

MNR. DIE VOORSITTER VAN DIE RAAD, MNR. DIE DIREKTEUR, DIPLOMANDI, DAMES
EN HERE,

MY EERSTE EN AANGENAME TAAK IS OM U, DIE DIPLOMANDI, GELUK TE WENS MET
DIE BEHALING VAN HIERDIE BELANGRIKE MYLPAAL IN U LEWENS WAT ONS VANOGGEND
VIER. DIT IS BESLIS VAN PAS DAT OUERS EN VRIENDE, MAAR VERAL DIE OUERS,
HIER IS OM TE DEEL IN DIE ONTVANGS VAN U DIPLOMAS. DIE OPENBARE ERKENING
VAN U BEHALING IS VIR U 'N TROTSE OOMBLIK. U KWALIFIKASIE GENIET OOK DIE
AANSIEN VAN U WERKGEWERS, VIR WIE DIT DIE BEWYS IS VAN 'N SEKERE
GEWAARMERKTE PEIL VAN KENNIS EN BEVOEGDHEID EN, NOG BELANGRIKER,
ONTEENSEGLIKE BEWYS DAT U DIE KARAKTERVASTHEID HET OM 'N MOEILIKE VOLGEHOUE
TAAK TE VOLEINDIG. IN DIE OPWINDING VAN DIE GELEENTHEID EN IN DIE GLOED
VAN SUKSESVOLLE BEHALING, VRA EK U OM 'N OOMBLIK NA TE DINK MET STILLE
DANKSEGGING AAN U OUERS, OF HULLE NOU OOKAL TEENWOORDIG OF AFWESIG IS,
WIE SE STEUN, SORG EN AANMOEDIGING U IN STAAT GESTEL HET OM HIERDIE
DOELWIT TE BEREIK.

[1978?]
Dames en Heren, my eerste plig van more is om te sê dat ek u
te kondig dat sy edele die Minister van Nasionale Onderwys
Dr. Koornhof, neem onvoorspelbare omstandighede, nie besig is om
aan sy edele die Minister, Dr. Koornhof, aan die Sekretaris van
Nasionale Onderwys, Dr. van Wyk, die Direkteur van Universiteits-
aangeleenthede, Dr. Steyn, aan die verteenwoordigers van die
provinsiale onderwysdepartemente en die kolleges vir gevorderde
onderwys, aan die rektor van die Universiteit van Transkei, en
aan u, my kollegas, rig ek ten eerste 'n woord van hartlike
verwelkoming en opregte dank vir u teenwoordigheid. Sovêr ons
kan vasstel, is hierdie die mees verteenwoordigende byeenkoms
van universiteitshoofde wat nog ooit in ons land gehou is. Die
belangrikheid van die taak wat ons vandag aanpak, kan aan daardie
feit gemeet word, en dit word verder onderstreep, u edele, deur
u teenwoordigheid. sy edele die Minister oorspronklik uitgenooi
word om ons simposium oop te maak.

As inleiding tot my omskrywing van daardie taak, noem ek die
ondervinding van die egpaar wat hul skaap-boerdery vir 'n paar

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weke gelos het om hul familie van vyftien kinders na die strand
te neem. Met hul terugreis het drie van die kinders op die stasie
weggedwaal en die trein gemis. Toe die ouers ontdek dat daar net
twaalf kinders op die trein is, was hulle vir 'n oomblik te verbluf
om te praat, en toe sê die man "Ja vrou, ek sê vir jou lankal,
iets vang hier onder die kinders".

Nouja, dit is presies wat ons lus voel om te sê wanneer ons kyk
na die aantal eerste-jaar studente waarmee ons begin en die aantal
grade wat ons uiteindelik aan daardie groep toeken. Nou is ons
taak om vas te stel watter ondiar dit is wat onder ons eerste-jaar
studente vang.

IN OUR APPROACH TO THIS TASK, WE ARE HAMPERED BY THE FACT THAT WE DO NOT KNOW THE SHAPE OF THE MONSTER WE ARE HUNTING AND, MORE SO, BY THE FACT THAT WE DO NOT EVEN KNOW THAT WE ARE HUNTING IN THE RIGHT FOREST. IF THE REASON FOR THE HIGH DROP-OUT RATE IS TO BE FOUND AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL, IT WILL TAKE CONSIDERABLE INVESTIGATION AND DEBATE TO PINPOINT THE FACTOR OR FACTORS MAINLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS SAD PHENOMENON, BE IT OUR TEACHING METHODS, OR OUR BULGING SYLLABUSES, OR OUR LARGE LECTURE GROUPS, OR TIME-TABLE DIFFICULTIES, OR OUR FAILURE TO INTEGRATE NEW STUDENTS EFFECTIVELY INTO THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM, OR THE DEMANDS MADE ON STUDENTS BY EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, OR BY MODERN SOCIAL LIFE IN THAT AGE GROUP, OR BY HIDDEN ANXIETIES CAUSED BY THE UNSETTLED CONDITIONS OF THE WORLD WE LIVE IN.

BUT WE CANNOT BE CERTAIN THAT THE MONSTER IS TO BE FOUND ANYWHERE

IN THIS FOREST, FOR IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE THAT HE MAY BE LURKING IN THE FOREST OF SECONDARY EDUCATION. IN COMPARISON WITH OUR UNIVERSITIES, FAR GREATER CHANGES IN TEACHING METHODS AND CURRICULA HAVE OCCURRED AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL IN THE SECOND HALF OF THIS CENTURY. THE CHANGE FROM 'ROTE' LEARNING TO 'ACTIVITY' LEARNING, AND FROM A RIGID CURRICULUM TO A WIDER CHOICE OF SUBJECTS MAY PERHAPS BE ENCOURAGING EXPLORATION IN LEARNING, HOWEVER DESIRABLE, AT THE EXPENSE OF DISCIPLINED CONCENTRATION. ~~THE~~ WIDER CHOICE OF COURSES COULD, PERHAPS, ENABLE THE PUPIL TO FILL UP ON THE DESSERT OF HIS CHOICE WITHOUT BEING TAUGHT ALSO TO EAT THE SOUP.

THE VERY FACT THAT WE ARE COMPELLED BY OUR PRESENT INVESTIGATION TO LOOK ON EDUCATION, THROUGH ALL ITS LEVELS, AS A SINGLE, CONTINUOUS PROCESS, IS IN ITSELF A HEALTHY EXERCISE. IT IS CERTAINLY

NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT MANY OF OUR PROBLEMS IN THE LATER STAGES OF EDUCATION MAY BE THE FRUITS OF OUR FAILURE TO TAKE AN ADEQUATE INTEREST IN THE PREPARATORY STAGES, TO ENSURE THAT THE FOUNDATION IS SOUND ENOUGH TO BEAR THE SUPERSTRUCTURE, AND THAT UNWORTHY MATERIAL IS SIFTED OUT AND NOT ALLOWED THROUGH TO LEVELS OF STUDY THAT SHOULD BE UNATTAINABLE TO THOSE BELOW A GIVEN MINIMUM ABILITY.

WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT THE INTERESTING SESSIONS ARRANGED FOR THIS SYMPOSIUM WILL LEAD US TO OUR QUARRY, SO THAT WE MAY SET ABOUT FINDING THE REMEDY FOR THE PRESENT SITUATION. THE STRUCTURE OF OUR SOCIETY HAS SUCH AN EXTENSIVE BASE OF UNSKILLED, POORLY EDUCATED AND ECONOMICALLY INACTIVE MASSES, THAT WE CANNOT AFFORD TO WASTE ANY OF THE MATERIAL THAT SHOULD HELP TO PROVIDE AN

ADEQUATE APEX FOR THE PYRAMID.

WAAR ON S UITEINDELIK OP DIE PUNT STAAN OM IETS DAADWERKLIKS TE DOEN OM HIERDIE PROBLEEM OP TE LOS, WIL EK GRAAG REG LAAT GESKIED AAN ALMAL WAT AANVOERWERK GEDOEN HET IN THE AFGELOPE JARE. REEDS TYDENS DIE VOORSITTERSKAP VAN PROF. E.J. MARAIS IS HIERDIE PROBLEEM NA VORE GEBRING EN ONDERWERP AAN DIE OORWEGING EN NASPEURING WAT UITEINDELIK TOT HIERDIE SIMPOSIUM GELEI HET.

should also like to take the opportunity to thank Louis for group.

BUT I MUST REMIND MYSELF, AT THIS MOMENT, OF THE CRICKET UMPIRE WHO WAS MISGUIDED ENOUGH, ONE DAY, TO RAISE HIS FINGER WHEN A BOWLER APPEALED FOR AN L B W DECISION AFTER THE BALL HAD RAPPED THE PADS OF THE GREAT W.G. GRACE. IN LORDLY ANGER, GRACE WALKED

DOWN THE PITCH TOWARDS THE QUAKING UMPIRE, POINTED AT THE STANDS AND SAID: "THOSE PEOPLE HAVE COME TO SEE ME IN ACTION - NOT YOU!"

ON THIS OCCASION, YOU ARE GATHERED TO LISTEN, NOT TO ~~ME~~, BUT TO ^{MY WORDS} ~~THESE~~ ~~of~~ DR. KOORNHOFF, AND I NOW ASK ~~HIM~~ TO ADDRESS US.

*Dr van Wyk to deliver the opening
address on his behalf*