

9
May 31, 1943.

Mr. Bus Ham,
Associated Press,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bus:

I am glad to have your letter of last week. I thought your story got a pretty good play. I have received a letter from a fellow in Providence sending me Bill Cunningham's full column write-up. Doubtless you have seen it. I am going to write Bill because I think he has some fine logic in his write-up. I think I can point out some things that might cause him to do a little crusading in that it will be necessary for the American Association of University and College Presidents to initiate this thing if it is to come to pass. They have their chance now, and if they do nothing about it then it could be charged up to administrative negligence.

The college administrators have often complained about the difficulty. Certainly everybody who is on the inside knows that the public has lost confidence in the wholesomeness of the administration of college athletics. It is not football alone, but the whole set up is tinctured with proselyting, subsidizing and chicanery.

You asked me what new angles I had. I don't know that there are any at all, but I think this is one thought that we could put out without reservation. It is this. Let's win the war first, and let's not put the winning of athletic teams as of paramount importance in this war time. And too, it is more important that we continue athletics in colleges for the morale of the boys in foreign service - not for the boys here on the home front. Their morale can be built up in many ways, but the boys who are overseas want to know regarding the athletic victories of their old school, and so forth.

Therefore, it is of primal importance that we carry on athletics on their account, and secondly on our account. Here's the other conviction that I have. It is much more important to carry on in interscholastic athletics with a full program than it is to carry on intercollegiate athletics with a full program. These boys coming up need to be toughened and hardened. There is practically a war college now on every campus, and these men are under military discipline. They are required to take their physical conditioning so many hours per week, and then there is a lot of marching and military administration that they are forced to take. So it is more important to the conditioning of the high school boys that we give them athletics and combatives and aquatics and gymnastics to build them up so that there will not be thirty-three and one-third per cent rejections as there has been up to the present time.