

**SPEECH BY DR. A. T. PORTER, PRINCIPAL, UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE, NAIROBI, AT THE OPENING OF THE NEW ENGINEERING
BUILDING ON WEDNESDAY, 11TH DECEMBER, 1968.**

My task this afternoon is a simple but important one. It is to express our profound appreciation and delight that so many of you have been able to join us this afternoon for this ceremony of the formal handing over of this new Engineering Building and its opening by our Minister for Education.

As has been said, this building has been constructed by the Government of Kenya with the assistance of loan funds generously provided by the United States Agency for International Development. Loan funds have also been provided under the same agreement for the construction of three Halls of Residence which now provide accommodation for 408 male students. Apart from these loan funds for capital development, we have also been generously assisted with provision of equipment for this Faculty as well as personnel assistance in other spheres of our activities. We would like to express once again our profound appreciation for all this evidence of interest and concern in the problems of higher education here in East Africa and for the readiness to respond to these needs.

We are delighted and honoured that His Excellency the Ambassador for the United States of America, Mr. Ferguson, and the Director of the U.S.A.I.D. Programme in East Africa, Mr. Hinman, have found time this afternoon to be with us and I would like them, on behalf of the College, to extend our gratitude to their Government.

Part of the funds for this building, as has also been mentioned, have come from the Kenya Government, and we are always grateful for the deep abiding and continuing interest which the present Minister for Education shews in the programmes of this College. The Minister, as is known, was once a member of the faculty here - I believe, the first East African to be appointed. We would like to regard ourselves as his first love and to think that he is only on secondment to the Government of Kenya.

We are also most grateful for the assistance we receive from our several donors whose representatives are here with us this afternoon.

It is a matter of satisfaction to us and of good fortune that the foundations of this College are laid firmly on technical and technological disciplines. From such firm foundations we have no doubts that this College will be able to play its part and take advantage of the technological revolution of our time. Here in this Faculty is a capability and confidence unmatched in any other faculty in tropical Africa, and we are ready to put our facilities at the disposal of a region wider than Kenya.

Though our Chairman of Council is in many ways one of us, we never cease to be agreeably surprised at his devotion and the time which he gives so unselfishly to the work and cares of the College. To him also we extend our sincere thanks.

I would also like to pay one word of tribute to Professor Royston Jones, formerly Dean of the Faculty, who has nursed this Faculty throughout the years to the position it has now reached and who has been central in all the negotiations since 1964 which are now fulfilled in the construction of these extensions.

The building would not have been erected but for the work of our Architects, Cobb Archer and Associates, and our Contractors, Laxambhai & Company Limited. To them also I wish to extend our sincere thanks.

Finally, we are grateful for the support we have received from the public and, in particular, from all of you who have come here this afternoon.

The aim of this College and this University is that it will be a service institution with close liaison and contact between the Government and ourselves and between ourselves and the private sector. We have every confidence that this Faculty will make an ever greater

contribution in solving current engineering problems that arise, whether in Government or in industry, in addition to our other important task of meeting the manpower requirements for Engineers and Surveyors for East Africa.