

SPEECH OF WELCOME BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, DR D S HENDERSON

"LAWYERS DAY" TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1985

Systems of law and those who administer them have had a bad press for centuries – Solon (c.630 – c.555 BC) said:

"Laws are like spiders' webs: if some poor weak creature come up against them, it is caught; but a bigger one can break through and get away".

Jonathan Swift, in the 18th Century, had the same idea, though he was more poetic about it:

"Laws are like cobwebs, which may catch small flies, but let wasps and hornets break through".

Shakespeare, who bridged the 17th and 18th Centuries, had one of his characters in Henry VI part 2 state, rather baldly:

"The first thing we do, lets kill all the lawyers".

Perhaps the problem is the fault neither of the law nor the lawyers, but rather the deep-seated human inability to admit error. When the case goes my way, the lawyer is brilliant, the master of the situation, honest and learned. When it goes against me he is incompetent and, probably, a crook.

The medical and teaching professions labour under similar problems. The patient's illness could have been caused by his misuse of his body, but he still expects his doctor to cure it. The pupil may have failed through lack of application to his studies, but the teacher is almost always blamed.

The legal profession in South Africa has, despite all I have said, a fine reputation and has produced men of great integrity, wisdom and learning. We

are proud that this University has nurtured many of them. ~~At least 15 OR 3~~  
~~have~~ ~~are~~ Judges Ru has produced at least 15 Judges - including  
the present JP of E Cape, and the 1st Chief Justice of Zimb. Several  
At this particular time in the history of our country, the importance of the  
legal system is paramount. We need men who are able to deal objectively, ~~of~~ ~~legal~~  
justly, and learnedly with those they represent, prosecute or judge. ~~Students~~

I am happy to welcome you to Rhodes today and I hope that your discussions with the staff of the Faculty of Law ~~will be~~ mutually beneficial.

1. Chief Justice of Zimbabwe  $\uparrow$  Judge Presidents  
 was first  $\downarrow$  Judges  
 have been  $\downarrow$  Appeal Ct Judges  
 15 VP at present  
 Several did part of studies



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*Surely 16 and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries!!  
He was long dead by 1700 the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> cent*

X  
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(too strong X)  
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X  
*The present Judge Presidents of the Natal and SWA Leuchers are also SR's. Work this in*

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