

HAVERFORD'S POLICY FOR THE PRESENT TIMES

A Statement by the Board of Managers

February , 1951

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The present critical period of national and world affairs compels us to consider with great seriousness the policy and program of the College for the years just ahead.

In the immediate situation the most obvious factor, the impact of which upon the College must be considered, is the proposed universal military service and training legislation.

Its specific provisions are not yet determined, but it seems probable that a universal 18-year-old draft will be adopted. In that event Haverford in the autumn of 1951 probably will have a very small Freshman class, with substantial reductions in its upper classes. The following year both the Freshman and Sophomore classes will be very small. In the third year--if 27 months were to remain the period of military service--we again should receive a normal Freshman class. During both the second and third years the total enrollment for the undergraduate and graduate courses at the College might fall as low as 100. It is impossible to make more than the roughest estimate.

From the narrow standpoint of finances this situation would present us with deficit operations over a period of at least three years. While it is difficult to give precise data on ways in which costs might be reduced, it is certain that if essential Faculty members are to be paid and if physical facilities are to be maintained it will be impossible, with so small a student body, to avoid an annual deficit of substantial proportions.

Confronted by this prospect it is clear that we cannot expect to continue to operate the College in the normal way through the emergency period. And as we seek to determine how to proceed we are concerned not merely to find ways of keeping the College going and of preserving its values but primarily to seek opportunities for it to be of greatest usefulness in a profoundly troubled world.

In endeavoring to meet these triple responsibilities, we have to consider Haverford's role in the light of its history and of its character as this has developed out of its past. It is a small college devoted to the aims of liberal education and having as its central purpose the development of courageous and effective men who will give life to the ideals for which the College stands. It has always been identified with the Religious Society of Friends which furnishes the background for its educational ideals. It has stressed a religion which looks not to a creed but to the light within, a Christianity which seeks to be not simply an ideal but a present way of life. It looks back to the founder of Quakerism who said: "I live in the virtue of that life and power that take away the occasion of all wars." These are some aspects of Haverford's heritage. These have been influences in giving the College a quality which has attracted a clientele sympathetic to its ideals and out of which has grown a body of loyal and valued alumni who have given abundant evidence of their faith in the Haverford tradition. From this background we look to the future and face the problems which it presents.

In the uncertainties of the present shifting scene we cannot formulate a fixed program. We think it desirable, however, to state the following broad considerations which we feel should guide the College in its course during the emergency period.

1. We reaffirm for the longer future our belief in the basic principles of liberal education upon which the College has founded its program. We do not want temporary pressures to shift Haverford from this foundation.

It is our wish and purpose, moreover, that the College should continue to offer during the emergency period its basic program of liberal education as effectively as it can. ~~This we are prepared to do on a reduced scale.~~

2. In addition, we look forward to offering, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, special educational and training courses through which Haverford's large resources of experience, faith and good-will may be used to help prepare individuals for humanitarian service whether at home or abroad. A one-year graduate program in social and technical assistance has already been adopted and undertaken. Among other possible courses illustrating our aim are these: instruction ~~at undergraduate~~ *in England* such as was formerly given for the members of the Friends' Ambulance Unit, including first aid, medical technology and motor transport; ~~training for the American Field Service~~; preparation for mental hospital work. We intend to explore the field for other similar lines of training.

The establishment of such courses will, it is hoped, draw students to the College and make up, in part, for those we shall lose through the operation of the draft.

3. We consider it of greatest importance that the College shall be as constructive and creative as possible in meeting, not only the bodily sufferings and social requirements of men but their intellectual, moral and spiritual needs. Underlying the ~~sufferings~~ political and economic derangements of the world is its moral and spiritual poverty. We conceive that the most useful and richest contribution which Haverford can make to the world today is educational service in this area of life, in lifting up men's thoughts, in quickening their sense of spiritual realities, in re-establishing their moral values, in redirecting their wills and purposes. To do this the soul of the College must itself be kept living and strong, must give its message through what it teaches and does. Most of all it must be a vital force through the character and activities of the individuals who go out from its campus. It must kindle fresh faith in the validity and power of the forces of mind and spirit.

Haverford does not come to this task wholly unprepared. It has long held this fundamental aim and basically the whole direction of recent changes in the academic program has been toward new ways of carrying out the concern to prepare men to give new life and meaning to Haverford's ideals. Now, in this time of deep-lying world conflict, confusion, fear and suffering, we feel that the call for this kind of education comes with special urgency.

We do not attempt at this moment to define in precise terms the program of the College in relation to the national military mobilization. Under a policy directed toward ~~such~~ the goal stated above it could not participate in programs which are out of harmony with its central purpose or which would impair its success in pursuing its basic aims. We recognize activities such as the R.O.T.C. as clearly in this category. But we do not feel that this policy would debar the College from accepting from the military establishment students who pursue work, such as that now followed by our premedical students, in harmony with the Haverford program. Further than this, we do not go at present. The specific applications of policy in this area we leave to be worked out as occasion may arise.

In developing the whole College program for the emergency period along the general lines indicated, there will be many problems to consider--problems of courses, educational methods, faculty, and students. We cannot forecast or settle all such questions in advance, but as they come up in the future we want the President and the Faculty to feel our confidence in them, and our encouragement to approach the problems imaginatively, and with courage both to stand firm and to adventure for the sake of our ideals.
