

August 16, 1938

Mr. Al Gebert  
Wichita University  
Wichita, Kansas

Dear Al,

I have tried all day to get you over the telephone but have been unsuccessful so will resort to this letter by way of explaining my conversation with our good friend George Haun. When George called me yesterday he first asked if we could find any employment in our plant for members of the Wichita University Football Team. I told him I that we had on previous occasions explained our position with respect to employing these boys in our plant. It is a complicated situation involving Government inspectors and Government auditors. Our plant is devoted entirely to Government contract work. We can do nothing that would appear to inflate or increase Government costs. These boys would, therefore, definitely have to make their own way and justify their position on the payroll. They would have to work a customary 44 hour week schedule. Our position is further complicated by current labor requirements and conditions that are prompted by Federal legislation that is peculiarly adaptable to a plant of this kind.

After giving George the foregoing explanation in brief, he then asked if the company could make a donation and it was to this that I took exception for that to my mind implies subsidizing athletics with which I have no quarrel if it is done openly. I tried to make George see my point of view and am afraid I went too far and possibly strained one of the most cherished friendships that I have ever had. To my way of thinking we make a serious mistake if we in any wise use these youngsters as pawns in our enthusiasm to obtain a good football team and ballyhoo our University. George knows me well enough to appreciate the fact that I am keen on athletics. As I have previously said, I am not altogether against subsidizing athletics. By this I mean an open and above board payment for athletic ability in place of "shadow jobs" and other devious methods of compensation. It seems to me that college is a poor place to begin teaching our youngsters some of the sharp methods that have put the business world into its present distrusted position. Don't think I don't know what I am talking about because I do and I only gave vent to my feelings to George yesterday because I felt we were close enough to each other that I could speak my mind.

No one could be as close to labor problems as we are or as close to the political situation as we are without feeling that there is much to be accomplished in getting back to fundamentals. Certainly one of the fundamentals is calling a spade a spade and putting our cards