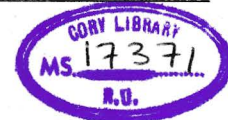


9/5/87



MR CHANCELLOR, THE MAYOR, COUNCILLOR KEMP, MEMBERS OF THE EAST LONDON LOCAL BOARD OF RHODES UNIVERSITY, STAFF, GRADUANDS, LADIES AND GENTLEMAN, TODAY IS A PROUD AND SYMBOLICALLY SIGNIFICANT OCCASION, BOTH FOR THE CITY AND THE UNIVERSITY. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EAST LONDON COMMUNITY AND RHODES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CLOSE AND CORDIAL. AT ANY GIVEN TIME THERE ARE ALWAYS SEVERAL HUNDRED STUDENTS IN GRAHAMSTOWN WHOSE HOMES ARE LOCATED HERE. A GREAT NUMBER OF CITIZENS HAVE THEREFORE RECEIVED THEIR TERTIARY EDUCATION AT RHODES. IT IS INDEED FORTUNATE THAT THE NAME OF OUR UNIVERSITY HAS NO GEOGRAPHICAL CONNOTATION. IT CAN THEREFORE BE CONSIDERED JUST AS MUCH "OUR UNIVERSITY" IN EAST LONDON AS IN GRAHAMSTOWN, MORE PARTICULARLY ON SUCH A "RITE OF PASSAGE" OCCASION, WHEN THE EAST LONDON DIVISION CAN BE THOUGHT OF AS HAVING

2

PASSED ITS INFANCY. THE "COMING-OUT" CELEBRATIONS HAVE BEEN PLANNED TO MIRROR THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EVENT.

I FELT PARTICULARLY HONOURED AT HAVING BEEN INVITED TO ADDRESS YOU THIS MORNING, SINCE THE ACTIVE GERMINATION AND SUBSEQUENT UNFOLDING OF THE EVENTS LEADING UP TO TODAY ARE COTERMINOUS WITH MY PERIOD OF OFFICE AS VICE-CHANCELLOR. IT IS APPROPRIATE THEREFORE THAT I SPEND A LITTLE TIME SKETCHING THE BACKGROUND TO THE VENTURE WHICH WE ARE CELEBRATING.

AS MOST OF YOU ARE PROBABLY AWARE, RHODES BECAME A FULLY-FLEDGED UNIVERSITY IN 1951, AFTER 47 YEARS AS A UNIVERSITY COLLEGE. AS A MARK OF THIS INCREASED MATURITY, FORT HARE BECAME AFFILIATED TO IT. FROM 1951 TO 1959, WHEN THE CONNECTION WAS BROUGHT ABRUPTLY TO AN END BY THE APPLICATION OF THE SO-CALLED EXTENSION OF UNIVERSITIES ACT, ALL

DEGREES EARNED AT FORT HARE WERE IN FACT RHODES DEGREES. A PROMISING AND EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP WAS THUS SET AT NAUGHT BY GOVERNMENT FIAT.

AT ABOUT THIS TIME A SECOND ATTEMPT TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH TERTIARY EDUCATION OUTSIDE THE ALBANY MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT WAS UNDER WAY, WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A RHODES PORT ELIZABETH BRANCH. THIS VENTURE ALSO SUFFERED SHIPWRECK, AS WE ALL KNOW, AND ITS DEMISE LED TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PORT ELIZABETH. IN PREPARING FOR THIS SPEECH I ASKED THE REGISTRAR TO SUPPLY ME WITH ALL THE DOCUMENTATION PRIOR TO THE INAUGURATION OF OUR EAST LONDON DIVISION. HE PRACTICALLY REQUIRED A WHEELBARROW FOR ITS TRANSPORTATION. THE EARLIEST LETTER I COULD FIND ON RECORD WAS ONE DATED 11 MARCH 1963 BY COUNCILLOR C K ROWLAND, SUGGESTING THAT A START MIGHT BE MADE WITH FINE ARTS CLASSES. HIS TIMING COULD HARDLY HAVE BEEN LESS PROPITIOUS. RHODES WAS LICKING ITS WOUNDS FROM TWO FAILED ENDEAVOURS.

IT IS HARDLY SURPRISING THEREFORE THAT THE MATTER LANGUISHED FOR SOME YEARS. IN 1968 AN ATTEMPT WAS MADE TO RESUSCITATE THE CONCEPT. FOR SOME TIME THEREAFTER VARIOUS BASES WERE CONSIDERED FOR A RHODES "ARM" (THE FAVOURED WORD DURING THIS PERIOD) SUCH AS TEACHER TRAINING, PARAMEDICAL STUDIES OR CONTINUING EDUCATION. IT WAS NOT UNTIL 5 DECEMBER, 1975, HOWEVER, THAT ANY MOMENTUM WAS SUSTAINED. ON THAT DATE THE THEN MAYOR, COUNCILLOR JOE YAZBEK, CALLED A MEETING OF INTERESTED PARTIES. AN AD HOC COMMITTEE ON TERTIARY EDUCATION, UNDER THE ENERGETIC CHAIRMAN OF DR ASHTON CHUBB WAS FORMED, AND THINGS BEGAN TO MOVE. THE FIRST IMPORTANT MILESTONE HAD BEEN REACHED.

IT SEEMED AT THE TIME, FROM A CAREFUL STUDY OF PAST MISHAPS AND OF SUCCESSFUL VENTURES BY OTHER UNIVERSITIES, NOTABLY THAT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF POTCHEFSTROOM IN VANDERBIJLPARK, THAT CERTAIN VITAL PRECONDITIONS HAD TO BE MET BEFORE THERE COULD BE ANY SOLID PROSPECT

OF SUCCESS. FIRST AND FOREMOST, THERE HAD TO BE A MAJOR COMMITMENT, BOTH MORAL AND FINANCIAL, FROM THE HOST COMMUNITY. I THUS INSISTED THAT RHODES HAD FORMALLY TO BE INVITED TO ESTABLISH A PRESENCE, AND THAT A DONATION AND FINANCIAL GUARANTEE TARGET BE ACHIEVED. SECONDLY, WE HAD TO BEGIN MODESTLY IN A STUDY DIRECTION WHOSE VIABILITY HAD TO BE EVIDENCED THROUGH PROFESSIONAL MARKET STUDIES. THIRDLY, BOTH FOR THE SAKE OF THE FUTURE DIVISION AND THE MOTHER COMMUNITY, SEPARATE ACCOUNTS HAD TO BE MAINTAINED, SO AS TO FORESTALL ANY ARGUMENTS ABOUT UNFAIRNESS OF RESOURCE ALLOCATION.

PROGRESS ON ALL THREE FRONTS WAS RAPID, AND IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE WE WERE PETITIONING THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL EDUCATION TO START A FIXED CURRICULUM BACHELOR OF COMMERCE COURSE FOR PART-TIME STUDENTS. THE SECOND MILESTONE WAS ACHIEVED WHEN THE RHODES UNIVERSITY PRIVATE ACT WAS AMENDED IN 1979 TO ALLOW FOR THE MOUNTING OF COURSES IN THE EAST

LONDON MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT. THEREAFTER, THE STORY IS WELL KNOWN. THE AD HOC COMMITTEE BECAME A LOCAL BOARD, CLASSES STARTED HERE IN THE TECHNICAL COLLEGE IN 1981, OUR THIRD MILESTONE. WE ACQUIRED THE OLD WOOL EXCHANGE BUILDING IN 1982, THE FOURTH SIGNIFICANT DATE. IT IS THUS APPROPRIATE THAT THIS INAUGURAL GRADUATION EXERCISE, OUR FIFTH MILESTONE, SHOULD BE TAKING PLACE IN THE TECHNICAL COLLEGE, HOME TO US SIX YEARS AGO.

THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REMARKABLE STORY MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO MENTION THEM ALL. I CANNOT LET THE OCCASION PASS, HOWEVER, WITHOUT INCLUDING, IN ADDITION TO NAMES ALREADY MENTIONED THOSE OF MR J J HUMAN, TOWN CLERK, DR DE BEER, PRINCIPAL OF THE TECHNICAL COLLEGE, MESSRS MIKE BOSWORTH AND TERRY BRICELAND, SUCCEEDING CHAIRMAN WHO SUSTAINED THE DYNAMIC LEADERSHIP TRADITION ESTABLISHED BY DR CHUBB, MR JONATHAN STEAD, OUR FIRST DEAN OF STUDIES,



AND HIS ABLE SUCCESSOR, MR RAYMOND SUTTNER, WHO HAS DONE SO MUCH WORK BEHIND THE SCENES IN PLANNING AND EXECUTING THE WEEKEND'S FESTIVITIES.

WHAT I HAVE DESCRIBED THUS FAR ILLUSTRATES A PARTICULARLY FELICITOUS EXAMPLE OF A HEALTHY SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF A PARTICULARLY KIND AND THE COMMUNITY WHICH SUPPORTS IT AND WHICH IT IN TURN SERVES. ALAS, SUCH RELATIONSHIPS ARE NOT ALWAYS SO MUTUALLY SATISFYING. SOME COMMUNITIES BECOME OVERLY AUTHORITARIAN, EVEN DICTATORIAL: THEY ALLOW NO INTERNAL AUTONOMY TO THEIR INSTITUTIONS, AND DEMAND NOTHING LESS THAN ABJECT SUBSERVIENCE. SOME INSTITUTIONS, ON THE OTHER HAND, BECOME ARROGANT, INSULAR AND SELF-ABSORBED, TOO CONCERNED WITH THEIR INTERNAL LIFE, AND ATTENUATE THEIR OBLIGATION TO SERVE.

WHAT THEN IS THE PROPER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY WHICH IT SERVES? IN PRACTICAL TERMS AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THIS RELATIONSHIP IS THAT BETWEEN THE STRUCTURES SET UP BY THE COMMUNITY TO REGULATE ITS INTERESTS, I.E. THE GOVERNMENT OR STATE APPARATUS, AND THE UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES. ONCE ONE MENTIONS GOVERNMENTS AND STATES, ONE IS TALKING POLITICS, AND POLITICS IS ABOUT POWER. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE STATE CAN, AND DOES, EXERCISE POWER WITH REGARD TO THE UNIVERSITIES. TWO MAJOR FACETS OF THE STATE'S POWER ARE LEGISLATION AND FISCAL CONTROL. EVERY UNIVERSITY IS GOVERNED BY ITS OWN PRIVATE ACT, AND THE RELATED STATUTES. THESE LEGAL INSTRUMENTS DEFINE THE MAIN STRUCTURES OF THE UNIVERSITY - COUNCIL, SENATE, FACULTIES AND THE LIKE, AND THE FUNCTIONS OF THE CHIEF OFFICE-BEARERS. I HAVE ALREADY MENTIONED THAT OUR PRIVATE ACT HAD TO BE AMENDED TO PERMIT US TO HOLD CLASSES IN EAST LONDON. IN ADDITION THERE IS THE JOINT UNIVERSITIES ACT, WHICH REGULATES MATTERS COMMON TO ALL

UNIVERSITIES, SUCH AS MINIMUM ENTRANCE QUALIFICATIONS, MINIMUM PERIODS OF ATTENDANCE, RELATIONSHIPS WITH PROFESSIONAL BODIES, ETC. THE METHOD OF CALCULATION OF THE STATE SUBSIDY, IN THE CASE OF RHODES APPROXIMATELY 80% OF OUR ANNUAL INCOME, AND ITS GROSS MAGNITUDE ARE ALSO CLEARLY POWERFUL TOOLS IN THE HANDS OF THE STATE.

POLITICS, HOWEVER, ARE NOT ONLY ABOUT THE EXERCISE OF POWER BUT ALSO ABOUT VOLUNTARY LIMITATIONS ON POWER. UNLESS THESE LIMITATIONS ARE PRESENT THE STATE'S POWER BECOMES ABSOLUTE AND TYRANNICAL. A WISE GOVERNMENT, THEREFORE, ONCE HAVING DEFINED THE BROAD PARAMETERS WITHIN WHICH A UNIVERSITY OPERATES, AND HAVING DETERMINED ITS SUBSIDY SUPPORT, WILL ALLOW TO THE INSTITUTION A GREAT DEAL OF AUTONOMY TO DETERMINE WHAT SHALL BE TAUGHT AND RESEARCHED, WHO SHALL UNDERTAKE IT, AND WHO SHALL BE THE RECIPIENTS. A WISE UNIVERSITY, ON THE OTHER HAND, WILL BE SENSITIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY IT SERVES, AND

10

WILL ACCORD DUE WEIGHT TO THOSE NEEDS IN DETERMINING ITS CURRICULA AND ITS RESEARCH PROGRAMMES.

WITH SOME SIGNIFICANT EXCEPTIONS, WHICH ARE INSEPARABLE FROM THE OVERALL POLITICAL MILIEU IN WHICH WE LIVE, THE STATE IN SOUTH AFRICA HAS, PARTICULARLY IN THE LAST DECADE, EXERCISED ITS POWERS WISELY, AND THE UNIVERSITIES HAVE RESPONDED POSITIVELY. IT WAS NOT ALWAYS SO. THE VAN WYK DE VRIES COMMISSION REPORT OF 1974 PROPOSED A MUCH MORE DIRECTLY LINKED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY, IN WHICH IT SEEMED THAT THE UNIVERSITY'S CENTRAL COMMITMENT TO THE PRESERVATION, EXTENSION AND TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE WAS CONSIDERED TO BE SUBSERVIENT TO THE ROLE IT SHOULD PLAY IN THE DIRECT UPLIFTMENT OF THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH IT WAS EMBEDDED. THE WORD USED WAS "VOLKSGEBONDENHEID". PROFESSOR G R BOZZOLI, THEN PRINCIPAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, EXPRESSED IN A MINORITY REPORT THE

OPPOSITION OF WHAT HAVE BECOME KNOWN AS THE OPEN UNIVERSITIES TO THIS VIEW OF A UNIVERSITY. HE ADVANCED ARGUMENTS OF THE KIND THAT THE UNIVERSITY SERVED THE COMMUNITY BEST BY DOING SO INDIRECTLY, BY PROVIDING A SOURCE OF TRAINED PROFESSIONAL MANPOWER, BY THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY ITS MEMBERS EVEN IF THEY WERE UNPOPULAR, BY THE SPIN-OFF FROM ITS RESEARCH AND BY THE ACCUMULATED KNOWLEDGE AVAILABLE THROUGH CONSULTING SERVICES.

TWO ANALOGIES ARE WORTH MENTIONING TO ILLUSTRATE THE POINT AT ISSUE. THE COURTS OF LAW ARE SET UP BY THE STATE, BUT THEIR PRIMARY AIM IS TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY INDIRECTLY BY ADMINISTERING JUSTICE. IN ORDER TO DO SO EFFECTIVELY THE JUDGES AND MAGISTRATES MUST ENJOY A CERTAIN INDEPENDENCE OF THE IMMEDIATE WISHES OF THE COMMUNITY OR THE STATE. UNLESS THEY ARE ACCORDED THIS INDEPENDENCE THE ONLY FORM OF JUSTICE DISPENSED WILL BE OF THE KANGAROO VARIETY. AGAIN, THE CHURCH MUST HAVE THE AUTONOMY TO PREACH THE WORD OF GOD RATHER THAN THE

I2

COMMUNITY'S CURRENTLY FASHIONABLE VIEWS ON MORALITY. "VOX POPULI, VOX DEI" OR "THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE IS THE VOICE OF GOD" CAN BE AN EXCEEDINGLY DANGEROUS DOCTRINE. THE WORD OF GOD, AS MEDIATED BY THE BISHOP OF ROME OR THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, MAY SOMETIMES SIT HEAVILY ON OUR SHOULDERS, BUT IT IS INFINITELY PREFERABLE TO THE LAST WORD BEING IN THE HANDS OF A MINISTER OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, WITH ALL THE RESOURCES OF THE STATE AT HIS DISPOSAL.

THE BATTLE OF "VOLKSGEBONDENHEID" HAVING LARGELY BEEN FOUGHT AND WON, IT WOULD INDEED BE IRONIC IF, AS INDEED THERE APPEARS TO BE A DANGER, THE CONCEPT WERE TO RE-APPEAR IN DIFFERENT CLOTHING. CERTAIN EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY, COMMUNITY-BASED POLITICAL PRESSURE GROUPS APPEAR TO BE RESURRECTING AT LEAST SOME ASPECTS OF THE ARGUMENT. MANY POSITIVE THINGS CAN BE SAID ABOUT CERTAIN FACETS OF PEOPLE'S EDUCATION. SOME OF ITS PROPONENTS, HOWEVER, SEEM TO ME TO BE COMING VERY CLOSE TO



DENYING TO THE UNIVERSITY ITS LEGITIMATE AND TRADITIONAL AUTONOMY, OR ITS PROVISION OF ROOM FOR DISSENT, WITHOUT WHICH IT CAN NO MORE PROPERLY DISPENSE THE FULL FRUITS OF KNOWLEDGE THAN THE COURTS CAN DISPENSE JUSTICE IN THE ABSENCE OF AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY.

THE PREVIOUS US AMBASSADOR HERMAN NICKEL, IN AN ADDRESS ON AN OCCASION SIMILAR TO THIS, SUMMED UP THE DANGER VERY SUCCINCTLY:-

"I ALSO HEAR A GOOD DEAL OF HEADY TALK THAT EDUCATION MUST BE GEARED TO A PARTICULAR IDEOLOGICAL CONCEPT OF RADICAL CHANGE. AS SOMEONE WHO IN HIS YOUTH IN THE GERMANY OF THE THIRTIES WAS EXPOSED TO SIMILAR THOUGHT CONTROL, I CAN ONLY WARN AGAINST THIS IMPOSITION OF NEW POLITICAL BLINKERS, WHICH TO MY MIND IS THE NEGATION OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM..... I AM OLD-FASHIONED ENOUGH TO BELIEVE THAT THE OPEN-ENDED SEARCH FOR TRUTH AND THE ACQUISITION

OF PRACTICAL SKILLS WILL HELP TO SET YOU FREE, ALL THE MORE SO IF THIS LIBERATES YOU FROM THE POLITICAL-IDEOLOGICAL DICTATES OF THE POLITICAL MOVEMENTS AND AUTHORITIES AND FADS OF THE DAY.

IT IS THIS KIND OF EDUCATION, NOT POLITICAL AGITPROP, THAT IS NEEDED FOR THE NEW SOUTH AFRICA WE SHOULD ALL LIKE TO SEE".

I SHOULD LIKE NOW TO TURN TO TWO IMPORTANT STRANDS IN THE EDUCATION OFFERED BY A UNIVERSITY, THOSE OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND INTELLECTUAL FORMATION. IN SOME CIRCUMSTANCES THE ONE FACTOR TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER THE OTHER, BUT IDEALLY THERE SHOULD BE A JUDICIOUS BALANCE. IN OUR INITIAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN EAST LONDON THE PROFESSIONAL COMPONENT HAS NECESSARILY PREDOMINATED. IT WOULD CLEARLY BE DESIRABLE TO WORK TOWARDS SUCH A BALANCE. ONE OBVIOUS DEVELOPMENT, UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION BY YOUR LOCAL BOARD, WOULD BE TO INTRODUCE CERTAIN ARTS

SUBJECTS, LEADING ULTIMATELY TO A BA CURRICULUM WITH A CIRCUMSCRIBED CHOICE OF SUBJECTS. NORMAL PRUDENCE DICTATES THAT SUCH A DECISION MUST BE PRECEDED BY RATIONAL MARKET SURVEYS, CAREFUL BUDGETARY PLANNING AND THE CLOSEST CONSULTATION WITH ALL INTEREST PARTIES IN GRAHAMSTOWN. SUCH A PROCESS CANNOT BE FORCED OR ENSHRINED IN A RIGID BLUE-PRINT OR FIVE-YEAR PLAN. INSTITUTIONS, TO MY MIND, FLOURISH MORE READILY IF THE GROWTH IS STEADY AND ORGANIC, RATHER THAN IMPOSED. CERTAIN PEOPLE CANNOT RESIST DISTURBING THE ROOTS IN THEIR ENDEAVOURS TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER THE PLANT IS GROWING PROPERLY. THIS IS A TEMPTATION WHICH WE MUST RESIST. "FESTINALENTE", OR "MAKE HASTE SLOWLY", THE ADVICE GIVEN US BY POTCHEFSTROOM, HAS SERVED US WELL OVER THE PAST SIX YEARS.

NONETHELESS, THE PRIZE OF BALANCING OUR PROFESSIONAL COURSES WITH MORE INTELLECTUALLY ORIENTED ONES IS WORTH ALL THE HARD WORK THAT LIES

AHEAD, AS I AM SURE YOUR BOARD IS ALL TOO WELL AWARE. CARDINAL NEWMAN, IN HIS GREAT CLASSIC, "THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY" 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".



MR CHANCELLOR, IT REMAINS FOR ME NOW TO OFFER MY CONGRATULATIONS ON THIS AUSPICIOUS OCCASION TO THE EAST LONDON COMMUNITY FOR SUPPORTING US SO GENEROUSLY AND SO STEADFASTLY, TO THE MEMBERS OF OUR LOCAL BOARD FOR THEIR WISE COUNSEL AND UNSTINTING SACRIFICE OF THEIR TIME AND ENERGY, BUT ABOVE ALL TO THE INDIVIDUAL GRADUANDS AND THEIR FAMILIES. STUDYING UNDER PART-TIME CONDITIONS REQUIRES NOT ONLY PERSEVERENCE AND DEDICATION FROM THE STUDENT, BUT ALSO SACRIFICE FROM HIS FAMILY. MAY YOU, THE GRADUANDS BEFORE US, MEET WITH THE PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS WHICH YOU DESERVE, AND MAY MANY OF YOU, HAVING NOW WHETTED YOUR APPETITES, RETURN IN DUE COURSE TO IMPROVE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS STILL FURTHER.

FOR RHODES UNIVERSITY IT HAS BEEN A PRIVILEGE TO HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY IN A MODEST BUT CONSTANTLY EXPANDING WAY DURING

THE PAST SIX YEARS, WE LOOK FORWARD TO A FUTURE OF EVEN GREATER PROGRESS AND DIVERSITY, SO THAT OUR ROLE IN THE EAST LONDON COMMUNITY MAY BECOME OF EVER GREATER SIGNIFICANCE.

D S HENDERSON

9 MAY 1987

[WPU.0222E]