



ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION OF SMITH COLLEGE
NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

June 15, 1961

Mrs. Thomas Thatcher Richmond, President
Weed Street
New Canaan, Connecticut

Mrs. Norman Isenberg
295 St. Andrews Road
Memphis 11, Tennessee

Dear Mrs. Isenberg:

Your enthusiastic participation in Southeastern's program or seminar has been reported to us both by your own account and Katharine Cowen's. I am so glad that it has meant as much to you as it seems to have. You certainly also sold us on sending one more alumna this year. Good luck to her.

Now, regarding your recommendation to my Board. We discussed your proposal quite lengthily for we know how thoughtfully and enthusiastically you made your suggestion. I hasten to tell you that not one ^{person} ~~present~~ on that Board has not participated in some kind of educational improvement group in the last ten years. Some of us have even done it through a study committee set up by our local Smith Club. So your idea fell upon very sympathetic ears. However, to a woman, we felt that it is not the place of the Alumnae Association to recommend that Smith clubs as such take up the betterment of local education as a club activity.

As you can read in our charter the purpose of the Alumnae Association is to further the well-being of the college and its alumnae. We feel that our responsibility to our communities can be expressed through other local organizations already available to serve such a purpose. It is to be expected that Smith women would be active in such a project, not to mention many other good causes that have engaged the attention of our fellow alumnae.

In order to be sure that we were mirroring the opinion of more alumnae than we ourselves, I brought the matter up to our other directors and alumnae trustees



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at breakfast last Sunday morning. This group numbered around fifty and the span of both geography and age was truly representative of our alumnae body. Again, the consensus of opinion was the same. Dear old Mrs. Ford expressed our opinions wonderfully when she said "if they aren't already in the thick of educational matters they should be, but they must do it through local cooperation with other educated men and women."

Truly, Mrs. Isenberg, we cannot recommend that Smith clubs get into an activity that might defeat them as a club. We cannot begin to have political overtones. However, be well assured that we plan to list in the Alumnae Quarterly samples of organizations which are working for better public schools and will urge our alumnae to be active in such pursuits.

Katharine Cowen tells me that you will be very disappointed but, believe me, we have given your proposition much consideration.

Most sincerely,

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