



GLOBAL SEMESTER 1993-94

8 September, 1993

Dear Friends:

Warm greetings from Athens, Greece! All 29 of us are fine and eagerly awaiting the arrival of Tom Friedrich from Ames, Iowa. Tom had some medical problems just before our departure and the latest word is that he is doing fine and will be back to full health when he joins us in Jerusalem on 13 September.

It will be difficult *not* to use superlatives in describing our trip thus far. The logistics have all been just as anticipated, the students have been great, the class sessions conducted by our hosts have been stimulating and even the weather has been perfect.

Geneva is a clean, charming, expensive and very civilized lake-side city. We all learned our way around quickly and by the second day were hopping all over the city by bus and by foot. The briefings conducted by the United Nations agencies were informative and provided us with a solid introduction to our understanding of the world through an examination of various issues we will continue to examine during the next five months. The World Health Organization representative detailed the several initiatives being used to obtain the goal of world health by the year 2000. The most impressive operation (and the one that stands the most chance of reaching the objective) appears to be in the area of immunization of all the world's children against the 6 major childhood diseases. We were all moved by the presentation at UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) that deals with the "silent emergencies" of over 35,000 children who die in the world each day. We learned that with over 50 conflicts taking place today around the world that 90% of the deaths in those conflicts are innocent civilians (women and children). A film relating some of the relief work done by Audrey Hepburn gave graphic testimony to both the major challenge and the small victories in this campaign to save the world's children. The session at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade building gave all of us a beginning insight into the complexities of trade and the maintenance of a world economy. Madame Fisher from the World Council of Churches provided us with a perspective of realistic hope for world peace achieved through faith in action. The Center for Human Rights and the International Red Cross focused on the plight of over 18.2 million refugees. With 190 nations in the world and over 3,000 different ethnic groups, this problem is becoming an area of United Nations' activity which demands ever increasing resources. We were especially moved by the presentation of a gentleman who just returned from Somalia and gave us a first hand account of the activities of the International Red Cross in that troubled region of the world.

The Palace of Nations is an impressive complex where we passed the meeting rooms in which delegations from the Muslims, Serbs and Croats were deliberating. The sense of optimism changed to a state of despair on September 3 when the talks on the status of the former Yugoslavia broke down. We ate lunch on that day in the UN cafeteria at the table next to Lord David Owen, the chief mediator for the talks and could see on his face the pain of this defeat.

You will all be happy to know that every student has successfully scored 65 (out of a total of 65) points on a geography quiz to identify countries in Europe, Asia, and Africa. In addition they have become organized to handle various aspects of our communal life style over the next five months. **RACHEL PETSCHER** is serving as head of the transportation committee, **BETSY BURRITT** heads the housing group, **WENDY JOYS** is in charge of the social committee, **KRISTEN WARE** will be responsible for life and worship, **CHRIS STAUFFER** and his committee will take care of health and first aid and the last group, led by **DAVID TAYLOR**, will

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deal with communications. We've celebrated the birthdays of **AMY KOOP** and **CHRIS STAUFFER** who will have very unique memories of this occasion.

We ended our stay in Geneva with our group dinner at a Swiss Hotel that served us a typical cheese fondue dinner. After a smooth flight to Athens we were met by our host at the airport and taken to our hotel located about 5 blocks from the Acropolis. None of us will forget the sight of the Parthenon looming overhead dominating the entire city of 4 million persons. We've been blessed with a wonderful guide who has taken us on walking tours and conducted lectures on the history, art and architecture of Classical Greece. We are all humbled by the magnificent achievements of this civilization and their contributions made 2,500 years ago. Pat has been able to revel in theater history as we sat in the stone seats of the Theater Dionysis at the foot of the Acropolis. Tomorrow evening we will attend a performance of Sophocles' play **ELECTRA** performed in an open-air theater in Greek by a theater company specializing in the preservation of the Classic Athenian style. Some of our students have gone to the Olympic Stadium to engage in their daily exercise program by running around the track in the same place as the Olympians did so long ago. Yesterday afternoon, the students all took advantage of a 45 minute swimming break in the Aegean Sea following our lecture at the Temple of Poseidon in Cape Sounion at the southern most tip of Attica.

We could go on and on. All of the students remain healthy, enthusiastic and highly motivated for the academic and the cultural dimensions of our trip. It is a treat for us to get to know each one of the students more as we progress in our lives together. I'm sure each and every one of them join us in thanking you for helping to make this life changing experience possible.

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ΧΑΙΡΕΤΙΣΜΟΥΣ ΑΠΟ ΑΘΗΝΑ.
ΦΙΛΙΚΟΤΑΤΑ.

Kathy and Pat

* TRANSLATION: LOTS OF CHARMS, FROM ATHENS,
FRIENDLY WISHES FROM