

The Chancellor, Makerere University

My fellow Chancellors

The Vice Chancellor – Makerere University

The Faculty Members

The Students

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am greatly honoured to be invited by this great institution to be the Keynote Speaker as we launch the celebrations of Makerere's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. This is also the year Uganda as a nation turns 50 years old.

Makerere's humble beginnings are chronicled in many places. Perhaps what most people do not know is the original name of the institution "NYANJA ERADDE". I must confess the words do not make much sense to me. Makerere began as a Technical school to train artisans i.e carpenters, brick layers but not plumbers or electricians because in 1922 Uganda had neither running water nor electricity. The elegantly dressed students wore shorts, pattice on their legs but bare foot.

It soon became clear that after ten years of schooling and then end up as an artisan was not satisfactory, so Makerere became academic. All qualifications in Education, Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine and Human Medicine were Diplomas. The holders of these qualifications went out to be assistants to the Colonial Masters who had degrees from their various Universities in their country.

The Carr-Saunders Commission 1947 – 48 recommended that Makerere becomes a University offering degrees of the University of London. In the meantime from mid thirties Makerere started admitting students from Kenya, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. The average age of the students was around twenty to thirty. Most students had tended to their parents goats and cows before starting Primary one at the tender age of twelve to fifteen. That meant of course by the time they entered

Makerere not only were they mature, but many had families left behind. They were serious about their studies.

The transition between Makerere College to Makerere University College was not without trauma. At that time the equivalent of “A” level was done at Makerere for two years on top of the twelve years in school. In 1949 Makerere decided that the students in the second year will finish with Diplomas and those who entered 1949 will start the degree course. The first recipients of Bachelor degrees spent five years at Makerere. This was reduced to three years when a few selected schools started doing “A” level studies. In the professional Schools Agriculture was the first to offer degrees. Veterinary and Medicine were reluctant to award degrees lest the Africans become equal to the British Vets and Doctors and thereby demand equal pay. After Uganda’s independence the Licentiate in Medicine and surgery was converted into degrees, with the stroke of a pen. Veterinary science was taught in Kabete, Kenya. The white Kenyan settlers were against Africans being fully fledged Veterinary surgeons. The issue was settled by creating a faculty of Veterinary Science in Makerere.

So what kind of income did the Makerere Diplomaes get in the 1940’s? Teachers started with 95/= per month. Agriculture 110/=, Veterinary 120/= and Assistant Medical Officer 130/= per month. In the 1940 these were big salaries. Many Doctors could afford a small car. A big car cost the grand sum of 2,000/=. As late as early sixties a Mercedes Benz 200 cost under 25,000/= when 20/= was equal to 1 pound.

In mid forties someone at Makerere read the part of the Bible where God after creating man decided that man should not be alone – hence a wife was found for him. Similarly Makerere decided to admit women students. The first lot of about ten arrived in 1945 as Adult students. All but a couple were ex – Primary school teachers, mainly trained at Buloba college. Their academic background was shaky, hence a story is told about one of these Adult student being asked by a curious person. She was asked “what are you studying at Makerere?” She replied “I am studying adultery.”

The first female student to qualify to enter Makerere was CATHERINE SENKATUKA the mother of a well known lawyer in town ALLAN SHONUBI.

She came from Budo in 1945. She was to be followed by SARAH NYENDWOHA Ntiro – The first female to get a degree from East and Central Africa. The women were housed in the “Box” adjacent to the Guest House of today.

At the time of the start of degree courses the student population stood at just under 500 – housed in the four halls of Sepuya, Bamugye, Nsubuga and <sup>Sejongo</sup> All in the southern part of the campus. The schools which sent students to Makerere were from Kenya: - Alliance High School and Mangu. From Tanganyika: – Tabora Boys School, and Zanzibar Secondary School. From Uganda :- It was Nyapea, Nabumali, St. Peters Tororo, Mwiri, Namilyango, Kisubi, Old Kampala, Budo, Nyakasura, and St. Leo’s Virika. A few students came from northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

One of the interesting aspects of demography at the time was that the teaching staff was all white and the students all black except for the Zanzibaris who were classified as black. Two very bright students were in their clinical years in the medical school. They were failed and discontinued not because they could not pass the examinations but because they were of mixed blood in those days call “Mulattos”. They were failed because the British did not want to classify them as whites, and have the privileges of the white Doctors. The first black Lecturer at Makerere was BALAMU MUKASA in the Department of Geography. He was housed near the football field, away from the whites. The first fully fledged Professor was DAVID WASAWO – who finished Makerere with a Diploma in Education was sent to Oxford, UK where he earned his Ph. D. in Zoology paid for by the Uganda taxpayer even though he was a Kenyan.

The current liberalness with which the University treats students was unheard of. Today we talk of retake of exams, female student taking maternity leave, student being excused from taking an exam because he has lost a family member. These are luxuries which did not exist. At the end of the academic year there was a bogeyman called PRINCE AKICHOMONG. This prince appeared at examination time when he mercilessly devoured students i.e. failed students were discontinued. For about a week when examination results came out students walked in great fear of Prince Akichomong.

This brings me to the all important question as “Why University Education?” We are not going to delve into debate of the value of University education. What is generally agreed is that a true University is free to teach what it wants to teach and when. The Western European Universities have been left to do what they want with little interference from their Governments. Regrettably this is not true in some African Universities. It is also generally agreed that students do not go to Universities to learn a Trade or Career. They are supposed to learn how to think. This is why in the early Universities, Philosophy was a very important subject followed by Mathematics. Both subjects cannot offer you a job but they teach you to think.

When Makerere graduated its first degree holders, certain companies like SHELL, CALTEX etc. came to recruit them to work for the oil companies. The Principal of Makerere then, was Sir, Bernard de Bunsen who is reported to have objected to such recruitment saying “I did not educate my students to become bloody merchants”.

With the numbers of both male and female being about the same Makerere faces a situation which is in almost every University worldwide. The issue of extra curriculum relationship between students and their teachers is not limited to Makerere. Male students complain about male lecturers befriendng female students and giving them marks not deserved. Perhaps it is now the other way round as well i.e. female lecturers favouring male student friends. Whatever the case may be it is agreed that students are mature and know what they are doing. When the issue came up some years ago at Oxford University it was resolved that nothing could be done. A few years ago the Vice Chancellor of Buckingham University, admitted that he lusts after some female students but takes action with his wife. Since it is impossible to police this situation the aggrieved students just have to grin and bear it. That is life.

There is one issue which has been reported about Makerere which is totally unacceptable for it undermines the very reason for coming to University, and that is cheating in examination or in writing academic papers. We are told about places where you can buy prepared papers for the assignment you are given. The reason

you are assigned a topic to write about is because as you research material for the paper you are actually learning. If, however, the paper is written for you and you merely read it, it is not the same. You are the loser. There are cases of students hiring someone else to sit the examination on their behalf. You may get away with it until you get a job and you have to apply the information which you will not have. These cases occur because the University has become so big and the classes so large that lecturers do not know all the students they teach. This is why I am personally happy that Makerere Business School at Nakawa will soon be a fully fledged University offering its own degrees.

Makerere has increased students intake in the last few years without increasing the facilities, starting with accommodation. There are some courses which can best be taught at other tertiary institutions other than University. In the faculty of health science in the Department of Radiology there are three courses. Course one is for Radiographers, a Diploma. There is the post graduate course for Radiologists, a qualified doctor. There is then a four year degree course which basically has no name. The graduate is neither a radiographer and certainly not a radiologist. He can take pictures, read them but cannot sign the report because he is not a Doctor. If such person went to give evidence in court, the court would throw him out because he is neither a radiographer or a radiologist. That course should be re-examined. In order for Makerere to regain its past glory it has to shed some new courses and go back to its core academic subjects with the numbers that are manageable. If we want 30,000 students, let us build facilities for thirty thousand students and not squeeze them in facilities meant for five thousand students. So what are the benefits of going to University? I recognize three unequal benefits:

- a) First the benefit is from the formal lectures by the lecturers;
- b) The private readings by the student of his own choice; and
- c) The interaction and net working with other students.

Ten to twenty years after graduation, number three may be the most important. If you can pick up the phone and call by first name the Governor of the Bank of Uganda or the Chairperson of Uganda Petroleum Corporation not to mention the Vice Chancellor of Makerere because you were classmates or roommates, life could be good for you. I do not believe that a degree by correspondence is the same as the degree obtained by attending lectures in person. Nor do I believe that

learning by computers is the same as seeing the teacher in flesh. The information may be the same as the one delivered by a machine and the other by a human being who can laugh or get angry and answer questions.

From about 1971 when IDI AMIN took power from a Civilian Government Makerere was not spared the fate that befell the nation. Many members of staff left the University because their lives were threatened. The economic chaos that took place led to shortages of essential commodities leading to inflation. The Uganda currency lost its meaning and salaries became inadequate. Since then the currency, through the efforts of Government and Bank of Uganda has stabilized. Essential goods are readily available. However, because of recent political instability under Amin salaries in Uganda became distorted. This has resulted in salary disparity leading to a lot of the discontent, strikes and demonstrations. The example quoted often is the wages paid by Kampala City Authority to the Tea girl of Shs.1,200,000/= per month as compared to an intern Doctor who gets about Shs.600,000/= per month. The Tea girl salary compares very favourably with those of lecturers at the University. In the medical field Senior Consultants take home less than Shs.2million per month and these people are expected to save people's lives. I have in my possession the last British Colonial Staff list with all the salaries paid to the various senior staff from Police officers to Judges. The current salaries scales bear no resemblance to the booklet I have.

When Makerere became a University, Professors were appointed and these professors were the highest paid Government staff. Because they were paid by Government. The Governor of Uganda was paid 3000 pounds per annum plus 2000 pounds duty allowance. The Chief Secretary earned 3,500 per annum Permanent Secretaries, who were all expatriates, earned 2,800 pounds per annum. Makerere academic Professors earned 3,000 pounds per annum while medical clinical Professors earned 3,300 pounds per annum. This soon changed after Independence. When Ugandans became Permanent Secretaries they said "We run a whole Ministry how can Professors who only run Departments earn more than we do?" There and then started the down grading of University staff. The reason why the British paid Professors more money than Permanent Secretaries was based on the fact that a Professor can always find a job as a Professor in other parts of the world where a Permanent Secretary is only Permanent Secretary in Uganda.

I am personally on record recently having written to the Prime Minister suggesting that Government should appoint a salaries Review Commission to look at ALL salaries paid to Civil Servants, Government Universities and Parastatals. The Commission should pay attention to three very important factors:-

- 1) The qualification required for the job;
- 2) The responsibilities of the job; and
- 3) The length of time the person has been in the job.

Until and unless the review is done and the many anomalies corrected, we will always have strikes. People are aware that many members of our Parliament before being elected were earning less than Shs.1million per month. As soon as they go to Parliament they earn Shs.12million per month, working from 2.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. four days a week, less than 9 months a year. The Policeman who guards the Minister not only earns little income but some not even have decent accommodation. These anomalies play in the minds of people. Even those who are not directly involved like farmers, they too get upset when they hear what their members of Parliament get, especially when they remember how much money those members earned in their previous jobs before being elected to Parliament.

Let us examine the status of the professional persons generally. Fifty years ago the best educated person in the village was the teacher. When the village held a meeting, the teacher most likely presided over the occasion. In the towns Doctors were held in the highest esteem. It was the dream of a clever pupil to become a Doctor. How are these two professions faring today? At the village meeting it is now the L.C.1 who calls the shots, and in towns, it is now the businessman who has replaced the Doctor. The situation can only get worse because with the advent of mobile telephones and dot.com era, many people can access information without consulting a third party. With better education patients can read up about their ailments and are likely to seek a second opinion if the doctor is unsure of the diagnosis. This is not an entirely a bad thing, but it does question what kind of income a teacher or doctor should get. With the free primary and secondary schools education this country is quietly going through a revolution. The expectations of the population are higher than ever before. These people who can read and write expect jobs, which are not there leading to frustrations.

At the last count, there are twenty nine Universities registered in Uganda, of these less than ten offer sciences. All of them offer business studies. With so many business studies graduates you would expect them to be creators of jobs not job seekers. Yet these are the people who are looking for jobs instead of creating jobs.

At 90 years old what kind of report card does Makerere University have to show. Of course the number of students has increased beyond the wildest dreams of the people who started the degree courses and the University has done well in the field of research, albeit with limited funds. Unfortunately, the increase in numbers has not been matched by the facilities. In the main the classrooms have remained the same so have the halls of residence, with double decker beds etc. I suggest that Makerere should consolidate what she has, and if there are any further expansions, let it be on other campuses. Certain non academic courses could also be accommodated elsewhere, to allow Makerere to be leaner and more efficient in order to regain and surpass its former glory. After all this is the institution which produced many of the current leaders of East and Central Africa.

Mr. Chancellor Sir, may we now turn to look at this lady who is fifty years old called Uganda. I had the pleasure of seeing Uganda born on 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1962. Uganda and I share the same Zodiac sign of LIBRA. The majority of Ugandans were not yet born. Through oral history and a few books they know that this nation was created by the British who ruled it for sixty years only, but changed its people for ever. For the interest of this audience, the British were in India for 300 years. After 300 years the Indian Culture changed little, a testimony to the deep rooted Indian culture.

We are reliably informed that the majority of Ugandans are below the age of 20, which means that the only Government they know is the Government of President Yoweri Museveni. All their reference points are current. These people do not know what kind of Government existed before independence. How efficient was it? How cruel were the colonialists? Was there rampant corruption? How were corrupt officials treated when caught? How were the education and health facilities in the country? These and many other questions are being asked by the post independent citizens of this nation called Uganda.



Let me say right from the outset that independence is the right to rule yourselves as a nation, the right to determine your own future is correct. That is to say Uganda is better off being ruled by her own sons and daughters. The idea that some foreign power should come and tell you what to do and how to do it was acceptable in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, today it is not.

African countries started getting their independence in mid 1950 i.e. Ghana and Sudan. This gained momentum at the beginning of 1960 with Uganda becoming independent on October 9, 1962. There is something unique about the independence of Uganda. Whereas in most African countries there was armed struggle with loss of human blood, Uganda got her independence through verbal struggle. I personally never, knew, saw or heard of a single Ugandan being shot by the British because of demanding independence. It may come as a surprise to you, because there was a large section of Ugandans who did not want independence. Buganda for example sent a delegation to London demanding independence for Buganda, which independence was declared a head of October 9, 1962. The people who travelled to London came back empty handed, except for the bowler hats they came back wearing.

The first constitution of Uganda provided for a non-executive President, with a Prime Minister as leader of Government, the British model. This lasted three years. The next constitution which was written by Government with no input from anywhere else and it made the President Executive the USA system. Since independence in 1962 Uganda has had the following Presidents:-

1. Sir Edward Mutesa
2. Milton Obote
3. Idi Amin
4. Yusuf Lule
5. Godfrey Binaisa
6. Paulo Muwanga
7. Milton Obote
8. Tito Okello
9. Yoweri Museveni.

Of these nine Presidents the cleanest in terms of abuse of power, no corruption what so ever was Sir Edward Mutesa. Why? Mutesa was both Kabaka and President. As Kabaka he had everything he needed including all the female of his people single or otherwise. The President of Uganda had one Rolls Royce, the Kabaka had three. The privileges of being a Kabaka far outnumbered those of being President. Mutesa, therefore, had no need to steal public funds for which he had no use. For some of our subsequent Presidents, the biggest mechanical object that ever reached their villages was a bicycle. The first Presidential aircraft was bought by Idi Amin.

Today Ugandans are crying about corruption, poor health service, bad roads, biting poverty etc. Yes there is massive corruption that is where my criticism of being independent ends. On October 9, 1962, the following roads were tarmacked Kampala/Entebbe, Kampala Jinja Tororo Mbale; Kampala/Masaka, Kampala Wobulenzi, Kampala Mityana, Kampala Busunju. The rest of the tarmacking is after 1962. There were less than 50 full Secondary schools, and less than ten doing "A" level. In each town there was a free hospital with drugs and one ambulance. Someone falling sick in the village was brought on a bicycle if they could sit otherwise carried on an improvised stretcher for as many miles to the nearest health centre. Most of the time the patient died before reaching medical personnel. Coming back to Kampala people living at Luzira, Kawempe, Natete etc. walked into town. There were no boda bodas or taxis as you know them today. A house help was called "BOY" even though he was a grandfather. The female help was an AYAH. Neither of these two had shoes. The boy wore shorts. In 1962 if you saw someone walking barefoot on Kampala Road, you did not look. Today someone not wearing a sandal or shoes, you look. Except for Civil Servants most Ugandans lived outside of town, with the exception of the slums of Katwe and Wandegaya. Most of the developments you see in Kampala have taken place in the last twenty five years. In 1962 Kampala was a city of seven hills i.e. Nakasero, Kololo, Mulago, Makerere, Namirembe, Rubaga, and Mbuya. Fifty years ago we were less than ten million Ugandans. Every University graduate was guaranteed a job. Makerere was graduating less than one hundred Ugandans annually.

In 1962 all senior jobs were held by the British. The first Ugandan Permanent Secretary was appointed in 1962. Makerere had already appointed a Black Professor David Wasawo in Zoology.

In order to fill the posts which were being vacated by the British Civil Servants the newly independent Government of Uganda embarked on a massive award of scholarships to Uganda students to study, mostly, in the United Kingdom. For every British Civil Servant we sent a replacement to attain the same qualifications. It was the greatest honour which the new Government bestowed on me by appointing me Chairman Central Scholarship Committee. I had a budget of several million British pounds. At times I chartered East African Airways aircraft to take and bring our students from the UK. It never even crossed my mind to do a deal with East African Airways officials so I could get back 10% of the cost. If I had tried the official of the airline would have thrown me out of his office or better still got me arrested. We did not know how to steal public funds. President Mutesa did not know how to steal public funds. For me my greatest contribution to the development of Uganda without any doubt was running scholarships. May I say that was my finest moment. Among the finest students we sent overseas are Dr. Eric Adriko PhD. Imperial College, London now Chancellor, Kyambogo University and Professor Fred Kayanja, V. C. Mbarara University. All else I have done for my country is only secondary to scholarships.

If our health facilities are poor, it is because we have neglected them by inadequate funding both in salaries and materials. Maintenance is the curse of Africa. We have not been able to maintain what the British left for us or even what we built after independence. What hospitals existed before independence were clean and well maintained. The salaries paid to health workers were acceptable according to the rank. Doctors were the best paid Civil Servants, whose income enabled them to live decent lives and send their children to good schools. Today a teller in a bank earns more than a junior Doctor in a Government hospital. Is it any wonder that we are training doctors for export? Matters were made worse when the schools of nursing and medical Assistants were transferred to the Ministry of Education. On public holidays student nurses do not go to work because the Ministry of Education is on holiday.

Suppose your wife begins labour on a public holiday, who is supposed to deliver your baby?

In order to get the health sector to be adequate and of world standard, there is only one way to go HEALTH INSURANCE. No nation on earth can finance its health service without heavy taxation or health insurance. The management of the scheme is complex and full of temptation for its abuse. Other countries have done it and we Ugandans should be able to do it.

Our education system has equally suffered. Fifty years ago Education had the biggest budget. Teachers were not over paid but had certain benefits of housing and free education for their children. The lives of the teachers were in their schools. They were available to pupils most of the working day. They did not owe allegiance to politicians and politicians had no influence in schools. Diets in schools were not outstanding but adequate. The birth and in some cases the popularity of private schools has much to do with food and general welfare of the schools children. Children brought up to eat eggs and cereal for breakfast, plus lunch and supper do not readjust easily to beans and posho as offered in government aided schools on a daily basis.

The private schools are becoming more and more popular. However, the danger signs from some of the private schools are becoming obvious. When the results of "O" and "A" levels come out, the private schools are eager to advertise their successes. What they do not advertise are the number of students who sat the examinations. Stories abound about teachers leaking examination questions to their students. Equally there are stories about private schools paying subjects examiners to improve the marks of their candidates. These are very dangerous issues because a student who was assisted to pass a particular examination will at some stage in his academic life come to an examination where there is no assistance. Cheating in examination by school officials is in some ways worse than money corruption by Civil Servants or politicians. In pointing out these weaknesses in some private schools does not take away the fact that these schools are important because they supplement Government effort in providing education for those who cannot find places in Government aided schools or those who prefer private schools.

In the fifty years of independence, the education system and standards in some schools have remained reasonably stable. In science and mathematics the standards have improved and can even be described as high. However in English, as a subject, the standard has very badly declined. Fifty years ago in all Government aided secondary schools, English was taught by native British teachers whose mother language was English. Grammar was an important part of the English subject. Today school children are being taught English by the third generation of Ugandan English teachers. Grammar disappeared from our schools years ago. Thus one hears a Makerere University graduate saying "please extend your car" meaning please stretch your car, when in fact he means please move your car. Phrases like "OK please." "I have ever seen there" are typically Ugandan English.

Having put in our constitution that English is our official language we should speak and write it properly and grammatically. We cannot bring back British teachers to all our schools. The solution is to create a post graduate diploma course of two years for prospective English subject teachers. This institution should be for many years to come run by native English speaking persons from the United Kingdom. The way English is spoken now will lead us to eventually speak a language not called English but Kienglish.

In the last 50 years Uganda has undergone political maturity with all its growth pains. We are not going to discuss politics as such because that is a subject discussed daily by all and sundry. There are two aspects of politics I like to touch on i.e. political freedom and security. Let me start with security. Today in Uganda we are experiencing the best security we have had since independence. Most Ugandans today go to bed and wake up the next day without fear of visits by security agents. We are not concerned about extra judicial killings. We go to functions at night knowing that we will return home safely. Our threat is from relatives with whom we have quarreled over land matters. Our threat comes from iron bar killers but not officially. We drive our vehicles from one corner of Uganda to the other with no road blocks. Those Ugandans below the age of 30 do not remember road blocks. Road blocks managed by illiterate, drunk soldiers with guns were not a pleasant sight. At

such road blocks Ugandans were relieved of their money, or their vehicles and if un lucky by loss of life. The worst road block by far was at KATABI in Entebbe. The soldiers knew you were going to the airport and therefore had money. Being illiterate many a time my passport was read upside down. If the present Government in your opinion has done nothing good at all and should go yesterday, at least do say thank you for bringing peace and security to this land. All developments, without exception came, is here and coming because of security. No tourist can come to a country where there is no security. No investor will go to invest his money where his or her life is in danger. When we cause disturbances in the country, it has multiple effects. Disturbance scares away tourists and investors, which in turn limits employment causing hardships to the unemployed and their families. Sometimes foreigners finance these disturbances and when things get out of hand these foreigners are the first to tell their nationals living in Uganda to get out. We should always remember “a stable African country is not necessarily a good country” to some outsiders. The more instability we have enables these countries to sell their weapons of war to us.

Freedom is an abused word. But real freedom comes with a lot of responsibility. Before independence we had limited freedom. The British did most of the thinking and planning for us. Even the Christian church was run by white people. One of the benefits of being ruled by the British was that we as African Ugandans did not pay income tax. Today in the churches we have to make collections to keep the church going. Yes, we have freedom in our churches but also the responsibility to finance them. During the Greek civilization if you were not educated, you had no business voting. This was because the freedom to choose depended on your ability to exercise your freedom knowing what was right and what was wrong. Clearly this freedom could not be risked to an illiterate person. To many of us in Uganda we interpret freedom to mean that you are free to do just anything you want to do. There is no such freedom anywhere in the world. Just take two people who want to exercise their freedom. These two meet in a room one wants the windows open, the other wants them closed. One wants to watch television the other wants to read. One wants to smoke the other objects. Each of them is exercising their freedom. Absolute freedom is an idea not a reality.

In Africa generally we believe that what is good for the west is good for us. Let us examine what happens with freedom in the UK. You have the freedom to demonstrate against an issue. You apply and are granted permission by the Police. On the due date you assemble at point A. The Police will tell you which route to follow. The Police will walk with you. On the way to point B where the rally is to take place you can shout, abuse whoever you are demonstrating against. Under no circumstance are you allowed to follow another route to point B. If you deviate from the official route, you are no longer in the demonstration and liable to arrest. While on the way to point B you cannot throw stones, or loot the shops along the way. Shops along the route remain open and do business as usual. In Uganda demonstrators have been known to have been given the route to follow to the demonstration area by the police only to reject both the route and venue given by the Police. Clearly the Police know which route and venue will cause the least interruption to the public not involved in the demonstration. One such example of impunity comes to mind. MABIRA demonstration. The Police gave a route and venue to the demonstrators NKURUMAH ROAD. One lady leader told the reporters and it was broadcasted saying "We are not thieves, we shall demonstrate on Kampala road." Whose freedom was being violated, the demonstrators or the shop owners on Kampala road. The Police having granted permission to demonstrators to follow a certain route to a given venue and this is challenged physically, what are the Police supposed to do? Yield to the demonstrators on this occasion? and what about the next and next occasions? The answer is clear, the Police in order to protect the greater public must use whatever force it takes to stop the demonstrators from taking the law into their hands. While in the UK the Police might use minimum force, but in the United States of America if you challenge the Police you will live to regret it.

We agree that the right of assembly is a constitutional right. Therefore, walk to work is a right. But if this involves recruitment of idlers to walk while shouting, taunting the Police and damaging property along the way, then it is no longer acceptable. The property destroyed along the way is also protected by the constitution.

For the majority of Ugandans, that is under 40 years the only form of Government they know is the present Government. Those who were old enough to remember what happened between 1971 – 1986 have a different interpretation of Political freedom. In a neighbouring country which had an elderly President, it was considered treason to discuss the President's health. I am very tempted to suggest that in a neighbouring country if walk to work took place there, we would now be referring to the leaders of the walk to work as the lates. However you feel about Uganda now, we have more freedom than most countries in the world. Let us take a very democratic, free country in the world in Central Europe. At 6.00p.m. daily the Police throughout that country descend into hotels to see who has registered as a guest. If you go to visit a friend and the neighbours do not know you, they will notify the Police immediately. Is that not a Police State? You try that in Uganda and the opposition will call this a Gestapo Government.

At personal level we enjoy certain freedoms unknown in many countries. The right to worship is one, even when the authorities know that the pastor preaching has never been to a theological institution. Most of the so called Pentecostal churches in Uganda would not be granted licences in other countries. There is the freedom for female to wear micro-mini shorts or skirts. In other countries women are covered head to toe in black with the temperature reading 40<sup>0</sup>C. For those who enjoy that kind of entertainment, you are free to go to KIMANSULO or watch the pole dance. Those are freedoms taken for granted. It is only when some of these freedoms are taken away that we realize what we did not appreciate.

The current topic being debated is the RESTORATION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TERM LIMIT. This is a very important issue and should be debated fully. But this only focuses on one person. As a nation we have more serious issues to tackle to help the nation in the next fifty years. To me the number one task is the restoration of an effective, efficient and respected Civil Service. You can limit the term of a President but without an efficient Civil Service the President will achieve little. Under the British colonial rule, there was a Civil Service that worked. Uganda was under the so called Indirect Rule which is to say there were two parallel administrations i.e. Central Government and Local government. In the Local Government you had the Head of homestead who reported to NYAMPARA who reported to PARISH Chief who reported to GOMBOLOLA Chief who reported to County Chief who reported to KABAKA, MUKAMA OR MUGABE



or TO COUNCIL OF CHIEFS or The District Commissioner. In the Central Government you had District Officers and Provincial Officers. In the Centre you had Secretary, Principal Secretary, Under Secretary, Deputy and then Permanent Secretary. In both Local and Central Government the systems worked because the chain of command was clear. The Police and Army had own Commissions that took care of everything from discipline to promotions and dismissals. The Governor who was the equivalent of a President was never involved in the day to day running of the Police or Army and for that matter of the Civil Service. Matters that reached the Governor for decision would have passed through the many levels where most issues were settled. Those issues that reached the Governor were grave and worthy of his attention. The British District Officers were all University graduates who were appointed and promoted on merit. An ordinary Ugandan going to see a District Officer expected fairness and honesty in the manner in which his problem was settled. Because of the level of education District Officers were also magistrates. Today Resident District Commissioners are “rejects” those who have lost elections and therefore tend to be those belonging to the ruling party. A voter from the opposition cannot expect a biased RDC to be fair to his problem. These RDCs owe their allegiance to the Appointing Authority with little or no regard for the people they are supposed to serve. A visit to any RDC office today will most likely find him not there either gone to Kampala or gone to do magendo. Since the boss is away other officers do likewise. The standard of cleanliness in the RDC’s offices leaves much to be desired. In short the administration has collapsed. From LC1 to Ministers everybody wants to see the President. Land dispute, see the President, Licence to import sandals, see the President. A truly outstanding case for the President was in KYENJOJO District where a Catholic Priest disappeared and the matter was reported to the President. This in spite of the fact that there is a Police Force in Kyenjojo. A Catholic Priest not murdered can only disappear for one of two reasons. He has either run away with the Church money or with a woman. In either case the President is of little assistance.

Bring back the old fashioned Civil Service even if the President has to sign a letter to a thief as “Your Obedient Servant.”

Today Permanent Secretaries are on contract. That is a contradiction of terms. You cannot be Permanent and on short contract at the same time. The person should not be called Permanent Secretary. A Permanent Secretary who knows that

he has a limited time at the top as the Accounting Officer, what goes through his mind? The answer is “take full advantage of the money in my care.” We took the name Permanent Secretary from the British. In Britain a PS is higher than his Minister. You can easily see a British Minister, but PS not easy. They are referred to MANDARINS. An efficient, effective and fair Civil Service makes the job of senior people in Government easier. Recruitment, posting, promotions must be fair and transparent. Salaries paid to Civil Servants must be commensurate with their duties. When merit is ignored the Civil Service suffers. The Civil Servants begin to adopt the attitude of “What is the use of hard work?” Proper administration makes the country run smoothly. In the past land issues were minimal. Because of the breakdown in administration we hear of cases of the same piece of plot belonging to three people with three identical titles. This is done with the complicity of officials in the land office. The impunity with which the law is broken in Uganda today is beyond the singing of it. Retired Justice Katutsi had one big regret on his retirement, that as far as corruption went he was only given tilapia to try. He was never given a crocodile. No top person in government has ever been imprisoned. Yet people know who is importing sugar or cigarettes illegally.

It is believed that Government loses big cases because the person/company accusing the Government agree with Government Lawyers that Government loses the case/s, pays heavy compensation and the government officials get a kick-back. This kind of action involves several people and they are all not sworn to secrecy. Sometimes the official processing the payment by Government gets short-changed and he talks. People throughout the country, young and old are talking about corruption because it is rampant. An Accountant in a so called “wet” Ministry suddenly puts up a block of flats the cost of which is equivalent to his total salary for ten years. No questions are asked. This sends the wrong message to people below him and encourages them to do likewise. We have reached the level where corrupt officials and thieves are admired. A man is imprisoned in the United States on a felony and returns to Uganda as a hero who gets elected Mayor and subsequently recommended for a Ministerial appointment! This is utterly preposterous! A nation that respect itself, and wants to be respected cannot honour a criminal.

You have given me the opportunity and I have said what is in my mind. I stand alone and take full responsibility of what I have said. I am a Ugandan who was alive and mature when this nation was born on October 9, 1962. It is not a perfect country but it is a beautiful country with mostly good people. It is the only country we call our own. Nobody can deport or expel us from this land of ours. I love this country. If there be any person who loves this country more than I do, I want to meet this person. I can only conclude by quoting a part of Desiderata.

*"Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever labours and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world, Be careful. Strive to be happy."*

Mr. Chancellor Sir, the Vice Chancellor thank you for honouring me by this occasion. Many a person dream of getting the Nobel Prize. Today I humbly accept my Nobel Prize I cannot get a higher prize than this opportunity to thank my country which has given me so much and allowed me to grow and live the life I have. There is not a job I envy in Uganda. I am Uganda.

Thank You.

Martine  
MARTIN J. ALIKER  
2/8/2012