

June 13, 1945

Mr. C. J. Smith
Newman, Georgia

Dear Jay:

At the meeting of the Board of Regents on Sunday, Doctor Sanford telephoned me from Athens that they had discussed our inadequate housing condition at this school and the probability of buying the Bolling-Jones Building and Ivy Street Garage immediately, provided the Governor could find the money for such a project. I am writing you this because I understand you were not present at the Board meeting, and I know that you would like to know the background of all that has occurred during the past two weeks.

A friend of Mr. Marion Smith, who had lunch with him Monday, said that the Board had passed a resolution asking for immediate action because of the great number of returned soldiers who are coming back to Georgia and would like to get full subsistence under the G. I. Bill of Rights while at the same time being employed in one of the eight hundred or more business houses in Atlanta.

I am attaching the report of the Governor's Investigating Committee which was submitted to him during the past week. I am also attaching a letter from Captain F. A. Sams, State Director of Veterans Education. Many returned soldiers are already registering with us to take advantage of the federal subsistence pay while regularly employed in Atlanta.

The building under consideration is only two blocks from Peachtree Street and is across the street from the Hurt Building, and while our entire space here is only 35,000 square feet, the square footage in the garage building is more than 180,000 square feet in a fireproof building with elevators and ramps between floors to take care of the heavy load in students going from one class to another.

While this agitation about the purchase of this building was in progress, I had our present building appraised by a professional appraiser, Mr. Joe Shaw, and he placed the appraisal at \$150,000. The State paid only \$60,000 for the property, and the W. P. A. put it in its present useable condition. The Baptist Tabernacle next door is

holding a Church Conference this week to make us a tentative bid on this structure. Erle Cocks, President of the Fulton National Bank, told me the Fulton National Bank had \$125,000 in the Bolling-Jones Building, and that the loan on the building from the Mutual Life Insurance Company is for \$175,000.

The federal government is to pay us the out-of-state tuition for each G. I. boy enrolled, and this will mean that for every thousand enrolled, we shall receive \$100,000 more than our present students pay, and you know enough about the finances of our program to know that we live very well on the tuition we receive from regular students. The Veterans Bureau has announced to us that we will have several thousands of these boys. From the report made by the Investigating Committee, and from what I have written so far, you may readily see that this institution could easily liquidate the cost of the Bolling-Jones Building. We now have an architect, Mr. Tucker, of Tucker & Howell, giving us an estimate on the reconversion of the garage building for school purposes. About one-third of the building under consideration is now rented for offices and brings in an income of \$25,000 a year. Such an arrangement could continue if we took over the building.

Far and above all the financial considerations involved, the State owes it to these returned veterans to hold as many in the State as possible and thus give them the proper practical training which our institution is prepared to do.

I know this is a pretty long letter for a banker to have to read, but I know your interest is such that you should know all the facts involved in our present situation, and, if it is possible for you and Scotty to hem in Ellis in the corner of a cool Newman front porch, please be assured that you shall be doing the State of Georgia and these returning veterans, as well as the several thousands of Georgia boys and girls involved from the six hundred Georgia high schools now enrolled with us, a very great service.

Cordially yours,

GEORGE M. SPARKS,
Director

GMS:h
Encls. - 2

*Cpy to Dr. R. C. Young
Board of Corrections
State Capitol*