

Good evening, SGA Senate Body, Student Body, faculty and staff. My name is Tyree' Barnes and I have come today to share a few of my concerns in relation to the disconnect which continues to prevent true movement on our campus. A few of the things that I will say will be nothing new to many of you. However, since repetition is the Father of learning, I feel the need to reemphasize certain points so that collectively we may gain a better understanding of the severity of the issues which stands in our way.

First - ECU has long valued itself on diversity. Each member of this campus has a unique experience, life perspective, personal beliefs and ideas - all which are necessary for our human evolution. Our perspectives, in a sense, is a form of treasure - a piece that fits with a master puzzle. However, when some members perspectives are valued more than others - or when a life experience is undermined due to our inability to empathetically relate - it causes a dysfunction in our human experience - where some members are filled (with acceptance, value, and self-efficacy - while the others starve from the lack thereof. It is imperative to remember that a rainbow needs all of its colors to become light. That the sun, being wisest of all, does not value one color over another. Can you imagine a world without the color Blue? The color Green? Red, Purple, Pink, Orange? How then, can we be comfortable with living in a world where each member is not able to fully express their unique hue?

You - members of the SGA Senate - representatives of the Student Body - leaders and builders of the future of ECU. As I have sat in previous meetings, there is an undeniable truth which I have become aware of. That there is here, in this very Senate, a form of segregation. A sense of Us vs. Them. How is it then that we can expect the body to grow when the heart itself is tainted? And when the heart stops pumping blood to certain body parts, is it not inevitable for that body parts to become numb? Is this why so many of the student body has lost faith in you all? Because, you yourself have not become whole. It is quite clear that this segregation, this silent political or personal dispute that you all are having is not only affecting you all, but all of us. The longer this goes on, the more blood we lose.

You all also acts as the brain of ECU. And when the brain makes a decision to walk a certain direction, even if it is into desolation, should we blame the body for its obedience?

Many of you have forgotten, that you all have an opportunity of a lifetime - to be remembered as the SGA class who really brought real visible change to ECU - yet many of you have taken such great opposing strides to halt this phenomenal moment.

To my brother, who said that he felt that we should do more research on Charles B. Aycock before we make a final decision to remove his name - I completely agreed. Therefore, I took your challenge.

Charles B. Aycock certainly did many great things in his life. He truly was an advocate for education. He truly opened up many doors in this manner. In fact, it became the foundation for his political campaign. However, Mr. Aycock also went to extreme efforts to disenfranchise black voters. He believed that blacks were pawns for politics. Despite the fact that he was the leading spokesman in the white supremacy campaigns from 1898-

1900s - despite the fact that this led to voter intimidation, voter fraud, and voter removal based on literacy test (interesting for a man who supposedly supports universal education) His platform - which used white tax dollars for white schools and black tax dollars for black schools - did not truly serve an equal, universal education - even to pass the created literacy test. If Mr. Aycock believed that blacks were pawns for politics when they could vote, then I ponder what he believed they were after they could not.

And yes, it is also true that Mr. Aycock was certainly a Christian man. However, religion serves as a stance for spiritual beliefs - it does not, always correlate to one's morality. We are able to see this all throughout the history of Christianity - from the Council of Nicea - to the Crusades - all the way forward to the Ku Klux Klan. Though, with that not being enough - I ran into Mr. Aycock's biography from 1912 - in it - it states that "Aycock believed in the right of the white man to rule as profoundly as he believed in God." It is not in my power to rule judgment over any of you - whether you voted for or against the removal of Aycock is not my concern. Although I will say, for those of you who voted against - I believe - no, I am certain - that you all have made Mr. Aycock very, very proud.

To the young lady in the back, who said last week that she did not feel comfortable sharing her views on the given topic - due to laughter and intimidation of the Student Body. To you, I would like to personally apologize on behalf of us all. It truly was immature and simply unacceptable. However, I assure you that the laughter you heard was truly a weep in disguise.

Finally, I would like to challenge you all, to remember every morning, the reason why you believed you should fill the seat that you are currently in. When you began your political campaign - and you told everyone how you would serve the student body and why it was necessary. Because when you told us, that you were here to serve the people - it has led me to ask you - which PEOPLE, were you all referring to?

Thank you.