

Kenya News

and Africa Report

SPECIAL REPORT — UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI



A Decade of Achievements in Higher Education

About 50 years ago, there were no secondary school facilities for Africans in Kenya. To-day, over 7,000 Kenyans of all races, together with many others from different countries, are engaged in courses of high study at the University of Nairobi and Kenyatta University College.

When Nairobi University was inaugurated by President Jomo Kenyatta in December 1970, it marked a historic landmark in Kenya's educational development. Then there were about 2,000 students enrolled in the University.

The University of Nairobi has its beginnings in a project to provide higher technical education for the then East African Colonial territories — Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. The project was approved and the Royal Technical College of East Africa opened its doors to the first intake of students in April, 1956.

Soon it was realised that the new institution would have to be broadened to meet the needs of the three countries involved, and in 1961, by an Act of the East African High Commission, the Royal Technical College joined Uganda's Makerere as the second University College in East

Africa under the name Royal College, Nairobi. In May 1964, it was renamed University College Nairobi, which it remained until December 1970 when the constituent colleges of East Africa became Universities in their own rights.

Tremendous progress was made in the 1960s, which saw the college spread out from its original campus near the centre of Nairobi to Kabete and Choromo as new faculties and departments were created. The student population jumped from 600 in 1963/64 to 2,670 in 1970/71 and new halls of residence were built to accommodate the increasing population. At its inauguration, the University of Nairobi included all the major academic and professional disciplines necessary in the university in a modern nation. It has 14 faculties, institutes and schools, sharing the wide range of activities and interests.

To-day the size and scope of the facilities offered by the Nairobi University demonstrate spectacular growth, a sign of vitality that has characterised the University whose demand has been great.

5 Campuses

Within a decade, Nairobi University

together with Kenyatta College have expanded into a vast community of about 14,000 people extending into 45 major campuses — the main campus, Kabete, Choromo, Kenyatta National Hospital, the Institute of Adult Studies at Kikuyu, and the Kenyatta University College.

Total number of students in Nairobi University by the end of October 1979 was 5,590 with about 1,000 students enrolled for post graduate studies. Kenyatta University College had 1,732 students. Admissin to 1st years had doubled from about 1,000 students in 1971 to 2,000 in 1979. Post graduate population had grown by almost five fold from 189 to 914. Academic staff has mushroomed from 409 to 800.

In 1974 alone, four new departments were incorporated namely Food Science and Technology, Department of Advanced Nursing, Immunology Centre with the support of World Health Organisation (WHO), and the Department of Dental Surgery and Pharmacy.

In 1976, the Institute of Computer Science, Population Studies and Research Centre was established. The Centre boasts the most advanced computer in East and Central Africa at

Chiromo Campus. In 1977, Agricultural Engineering was created, and in 1978, the Forestry Department was instituted, making the University of Nairobi, the most integrated with the largest faculty facilities and the most extensive research capacity anywhere in Black Africa excluding Nigeria, and including the century old West African Universities.

To-day, the Chiromo Campus has been developed into an enlarged facility with physical sciences and pre-medical studies. The Faculty of Education is now an integral part of Kenyatta University College, and Kikuyu is preparing to accommodate the external degrees programme. Currently, it is the only campus with branches throughout the country.

Service Oriented

Kenya being basically an agricultural nation requires fullest exploitation of this vast industry as well as the efficient management of resources. Much more than is appreciated by outsiders, the University of Nairobi has been closely associated with this crucial national sector through the activities of faculties directly related to agriculture and natural resources. The Faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences have been preparing students for actual "development in rural areas" since inception in 1970 and 1962 respectively. To-day, the majority of agriculturalists in government or private sectors and who are engaged in day to day animal and crop husbandry, extension work, agricultural research and administration and enterprises as well as the veterinary personnel, are from Nairobi University.

The 500-acre Experimental Field Station at Kabete is used as an open laboratory for research, teaching and experimental work. Before graduating, students do practical work in approved farms all over Kenya. Veterinary farm has been expanded significantly to improve teaching and research facilities primarily in animal production.

Out of a handful of students, this year there are 322 and 359 students enrolled in Veterinary and Agricultural Faculties. The Agricultural enrollment is targeted to grow to 800 by 1983.

Science and technology

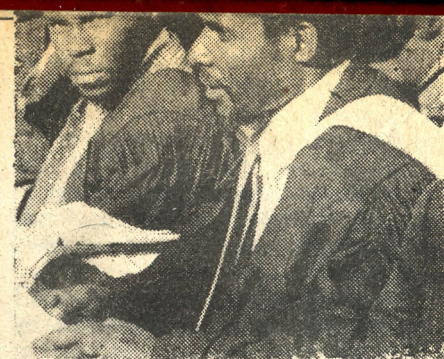
The mounting of specialised courses in the Faculty of Science whose number of students has grown from 370 in 1970 to 968 to-day has had profound impact on a number of professional needs, in the country and beyond. So has the Faculty of Engineering whose degree courses in

Engineering started in 1961 and in Surveying in 1964. To-day, in the critical fields of planning and design, operation, management and research, electrical operation, power systems and analysis, electrical measurement, telecommunications, aviation, electronics and electrical power engineering, production engineering and process design; land surveying including photogrammetry, Nairobi graduates provide the backbone as well as leadership. The Computer Centre, initiated in 1969, and which an KL190ZA computer was installed in 1970 has to-day the most sophisticated computer installation anywhere in Eastern and Central Africa, and serves teaching and research needs. It has rapidly developed into the most advanced scientific computing centre in Kenya serving research organisations in both private and public centres. In this age where science and technology forms the core of industrialisation and technical advancement without which a country would be hopelessly disabled, the Nairobi University science and engineering centres may be the answer to the country's needs.

Medical needs

Anybody admitted to Kenyatta National Hospital will be observed by a consultant group of youthful attendants, eager, anxious, alert and observant. They are part of interns at ten school of medicine, preparing for a career of healing diseases.

The Faculty of Medicine was started in July 1967 with an intake of 30 students. Before then, University medical education for East Africa was carried almost entirely at Makerere University in Uganda. Hence the predominance of Makerere trained medical doctors in both private and public service. The picture is nonetheless rapidly changing and soon, Nairobi University trained doctors will soon dominate the field. By 1980 the total number of students in the school of medicine had grown by a massive almost 2,460 per cent to 769. It includes not only Advanced Nursing and Pharmacy, but also post-graduate teaching responsibilities. Members of the clinical staff serve in hospital wards and out-patient clinics, as well as in the operating theatres, delivery rooms, laboratories and visiting outlying hospitals. They take part in training and examining of nurses and para-medical personnel in Government and Aga Khan Hospitals. They provide health services by special arrangement with the Ministry of Health as part of field training and operational research programme in rural health.



Graduates — What future

The Vice-Chancellor, has for a long time been closely associated with the School, having served as Professor of Human Anatomy and its dean.

The embattled Campus

Whereas most of the following pages deal with solid accomplishment of the Nairobi University during this tenth years of operation as a wholly independent seat of higher learning, it would be naive not to analyse the latest crisis that led to indefinite closure of the institution and growing uneasiness about its future and the character of high education in Kenya.

On Tuesday night, February 26 1980, about 5,000 students smashed crockery and utensils at the central catering units in protest at what they described as bad food unfit for human consumption and outdated and dirty utensils.

Violence continued the following day when rampaging students took to the streets, stoning cars and hurling bricks and anything touchable through neighbouring car showrooms and store windows.

The police riot squad was hurriedly summoned, but as tension mounted between them and students, the Government through the Registrar announced the indefinite closure of the University.

This marked the second time for the closure of the University during the current 1979/80 academic year. This time only the main campus was involved. On October 7, 1979 the University was again closed following demonstrations that demanded former KPU leaders to be allowed to contest the general elections. Six students were expelled before the University was re-opened about a month later on November 12.

Whereas bad food was cited and perhaps unjustifiably high-lighted as the principal cause of strife, other more subtle reasons abounded. Central to these were what the students termed as "violation of the student Union's Constitution" by the administration, and deteriorating relationship between them and the administration — See the Report.

In the seventies, the University of Nairobi was rocked by strikes and ugly confrontation between the students, the administration and police that too often led to the closure of the institution and disciplinary actions to the ring-leaders, or simply those unfortunate enough to be associated with strife.

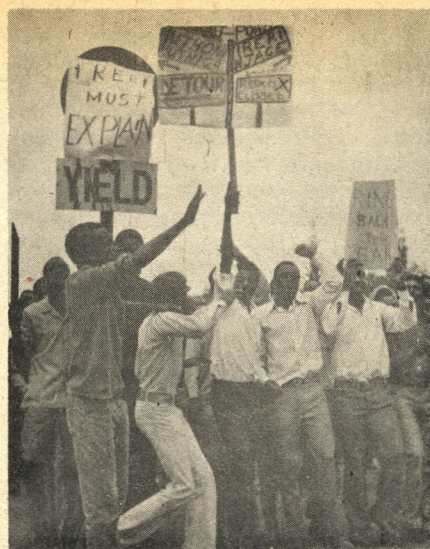
It started with the January 1971 overwhelming boycott of classes by students following the suspension of four women students who were punished for taking part in retaliatory action against a Warden. The Warden was a target because he had changed room assignments in a manner considered unfair, and the student body pledged to stay out of classes until all the suspended students were reinstated.

The decade ended with students again demonstrating but in this time against the government and the National Party, Kanu, for non-clearance of former opposition leaders and a former detainee to stand in the Parliamentary Elections scheduled for 8th November 1979. In between, there were numerous strikes and demonstrations at the campus for various reasons ranging from allowances and living conditions to the murder of J.M. Kariuki, and eventually about the blocked channels of communication with the administration.

In broad outline and structure, both in its internal organisation and its external relations, the Nairobi Campus was similar to many other African campuses in the seventies, but lacked the militancy expected in such places as the U.S., Middle East, Asia and Europe. Unlike those places, Universities in Africa have not been protected from a host of structural and normative checks against the really harsh attacks that many elements in society wished to mount against student radicals.

Scenarios

Usually all demonstrations followed more or less similar patterns. Students would deliver an ultimatum to the administration, which would immediately refuse to respond to such an ultimatum. Consequently, the initial cause for complaint by student would be lost as they become increasingly angry at what they view as administration intransigence. Then the demands for response on specific grievances would give way to personal attacks on University authorities. Authorities would then become concerned with upholding the dignity of their position and that of the University as attacks gathered in force



Demos - how long?

and shrillness. Then the familiar force of escalation set in. The student leaders invent new complaints to maintain momentum, and to maintain unity, students verbally attack the non-compliant threatening physical harm. As strife continues, the administration resort to its own show of force. Police patrol the campus almost immediately, and in consequent circulars, the administration threaten disciplinary action against those who persist in disruptive action.

The show of force hardens the student resolve as the police in riot gear are brought in to clear the central campus. The student claim that excessive zeal is used in the clearing actions and charge "police brutality".

By this time, symbolic politics have almost completely replaced substantive politics. The debate is no longer on student complaints, but on disciplinary actions, as students are attached from virtually everywhere, from individuals to the editorials. The latter justify their attack on the fact that the students are ungrateful to the national sacrifices.

Meanwhile, mediation between the student leadership and the faculties to create "meaningful dialogue" produce little or no concrete solutions. Overpowered, the students are either sent home indefinitely or go back to lectures.

Major elements

Nairobi University, despite the last demonstrations against the electoral ban and later on food conditions, and such ugly incidents following Kariuki's death, lack serious politics. Student activism has had little effects as long as students politicization is muted or least developed. Apparently as the University enters the eighties, students seem to lack political perspective and

political consciousness. Attempts last year to establish Kanu office failed.

A characteristic of campus strife is lack of political goal to escalate the conflict, and whenever demonstration and confrontations are escalated, it has been more a product of confusion and anger. In other words, the campus has had no distinctive political ideology. Unlike other campuses, Nairobi had never had a group which openly sought violent confrontation. The police have from time to time been taunted, but never really challenged. This is unlike other places where large groups of students seek violence.

Although from time to time politicians have blamed outside influence, Nairobi situation lacked "outside agitators", i.e. non-students playing a major and radical role in campus politics. This has had moderating effects.

Future patterns

Severe university actions as witnessed during the latest demonstration that led to long closure, and President Moi's personal warnings and University sanctions appear to be uniformly feared by nearly all the students, and may characterise the eighties, which may see less and less of student activism. Repressive action immediately taken against the agitators as witnessed in the immediate closure of the University without any allowance of negotiations seems to be a political success that may be employed again and again.

Of course Nairobi University will not be immune to widespread student activism that may not be simply contained by immediate repressive action. There are cross-national regularities in student activism and universities the world over are caught in a deterministic sequence of events which moves from students quietude to moderate confrontation politics to militant action by student group. As viewed elsewhere, Nairobi is simply lagging a few years behind campus politics elsewhere.

But unlike elsewhere, student activism in Africa seems to evolve in response to local conditions and not according to some presumed regularities underlying all student politics. And the local conditions as witnessed in February's, outburst of ugly unrest, Kenya is likely to continue to see from time to time unprecedented demonstration of student militancy. And so long as students remained indifferent to national issues, tactical militancy will be put down by harsh measures without having to debate national political questions.

An Evaluation of the Recent University Senate Sub-Committee Report.

The leaking of the Senate Sub-Committee's report to the local press was received with a lot of interest by the public and it dramatically changed the opinion the general public had formed about University Students and their riots. Implementation of some of the recommendations contained in that report would have far reaching implications in the future of the University.

The Committee had been appointed by the University Senate on 3rd March, 1980 after the students riots of February 1980 and the subsequent closure of the University. The Committee's terms of reference were "to look into the totality of the problems relating to the recurrent students' riots at the University". The Committee "interpreted these terms broadly to cover the entire areas of student welfare, administrative structure of the University, academic organisation, academic facilities, staff welfare and communication within the University" because "anything adversely affecting any of these areas, is likely to generate widespread discontent within the University, which is likely to spill-over into student unrest."

The seriousness with which the report should be taken is indicated by the calibre of the members of the committee who are all prominent members of the University Community and who should know what they are talking about because of their long association with the University. The Chairman of the Committee was no other person than the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, who is also the Professor in the Department of Animal Production, Prof. R.S. Musangi. Other members were Prof. J.C. Donders, who is a Catholic Father in charge of St. Paul's Chapel at the University and has also been the Professor and Chairman in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies; Prof. P.M. Mbithi has been for a long time the Professor and Chairman of the Department of Sociology and recently contested the Deanship of the Faculty of Arts; Prof. S.O. Wandiga is the Professor and Chairman in the Department of Chemistry; Mr. J.K. Koinange was for many years the Dean of Students in the University of Nairobi and is currently the Principal of Kenyatta University College; Dr. Okoth-Ogendo is the Dean of Faculty of Law; Dr. N.D. Nzomo is the Dean of Faculty of Commerce; Dr. B.E. Kipkorir is the

Director of the Institute of African Studies; and Dr. F.N. Owako is the Deputy Registrar in the University of Nairobi.

The immediate significance of the report was that though not condoning the students' destructive behaviour during the riot, the University authorities were blamed for the conditions which caused the students to riot. Before the Senate report, there had been a public outcry against the students, accusing them of rioting over trivial and imaginary grievances. The report revealed that the students were agitating against real bad conditions in the catering unit and mismanagement of their funds and that the catering unit needed a thorough probe so as to cure the ills afflicting the student community in the University and avoid future ugly incidents between the students and the administration.

Another related implication of the report is that in future, the public will expect proper investigations to be instituted on areas of student grievances instead of merely accepting the administrators' views and condemning students. Future public view is likely to reflect the saying that 'where there is smoke, there is fire.'

Apart from the above change in the public view of students vs. administration clashes, the report, if implemented, will lead to considerable structural and policy changes in the University in the future. For instance, the report recommends a reorganisation of the University administrative structure so as to enhance its effectiveness, especially in academic matters, "a role which the personnel in the administration seem to have lost sight of". The report notes that this is not the first time such a reorganisation of the administrative structure had been recommended. Faculties and Senate had made earlier similar recommendations but these had not been implemented. The failure to implement these recommendation raises an important issue, viz, the relationship between the Senate and the Council. The Senate is made up of mainly academic members of staff such as deans of faculties, chairmen of departments and some faculty representatives. These are people who are more in touch with the University and know its problems. On the other hand, the Council is composed of mainly people outside the University. The Council is the Supreme body in

the University and Senate recommendations can only be implemented when they have been approved by the Council. Thus, the failure to implement some of these Senate recommendations raises the question whether there is lack of cooperation and respect between the two University bodies.

Indeed the ineffectiveness of the Senate is mentioned in the report. The Committee says, "The impression one gets is that the Senate has not been effective since 1974/75 when most of its recommendations regarding the University were either nullified or ignored." This shows a serious disregard of the Senate by the Council, thus relegating the Senate to an unimportant position, which is against the University Act, Section 13(1) (e), which empowers the Senate to "initiate proposals relating to the conduct of the University generally, and to discuss any matters relating to the University and to make representations thereon to the Council."

It is reported that the publication of this Senatorial Committee report in the press before the Council had a chance of discussing it, has further worsened the relationship between the Senate and the Council.

With regard to kitchens and Halls of residence, the report also makes recommendations which have far reaching implications especially on financial aspects. It is recommended that each kitchen should operate independently as far as budget and menu are concerned and that the Cater/Cateress in charge of each kitchen should make the orders. They also recommend instituting a system of verification so that the kitchen accountant can cross-check the orders and financial disbursements. Of much more significance is the recommendation that 'students should be fed in smaller groups on hall basis, each hall with two to three dining rooms and that the present Central Catering Unit (CCU) be converted to some other use. This would mean putting up at least five new kitchens. There are now thirteen halls of residence for men and three for women. Abandoning the complex Central Catering Unit would mean considerable wastage of funds invested in it. The report also recommends that new halls of residence be built but not along the State House Road area where many motorists have suffered in the hands of rioting students. Housing all the

students who are currently staying out of the main campus will require about three more halls of residence.

It was also recommended that the Institute of Halls of Residence which was formed a few years ago, charged with the responsibility of looking for accommodation for students, be abolished. This Institute has been handling the repayment of the loans granted to students. Abolition of this Institute at this stage may bring confusion in this issue of collecting of students' loans which already is not working smoothly because most of the former students have refused to cooperate in the repayment of the loans.

The Committee reports that 'among the greatest sources of discontent among students is the lack of a Students Union through which they would air their views, and communicate with the authorities on various matters. The report explains the current lack of a student body in the University as being a result of students' quarrels among themselves and other failures and some constitutional problems involving the students' organization.

The Senatorial Committee calls for efforts to revive the students' body, and during this exercise, the students should be invited to register under the University Act. The report argues that this would enable students to have a more effective forum for communication.

In the area of academic departments, the Committee was disturbed by lack of teamwork in some Departments, "where a large number of staff are not consulted by the Chairmen of their Departments," even in important matters like recruitment, teaching load, introduction of new courses, conduct of examinations, etc. They received complaints on the manner in which chairmen of departments are appointed.

These complaints concerning the manner in which Chairmen of Departments are appointed and their powers are said to be at the root of the current tension between Senior and the 'young' members of academic staff. Some Chairmen of Departments are accused of assuming 'dictatorial' powers in running their Departments and that they wield undue influence in the recruitment and promotion of members of staff and the granting of scholarships.

The Committee recommended that there be regular departmental meetings at least once a month and that copies of such minutes be submitted to the Dean and the Vice-Chancellor. In addition, it was recommended that the Chairmen of

Departments should continue to be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the Faculty Dean, from the rank of Senior Lecturers and above and that the appointment be for a period of three years renewable once only for a further period of three years.



The Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor — concern

As far as the Deans of Faculties are concerned the Committee recommended that the Statute XI (19) be amended so that Deans be appointed from among Professors, Associate Professors and Senior Lecturers without being required to have served as a Chairman of a Department for a period of two years, as is the case now. It will be remembered that this particular statute precipitated a crisis in the University's Faculty of Arts during its election of a Dean in March this year. Other faculties like Engineering, Commerce, and Law are reported to have earlier elected deans who were not qualified according to that statute. The Committee further recommended that Deans should be elected for a period of two years, renewable once only and that those who had served as deans previously should not be eligible for election, and that no person serving as a Chairman of Department shall at the same time be elected a Dean. Implementation of these recommendations would go far in avoiding concentrating excessive powers in a single individual in the faculty as is the case at present.

The Committee further recommends that 'a system of annual review of all academic staff be introduced with immediate effect so that all members are given equal opportunity for promotion.' At present, there are bitter complaints in the Faculty of Arts, that members here are being discriminated against as compared with other faculties. For instance, while in other faculties, members of staff with their second degrees (Masters) are recruited directly as Lecturers and are on permanent terms, those in the

Faculty of Arts have been recruited as Tutorial Fellows or Assistant Lecturers, on temporary terms. The faculty has been insisting on obtaining Ph.D before one is appointed a lecturer on permanent terms. The Committee's recommendation of 'equal opportunities' for all in the University is likely to be welcomed by members of staff, especially the Faculty of Arts and could ease the current tension.

Noting that 57% of previous student disturbances took place in the months of January, February and March, a period associated with dry season and hence susceptible to food shortages, and 'J.M. anniversary, the Committee recommended that the University's academic year start in April. Presently, the academic year has been starting in the last week of September or first week of October. Whether such a change will eliminate student disturbances remains to be seen - but it is very doubtful.

A related issue which seems to have escaped the attention of the Senatorial Committee is what will be done with Form Six students, who have been waiting to join the University. If this change in the academic year is affected by April, 1981, it will mean that there will be two groups of Form Six leavers waiting to join the University. Since the University cannot absorb all of them at once without creating other serious problems, it will mean that one group will have to wait for about 16 months before joining the University and this will be true of all subsequent groups. The Government will have to find ways of gainfully occupying these students during these sixteen months. Alternatively, 1981 intake could take the two groups together, but this would mean leaving out many qualified students. Another problem which is likely to crop up if the second alternative is adopted is that the time between December when E.A.A.C.E. is done and the time for the beginning of the academic year in April is too short for marking, grading and all other formalities necessary before the students are admitted in the University.

There is no doubt that the Senate Sub-Committee has come up with a very important report and that the concerned parties should accord it the weight it deserves. The Senatorial recommendations should be given a chance by being implemented, although we recognize some of them need substantial amounts of funds which may not be readily available, that is, some of these recommendations require long term measures. But there are many of them which can and should be implemented in the short-run, to enable the institution to start functioning soon.

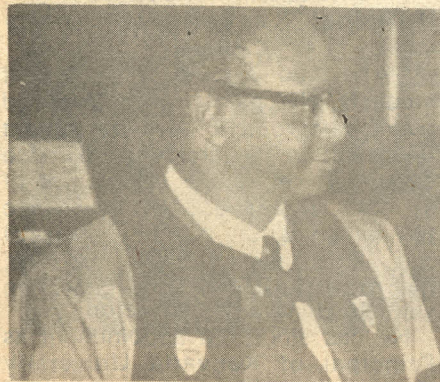
Since its inception, the University of its Nairobi and its predecessor have benefitted from a top leadership of highly distinguished talent, competence and commitment. Below a brief profile:



**Mzee Jomo Kenyatta
Chancellor 1970-78**

Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, first President of the Republic of Kenya became the first Chancellor of Nairobi University when it became an autonomous institute of higher learning. Mzee was both a scholar and a distinguished author (Facing Mount Kenya) and had been much decorated by leading Universities even before he became Chancellor of Nairobi University. The Universities of East Africa, Manchester, and Haile Selassie I awarded him the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

Mzee Kenyatta showed unusual keenness and concern for the young University, never missing a single occasion to award degrees and diplomas and to deliver key speeches of his administration and his ideals about the University and its role in a developing society. His greatest wish was for the University to enrich, in every sense the people of Kenya who sacrificed so much for its survival. As he said in 1969 graduation ceremony, "The principal object of higher education in the difficult years of any new country is to produce the technical and professional manpower needed to promote and control all aspects of development."



**Dr. Arthur Thomas Porter
Principal 1964-70**

Formerly the Vice-Principal and at one time Acting Principal of Fourah

Bay College, Dr. Arthur Porter accepted an invitation to be the first African head of Nairobi University College in 1964. At Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone, Dr. Porter was also Professor and head of the department of history.

He was educated at Cambridge University where he held a masters degree and later on at the University of Boston where he obtained a doctorate. Boston would in 1970 honour the distinguished academic by an award of the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters.

Porter brought to Nairobi a unique combination of an accomplished scholar, university administration and negotiator, and was admirably suited to undertake the crucial and challenging task of steering the course of the craft of the young University College towards the eventuality of full autonomous university status.

It is during Dr. Porter's tenure of office that the college experienced tremendous growth in students numbers, recruitment of high calibre staff, and introduction of new and the expansion of existing faculties making Nairobi a quality institution of higher learning within the international academic community. By the time he left Nairobi, the college had a capital expenditure of over £4 million, the average recurrent expenditure of £1½ million, a staff of 1,500 and a student population in excess of 2,000. Those who witnessed the great campus upheavals of 1969 Academic Freedom, bear testimony to Porter's remarkable coolness and grace under pressure.

In his last year of service, the University enrolled 730 freshmen. His great theme was "excellence and relevance"; for the institution he saw as conerstone to Kenya's future. For him there was no compromise on the quest for education. As he said, "in the pursuit of knowledge, and in cultivation of intellect, the only false doctrine is belief in infallibility."



**Bethel Mareka Gecaga
Chairman of the University
Council since 1963**

B.M. Gecaga has been closely associated with Nairobi University and higher education in Kenya, and has been a key figure in the University administration for many years having served without interruption as Chairman of the governing Council of former Royal College and the University College since 1963.

A barrister by profession (of the Middle Temple) Gecaga became chairman and general manager of B.A.T. (Kenya) Ltd. in 1967, the first african to be appointed company chairman of a major international corporation in Kenya. Previously, he had served for several years as a legal officer in the Kenya Government and also in private practice.

He has remained perhaps one of the most respected administrator with an impeccable history of performance, presiding over the University top administration during some of the most turbulent periods, as well as during its pinnacle. For him "education — true and wholesome education..... is the pursuit of truth and the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, — will continue to be the cornerstone of advance and progress in all fields of our national endeavour."



**Dr. Josphat Njuguna Karanja
Vice-Chancellor 1970-79**

Before he took over from Dr. A.T. Porter in June 1970 as Principal of the University of Nairobi, Dr. J.N. Karanja was Kenya's High Commission in London, a position held with distinction and colour, becoming Dean of Diplomatic Corps in the Court of St. James.

Dr. Karanja began his career as a lecturer in Africa and modern European history in 1963 at the then Royal College Nairobi after several - years of postgraduate studies overseas.

He studied in Makerere, New Delhi and Princeton University, New Jersey where he obtained his Ph.D degree.

Upon independence in 1963, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta appointed him as Kenya's first high commissioner to Britain. He would preside as Vice-Chancellor of Nairobi University for almost a decade, during a critical period of campus strife and institutional unease that had firm international origins. All throughout the embittered period that saw ugly police-student confrontation, Karanja remained firm to his belief that the University had to be preserved as a community of students and scholars committed to the common course of society. As he would say, "As a human institution, our University must inevitably reflect the society of which it is a vital part. The University cannot be immune to the effects of problems that face the society. It has a fundamental obligation to put the power of critical intelligence to work for the solution of these problems."

By the time he left the University to contest for parliamentary elections, Dr. Karanja had presided over vast developments that more than doubled the student population in less than a decade as well as the number of graduates and post-graduates that formed the central core of higher level professionals in Kenya's manpower needs. A man of exceptional intelligence and courage, who ruled the University with iron-grip, Karanja's imprints will long remain in this higher institute of learning for long period to come. He has been judged harsh and ruthless in dealing with student uprising. Others complained about his arrogance and inaccessibility, but none question the fact that he held the University together in the tumultuous seventies against the vast onslaught of chaos, vicissitudes and strife. In his final year, 1,763 students graduated, 11 were Ph.Ds, and 129 obtained Masters degrees.



Daniel arap Moi
2nd President of the Republic of Kenya and Chancellor of Nairobi University

As Chancellor of Nairobi University, President Daniel arap Moi has not hesitated to use his office to discipline

the students, nor use the University platform to caution the use of excessive criticism. Twice he has sent the students on compulsory leave after their demonstrations in 1979 and 1980. And during the 1979 graduation ceremony, he warned, "I sometimes feel that the professors and lecturers should be of greater use to our society if their initiatives and occasional intolerance could be transformed into something more useful." His creation of the ministry of higher education reflects his commitment to rationalisation of educational system in the country. To him, the University must maintain its leadership in the entire educational system of the country to ensure that it is relevant to the needs of the society now and in the future. Hence his first directive on becoming Chancellor was the requirement that the University continue to develop the human resources required for development of the country, and his emphasis of the role of University in consolidating the national unity. He directed the construction of a biological science building and the Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library as an addition to physical academic facilities. He also directed the University and the Ministry concerned to work out the University Student Service Scheme.



Professor Joseph M. Mungai
2nd Vice Chancellor 1979

Professor J.M. Mungai was appointed the Second Vice Chancellor of Nairobi University following Dr. Karanja's resignation in May 1979 to contest Githunguri Parliamentary Seat. Professor Mungai brought to the top University post, unusual experience, both as an administrator and as a scholar. Not only had he served as a Deputy Vice Chancellor, but had served for many years as the head of the School of Medicine in which he has been professor of human anatomy from an early age of 36. On this aspect, Chairman Gecage would say at the 1979 graduation ceremony; "He was the youngest Kenyan to be appointed a professor in this University exploding the myth that

grey hair is a necessity for professorship".

Through his popular column — "Spotlight on Knowledge" in the Daily Nation, Professor Mungai has been in the fore-front of expanding knowledge and information, in simple, concise and highly informative presentation. Through such medium and the chairmanship of the National Council for Science and Technology, Professor Mungai has highlighted scientific knowledge more than anybody else in contemporary Kenya. It is largely because of his utmost concern with cultivation and dissemination of knowledge that his appointment as Vice Chancellor was highly acclaimed. University Community welcomed an accomplished scholar with unique demonstration of humility, a towering administrator of simple designs and common humanity.

His concept about the University of Nairobi is that of the largest research and post-graduate training institution in the country, where the enormous expertise should be dedicated to the development of the human resources required for the development of the country. As he would say during the 1979 graduation ceremony, "research which is nationally co-ordinated and whose knowledge is appropriately used is the only way of facilitating the definition and alleviation of social and economic problems."

How Professor Mungai will be able to deal with student crises as and when they occur remains to be seen. As Deputy Vice Chancellor under Dr. Karanja, he witnessed the extent to which student explosion could overcome the most seasoned and even ruthless official reaction. More than anybody else, given his long experience in the University teaching and administration, he is in the best position to contain any adverse development.

Karuga Koinange
Principal Kenyatta University College

More than any other dean of students, Karuga Koinange presided over the turbulent days of student upheavals in the greater part of the seventies with spectacular degree of success, largely because he was able to mingle with the students as one of their kind, and at the same time, maintained excellent communication with the University administration.

He has since the appointment as Principal of Kenyatta University College presided with exceptional competence, holding the once volatile campus firmly against major interruptions and disruptions and at times of strife in the main campus.