

SPEECH NIGHT, ST ANDREW'S SCHOOL, SENDERWOOD, JOHANNESBURG

FRIDAY 6 NOVEMBER 1981

IT WAS WITH GREAT PLEASURE AND A SENSE OF PRIVILEGE THAT I ACCEPTED THE INVITATION TO ADDRESS YOU ON THIS AUSPICIOUS OCCASION THIS EVENING. IN THE FIRST INSTANCE THE ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE A GOOD MANY MONTHS AGO AND SO I COULD COMFORTABLY POSTPONE MY THOUGHTS AS TO WHAT I SHOULD SAY TO YOU. NOW AS I STAND BEFORE YOU MY FEELINGS ARE THOSE FAMILIAR ONES WHICH EVERY TEAM MEMBER EXPERIENCES JUST AS THE WHISTLE BLOWS TO SIGNAL THE START OF AN IMPORTANT MATCH - AN AWAY MATCH OF COURSE.

IN A MORE SERIOUS VEIN IT IS AN HONOUR FOR ME TO BE ADDRESSING THE SCHOOL WHICH MY MOTHER ATTENDED. MR SIMMONDS WAS KIND ENOUGH TO SEND

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ME A COPY OF THE PAGE OF THE SCHOOL REGISTER ON WHICH HER NAME IS INSCRIBED. MY MOTHER WAS ONE OF THE MOST TRULY EDUCATED PEOPLE WHOM IT HAS BEEN MY PRIVILEGE TO KNOW, AND SO AT ONE REMOVE I OWE A PERSONAL DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO ST ANDREW'S FOR ITS PART IN MY OWN EDUCATION. SECONDLY, MY WIFE AND I HAVE BOTH KNOWN MR SIMMONDS FOR MANY YEARS AND HAVE THE DEEPEST AFFECTION AND RESPECT FOR HIM. IF I CONFIRM TO YOU THAT HE WAS ONE OF HER GEOGRAPHY STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY I SHALL LEAVE YOU TO SPECULATE AS TO WHAT THAT IMPLIES ABOUT HIS AGE OR HERS.

ONE OF THE MORE IMPORTANT EVENTS IN SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION IN RECENT YEARS HAS BEEN THE PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT OF THE MAIN COMMITTEE OF THE HSRC INVESTIGATION INTO EDUCATION, ENTITLED "PROVISION OF EDUCATION IN THE RSA". THIS MODESTLY SIZED VOLUME OF 221 PAGES, INEVITABLY

DUBBED THE DE LANGE REPORT, AFTER THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE, IS THE DISTILLATION OF OVER 40 000 PAGES OF SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS AND OF THE COLLECTIVE WISDOM OF SOME L 300 PEOPLE WHO EITHER PARTICIPATED IN THE DELIBERATIONS, GAVE EVIDENCE OR SUBMITTED MEMORANDA.

THE DE LANGE REPORT IS NOTEWORTHY FOR WHAT IT IS, BUT EQUALLY SIGNIFICANTLY, FOR WHAT IT IS NOT. IT IS NOT THE REPORT OF A GOVERNMENT COMMISSION, NOR IS IT PART OF THE PLATFORM OF A POLITICAL PARTY. IN SHORT IT IS NOT A POLITICAL DOCUMENT, BUT RATHER A TIMEOUS AND PRAISEWORTHY ATTEMPT BY A COMMITTEE OF TWENTY-FIVE MEN AND ONE WOMAN, DISTINGUISHED BY THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OR INTEREST IN EDUCATION, TO ARRIVE AT OBJECTIVE PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS WHEREBY THE PROBLEMS BESETTING THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH

AFRICA MAY BE ADDRESSED. BEARING IN MIND THE TIMESPAN OF A LITTLE OVER A YEAR ALLOTTED TO THE TASK, THE REPORT IS TRULY A REMARKABLE ONE. IT IS THE FIRST SERIOUS ATTEMPT IN SOUTH AFRICA, AND ONE OF FEW IN THE WORLD, TO EXAMINE EDUCATION IN A CALM, SCIENTIFIC AND DISPASSIONATE MANNER. THE VIEW HAS BEEN EXPRESSED THAT ANY QUALIFIED GROUP OF PEOPLE, EXAMINING THE EVIDENCE PRESENTED, WOULD HAVE COME TO THE SAME OR VERY SIMILAR CONCLUSIONS. THE VERY FACT THAT ALL AVAILABLE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE, FROM SUCH DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AND EXPERIENCE, WERE ABLE TO SIGN THE DOCUMENT IS STRONG EVIDENCE FOR ITS NONPARTISAN NATURE. IT IS THEREFORE WITH A SENSE OF CONSIDERABLE DISAPPOINTMENT THAT ONE EXAMINES THE GOVERNMENT'S INITIAL RESPONSE TO THE REPORT, WHICH TAKES THE FORM OF AN INTERIM MEMORANDUM. IT IS TO BE DEVOUTLY HOPED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S CONSIDERED REACTION, AFTER TAKING INTO

ACCOUNT THE VIEWS OF INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS, AS WELL AS THOSE OF ITS OWN WORKING PARTY, WILL BE MORE ENCOURAGING. BE THAT AS IT MAY, THERE CAN BE NO WISHING AWAY OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF SUCH A BLUE-RIBBON COMMITTEE, SO THOROUGHLY AND INDUSTRIOUSLY ARRIVED AT.

THE HEART OF THE REPORT LIES IN ELEVEN BASIC PRINCIPLES WHOSE ANNUNCIATION OCCUPIES LESS THAN TWO PAGES. AS ONE STUDIES THESE PRINCIPLES IT IS DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE SERIOUS AND INFORMED DISAGREEMENT WITH THEM. AS WITH ANY SET OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES, HOWEVER, THE VITAL QUESTION IS THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY ARE INTERPRETED AND IMPLEMENTED. FOR OUR PURPOSES TONIGHT I WISH TO DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO ONLY TWO OF THEM, THE THIRD AND THE EIGHTH, WHICH READ AS FOLLOWS:

"EDUCATION SHALL GIVE POSITIVE RECOGNITION TO THE FREEDOM OF CHOICE OF THE INDIVIDUAL, PARENTS AND ORGANISATIONS IN SOCIETY", AND

"PROVISIONS SHALL BE MADE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND STATE SUBSIDISATION OF PRIVATE EDUCATION WITHIN THE SYSTEM OF PROVIDING EDUCATION".

THESE TWO PRINCIPLES, TAKEN IN TERMS OF THE PLAIN AND OBVIOUS MEANING OF THEIR WORDING, CONTAIN GREAT ENCOURAGEMENT FOR A SCHOOL SUCH AS ST ANDREW'S. IT IS PRECISELY BECAUSE PARENTS SET SUCH STORE BY THEIR FREEDOM TO SELECT WHAT TYPE OF EDUCATION THEY WISH TO HAVE THEIR CHILDREN EXPERIENCE THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO MAKE THE SACRIFICES NECESSARY TO SUPPORT A SCHOOL SUCH AS THIS. IT IS SURELY A CONSTRAINT

NOT BELONGING TO THE SCIENTIFIC DOMAIN THAT THE GREAT MAJORITY OF PARENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA FIND IT EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT EVEN THEORETICALLY TO EXERCISE THAT DEGREE OF FREEDOM OF CHOICE. LET US HOPE THAT THE REACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT IN ITS INTERIM MEMORANDUM IS NOT ITS FINAL WORD ON THIS PARTICULAR SUBJECT. LEST WE IMAGINE THAT ONLY SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICIANS HAVE A BLIND SPOT IN THIS ARENA, LET ME REFER TO A REVIEW IN A RECENT EDITION OF PUNCH OF A BOOK "POLITICS IS FOR PEOPLE" BY THE CURRENT DARLING OF THE NEW BRITISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, THE INIMITABLE MRS SHIRLEY WILLIAMS, WHO OUGHT TO KNOW BETTER. THE REVIEWER, ALSO BLESSED WITH THE NAME OF WILLIAMS, QUOTES HER AS FOLLOWS "IT IS WITH RELUCTANCE THAT I FOR ONE CONCLUDE THAT THE FREEDOM TO SEND ONE'S CHILDREN TO AN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL IS BOUGHT AT TOO HIGH A PRICE FOR THE REST OF SOCIETY". HE THEN COMMENTS "AND WHO IS SHE, OR

ANYONE ELSE, TO DECREE THAT PARENTS SHAN'T SPEND THEIR MONEY, HARD EARNED OR GOT BY LUCK, ON THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION INSTEAD OF ON DRUNKEN FLIGHTS TO ATHENS TO WATCH STOKE NEWINGTON WANDERERS GET LICKED?" AT LEAST WE ARE SPARED THAT PARTICULAR BRAND OF GOBBLEDYGOOK IN SOUTH AFRICA.

GRANTED THE FREEDOM FOR PRIVATE SCHOOLS TO EXIST SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE ALWAYS HAD TO PAY AN INEQUITABLE PRICE TO MAKE USE OF THEM. THE SECOND DE LANGE PRINCIPLE I HAVE MENTIONED IS THEREFORE OF THE UTMOST SIGNIFICANCE. IT IS WORTHWHILE QUOTING THE REPORT'S OWN COMMENT ON THIS RECOMMENDATION

"STATE SUBSIDISATION OF PRIVATE EDUCATION WOULD IMPLY SOUTH AFRICA'S ENTERING A NEW PHASE IN WHICH PRIVATE EDUCATION WILL NO

LONGER BE LIMITED TO A SELECT FEW WHO CAN AFFORD IT, BUT WILL BECOME A MEANS THROUGH WHICH STATE ASSISTANCE CAN BE AFFORDED TO THOSE WHO MAKE PARTICULAR DEMANDS ON EDUCATION WHICH GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS CANNOT OR WILL NOT MEET."

IF WE COUPLE THIS WITH AMENDMENTS TO THE INCOME TAX ACT WHEREBY UP TO CERTAIN LIMITS DONATIONS TO SCHOOLS WILL QUALIFY FOR TAX RELIEF, THEN THERE ARE REASONABLE PROSPECTS FOR THE FINANCIAL BURDENS ON PRIVATE SCHOOLS BEING VERY CONSIDERABLY RELAXED.

LET US HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT, WHICH HAS ALREADY STATED THAT IT ACCEPTS THESE PRINCIPLES SUBJECT TO CERTAIN RESERVATIONS, WILL CALCULATE SUBSIDIES TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN A FAIR-MINDED AND UNGRUDGING

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MANNER. THE REPORT ITSELF PROVIDES SOME STATISTICS THAT MAKE IT WORTHWHILE TO SPECULATE ON A BASIS ON WHICH AN EQUITABLE SUBSIDY COULD BE CALCULATED. ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT STATISTICS IN ANY EDUCATION SYSTEM IS THE PUPIL:TEACHER RATIO. THE HSRC REPORT PROVIDES US WITH THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

<u>POPULATION GROUP</u>	<u>TEACHER: PUPIL RATIO</u>
WHITE	20.16
ASIANS	27.21
COLOURED	29.52
BLACKS	48.47

IF THE GOAL OF PARITY IN EDUCATIONAL QUALITY IS ACCEPTED THE REPORT CONCLUDES THAT BRINGING ALL SCHOOLS UP TO THE WHITE RATIO IMPLIES A

VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FINANCIAL BURDEN. INSTEAD, IT PROPOSES THAT THE PRESENT RATIO OF COLOURED OF APPROXIMATELY 30:1 BE ACCEPTED AS AN ATTAINABLE NORM FOR ALL RACE GROUPS. THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE OF THE GOLDEN MEAN IN THAT THE POSITION OF THE WHITES WILL BE ATTENUATED BY EXACTLY THE SAME RATIO (3:2) AS WHICH THAT OF THE BLACKS WILL BE IMPROVED. IN OTHER WORDS THE PRESENT RUNNING COSTS PER WHITE PUPIL PER ANNUM OF APPROXIMATELY R1 100 WILL REDUCE TO ABOUT R750. IN EQUITY, THEREFORE PRIVATE SCHOOLS SHOULD BE ACCORDED A SUBSIDY OF R750 PER PUPIL. LOOKED AT IN A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT WAY A 30:1 TEACHER:PUPIL RATIO WOULD PROVIDE A SCHOOL SUCH AS YOURS WITH EIGHT TEACHER SALARIES, APPROXIMATELY HALF OF THE TEACHER SALARY BILL THUS TO BE MET BY THE STATE. IT NEEDS NO GREAT EFFORT OF IMAGINATION ON THE PART OF THIS AUDIENCE TO APPRECIATE WHAT A PROFOUNDLY SALUTARY EFFECT SUCH A DISPENSATION WOULD HAVE ON THE FINANCES OF THE SCHOOL.

IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN A SOURCE OF AMAZEMENT TO ME THAT SUCH AN OBVIOUSLY RATIONAL PRINCIPLE HAS BEEN SO VEHEMENTLY RESISTED, ESPECIALLY HERE IN THE TRANSVAAL. THE OTHER PROVINCES HAVE ACCEPTED IT TO A GREATER OR LESSER DEGREE, WITH THE ORANGE FREE STATE BEING THE PACE SETTER. YOUR NAMESAKE SCHOOL IN BLOEMFONTEIN ALREADY ENJOYS THESE ADVANTAGES IN FULL MEASURE. THE OPPOSITION IS EVEN MORE PUZZLING WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THE CLEAR ANALOGY OF OUR HEALTH SERVICES. AS WITH EDUCATION THE COST OF MEDICAL TREATMENT HAS RISEN BEYOND THE ABILITY OF ALL BUT A SMALL MINORITY TO MEET IN FULL. TO OUR GREAT GOOD FORTUNE WE HAVE AVOIDED THE BUREAUCRATIC RIGIDITIES OF A NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE OF THE TYPE ENSHRINED IN BRITAIN. INSTEAD, MOST OF US BELONG TO ONE TYPE OR OTHER OF MEDICAL AID SCHEME WHOSE COSTS ARE MET PARTIALLY BY OURSELVES, PARTIALLY BY EMPLOYERS AND PARTIALLY (AND INDIRECTLY) BY THE STATE

THROUGH VARIOUS TAX CONCESSIONS. EIGHTY PERCENT OF THE COSTS OF TREATMENT, ACCORDING TO A FIXED SCHEDULE, ARE REIMBURSED TO US. IF WE WISH TO ENJOY MORE EXPENSIVE TREATMENT THAN THE TARIFF ALLOWS WE ARE FREE TO DO SO BY PATRONISING PRIVATE DOCTORS AND PRIVATE HOSPITALS WHICH HAVE "OPTED OUT" OF THE OFFICIAL TARIFFS. THE DE LANGE REPORT IN EFFECT IS ADVOCATING THAT THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION SHOULD BE ALONG THE SAME GENERAL FINANCIAL LINES AS THAT OF HEALTH CARE. ANY OFFICIAL RELUCTANCE TO ACCEPT SUCH A PROPOSAL IN REALITY IMPLIES THAT EDUCATION, WHOSE NECESSITY IS UNAVOIDABLE, IS REGARDED AS BEING OF LESSER CONSEQUENCE THAN MEDICAL ATTENTION, THE NEED FOR WHICH WITH LUCK AND CARE CAN BE MINIMISED.

IN ADDITION TO ITS RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING PRIVATE SCHOOLS THE DE LANGE REPORT THROUGH ITS VERY APPROACH AND TONE, PROVIDES A VERY

VALUABLE REINFORCEMENT OF THE SENSE OF VISION AND BALANCE WHICH IS PART OF THE BASIC ETHOS OF PEOPLE WHO HABITUALLY LOOK DISPASSIONATELY AT ALL SIDES OF A QUESTION. ONCE ONE HAS MADE UP ONE'S MIND CAREFULLY THEN ENTHUSIASM IS A QUALITY WHICH IS FREQUENTLY PUT BEFORE US IN POSITIVE TERMS. ITS ETYMOLOGY, DERIVED FROM THE GREEK, IMPLIES ALMOST A POSSESSION BY GOD, A SORT OF INSPIRATION. ENTHUSIASM, IN THE SENSE OF A FORM OF INSPIRATION, IS INDEED A POSITIVE QUALITY, TO BE ADMIRERD AND PROMOTED IN BOTH INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES, EVEN IN COMMITTEE REPORTS. UNFORTUNATELY, THERE IS A DARKER SIDE TO ENTHUSIASM. IF ONE AVOIDS THE CAREFUL WEIGHING UP PROCESS, BECAUSE OF THE NATURAL HUMAN PROPENSITY TO ELIMINATE THE DIFFICULT BUSINESS OF THINKING, THEN ENTHUSIASM FOR AN ACTIVITY OR CAUSE CAN ALL TOO EASILY LEAD TO OBSESSION, EVEN FRENZY, AND THUS TO A LOSS OF OBJECTIVITY AND SENSE OF

JUDGEMENT CONCERNING THE WORLD AROUND US. THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ANGLICAN BISHOPS IN ENGLAND FOR EXAMPLE, SECURE IN THEIR COMPLACENCY, CONDEMNED THE PHENOMENON OF WESLEY, WHITEFIELD AND THEIR FOLLOWERS AS MERE ENTHUSIASM. ENTHUSIASM, IN THIS NEGATIVE SENSE OF OBSESSION OR FRENZY, CAN BE, AND HAS BEEN THROUGHOUT HUMAN HISTORY A VERY DANGEROUS TEMPTATION. THE DISTINGUISHED ENGLISH CHURCHMAN RONALD KNOX WROTE A WHOLE BOOK ON THE SUBJECT, SHEDDING VALUABLE LIGHT ON SOME OF THE MORE DEPLORABLE EPISODES IN HISTORY, DEPLORABLE MORE PARTICULARLY BECAUSE WHAT STARTED AS NOBLE AND GENEROUS IMPULSES DEGENERATED INTO A NARROW, INTOLERANT AND EXCLUSIVE VIEW OF THE WORLD. KNOX DESCRIBES THE PHENOMENON VERY SUCCINCTLY IN THESE WORDS:

"THERE IS, I WOULD SAY, A RECURRENT SITUATION IN CHURCH HISTORY - USING THE WORD 'CHURCH' IN THE WIDEST SENSE - WHERE AN EXCESS OF

CHARITY THREATENS UNITY. YOU HAVE A CLIQUE, AN ÉLITE, OF CHRISTIAN MEN AND (MORE IMPORTANTLY) WOMEN, WHO ARE TRYING TO LIVE A LESS WORDLY LIFE THAN THEIR NEIGHBOURS; TO BE MORE ATTENTIVE TO THE GUIDANCE (DIRECTLY FELT, THEY WOULD TELL YOU) OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. MORE AND MORE, BY A KIND OF FATALITY, YOU SEE THEM DRAW APART FROM THEIR CO-RELIGIONISTS, A HIVE READY TO SWARM. THERE IS PROVOCATION ON BOTH SIDES; ON THE ONE PART, CHEAP JOKES AT THE EXPENSE OF OVER-GODLINESS, ACTS OF STUPID REPRESSION BY UNSYMPATHETIC AUTHORITIES; ON THE OTHER, CONTEMPT OF THE HALF-CHRISTIAN, OMINOUS REFERENCES TO OLD WINE AND NEW BOTTLES, TO THE KERNEL AND THE HUSK. THEN, WHILE YOU HOLD YOUR BREATH AND TURN AWAY YOUR EYES IN FEAR, THE BREAK COMES; CONDEMNATION OR SECESSION, WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE? A FRESH NAME HAS BEEN ADDED TO THE LIST OF CHRISTIANITIES."

THE HALLMARK OF AN ENTHUSIAST OF THE TYPE I AM CONSIDERING IS THAT HE HAS TAKEN ONE ASPECT OF WHAT WAS A TRUE AND PERHAPS ORIGINAL INSIGHT AND UNCONSCIOUSLY DISTORTED HIS CENTRAL THEME TO THE POINT THAT IT OCCUPIES THE WHOLE SPIRITUAL, INTELLECTUAL OR POLITICAL STAGE. SUCH AN ENTHUSIAST THEN BECOMES MORE NOTABLE FOR CONDEMNING THOSE WHO DISAGREE WITH HIM THAN FOR PROMOTING THE POSITIVE BUT PARTIAL VISION WHICH IS HIS CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTION. THE BETTER TO CONFOUND HIS ENEMIES HE SIMPLIFIES HIS POSITION TO THE POINT THAT HE, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY HIS FOLLOWERS, ARE ONLY CAPABLE OF THINKING IN UNEXAMINED AND STEREOTYPED SLOGANS. LET US CONSIDER SOME OF THESE SLOGANS. THEY WILL NO DOUBT BE SUFFICIENTLY FAMILIAR TO YOU NOT TO REQUIRE ELABORATE ELUCIDATION:

MY COUNTRY RIGHT OR WRONG  
JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE

ONE MAN ONE VOTE IN A UNITARY STATE  
ONE (WHITE) MAN ONE VOTE  
LET THEM DEVELOP ALONG THEIR OWN LINES  
POWER TO THE PEOPLE  
FROM EACH ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY, TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS NEEDS  
ALUTA CONTINUA  
LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY

I DO NOT KNOW WHAT YOUR REACTION IS ON HEARING AN ARGUMENT BY SLOGAN. MY RESPONSE TENDS TO BE A CAUTIOUS "YES, BUT .....". THE ENTHUSIAST, HOWEVER, (OR PERHAPS WE SHOULD CALL HIM BY HIS RIGHTFUL TITLE, THE FANATIC) WILL HAVE NONE OF THAT. HE IS A STAUNCH SUPPORTER OF THE BIBLICAL INJUNCTION "HE WHO IS NOT WITH US IS AGAINST US" RATHER THAN

OF THE COMPETING "HE WHO IS NOT AGAINST US IS FOR US". THERE IS NO ROOM FOR BUTS IN HIS SCHEME OF THINGS, AND HIS ARMOURY OF INVECTIVE AGAINST WAVERERS AND BACKSLIDERS LIKE YOU AND ME IS IMPRESSIVE. "SELLOUT", "COLLABORATOR", "FELLOW-TRAVELLER" OR "RUNNING DOG OF IMPERIALISM" ARE AMONGST THE MILDER EPITHETS.

THE ENTHUSIAST ALWAYS HAS A RADICALLY SIMPLE, SINGLE-MINDED ANSWER FOR THE ILLS OF THE WORLD. FOR JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU OUR PROBLEMS WOULD MELT AWAY IF ONLY THE WORLD COULD BE PERSUADED TO RETURN TO THE PRISTINE INNOCENCE OF THE NOBLE SAVAGE. SIGMUND FREUD WOULD HAVE HAD US BELIEVE THAT IF WE COULD ONLY RID OURSELVES OF OUR SUBCONSCIOUS REPRESSIONS, ESPECIALLY OUR SEXUAL ONES, WE SHOULD ALL LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER. KARL MARX HAD THE ANSWER IN THE ECONOMIC THESIS,

ANTITHESIS AND FINALLY THE SYNTHESIS OF DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM. AFTER THE FINAL TRIUMPH OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT THE STATE WOULD WITHER AWAY TO USHER IN THE MILLENIUM. HENDRIK VERWOERD SAW THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL CONFLICT IN THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF THE CONTACT BETWEEN THE RACES THAT INEXORABLY LEADS TO FRICTION.

IF ENTHUSIASTS FIND THEMSELVES IN A POSITION OF POWER IT BODES ILL FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT RAPIDLY SEE THE ERROR OF THEIR WAYS AND BECOME TRUE BELIEVERS. IF PERSUASION DOES NOT INFLUENCE THEIR STUBBORN MINDS THEN THEIR ACQUIESCENCE MUST BE COMPELLED. THEY ARE POLITICALLY RE-EDUCATED, MOVED, BANISHED, DETAINED, OR IN CASES OF EXTREME STUBBORNNESS ELIMINATED OR "LIQUIDATED". THE WORLD IS STILL PAINFULLY FAMILIAR WITH THE PERSUASIVE METHODS OF ADOLF HITLER OR JOSEPH STALIN. TODAY, AS

ALWAYS, THERE IS NO LACK OF ENTHUSIASTS. LEAST THE MEMORY OF THOSE OF A GENERATION BACK GROWS DIM, WE NEED BUT REMIND OURSELVES OF THE EXPLOITS OF FIDEL CASTRO, IDI AMIN, COLONEL GADDAFI OR THE AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI.

THE STARTING POINT OF MY DELINEATION OF THE ABERRATIONS OF MISPLACED ENTHUSIASM, YOU WILL RECOLLECT, WAS MY PERCEPTION OF THE BREADTH OF VISION AND BALANCE EXHIBITED BOTH BY THE DE LANGE REPORT AND BY THE HERITAGE OF THE KIND OF EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT WHICH I KNOW THAT YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED IN THIS SCHOOL. HAROLD MACMILLAN, FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF BRITAIN, ONCE RECALLED THAT AT HIS FIRST LECTURE AT OXFORD THE PROFESSOR TOLD THE CLASS "WHAT YOU WILL STUDY IN MY COURSE WILL BE OF NO CONCEIVABLE PRACTICAL USE TO YOU IN ANY CAREER, BUT IT WILL AT

LEAST ENABLE YOU TO TELL WHEN SOMEBODY IS TALKING ROT". THIS CHARACTERISTIC OF A TRAINED MIND IS NO MEAN ONE, AND I HOPE THAT YOU WILL HAVE IMBIBED SOMETHING OF THAT ASPECT OF EDUCATION, THE PERMANENT INOCULATION AGAINST INTELLECTUAL NOSTRUMS AND QUACKERY, BEFORE YOU LEAVE ST ANDREW'S TO MAKE YOUR WAY IN THE WORLD. EVEN THIS TRAINING OF THE MIND THROUGH ACADEMIC PURSUITS, HOWEVER VITAL THOUGH IT IS, IS NOT THE ONLY IMPORTANT ASPECT OF EDUCATION. IN THESE DAYS OF FEWER AND FEWER BARS AGAINST WOMEN IN VIRTUALLY EVERY WALK OF LIFE, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTIONS OF MINING AND STEELMAKING, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO ACQUIRE SOME USEFUL KNOWLEDGE THAT WILL PREPARE YOU FOR A CAREER. IN THE STRICTLY CLASSICAL EDUCATION OF PREVIOUS GENERATIONS THERE WAS AT TIMES AN OVEREMPHASIS ON THE PURELY ACADEMIC AND AESTHETIC PREPARATION OF LADIES AND GENTLEMEN WHOSE CIRCUMSTANCES DID NOT REQUIRE THEM TO

EARN A LIVING IN MANUFACTURING, A TRADE OR A PROFESSION. IN OUR PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES IN SOUTH AFRICA OF A VAST SURPLUS OF UNSKILLED AND POTENTIALLY UNEMPLOYABLE PEOPLE COUPLED WITH CRIPPLING SHORTAGES OF SKILLED PERSONPOWER IN PRACTICALLY EVERY AVOCATION, THERE IS PERHAPS BEGINNING TO BE A DANGER OF OVEREMPHASISING THE ACQUISITION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE, TO THE DETRIMENT OF PRODUCING A WELL-BALANCED AND EDUCATED CITIZENRY. NONETHELESS, IF WE ACCEPT THE DE LANGE FIGURES THAT WHITE SCHOOLS ACCENTUATE ACADEMIC OVER TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN THE RATIO OF 80:20, WHILE FOR BLACKS THE RATIO IS AN ASTONISHING 99:1, THEN THE PENDULUM HAS A GREAT DISTANCE TO SWING BEFORE WE ARE OUT OF BALANCE IN THIS OPPOSITE DIRECTION!

BE THAT AS IT MAY, ALL PRESENT AT THIS SPEECH DAY GATHERING, WHETHER YOU ARE A PARENT, A PUPIL OR MEMBER OF STAFF OR OF THE COUNCIL, HAVE

CHOSEN, OFTEN AT GREAT SACRIFICE, TO SUPPORT ST ANDREW'S BECAUSE YOU BELIEVE IN THE KIND OF EDUCATION IT PROVIDES. FROM WHAT I KNOW OF YOUR SCHOOL AND YOUR PRINCIPAL YOUR CONFIDENCE IS NOT MISPLACED. THE PUBLICATION OF THE DE LANGE REPORT GIVES ONE GROUNDS FOR CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM THAT THE POWERFUL AND VALUABLE EDUCATIVE ROLE PLAYED BY THE PRIVATE SCHOOLS IS DUE AT LAST FOR A MORE APPRECIATIVE OFFICIAL RECOGNITION. EVERY AGENCY BE IT FORMAL, INFORMAL OR NONFORMAL, TO USE THE CATEGORIES IN THE REPORT, WILL HAVE TO BE PRESSED INTO MAXIMUM SERVICE IF SOUTH AFRICA IS EVER TO HOPE TO SET TO RIGHTS ITS SHAMEFUL PAST NEGLECT OF THE WHOLE SCHOOLING PROCESS. IN THIS GREAT WORK ST ANDREW'S WILL CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN A PROUD POSITION.

IT REMAINS FOR ME NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, TO CONGRATULATE THOSE WHOSE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SCHOOL OVER THE PAST YEAR HAVE RECEIVED DUE

PUBLIC RECOGNITION, TO OFFER ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE WHO WILL TAKE OVER POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY NEXT YEAR, TO WISH EVERY SUCCESS TO THOSE ABOUT TO EMBARK ON THE ARDUOUS BUSINESS OF WRITING PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS, AND TO SAY GODSPEED TO ALL WHO WILL SHORTLY BE EMBARKING ON THE NEXT PHASE OF THEIR CAREERS. IT HAS BEEN A GREAT PLEASURE AND A PRIVILEGE FOR MY WIFE AND MYSELF TO HAVE BEEN YOUR GUESTS TONIGHT. AS WE WING OUR WAY BACK TO A CERTAIN COUNTRY TOWN IN THE EASTERN CAPE, MR HEADMASTER, WE SHALL TAKE WITH US SOME FOND MEMORIES AND FINE IMPRESSIONS.

DR D S HENDERSON  
RHODES UNIVERSITY

6 NOVEMBER 1981