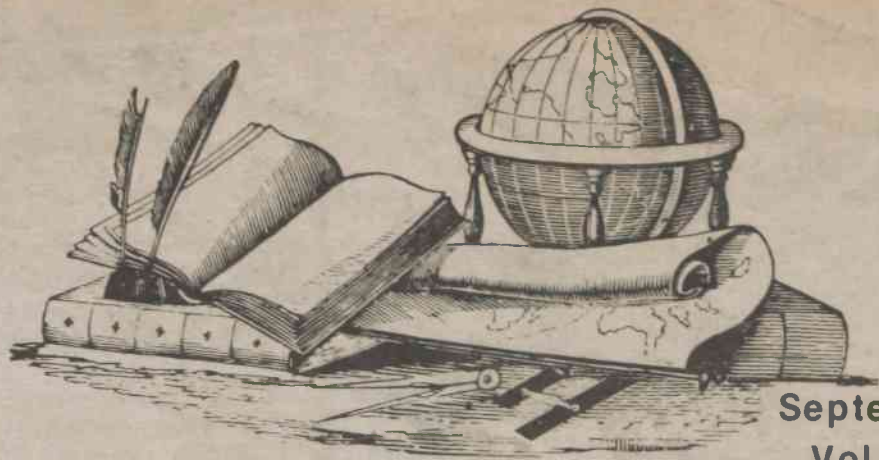


The Compass



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Dr. Jimmy R. Jenkins, Acting Chancellor

by R.J. Walker

I walked into the large, impressive office with one of my photographers (Bill Parson) and expected to receive the typical run-around routine that most people in leadership positions tend to give me. Boy, was I surprised! I was on an interview assignment that turned out to be the best that I have ever had. It was pleasant, comfortable, and finally moving.

I was in the office of our Acting Chancellor, Dr. Jimmy R. Jenkins, who promptly greeted us with a warm smile, a friendly handshake, and an invitation to be seated. Then my interview began.

Q-"Dr. Jenkins, do you have a message you would like to extend to the University?"

A-"Yes, I believe that this university is on the verge of a giant leap forward in terms of its position in the University of N.C. System and as a historically black institution. First of all, we are moving into a new era of technology that will eventually revolutionize our total operation and the quality of our performance and achievement. We have been fortunate enough to negotiate for and receive the necessary funds to finance a major, university-wide program and to compete for the best

qualified staff to help us with our new curriculum and program in technology."

Q-"How much do you think this program will cost?"

A-"We expect to spend approximately \$700,000.00, this year alone, in order to provide computers for the use of students, faculty and administrative staff.

We are also in the process of completing a new landscaping program which will make this institution comparable in appearance to any public institution of its size in the state of NC."

Q-"How do you feel about ECSU as a black institution?"

A-"Historically black institutions have been recognized in the past simply by the appearance of their campuses. We realized that, because of our limited resources and personnel, our campuses couldn't look like our predominantly white sister institutions. However, today, with the understanding and assistance of the General Administration of the University of N.C. System we are now able to direct our attention to the aesthetics of our institution, as well as our academic programs. A few years from now, you will no longer be able to ride by here and identify this institution as predominantly black by merely looking at the buildings and grounds."

Q-"How do you feel about the location of ECSU as a factor in its future?"

A-"Actually we are ideally located in what we might call a 'blessing in disguise.' At one time, being located here seemed to be a disadvantage. It was hard to recruit students to come to school 'way out here.' We have been able to turn this 'way out here in the boon docks' attitude into a promise of an 'Oasis in Northeastern N.C.' because our location actually places us in the unique position of unlimited growth. Also, we are not bothered by the problem of duplication of programs because the four-year institution closest to us in NC is 120 miles away."

Q-"How do you feel about your experience as Acting Chancellor?"

A-"I have found it to be both exciting and definitely challenging. As an alumnus of this institution and then a teacher, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and finally Acting Chancellor. I have been privileged to see ECSU from every possible perspective and through many junctures in its history. Right now, ECSU is at the threshold of deciding whether it will be 'ECSU - The University of Northeastern NC' or 'ECSU -



"... we are moving into a new era of technology that will eventually revolutionize our total operation..."

which happens to be located in Northeastern NC.' Its decision will depend upon everyone involved with the University - the students, the faculty, the administrative staff, the alumnae, the community-at-large, and the State and University System leadership. However, above all, I believe its decision will depend upon the leadership of its Chancellor."

Q-"Do you feel that you are in the best position to provide this leadership as Chancellor of ECSU?"

A-"Because of the range and depth of my experience over the years at this institution, I certainly desire the opportunity to provide the leadership that is inherent only in the Chancellorship. At this particular time, I believe it would be inappropriate for me to comment on whether or not I am in the best position to assume this role. As you

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