Brooklyn College
BEDFORD AVENUE AND AVENUE H
BROOKLYN, N.Y.

HARRY D. GIDEONSE, PRESIDENT

September 10, 1943

The City Planning Commission
Municipal Building
New York, N.Y.

Gentlemen:

The attached report by Randolph Evans sets forth the need for and the facilities offered in the proposed College Center and Arts Building for Brooklyn College. This report was submitted to us on April 1, 1943 and we have since that time added supplementary material explaining the functions of the existing five buildings on the college campus. The original plans for the college were designed for the college as a whole and included a building of this type. The future may bring some modifications in the program of the college along material lines and in support of a possible Federal military program after the war, but there is sufficient flexibility in the long-term program for the college to take care of such needs. In case this report does not adequately answer all questions that may arise as to the educational needs that will be met in this building, I shall be very happy to extend an invitation to the City Planning Commission as a whole to make a personal inspection of our facilities.

A building of the type of the proposed College Centre and Arts Building was projected when the college moved to its present site and the lack of it has greatly hampered our educational effectiveness. Colleges and high schools throughout the country have facilities of this type. Every new high school in New York City is so equipped. Hunter College has an auditorium and City College has its Great Hall. State universities throughout the country have so-called "student union" buildings ranging all the way from the model set at the University of Alabama to the efficient and impressive centers of the state universities of Iowa, Michigan and Wisconsin. The educational reason for these facilities is simple. The academic (classroom) program of a school or college meets only the intellectual needs of its students, and even when a college offers an excellent academic program—and Brooklyn College can demonstrate the academic quality of its program by every known yardstick—it may turn out a questionable final product because it overlooked the social, guidance and citizenship needs of its students. At Brooklyn College contact between faculty and studentbody is almost exclusively a classroom affair, and contact among the students themselves is restricted to the same narrow limits. There is no space for student activities (except some locker space in the basements which has been made available) and the space for individual conferences with teachers and advisers (staffrooms) is extremely restricted. We live in a borough which elects a communist to the City Council, and continuous cultivation of our studentbody by the issue of literature at our college gates is a regular procedure of

* Since the original loan and grant for Brooklyn College were limited to a capitalization of the rent paid in office and loft buildings in the downtown district, only an academic building, a science building, a library, a gymnasium and a heating plant were authorized. The provision for auditorium and student activities space was postponed to a later stage.
pressure groups. There can be no regular college-wide program to develop constructive and educational alternatives until facilities are available. At present there is no contact whatsoever between the President of the college and the student body—such contact is, of course, normally provided in an assembly or chapel program but no facilities exist in our present plant for such purposes. Programs of vocational and professional guidance—(necessarily individualized at least in part) are vitally handicapped because of the limits of staff-room space, and even experimentation with certain budgetary economies in large class instruction is discouraged by the absence of suitable rooms. We therefore constantly felt the need of a large auditorium or assembly hall, ample space for student advisers and student activities, and more adequate space to permit the organization of at least a number of large lecture classes. I shall discuss these needs seriatim.

Auditorium

The need for the auditorium is, of course, the most urgent of all. At present the college administration has to interrupt the gymnasium schedule if a fairly large student group is to assemble—the gymnasium schedule is very crowded for purposes of physical education, and it is almost the last college program which we would desire to cramp in an urban college. The college has absolutely no facilities for college-wide or even college class functions. It has no college assembly hall, a type of facility that is available in every college and even high school in the form of a chapel or auditorium. The largest lecture room on our campus—and it is in continuous use—seats only 300. We should have at least the facilities for a regular weekly freshman assembly program, and probably a senior program as well. We should have an auditorium large enough to accommodate the entire Day Session student body, or Evening Session student body, in two successive sessions. The proposed auditorium is a minimum size for this purpose. It would permit us to present the same program to our entire undergraduate student body in four or five successive sessions.

Such assemblies present the only method by which a college without dormitories can build a college community out of its heterogeneous urban student body. If we are to counteract the influence of street-corner orators and demagogues who hire halls, we must have a place where programs of an educational nature can be arranged. Needless to say, the educational value of such gatherings doesn't depend on the speeches alone. It is derived also from the manner in which the meeting is conducted, the atmosphere of intellectual honesty which is maintained, the sense that the individual gets of participating in worthwhile experience shared with members of a large group of which he is a part. The importance of the last has been demonstrated in the armed forces. The recently inducted soldier after a few months of association as a functioning part of a great whole returns home with a keen sense of group loyalty. Such programs are a regular part of the college program elsewhere. They are more needed here than elsewhere because our students continue to live at home and because of the influence of our urban environment.

Student Activities

The transfer of the Music and Design Departments, as well as the dramatic activities and workshops of the Speech Department, from the
overcrowded Boylan Hall to the new building, will make ample space available for student activities and counseling offices. At present the classrooms in this building are so urgently needed for class purposes that there is little space available for these purposes. These so-called extracurricular activities are not "extra" but, in a college that aims primarily at good citizenship and balanced personality, they are an essential part of the total educational process. We now have the administrative framework set up for the proper supervision of these activities to insure their educational nature but we need rooms in which they can meet.

High quality of citizenship should be the first aim of democratic education. It is not achieved by reading textbooks or listening to lectures. A student's attitudes, emotions and skills in living are of primary importance, and a very large part of such education springs from the activities and contacts of students among themselves under suitable guidance. We have no dormitories or fraternity houses, and these significant aspects of education must therefore be neglected if suitable facilities and a constructive educational policy do not provide for them. I attach two tables which indicate the numbers of students already interested in a variety of student activities (Table I, 1943) and the large variety of student organizations that already exist (Table II). These tables also indicate, however, that more than nine-tenths of our students have not even one single contact of this type, and the college cannot well afford to tackle this weakness in our program until suitable facilities are available.

Legislative investigations such as the Rapp-Coudert investigation have reminded us of the weakness of our program in other than academic respects. It is true that even the highest estimates of the investigators for students involved in communist activities never went beyond a figure that represented only three percent of our student enrollment (which should be compared with the much higher communist vote cast in the borough elections for the City Council) but it is also true that mere suppression of symptoms has never constituted an effective therapy for any malady. The Rapp-Coudert Committee itself stressed the need for a positive educational program. The Board of Higher Education has constantly reminded us of the need for a vigorous program of college-wide meetings, class meetings, counseling and guidance programs, and extracurricular activities which, if well developed with an eye to general participation, are of course the heart of a college program. It is, however, impossible to develop citizenship training in a huge college like Brooklyn College if the college faculty is restricted to nothing but classroom contact with the student body.

The space in Boylan Hall which will be made available by the transfer of the Music and Design Departments will be used to provide for vocational and general guidance programs (staffrooms, conference rooms, etc.), and student activities of many varieties. Boylan Hall is the indicated place for such space use because it is the busiest classroom building on the campus, and staffrooms, counseling offices and activities rooms should be located near the most active student traffic. It is not necessarily the intention to locate these activities in the exact space vacated by the Music and Design Departments. Staff and counseling offices should be made available near departmental and administrative offices, and a general reassignment of space can therefore be anticipated.
Transfer of the Music and Design Departments and the Speech Workshop to a New Building

The transfer of the several art departments to a new building will not only release much needed space for counseling and student activities but plans for the new building take into account the necessary facilities for effective work in the arts which supplement in an indispensable fashion the exclusively intellectual emphasis of our normal academic program. The insistence on shopwork rather than on formal classroom instruction in the various arts departments, serves an important educational purpose, and the slant on shopwork in the dramatic and design activities is well brought out in the data submitted by the chairmen of these departments, and reproduced in the report. The significance-wholly apart from the musical aspects of the department's work-of the development of team work and cooperative activities in the work of the Music Department, points in the same direction. Planning of the new building takes into account the expansion of this feature of the College's program which will follow, once material facilities are available. Each department also has a special use for the Lecture Hall which is provided.

Lecture Hall

The Lecture Hall provides an ideal large classroom for instructional purposes. The college has not been able to use large lecture classes as much as is customary elsewhere-and quite compatible with instructional efficiency as well as administrative economy. The primary reason for our excessive use of small classes has been the absence of suitable facilities in our present building.

Planning

Planning implies foresight as well as an understanding of human values and a clear group of technical data. Parks, highways, docks and educational facilities are not ends in themselves. They are means with which we achieve human ends. It is a truism of educational literature today that the greatest weakness of the traditional academic program has been its exclusively 'classroom' character. The American Youth Commission of the Council on Education has under the distinguished leadership of Owen D. Young stressed the view that group and work experience are the crucial weaknesses of American education. Brooklyn College has shown imagination and initiative in elaborating programs in this area even under extreme budgetary handicaps. Our personnel and guidance program has made rapid strides in recent years in spite of limited space. During the past two years the college has cooperated in a summer agricultural program which has resulted in a statement by Dr. W. J. Weaver, who was charged by the State of New York with the development and supervision of these programs, that "no other group in the State has been able to equal our record at Morrisville, New York with as large a number of persons concerned." I believe that our record demonstrates a willingness to take the long view in planning for the future of the borough we serve. Professional flexibility and imagination are not sufficient, however, to meet one of the most difficult educational challenges. We must have at least the equipment which is available elsewhere as a matter of course.
Unlike the case for many of the other post-war projects, the site for this building is already available on the present campus. It was made available in the original project for the college—and the building itself was postponed until just such a combination of circumstances would arise as is now foreseen for the post-war period. Our experience with the present buildings demonstrates that the absence of the College Center and Arts Building has seriously diminished the net effectiveness of the college plant which is now available. If citizenship is our primary educational objective, we should have the tools with which to develop it.

Sincerely yours,

Harry D. Gideonse
President

HDG:M
### Table I - 1943

The following information was compiled from the Brooklyn College Student Activities Record cards which were filled out by Day Session students in the Spring semester 1943.

#### STUDENTS INTERESTED IN:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Athletic Activities (Men)</th>
<th>Athletic Activities (Women)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>284</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
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<tr>
<td>288</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>Dancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxing</td>
<td>Fencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fencing</td>
<td>Handball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gymnastics</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track</td>
<td>Archery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ping-Pong</td>
<td>Hockey</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrestling</td>
<td>Softball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handball</td>
<td>Volley Ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Ping-Pong</td>
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<tr>
<td>157</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>Badminton</td>
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<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>General</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hockey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Departmental Extra-Curricular Activities

| Biology  | 265 |
| Chemistry | 160 |
| Classical Languages | 13  |
| Design    | 86  |
| Economics | 108 |
| Education | 42  |
| English   | 30  |
| Geology   | 15  |
| German    | 10  |
| History   | 42  |
| Home Economics | 21 |
| Hygiene (Men) | 18 |
| Hygiene (Women) | 36 |
| Mathematics | 59  |
| Music     | 147 |
| Philosophy | 4   |
| Physics   | 65  |
| Political Science | 39 |
| Psychology | 147 |
| Romance Languages | 160 |
| Sociology, Anthropology | 68 |
| Speech    | 45  |
| Science (specific one not indicated) | 30 |

#### Student Government

| 356 |

#### Publications

| Newspaper | 701 |
| Magazine  | 350 |
| Yearbook  | 200 |

#### Religious Organizations

| Catholic | 315 |
| Jewish   | 1,260 |
| Protestant | 108 |
| Inter-Faith | 33  |

#### Social Organizations

| Sorority | 705 |
| Fraternity | 410 |
| House Plan | 841 |
| Other    | 214 |

#### Social and Political Problems Groups

#### Special Interest Groups

| Photography | 538 |
| Hiking      | 762 |
| Drama       | 719 |
| Debate      | 228 |
| Radio       | 526 |
| Band        | 121 |
| Orchestra   | 221 |
| Choral      | 375 |
| Miscellaneous | 252 |

#### STUDENTS WHO ARE MEMBERS IN:

1. 1 organization  
2. 2 organizations  
3. 3 organizations  
4. 4 organizations  
5. 5 organizations  
6. 6 or more organizations
STUDENT COUNCIL

HONOR SOCIETIES
Delta Sigma Rho
Eta Sigma Phi
Pi Mu Epsilon
Propylaea

MEN'S ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
Intercollegiate Teams
baseball
basketball
fencing
football
swimming
tennis
track
wrestling

Intramural Teams
badminton
baseball
basketball
boxing
gymnastics
handball
swimming
table tennis
wrestling
Cheering Squad

WOMEN'S ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
Intercollegiate Teams
archery
basketball
fencing
hockey
swimming
tennis

Intramural Teams
archery
badminton
basketball
fencing
hockey
ping-pong
softball
swimming
tennis
volley ball

Modern Dance Club

PUBLICATIONS
Brooklundian - Yearbook
Observer-Kaleidoscope - Literary Magazine
Pulse - Intercollegiate Magazine
Vanguard - Newspaper

DEPARTMENTAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
Art Group
Attician Society
Brooklyn College Hiking Club
Brooklyn College Radio Guild
Brooklyn College Rifle Club
Bureau of Economic Research
Bureau of Government Research
Bureau of History Research
Camera Club
Chemistry Society
Childs Arts Group
Classical Club
Dance Orchestra
Debate Council
Deutscher Verein
Education Club
English Club
Freshman Debate Council
Geology Club
Gilbert and Sullivan Society
Harriet Tubman Society
Home Economics Club
Interpretative Reading Club
Italian Club
Jazz Club
Junior Freshman Committee
La Sociedad Hispanica
Le Cercle Francais
Le Salon
L'Etincelle
Light Opera Guild
Masquers
Mathematics Society
Physics Club
Psychology Club
Shakespeare Reading Circle
Social Service Club
Society of Biology and Medicine
Square Dance Group
Symphonius
Tricolore
Varsity
Student Organizations
Spring Semester 1943

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS
All-College Bible Club
Hillel Foundation
Interfaith Council
Menorah Society
Newman Club
Student Christian Association

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS GROUPS
Avukah
Eugene V. Debs Society
Post-War Problems Group

POLITICAL PARTIES
Campus Party
Kingsman-Fusion Party

SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS
Brooklyn College Booster Squad
Grand Council of Campus Sorors
Grand Council of Sisterships
Hi-Hites Club
House Plan
Beecher House
Boylan House
Brooks House
Camera House
Des Genomes House
Dix House
Drebbin House
Friedenburgh House
Harris House
Hunt House
Ingersoll House
Kelly House
Mann House
McCormack House
Robinson House
Rosenberg House
Slocum House
Stone House
Tripp House
Victory House

INTERFRATERNITY COUNCIL
Alpha Gamma
Alpha Nu Sigma
Alpha Phi Delta
Alpha Phi Omega
Chi Beta Nu
Delta Gamma Rho
Epsilon Phi Alpha
Omega Delta Phi
Phi Beta Upsilon
Phi Delta Pi
Phi Delta Rho
Phi Mu Theta
Pi Beta Gamma
Sigma Kappa Chi
Sigma Tau Sigma

PANHELLENIC ASSOCIATION
Alpha Delta Pi
Alpha Omega
Alpha Phi Epsilon
Delta Phi Epsilon
Delta Sigma Pi
Iota Alpha Pi
Kappa Delta
Lambda Gamma Phi
Phi Tau Alpha
Pi Alpha Tau
Pi Phi Alpha
Pi Sigma
Sigma Tau Delta
Upsilon Phi
Zeta Phi