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- 45. Francis J. Brown to Commission Members, August 6, 1947, Harold H. Swift Papers, Department of Special Collections, The University of Chicago Library, box 180, file 2; and President's Commission on Higher Education, Higher Education for American Democracy, vol. 1, "Establishing the Goals" (Washington; D. C., U. S. Government Printing Office, 1947), p. 41.
- 46. President's Commission, Higher Education, 1:25.
- 47. Ibid., 1:101.
- 48. Ibid., 1:68.
- 49. Ibid., 1:32.
- 50. Ibid., 1:32.
- 51. Ibid., 1:69.
- 52. *Ibid.*, 1:9.
- 53. Ibid., 1:10.
- 54. Ibid., 1:50-58.
- 55. Ibid., 1:49.
- 56. See Gail Kennedy, ed., Education for Democracy: The Debate Over the Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education (Boston; D. C. Heath and Company, 1952). Shortly after issuance of the President's Commission report, the Association of American Universities sponsored a Commission on Financing Higher Education. Its final report is usually considered a conservative rejoinder to Higher Education for American Democracy. [see Commission on Financing Higher Education, Final Report: Nature and Needs of Higher Education (New York, Columbia University Press, 1952) and David D. Henry, Challenges Past, Challenges Present: An Analysis of American Higher Education Since 1930 (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1975), pp. 79-84.]

#### **CHAPTER**

## 11

## Higher Education for All: The Mission of the City University of New York

Actanges on a scale rivaling, if not exceeding, those of the late nineteenth century. The rapid growth of the economy's tertiary or service sector created a large demand for white-collar workers—a demand that America's colleges and universities hastened to fill. In the postwar era, American higher education monopolized upward social mobility not only by regulating access to graduate and professional school, but now also by controlling access to at least the white-collar portion of the middle class. "There is a growing link between educational attainment and occupational advancement," commented Seymour Martin Lipset and Reinhard Bendix in the late 1950s. "With over half of the gainfully employed working in tertiary industries, and with the increasing growth of industrial and governmental bureaucracies," they stated, "nonmanual skills are requisite for a large proportion of the available jobs each year." "And," they concluded, "nonmanual skills are increasingly acquired through formal education."

Higher education's growth rate between World War II and the early 1970s exceeded even the most optimistic immediate postwar predictions. In the

1970s, despite recent reverses, almost half of the college-age population actually attended college, and the more than eight million students represented by this fraction constituted more students than the number attending high school just thirty years earlier.

Most of this growth took place in the public sector. Expansion by America's private colleges and universities was thwarted by the lack of either capital funds and/or motivation. The growth of many state university systems followed similar patterns. A central campus would be reserved for those most qualified academically; regional and local campuses would serve students with less impressive qualifications. This pattern developed most fully in California with its three-tiered system of universities, four-year regional liberal arts colleges, and two-year community colleges.<sup>2</sup>

During the 1960s, educational progressives began to speak of universal higher education as a desirable national goal.<sup>3</sup> Just as universal secondary education had been accepted by a once dubious public, universal higher education would one day be accepted, its supporters reasoned. Access to higher education would bring about fulfillment of one of the great tenets of the nation's credo: true equality of opportunity. The rapid growth of higher education facilities roughly paralleled the growth in available positions during the postwar years, and during the prosperous sixties it appeared that this trend would continue. Coming at a time of heightened social concern for groups that had been the victims of past discrimination, the prospect of rectifying past injustice simply by providing an opportunity for a college education seemed highly attractive.

Events at the City University of New York during the late 1960s led it to undertake a program of expansion based on the most advanced embodiment of the theory of universal higher education. Beginning in the fall of 1970, the University guaranteed admission to one of its undergraduate divisions and to the desired program of studies to all New York City high school graduates. Although CUNY admissions officers assigned them to a given division based on students' "ability," they simultaneously employed several different measures of this quality to assure that each student body would reflect the heterogeneity of this most heterogeneous of all American cities. City University authorities acknowledged that the achievement of this social goal implied the presence on each campus of students with a fairly wide range of abilities, but they intended to take concrete steps to permit the maximum development of each student.

Broad political, rather than narrow academic reasons, underlay adoption of this "Open Admissions" program. These reasons reflected an awareness of the social implications of admissions policies.

#### **BACKGROUND: DEMAND AND RESPONSE**

The College of the City of New York, the city's first municipal college, had not been New York's foremost institution of higher education at any time in this century. Always in Columbia's shadow, the College took its subordinate position into account in determining its course and paths of growth. Given the middle and working class background of most of its students, the College's emphasis on the rapid acquisition of usable skills comes as no surprise. Many CCNY students in the years before World War II could not afford to remove themselves from the work force for the nine or ten years required by the Columbia Plan (that is, 4 years of high school, 3 of college, and 2 or 3 more of professional school). Typically, they would complete a three-year program at Townsend Harris Hall, CCNY's preparatory division, study at CCNY for perhaps the two years necessary to complete a preprofessional course, and then attend one of the professional schools in the city-perhaps one of Columbia's.4 Alternately, a student might enter one of City College's undergraduate professional schools such as the School of Business and Civic Administration, the School of Technology, or the School of Education, all operational divisions by the 1920s. Students were not charged for attending any of these divisions; City College maintained a free tuition policy from the day it opened its doors in 1847.

Limitation of enrollment by Columbia, and later by other colleges attractive to New York City students, increased pressure on CCNY to accept students who could not gain admission elsewhere. The continued growth of New York's population, especially in the outlying boroughs remote from the College's upper Manhattan campus, forced the College to consider establishment of additional facilities. The demands for further growth led the New York State Legislature in 1926 to abolish the City College Board of Trustees and replace it with a Board of Higher Education of the City of New York. The new body was responsible not only for the affairs of City College and Hunter College (the municipal college for women), but also for any additional public colleges to be subsequently opened. The same year, a Brooklyn branch of CCNY was opened in downtown Brooklyn. Continued overcrowding forced the Board of Higher Education to establish an independent municipal college in Brooklyn, which opened its doors in 1930. Construction of a Bronx branch of Hunter College began in 1929. A fourth independent municipal college, Queens College, opened in 1937.5 Despite the increased taxing of facilities in the years just after World War II, the Board of Higher Education undertook no additional expansion at that time.

Admission to the municipal colleges was never determined by any "subjective" factor such as personality. Originally, City College admitted students by

examination. Like most other colleges, it shifted to the certificate system, and then to the use of "objective" criteria to predict success in college. During the immediate post-World War II years, each municipal college granted admission to all graduates of any New York City high school whose high school average exceeded the annually determined cutoff for that college. At that time, cutoff scores hovered in the high 70% range. In the late 1940s, a modification in policy allowed admission of the bottom third of each entering class on the basis of an average of high school record and aptitude test score.<sup>6</sup>

Complaints that the municipal colleges, despite several expansions, had not met the legitimate demand for higher education in New York City continued as in the past. After World War II, Donald Cottrell, who had been asked by the Board of Higher Education to prepare a master plan for future growth of the municipal college system, renewed the charge. A long-time advocate of the democratization of education, he had been influenced by the Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education and impressed with the successful growth of the California system of higher education. Cottrell argued that in 1950 there would be more than 48,000 New York City students "capable and desirous" of completing either a two- or a four-year college program which the municipal system was not accommodating. He further demonstrated that "occupational shifts involving the expansion of certain fields, the rise of new industries, and the relative decline of other industries and occupations" created in New York City a considerable demand for workers with at least some college education. For example, in 1950, New York City needed an additional 7500 men and 2350 women college graduates to fill professional and semiprofessional positions. Overall, he estimated that the city needed about 25,000 additional college graduates and an additional 32,000 workers with some college education to fill professional, semiprofessional, managerial, clerical, sales, and miscellaneous positions. He projected that the demand for workers in these categories would decline by only 10% during the following decade.8

The BHE discussed Cottrell's recommendations for increased higher educational facilities, but decided to take no action. Cottrell's own figures indicated that the number of unaccommodated students capable and desirous of completing four years of college would slacken off in the mid-1950s and not reach appreciable levels again until the end of the decade, when the war and postwar babies would begin to come of college age. The Board took no heed of Cottrell's figures concerning the ongoing need for two-year college programs. Thus, it ignored the admonition that his figures constituted minimum projections, and that "to base long-term planning on either a temporary valley or a temporary peak" was unreasonable.

Little growth occurred in the municipal college system during the next dozen years. Between 1950 and 1962, total annual admissions to the four-year colleges increased from 10,337 to 11,945, but admission of bachelor's degree candidates decreased from 8859 to 8563. Three community colleges

were founded during the mid- and late 1950s (Staten Island Community College in 1955, Bronx Community College in 1957, and Queensborough Community College in 1958), but in 1961 these colleges together only enrolled 3% of the city's high school graduates. During the 1950s, the ratio of those enrolled in the four-year colleges to public and private high school graduates declined considerably. This resulted from an increase in the cutoff points required for admission—a conscious attempt to keep the size of the entering classes constant.<sup>10</sup>

In 1962, the BHE established a subcommittee to draft another master plan, and again received a report that was an indictment. The Committee to Look to the Future criticized the Board's current admissions policies as "restrictive" and charged that they eliminated "a large group of New York City high school graduates who may have a legitimate claim to free public higher education." It attributed recent increases in the cutoff point to limited plant capacity, not to inflated high school grades, as some had claimed. The Committee's staff concluded that a policy of increasing academic exclusiveness was not "in keeping with the functions of a publicly supported university," and would no longer be feasible once the postwar babies attained college age. A reasonable goal, suggested the staff, would be the establishment of cutoffs making 30% of the city's academic high school graduates eligible for admission to the four-year colleges and a third of the city's academic and vocational high school graduates eligible for admission to the community colleges. Of course, not all of these students would attend, but establishment of such an eligibility pool would allow City University "to provide high quality instruction suitable to the various levels of ability of those persons who have a reasonable expectation of success in their education beyond the high school."11

Thus, two master plans issued twelve years apart came to the same general conclusions. If the Cottrell Report could be ignored because the crisis it predicted would take place a decade later, the Report of the Committee to Look to the Future made it clear that increased academic selectivity should no longer be opted for at the expense of expansion.

By 1962, the question of exclusiveness was not the BHE's only problem in the area of admissions policies. Major racial and ethnic changes were taking place in the city's population, and these changes were not reflected in the student bodies of the municipal colleges. In a period of increased concern with civil rights and equality of opportunity, this growing imbalance could not be ignored.

### ETHNICITY, RACE, AND PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION IN NEW YORK CITY

"The student population [of CCNY] has always reflected the tendencies of the population of the city at large," wrote the author of a history of City College. Almost from the time of its founding, New Yorkers perceived CCNY as an important vehicle for upward mobility. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, the majority of CCNY students had been middle class, native born Protestants. A sizable number of Jews of German descent began to appear in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and, after the lifting of a prohibition on admission of private and parochial school graduates in the 1880s, they were joined by many Catholic students.<sup>12</sup>

A substantial shift in the City College student body occurred at the turn of the century with the admission of large numbers of East European and Russian Jews. As early as 1903, they constituted perhaps 75% of all students. If anything, this percentage increased over the next three decades. In the thirties and forties, as the percentage of Italian-Americans, blacks, and Latin Americans in the city's high schools increased, their representation in the CCNY student body also increased.<sup>13</sup>

During the years after World War II, the general concern over barriers to higher education led some to perceive that the municipal colleges might not be absorbing students from new ethnic and racial groups as quickly as before. "It is interesting to observe," wrote Donald Cottrell, "that so-called 'problem neighborhoods'—those which have a high proportion of crime, juvenile delinquency, truancy and other undesirable characteristics—are much below the average of the City in percentage of population who have had some post-high school education." <sup>14</sup> The BHE's concern for exclusiveness, rather than a purposefully discriminatory policy, probably created the problem. Cottrell believed that his proposed expansion of the municipal colleges would lead to attendance of students from these neighborhoods in substantial numbers. He based this belief on past performance. Students from similar neighborhoods had been accommodated by CCNY in the past and, most probably, many "capable and desirous" members of these newer groups were among those denied admission by the failure of the municipal colleges to expand.

This belief in "automatic incorporation" would be strongly challenged in the coming years. During the 1950s, a major demographic revolution took place within New York City. While the city's population remained constant during that decade, about a million blacks and Puerto Ricans replaced the same number of whites who moved to the suburbs or out of the area completely. The social profiles of the city's high school graduates and its municipal college students did not reflect this change. Throughout the fifties, the percentage of nonwhites among the city's high school graduates remained constant at 13%; nonwhite enrollment at the municipal colleges remained at 5%. Further, although these colleges admitted roughly 20% of New York City's high school graduates, nonwhites constituted only 1% of the high school graduates admitted.<sup>15</sup>

The Committee to Look to the Future gave scant attention to the under-

representation of blacks and Puerto Ricans at the municipal colleges. Not only did the Committee envision no positive steps to remedy this situation, it actually modified its enrollment projections downward since the increasing proportion of the high school population composed of nonwhites did not appear to attend college at the same rate as whites. No one suggested the modification of admissions policies to increase the percentage of nonwhites; such a suggestion would have been dismissed immediately as reintroducing discriminatory mechanisms that had been outlawed by the state fifteen years before. But in the New York City of the mid-1960s, the problem of race and education proved volatile. Leaders of the civil rights movement perceived that education could provide a major route out of the ghetto, but that admission of representative numbers of nonwhites to the municipal colleges would not be automatic.

The two problems of numbers and race, although distinct, became increasingly related. Even if New York's population had been all white, the city's economy would have required additional college-trained workers. Both the Cottrell Report and the Report of the Committee to Look to the Future assumed there existed a sufficient supply of capable individuals to meet the demand if the municipal colleges would only undertake to educate them. But the presence of an increasing proportion of nonwhites who were not making their way through the educational system placed this assumption in doubt. Albert Bowker, who became Chancellor of the City University of New York shortly after issuance of the Report of the Committee to Look to the Future, took alarm at this trend, and resolved that positive steps would have to be taken to avoid both an economic and a social disaster in New York City. But Bowker knew that such steps would be difficult to implement, given the conservative nature of the BHE and its Chairman, Gustave Rosenberg.

#### BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION, ROSENBERG, AND BOWKER

Although the legislation creating the Board of Higher Education had given it authority to coordinate the activities of the municipal colleges, the Board preferred to allow them to develop autonomously. It conceived its own principal task to be the consideration of those routine matters which happened to concern more than one college. Criticism of the BHE's inattention to major policy considerations led it to establish in 1946 an Administrative Council, composed of the presidents of each of the municipal colleges. The Council successfully coped with the many short-run problems that emerged just after World War II, but it did not succeed in removing many routine items from the BHE's agenda.

The Board's lack of attention to broad policy questions can be attributed to a pragmatic conservatism. "[The] College Trustees Board is a sort of Preparation School for Supreme Court Judgeships and other high salaried offices," wrote an early twentieth century observer. The BHE had its share of judicial aspirants when it replaced the CCNY Board. As a result, it hesitated to undertake projects that might alienate the city's major political factions. Expansion would be implemented only in response to a demonstrable, immediate need, and then only when it could be accomplished without harm to the city's capital budget.

The social and economic backgrounds of the Board members reinforced this conservative thrust. As late as 1963, the year of Albert Bowker's appointment as Chancellor, the average age of the twenty men and four women to serve on the Board at some time during the year was 68; their average tenure on the Board was 13 years. Racially, the BHE included twenty-two whites and two blacks. (the first Puerto Rican would be appointed the following year). The three major religions were represented in roughly equal numbers. Democrats comprised a majority, reflecting the political affiliation of the mayors who had appointed most of them. The Board's 1963 membership included eight lawyers; other members came from such professions as banking, medicine, business, and public relations. Two academicians and three "volunteer-housewives" also served. Significantly, very few BHE members had attended the municipal colleges; most had studied at private institutions. Their upper middle class career patterns plus their elitist educations led them to provide a narrow answer to the question of who should go to college.

In many ways, Gustave Rosenberg, the Chairman of the Board of Higher Education from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s, personified these general characteristics. Born in New York in 1900, Rosenberg was an attorney and a lifelong Democrat active in local politics. Appointed to the Board by Mayor Impelliteri in 1952, he became its chairman five years later. Like some other Board members, Rosenberg aspired to a judgeship. In 1961 he was defeated in an elective judicial contest when a split within the Democratic Party forced him to run on the Liberal Party line. After suffering a second defeat in 1965, he finally achieved his goal two years later with his appointment to fill a vacancy on the State Supreme Court. Later he would be appointed to the Court of Claims.

Rosenberg found the BHE a useful device for the furthering of his political career since it gave him considerable visibility as well as access to important public officials. He continued the Board's tradition of undertaking no long-range planning—even the report issued by the Committee to Look to the Future had been produced only in response to the requirements of a recently passed state law. Rosenberg personally attended to the day-to-day administration of systemwide problems, a practice that created considerable friction after the appointment of the system's first chancellor in 1960.

In 1955, after a decade of haggling, the BHE and the Administrative Council finally agreed to the creation of the administrative entity to be known as the City University of New York, and to the creation of the office of Chancellor of the University. The resolution creating the office stated that its occupant would be the chief *educational* officer of the municipal college system, the presiding officer of the Administrative Council, the officer responsible for preparation of the University's operating and capital budgets, a representative to outside agencies, administrator of overall *Board* policies, and the supervisor of a staff to prepare reports on policy matters.<sup>18</sup>

After the city government ratified creation of the chancellor's office in 1957, the BHE permitted the Administrative Council to nominate its first occupant, probably in the expectation that it would choose one of its own members. Two years later, the Council had still to be heard from. The Board, wishing no further delay, proceeded to conduct its own search. In June, 1960, a Committee on the Chancellor recommended the appointment of John Rutherford Everett as CUNY's first Chancellor, effective September, 1960.

Everett served a short and unhappy tenure as chancellor. Some critics charged that he did not have the temperament to deal with his assigned duties, nor to cope with the sometimes conflicting demands of the BHE and the Administrative Council. Most important, Everett found himself unable to function as the University's chief administrative officer, a function retained by Rosenberg. In 1962, Everett resigned to assume the position of Director of the New School for Social Research.

Before a new chancellor was chosen, the Administrative Council expressed its concern to the Board that any person it might appoint would soon find himself as frustrated as Everett unless the BHE recognized the new appointee as "a professional administrator," with his professional responsibility not "qualified or limited through the exercise of administrative prerogatives by any person or agency outside the Administrative Council." Although the Council expressed concern that an "iron chancellor" might "stultify our undergraduate institutions to a point of mediocrity and reduce their presidents to the status of geographically assigned deans," the Everett affair made it more concerned that another weak chancellor would reduce the University to the status of a "legal fiction with a figurehead chancellor."

The Council also hinted that Rosenberg had usurped the legitimate powers of the Board as well as the legitimate powers of the Chancellor. "The powers of the Board," it said, "are by law vested in the Board of Higher Education as a corporate entity and not as individual members." This implied that each member of the Board had an equal right to information and an equal say on any matter worthy of the Board's attention. It reminded the members that "no single member can act for the Board except as the Board may authorize."

The Council chided the Board for its preoccupation with detail. "The

present agenda of the Board might be compared to that of a board of directors of a bank whose officers insisted on passing in review every cancelled check as proof of the integrity of the bank's operations." "The full concern of the Board," the Council concluded, "is with the establishment of policies; and after that with being assured that the policies are rightly and effectively administered." After issuing this set of warnings, the Administrative Council eagerly awaited the appointment of the City University's next chancellor.

Its choice, Stanford's graduate school Dean Albert Hosmer Bowker, had gained exposure as a BHE consultant on current trends in graduate education during planning for a CUNY graduate division intended primarily to alleviate the city's serious teacher shortage. Bowker, said Rosenberg, "gave promise that he grasped our problems and purposes." Since it was widely assumed that the chancellor would be devoting most of his time to graduate education Bowker had been thought of as a possible successor to Everett all along. All sides applauded Bowker's acceptance of the Board's formal offer in 1963. "Dr. Bowker as a scholar and organizer stood out as best suited to building the great university which the board envisions," commented the BHE chairman. The Administrative Council noted that "really fine advanced graduate programs offered in the name of the university as a single entity, and leading to university doctoral degrees, require at least a limited type of central direction operating from a base of real authority." Privately, its members resolved to see that Bowker would get this authority.

#### **BOWKER VS ROSENBERG**

Although hired because of his expertise in graduate education, Chancellor Bowker soon became deeply involved with the two major problems confronting CUNY's undergraduate divisions—numbers and race. His liberal answer to the question "Who should go to college?" led him to a confrontation with Chairman Rosenberg in 1965. His determination to take special steps to equalize opportunity for black and Puerto Rican New Yorkers made the City University the scene of a much greater confrontation in 1969.

Bowker's first exposure to the effects of the BHE's chronic shortsightedness came in 1964 when the Board failed to anticipate the additional demands on facilities created by the first influx of postwar babies. At the last moment it met the crisis by implementing "Operation Shoehorn," which squeezed into each college a number of students significantly in excess of each plant's intended capacity. Bowker and the Administrative Council resolved that planning for the next major increase in student enrollments, due in the late sixties, would be begun far in advance.

Bowker's plans for this new wave of students included increasing the pro-

portion of the city's high school graduates who would be eligible for admission to at least one senior college. During the early sixties, the percentage of students so eligible hovered at about 23%. The City University's 1964 Master Plan envisioned an ultimate increase in this proportion to 33%. <sup>21</sup> But given increasingly larger high school graduating classes, Bowker concluded that a more realistic percentage for the immediate future would be 25%. The BHE's approval of the Master Plan committed it to such an expansion, but again Bowker became convinced of its unwillingness to implement that commitment.

Bowker's frustration with the Board's shortsightedness matched his frustration with the limitations Chairman Rosenberg had imposed on his authority. In April of 1965, the Chancellor decided that in this deteriorated situation he had no choice but to present a bill of particulars to the entire Board. Bowker accused Rosenberg of restricting his access to government officials and agencies, citing specifically his refusal to allow the chancellor to consult with the budget director of the city administration. He accused Rosenberg of monopolizing communications with the media. Last, he complained of inadequate access to the various committees of the Board as well as to its individual members.<sup>22</sup> It is not clear what action the Board took in response to Bowker's complaint, but judging from subsequent events, any steps taken were insufficient.<sup>23</sup>

During the summer of 1965, Bowker and his aides considered various alternative methods of raising the capital funds necessary to undertake a major expansion of City University. They concluded that the most likely source of such funding would be the state government. State support for the municipal colleges had been negligible until 1961, when it began to provide increased funding for the State University system as well as for CUNY. By 1965, state support for CUNY exceeded city support for the first time.<sup>24</sup>

In September, Bowker submitted a memorandum concerning long-range planning to all members of the Board. Cautioning that construction lead times required rapid decisions concerning financing to avoid a repetition of the "Shoehorn" fiasco, Bowker suggested that the BHE lobby for additional state aid. He proposed two specific plans. Under the more "modest" proposal, the Board would request complete state financing for CUNY's doctoral programs, a revision in CUNY's favor of the formula for funding of teacher training, and the equal sharing of the costs of operating the four-year colleges by New York State and New York City. He also submitted "A Somewhat Bolder Proposal."

This would have the State assume the total operating budget of the components of the City University other than the community colleges. By nominally imposing tuition (but in actuality retaining the substance of our present free tuition policy by a combination of Mayoral Scholarships and State Scholar Incentive Plan), we would reduce

the operational costs to the City of the units affected to less than \$10 million; the sums collected as tuition, applied to the State Dormitory Authority Program, would finance a \$400 million capital budget for the senior colleges and divisions without any significant outlay by the City.<sup>25</sup>

Rosenberg's treatment of Bowker's proposals at the Board's October 25, 1965 meeting proved the ultimate frustration. Bowker later recounted his version of what took place.

At the Board meeting of October 25, 1965, the Chancellor displayed charts showing in graphic form some of the problems which the City University faces as it approaches the critical years ahead. The Chancellor presented his preliminary discussion; instead of allowing and encouraging Board members to discuss this vital problem freely, to ask questions, and to get the advice of the Chancellor and the presidents present, the Chairman sent up to his office for a chart which had been prepared for his personal use. This chart lauded the achievements of the Board under his leadership for the past eight years. With this display of past action, devoid of any reference to future needs, he closed the discussion and called for the next item of the agenda. 26

At this point, Bowker decided that further efforts to prod the Board to address the questions of planning and of the relationship of the chairman to the chancellor would be pointless. Within a few days, the public received the first inkling that something was amiss at City University.

#### GOING PUBLIC

In deciding to air the dispute in public, Bowker had the support of the members of the Administrative Council.<sup>27</sup> On November 6, three days after the election of John V. Lindsay as mayor of New York, President Meng of Hunter College publicly suggested imposition of tuition fees on CUNY students as a method of avoiding increased budgetary dependence on the state. Shortly thereafter, President Gallagher of CCNY publicly spelled out the details of the planning problem and suggested imposition of a "theoretical" \$400 per semester tuition fee—the same suggestion made in Bowker's "Somewhat Bolder Proposal."

Both men later claimed their tuition proposals were taken out of context and that the real point of their remarks was to call attention to the need for expansion. However, the presidents had struck a deep nerve. In reality, "student fees" already comprised perhaps a fifth of CUNY's income, but most New Yorkers believed the *principle* of free tuition at the municipal colleges was an important guarantor of opportunity. A number of interested groups denounced the presidents' remarks, including alumni and politicians. Students threatened a permanent strike upon the imposition of tuition and made plans

for a six-hour teach-in on the virtues of free tuition. Rosenberg expressed "shock" at the presidents' statements and commented, "I think that a matter such as this which involved a fundamental change in policy should come from the Board." Of course, he had the benefit of Bowker's proposals and of his elaboration at the October 25 Board meeting. His shock probably came from Bowker's willingness to make his proposal public.

By the time that Bowker released the full text of his proposals on November 11, the furor created by the tuition issue led him and the Administrative Council to conclude that the public's attention had been deflected from the real issue—the need "to hasten the completion of our desperately needed construction program." Bowker told the Council that he would recommend to the BHE "as part of any financing plan adopted, the maintenance of free tuition in all of the colleges of the University." The Council decided to adopt an alternate proposal that would have involved increased city funding of the CUNY capital budget.

A few days later, the BHE held an emergency meeting, not to discuss the question of capital construction, but to rebuke the chancellor and the presidents for taking their grievances to the public. At the meeting, the Board reaffirmed its commitment to free tuition at the City University, and expressed regret that recent unauthorized public statements led some to believe that the Board had changed its policy. Finally, it warned that it "has a right to expect undivided fealty on the part of all its officers of administration to the policies and by-laws of the Board, irrespective of any other position they may hold." <sup>30</sup>

Bowker decided that in light of this last resolution he had no recourse but to offer his resignation. "When the chief administrative officer of a university finds," he wrote in his letter of resignation, "that, however unjustifiably, his board of trustees has manifested a lack of confidence in him, it is my judgment that his real usefulness to the university is at an end, and he should resign." Several presidents immediately supported Bowker's decision. Gideonese of Brooklyn College and Meng announced their retirements, while Harry Levy, Bowker's dean of Studies, resigned from that position. In his letter of resignation, Gideonese wrote, "Fealty is a medieval concept and it describes the position of a medieval lord in his relation to his feudal serfs. Members of the Board of Higher Education are not medieval lords—and I am not inclined to become a serf." 32

The majority of the Board did not expect its November 17 actions to precipitate these resignations and retirements. At the Board's regular monthly meeting of November 22, it extended an olive branch to the chancellor and his supporters. The Board explained that the only "fealty" asked of CUNY's educational officers was loyal cooperation in support of the Board's policies, and it regretted any misunderstanding of this sentiment. It reaffirmed its

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desire to maintain open lines of communication between itself and the Administrative Council, and stated that Board decisions should be taken only after "free and open" discussion with its educational officers. Finally it asked the chancellor and the others to reconsider their decisions. In taking these steps, the Board had done something virtually unprecedented: it invoked its authority to overrule its chairman. Rosenberg and three close associates voted no on the peace feeler.<sup>33</sup>

The Qualified Student

In the public's eye, the issue still appeared to be free tuition. Rosenberg was not disposed to alter the public's perception. Just after public announcement of Bowker's resignation, Rosenberg told the New York Times, "President Meng . . . made an address . . . which went to the press and was widely interpreted as immediately calling into serious question the continuation of the free tuition policy of this board and of the municipal colleges. . . . Beyond this, I am aware of no difference between President Meng and the Board."34 He would later state, "Some educators have begun to say that 'the free tuition issue is a sham.' The only sham I see is in the semantics used in pretending that the establishment of the principle of a tuition charge is not the disestablishment of the principle of no tuition charge."35

The public learned the other side to the story when State Senator Manfred Ohrenstein, chairman of the State Legislature's Joint Legislative Committee for Higher Education, conducted a series of hearings to ascertain the facts of the dispute. During the hearings, Mary Ingraham, a long-time member of the Board, testified, "We have a lot to thank Mr. Rosenberg for," but added, "there is a serious need to clarify the relations between the board and the administrators." Ruth Shoup, the only Board member to oppose the "fealty" resolutions, was more blunt. She charged that the chairman had made decisions for the Board on his own or with a small group of members and that the Board had been placed in a position of being "an assenting audience." 36

The New York Times editorialized that by his testimony to the Ohrenstein Committee, Rosenberg exhibited "a depressing failure to comprehend the basic issue of the crisis. That issue is the precarious financial condition of the City University. Instead of admitting the dilemma, Mr. Rosenberg stressed his Board's past achievements and implied that there was no reason for alarm about the future." Although the Times had been critical of Bowker's stance during November, it admitted that his actions "can now be more readily understood in light of Mr. Rosenberg's testimony. The frustrations which the Board permitted to build are largely responsible for the administrators' desperate and injudicious actions." 37

Sensing that both the Board and the chancellor wished to pull back from the brink, Mayor Robert Wagner dispatched his aide Julius Edelstein to mediate a final settlement.<sup>38</sup> Bowker and Levy offered to withdraw their resignations if certain immediate steps were taken, including access by the chancellor to all government officials short of the mayor and the governor, transfer of the public relations staff from the chairman's to the chancellor's control, and permission for the chancellor to attend all subsequent BHE meetings. Pending revision of the BHE's by-laws, mediation of all jurisdictional disputes would be undertaken by a five-member commission appointed by the Board.<sup>39</sup> Mutually acceptable interim procedures (including establishment of a Committee to Devise Remedies Against Future Misunderstandings) were implemented and Bowker withdrew his resignation. 40 Bowker considered early drafts of the Board's proposed by-law revisions unacceptable, mainly because they did not incorporate his insistence that the chancellor be henceforth described as "the chief educational and administrative officer of the City University of New York and the chief administrative officer for the Board of Higher Education." When the Board finally offered to revise its draft to describe the chancellor's role in precisely those terms, Bowker agreed and the immediate crisis ended.41

Shortly after completion of his hearings, Senator Ohrenstein proposed that the state increase its contribution to the City University's operating costs and that the necessary funds for capital construction be raised by the issuance of bonds by the New York State Dormitory Authority. Despite the endorsement of the legislative form of Ohrenstein's plan by Assembly Speaker Anthony Travia, the bill languished for several months. Bowker believed that immediate passage was essential if needed facilities were to be ready in time for the enrollment bulge predicted for the late sixties. In April, 1966, when passage of the legislation still did not appear imminent, Bowker announced that 2300 high school graduates who would normally have been admitted to the fouryear colleges (based on the standards of the previous year) would have to be rejected unless the construction legislation were passed. Even if emergency space could be found for these students during their freshman year, the chancellor reasoned that current facilities were inadequate to accommodate them during their junior and senior years.<sup>42</sup> Bowker's announcement had the intended effect, and heightened public concern was translated into legislative progress. The Assembly finally passed the bill on June 22, 1966; the Senate followed on July 1. The City University ultimately admitted all students qualified for admission under the previously existing criteria.<sup>43</sup>

That fall, Bowker recommended the accelerated development of previously proposed new units of the University and provision for additional students in four-year colleges through the rental of space and the construction of new facilities. On October 24, 1966, almost exactly a year after the Board meeting that precipitated the crisis, the BHE approved Bowker's specific suggestions for the opening of a new four-year college (subsequently known as York College) a year ahead of schedule, the establishment of an experimental freshman program under the auspices of the CUNY Graduate Center, and the enrollment of an additional 3000 students in the four-year colleges according to an allocation formula to be devised.<sup>44</sup>

During the months of delicate negotiations with the Board, Bowker convinced it to redefine its goals for the University in broader terms. At its meeting of February 28, 1966, the BHE announced that the goal of City University would henceforth be "to offer the benefits of post-high school education to all residents of New York City who are able and eager to avail themselves of such benefits." This general statement was backed with a proposal aimed at offering admission to some unit of the University to all the city's high school graduates by 1975. This would be accomplished by the planned expansion of the senior colleges so that they would continue to offer admission to the top 25% of all high school graduates, and by the expansion of the community colleges so that they would provide "post high school education for all young people of college age whose qualifications are not such as to admit them under present arrangements." 45 Specifically, the next 50% of high school graduates would be offered admission to the community colleges. The remaining 25% would be accepted by Educational Skills Centers, which would offer "a number of different but integrated programs to answer the needs of many New Yorkers who seek occupational skills."46 This 100% Admissions Plan was fairly well received by the New York press. The Times commented that California appeared to be successful in a similar effort and that the plan would not threaten the standards of the City University: "The excellence of the senior colleges would be preserved but without barricades against extending educational opportunities at every level."47

Given the nature of the changes taking place at City University, changes in the BHE's composition did not come unexpectedly. Soon after Bowker's resumption of his duties as chancellor, Abraham Feinberg, an ally of Rosenberg, submitted his resignation. Calling Bowker a "heartless and ruthless and power-hungry Chancellor," he charged that "all that has been built in over one hundred years is in jeopardy." The hands-off attitude expressed by Mayor Lindsay in the two months since he replaced Wagner indicated to Feinberg that "he will continue to allow a rabid group, led by the Chancellor, further to deteriorate the status of the City University and further to endanger its existence as an independent entity granting free tuition to all who qualify." 48

Rosenberg's own days were numbered. It had been apparent all along that either he or Bowker had to go. When the Board decided to ask Bowker to return, it became only a matter of permitting Rosenberg to save face. After passage of legislation creating the City University Construction Fund, Rosenberg was appointed to head it. Bowker protested until informed that in exchange for the appointment Rosenberg promised to resign from the Board. Upon his appointment to the State Supreme Court in January, 1967, Rosenberg completely severed his relationship to City University.

## BOWKER AND THE PROBLEM OF RACIAL INCLUSION

By 1966, City University had committed itself to offer in 1975 some form of postsecondary education to all graduates of New York City high schools. But as Bowker became better acquainted with the status of public education in New York City, he realized that even such a commitment would be insufficient. "If we look at areas of poverty in New York City," he wrote in 1964, "we find major erosion of the schools. We find high schools with only twenty or thirty graduates with academic diplomas, and other factors which could lead us to say that higher education is an unrealizable aspiration for many." Bowker considered such an attitude "destructive for the City of New York and for the individuals involved." The faster the white middle class fled the city, the more it became dependent on the increasing proportion of nonwhites who remained. But precisely these citizens derived the least benefit from the schools. Bowker concluded that a massive upgrading of the public schools was necessary, and that the City University could be of direct service. "But most of all," he said, "the school and college must say to these youngsters that they are expected to succeed and there will be opportunities for them beyond high school. The places for freshmen must be there." 49

Bowker conceived the mission of City University to be the provision of higher education for all those who knocked at its door, and also the seeking out of those who refrained from knocking, but who might profit from higher education. Like any good missionary, Bowker asked students in the latter category for an act of faith—faith in themselves that they could succeed, and faith in the City University that such success would be meaningful. During his tenure as chancellor, Bowker took a number of initiatives designed to reward that faith.

In 1963, Bowker returned from his first pilgrimage to Albany with a promise of \$500,000 for a small experimental admissions program. Under the terms of the College Discovery Program, disadvantaged students would be admitted to various units of the City University on the basis of their principal's recommendation instead of on their high school averages or their composite scores. On learning of Bowker's intention of circumventing the regular admissions process, some BHE members voiced bitter objections. Bowker called justifiable the use of nontraditional methods of admission, since the traditional criteria did not unearth nonwhite students with college abilities. "There are . . . young men and women," he said, "who because of economic deprivation and lack of expectation of opportunity which surround them in their home environment, do not rank high in academic achievement despite their native abilities; in large measure, these are adolescents in what have been called 'pockets of poverty.'" When objections persisted, Bowker informed Rosenberg that he would resign unless the Board sanctioned his

program. After some discussion, the Board gave Bowker the approval he sought.<sup>50</sup>

The program permitted each high school in the city to make two nominations, and allotted extra nominations to ghetto high schools. Besides the recommendation of the principal or guidance counselor, an applicant had to have completed at least twelve units of secondary school work (with exceptions) and had to come from a family with an income below \$1700 per family member. A final screening limited the number of admitted students to the number of places provided for in the budget.<sup>51</sup>

CDP did not have a special curriculum. Instead, various community colleges received the students and assigned them a limited program from the regular curriculum until they felt more at ease in the college environment. More than 40% of those who entered CDP were blacks, about 25% Puerto Ricans, and less than 20% were whites. Almost 27% of the 760 students who began the program in either 1964 or 1965 received their Associate of Arts degree by the spring of 1968. Among those who left the program, some entered a regular college program and a considerable number continued to attend the community college to which they had been assigned on a part-time nonmatriculated basis. Personal difficulties, responsibilities at home, job demands, and financial pressures were the most frequently cited reasons for leaving the program. <sup>52</sup>

A second "prong" of CDP was initiated in 1965. Guidance counselors or others in community action or social welfare programs nominated ninth-grade students showing potential for enrollment in high school development centers. At these centers, students followed intensive college preparatory courses, featuring small classes, double periods in basic subjects, tutors, guidance, and a small stipend for incidental expenses. More than three-quarters of those who entered the program during its first years completed the course and were admitted to either a community or a senior college.<sup>53</sup>

Later in 1966, the same Legislature that established CUNY's \$400 million construction fund established and funded, at the behest of black legislators and with the covert sponsorship of the chancellor, the SEEK program. Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge was designed to place high school graduates from officially designated poverty areas into special programs at the senior colleges. Most SEEK students did not meet the normal criteria for admission to the senior colleges, and many had not even taken an academic course in high school. The program featured a special curriculum that integrated remedial work with regular college offerings. Most SEEK courses featured more contact hours per week than did regular courses covering the same subject matter. In addition, individual tutoring was available. Well over half the full-time students in SEEK achieved passing grades during its first two years. About 10% had averages of B or better.<sup>54</sup>

Several aspects of SEEK and CDP disturbed various groups at CUNY. Many faculty members resented imposition of the SEEK program on the University by the State Legislature. Once established, SEEK students and faculty began to press for full autonomy over their program, while many thought the program already too autonomous. Some white students resented admission of nonwhites who did not have to meet the admissions criteria in force for everyone else. As these programs expanded, and as new programs were established to supplement them, this resentment increased dangerously.

#### PRELUDE TO CONFRONTATION: THE 1968 ADMISSIONS CONTROVERSY

The 1967-68 academic year began quietly. The CUNY construction program had gone beyond the planning stage and there was general optimism that new facilities could be opened in time to meet the increases in enrollments expected in each of the next several years. In the fall of 1967, the media gave City University's plans considerable publicity. After several years of discomfort, the general theme ran, greater numbers of CUNY students would be accommodated in expanded facilities. "The chances that these students will get into schools of their choice next September are held to be the best in years." said U.S. News and World Report. "If anything, City University will try to drive down admissions requirements despite an expected increase in applications of more than 5000," reported the New York Post. 55

Thus when several months later chancellor Bowker announced that budge-tary considerations had forced the University to establish a series of cutoff points higher than those of 1967, considerable protest ensued. A student newspaper quoted a Brooklyn College registrar as calling it "irresponsible" to raise the requirements for admission after applications had been filed: "The students couldn't make a value judgment about which branch of CUNY to apply to since they were given erroneous information about what the cut-off points would be." Specific reference was made to an information booklet for applicants which implied that the 1968 cutoff points would be the same as those of 1967.<sup>56</sup>

The Chancellor's Office, which for the previous several years had tried to emphasize the eligibility of anyone with an 82% average for admission to a senior college, made known the fine print: "We do not decide each year what high school averages shall be required. Rather, we rank all applicants and admit them until all available places are filled, with students with higher grades and test scores considered first. While the grades and test scores of the last student admitted to each program can therefore be considered to be the 'admissions requirement' for that program, they are determined after match-

ing the number of applicants to the number of seats available rather than before." Between 1967 and 1968, the secondary school averages of applicants had increased, and thus the cutoff scores for most, but not all divisions, had

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increased. The argument that Baruch College had accepted all applicants with an 82% average did not appease the many students with averages over 82% who had not applied to Baruch and who had been rejected from those

divisions to which they did apply.<sup>57</sup>

The common knowledge that special efforts were being made to accommodate additional students into CDP and SEEK exacerbated resentment over CUNY's handling of the situation. The BHE purposefully gave no publicity to impending admission of students into these special programs but, when word of this practice got out, its representatives reassured concerned citizens that such admittance came in addition to regular student acceptances.<sup>58</sup> Those students, mainly white, who saw themselves as victims of unmerited favoritism to nonwhites, remained unconvinced.

Bowker knew he was treading on thin political ice by emphasizing minority enrollments at just this time, but he felt he had little choice. The assassination of Martin Luther King in early April had increased racial tension, which manifested itself at CUNY in demonstrations and sit-ins at several campuses. Although numerically small, the black and Puerto Rican students on the various campuses often molded themselves into a forceful political unit, and sometimes enlisted the support of key faculty members.

Bowker's responsiveness to these students' demands stemmed from his conriction that the City University's efforts in the area of nonwhite student recruitment were still insufficient. CUNY's Ethnic Census revealed that such students still did not gain admission in proportion to their representation in he city's high school graduating class.<sup>59</sup> Further, if it had not been for the 3EEK Program, the percentage of nonwhite enrollment in the senior colleges would have declined from 6.1% to 4.7% between 1967 and 1968, and the total 10nwhite enrollment at CUNY would have declined from 8.9% to 8.0%.60

Bowker concluded that the traditional methods of admission could not be counted on to insure additional minority student enrollment, and therefore indertook an intensive effort to convince the BHE to create yet more special programs. By midsummer, 1968, his effort had paid off. The Board concluded hat social inequities, injustices, and frustrations had resulted in heightened ntergroup tension, and specifically that the need for college education for righ school graduates from deprived neighborhoods was "a social danger equiring our immediate attention." It proclaimed "the historic mission of he public college system of New York City . . . to provide expanding educaional opportunities, particularly for those whose backgrounds of social, eduational and economic disadvantage clearly identify them as most needful of he special concern and assistance of the City University." Finally, it resolved

that "the maximum use of the resources, capabilities and creative capacities of the City University be mobilized and focused on this mission which must be given one of the highest priorities among all the undergraduate missions of the City University."61 It approved two specific steps to take effect when classes resumed the following month. First, it offered admission to some unit of the City University to any student among the top 100 graduates of each city high school not already admitted by some other mechanism. Second, it upgraded the SEEK program by raising SEEK students from part-time to full-time matriculated status and by identifying it as a five-year program, thus permitting remedial work to be counted toward full-time status. The BHE also recommended that units of the City University directly administer five New York City public high schools (one in each borough) to obviate the need for remedial work at college by assuring adequate secondary training. This last recommendation elicited little enthusiasm among the city's educational establishment and was never implemented.62

Immediately after the Board took these actions, CUNY's admissions office set to work to recruit students into the Top 100 Scholars Program in time for the fall semester. It offered each eligible student admission to a senior college and offered most students admission to a SEEK program. Since many eligible students had already been admitted to CUNY or to some other college and since a number of high schools did not have 100 graduates, the actual pool of students who might be affected by the program was about 800. One hundred and fifty-four students were actually recruited and assigned to various units of the City University. Most of these had been graduated from the city's ghetto high schools. About 40% of those admitted were Puerto Rican (or students with Spanish surnames), 32% were black, and 29% were whites or others. At a time when the cutoff points for admission to the senior colleges had risen from 82%, more than three-quarters of those students admitted under the Top 100 Scholars Program had averages between 70% and 80%.63

Adoption of this program so soon after the problems of the previous spring brought a barrage of criticism on Bowker and the BHE. Some did not read the fine print and interpreted the Board's action as admitting the Top 100 Blacks and Puerto Ricans. Others charged that the Board had established a quota system and cited in evidence the Board's request that the chancellor report on the progress toward "the end that minority groups shall be represented in the units of the University in the same proportion as they are represented among all high school graduates of the City."64 Many argued that if additional places had been available at CUNY's senior colleges, they should have been filled by students next on the list of rankings under the normal criteria for admission.

Procedural criticism also came from the City University Senate, which had just been established during the 1967-68 academic year, on the grounds that it should have been consulted in advance of adoption of any resolutions. That fall, the Senate gave consideration to CUNY's admissions policy and concluded, "the present admissions criteria coupled with the inadequacies of most ghetto high schools, have been keeping out of the University many black and Puerto Rican young men and women who have the ability to absorb and build upon a college education." It ratified the BHE's recent initiatives, called for additional experimental programs, for expansion of SEEK and CDP, and for greater university influence over the city's high schools. Finally, the Senate criticized the Board for not carrying its reforms far enough. The problem with those reforms, said its report, "is not that they would admit large numbers of students with severe educational deficiencies, but rather that they largely ignore the necessity for concomitant changes in the colleges, to meet the needs of these students." In the long run, however, the Senate's stance was not significant for its criticisms, but for its support of policies that many other faculties would have steadfastly opposed.65

#### THE SOUTH CAMPUS SEIZURE

The assassination of Martin Luther King in April of 1968 began a year of heightened racial tension in New York City. The next fall, the United Federation of Teachers, which represented the city's public school teachers, struck against the policies in hiring and dismissal in effect at the Ocean Hill-Brownsville "demonstration school district." The charges of racism and anti-Semitism that had been made by the various sides in the dispute had barely disappeared from New York's newspapers when another crisis emerged at City University and raised racial tensions even further.

The reaction of New York's white majority to the BHE's announcement of the Top 100 Scholars Program had led Bowker to conclude that adoption of further policies that appeared to favor one group over another would place himself and the Board in a politically untenable situation. Thus, when it became apparent that both the city and the state governments would sharply reduce CUNY's proposed budget, Bowker had to develop a strategy to assure that any cutbacks would not disproportionately affect any group. Perhaps the only way City University could effect significant savings was by a cut in the size of its entering class. But cuts in the regular programs would further increase white student resentment of blacks and Puerto Ricans admitted under special programs. If CDP and SEEK were cut, black and Puerto Rican students would be equally resentful at a system that seemed to favor whites. Bowker therefore announced in March, 1969 that no freshman class would be admitted to the City University unless the state and the city provided funds that would permit the continuance of all CUNY programs.

This announcement stunned the present CUNY student population as well as those who had been momentarily expecting to receive their letters of acceptance to the University. The students responded as Bowker had hoped. Instead of infighting, they conducted massive demonstrations against the city and state governments in Harlem, at Governor Nelson Rockefeller's office in Manhattan, and in Albany.66 This pressure brought first fruit on the state level. The enacted state budget provided \$90 million for the City University, an increase of \$9 million over 1968, although \$20 million less than the University's request. Later that spring, the city also came up with adequate funding. But by that time Bowker's efforts to maintain internal unity had been doomed by the seizure by more than 150 black and Puerto Rican students of eight buildings on the South Campus of City College.<sup>67</sup>

Although it was not the first demonstration by black and Puerto Rican students during the spring, 1969 semester, the South Campus seizure was by far the largest. The newspapers first reported that the demonstrators demanded a "much larger percentage of Negroes and Puerto Ricans be admitted to the college."68 Subsequently the demonstrators issued a list of five demands. The most important called for adoption of admissions criteria to assure that in the future the entering class at City College would reflect the racial composition of the city's high schools. The other demands included a separate black and Puerto Rican studies program, a separate freshman orientation for minority students, a greater student voice in the SEEK program, and a requirement that students preparing to become elementary schoolteachers at the City University take courses in black and Puerto Rican history and culture.

After consulting with members of his faculty, CCNY president Gallagher responded to the seizure by ordering the entire College closed and by assigning a faculty team to commence negotiations with the demonstrating students. After eleven days, three of the five demands seemed to have been settled. During this period the BHE approved Gallagher's handling of the situation, despite growing public criticism. In early May, Mario Procaccino, a candidate for the Democratic Party nomination for Mayor, obtained an order for the Board to show cause why the courts should not direct that CCNY be reopened. Although the order was not returnable for several days, Supreme Court Justice Edward McCaffery ordered the College opened in the interim.

Just before its required appearance in court, the BHE ordered CCNY's reopening and conditioned any further negotiations between demonstrators and official representatives on the vacating of the areas of the South Campus held by the students. The demonstrators vacated those areas on the next day, but attempted to reclose the campus several days later by conducting a series of "hit and run" disruptions. Violence between opposing factions of students

occurred during these disruptions, just as Bowker feared. Gallagher ordered the campus closed again, but this time the Board's Executive Committee, after considerable debate, announced, "The majority of the Executive Committee, based on the action of the Board of Higher Education of May 4 [which reopened the campus], concluded that the Executive Committee could not close the college." 69

At this point, President Gallagher, who had submitted his resignation during the recent budgetary crisis, made that resignation immediately effective. His statement made clear his sympathies with the demonstrators, his anger that politicians had exploited the confrontation for partisan advantage, and his distress that the Executive Committee's majority had overruled him.<sup>70</sup> Professor Joseph J. Copeland, who had been a member of Gallagher's faculty negotiating team, replaced him.

Police patrolled the CCNY campus as Copeland began his first day as president. Leaders of the student demonstrators conditioned any resumption of negotiations upon the removal of those police, a stipulation Copeland agreed to. Discussions began again on Saturday afternoon, May 17, and lasted until 3:00 A.M. on the morning of May 23. At that time, agreement was announced on a new mechanism of admission to CCNY by which half of each entering class would be admitted under the traditional criteria, while the other half would be admitted from poverty areas "without regard to grades." As a first step toward implementation of this dual admissions plan, 300 additional freshmen would be admitted in both of the following two semesters.

The terms of this agreement set off a political uproar. In an attempt to steal some headlines from Procaccino, former Mayor Robert Wagner and Congressman James Scheuer, both candidates for the Democratic mayoral nomination, denounced the plan. Herman Badillo, a Puerto Rican and yet another candidate for the Democratic nomination, stated that "implementation of such a policy would lead to two separate and unequal colleges of uncertain quality and would merely continue an extension of the educational disaster of the New York City public schools into the system of higher education, with no benefit to the children involved whether they be white, black, or Puerto Rican." Mayor Lindsay at first issued a noncommittal statement in which he expressed support for efforts to provide additional opportunities for students from disadvantaged neighborhoods "provided they do not set up a quota system or violate the Board's pledge to admit all students with averages of 82 or higher." Two days later he announced that further study led him to conclude that the dual admissions plan was a "quota system" and that if necessary he would use the prerogatives of his office to thwart its implementation.72 Of all the candidates for the mayoral nomination of the city's major parties, only the author, Norman Mailer, supported the proposal. The

CCNY Faculty Senate rejected the dual admissions proposal in favor of a more modest plan that would have admitted 300 additional freshmen in the fall, and another 100 the following spring. The 400 would have been admitted without regard to their academic performance in high school, and would have been chosen on the basis of "motivation, determination to undertake college work and other subjective evaluations of their suitability for higher education."73 The Faculty Senate referred its plan to the Board of Higher Education which, as everyone knew, would have the final say.

#### **OPEN ADMISSIONS:** THE ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE

On the first evening of the South Campus seizure, Chancellor Bowker concluded that CUNY could not remain an arena for racial confrontations. For City University to continue to perform its mission, it would have to adopt an admissions policy that eliminated the competition between various groups for a limited number of places. He decided that immediate implementation of a 100% Admissions Plan was the only way to achieve significant minority inclusion, especially at the senior colleges, while assuring that such gains would come at minimal expense to the (mostly white) constituency already present.

Advocacy of such a plan by blacks and Puerto Ricans, the groups most adversely affected by the current admission system, came as no surprise to Bowker.74 And it may not have come as much of a surprise to learn that such a proposal would have the support of many influential whites. Harry Van Arsdale, the powerful chairman of the city's Central Labor Council, opposed dual admissions at CCNY, but believed that the City University should be admitting more students. Not only blacks and Puerto Ricans, but many whites desirous of going to college achieved high school averages below the current cutoff points. Van Arsdale argued that in the working class homes of many such students the family income, although not much above the poverty level, was too high to meet SEEK and CDP criteria.75 A lawyer for the Central Labor Council commented, "the people who are just a little bit more fortunate, those among us also need a lot of help and also need a lot of attention and also are crying out for the aid that you are responsible to give them."76 Another member of the Central Labor Council made the same complaint and then asked, "Maybe there could be an open enrollment for all the kids in the City of New York?" 77 Other groups such as the City College Alumni Association, which opposed dual admissions, advocated adoption of open enrollment.<sup>78</sup> Bowker knew that such a plan meant pressuring City Hall and Albany for the necessary funding, but he also knew that a united City University had just been successful in resisting severe cuts on its budget.

The Board of Higher Education, which Bowker had to convince of the need for open admissions, was in the midst of a rapid turnover. By the fall of 1970, the implementation date of the new admissions plan, a majority of the Board had been appointed by Mayor Lindsay; in other words, they had not been on the Board at the time of the Bowker-Rosenberg confrontation. The average tenure of Board members had declined to four years, and the average age declined by almost 16 years. Members of the Board represented a broader spectrum of occupations. In 1970 it included two social workers, two clergymen, two public administrators, an artist, a student, and five academicians. More Board members, including some of the youngest, had been graduated from CUNY. Fewer could be identified by traditional political affiliations. Last, the Board included several black and Puerto Rican members who had been active in community affairs. Bowker believed that the Board's prior receptivity to his presentations on the problem of racial inclusion bode well for its acceptance of his new proposal.

At a meeting conducted during the South Campus seizure, the BHE had reaffirmed its commitment to implementation of the 1966 100% Admissions Policy "as a first priority." <sup>79</sup> In early July, after taking testimony from all interested parties, and after extensive discussions with Bowker and his staff, the Board committed itself to implementation of an Open Admissions Plan by the fall of 1970. The Board spelled out the specific objectives of the plan. Admission to some City University program would be offered to all New York City high school graduates. Remedial and supportive services would be supplied to all who needed them. Standards of academic excellence would be maintained. Ethnic integration of each unit would be achieved. Mobility between divisions would be provided for. Admission to a specific program and college would be guaranteed to those who would have been admitted to them under the old admissions criteria.

The Board charged the Commission on Admissions, which it had created during the spring, with recommending "a specific system of admissions criteria which will implement the preceding provisions, and which will also insure that each unit of the University is given significant responsibilities for preparing the academically less prepared student to engage in collegiate study." 80

The commission understood that the stated goals of Open Admissions were potentially contradictory, but intended to gain the broadest support possible. It took its real task to be to devise a plan politically acceptable to all external groups and yet with enough educational rationale to gain acceptance by internal constituencies. It first decided that all applicants should be accepted either by the community colleges or by the senior colleges. Separate Skills Centers, envisioned in the 1966 100% Admissions Plan, would most likely be attended exclusively by blacks and Puerto Ricans—a violation of the Board's requirement of ethnic integration. The Committee recommended that long-

run planning be undertaken for establishment of comprehensive colleges offering a diversity of programs of various lengths as a replacement or a supplement for the community colleges.

Admission to the senior colleges posed the commission's most important problem. The Board's mandate that all units share in the education of "the less prepared student" implied a change in their current admissions criteria. The Committee offered three alternative plans for admission based on the principles that "the primary determinant of student allocation should be student choice; that allocation to a college should reflect in some way the academic achievement of the applicants, and that 'integration' should be defined primarily in terms of attempting to equalize the ethnic distribution in the senior college freshman class and the community college freshman class."

The first of the three proposed options would have admitted most students on the basis of rank in the student's own high school; the remainder would have been admitted under SEEK criteria. The second would have admitted 60% of the freshman class on the basis of high school rank, 15% on the basis of SEEK criteria, and the remaining 25% on the basis of student choice, with a lottery to allocate places in cases of excessive demand. The third option would have admitted students by high school rank and SEEK criteria, but would have specifically assured that students previously admitted to specific senior and community colleges would still be so admitted. The Committee recommended that all students be guaranteed admission to the *program* they wanted, regardless of the unit to which they were assigned. Thus, a student admitted to a community college would be guaranteed access to a liberal arts program, if that was his wish.<sup>81</sup>

The first and second proposals largely aimed at achievement of ethnic integration of the senior colleges. Studies of the Top 100 Scholars Program indicated that the group deriving the greatest benefit from the use of rank in class were students with relatively low averages who were enrolled in high schools with very few graduates, or where most students who obtained diplomas did so with barely passing averages. Although some high schools fitting this description were located in working class white neighborhoods, most were in black and Puerto Rican ghettos. Most black and Puerto Rican spokesmen stated their preference for one of the first two options.

Opponents charged that the first and second proposals violated the Board's mandate to insure that all students who would have been guaranteed admission to a given college under the old admissions criteria would still have the same option. They argued that some form of the old criteria would therefore have to be retained. The white and especially the Jewish groups that commented on the Committee's proposals favored the third, or an alternative offered by CCNY Professor Harry Lustig that would have first admitted all students qualified under the traditional criteria, and then have admitted

students on the basis of their high school ranking with 10% of the seats in each college set aside for "students to be selected by admissions counselors on the basis of their potential, motivation, professional objectives and the goal of ethnic integration," who did not qualify under any of the other criteria.82

The Qualified Student

Since the City University would be dependent for funding of Open Admissions on the city (and on the state), the Board decided to await the results of the city's mayoral election before adopting a final plan. Incumbent Mayor John Lindsay had been the first of the three major candidates to endorse the principle of Open Admissions. His opponents, Democratic nominee Mario Procaccino and Republican candidate John Marchi, followed suit later in the campaign. All three had urged that careful consideration be given to the method of implementation. When the Commission on Admissions announced its proposals, Procaccino and Marchi denounced all three. When Lindsay indicated that he supported the Lustig proposal over any of those in the Commission report, it became apparent to Bowker that to some extent at least the traditional admissions criteria would have to be preserved.

Once the Board knew that Lindsay had defeated his opponents, it set to work with the chancellor on a compromise plan that retained some use of class rank-something that would not have been possible if either Marchi or Procaccino had been victorious. "The use of rank in class," the Board argued, "evaluates the performance of students in competition with peers in their own high school, and provides college going motivation for students in each high school in the City. Data indicating the performance of students in the secondary schools in our City show that rank in class is an effective means of minimizing the differences in college opportunity now caused by great variances in the grading patterns of the different high schools." Under the Board's compromise plan, all applicants would be placed in one of ten admissions groupings. Each group contained all students with a given range of high school averages or with a certain high school rank. Each student would be assigned to the lowest numbered group to which he qualified.

Under the Board's plan, students in all groups would be admitted to the City University and students in Groups 1 through 5 would be guaranteed admission to a senior college. No student would be denied admission to a unit to which he or she would have been admitted before the implementation of Open Admissions. Preference for admission to a specific unit within the City University would be given to students in lower number groupings.83

Thus, the Board attempted to gain at least partial acceptance of the use of high school ranks by retaining academic average as an alternative criterion and by lowering the cutoff point for admission to some senior college from 82% to 80%. All concerned groups expressed approval of the plan at the time of its implementation.

Subsequently, various city departments and the New York State Board of

Regents approved the program, and the city agreed to match the state's contribution toward its funding. Final implementation turned on the agreement of Governor Rockefeller. The governor agreed to provide the state's share of funding for the program without making any demands in return, such as the imposition of tuition. His reasons were compelling. During his reelection campaign the following fall he would be asking for the votes of a city whose major interest groups had united behind the open admissions plan. His own State University had adopted a policy of gradual expansion and it would have been politically foolish to cut off funds for a similar, though more ambitious, downstate proposal. In short, Governor Rockefeller would have been marked as the political villain if Open Admissions had failed at that stage.

#### CONCLUSION

To a significant degree, the deficits of the black and Puerto Rican students are the result of inadequate preparation in the elementary and high schools. The New York City high schools stand in the same functional relationship to the University as the elite prep schools once did in relationship to the Ivy League colleges. In other words, the organization of the college work has been based on the premise that the students were adequately prepared by the public high schools. But if the colleges can no longer rely upon that preparation, then any educational process based on the traditional premise is bound to be ineffective.

The inadequacies of the high schools are not peculiar to New York. They occur, with varying seriousness, across the country. But a private university is largely free to select students from the population of all American high schools and the most prestigious colleges do just that. The City University, however, is tied to one set of high schools; it is not free to sample the secondary school universe . . . 84

At the turn of the century, when Nicholas Murray Butler proposed that Columbia University encourage closer relations with the newly opened New York City high schools, he intended to recruit their best graduates. As time passed Butler concluded that the high schools were not sufficiently selective in sending students to Columbia, and he reassigned the selective function to his own admissions office, which began to recruit from a wider constituency.

New York's municipal colleges had no similar option. By law, they were dependent on the New York City high schools for their student bodies. Although the municipal colleges never practiced invidious discrimination, many charged the Board of Higher Education during its fifty year history with maintaining unnecessarily exclusive admissions policies.

When Albert Bowker arrived on the scene in 1963, an immediate surge in demand for places at the colleges confronted him. Passage of the construction

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# fund legislation went far to solve this problem. But at the same time, Bowker perceived a serious long-run problem. The demand for higher education came mainly from the residents of the city's white, middle class neighborhoods, precisely the group that had been fleeing from New York in large numbers for more than a decade. The black and Puerto Rican groups that replaced them did not perform as well in school as the white students, and therefore at some distant but real point City University would begin to face an enrollment decline.

Bowker attributed the blame for this to environmental factors, and singled out the New York City public educational bureaucracy for special condemnation. He concluded that the failure of elementary and secondary education to be responsive to the needs of these new groups meant that their success, on which turned the survival of New York City, depended on the responsiveness of City University. The chancellor walked a tightrope as he tried to strike a balance between the claims for places put forward by the various groups. The South Campus seizure of spring, 1969 convinced him that immediate implementation of Open Admissions was the only acceptable solution.

At this point it is appropriate to ask a hypothetical question. What would have happened to the City University if Bowker had not succeeded in getting his way each time he brought its problems to the attention of city and state governments, the media, and the public? The political consequences of following through on one of his threats, for example his threat not to admit a freshman class, might have seriously jeopardized attainment of his long-run goals. The costs to the students affected, many of whom would have become immediately subject to the draft, could not have been measured. Perhaps Bowker adhered to what Max Weber called an ethic of ultimate ends, that is, an ethic which places responsibility for the consequences of one's acts upon others. Although muted by Bowker's success, it is a real question that all groups—politicians, trustees, students, faculty, administrators—failed to give adequate consideration during the turbulent late 1960s.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 11 HIGHER EDUCATION FOR ALL THE MISSION OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

- Seymour Martin Lipset and Reinhard Bendix, Social Mobility in Industrial Society (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1959), p. 189.
- See Neil J. Smelser and Gabriel Almond, Public Higher Education in California (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1974).
- 3. See Earl J. McGrath, ed., Universal Higher Education (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1966).
- S. Willis Rudy, The College of the City of New York: A History 1847-1947 (New York, The City College Press, 1949), pp. 308-312. See also Nathan Glazer, "City College," in David Riesman and Verne A. Stadtman, Academic Transformations (New York, etc., McGraw-Hill, 1973), pp. 71-98.
- 5. Rudy, The College, pp. 382-389.
- 6. In the early 1960s each college was permitted to accept its entire student body on the basis of the composite score. See Louis M. Heil, Louis Long, Marjorie Smiley, and Emma Spaney, An Investigation of Criteria for Admission to the City University of New York (New York, City University of New York, 1961); Minutes of the Administrative Council, November 28, 1961, p. 22: January 11, 1962, p. 30; May 7, 1963, p. 30.
- Donald P. Cottrell, "The Liberal Arts College Problem," Teachers College Record (February, 1932), 32: 457-462; Donald P. Cottrell, Adrian Rondileau, and Leo S. Schumer, Public Higher Education in the City of New York: Report of the Master Plan Study (New York, 1950), p. 22; Minutes of the Board of Higher Education, February 20, 1950, p. 56.
- 8. Cottrell et al., Public Higher Education, pp. 12, 44.
- 9. Ibid., p. 13.
- Thomas C. Holy, A Long-Range Plan for the City University of New York 1961-1975 (New York, The Board of Higher Education, 1962), p. 91; Minutes of the Board of Higher Education, November 18, 1957, p. 472; November 17, 1958, p. 518; November 16, 1959, p. 536; November 21, 1960, p. 562; November 21, 1961, p. 634; November 19, 1962, p. 663; December 16, 1963, p. 337; and December 21, 1964, p. 519.
- 11. Holy, A Long-Range Plan, pp. 73, 127-128, 68-69.
- 12. Rudy, The College, pp. 124-126, 173-174.
- 13. Ibid., pp. 292-294, 396-397.
- 14. Cottrell et al., Public Higher Education, p. 17.
- 15. Holy, A Long-Range Plan, pp. 82-83, 99 (Table 12).
- 16. Joint Legislative Committee on the State Education System, Report of the New York City Sub-committee Concerning Administration and Financing of the Public Education System of the City of New York Under the Control of that City's Board of Higher Education (Albany, Williams, 1944).
- H. G. Schneider to John H. Finley, May 3, 1922, John H. Finley Papers, New York Public Library, box C-4, CCNY through '26 file.
- 18. Minutes of the Board of Higher Education, April 18, 1955, p. 210.
- 19. The Administrative Council to the Board of Higher Education, The Chancellorship and Its Implications for the City University, October 11, 1962, pp. 5-6. Office of Vice Chancellor Timothy Healy, CUNY, Miscellaneous Material on BHE's and Chancellor's Functions Prior to Administrative Reorganization (1965-66) file (hereafter referred to as Healy, Miscellaneous Material file).

The Mission of the City University of New York Master Plan of the Board of Higher Education for the City University of New York 1968 (New York, BHE, 1968), pp. 171-172.

- 20. The Administrative Council, The Chancellorship, p. 11, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file; New York Times, July 26, 1963, p. 1.
- 21. Board of Higher Education of the City of New York, 1964 Master Plan (New York, 1964), p. 113.
- 22. Bowker to the Members of the Board of Higher Education of the City of New York, April 15, 1965, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file.
- 23. At its next meeting the BHE adopted certain measures designed to streamline the Board's agenda. Minutes of the Board of Higher Education, April 26, 1965, p. 114.
- 24. See Committee on Higher Education, Henry T. Heald, Chairman, Meeting the Increasing Demand for Higher Education in New York State (Albany, 1960).
- Office of the Chancellor, "New York State Appropriations to the City University," September, 1965, revised September 29, 1965, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file. The state's share of community college support had been fixed at one-third of operating costs.
- Bowker et al. to James Allen, December 6, 1965, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file. Minutes of the Board of Higher Education, October 25, 1965, p. 447.
- 27. In Bowker's last communication with the City University Committee before going public. he asked it to consider the recommendations in his "Somewhat Bolder Proposal." He stated that Presidents Gallagher (CCNY), Meng (Hunter), Gideonese (Brooklyn), and McMurray (Queens) enthusiastically concurred in those recommendations (Bowker to Rosenberg, November 3, 1965, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file).
- New York Times, November 8, 1965.
- 29. Administrative Council Statement—draft, November 14, 1965, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file.
- 30. Minutes of the Board of Higher Education, November 17, 1965, p. 472.
- 31. Bowker to Rosenberg, November 19, 1965, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file.
- 32. Gideonese to Rosenberg, November 19, 1965, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file.
- 33. Minutes of the Board of Higher Education, November 22, 1965, p. 476.
- 34. New York Times, November 21, 1965.
- 35. Rosenberg to Allen, November 29, 1965, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file.
- 36. New York Times, December 10, 1965.
- 37. Ibid., p. 40:1.
- 38. Edelstein to Bowker, November 27, 1965; Levy to Edelstein, December 16, 1965, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file.
- Bowker et al., "Memorandum," December 14, 1965, attached to Bowker to the Board of Higher Education of the City of New York, December 14, 1965, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file.
- 40. Bowker to the Board of Higher Education of the City of New York, December 14, 1965, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file.
- 41. "Report of the Special Committee for the Study of Administrative Relationships and Functions," March 3, 1966, p. 12, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file. Italics mine.
- 42. This was partly because of an expected increase in the number of community college students who would be transferring into the senior colleges after receipt of the Associate of Arts degree.
- 43. The City University of New York, The Administration of the City University of New York (New York, The City University of New York, 1967), pp. 82-83; Board of Higher Education,

- 44. The City University of New York, The Administration, pp. 93-94.
- 45. Minutes of the Board of Higher Education, February 28, 1966, pp. 60-63.
- 46. Board of Higher Education, 2nd Interim Revision-1964 Master Plan, p. 30. The Skills Centers would also accept high school dropouts who needed training in educational fundamentals, who showed promise of academic achievement, or who desired occupational preparation.
- 47. New York Times, May 2, 1966, p. 36.
- 48. Feinberg to Rosenberg, June 7, 1966, Healy, Miscellaneous Material file.
- 49. Board of Higher Education of the City of New York, 1964 Master Plan for the City University of New York (New York, BHE, 1964), p. 7. See Rosenberg's statement, p. 3.
- 50. Board of Higher Education, Minutes of the Board of Higher Education, February 17, 1964, p. 39.
- 51. Angelo Dispenzieri and Seymour Giniger, The College Discovery Program: A Synthesis of Research (New York, The City University of New York Research and Evaluation Unit, 1969), pp. 2-
- 52. Dispenzieri and Giniger, The College Discovery Program, pp. 11, 21, 26-27.
- 53. Board of Higher Education, Master Plan . . . 1968, pp. 197-198. When the 100% Admissions Plan was adopted in 1966, CUNY officials envisioned that the community colleges would employ traditional criteria to offer admission to about 40% of the city's high school graduates.
- 54. Board of Higher Education, Master Plan . . . 1968, pp. 198-199.
- 55. U.S. News and World Report, January 8, 1968, pp. 56-57; New York Post, December 10, 1967.
- 56. Press release. April 5, 1968, Office of University Relations, City University of New York; Kingsman, April 26, 1968, p. 3.
- 57. Form letter, undated (draft written by Robert Birnbaum), Vice Chancellor T. E. Hollander files (hereafter referred to as Hollander), Form letters sent re 1968 admissions policies of CUNY file.
- 58. Chandler to Frederick W. Richmond, May 9, 1968, Hollander, Admissions 1967-68, 1968-
- 59. The City University of New York, "Report of the Fall 1970 Undergraduate Ethnic Census," p. 5.
- 60. Calculation based on the City University of New York, "Report of the Fall 1970 Undergraduate Ethnic Census," p. 11.
- 61. Minutes of the Board of Higher Education, May 27, 1968, p. 117; June 21, 1968, p. 121; August 1, 1968, pp. 180-181.
- 62. Lester Brailey to Dr. Birnbaum, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Rosner, December 19, 1968, Hollander, New Admissions Policy (approved by BHE 8/1/68) file.
- 63. Robert Birnbaum to Bowker, September 24, 1968, May 27, 1969, Hollander, Top 100 Scholars 2 file.
- 64. Bowker to Dr. Mortimer I. Bloom, September 17, 1968, Hollander, New Admissions Policy (approved by BHE 8/1/69) file. Minutes of the Board of Higher Education, August 1, 1968, pp. 180-182.
- 65. Minutes of the Meeting of the Faculty Senate of the City University of New York, Wednesday, September 25, 1968, p. 2; Senate Resolution No. 1 (Proposed by the Temporary Executive Committee); Resolution on Faculty Participation on the Formulation of University Policy; The City University of New York, The University Senate, "Report on Special