

## ANNEX

### *Speeches at the Luncheon on 6 June 1958*

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, PRINCE PHILIP

DUKE OF EDINBURGH

NINE years ago the foundation stone of this College was laid and everything that can be said about the foundation of a new College in Oxford was said on that occasion by a veritable galaxy of erudite people. Nothing was left out and I was particularly struck by one of the Founder's remarks on that day. 'In any case', he said, 'it can be said without fear of contradiction that Nuffield College will improve the appearance of Oxford, if nothing more.' This must be by far the rashest remark ever made in this City<sup>1</sup> where a new building or even a new road cannot be contemplated without arousing a furious storm.

You will forgive me, therefore, if I do not comment on the buildings. On occasions like this it is perhaps wiser to make use of a cliché and you will have to put up with this one: that it's not the building but what goes on inside that matters. All the same, I would like to pay a tribute to the builders who have quite obviously done a first-class job of work. Having said that it would be unfair not to commend the efforts of the Architect and I hope I do that and still retain a neutral position.

The real importance of the foundation of Nuffield College lies in its constitution and purpose which direct its work into new fields of study and research. That is the true measure of the imagination and generosity of Lord Nuffield.

The objective study of the way people manage their economic problems, their social lives and their self-government cannot fail to have a real and lasting value to human society. Not in the old-fashioned and misguided belief that it can produce a sort of Utopia—but in the belief that a better understanding of these problems may prevent some of the worst mistakes.

<sup>1</sup> At this point there was so much laughter that His Royal Highness stopped speaking, whereupon Lord Nuffield interjected 'Sir, I was thinking of the entrance to Oxford,' to which His Royal Highness replied 'I think it was still clearly rash. After all no new building, not even a new road can be built here without the most furious storm.'

In the purely practical sense it is the people of this world who control its density irrespective of the instruments, weapons or even factual knowledge which is at their disposal.

We can manipulate with ever-increasing ease the material and tangible things of this life but we are really still like groping children when it comes to the intangible social studies. This may sound rather unkind especially in this company in this College. It is, of course, not meant as any reflection on your work but merely a reflection on the appalling complexity of the problems which this College is proposing to study.

Two years ago there was held here in Oxford a Study Conference on the Human Problems of Industrial Communities within the Commonwealth and Empire. Several of the subjects discussed were entirely new to many of the members and quite a few of the tentative conclusions reached came as a complete surprise to many experienced men and women. I quote this only because it struck me most forcibly that there are a great many well-meaning people sitting around busily solving the problems of other people and communities without the very least comprehension of what the real problems are.

For instance, housing conditions and working conditions both have obvious and measurable standards which money can improve, but the frustrations of a petty-fogging bureaucracy or the slow poison of bad industrial relations are not so obvious and the remedies depend more on practical thought than on expensive theories.

Sitting in the grandstand, as it were, it may look as if many international, economic or political problems have very straightforward solutions and any reasonably capable expert can produce them in his sleep, but I have yet to meet an expert who can solve the problems of pride, suspicion and face and all the other human peculiarities which seem to dominate the relations between communities.

If Nuffield College can dig out and lay bare the true facts of human tensions and frictions it will certainly not produce any noticeable increase in human happiness but it will at least help to lubricate the rather creaking machinery of man-made institutions.

And if Nuffield College shows anything like the same energy and vitality as its Founder, results ought to be forthcoming fairly soon.

Of course, the real difficulty about the social studies is that they are the observation of human behaviour, and people have the maddening habit of behaving like people, and not like rational electronic computers, and, what is more, they never will. I sometimes think that the most irrational human behaviour of all is making and listening to speeches on important occasions.

Having said that, I think this is perhaps the appropriate moment to hand you, Mr. Warden, on behalf of the Queen, the Royal Charter for Nuffield College and with it to offer you and the Fellows and Students and all your successors a brilliant and successful future.

#### REPLY BY THE WARDEN

This, Sir, is a memorable day in the life of the College, a day made more memorable by the presence of Your Royal Highness and by the very kind and interesting things you have just said about our Founder, about the College and about the subject of our studies. We are most grateful to Her Majesty the Queen for the grant of this Charter which so magnificently symbolizes our coming of age and which places on me and my colleagues, and on our successors for untold generations to come, the responsibility for this College, this child of Lord Nuffield's imagination and enterprise.

When, Sir, my predecessor but one, Sir Henry Clay, spoke after lunch on the day the Foundation Stone was laid by you Mr. Chancellor in 1949, he said we had one great advantage over other Colleges—'our Founder is still in our midst'. I am very proud and happy that I also can say 'our Founder is still in our midst'. You may be popularly known as The Gov'nor in the East End of Oxford but to us in the West End you are The Founder. You and, of course, Lady Nuffield, have a special place in our affections and in our thoughts today and always.

You gave us a very good start in life. You gave us the great privilege of bearing your name and our close association with you

is shown by your coat of arms which so decorates this Hall. You also made sure we would have a few shillings to rub together in our pockets—not to mention a few fivers in our wallet. You made provision for the building of a complete College and you wisely expressed the wish that the building that was to bear your name should be built according to the best traditions of Oxford College architecture. For bringing us into being and for giving us such a good start in life we express our warmest thanks. The only way we can repay you is to see that over the years we come as near as we possibly can to achieving the standard and integrity of performance and the generosity of spirit which you yourself have so outstandingly achieved.

If you, Founder, are the father of the College, the University is our mother. I trust, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, you do not mind seeing yourself in this representative role. It is interesting to speculate on the virtues of the University as a mother. Sometimes one is smothered with affection, at other time one can only assume that infanticide is the prevailing practice. We owe a great deal to a succession of Vice-Chancellors and leading University statesmen and administrators and to our Trustees. Some must have thought a strange child was growing up in their midst but their advice and guidance were always readily available. There is something mystically satisfying in the feeling that we have joined the family of Colleges. True our cuisine may not be quite as brilliant as that shall we say at W (or at M) nor may we have a scholar quite so world renowned nor so eccentric as old X at say Y—but no doubt these and other failings will be remedied during the next hundred or so years. What has been important to us in growing up towards the status of an independent College has been an ability to draw upon the experience of other Colleges, to draw upon a pattern of life developed over centuries by the University and the Colleges.

Now, in order to build a College it is unfortunately necessary to have an architect. And—equally unfortunate—the architect must have a client. The result is a most ambivalent relationship. We are, however, still good friends with at least one of our architects and Mr. Barnes is sufficiently forbearing with our

idiosyncrasies to grace our table today. Then there is the builder. He has to suffer for the sins of both client and architect. A builder works to a series of target dates. The golden rule is never to ask for these dates for what the eye has not seen the heart cannot grieve. We are most grateful to Mr. Barnes and to Benfield and Loxleys for all the effort they have put in on our behalf, for their willing co-operation and for the very fine building they have designed and built. We have, Sir, learned one new economic law these last few weeks. There is nothing so stimulating to productivity as a Royal Visit. In the jargon of the economist, you have, Sir, put quite a kink in the production curve. This is one of the important scientific discoveries of the I.G.Y.

Childhood is the time for rich aunts and uncles. We have been fortunate in having an aunt who is not only rich but also warm-hearted. I refer to the Nuffield Foundation, Lord Nuffield's largest single benefaction. Since 1946 the Foundation, in a series of grants, have added £400,000 to the Founder's original benefaction of the site and £900,000. This is generosity indeed. We have also had a rich uncle in the shape of the University Grants Committee. The U.G.C. came to our aid at a critical time in the financial affairs of our building programme and have provided nearly £200,000 or nearly 30 per cent. of the total capital cost. Without the generous aid of these two bodies—one private, one public—the marked rise in prices since 1937 would have made it very difficult, if not impossible, to complete the building. I would also like to take this opportunity of thanking the Leverhulme Trust in this country, and the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations in the United States, for the financial help they have given to current expenditure on research in the College.

Finally I would like to say a brief word about the place of the College in the University. What is the character of a 'research' College? How can it best fit into the framework of University life and studies? In other words, how do we see ourselves?

First, we see ourselves as a small College so far as Students are concerned. To help ensure this we deliberately inserted in our Statutes a clause limiting the number of Students and commoners to 50 at any one time. A low limit is essential for two reasons.

It is a safeguard against a lowering of standards and it will conduce to a close relationship between Fellows and Students. In an undergraduate College the lower Second- or the Third-Class man may nevertheless be very well worth while and can make a significant contribution to the life of the College and subsequently to the outside world. There is little justification for the postgraduate student who is less than first class.

The title of 'Student' with us, therefore, is equivalent to that of Scholar and we hope that all or the great majority of the junior members of the College will measure up to that standard.

It is easy to fall into the error of thinking of a postgraduate College as a kind of hostel for people working for D.Phils. or B.Litts. For what can take the place of the teaching which integrates Tutors and undergraduates in the normal College? Integration in a graduate College must come from the Students working closely with the Fellows in similar lines of research. This is made more possible in our case by our field being limited. We see ourselves as a small body of Fellows and Students living and working together in a large but nevertheless contained and homogeneous field of study and research.

Second, we intend to interpret our terms of reference quite widely. In addition to the basic economic and political studies we must obviously be firmly based on history. We are interested in law, philosophy, psychology and some other branches of science and technology and in any discipline necessary for a fuller understanding of social, economic and political problems.

Third, we wish to make as large a contribution as we can to the general purposes of the University. Most of the Official and Research Fellows do a limited amount of teaching for other Colleges. They lecture and hold classes in the University. The great majority of our Students have either read one of the Honour Schools or at the time of their election had already been working for a year in Oxford on their thesis.

Next, there is the subject matter of our studies—social, economic and political problems. A very big and important field as you, Sir, have stressed a few moments ago. It has one difficulty which is not present in most other University studies. It is not easy to

study and write about contemporary problems without becoming involved. In the long run the reputation of the College will depend on our ability to deal with matters of current or recent public controversy without on the one hand being remote and impractical nor on the other being so involved that we cannot write about them with true academic detachment.

Finally a sobering thought. The College in the University which you, Sir, grace as an Honorary Fellow, has already celebrated its 700th anniversary. We are hardly 21.

And now, Sir, I have said enough. Our guests are no doubt eager to ascend our ivory tower and to see the new view of Oxford which you saw before lunch. May I conclude by thanking you once again for honouring us with your presence. Your interest and the words you have spoken today are a great encouragement to us and we will long remember them.