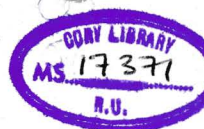


FILE - SPEECHES

KEYNOTE ADDRESS : ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF CUTA
THE NATURE OF A UNIVERSITY IN A CHANGING SOCIETY



2 May 1986

COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IN BEING GIVEN THE PRIVILEGE OF THE FIRST WORD AT YOUR ANNUAL CONFERENCE, I AM ACUTELY AWARE THAT, TO USE A BOXING ANALOGY, I AM LEADING WITH MY CHIN. SOME OF OUR LEARNED FRIENDS HERE PRESENT HAVE HAD A BRIEF OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY WHAT I INTEND TO SAY, AND SO NO DOUBT HAVE FORMULATED A NUMBER OF SEARCHING POINTS FOR DISCUSSION, POINTS ABOUT WHICH I HAVE NO ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE. AS A VICE-CHANCELLOR OF SOME EXPERIENCE I RECOGNISE SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES AS AN UNAVOIDABLE OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD. FURTHERMORE, AS THE LONGEST-SERVING VICE-CHANCELLOR INVITED TODAY I ACCEPT MY ROLE WITH A GOOD GRACE. BESIDES, I HAVE HAD SEVERAL DECADES OF UNIVERSITY LIFE IN WHICH TO FORMULATE MY VIEWS ON THE MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION, AND SO HAVE LITTLE EXCUSE IF I AM CAUGHT UNAWARE.

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ALTHOUGH THERE WERE GREAT CENTRES OF LEARNING IN ANCIENT TIMES - ONE THINKS IN PARTICULAR OF THE ATHENS OF SOCRATES, PLATO AND ARISTOTLE AND ALEXANDRIA IN THE PATRISTIC AGE - WHICH FORESHADOWED THE UNIVERSITY CONCEPT, UNIVERSITIES AS WE KNOW THEM TO-DAY REALLY HAD THEIR ORIGINS IN PARIS DURING THE 12TH AND 13TH CENTURIES. OF THE SYSTEM OF SCHOOLS ORIGINATED BY CHARELMAGNE, ONE, THAT OF PARIS, ROSE TO PRE-EMINENCE, AND ACTED AS THE PARADIGM FOR THE CLASSICAL UNIVERSITY CONCEPT. SOME OF THE DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF THE PARIS MODEL ARE:

- A) IT IS A STUDIUM GENERALE, THAT IS, ANY SUBJECT WITH AN INTELLECTUAL CONTENT IS IN PRINCIPLE PART OF ITS AMBIT. A STUDIUM GENERALE IS NOT A SEMINARY, A LAW SCHOOL OR A MEDICAL SCHOOL, PREPARING ITS CLIENTELE FOR A LIMITED NUMBER OF SPECIFIC PROFESSIONS.

- B) IT IS A COMMUNITY OF SENIOR MEMBERS, WHO TEACH, AND JUNIOR MEMBERS, WHO LEARN. THIS CONCEPT OF COMMUNITY IMPLIES THAT THE UNIVERSITY IS SELF-GOVERNING, AND THAT THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS FROM DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES INTERACT WITH ONE ANOTHER. THIS INTER-DISCIPLINARY INTERACTION IS ONE OF THE STRENGTHS OF A UNIVERSITY AND GIVES IT A CHARACTERISTIC FLAVOUR; MEMBERS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF APPRECIATING KNOWLEDGE AS A WHOLE, AND ESCAPING FROM THE CONFINES OF THE NECESSARILY NARROW PERSPECTIVE OF THEIR OWN SUBJECT. THIS ADVANTAGE IS ATTENUATED TO VANISHING POINT WHEN, AS ONE CYNIC PUT IT, A UNIVERSITY BECOMES "A COLLECTION OF INDIVIDUALS UNITED BY A COMMON PARKING PROBLEM". COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP ALSO IMPLIES A LOYALTY TO THE INSTITUTION AT LEAST AS EXTENSIVE AS THE COMMITMENT TO ONE'S SPECIFIC PROFESSION OR ACADEMIC INTEREST.

- C) THE RAISON D'ÊTRE OF THE WHOLE ENTERPRISE IS KNOWLEDGE, ITS TRANSMISSION, EXTENSION AND ADVANCEMENT. KNOWLEDGE, IN THE CLASSICAL UNIVERSITY ETHOS, IS ITS OWN END. WE CONSIDER KNOWLEDGE PRIMARILY FOR ITS OWN SAKE, AND ONLY SECONDARILY AS BEING APPLICABLE IN VARIOUS USEFUL PROFESSIONS. THIS EMPHASIS STEMS FROM A PARTICULAR NON-REDUCTIONIST VIEW OF MAN AS HAVING A MIND AS WELL AS BODY, AS BEING SOMETHING MORE THAN "A FORTUITOUS CONCOURSE OF ATOMS", REDUCIBLE TO AN OBJECT OF BIOLOGICAL INTEREST AND HENCE THROUGH CHEMISTRY TO AN ULTIMATE "EXPLANATION" IN TERMS OF PHYSICS. IF, THEREFORE, MAN IS BOTH BODY AND MIND, HIS MIND HAS NEED OF NOURISHMENT ALMOST AS URGENTLY AS HIS BODY. KNOWLEDGE IS THE NOURISHMENT OF THE MIND. EVEN IN CLASSICAL TIMES THIS WAS A WIDELY HELD VIEW. CICERO, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS OF

THE OPINION THAT, AS SOON AS OUR BASIC PHYSICAL NECESSITIES ARE SECURED, A SEARCH AFTER KNOWLEDGE IS THE NEXT MOST PRESSING REQUIREMENT FOR HUMAN HAPPINESS.

- D) ALTHOUGH A UNIVERSITY IS CONCERNED WITH BOTH THE TRANSMISSION AND ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE, THERE IS NO QUESTION BUT THAT TEACHING TAKES PRIORITY OVER RESEARCH. THE PROPER FORMATION OF MINDS IS THE FIRST BUSINESS OF A UNIVERSITY. HISTORICALLY, UNTIL THE RISE OF THE "GERMAN" MODEL IN THE 19TH CENTURY COMPARATIVELY LITTLE RESEARCH WAS UNDERTAKEN IN THE UNIVERSITIES. / MOST IMPORTANT DISCOVERIES WERE MADE BY INSPIRED INDIVIDUALS OR ELSE TOOK PLACE IN ACADEMIES, INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIETIES NOT ASSOCIATED WITH ANY CAMPUS, IN SHORT IN WHAT TODAY WOULD PERHAPS BE CALLED "THINK TANKS". EVEN NOW THE MAJORITY OF THE MORE

FUNDAMENTAL ADVANCES ARE MADE IN RESEARCH INSTITUTES AND INDUSTRIAL LABORATORIES. IT IS SOME CONSOLATION TO REFLECT, HOWEVER, THAT THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE THESE DISCOVERIES ARE ALMOST INVARIABLY UNIVERSITY PRODUCTS.

A MOMENT'S REFLECTION REVEALS WHY THIS SHOULD BE SO. RESEARCH DOES NOT IN PRINCIPLE REQUIRE THE PRESENCE OF STUDENTS, WHEREAS TEACHING DOES, AND WHERE WOULD A UNIVERSITY BE WITHOUT ITS STUDENTS? UNIVERSITY RESEARCH IS NOT TO BE DENIGRATED BY TAKING SECOND PLACE: IT HELPS TO IMPROVE THE MINDS OF THE TEACHING STAFF! ON A MORE SERIOUS NOTE, I VENTURE TO SUGGEST THAT THE BEST LOCALE FOR A PARTICULAR PIECE OF RESEARCH, ON OR OFF CAMPUS, IS A PRAGMATIC, NOT A THEORETICAL QUESTION. IT DEPENDS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF COMPETENT PEOPLE AND EQUIPMENT.

THIS GOAL OF COMMITMENT TO THE PRIMACY OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE TRADITIONAL UNIVERSITY IMPLIES THE ESPOUSAL OF A SET OF VALUES, WITHOUT WHICH THE WHOLE ENTERPRISE WOULD BE RENDERED NUGATORY AND INEFFECTIVE. AMONG THESE VALUES ARE:-

- I. COURTESY AND DECORUM. IN ACADEMIC LIFE, AS ON THE RUGBY FIELD, A REGRETTABLE TENDENCY IS SOMETIMES EVIDENT TO PLAY THE MAN AND NOT THE BALL. PERSONAL INVECTIVE AND LACK OF COURTESY GENERATE HEAT RATHER THAN LIGHT. IDEAS, AND NOT THEIR PROPONENTS, ARE THE PROPER OBJECT OF DISCOURSE.
2. RESISTANCE TO ALL OUTSIDE PRESSURE, WHICH WOULD TEMPT OR DEFLECT US FROM OUR COURSE. DURING THE COMING YEARS WE SHALL HAVE TO GUARD OUR AUTONOMY MORE ASSIDUOUSLY THAN EVER AGAINST WHAT THE

POET DOUGLAS LIVINGSTONE TERMS "THE PSYCHOPATHS OF THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT". WE SHOULD ALSO BE ALERTED TO POSSIBLE INROADS INTO OUR AUTONOMY FROM A TRADITIONALLY MORE WELL DISPOSED QUARTER, THAT OF THE MULTIFARIOUS ORGANISED PROFESSION BODIES, WHO HAVE A STATUTORY RIGHT TO CONCERN THEMSELVES WITH WHAT WE TEACH. THESE BODIES HAVE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS, BUT WE MUST ENSURE THAT THESE INTERESTS DO NOT EVOLVE INTO OUT-AND-OUT PRESCRIPTION. OUR GRADUATES MUST BE PROFESSIONALLY COMPETENT, BUT THEY MUST ALSO BE COMPLETE AND EDUCATED HUMAN BEINGS. WE SHALL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY LATER IN OUR PROCEEDINGS TO EXAMINE THIS QUESTION IN GREATER DEPTH.

3. RECOGNITION OF HUMAN DIGNITY AND OF THE WHOLE PERSON. THERE ARE NO GROUNDS, ESPECIALLY AT A UNIVERSITY, FOR PLACING ANY

INDIVIDUAL AT A DISADVANTAGE BECAUSE OF SEX, CREED OR ETHNIC ORIGIN. WE ARE CONCERNED WITH PEOPLE AS INDIVIDUALS, WITH THEIR SPECIFIC CONCERNS, ASPIRATIONS AND NEEDS. PEOPLE ARE NOT DISEMBODIED BRAINS: THERE ARE PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL, RECREATIONAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMPLETE PERSON. SMALL SCALE STRUCTURES ENABLE THESE REQUIREMENTS TO BE MORE EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSED THAN OVERLY LARGE ONES. TO MY MIND SOME OF OUR CAMPUSES ARE BECOMING SO LARGE THAT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL IS IN DANGER OF BECOMING SUBMERGED. WHERE THIS IS UNAVOIDABLE A MORE FEDERAL ASSOCIATION OF SMALLER STRUCTURES SHOULD BE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED.

4. COMPETENT MANAGEMENT. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT UNIVERSITIES ARE UNDER SEVERE FINANCIAL PRESSURE, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE SO

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FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. EVEN IF THAT WERE NOT SO, NOTHING ENGENDERS LOSS OF SUPPORT FOR UNIVERSITIES AND HENCE AN EROSION OF THEIR POSITION, THAN PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF WASTE AND MISMANAGEMENT. COMPETENT MANAGEMENT IS NOT A FRILL: IT IS ONE OF THE STRONGEST BASTIONS OF A UNIVERSITY'S CONTINUED WELL-BEING. MISALLOCATION AND DUPLICATION OF RESOURCES THERE HAVE BEEN ON AN EXTENSIVE SCALE, FIRSTLY BECAUSE IDEOLOGY HAS BEEN ALLOWED TO TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER COMMON SENSE, AND SECONDLY BECAUSE OF INSTITUTIONAL PRIDE, COUPLED WITH A RELUCTANCE TO ACCEPT NECESSARY THOUGH OFTEN PAINFUL DECISIONS. UNIVERSITIES, UNLIKE BUSINESSES, ARE NOT TEMPERAMENTALLY ATTUNED TO REDUCTIONS, OR EVEN RE-ALLOCATIONS OF RESOURCES. OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS WE ARE GOING TO WITNESS A WONDERFUL CONCENTRATION OF MINDS ON THIS SUBJECT. OUR PANELISTS LATER ON IN THE MORNING ARE DOUBTLESS READY TO WARM TO THIS THEME.

THE CRITICISM MOST FREQUENTLY LEVELLED AT THE TRADITIONAL VIEW OF A UNIVERSITY IS THAT IT IS A LUXURY THAT CANNOT BE AFFORDED UNDER QUASI THIRD WORLD CIRCUMSTANCES SUCH AS THOSE PREVAILING IN SOUTH AFRICA. EDUCATION, IT IS ARGUED, MUST BE SEVERELY PRACTICAL, CONCENTRATING ON PREPARING DESPERATE PEOPLE FOR THE JOB MARKET. IT MUST BE "RELEVANT", THOUGH TO WHAT END IS NEVER CLEARLY ENUNCIATED. THIS UTILITARIAN ARGUMENT WAS NOT INVENTED YESTERDAY: IT HAS A HISTORY. THE CELEBRATED BRITISH PHILOSOPHER LOCKE, FOR EXAMPLE, ARGUED THAT

"REASON IF CONSULTED WITH, WOULD ADVISE, THAT THEIR CHILDREN'S TIME SHOULD BE SPENT IN ACQUIRING WHAT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO THEM, WHEN THEY COME TO BE MEN, RATHER THAN THAT THEIR HEADS SHOULD BE STUFFED WITH A DEAL OF TRASH, A GREAT PART WHEREOF THEY USUALLY NEVER DO ('TIS CERTAIN THEY NEVER NEED TO) THINK ON AGAIN AS

LONG AS THEY LIVE; AND SO MUCH OF IT AS DOES STICK BY THEM THEY ARE ONLY THE WORSE FOR".

NEWMAN, IN HIS GREAT CLASSIC, "THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY", QUOTING DR COPLESTONE, BISHOP OF LLANDAFF, OBSERVES THAT A PROFESSIONAL MAN IS NOT ALWAYS ON DUTY, AND THAT HE NEEDS FAR MORE THAN USEFUL KNOWLEDGE:

"AS A FRIEND, AS A COMPANION, AS A CITIZEN AT LARGE; IN THE CONNECTIONS OF DOMESTIC LIFE; IN THE IMPROVEMENT AND EMBELLISHMENT OF HIS LEISURE, HE HAS A SPHERE OF ACTION, REVOLVING, IF YOU PLEASE, WITHIN THE SPHERE OF HIS PROFESSION BUT NOT CLASHING WITH IT; IN WHICH IF HE CAN SHOW NONE OF THE ADVANTAGES OF AN IMPROVED UNDERSTANDING, WHATEVER MAY BE HIS SKILL OR PROFICIENCY IN THE OTHER, HE IS NO MORE THAN AN ILL-EDUCATED MAN".

IF, THEN, WE CONFINE EDUCATION TO THE USEFUL, WE SHALL END UP WITH LEGALISTS RATHER THAN LAWYERS, TECHNICIANS IN PLACE OF DOCTORS AND ENGINEERS, POLITICIANS (OR EVEN WORSE, APPARATCHIKS) INSTEAD OF STATESMEN, SCRIVENERS FOR JOURNALISTS, "TICK BIRDS" FOR ACCOUNTANTS, INSTRUCTORS AS TEACHERS OR TECHNOCRATS AS MANAGERS. THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES, I AVER, CAN AFFORD SUCH ONE-DIMENSIONAL DISTORTIONS EVEN LESS THAN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. LET US NOT FORGET THAT, UP UNTIL ABOUT TWO CENTURIES AGO, THERE WERE ONLY THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES. THE TRADITIONAL UNIVERSITY, THUS, HAS DEMONSTRATED ITS VIABILITY OVER CENTURIES OF THIRD WORLD EXPERIENCE. ONE POOR COUNTRY LEADER, TO HIS GREAT CREDIT, PERHAPS BECAUSE HE WAS EDUCATED IN THE SCOTTISH TRADITION, UNDERSTANDS THIS CONCEPT OF EDUCATION SUPREMELY WELL. I REFER OF COURSE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF KAMUZU COLLEGE, AN UNASHAMEDLY ETONIAN ESTABLISHMENT IN THE AFRICAN BUSH, BY PRESIDENT BANDA OF MALAWI.

A FURTHER, AND POTENTIALLY MORE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFICULTY WITH THE "EDUCATION FOR JOBS" APPROACH IS THAT IN THE 21ST CENTURY, IN WHICH ALL THOSE CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS WILL SPEND THE GREATER PART OF THEIR ADULT LIVES, A GREAT MANY JOBS WILL SIMPLY HAVE DISAPPEARED. IN THAT CATCHY LITTLE BOOK "MEGATRENDS" BY JOHN NAISBITT IT IS ESTIMATED THAT EARLY IN THE NEXT CENTURY, WITH THE WIDER APPLICATION OF AUTOMATION AND ROBOTIZATION, SUFFICIENT MATERIAL GOODS FOR ALL WILL BE CAPABLE OF BEING PRODUCED BY ONLY TEN PERCENT OF THE POTENTIAL LABOUR FORCE. A SUPERIOR EDUCATION WILL UNDOUBTEDLY IMPROVE THE INDIVIDUAL'S POSITION IN THE LABOUR MARKET, BUT EVEN IF BY SOME MIRACLE AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM COMPARABLE WITH THAT OF, SAY, WEST GERMANY WERE TO ARISE IN SOUTH AFRICA, THAT WOULD NOT OF ITSELF CREATE JOBS FOR ALL. MUCH INCREASED LEISURE FOR ALL, WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE NEVER FINDING WORK, IS A VERY PLAUSIBLE SCENARIO. IN SUCH

CIRCUMSTANCES THE WELL-FORMED MIND OF THE CLASSICAL UNIVERSITY WILL BE A GREATER ASSET THAN A VOCATIONAL APPROACH, WHICH MAY WELL CONDEMN MANY TO FRUSTRATED HOPES.

THE PARLOUS STATE OF BLACK EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS RESULTS IN A GREAT MANY ILL-PREPARED, BUT NOMINALLY QUALIFIED APPLICANTS FROM DIS-ADVANTAGED GROUPS SEEKING ENTRY TO THE UNIVERSITY. SOME TRADITIONALLY WHITE UNIVERSITIES HAVE RESPONDED GENEROUSLY TO THIS SITUATION, AND HAVE ATTEMPTED BRAVELY TO REMEDY IN A FEW SHORT MONTHS, THROUGH SPECIAL TUITION AND FORMAL ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMMES, THE GRAVE SHORTCOMINGS OF TWELVE YEARS OF INADEQUATE SCHOOLING. EXCEPT AS A SHORT-TERM PALLIATIVE INDICATIVE OF MANIFEST GOODWILL I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THESE ACTIVITIES IN THE LONG TERM WILL PROVE TO BE VERY EFFICIENT OR EFFECTIVE. FURTHERMORE, THEY DIVERT SCARCE RESOURCES AWAY FROM THE

FORMAL TASKS OF THE UNIVERSITY. THE PROPER SOLUTION IS TO DEVOTE FAR MORE RESOURCES TO THE PATIENT IMPROVEMENT OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLING, IN THAT ORDER OF PRIORITY. FORTUNATELY, THERE ARE RECENT ENCOURAGING SIGNS THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS PREPARING SERIOUSLY TO ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM. IT WOULD BE A FAR MORE EFFECTIVE PROCESS FOR UNIVERSITIES NOT TO EXPAND INORDINATELY THEIR REMEDIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES, BUT RATHER TO ENCOURAGE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIALISED INSTITUTIONS, CALL THEM COMMUNITY OR VITH FORM COLLEGES, OR WHAT YOU WILL, SPECIFICALLY ORIENTATED TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE. A NUMBER OF COURAGEOUS BEGINNINGS IN THIS AREA HAVE ONLY RECENTLY GOT UNDER WAY. I BELIEVE WE SHOULD OFFER THEM EVERY ENCOURAGEMENT, FOR IF THEY PROVE SUCCESSFUL THEY WILL HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO A VERY REAL AND PRESSING ISSUE TO WHICH IT IS CLEAR THAT UNIVERSITIES ARE NOT WELL ADAPTED.

LEST IT BE CONSIDERED THAT I AM ESPOUSING A TOO STAND-PAT POSITION, I SHOULD LIKE TO ENCOURAGE MOVES TOWARD A RE-ORIENTATION OF MANY OF OUR SYLLABUSES AND RESEARCH INTEREST, (THOUGH NOT OUR FUNDAMENTAL NATURE FOR THAT WOULD DESTROY OUR EXISTENCE AS UNIVERSITIES IN ANYTHING BUT NAME) TO THE REALITIES OF OUR SOUTH AFRICAN CIRCUMSTANCES. WE SHOULD BE, AND MANY OF US ARE, CONCERNED WITH AFRICAN LANGUAGES, HISTORY, ART, MUSIC, POLITICS AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION. MUCH OF OUR RESEARCH IS FOCUSSED ULTIMATELY ON THE SOLUTION OF LOCAL PROBLEMS IN VIRTUALLY EVERY FIELD OF STUDY. THERE IS NO REASON WHATEVER WHY A UNIVERSITY SHOULD NOT LOCALISE AND CONTEXTUALISE MANY OF ITS INTERESTS, AND SIMULTANEOUSLY ADHERE TO INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC GOLD STANDARDS. WHILE REMAINING UNIVERSITIES IN THE FULLEST SENSE OF THE WORD WE SHOULD ALL AIM AT BEING, TO BORROW AN EXPRESSION FROM BISHOP TUTU, AS SOUTH AFRICAN AS BILTONG.

ALTHOUGH I HAVE ARGUED AGAINST ITS THEORETICAL PRIMACY IN THE UNIVERSITY CONTEXT, LET US BY NO MEANS DE-EMPHASISE OUR RESEARCH ENDEAVOURS, IN SPITE OF SOPHISTRIES THAT LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES CANNOT AFFORD RESEARCH. ON THE CONTRARY SUCH COUNTRIES FREQUENTLY EXPERIENCE A GREATER PROPORTIONATE PAYOFF FROM RESEARCH THAN AFFLUENT ONES. CONSIDER ONE DRAMATIC EXAMPLE. THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH, CONDUCTED LARGELY IN MEXICO AND THE PHILLIPINES, FUNDED INITIALLY WITH ROCKEFELLER SEED MONEY, THAT LED TO THE GREEN REVOLUTION, ACCOMPLISHED MORE TOWARDS TO THE SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES THAN THE AGGREGATE OF ALL DIRECT AID. HERE IN SOUTH AFRICA, NO MATTER WHAT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SYSTEMS OVERTAKE THE PRESENT ONES, OUR MAJOR NEED TO FULFIL OUR FULL WEALTH-CREATING POTENTIAL FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL, CANNOT POSSIBLY BE TIMEOUSLY MET WITHOUT THE RESEARCH AND

APPLICATION ENDEAVOURS OF GEOLOGISTS, GEOGRAPHERS, CHEMISTS AND ENGINEERS, TO NAME A FEW KEY FIELDS.

WHEN I WAS A STUDENT I WAS, LIKE ANY OTHER WORTHY OF THAT NAME, OF A REFLECTIVE TURN OF MIND. I WAS ANXIOUS TO ASCERTAIN WHAT MANNER OF INSTITUTION I WAS ATTENDING. TO MY GOOD FORTUNE I WAS ADVISED TO READ CARDINAL NEWMAN'S GREAT CLASSIC, TO WHICH I HAVE ALREADY MADE REFERENCE, "THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY". A LITTLE OVER TEN YEARS AGO, AS I WAS ABOUT TO ASSUME MY PRESENT POST I WISHED TO REMIND MYSELF OF THESE MATTERS, AND I READ IT AGAIN. IN PREPARATION FOR THIS MORNING I STUDIED IT A THIRD TIME. WHETHER ONE ACCEPTS, OR WISHES TO REFUTE, THE TRADITIONAL VIEW OF A UNIVERSITY, ONE CANNOT OVERLOOK THIS BOOK. MANY OF MY GRAHAMSTOWN COLLEAGUES MUST BE OF THE SAME MIND, JUDGING BY THE CONDITION OF THE COPY I DREW FROM THE RHODES LIBRARY. IN CONCLUSION,

THEREFORE I CAN HARDLY DO BETTER THAN ALLOW THE FINAL WORD TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS CARDINAL:

"IF A PRACTICAL END MUST BE ASSIGNED TO A UNIVERSITY COURSE, I SAY THAT IT IS THAT OF TRAINING GOOD MEMBERS OF SOCIETY. ITS ART IS THE ART OF SOCIAL LIFE, AND ITS END IS FITNESS FOR THE WORLD. -----

BUT A UNIVERSITY TRAINING IS THE GREAT ORDINARY MEANS TO A GREAT BUT ORDINARY END; IT AIMS AT RAISING THE INTELLECTUAL TONE OF SOCIETY, AT CULTIVATING THE PUBLIC MIND, AT PURIFYING THE NATIONAL TASTE, AT SUPPLYING TRUE PRINCIPLES TO POPULAR ENTHUSIASM AND FIXED AIMS TO POPULAR ASPIRATION, AT GIVING ENLARGEMENT AND SOBRIETY TO THE IDEAS OF THE AGE, AT

FACILITATING THE EXERCISE OF POLITICAL POWER, AND REFINING THE INTERCOURSE OF PRIVATE LIFE. IT IS THE EDUCATION WHICH GIVES A MAN A CLEAR CONSCIOUS VIEW OF HIS OWN OPINIONS AND JUDGEMENTS, A TRUTH IN DEVELOPING THEM, AND A FORCE IN URGING THEM. IT TEACHES HIM TO SEE THINGS AS THEY ARE, TO GO RIGHT TO THE POINT, TO DISENTANGLE A SKEIN OF THOUGHT, TO DETECT WHAT IS SOPHISTICAL, AND TO DISCARD WHAT IS IRRELEVANT. IT PREPARES HIM TO FILL ANY POST WITH CREDIT, AND TO MASTER ANY SUBJECT WITH FACILITY. IT SHOWS HIM HOW TO ACCOMMODATE HIMSELF TO OTHERS, HOW TO THROW HIMSELF INTO THEIR STATE OF MIND, HOW TO BRING BEFORE THEM HIS OWN, HOW TO INFLUENCE THEM, HOW TO COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING WITH THEM, HOW TO BEAR WITH THEM."

I CAN IMAGINE NO BETTER PRESCRIPTION OF OUR CURRENT NEEDS IN SOUTH AFRICA. SINCE I DO NOT PRESUME TO IMPROVE ON NEWMAN, AND BECAUSE YOUR OWN UNIVERSITY EDUCATIONS HAVE ENABLED YOU TO BEAR WITH ME I AM CONTENT TO REST MY CASE.

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2 MAY 1986