

TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
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Dr. John M. Rudley
President

MEMORANDUM

TO: The TSU Police Department

FROM: John M. Rudley

DATE: October 1, 2014

First of all, I wish to thank all of the members of the TSU police department for their service during the seven years I have been president. During these seven years, a turnaround has occurred in a police department that formerly lacked focus, and lacked the confidence of the students, faculty and staff of the university as well as the general public. Now, we are faced with a somewhat disgruntled group who apparently want the police chief to resign for reasons that I consider petty and for reasons that are not within our plan for our campus security force. I would like to address a few salient points that seem to be of concern to some.

First, in case you did not read my budget letters to the staff and faculty, we have experienced a \$7 million dollar budget short fall because the US Department of Education cut the Pell Grant Program and restricted the Parent Plus Program. Both of these actions affected African American students from low income families and for TSU, that's 85% of our population.

Second, when I arrived at TSU, I asked Roger to evaluate the force and tell me what he thought about the remedies that would be required. I must tell you that my intent was not to offer the job to him initially because I knew that he was happily retired. I also was not sure if he would even consider a position at TSU since the reputation of the TSU police department was not up to his or my standard at the time (a situation that has been thoroughly improved under his tenure). Please note that as the chief financial officer for over 20 years, I have always had the responsibility of managing a campus police department which is now the responsibility of Craig Ness and formerly it was Jim McShan's task. The point is that as President, I am no Johnny Come Lately to the management of a campus security force. In the current debate about the need for "tactical military style" responses on college campuses, there is always a group of officers who see themselves as military operatives and over the years, my job has always been to draw the line as to what the university will or will not pursue in the form of training, equipment, surveillance, community policing and force.

Third, I have always found Roger to be direct and to the point and not dishonest. Therefore, I do not agree with the assessment of the group responsible for the letter and basically, that characterization is simply incorrect.

Fourth, the issue of training is directly tied to Roger's decision making and if he does not support training for some, I trust his judgment. I also believe that college campus police need more training in methods to deal with a new generation of college student on US campuses who come to us with mental illness. I believe that we have had enough of the full force response and need preventative intrusion when abhorrent behavior is reported or observed by officers.

Fifth, the issue of pay and how much to pay for every pay grade is expressed in every police force that I have had to manage. And since Roger could not force the US Department of Education to delay its Pell Grant and Parent Plus Loan actions, and I could not provide him the resources that he has requested to compensate members of our security force, I must take the responsibility for not having sufficient resources. My experience over the years is one where security officers have left various university campuses that I served, after the campus took a chance and hired and trained them, only to have them leave for higher paying jobs either with the local city force or another university. This is a constant and I do not consider it unusual if officers want to leave based upon their pay grade. As with all of our employees, if they choose to leave, I will wish them well.

Finally, I believe that when Jim McShan decided to leave, there was some lack of attention to the brewing issues within the police department and he simply left all matters for Roger to resolve. On this point, if an outside group (such as the one that performed an unauthorized survey of my force) had come to my campus, I would not have allowed the survey and I would have inquired as to what member of our staff had the audacity to ask an outside group to come into our university without the permission of their immediate supervisor. As we all know, protocol is imperative in any organization, and when members take it upon themselves to take such actions, then I would suggest that there is no room in our organization for them and they should take their recommendations about how to run a campus security force, to their next employer.

When I read and re-read the letter, I determined that the allegations were petty and not sufficient to warrant the termination of Roger. In my opinion, Roger should stay and leave on his own terms. I have always invested in campus security personnel, and I authorized the hiring of new officers to increase the force each of the first two years I was here before the budget crisis. We hired officers to man the security outpost at the dorms because when we arrived, the gangbangers had open access to every dorm. We closed streets and fenced in the campus; we invested in cameras throughout the campus; we invested in lighting; we even invested in uniforms and training to send an officer to the FBI training facility.

Certainly, no one is perfect but we all try to do our best with what we have been given, and I believe that the persons who are out to get the Chief should take a critical look at themselves and ask "what has TSU meant to me." These persons should consider what TSU has provided to them in their career and ask themselves, "do I want to continue to support TSU or do I need to move on with no hard feelings because in America I can thrive somewhere else."

I will continue to invest in our campus security force when funds are available because I am proud of what the officers and staff have accomplished over the past seven years of my tenure. Even those who are complaining, I appreciate their dedication and commitment to the safety and security of our students, faculty and staff and I am certain of my statement.

cc: Craig Ness
Brian Dickens