

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH

**FREEDOM OF SPEECH** is a subject of which no ink has been spared — a lot has been said on it and many limits drawn. Freedom of Speech in African countries has not been worth the piece of paper it has been written upon. Intimidatory element has tended to feature in varying degrees especially in connection with the Press. From past experience, and also in order to safeguard their position and interest the newspaper men have carefully molded the views of the public and tactfully reduced them to a waste-paper basket.

Constitutional difficulties have been compounded by the fact that in modern politics in African countries, it has been difficult to identify what constituted a constructive criticism and also what constituted a fair and justified attack upon the African governments. As a result of this situation, freedom of speech as understood by most, has been the product of the confusion, as existing in these two camps. This has enabled most graduates from these countries to start on in life from a position of greater handicap than their counterparts from countries where freedom of speech was indeed a reality. They have therefore lacked the capacity to have a sense of an appropriate action at a given historical time.

Social engineering in the new African states, as was once stated, has sometimes taken the form of purposeful collectivisation of anger in a bid to make the populace share a moment of indignant sympathy. The collectivization of anger sometimes results in the nationalization of protest. A capacity for what MILL calls "collective pride and humiliation" is a particularly important feature of a sense of shared nationhood. It is precisely because of this that anger as an emotion is so central to the growth of nationhood. After all offended pride gives rise to anger. Collective humiliation is a deeper stage of offended pride. This in turn generates anger, either overtly or in a subdued silent form. Shared moments of collective anger by a group, by being connected with the cumulative acquisition of a capacity for collective pride and collective humiliation, become part of the process of national integration.

While it can be concluded that since that eventful January, the students here have been relatively peaceful and substantially homogeneous and have tried to avoid as far as possible deep divisive potentialities of ethnic cleavage; the fact that it was also a period of cumulative dissension and intrigue cannot be ruled out, students have failed to be sensitive to the needs for conciliation and accommodation. In certain quarters, students have accepted honours, enthused over it and then let it lapse into relative oblivion. When faced with a problem, what you find are small groups of 2, 3, 4 or more, scattered all over the compound, passing resolutions which never proceed beyond the theoretical stage. Frequently these groups are summarily dissolved, if the face of a newcomer to a group is not approved. Thus the former organic solidarity has been replaced by a mechanical one among the students.

Being cognitive of the limited use of freedom of speech and that one of Press, the College Students have used their analytical and incisive minds in order to discover where these two kinds of freedom reigned in greater dimensions. This problem was finally solved by discovering lavatory walls as strategic sites. Lavatory walls especially those in the library — the seat of books, are fast becoming growing and popular newspapers in which individual's genuine feelings are accurately reflected. The ordinary newspaper is viewed with suspicion as a great betrayer which distort their expressed views. Congestion in these lavatories is heavier in the morning sessions as intellectuals rush to record or comment on the previous days happening. Their sole cooperation in this field have helped to make bowel-opening in these sites not only a convenient exercise, but a pleasurable one as well.

University College Nairobi, as a whole is therefore lacking that international image as a great radical institution. We therefore entrust our outgoing members to their different fields of endeavour, to try and make the concept of "freedom of speech", a reality, by using their moral assets as a means of bringing about major reforms within the political framework. Not that we ask of them to enter into any kind of tactical arrangements with the leaders, but to try and "anoint the wheels of government machinery with a University oil." To embark on programmes of genuine probing for reasons behind government policies and genuine analysis of those reasons.

## Not yet Uhuru

Dear Sir,

For so many years, women have been struggling to gain equal footing with men, some have had the guts to muscle in men's jobs. In theory we are supposed to be equal but technically speaking, the ladies have been more equal than us. I am not confining my remarks to college girls but all the girls. If you happen to visit Mombasa you will know what I mean. Equality is given much emphasis there. In their dance Halls, sex discrimination is virtually eliminated. Everybody pays the **same amount** in Order to gain entry into the Halls. I don't see why the same thing cannot happen here. I therefore move a motion for this equality. A country-wide campaign should be carried out throughout the country for the implementation of this move. It has also come to my attention that our Magazine enjoys a wide readership almost all over the country especially in major institution. I therefore hope that my message will get across. In the case of the University College, free entry should cease forthwith, and that is including everybody even the so-called officials — *self-syled ones, that is.*

Fred.

## Porter Hall

Dear Sir,

It is no accident that it is only when a great man leaves or is about to leave that the majority begins to notice his greatness by the big gap his departure leaves. It is also no accident that Dr. Porter should be exceptional to this rule.

Those of us who have followed up the history of development and expansion of this College, will no doubt agree with me that the man who has been behind it deserves to be honoured in One way or another. Unfortunately the man behind all these developments will shortly be leaving us for his home town.

I am sure that if you organize a trip from Hall 2 through Hall I to Hall III you will meet with the names of the Halls which are not only hard to pronounce but having none or little historical significance from dubious sources.

Could my dear students investigate and see if they don't agree with me that one of these Hall should be named after our Principal.

Editor.

## Accommodation

Dear Sir,

Already there is a critical problem of accommodation, as one of our readers observed in our last issue. This problem as I can foresee, is going to create a lot of tension among the students, next academic year with the coming of the freshers.

I particular direct this question to the Dean of Students. The first question is; what became of the double-decker-bed project? As you might have been aware most of the Students did not support the idea. They however regarded the introduction of more book-shelves as a wise move indeed. The second question is this: What plans are in hand to ease these problems?

There are talks that in future, every room in Hall 9 will accommodate four "wananchi" instead of two!! This as you very well know is a very serious breach of health codes.

As we all know, the College or Government or whoever is concerned is getting his planning policy programmes all mixed up. Introduction of new faculties and expanding of old ones usually go hand in hand with the building of more halls of residence. One cannot take more food in the mouth than one is able to chew.

Bob.

## Tuck Shop

Dear Sir,

During the second half of last term a motion was moved to close down the Tuck Shop which in the past has offered inestimable value to the students. No explanation was given for this action. Since its closure student customers have been left with the alternative of purchasing their requirements from the College Bar.

The Tuck Shop was closed down and since then it has fallen into disuse. The former center of vigorous activity is now covered with a thick layer of dust. One wonders why in the first place the shop was closed when it is not serving any useful purpose now. Could the Warden concerned or even the Hall Chairman enlighten us on this otherwise we shall press for it to be reopened. The idea of purchasing minor things in the Bar is simply unthinkable!!! Some of us here just don't like the idea of stepping into that bar, let alone purchasing anything from there.

Sammy.