I think it is this kind of being forced into one kind of channel and one kind of channel only that is causing many of the student revolts, not just here in the U.S. but I mean Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Paris, Madrid, England—you can go down a list of countries and it reads like a Who's Who of the university world. Northwestern, Berkeley, Hawaii, Columbia, Duke—it's an endless list and I think that this means there is more to it than just violence and there is more to it than simple youthful exuberance. There really is a feeling that this is the only channel left open.

MAHONEY:

Well, why is that, Marilyn? I mean why have we existed without so much demonstration and all of a sudden you are getting a student group which is channeling that protest into the form of demonstration you know? What is today's student that is making that?

KATHY:

I don't think there is that much of a difference. There were peace demonstrations in the universities in the 30's and it goes back all throughout the 20th century. I don't think it's something special about the student now except that there are things going on now in our country in the governmental policies that are making people stop and think and try to do something in the situation that they are in. The students who are revolting, if you want to say revolting, do so because they are not satisfied with what the administration is giving them. They don't want the administration to give them anything. They want students and faculty and administration to give the whole university one thing, not three separate things from only one segment of the university.

MAHONEY:

In other words, you think students should have power or a much stronger voice than they have had.

KATHY:

Oh yes.

MAHONEY:

I think most of us as alumni are curious as to what the mood is on the Hunter campus at this point. Are there really "revolting" students at Hunter, in a different sense of the word, or are they as quiet as they used to be when I was there in the 50's?

TONI:

I think it's important to say that what we are doing is educating people and we're educating them, I think, somewhat younger than we did before.



We are giving them not the greatest education but a good education, and are instilling in them the ideas of the country, the ideas of democracy and we get them all gung-ho to have chances to improve everything, to see in action what we're teaching them in books. They look for an avenue because they see that some of the things are very incongruent with what they are learning. Then when they look for an avenue to make it manifest and not just an ideal, they are stuck. They are at a dead end. I think that is what happened at Columbia and that we have less of a chance at Hunter because the wall is not that solid. I personally feel, and I felt this way even before I attained the office I now have, that President Cross is somebody you can go up to and say, "Hey, President Cross, I have this problem and I think I have the student body behind me, or a majority of the student body behind me, and this is a problem you should face."

MAHONEY:

Do you think that he has successfully opened up the channel more than it was before?

TONI:

Yes, definitely. I think he's more willing to listen to people.

MAHONEY:

Does the average student feel that way? You know, you people here are—

KATHY:

—Atypical?

MAHONEY:

You do have access that the average student doesn't have. I mean in terms of these luncheons, for example . . . does the average kid who goes feel he can talk about anything? Do you think the kids are not talking and are not saying what's really on their minds? Are you atypical in your feeling that a communication channel is open or do all the students feel that way?

KATHY:

Well . . .

MAHONEY:

Do you attend the President's luncheons?

KATHY:

No, I have never . . . but . . . (laughter) . . . well, if there was anything I had to speak to him about, I could speak to him without going to the luncheons.

MARILYN:

That's the sort of point that I felt in response to your question, what's the mood of Hunter and is it any more active? I think what we have at Hunter is basically a hard core of activists numbering anywhere between 50 and 200, depending on various issues. That's out of 4,500 students. What I am talking about are students who are more to the left than the general student body. These are people who were involved in the April 27 demonstration. We had 300 people come out for an ad-hoc McCarthy committee, 300 dedicated people with whom I worked closely, and it was a very good experience because these were people I had never seen before. But I think most Hunter students don't go to the president's luncheons. At

Hunter, for some reason, we aren't confronted with the same kinds of problems that they are confronted with at Columbia. Our affiliation with defense contracts is certainly minimal, if at all. I mean, there is something that I would get very upset about. Right? So, I don't feel the need to protest that because it doesn't exist at Hunter. If it was there I would.

MAHONEY:

Well, the stereotyped image of the Hunter student has always been an apathetic student body. You can't get them to rally about things . . . You can't get them to come out and make a protest, whatever the nature of your protest is. Is that still true or is that doing you a disservice as the student body? Does the student body really care about issues?

MARILYN:

I would say generally that is a fairly accurate picture. I think that it varies on certain issues and in certain times. The McCarthy Committee was the largest outpouring of student opinion I had ever seen at Hunter.

MAHONEY:

Well, what is it that makes a Hunter student a quiet college student in today's day of the college student?

MARILYN:

I think it's basically a lack of issues. Also, where the Hunter College student comes from is an important segment.

KATHY:

And what he's after . . .

MAHONEY:

What is the Hunter student after?

KATHY:

A degree. We know a lot of our students turn out to be teachers and I think that the majority of the students are there for their degree. It's like job training for their career, whatever it's going to be, and so they don't really care that they have to take so many required courses, because, well, if it gets me what I want in the long run, it's O.K. But the student who is there for an education, and not an education for a specific job, will care about what kind of courses he's getting. And I think those students are very few. And they try to avoid involvement. They try to work out their programs so that it's on a personal, individual level rather than a group level of protest.

MAHONEY:

But President Cross spoke about student power and about students having a voice in what's being taught and how it's being taught . . . Danny, I think you mentioned you were active in the faculty evaluation committee?

KATHY:

Student evaluation committee . . .

MAHONEY:

Student evaluation. Well, as one of the critics of the faculty, what is your opinion of the Hunter faculty?

DANNY:

I am not a critic of the faculty. I just want to make it (or wanted to, past tense, I am not an officer any more) possible for the student who doesn't have it in him to run up and participate very directly in a confrontation system . . . to have some kind of chance to get some kind of information across. Say that, "Well, I am



"...a basic lack of trust..."

interested in these kinds of things. This is not coming across too clearly . . . Make it better . . . Do this, do that, do the other thing." So, I wouldn't classify myself as a really radical person who's going around trying to tear everything down.

MAHONEY:

No, I don't suggest that in the use of the word "critic." I mean as a critic a person who is evaluating someone else's performance, which the students are doing. How do you think the Hunter faculty, for example, is communicating with students today?

DANNY:

I think the whole issue of communications is not the important one. It doesn't really get at the real problems. I think when someone talks to me about communication it's like an academic discussion and it doesn't hit at the real problems. I think one of the major problems at the base of everything is the idea of trust. No matter what the issue, at Hunter or any place else, the student, or even the faculty I guess, must perceive that somewhere in the system there's a basic lack of trust and that there doesn't seem to be any orderly way of proceeding with some kind of assurance that your position will be taken and listened to and, hopefully, acted upon.

One of the very positive observations President Cross did make on that radio show was that students on the whole do not have the access to decision-making power that they need. I think that there can be several stages set up in the development of a student crisis—the first one being issues that are brought up and then not dealt with on a level of trust; they're either shelved or voted on and kind of compromised into non-existence. I think the second level comes right out of that, and that's a building-up of frustration that sometimes takes years and other times takes a matter of hours, which I think happened at Columbia. I think the important factor in that is probably

the intelligence level of the students in general, to a certain degree maybe their sex and to another degree their political makeup . . . I'm not sure about that. And I think eventually even the most conservative campus will get together and decide to do something, and that will take varying forms, again depending on the student body.

MAHONEY:

Getting back to Hunter . . . you feel that the students and the people who are working with the faculty and the administration have this feeling of trust that you speak about. I think that it comes down to a basic thing of communications again: the faculty communicating with you as students. Are you communicating with them and translating what's important to you? I think we have different terminology and there is this—call it a generation gap if you will; that is an awfully tired term I think—but there is a use of a student demonstration as a term or a student riot as a term. Again, it's a difference of terminology, a difference of communications. You talk of student power. People say, *Well, how much do they want?* . . . *What is it they want?* You talk about demonstrations and then you wonder where the matter of others' rights comes in. At Hunter, for example. Is there this feeling of trust between the student and the administration or the student and the faculty? Also, what do you have in terms of student power at Hunter?

MARILYN:

Not enough.

TONI:

I think there is a very big problem here in that nobody either on the administration level, the faculty level or the student level is aware of where the other level is at. At the last faculty council meeting, I was very surprised to learn that there was this very strong dichotomy between faculty and administration. That the members of the faculty don't really know where



their powers are. The administration people don't really know where their powers are. They know it's on paper, but they don't know where they're stepping on their colleagues' toes and where they're not. They're very strained at the point of how many administrative members there should be on a committee so that it won't look like the administration is ruling. This confusion goes right over to the student body because the student body has no idea what student power really means. They've seen what happens on radical campuses, what's happened when things burst, but not really what the constructive terminology for student power means. They don't understand that administration and faculty are really supposed to be there for the student. They don't understand that, if they unite on a good solid project that they themselves can back with facts, there should be—and if they can unify enough, there will be—an open channel. They are still at the point, I think especially Hunter, where there has not been a very big change from high school to college. So, they don't realize that they are not supposed to be ruled with an iron hand the way they were in high school. They don't understand that . . . they don't understand that if they unite they should have a voice and it should be constructive and it should not be this radical thing, it should be an accepted constructive force. This is what I think. There are students who are normal . . . not particularly active and not particularly radical. I am very surprised when we can get out a published teacher evaluation. They can't believe that they have that kind of power. That power doesn't necessarily mean violence or nonconstructiveness.

FOX:

For one, I gather now as a conservative adult, a presumption of right on the part of students that when they identify the problem, they've properly identified it and that, therefore, it's very clear what the solution should be and any rejection of that solution is wrong.

VOICES:

No, no, no.

FOX:

Well, I sensed it even here in this discussion.

MARILYN:

I think that your comment is perhaps typical yet not really one that I can agree with.

FOX:

All right. Why?

MARILYN:

What is visible and what is invisible are two very different things obviously, and often that's really where the problem lies. The visible idea that we have the right answer and, man, we're gonna sock-it-to-ya and if you don't take it, you better watch out—that's the visible part of it. But the invisible, behind-the-scenes kind of activity is going on everywhere, in your radical students also, not just in your student-government types . . . We want to be in the place where the problems are being considered. We want to have people on Faculty Council committees. We're not going to say we have the right answer and

"... there doesn't seem to be any assurance that your position will be listened to..."

we're not going to say there's only one way of doing it. I think that the majority of students are reasonable, intelligent people. When presented with a problem which they can then see from both sides because they are going to be in a place where it is being presented from both sides (and if one side is being presented, then maybe they can offer some opinion on the other side of the problem), then from that kind of dialogue a meaningful answer can come out. Students are not totally dogmatic; they're usually very practical people when confronted with a specific problem. We are being dogmatic in the sense that we want to have the power to be where the decision-making is made, but we're not going to say that we are going to be dogmatic in every answer, in every attempt at a problem solution.

FOX:

Yet you said when a question came up about what issues were burning at Hunter: "Not enough!" To me this suggests that there is a great urgency here to create problems.

KATHY:

No . . . what I was thinking when Marilyn said "not enough" . . . was that most Hunter students think the most pressing problems are prices in the bookstore, the food in the cafeteria, and so on. (laughter) I think what Toni tried to say before is that the issues are there and the students are not aware of them, but they are there and they just need to be presented to them, not to be made up. The issues of students rights in Faculty Council . . . why aren't students in there making the decisions if they are the ones who have to go under those decisions?

FOX:

You mean, contribute to the decision-making? . . .

TONI:

Yes. I didn't mean to give you the idea that I didn't expect the student to be constructive and to be backed by facts and that they had the only right answer. That's not what I meant.

I meant that for them to have power they have to have facts behind them, and not ask something without really knowing what they are asking for. They have to be aware of all the other sides. It is a terrible thing to think that a faculty member is given tenure—tenure means that he is going to teach students for the rest of his life or as long as he wants to at your college—without even a student opinion being voiced.

FOX:

And yet President Cross said that these evaluations went to the faculty member himself via students' choice; is that right?

KATHY:

If he volunteers to have the evaluation done.

FOX:

How many volunteered to have it done?

DANNY:

Last time there were 117. This term the numbers have not been calculated yet.

MAHONEY:

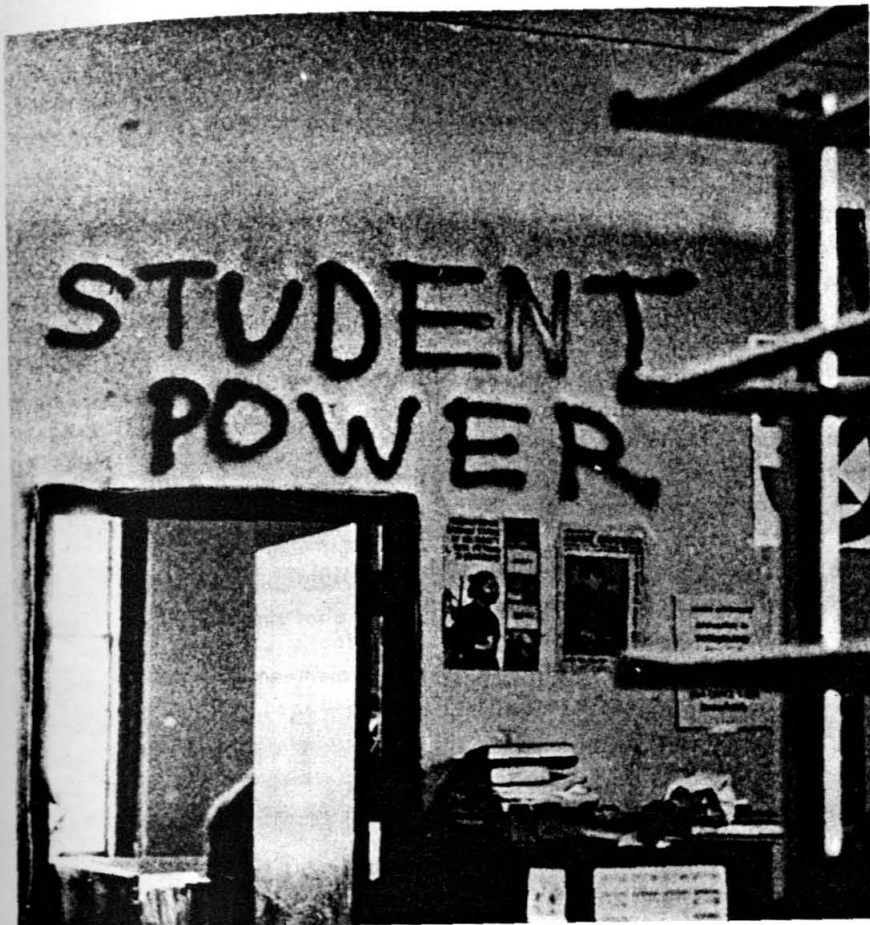
From a faculty of how many?

DANNY:

About 500. Close to a quarter answered, I guess.

TONI:

I think the fact that there were only 100 teachers who participated is indicative of the atmosphere between faculty and students. Faculty was downright afraid to be a part of this program. As members of that committee we spoke to bunches and bunches of faculty, and they did not want to leave themselves that wide-open to students. One of the things we were most against in the program as it now stands on a voluntary basis is not that it is voluntary and we don't have the force . . . the ability to force faculty members to participate in it; it's that the people who do participate tend to be the ones who are very secure!



MAHONEY:

Toni, here you are the elected head of the Student Senate. How do you propose to get your student body more concerned about things you think they should be concerned about? How do you make them worry? What is the administration doing with the student body? What would you do if you were President Cross, for example?

TONI:

I would try to solve the problem that he has of strained ties between his administration, his faculty and his students. Every group is afraid of the other group. For some reason, and this seems ridiculous in an academic community where people are supposedly qualified, they're so insecure. It's just amazing.

MAHONEY:

Are the students insecure?

TONI:

Certainly. They don't understand that they should have a say in their stu-

dent life. They are still at the level where they think that they have to accept from the administration and from the faculty whatever they're getting.

MAHONEY:

Well, what do they have to offer, given the channels?

TONI:

Well, we have a large number of people in our administration and in our faculty that should not be there. I think that if students had a voice, we could tell you that. If we had a wide enough voice we would be able to avoid the people who just hate this one person because he gives an "F" in a course and we would be able to rule out the people who love this person because he gave an "A" in a course. There's a great majority of students who can really judge. They've had a teacher for six months, three times a week. That's more than the administration ever sees the faculty! Students are so much more aware of what the teacher is really like.

MARILYN:

The question about what we would do if we had the channels, I think that the main point that we offer is our age—our age, our imagination, perhaps our different experiences. As Toni pointed out, it's a newness, a freshness in a situation which allows us at this point to look at it a little more critically than people who have been in the situation, who because of their situation—and it's quite understandable—are perhaps much more willing to maintain it as it is. I'm a political science major . . . I'm working now on a program for which you'd get course credit if you did active work in a political campaign. I think that's an important point. This was never suggested before, the faculty aren't suggesting it.

MAHONEY:

Well, you'll be getting credit . . .

MARILYN:

Not yet, I'm still working on it. The people aren't getting service credit for the projects. I think an expansion of the colloquia system (the colloquia system involves highly selected students with very high grade points who are involved in a year-round interdisciplinary study in a specific area) is a marvelous thing, but I think it ought to be expanded beyond those who have a cutoff grade point to those who are interested in that particular area. So that's another point.

TONI:

Something like a 3.7 index doesn't indicate that 3.7 and above are the only people qualified.

MARILYN:

Right. This past year it was in urban affairs. Now I'm sure there are people wandering around who have a great interest in urban affairs, who might have really profited from and been a good contributing factor in a colloquium.

FOX:

Perhaps some of these restrictions might be dictated by economics. It's possible there's just not enough money around to accommodate all people who are interested in these programs.

MARILYN:

Sure. The point is, though, these are the kind of things we have to know about.

MAHONEY:

Well, in the question of student protests, student demonstration and student power that we've experienced this spring, I have been very troubled by the lack of concern where your students who are demonstrating don't always take into account other people's rights. At Columbia, for example, what about the students who wanted to go to class? What about situations where there were evidences of destruction in the library and property destruction? I know it troubled me and it troubled a lot of people and it clouded our understanding of young people . . . Where do other people's rights come in?

TONI:

What's bothering me about what you just said is that it troubled you. Doesn't it occur to you that it troubled young people, too?

MAHONEY:

I hope it did. I don't know, did it?

TONI:

You see, what you've done is you've lumped all the young people together. You've assumed that because a given number of students have been destructive, have prohibited students from going to class, that that is where the majority of student opinion lies—and I don't think that's true.

MAHONEY:

I'm asking it more as a question than stating it as an assumption. Did it trouble students?

TONI:

One of my greatest fears about what happened at Columbia is who started that. What were the real motives behind the more radical students? Were they out for publicity, were they out for vandalism, were they out to prove their power not necessarily constructively, but just to show that they could hit *The New York Times*, that they could hit international news, that

they could call for the resignation of a president? Is this what they were out for, or were they really out to point out the wrongs that had been done them? Now, Columbia has a long history of wronging the student, I think. They have always been known as a very conservative administration, a very conservative faculty. They have always been in this position because most of the students were so happy they finally got to Columbia and because the university has such a name that they weren't about to risk themselves by being radical—by being something that somebody who had the power to throw them out might throw them out. So, now you sit back and you watch what finally happened after maybe 20 or 50

years of building up, and you say they did have a good sound basis but you ask *Who started it?* Were they just people—nonstudents—I mean, a number of those people on campus were nonstudents. You worry about that, but that doesn't necessarily mean that you can lump all the people with people who were just out for nonconstructive violence or power or whatever. There are students who have every right to demonstrate and whose ideals were most laudable.

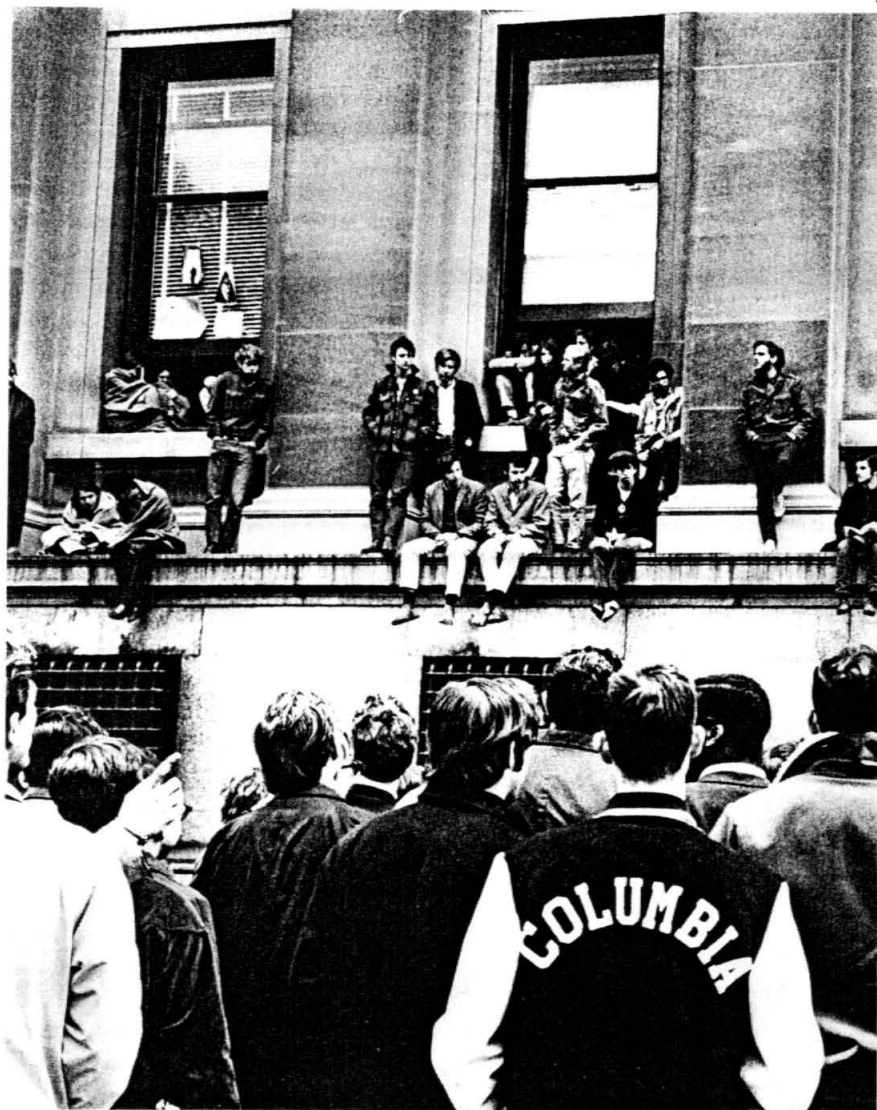
MARILYN:

I really must identify myself as probably the most "left" person in this group . . .

FOX:

You already have! (laughter)

**"... where do
other people's rights
come in..."**



"It was a last resort. They didn't like it;... because it was the only one open,... they felt it was a necessary step."

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MARILYN:

I'll admit and say that I'm also probably closest to those students who were participating in Columbia. I know on Tuesday afternoon I went to bail out three friends, so I'm speaking perhaps from a closer viewpoint. I truly do understand your point about the rights of others. It bothers me a great deal. It's something that can't be solved with a very glib answer. The one that I've worked out for myself, the one that I've seen and talked to other people about . . . Basically, I sort of look at it from the history of other political movements, and I think of the union movement . . . It is a question of identifying who is not allowing the rights of others in a prima-facie case, and the answer in the first union organizations was the companies and the cartels that were working up at the railroads, and the coal mine owners' associations. And in this present situation it's the university and the university administration, not necessarily the faculty, because very often they are in the same position as the student. What happens is that at this point an abrogation of the rights of others, which is what it was, is a necessary thing to illustrate, and it is necessary to identify who the real oppressor and who the real abrogator of these rights is. And it's not something that the people at Columbia are doing every day.

It was a last resort. They didn't like it; they didn't like the fact that they had to lock classrooms to get attention, and it was an attention-getting device because it was the only one open, but they felt it was a necessary step. I personally feel that if the situation ever got that way at Hunter—and I don't think it will—that if as a result of that kind of demonstration or as a result of peaceful activity—which is how I want to see it—we did get a legitimate voice on Faculty Council, if we did have those kinds of channels, then we would not have the right to abrogate the rights of others. But as a last resort, and when you are faced with an oppressive administration, it becomes almost a necessity. It's a terrible necessity but it's not a glib answer and its not satisfactory.

MAHONEY:

No, it's not an easy problem and I don't think you can generalize about it . . . I don't understand what causes students who are protesting to feel obliged to do as much physical damage to the college as reported.

KATHY:

About physical damage, you only saw what those buildings looked like after the students were removed from the buildings. Unless you were there during the time, you really don't know how much damage was done by the

students or by the police. Now this is a question in my mind, too. I can't see why they would want to destroy the place they were sitting in; they were going to sleep there, they were going to live there for a number of days . . . so why the hell go and destroy it?

FOX:

What about that manuscript that was burned—10 years of research . . .

KATHY:

See, I'm just saying you don't know because both were removed from the situation, so how do you know who did it or why it happened?

MAHONEY:

President Cross spoke of the fact that he thinks he has the communication channels open. He thinks he has these channels—the luncheon device, the fact that students will go up and speak to him or come to him—he hopes he has these paths open. And yet, judging from what you have said here, I don't feel that is particularly true.

TONI:

It takes a certain kind of student to go to the president of his college and say, "I don't like this, that and the other thing." Once you have a student at that level, he is already some place else!

FOX:

This leads into something that I was hoping we could move along into and Ursula raised before: What will you, as leaders, do to create a climate for your students to approach the administration and the faculty, and then later I would like to go into what major problems you anticipate on the campus and what could the alumni do to relieve these. Someone here spoke about the Hunter student being degree-oriented. This puts a different complexion on the student and makes him sound more like a technician than an intellectual in pursuit of education. I just would like to explore those themes a little more, but starting with what would you do in terms of a student program?

MARILYN:

Part of the reason that I ran for office and part of the reason that I have been active in student government since my freshman year has been this question of how do you present issues. My answer to the question is basic programming. I am not quite as pessimistic as perhaps Kathy was that they are all degree-oriented . . .

KATHY:

Majority—but not all.

MARILYN:

But I think there are a lot of intellectuals hiding in the woodwork who can be approached and who can be gotten to talk good solid programming. And this is what I intend to do in my office . . . a programming on ways other colleges have attacked some of these problems by bringing in people from these other colleges. If the program is offered during Dean's Hour and people come out—if you get only 50 people, maybe it is 50 who never attended a program or who were never aware of some of the solutions other colleges have tried out. It's publication of views in the newspaper. Basically it's programming in terms of even just bringing the outside world in to make people less degree-oriented in terms of perhaps a symposium on Black Power or a symposium on this very question of the student role. Perhaps it's simply

the History Department sponsoring case study of the migrant worker problem. I think when people begin to explore these kinds of problems in an academic community you break down your degree-oriented technician type of person, and when they start exhibiting a concern in this area it follows, I think, that they will start exhibiting concern in other areas.

KATHY:

The main thing on my mind, and Marilyn's too, is students on Faculty Council. There are a number of committees on Faculty Council, so if I would approach the committee chairman on each committee of Faculty Council and say we want to do this and have every one of them say "Yes" and then try to get responsible students to fill these places, we would be in bad shape. You have to work from both sides at the same time, but I see it as a coordinating role more than a leader role really. It's more a coordinator, a programmer, that is the important thing.

TONI:

With regard to Faculty Council committees—I attended just before school ended a committee on recruiters on campus. The thing that I was most impressed with—and which I confronted the faculty members with and they didn't like it at all—was that, although they are very open-minded people, their main purpose in their committee was to have down on paper an out that would show that they were not totally responsible for having recruiters on campus. They had devices like—in order to have a recruiter on campus, you would have to have at least one signature from a student saying that he wanted that recruiter on campus. They didn't necessarily say that they would publish the student's name. They just wanted, if something should happen, to have it on paper. This is ridiculous. Then there's the status of the student on Faculty Council. The way it's on the by-laws now is that there are two members of the student body that attend Faculty Council meetings. Prior to this there was one member and

that was the student president. Now it's two members. I don't know who the other person is going to be. They didn't specify. They have a new thing. They just passed a new set of by-laws at their last meeting. Their new thing is to get students on committees. This is what they want to do. But they have this problem on how many administrative and how many faculty members should be on the committee so there is not a strong dichotomy between committee members. That stretches over to students because they don't want any one person to have the power. They don't want to look too liberal, nor do they want to look too dogmatic, too structured, too unlistening to students. They are going to have a students' rights and activities committee . . . I think it will be an even number of students and faculty. Then the last question that came up was, there were three committees and what would be the amount of representation of the students. Well, they didn't accept it as it was proposed, but they did accept the idea of having the committee on students' rights activities handle the problem of the amount of representation the student should have on each committee of Faculty Council and on Faculty Council itself. Therefore, we do have an open avenue. But the thing is—how open is the avenue when I am the only person who knows about it, since I was the only person at that meeting except Jerry Teplitz, who was the former president of the Student Senate?

"We want to be in the place where the problems are being considered."

"...We have to develop an avenue to reach the student."



FOX:

Then you have to develop your channels for communications with your peers.

TONI:

Certainly, but the point is that they are starting but they are not communicating with the student body as a whole. They are communicating with the atypical student.

KATHY:

Well, I think that they feel that that is the people . . . the student representatives who are there. It's their responsibility. They are saying, "We are doing you this favor by letting you be here, telling you what we are going to do, so now you go and tell your students."

FOX:

Let me say one thing, and I don't defend the administration or the faculty in any way, shape or form. I can barely get any one of them to talk to me! But I do know there is a great problem in reaching people. They don't know how to reach the alumni, in quotes . . . so they come to the President of the Alumni Association. Now we have been running a program in career counseling for three years. Most of us are established in business, and we would like to share

our knowhow and wherewithal with people who are interested. We cannot reach the students. I stop people in the hall, but I have no way of reaching these students . . . so if I can't do it, I know faculty members can't either.

KATHY:

But what I am saying is—it's a responsibility of both the faculty and the administration, as well as the student, to reach the other students.

FOX:

Maybe something we are getting at here is that we have to develop an avenue to reach the student.

MARILYN:

I remember back a year and a half ago when I was simply an observer on Student Council.

MAHONEY:

An innocent Political Science Major.

FOX:

A leftist political scientist.

MARILYN:

There aren't too many of us. Just in terms of my relation to Student Council, which has been generally through the National Student Association representative, I remember the first time

we finally got someone on Faculty Council—and this was really a big step forward; we had someone who could be there and sit and listen, who could only speak when spoken to . . .

MAHONEY:

Is that actually true?

MARILYN:

Oh yes. It's apparently still presently true.

TONI:

Now since President Cross is chairing, you are easily recognized.

MARILYN:

It didn't used to be like that. I remember the first Faculty Council stipulation that Student Council had approved this one person who was going to be there—and one of the points raised was that the student couldn't go out and tell what was being said in Faculty Council because they thought this would interrupt the decision-making process . . . if too much information was gotten out before the decision was made . . . that we didn't want the students to know until the decision was made what the decision was. And I think this kind of attitude—I hope . . . I don't know if



it has changed—is the kind of attitude that we sometimes have to face up to as students.

TONI:

The thing is that we have faculty and administration people that are like President Cross that say, "Inform the student as much as possible, let him know what's happening." And then we have the other kind that come from the other . . .

MAHONEY:

. . . the old school? The Dinosaur Age!

TONI:

Right! They just don't understand that students actually do think . . . that they do something other than go home and either do memorize or don't memorize what's going to be on that test. There are still people around like this . . . that's really what's frightening.

MAHONEY:

Why don't you people go to lunch with the president and tell him that you don't think his systems of communication with the students are working, or how they should be improved. Wouldn't that be wiser?

KATHY:

I think what Toni said before . . . I think we could approach him more on a personal level as elected leaders because at the luncheons—from what I know of them—different groups of people come each week but they discuss the same type of things, like the cafeteria and the bookstore and, you know, it's just a thrill to be in there.

MAHONEY:

I think if you had an interesting luncheon group, if he had the student leaders . . .

KATHY:

No . . . a lot of people go to these things, so it's kind of difficult to get your thing in—what you want to say to him—with so many people there. He sometimes has 35 to 50 people in there.

MARILYN:

The point is . . . personally . . . I am not terribly impressed . . . that I have to go right to the president of the college when I have a problem.

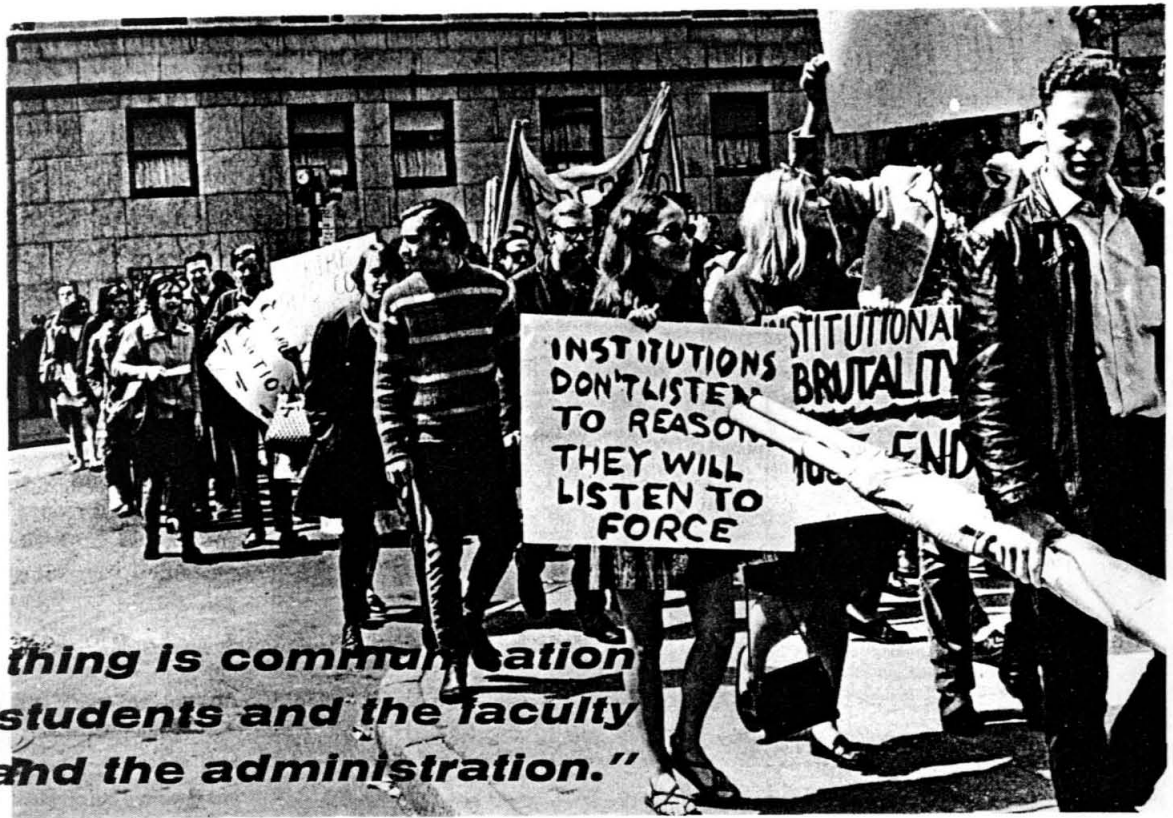
MAHONEY:

No. But you have here essentially a

who says he is very interested in listening and who I think is sincere; if you have a communication channel that is really not working or not working well . . . you gave evidence that it really isn't working to your satisfaction—and if he is not getting from you your voice and your opinion, then it's not working to his satisfaction . . . then I think it comes to a point where you should both sit down with each other and say, "This is what we think you should be doing and why can't it work? Why do we have to have this one voice or this kind of faculty-student set-up?" Again we come to the communications gap where you feel this way and you are not communicating with him. You know it's a mutual responsibility of transferring your views back to him.

DANNY:

Well, I'm going to get back on my thing about trust . . . because I think a lot of it applies. I wrote down one interesting thing that President Cross did say . . . that certainly there are a lot of factors involved in why people protest and do certain things, and one of them is certainly the age. But there are a lot of other factors, too, and I really think the most important is trust. When a president of a college can say that 90% of the energy that is expended in student protest is wasted and it's not very constructive and that the college is just a symbol of wider things . . . what kind of atmosphere . . . put yourself in the place of a student . . . here's a student . . . a student leader . . . what would this do to the average student? . . . Well, forget it . . . Or what am I going to talk to him for and why should I talk to my representative, because that is just another step away from him. If I can't get to my representative because my representative thinks that 50% of what I say is wasted energy, and he conveys my



**"The main thing is communication
—with students and the faculty
and the administration."**

MAHONEY:

Let me just say this: I think that your reaction to that remark is perhaps understandable. But I think there's a slight misinterpretation perhaps of what he meant. How much of any protest, whether it is student protest or a political protest or what kind of protest, gets to home base? How many hits do you have in a ballgame that get the player home? If I were to say that 90% of a baseball game was wasted it would be basically the same thing. How much political protest is going on in the country right now . . . how much civil rights protest is going on that is, in effect, making a change in the law? I think this is what he means. If you get 10% effectiveness that makes a difference; then you've got something.

MARILYN:

But I don't think you can distill the 10% without going through the whole rest of it.

MAHONEY:

No, but in fairness to what he said, you're over-reacting. You are saying he is attacking youth. I don't think he is really doing that. I think it's a thoughtful comment that he is trying

to say that 10% is getting through, and if they are getting through I think that is a very high rate and a good return.

DANNY:

Well, then I think you have the responsibility of saying that if you are only going to accept 10% of what is being thrown at you—if you want to say thrown—I think you have the responsibility of providing some explanation for why the 90% is being turned down, because I think if you don't do that you build up a lot of frustrations.

It seems that . . . communication really is almost a technique . . . I think that in a college like Columbia, everyone expected that there would be some kind of confrontation because they were very conservative and everything. But in a place like Hunter there are channels. How effective they are is open to debate—but there are channels, and in some ways communication can actually become a technique for handling student demonstrations and student demands. I really have to hold back from being very frustrated and sounding very biased, because I have been dealing with different faculty groups the past

couple of years and some of them have been very productive, but the ones that have not been very productive have been very unproductive and very negative kinds of experiences. I was in one about three weeks ago. A faculty committee would meet at 3 o'clock to discuss a certain issue . . . You would request to come there or your presence would be requested by the secretary of that group. You come in and make a report saying, "We feel this . . ." Then the chairman of the committee would say, "Thank you for your ideas and we will be sure to get in touch with you," and then you would be asked to leave and the discussion on the points you made would be carried on either before or after because the chairman over and over again made the comment, "We'll just accept points of information now and the actual discussion will be carried on later." I think this is very bad. I also think this is probably something that will be corrected because this is, as President Cross might say, "a crude technique." If you are going to handle students in committee you can be more refined at it and still have the same effect. I think this is something that will pass. Another

thing that is the students' fault but will probably pass over the years is the lack of organization and poor leadership

MAHONEY:

Well, if you were to be asked for a suggestion of what you could do to improve things at Hunter specifically—and I would like each of you to answer—what one thing do you think would help the most?

FOX:

You mean technique?

MAHONEY:

That, or the problem that you would solve first.

KATHY:

For myself, as a member of the Executive Board, I am not concerned with getting a large following or a large group of people. I have things set in a program that I plan to attempt to get going. I am very pessimistic about it, but I should not be. I feel I have no right to be because even if someone before me has tried to do these things and has failed, I haven't myself been turned down a number of times, so I am trying to change my attitude and it will change by the end of the summer. But, I am just committed to, even if I have to do it alone, whatever I can do, to try to implement the things that I set out to do, which includes getting people on these committees, and getting students on the Faculty Council on each working committee. And just to get them there is not enough. You can put any idiot in and they sit there and say *I'm here, I'm great*. But you have to get something to come from it. And then, it's also a lot of things. You know, we throw around "academic community" . . . well, as far as I'm concerned, academic community doesn't exist in Hunter because half the people who are in this community don't even know that it is a community—and it isn't! . . . It isn't a community because, as we have all said tonight, we are just three separate factions and nobody knows exactly where they are at and nobody knows where the other people are at and most of them are not really that con-

cerned. They are trying to get themselves together. I have seen a lot from other universities and Hunter is really behind on these things. Like our course evaluation is this great thing that President Cross calls "student power." That is not student power. You know you're not overstepping any bounds, all you are doing is getting people together, deciding that you want to do something and doing it. There's no question of you having the right to do that as far as the administration is concerned, because they can't very well say "No" on an administration basis But schools have had teacher evaluations for decades and decades, you know. This is our first thing, and then we have this big thing about having two students on Faculty Council. It just strikes me as so reactionary

MAHONEY:

Marilyn, what would you do? I mean, what would be the most important change that you think should be effected?

MARILYN:

Well, let me say right off that I concur with Kathy's statements pretty much wholeheartedly and it would be, in my case, an additional resource person to help follow up on what Kathy has been suggesting. Again, the point is that there are various changes; I rattled off some before about expansion of curricula, academic credit for service projects in the outside community. We talk about budgetary problems. O.K. At Barnard when they had the same problem of limited budget and limited faculty . . . well, what they said was, "We'll have independent study. And this way people who want to can do more independent study, and thus our professors are free of that person in the classroom—or perhaps a whole lot of people in the classroom—to teach another class, and will need only a certain amount of time to spend on that. And so again expansion of independent study." These are the sort of projects that need the approval of a faculty group or of administration. There are also projects that I intend to do which are simply directed for other students. These basically are



ones that concern the student in the larger community. It would be perhaps the war in Vietnam, the upcoming political campaign, inviting speakers and any question like that: Black Power . . . white racism . . . effects of the report of the President's Commission on Civil Disorders Violence in America is a subject and perhaps planning a week-long symposium in September on the World-Wide Student Revolt. These are programs that are directed toward students and are mainly a service function which I consider to be my main function at this point.

MAHONEY:

Toni, what about you?

TONI:

I can easily say that I agree with Kathy and Marilyn. It's very easy to rattle off things that have to be done. These are things that have had to be done for years and years and years. Things like communication, things like student voice in curricula. Things like the cut system, things like the credit system. All things that have to be handled. Then there's the bookstore and the cafeteria. All this stuff has been mentioned before. They all have to be handled. The main thing is communication with students and the faculty and the administration. It just makes me so tired to think about it. There's years of dust on the problems. It's an amazing thing. Once you have decided that you're going to handle these problems, then the question is are you going to handle the problems with yourself and 10 people and the faculty, or with the administration too. This is sometimes the only way to do it. Then you have this marvelous break in the system and you come across the fact that nobody else knows about it. Nobody

except your 10 people and the faculty that you are working with. The administration . . . they don't know about it . . . besides those people, nobody knows about it. So the rest of the school is just as discontented, unless you have managed to communicate to them that, although they are still taking the train home five minutes after their last class, something is being done.

FOX:

I want to ask Marilyn a question. Would you like to see the students reach a point where they would revolt?

MARILYN:

No. I would like to see the way open so that that is never necessary. Again, that chief word is "necessary." If it were to come to the point where everything else was beyond repair . . . that there were no channels . . . and that there was an oppressive administration, then I would say "Yes." But it's an absolute last resort which I hope would never come about. It's not a goal.

MAHONEY:

I think in one final go-round, if you were to sum up a Hunter student in a one-word characteristic . . . what would you say?

TONI:

I would not do it . . . it is virtually impossible to do. You have the Hunter student who comes because he can't afford to go to a private school; you have the Hunter student who comes because he lives in Brooklyn and would rather have gone to Brooklyn; you have the student who goes because his mother went or her mother went; you have the student who goes because he lives down the block; once in a while you have the student who goes because he really thinks Hunter is the greatest thing that ever happened to the whole wide world. You can't make a capsule summary of a Hunter student.

MAHONEY:

What do you think is characteristic of your college age?

TONI:

Well, I think I said this before. What we are doing is we are molding people to think that originality is a good thing. We are molding them to believe in the ideals of democracy, etc. We are molding them to recognize and speak out about what they feel is wrong according to the principles that they believe in. And if everything goes right they are going to go for this originality, they are going to go for this manifestation of the ideal and they are not going to accept being swallowed up in paper work.

MAHONEY:

Marilyn, how would you characterize it?

MARILYN:

I don't think it's changed very much from your generation . . . sort of a pessimistic view . . . I think that the general Hunter student, because of the situation of coming from the subway up through the tunnel, up the elevators, down the elevators, back to the tunnel and into the subway, presents a unique problem for those of us who are interested in experiences with other campus schools. In attending a campus school myself for a while, I see the differences and the problems. I think it's basically that students can be reached and that it's a goal for those of us who have a prior interest or have developed an interest to reach those students, and that once reached they will respond.



to be continued