

The 'Student Strikes' at Fort Hare

My dear Principal Kerr,

You may recall that years ago I wrote you a letter of congratulation from American for your brilliant address at the opening of Fort Hare College. That letter was inspired by a vision and a dream that most of us had of Fort Hare as a centre of training of ^{real} African Leaders ^{with original} and independent views and inspiring personalities in an atmosphere and environment that is truly university in every sense with mutual respect and cooperation between staff and students to offset the traditional racial attitudes in South Africa between white and black of ruler and ruled.

However recent incidents may be the cause of Fort Hare being misunderstood her attitude being misinterpreted and tend to leave grave doubt whether she as our leading educational institution where white and black are in close contact is exemplary in race relations as should be expected.

Those of us who are jealous of Fort Hare status and future as our University no matter whether we are not products of her lecture rooms regret to say right or wrong the approach at ^{salutation} ^{an impression has} ^{been given} ^{to the outside world} African and other wise that the approach at ^{salutation} of these strikes have followed the usual South African pattern of approaching Native affairs.

We wonder if the case of the Beda Hall students has not been unwittingly slight prejudiced by reference to last year's strike and to the following statement:—

In view ^{impair} the analysis of this statement has many disturbing implications ^{and} features besides the status of Fort Hare, which leave little room for benefit of doubt for the people involved.

Further ^{is} there a possibility that in the procedure followed in dealing with the Beda Hall students miscarriage of justice might have taken place. ^{Finally} ^{is} there a danger of complicating college discipline by bringing in religious denominational and conservative matters.

within the scope of the Senate

Can Jost Hare avert similar future incidence
without an enquiry into the recent happening.

I hope, Mr Principal, you will appreciate that
we have no intention of trying to interfere
with Jost Hare's internal affairs but
we are personally concerned that Jost Hare
as our only University shall have a good
name.

We have no desire to encourage student
to flout the authority of the ^{Senate} institution or to
undermine the discipline of the institution.

Yours sincerely

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