



1-16-1981

Chancellor Reese Letter Addressing Jim Drinnon Appointment

Commission for Blacks

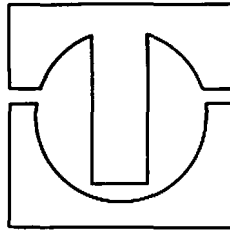
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Office of the Chancellor/The University of Tennessee, Knoxville/527 Andy Holt Tower/Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

January 16, 1981

Dr. John Morrow
1116 C McClung Tower
Campus

Dear John:


Thanks for your letter of January 12. I can well understand your perspective on the Drinnon move, and the distress which the picture of that move provided by the Beacon engenders. I know this situation has caused some bad feeling on campus, and I don't believe it has been handled particularly well -- and I regret both of those occurrences.

I do, however, have a different perspective. Jim Drinnon has been, I believe, a very good Chancellor for UT Chattanooga: he's worked very hard and given a great deal of himself, and has done an enormous amount of good for that campus. Now he has been given what amounts to a temporary transfer to a unit to which he can contribute a great deal; this appointment is a quite temporary one (it will not exceed, I expect, six months). I think UT can well afford to treat him at least this well.

It may well be self-serving for me to view the Drinnon move in this way; perhaps I am mollified by the temporary nature of the appointment. At any rate, as you point out, the Legal Counsel's office is neither under my jurisdiction nor that of the UT Knoxville Affirmative Action plan. We must simply do what we can to be humane in all the ways available to us -- and I think that's what President Boling is trying to do as well.

Thanks for sharing your concern with me. As you know, Chuck Johnson raised similar questions in his letter of January 13; I have responded to him with the same things I've said here. Please let me know if you wish to discuss this, or anything else, further.

Sincerely,


Jack E. Reese
Chancellor

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cc: Vice Chancellor Luke Ebersole
Ms. Betsey Creekmore