



5-4-1977

Letter Explaining Decision Not to Honor Alex Haley With an Honorary Degree

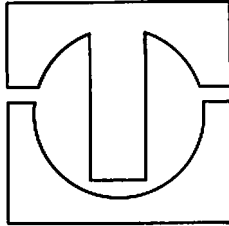
Commission for Blacks

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SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
DEAN'S OFFICE

Office of the Chancellor/The University of Tennessee, Knoxville/506 Andy Holt Tower/Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

May 4, 1977

Dr. Betty J. Cleckley
Chairperson
Commission for Blacks
School of Social Work
2014 Lake Avenue
CAMPUS

Dear Betty:

I understand that Sammie has talked with you by telephone about the Commission for Blacks' recommendation that the University award Alex Haley an honorary degree during his visit to the campus later this month. As she explained, the University has chosen not to award honorary degrees even though we are authorized by the Board of Trustees to do so and even though numerous persons are recommended for such awards during the course of a year. We believe that the institutional emphasis should be on earned degrees and that distinguished alumni and friends should be honored in other appropriate ways.

Certainly I share the Commission's high regard for Mr. Haley's contributions to the state and the nation and am pleased that our staff is involved in arranging the schedule for his visit and affording him the recognition he deserves. I look forward to meeting him and to hearing the presentations he will make.

Sincerely,



Jack E. Reese
Chancellor

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cc: Dr. Edward J. Boling
Dr. Luke Ebersole