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PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF NATAL
KING GEORGE V AVENUE · DURBAN

11th January, 1960.

Mr. Trevor Coombe,
Secretary,
Executive Committee,
Convocation of University of Natal,
Maritzburg College,
PIETERMARITZBURG.

Dear Mr. Coombe,

From what I have gathered from verbal utterances and even from written expressions by members of Convocation, even of the executive, there seems to be a general impression that at no time did the University of Natal as a body officially condemn the Government's action in connection with the establishment of separate universities.

I am herewith enclosing a couple of copies of a joint resolution passed by Council and Senate on this matter. This protest was not only sent to the Minister, but was also conveyed to the public press throughout South Africa.

It is hardly possible for the University of Natal to have expressed itself more unanimously and more forcefully than it did in this joint resolution of Senate and Council.

Please bring this to the notice of your Executive and to that of as many members of Convocation as possible.

Yours sincerely,

C. G. Malherbe

PRINCIPAL.

P.S. Convocation was fully represented on the University Council at the time when this resolution was taken.

Convocation
Executive

XXXXXXXXXX

29 Leinster Court,
Leinster Road,
Pietermaritzburg.

21st February, 1960.

The Principal,
Dr E.G. Malherbe,
University of Natal,
King George V Ave.,
Durban.

Dear Dr Malherbe,

I am sorry there has been such a delay in replying to your letter of 11th January. Your letter dealt with the attitude of Council and Senate to the Government's plan for tribal colleges, and you enclosed several copies of the Council and Senate resolutions on the matter. We have not met as a Committee since I received your letter, but at our next meeting on 8th March, I shall bring your letter and the resolutions to the attention of the members.

Since we received your previous letter on the Golden Jubilee Celebrations, our President, Mr Goldberg, has been in touch with Mr Playfair. Unfortunately he was not then able to inform Mr Goldberg what help he would like the Convocation to give him. However, Professor MacMillan and I have had a chat about the Education Conference, and I shall be taking to our next meeting a proposal that we offer to assist Prof. MacMillan with some of the arrangements for that Conference. No doubt Mr Playfair will inform us in due course of what we can do to help him.

Yours sincerely,

Trevor Coombe
Secretary

COUNCIL AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS.

The Council and Senate of the University of Natal, having carefully considered the "Separate University Education Bill" now before Parliament and having received a report of the negotiations up to the present with the Minister concerned, solemnly and unanimously resolve as follows:-

1. The Council and Senate of the University of Natal condemn the proposal to dismember this University by the removal of the Medical School and by the exclusion of Non-European students from other Faculties. They regard the proposed legislation as a flagrant breach of the principle of university autonomy and as a grave assault upon academic freedom.

The Council and Senate further protest that the Minister should present to Parliament proposals which had at no time been discussed with the University. These proposals deeply affect the University as a whole and Council and Senate consider that they constitute a high-handed abrogation of the conditions of service of the staff of the Medical School.

2. The Council and Senate consider that the ends which universities serve cannot be realised unless their integrity, autonomy and academic freedom are respected by the State. The Council and Senate, therefore, record their condemnation of the intention to place any university under the complete control of a Minister and his officials.
3. Council and Senate record their indignation at the proposal contained in the Bill to vest in Ministers and Government officials the powers to appoint and dismiss members of university staffs and to discipline them for the expression of opinions which may be regarded unfavourably by the Government of the day.
4. The Council and Senate re-affirm the principle that an essential condition of university autonomy and of academic freedom is the right of a university to decide for itself who shall, and who shall not, be admitted to its classes.
5. The Council and Senate commend those universities which have taken a lead in defending university autonomy and academic freedom, and consider that the proposed inroads on university autonomy should be fearlessly resisted by all universities.
6. The Council and Senate urge the Government to give serious consideration to the convictions embodied in this protest.

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