

The City University of New York

535 East Eightieth Street
New York, New York 10021

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Office of the Chancellor

July 2, 1968

To: Members of Community College VII Planning and Presidential
Search Committee

From: Albert H. Bowker

During the past few weeks, we have had a series of meetings, at the staff level, with the representatives of the Bedford-Stuyvesant community. Our purpose in having these meetings was to keep up communications and fill time until the community committee was ready to work on the presidency. These sessions have followed the familiar pattern of demands and bargaining. They requested that we provide them with space and services so that they would have a place to meet, would be able to keep the community informed of their activities, and would be able to have the necessary resources available so that they could make intelligent and free decisions on behalf of the community. A budget of their requests is attached. We have indicated general agreement except in the matter of consultants.

Ordinarily my office provides such supportive services as may be needed by advisory committees and search committees. This is the pattern we followed with the Baruch Advisory Committee, and are now following with the Special Advisory Committee on Harlem and the SEEK Advisory Committee. Thus, we do not have much experience in dealing with requests of this nature, but it is our feeling that we should make an effort to cooperate and try to work toward the reduction of the feeling of mistrust that now exists.

The question is a matter of judgment on how to proceed rather than a financial concern. We do have a substantial sum available for the planning of Community College Number VII.

A rational examination of the request leads me to the conclusion that they really don't need the space and services requested. However, they feel strongly that this is an important step in equalizing their position in relation to the Board. It is my feeling that an affirmative move by us at this stage of the overall negotiations, even though questionable as an independent action, would provide long-range benefits.

Up to now we have handled this matter at a staff level to save the Board members from the trouble of continuous meetings. We do not, however, wish to do anything the Board might feel is inappropriate. Therefore, if you want us to tell the Bedford-Stuyvesant Committee that we cannot honor their request, we shall act accordingly. However, I do think that such action will precipitate a major crisis.

What is your pleasure?

Enc:

AHB:Slb

cc: Mr. Porter R. Chandler ✓
Mr. Frederick Burkhardt
Mr. Luis Quero Chiesa
Dr. J. Oscar Lee

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