

Nolan file TT as

November 13, 1973

Mr. Arthur Thornhill, President
Little Brown, Incorporated
Arlington Street
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Arthur:

I thought you would want to have a report of the Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting in which I did my best to fill in for you as Chairman. The meeting was held on Thursday afternoon: Tom was there, along with Jim Martin and his tree man, Dick Streeter, plus several alumnae, students, Tim Smith, and members of the faculty, including the new chairman of the Art and Architecture Committee, Fred Wohnus. The meeting went on for one and one-half hours, most of it in Dickenson, part of it outside on the Commons Lawn with Streeter.

Jim Martin had prepared a rough report of the maintenance work which had been done this year, including the painting of the houses this summer, and showed us color snapshots of the painting work. I think everyone was pleased with the look of the houses. Tim told us that work was proceeding smoothly with the new buildings, nothing other than the usual snags and we had a tour of them on Saturday morning, led by Bob Ward.

Most of the meeting was given over to the discussion of certain maintenance problems which are or may be achieving critical importance, and with regard to which, therefore, the College may have to anticipate new expenditures.

One of these is the question of the steam distribution system: apparently there was a bad break in one of the return lines at the end of June, and this led Martin to alert our Committee to the probability of further breaks, the need to keep the system under surveillance, and the probability of additional repair jobs. Although such systems often need partial replacement as they become progressively aged, this system was insulated less than a decade ago in order to slow down the inevitable process of deterioration. Apparently it is now agreed that the material was not installed properly, no underground drainage having been provided. Jim and his staff seem

Mr. Arthur Thornhill
November 13, 1973
Page 2

to be reasonably confident that future problems will occur sporadically, and therefore that they will be able to repair them with College equipment and personnel. There was some discussion of determining the possible liability of the engineering or contracting firms which did the insulation work, but how far we ought to pursue this matter was not clarified.

A second problem revolved around the question of how the College ought to respond to the "energy crisis." The issue becomes critical because of the rise in fuel costs, from 13 to 20 cents a gallon for the No. 2 fuel which the College uses. One way of cutting down costs which I gather has been discussed over the years, is adding storm windows to the buildings. About half the houses have them, but there are none in the Commons or the Barn. Jim reported that the Commons is particularly inefficient in terms of fuel consumption; that he will ask the Powers concern to conduct a survey of the Commons and give an estimate of the possible savings in heat from the installation of storm windows and what the window installation itself would cost. We also talked about the advisability of installing individual room thermostats in one of the houses as an experiment to determine possible economies to familiarize students and personnel with more efficient ways to use the heating system, but no consensus emerged about what to do about these matters. I am not competent to judge how significant any of these measures might be in contributing to the reduction of maintenance expenditures.

A third area dealt with was the College's landscaped environment. As you know, this is a major interest of mine, so naturally I was happy to learn that in the person of *Someone who* Dick Streeter the maintenance staff now includes *seems to* know a good deal about tree care and has been working on the problem. The principal question before us at the moment is what to do about the 184 elms which still stand on the campus out of the 300 or 400 which were here a decade ago. Streeter would like the Board to approve an expenditure of \$300 to bring a firm up here which claims to have developed an effective system of therapy for controlling the Dutch elm blight, and who would recommend a ten year control program. He had some experience with them in his previous work, and he showed me a report of the program they have initiated at Brown University. Everyone agreed that if we can save the elms we ought to do so: even though the therapy program would cost at least \$150 per tree over a ten year period, that is a lot less than what it costs to take down each of these huge trees, leaving aside the question of replacement costs.

Mr. Arthur Thornhill
November 13, 1973
Page 3

However, I also know that many botanists have been making claims about specific nostrums for Dutch elm disease, most of which have turned out to be ineffective, so I think that someone ought to check with Brown before we go ahead even with approving the expenditure for a consultant's visit.

We also discussed the fact that the College now has no program for replacing the trees already killed, that it has a small nursery but does not grow any deciduous stock, only conifers, and also that some thought should be given to converting the 375 acres of pasture land into forest. The college does not get any rent for the haying of these lands now but is glad if it can find someone who will mow the fields in return for free hay; that people believe it will be increasingly difficult to find anyone in the years ahead; that the fields therefore will reseed themselves inevitably anyway and therefore it may be wiser to adopt a deliberate tree planting program.

I hope I am not repeating matters with which you already are familiar, but I thought you would like to know what was discussed in your absence. We missed you and hope you had a good stay in Frankfurt.

Sincerely,

Robert Gutman
Professor of Sociology

cc: Mrs. Jessie Emmett
Mr. Thomas Parker ✓