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M.13/45

UNIVERSITY OF NATAL,  
PIETERMARITZBURG.

27th December, 1950.

The Secretary for Education, Arts and Science,  
Union Education Department,  
New Standard Bank Buildings,  
P R E T O R I A.

Dear Sir,

Non-Union Natives in the University of Natal.

With reference to your letter E.317/21 of the 13th of December, I wish to point out that, excluding the medical faculty, there are about fifty different courses attended by non-European students in the non-European section of this University. The number of non-Union students attending or likely to attend each particular class is so small that it will make not the slightest difference to the University as far as cost is concerned, or exclude any Union student through lack of accommodation. For example, the professor lecturing to a class of ten could just as well lecture to a class of twelve in a particular course. What the University would lose, however, would be the revenue in fees from these non-Union students, should they be barred from attending these courses.

Furthermore, by thus reducing the number of students attending a particular course, it is very likely that some courses will have to be closed down completely owing to the smallness of the classes. This will actually mean that Union non-European students will be deprived of the facilities which the University would otherwise have been able to offer them.

It is, therefore, difficult to see how in practice at this University the Union Native student will benefit by this decision. It penalises the University of Natal financially and does not help the Union Native student in the slightest.

Such a ban cannot but strain the good relations which educational and scientific organisations have tried to build up between

South .....

South Africa and territories South of the Sahara, relations which seem essential to maintain and cherish if South Africa wishes to aspire to cultural and civilised leadership in this sub-continent.

Negotiations are under way with the Colonial Development Foundation in Great Britain as well as with the Rockefeller Foundation in America for financial support for the non-European section of this University. The chief basis of the interest of these organisations in our University has been the fact that this University will serve the needs also of Africans in territories outside the Union south of the equator. This ban by the Government which has been given fairly wide publicity has nullified one of the main arguments we had for strengthening our case for financial support.

The loss of endowment for research facilities in the proposed medical school at the post-graduate level which it was hoped that the financial support above referred to would provide, is a serious matter to the University. The Council feels that it should retain the right to lay down its own policy as regards such activities, but if it is overridden it feels that the Union Government should itself provide the endowment.

Finally, the University stated clearly in its letter of December 1st what guarantees it is prepared to offer. The Council feels that this pledged undertaking to carry out the Cabinet's intention to the fullest should be adequate safeguard against any of the dangers feared.

As it is possible that the above-mentioned implications of the Cabinet's decision (particularly as it affects the Union Native student) may not have been fully realised, I have stated them at some length in the hope that the Minister will reconsider his ruling as far as this University is concerned.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) E. G. Malherbe.

PRINCIPAL.

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