

Letter from Marcellus Hartley Dodge to Nicholas Murray Butler, September 22, 1932

Dear Nicholas Murray,

Enclosed is a letter I recently got from Mrs. Ochs, excuse the personal reference. Iphigene says he [her father, Adolph Ochs, the publisher of The New York Times] is fine and hopes to be as well as ever....

I believe we should have one Jew on our board but no more. He was nearly elected before, [but Cardozo was elected instead]. We got one of the greatest lawyers of our time and a fine trustee, but not a representative of the body of Jews in New York and the country.

Of course I know his age, and they said we would be electing him for his wealth (nonsense to my mind). If he comes back from Lake George as they say he will, I would rather have him with his mature judgment and acquaintance, for the few years he could give us than a lot of others at 50 would bring. Old heads are what we are asking for these days!

Why enumerate them to you; waste of time, except this. He would contribute to keeping the present Columbia point of view. If Columbia restricts her view point, and brings it to the restricted view point of certain groups of citizens of New York she will not thrive. You know what I mean.

To elect Mr. Ochs to Harvard or Yale would be to elect him to a fine body of men. To elect him to Columbia would mean receiving in the family. You have no greater admirer and Mr. Ochs is one who wears and improves on close range. His daughter (the real future owner of The Times, in spite of his general plans) is a part of Columbia, Arthur Sulzberger is a graduate. He has for a generation assiduously printed in full your own opinions and the full news of Columbia. It would be a fitting adornment at the close of his career, and he would adorn Columbia anyway.

There is no harm in considering it. The Chemical bank or the Allied Chemical Co. might not consider it, but Columbia can. That just illustrates the difference between a commercial company and a great university.

Coykendall [the newly elected Chair of the Board] suggested a Doctor in the Spring. If we can find just the man lets consider him. If we cant, lets go slow and leave well enough alone. We have a fine Dean and we don't want any conflicting opinions in the board on medical matters. They are complicated enough as they are.

Remember me to Mrs. Butler and Sarah.

Sincerely yours,

Marcellus

PS I got your letter just now about [Thomas J. Watson, head of IBM]. Think he would be a splendid trustee. Both Watson and Mr. Ochs for instance would "know what its all about."