

United Campus Ministry  
Emory University

August 15, 1969

President S. Atwood  
Administration Bldg.

Dear President Atwood:

Yesterday I received a copy of the formal report of the Alumni Council which I understand will be distributed to the more than 27,000 Emory Alumni.

I have been told that you were present at that meeting and helped to modify what some of the members of the Alumni Council would have preferred. It is my impression that you helped to pass a much more modest statement than the one some Alumni intended. I should like, therefore, to express my appreciation to you for helping to prevent polarization and to facilitate open communication.

I am concerned, however, about one sentence in that report which reads: "Except for the occurrences beginning May 25, Emory has been singularly free of violence and unlawful acts." This clearly indicates that the events which took place beginning May 25 were both unlawful and violent, and I am sure that this is precisely the understanding which the Emory Alumni will have in the light of this report. I find this sentence both inaccurate and unfortunate. As one who was there from the beginning, even though at times the situation was tense, it was not violent, and to label those protests violent, I believe,

is to play into the hands of reactionary elements of our University and Alumni and to suggest that what happened in May was carried out by a group of students without cause against a University without fault.

It seems to me that this sentence, if not corrected, will be simply one more statement which will lead to further misunderstandings, suggesting to the Alumni that anything like the events in May would be suppressed by the administration and whatever legal force is necessary. It further implies an exoneration of the University as a whole from its responsibility in carrying out the changes agreed upon in May.

I feel very badly that such a sentence will receive a wide reading, obscuring what was in many ways a fine report by a rightfully concerned Alumni.

Yours truly,

Richard C. Devor  
University Chaplain

cc: Jake Ward

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