

Catt, Carrie Chapman

General Correspondence

Rockford College International Relations Club

Rockford College Department of History

Rockford, Illinois

26 January 1925

Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt,

171 Madison Avenue, New York.

My dear Mrs. Catt:

I have delayed in answering this letter because of the the pressure of work, both for myself and for the president of the club, who is signing the questionnaire with me, in the absence of the secretary. But that does not mean that we are unappreciative of the service you are doing in gathering data which will surely throw light on the false and cruel accusations that have been made against college clubs which, so far as I am acquainted with them, are completely innocent of the charges.

I cannot help thinking that this accusation of sex immorality, or of advocacy of radical changes in standards, while it is doubtles a source of real anxiety to people who are misled by the allegations, has its origin in the efforts of certain persons and organizations who have ulterior motives. At any rate, they seem determined to besmirch anybody or any group who are working for the cultivation of international friendship. If they think that the prevention of war and the cultivation of international good will is going to bring about revolution and communistic experiments, their reasoning is very different from ours.

I have written at greater length than you have time to read, I fear. We were unaware of the dreadful charges brought against us by the gentleman from Los Angeles until you called them to our attention, but we have had unpleasant publicity from the Chicago Tribune in its series of articles charging the colleges, the women's clubs, the peace societies, the senators of the United States who have visited Russia, and even the churches, with being the tools of Moscow. Thanking you again for under taking to bring out some of the facts, and for lending the prestige of your name to the defense of the otherwise rather defenseless, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

Elizabeth P. Brush

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO TWENTY-FIVE COLLEGE ORGANIZATIONS SUBTLY CHARGED WITH BEING TINGED WITH COMMUNISTIC IDEALS.

*1. When was your organization formed?*

Answer. In the winter of 1920-1921.

*2. Was it organized by a foreigner?*

Answer. No. It was organized by the professor of history, with the support and advice of the president of the college, after correspondence with the Institute of International Education, a part of the Carnegie Endowment activities. They sent Baron Korff, well-known among historical students in this country, and, by the way, a refugee from the Bolshevist regime, who helped us to organize by telling us of the work and purpose of other International Relations Clubs.

*Or after an address by a representative of the European Youth Movement?*

Answer. No.

*3. Have you had an address by a declared communist?*

Answer. No.

*Or have speakers upon other themes espoused communism?*

Answer. No.

*4. Has your society endorsed communism by resolution?*

Answer. No.

*Or the recognition of the Soviet Russia by this country?*

Answer. No.

*5. What is the primary object of your organization?*

Answer. The study of international relations.

*Was it formed with or without the consent of the faculty?*

Answer. With the good wishes of the faculty, several of whom have always been interested in it, but without formal consent except of the president of the college, who is much in sympathy with the purpose of the club.

*6. Have you any connection with the Soviet Russia or any of its agents?*

Answer. No.

*7. Have you endorsed socialism by resolution?*

Answer. No. Such an action would be contrary to the spirit and purpose of the club.

*8. How many of your members do you estimate are socialists?*

Answer. In all probability, none at all.

*How many communists?*

Answer. None.

*What is your total membership?*

Answer. Fifteen, on our new basis. (See below).

*9. Have you passed resolutions forming any program aiming at permanent peace -- such as the World Court, League of Nations, Outlawry of War, etc.?*

Answer. Yes.

*What was their nature?*

Answer. Nothing in the nature of a comprehensive program, since our primary purpose is to study the international situation, but upon occasion, we have passed resolutions commending all the above; i.e., our entrance into the World Court, cooperation with the League of Nations, and any measures looking to the Outlawry of War.

*10. Are you permitted by your college to meet freely, with or without supervision?*

Answer. The club meets freely. No requirement as to supervision. One of the members of the department is faculty adviser, and is practically always present at the meetings, as is the other member of the department. Other members of the faculty are often present. Ordinarily, except when speakers from outside are present, no general invitation is extended to the student body or the faculty as a whole, as the members of the club are timid about leading discussion with a large number present.

*11. Does your organization consider itself radical?*

Answer. No.

*12. Does your organization consider itself liberal or progressive; if so, what liberal or progressive measures has it endorsed?*

Answer. Yes. See answer to question 9 for measures endorsed. In addition it has endorsed the Student Friendship Fund, child-feeding funds, the Washington conference, etc.

*13. Have you endorsed the Youth Movement?*

Answer. No. The club endorsed the formation of the National Student Forum after a conference held in Chicago called a "Conference on the Limitation of Armament". It has never been asked to endorse the Youth Movement. Three European students came to the college with Mr. George Pratt in the spring of 1922, and addressed the club, the whole student and faculty body, and several classes, at the invitations of instructors. They asked for no endorsement of the "Youth Movement". They talked of conditions in the countries from which they came, political, social, and educational, the differences they noted in America, etc.

*14. If so, what is your definition of it?*

Answer. We do not know any definition of it.

*15. Has any speaker included any similar comment upon the relation of the sexes in youth as quoted from Mr. Marvin's letter enclosed?*

Answer. No.

COMMENT. This copy has been made, because the space in the original questionnaire was not adequate for full answers. Perhaps we have made them too full. It can hardly be too strongly emphasized that the spirit of the club is that of students, and that the members are primarily interested in attempting to understand the present international situation and its background and to be able to make intelligent decisions as American citizens whenever a decision has to be made involving factors which affect the maintenance and development of international friendship and co-operation. Any reputation of radicalism is absurd.

Our membership has been much larger than it is now. Last spring it was about sixty, but it was decided this fall to have membership restricted to those who would definitely undertake to do a considerable amount of reading, to take part in the discussions, and to lead them when their turn came. This change came about largely because we have no money for outside speakers, and in consequence can have them very infrequently, and must depend on our own discussion. It takes much more genuine interest to continue active membership without the stimulus of outside speakers, and the club agreed that it was better to have the membership limited, and to share any speakers we may be so fortunate to get with the entire student body. We miss the very stimulating speakers which the Institute of International Education used to send to us.

(Signed) Elizabeth P. Bruch; Professor of History and Faculty Advisor to the Club

Maxine E. Ferguson; President of the Club

For Rockford College International Relations Club

January 24, 1925.

Transcribed and reviewed by volunteers participating in the By The People project at crowd.loc.gov.