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Letter to Dr. J.W. Garner from Dean Hoskins

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October 11, 1923

Dr. J.W. Garner
University of Illinois
Urbana, Ill.

My dear Doctor Garner:

In compliance with your request I am sending you the written statements concerning the recent changes in the University of Tennessee faculty.

A great many false and misleading statements concerning these changes were published by the newspapers and consequently I am unable to say whether or not the statement mentioned in your letter is correct as you did not give the date or the name of the newspaper. I did not see all of the newspaper statements, but what I did see were not correct. One of the local papers, The Knoxville News, a Scripps-Howard publication, was and is very antagonistic to the University.

The first case that was dealt with was that of Dr. Jesse William Sprowls, Professor of Secondary Education. I am sending you copies of the letters stating the reasons why Doctor Sprowls was not recommended for reappointment.

The second case was that of Mrs. A.M. Withers. Mrs. Withers was in charge of the Art Department. I am sending a copy of my letter to the President stating the reasons why Mrs. Withers was not recommended for reappointment. Mrs. Withers was notified on or about April 1st.

The third case was that of Dr. John R. Neal, Professor of Law. I am sending copies of the letters stating reasons why Doctor Neal was not recommended for reappointment.

The remaining cases were those of Dr. A.A. Schaeffer, Professor of Zoology, Dr. R.S. Ellis, Professor of Psychology and Philosophy, Dr. R.S. Redford, Professor of Latin and Roman Archaeology and Professor Maurice Mulvania, Dean of the Pre-Medical Course and Associate Professor of Bacteriology. I am sending you a copy of the Record of the Deans' Meeting stating the reasons why these members of the faculty were not recommended for reappointment.

We waited for some time before entering into a general investigation, hoping agitation and antagonism would subside. We were, however, forced into an investigation by the prolonged disturbance. Dr. Schaeffer was especially violent in his opposition. He had been giving us trouble for a long period of time and it was impossible to get him to cooperate in carrying out the ordinary regulations of the institution. Doctors Ellis and Redford and Professor Mulvania asked for a hearing before the Board of Trustees. The request was granted. Dr. Neal was also given a hearing before the Board of Trustees. Dr. Schaeffer never did reply to the notification sent to him.
I beg to urge that your entire Committee come to Knoxville to conduct the investigation here at the University. It is impossible to arrive at a just conclusion through an investigation conducted by correspondence and at long range. We do not know in detail the charges that have been made against the Administration of the University. We should like to have a copy of these charges. If your Committee were here we could enter into the details for both sides and all evidence with its source would be known.

I am numbering the papers according to the order given in this letter.

Very cordially yours,

Dean.