

FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
O W E R R I

UNVEILING OF THE FOUNDATION PLAQUE -
30TH MARCH 1985
ADDRESS BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
PROFESSOR U. D. GOMWALK

Military Governor of Imo State, representing the Visitor
Honourable Chancellor
Members of Supreme Military Council
Military Governors
Federal Ministers
Pro-Chancellor
Visiting Chancellor, Pro-Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors
Your Highnesses
My Lords
State Commissioners
Members of Council and Senate
Traditional Rulers and Representatives of Communities
around the Permanent Site
Distinguished Ladies & Gentlemen

I do not propose now to tire you with a long address but I beg you, in the words of Francis Bacon, "Stay a little, that we may make an end the sooner". All I wish to do is to explain briefly the layout of this campus and the works currently in progress.



We are now near what will be the focal point of the University where several axes meet. The Academic Axis, running the centre of the academic area, will go straight down from the focal point near here to the river Otamiri, on our western side, following a line more or less parallel to this road. At the focal point over there it will be joined by the Social Axis coming in at an angle from roughly the direction of our entry to the site today, and passing from the sports facilities and through the students' residential area. A third axis will come out this way from the focal point through the Engineering workshops, and a fourth axis will pass between some of the academic buildings and on to the University Farm on the southern side of the site.

The Academic and Social Axes will be marked by footways only, and the motor roads will skirt round the edges of the academic and social areas. The way we have entered from Ihiagwa will be the second access road skirting the social area, on which design work is being conducted by our own experts within the University. The main access road will start on the other side of the river Otamiri from a point on the road towards Obinze, come round and across the river on the University's own bridge and then run up on the southern side of the academic area to about this point. Another road will

branch off and go round the northern side of the academic area, linking up with the main access road down near the bridge. The main access road, the bridge and the roads around the academic area are now under construction, scheduled for completion early in 1986.

It was near the entry to our site along the secondary access road that, by historical chance, a conflict of interests arose some time ago between the University and the Catholic Mission. We are extremely grateful to the Military Governor, Imo State, for having resolved that issue in a way that has preserved the integrity of the University's Master Plan.

I would like to mention another problem which is of some concern to the University although strictly outside its boundaries. The State highways from Obinze and from Ihiagwa have been constructed but the twain have not met because the linking bridge over the Otamiri river has still to be built. The roads and bridge within the University campus will, of course, be private, so that through traffic will not be able to pass between Obinze on the Port Harcourt road and Ihiagwa and beyond to the Aba road unless the bridge is built on the public highway. We have earlier asked that, when it is to be built, which we hope will not be delayed, the level of the bridge

should be high enough to allow for a road to go below linking this part of the campus to a residential area on the other side of the river and north of the public highway. This will be in the general interest as it will minimise the dangers of traffic congestion or accidents where University roads cross over the public road.

The building which we are able to erect on the Permanent site at this stage will be around us here. In the School of Engineering & Engineering Technology there will be two workshops near to each other. Initially these will have to serve as laboratories and to some extent lecture theatres and offices as well, limiting their effectiveness as workshops. The School of Natural & Applied Sciences will have a building intended eventually for Industrial Chemistry alone, but for now serving the whole School for the more advanced classes, and even then, leaving one wing to be added later. Finally a small part of the School of Agriculture & Agricultural Technology will be built to serve as a multi-purpose building for the School.

Much further development will be needed later in all these Schools before they are complete, even for the existing programmes of study. That is as far as our funding will take us at present.

The School of Management Technology and the early years of teaching in all Schools will not be covered here, but will have to continue for the time being over on our Lake Nwaebere Campus. We can provide for no students or staff to reside here at present, and they will have to come here just for classes and then go back again. There will at present be no Library, no Health Services, no Administration, no catering facilities, no Maintenance Yard here. Even fully equipping these buildings and bringing in water and electricity supplies present problems that we have still fully to solve.

That construction work has begun is a great advance, and is fittingly to be marked by the unveiling of the Foundation Plaque, but we shall still be very far indeed from having a full-fledged University on this site. This underlines the significance of our Endowment Fund and also of our appeals to Government and the National Universities Commission to understand our problems and to increase their financial provision in the next five-year Plan period.

Before I end, and the Visitor is invited to unveil the Foundation Plaque, I should like to welcome the

representatives of the neighbouring communities who are present here with us today.

We have all along tried to deal openly and frankly with them, explaining our objectives, needs and problems, and listening to their needs and problems so as to work in harmony. They have always shown us that they welcome the University's coming in their midst, and they have cooperated greatly with us in making land available. I hope that this mutual cooperation and frankness will endure for all time, and that the University's presence will indeed be of general benefit.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, it only remains for me now to invite our Chancellor to lead our Visitor, the Head of the Federal Military Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, through his representative, Brigadier Ike Nwachukwu, Military Governor of Imo State, to unveil the University's Foundation Plaque.

Honourable Chancellor, Sir.

