

Columbia University
in the City of New York

NEW YORK 27, N. Y.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 10, 1950

Dear President Wiggins:

It is an honorable custom for universities to mark their centennial years by suitable observances. During the year 1954, Columbia University in the City of New York will take note of the two-hundredth anniversary of its establishment as an institution of higher learning.

In considering what would be the most appropriate theme for Columbia to emphasize in its celebration, the Trustees, aided by a committee representing the Faculties, students and alumni, have agreed that there is one principle which all free universities unflinchingly must defend. This is the ideal of full freedom of scholarly inquiry and expression, the right of mankind to knowledge and to the free use thereof.

For many centuries the civilized world has held that this principle is essential to human liberty, welfare and progress. Unhappily, it is now being subjected to serious and systematic attack in many lands. Our Trustees, accordingly, have concluded that it would be appropriate to ask institutions of higher learning throughout the world to join in reaffirmations of their faith in the freedom of inquiry and expression. Our plans for a convocation in New York are in preparation. Meanwhile, we are suggesting that each participant find its own manner of marking this privilege, which is man's natural right, but not always his legal one. The nature and methods of such observances would vary greatly from institution to institution, possibly taking the form of convocations, special lectures, courses of instruction, publications, and the like. But no matter what forms such observances may take, if they center on the year 1954, their concentrated effect will focus world-wide attention on the belief that, through the free and just use of all the

knowledge he can acquire, man may triumphantly insure the peace and progress for which he strives.

Columbia will make this ideal the central theme of its Bicentennial celebration in 1954. Should you find it possible to participate at that time in this demonstration of faith and belief, we would be happy to exchange with you and other institutions such information and plans as may be mutually of interest.

The cause which we seek to serve far transcends any of our individual institutions. We invite your collaboration in it, and shall welcome such comments on this letter as you, at your convenience, may care to send me.

Sincerely,

Dwight D. Hoover

President D. M. Wiggins
Texas Technological College
Lubbock, Texas