

Historical Subject Files

Used with permission.

From the collections of the University Archives, Princeton University,
Princeton, NJ

Documents can only be used for educational and research purposes. If used for commercial purposes, please contact the above institution.

December 2nd, 1918.

My dear General Rees:

I have received your letter of November 26th with the questionnaire attached concerning the possibility of our re-establishing an Officers Reserve Training Corps in Princeton. Our Princeton view on this subject cannot be expressed adequately within the limits of your questionnaire, and if you will therefore allow me I should like to make a more detailed statement of our position.

Practically the entire membership of the University has been compromised within the S. A. T. C. and the Naval Unit and in these fall months our students have been put through a very rigorous training and have been under a very carefully supervised military discipline at all times, as you know. Consequently, with the end of the war and with the demobilization of the S. A. T. C. our young men express themselves as very desirous of getting back as soon as possible to the academic basis of our old university life. They were naturally let down and somewhat depressed in spirit because of their splendid purpose to serve the country being suddenly made impossible of realization. It would be very difficult to establish the Officers Reserve Training Corps at once with the beginning of our new term in January, as the men would not enter into it with the same spirit of enthusiasm with which they joined the S. A. T. C. in October. It seems to me that we could take up the question of re-establishing our R. O. T. C. under far more favorable circumstances if it could be postponed until after we have been able to get our academic life thoroughly established.

I wish to assure you very emphatically that Princeton stands in readiness to carry out any plan of military training which the Government may devise and which the Universities of the country may be able to undertake.

If you will allow me to make the suggestion, it seems to me that a conference of the representatives of all of the colleges and universities which have had the R. O. T. C. might result in some very valuable suggestions. Such a conference could be held in the near future at Washington and would perhaps throw much light upon this particular problem.

As you may possibly know, I have been in communication with General Snow, looking towards the establishment here in connection with the S. A. T. C. of an Artillery School. All the equipment has been sent to us and recently two artillery officers have been detailed here for the purpose of instruction. I should much prefer to have the military instruction which Princeton University can give specialized in an artillery unit. Whatever we undertake, however, I am sure will start with a better chance of success if we can have an interim in which our students will be able to establish themselves in their old academic life.

I am hoping to have the pleasure of seeing you in Boston at our conference Thursday afternoon.

With warmest regards,

Faithfully yours,

To-
General R. I. Rees,
Washington, D. C.