

SCHOLARS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

IT IS AN HONOUR TO HAVE BEEN INVITED TO PRESENT THE KEYNOTE SPEECH AT THE START OF YOUR CONFERENCE THIS EVENING, BUT YOU HAVE SET ME A DAUNTING TASK, ONE WHICH HAS CAUSED ME TO CONSIDER THE SUBJECT OF THE FUTURE FROM A NUMBER OF ANGLES DURING THE PAST FEW WEEKS. SINCE I DO NOT SET ANY CREDENCE BY ASTROLOGY OR CRYSTAL BALL-GAZING, I HAVEN'T COME UP WITH EASY ANSWERS FOR YOU.

PREDICTIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE RANGE FROM GLORIOUSLY ROSY TO SPAIRINGLY BLEAK, DEPENDING ON ONE'S POLITICAL, IDEOLOGICAL, SCIENTIFIC OR SPIRITUAL VIEWPOINT. WE HAVE TO MAKE EDUCATED GUESSES

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ABOUT THE FUTURE AND, OFTEN, THESE TURN OUT TO BE VERY WIDE OF THE MARK BECAUSE EVEN THE MOST PAINSTAKINGLY CAREFUL SCIENTIFIC ANALYSES CANNOT ACCOUNT FOR EVERY POSSIBLE FACTOR. WHO COULD HAVE PREDICTED THAT AIDS WOULD BE ONE OF THE MOST INSOLUBLE PROBLEMS OF THE LATE TWENTIETH CENTURY? IT IS, HOWEVER, IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER THE FUTURE BECAUSE WE AND OUR CHILDREN AND OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN WILL HAVE TO LIVE THERE.

THE THINGS THAT FACE US IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE ALSO COLOUR OUR VIEW. IF YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO A PARTY OR A HOLIDAY, YOUR ASSESSMENT OF THE FUTURE WILL PROBABLY BE ROSY, BUT IF YOU ARE FACING EXAMINATIONS, THE EXTRACTION OF A TOOTH, OR A WEEKEND WITH YOUR LEAST FAVOURITE AUNT, YOU WILL PROBABLY BE GLOOMY.

LET US AGREE, THEN, THAT ASSESSMENTS OF WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE FUTURE COULD RANGE FROM GEORGE ORWELL'S PROFOUNDLY DEPRESSING STATEMENT: "If YOU WANT A PICTURE OF THE FUTURE, IMAGINE A BOOT STAMPING ON A HUMAN FACE - FOR EVER"; TO: "I HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE, AND IT WORKS" - A STATEMENT MADE BY LINCOLN STEFFENS AFTER VISITING MOSCOW IN 1919, TWO YEARS AFTER THE REVOLUTION. BOTH STATEMENTS WERE MISGUIDED AND ONE-SIDED, ALTHOUGH BOTH HAVE AN ELEMENT OF TRUTH, BUT THEY DO ILLUSTRATE HOW OUR OWN EXPERIENCE COLOURS OUR VIEW OF THE FUTURE. GEORGE ORWELL DID NOT DID NOT MEET MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA AND HER SISTERS; JOSEF STALIN WAS NOT IN POWER WHEN STEFFENS VISITED MOSCOW - BUT MY JUDGEMENTS ARE MADE IN THE LIGHT OF HINDSIGHT, WHICH YOU MAY EL IS UNFAIR.

PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST USEFUL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE FUTURE, IF YOU CONSIDER IT CAREFULLY, IS THAT MADE BY T S ELIOT IN FOUR QUARTETS:

"TIME PRESENT AND TIME PAST
ARE BOTH PERHAPS PRESENT IN TIME FUTURE,
AND TIME FUTURE CONTAINED IN TIME PRESENT"

IT MAY SEEM A LITTLE CRYPTIC WHEN YOU FIRST CONSIDER IT, BUT IF YOU ARE LOOKING TO YOUR OWN FUTURE, YOU WILL SEE THAT WHAT YOU WERE AND DID IN THE PAST, AND WHAT YOU ARE AND ARE DOING NOW BOTH HAVE A BEARING ON YOUR FUTURE.

ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE FUTURE IS TO LOOK AT HISTORY. THIS MAY APPEAR AT FIRST TO BE LOOKING IN THE WRONG DIRECTION, BUT, BECAUSE HUMAN BEINGS, WHO MAKE AND MOULD HISTORY, SEEM SUBJECT TO THE SAME STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES, FAILINGS AND VICTORIES, HISTORY WILL REMAIN AN

IMPORTANT AREA OF STUDY FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO MAKE THEIR MARK ON THE WORLD IN THE FUTURE. ONE OF THE GREAT TRAGEDIES OF MANKIND IS THAT WE SEEM INCAPABLE OF LEARNING FROM THE THE MISTAKES OF OTHERS RECORDED SO CLEARLY IN THE PAGES OF HISTORY.

PERHAPS THIS IS BECAUSE EACH GENERATION BELIEVES THAT IT HAS THE ANSWERS THAT THE PRECEDING GENERATION SOUGHT IN VAIN. THIS MAY BE TRUE WHEN WE LOOK AT THE FIELDS OF SCIENCE, MEDICINE, MATHEMATICS AND THE ARTS, ALTHOUGH IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT FOR EACH PROBLEM SOLVED ANOTHER EMERGES. HOWEVER SOPHISTICATED OUR SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE MAY BE, HOWEVER WELL WE SEEM ABLE TO MANIPULATE AND MANAGE OUR ENVIRONMENT, WE SEEM UNABLE TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE PROBLEMS CAUSED BY HUMAN GREED

AND PRIDE. IF WE ANALYSE THE CAUSES OF SUFFERING, WE MOST OFTEN FIND GREED AND PRIDE AS THE ROOT CAUSE OF VIOLENCE - FROM BABY BATTERING TO GLOBAL WARFARE.

THESE TWO HUMAN FAILINGS ARE, SURELY, AT THE ROOT OF OUR INABILITY TO LEARN THE LESSONS OF HISTORY.

IN HER BOOK, THE MARCH OF FOLLY, BARBARA TUCHMAN WRITES:

"A PHENOMENON NOTICEABLE THROUGHOUT HISTORY, REGARDLESS OF PLACE OR PERIOD IS THE PURSUIT BY GOVERNMENTS OF POLICIES CONTRARY TO THEIR OWN INTERESTS. MANKIND, IT SEEMS, MAKES A POORER PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT THAN OF ALMOST ANY OTHER HUMAN ACTIVITY. IN THIS SPHERE, WISDOM, WHICH MAY BE DEFINED AS THE EXERCISE OF JUDGEMENT ACTING ON

EXPERIENCE, COMMON SENSE AND AVAILABLE INFORMATION, IS LESS OPERATIVE AND MORE FRUSTRATED THAN IT SHOULD BE. WHY DO HOLDERS OF HIGH OFFICE SO OFTEN ACT CONTRARY TO THE WAY REASON POINTS AND ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST SUGGESTS?...

"ELSEWHERE THAN IN GOVERNMENT MAN HAS ACCOMPLISHED MARVELS : INVENTED THE MEANS IN OUR LIFETIME TO LEAVE THE EARTH AND VOYAGE TO THE MOON; IN THE PAST HARNESSSED WIND AND ELECTRICITY, RAISED EARTHBOUND STONES INTO SOARING CATHEDRALS, WOVEN SILK BROCADES OUT OF THE SPINNINGS OF A WORM, CONSTRUCTED THE INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC, DERIVED MOTOR POWER FROM STEAM, CONTROLLED OR ELIMINATED DISEASES, PUSHED BACK THE NORTH SEA AND CREATED LAND IN ITS PLACE, CLASSIFIED THE FORMS OF NATURE, PENETRATED THE MYSTERIES OF THE COSMOS. 'WHILE ALL OTHER SCIENCES

HAVE ADVANCED' CONFESSED OUR SECOND PRESIDENT (OF THE UNITED STATES), JOHN ADAMS, 'GOVERNMENT IS AT A STAND; LITTLE BETTER PRACTICED HOW THAN THREE OR FOUR THOUSAND YEARS AGO'...

"IT MAY BE ASKED WHY, SINCE FOLLY OR PERVERSITY IS INHERENT IN INDIVIDUALS, SHOULD WE EXPECT ANYTHING ELSE OF GOVERNMENTS? THE REASON FOR CONCERN IS THAT FOLLY IN GOVERNMENT HAS MORE IMPACT ON MORE PEOPLE THAN INDIVIDUAL FOLLIES, AND THEREFORE GOVERNMENTS HAVE A GREATER DUTY TO ACT ACCORDING TO REASON."

IT MAY WELL BE THAT WE SHOULD RATHER BE CONCENTRATING ON DEALING WITH THE FOLLY AND PEVERSITY INHERENT IN INDIVIDUALS. THAT IS A VERY GOOD IDEA, YOU MIGHT SAY. BUT OF COURSE THAT MEANS STARTING WITH YOURSELF, AND ONE OF OUR GREATEST FAILINGS AS HUMAN BEINGS IS OUR AMAZING

CAPACITY TO JUSTIFY OURSELVES AND OUR ACTIONS. WE FIND IT VERY HARD TO ADMIT TO OUR FAILINGS AND NEED SOMEONE OR SOMETHING OUTSIDE OURSELVES TO EXPOSE THEM.

SOME MIGHT ADVOCATE TURNING TO THE CHURCH AS THE ANSWER TO THIS PROBLEM OF HUMAN FRAILTY, BUT IF WE LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH WE FIND A RECORD OF BIGOTRY AND BLOODY VIOLENCE ALMOST AS HORRIFYING AS THAT OF ANY OTHER HUMAN INSTITUTION. OUR FAITH MUST BE AN INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE OF GOD IF IT IS TO BE OF ANY USE TO US IN DEALING WITH THE FAILINGS THAT LEAD TO THE HORRORS THAT BESET MANKIND. IF YOU ARE HONEST WITH YOURSELF, YOU WILL ADMIT THAT YOUR MOTIVES FOR MANY OF YOUR ACTIONS AND WORDS, HOWEVER LAUDABLE THEY MAY BE ONCE THEY ARE EXPRESSED, ARE SELF-CENTRED. THIS KIND OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE CAN BE DEPRESSING, BUT UNTIL WE ADMIT TO THE ROOT OF

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EVIL WITHIN OURSELVES, WE CANNOT HOPE TO BECOME THE PEOPLE WE ARE CREATED TO BE, MAKING A POSITIVE AND CREATIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE LIVES OF THOSE AROUND US.

MATTHEW ARNOLD, IN DOVER BEACH, WRITTEN IN THE MIDDLE YEARS OF THE LAST CENTURY, SEEMS TO BE WRITING OF THE PRESENT AGE, WHEN HE SAYS:

"THE SEA OF FAITH
WAS ONCE, TOO, AT THE FULL, AND ROUND EARTH'S SHORE
LAY LIKE THE FOLDS OF A BRIGHT GIRDLE FURL'D.
BUT NOW I ONLY HEAR
ITS MELANCHOLY, LONG, WITHDRAWING ROAR,
RETREATING TO THE BREATH
OF THE NIGHT-WIND, DOWN THE VAST EDGES DREAR
AND NAKED SHINGLES OF THE WORLD.
AH, LOVE, LET US BE TRUE
TO ONE ANOTHER! FOR THE WORLD, WHICH SEEMS
TO LIE BEFORE US LIKE A LAND OF DREAMS,
SO VARIOUS, SO BEAUTIFUL, SO NEW,

HATH REALLY NEITHER JOY NOR LOVE, NOR LIGHT,
 NOR CERTITUDE, NOR PEACE, NOR HELP FOR PAIN;
 AND WE ARE HERE AS ON A DARKLING PLAIN
 SWEEPED WITH CONFUSED ALARMS OF STRUGGLE AND FLIGHT,
 WHERE IGNORANT ARMIES CLASH BY NIGHT."

THESE LINES WERE WRITTEN WHEN EXPECTATIONS WERE THAT LIFE COULD ONLY IMPROVE AND ARNOLD'S PESSIMISM SEEMS RATHER INCONGRUOUS - UNTIL ONE CONSIDERS WHAT HAS OCCURRED IN THE CENTURY SINCE HE WROTE THOSE LINES. MANY, IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD HAVE FOUND "NOR CERTITUDE, NOR PEACE, NOR HELP FOR PAIN" IN THE LONG YEARS OF THIS CENTURY.

THE 'IGNORANT ARMIES' WHICH 'CLASH BY NIGHT' HAVE BEEN AT IT FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. THE HISTORY OF EARLY CIVILIZATIONS IS FULL OF WAR AND MAN SEEMS TO HAVE BECOME ADEPT AT DEVELOPING MORE AND MORE SOPHISTICATED

WEAPONS OF DESTRUCTION. THERE HAVE, CERTAINLY, BEEN GREAT MEN AND WOMEN OF FAITH THROUGH THE CENTURIES, STANDING OUT LIKE BEACONS ON THE 'DARKLING PLAIN', BUT WE SEEM BOUND BY OUR NATURE TO FIGHT OUR BATTLES ANEW IN EACH SUCCEEDING GENERATION.

PERHAPS MY GENERATION MUST LIVE IN THE HOPE THAT YOUR GENERATION WILL CONCENTRATE YOUR MINDS AND HEARTS MORE ON LEARNING FROM THE MISTAKES OF HISTORY THAN PREVIOUS GENERATIONS, INCLUDING MY OWN, HAVE DONE. TAKE COURAGE FROM BENJAMIN DISRAELI, WHO SAID: "ALMOST EVERYTHING THAT IS GREAT HAS BEEN DONE BY YOUTH". THAT SHOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE YOUR INTELLECTUAL AND CREATIVE GIFTS BEFORE THEY BEGIN TO ATROPHY. THOSE IN THE KNOW TELL US THAT THE DEGENERATIVE PROCESSES ACCELERATE AFTER ONE REACHES ONE'S EARLY TWENTIES - SO YOU HAD BETTER GET MOVING.

YOU ARE PRIVILEGED, ALTHOUGH YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE AT PRESENT. YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN GIFTS OF INTELLECT WHICH COULD BE OF GREAT VALUE TO YOURSELVES AND THE SOCIETY IN WHICH YOU LIVE. YOU NEED TO TAKE CARE THAT YOU DO NOT MAKE BLUNDERS THAT WILL BLUNT OR DESTROY YOUR CAPACITY TO MAKE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE LIFE OF YOUR COMMUNITY.

PROBABLY THE GREATEST SCIENTIST WHO EVER LIVED, SIR ISAAC NEWTON, UNDERSTOOD WITH GREAT CLARITY HOW FAR OUR INTELLECTUAL ATTAINMENTS FALL SHORT OF OUR AMBITIONS. TOWARDS THE END OF HIS LONG AND ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER HE MODESTLY ASSESSED HIS ACHIEVEMENTS IN THESE

RDS:

"I DO NOT KNOW WHAT I MAY APPEAR TO THE WORLD; BUT TO MYSELF I SEEM TO HAVE BEEN ONLY LIKE A BOY PLAYING ON THE SEASHORE, AND DIVERTING MYSELF IN NOW AND THEN FINDING A SMOOTHER PEBBLE OR PRETTIER SHELL THAN ORDINARY, WHILST THE GREAT OCEAN OF TRUTH LAY ALL UNDISCOVERED BEFORE ME".

KNOWLEDGE IS SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY ACQUIRED AND PRECARIOUS AND UNCERTAIN IN ITS PRESERVATION AND TRANSMISSION. ITS EXTENSION IS EVEN MORE DEMANDING, AS ANYONE WITH EVEN THE SLIGHTEST EXPERIENCE OF EXPERIMENTATION OR RESEARCH WILL ATTEST.

WITH KNOWLEDGE, THEREFORE, AT THE CORE OF THE WHOLE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS, IT NEVER CEASES TO SURPRISE ME HOW CARELESS PEOPLE CAN BE

WITH IT. THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SOME, ALTHOUGH THERE CANNOT BE MANY TODAY, WHO AFFECT A 'HOLY IGNORANCE', CLAIMING THAT ANY KNOWLEDGE NOT RELATING TO THEOLOGY OR THE SCRIPTURES IS A BEST SUPERFLUOUS, AT WORST POSITIVELY HARMFUL.

OTHERS, THE VERY ANTITHESIS OF NEWTON, ARE SUPREMELY ARROGANT CONCERNING THEIR INTELLECTUAL ATTAINMENTS. A PARADIGM EXAMPLE OF THIS ATTITUDE IS ATTRIBUTED, PROBABLY UNFAIRLY, BUT CERTAINLY AMUSINGLY, TO A LEGENDARY MASTER OF BALLIOL, BY A GROUP OF UNDERGRADUATES IN THE 1870s:

FIRST COME I: MY NAME IS JOWETT.
THERE IS NO KNOWLEDGE BUT I KNOW IT.
I AM MASTER OF THIS COLLEGE:
WHAT I DON'T KNOW ISN'T KNOWLEDGE.

INTELLECTUAL ARROGANCE CAN BE A FAILING IN THOSE WHO HAVE DEVELOPED SPECIAL GIFTS IN A SPECIALISED WAY. BECAUSE ONE PERFORMS WELL IN A GIVEN AREA, IT IS EASY TO BELIEVE THAT ONE IS SUPERIOR TO OTHERS WHO DO NOT PERFORM SO WELL IN THE SAME FIELD, EVEN THOUGH THEY MAY BE ESPECIALLY GIFTED IN OTHER AREAS. THIS BLINDNESS TO THE TALENTS OF OTHERS CAN, AND DOES, LEAD PEOPLE TO ASSUME THAT THEIR OPINIONS AND JUDGEMENTS ON ALL SUBJECTS ARE INFALLIBLE - A VERY DANGEROUS CONCLUSION FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL, NO MATTER HOW GIFTED HE MAY BE IN HIS OWN FIELD.

A RIGID INTELLECTUAL ARROGANCE CAN, MORE DANGEROUSLY, LEAD ONE TO MAKE ERRORS IN ONE'S OWN FIELD OF OPERATIONS TOO. IF I REGARD MYSELF AS INFALLIBLE, I WILL FIND IT WELL-NIGH IMPOSSIBLE TO ACCEPT THAT I COULD

BE WRONG IN MY JUDGEMENTS - EVEN IF THE RESULTS OF MY OWN RESEARCH PROVE ME WRONG. THERE HAVE BEEN SOME TRAGIC EXAMPLES OF THIS, PARTICULARLY IN THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD.

THOSE WHO ARE LEADERS IN THEIR FIELDS HAVE A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO MAINTAIN THEIR INTEGRITY AND HUMILITY AT ALL COSTS - THEY ARE, IN FACT, THEIR MOST IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTES AND THE ABSENCE OF EITHER COULD BREAK A PROMISING CAREER.

AS WE CONTEMPLATE THE TROUBLED AND UNCERTAIN FUTURE OF OUR COUNTRY AND THE WORLD BEYOND ITS BORDERS, WE MUST ACCEPT THAT NOTHING OF LASTING VALUE WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED BY COMPROMISING, FEARING OR SUPPRESSING THE TRUTH. NO PARTY HAS A MONOPOLY ON THE TRUTH, ON RIGHTEOUSNESS OR ON

LEGITIMATE FEARS. WE HAVE AN AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY TO AVOID THE TEMPTATION OF GRANDSTANDING, OF PANDERING TO THE LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR AND OF PRESENTING PLAUSIBLE HALF TRUTHS WHEN IT SUITS US.

YOU, WHO HAVE BEEN SO PRIVILEGED IN YOUR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES CANNOT POSSIBLY SERVE YOUR COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE IF YOU DO NOT RESPECT THE TRUTH AND STRIVE EVER MORE DILIGENTLY TO KNOW IT. IF YOUR EDUCATION UP TO NOW MEANS ANYTHING AT ALL, OR WILL BE OF ANY CONSEQUENCE IN THE FUTURE, THAT IS YOUR BOUNDEN DUTY.

YOU WILL HAVE TO DECIDE HOW YOU ARE GOING TO EMPLOY THE OPPORTUNITIES WITH WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN SHOWERED. WILL YOU USE THEM TO FURTHER YOUR PERSONAL WEALTH, YOUR COMFORT, OR EVEN YOUR SECURITY? IS THAT ADEQUATE RECOMPENSE FOR ALL THE SACRIFICES THAT HAVE BEEN MADE ON YOUR BEHALF?

I DO NOT WISH TO LEAVE YOU WITH THE BELIEF THAT MY VIEW OF PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE IS ENTIRELY GLOOMY - THAT WOULD BE TOO DEPRESSING FOR ALL OF US. I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT, WHEN MAKING JUDGEMENTS TO BE POSITIVE IN THE ASSESSMENTS ONE MAKES. FOR EXAMPLE, JUDGE BY THE BEST, NOT THE WORST. JUDGE THE CHURCH BY ITS SAINTS, NOT THE SINNERS. WHEN ONE LOOKS AT THE FOLLIES AND FAILURES OF GOVERNMENTS, REMEMBER THE BENJAMIN FRANKLINS, THOMAS JEFFERSONS AND WILLIAM WILBERFORCES OF HISTORY AND LEARN FROM THEIR GIFTS AND SUCCESSES, AS WELL AS LEARNING FROM THE MISTAKES OF OTHER, LESS LAUDABLE EXAMPLES.

THERE IS HOPE IF YOU WILL SEEK IT. IT IS NOT MY TASK OR MY INTENTION TO CONVINCE YOU OF THIS, BECAUSE SPIRITUAL TRUTHS ARE NOT THE PRODUCT OF THE EXERCISE OF THE HUMAN MIND, HOWEVER WELL-DEVELOPED AND EDUCATED. I HOPE, HOWEVER, THAT I HAVE POINTED OUT TO YOU THE DANGERS

OF A LIFE WITH NO SPIRITUAL CONTENT. WE ALL HAVE A "COSMIC SQUINT", WHICH MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO BE SURE THAT THE VIEWS WE HOLD ARE CORRECT, BUT AS LONG AS WE RECOGNISE THIS AND SEEK THE TRUTH WE WILL NOT FALL INTO THE TRAP OF EITHER SPIRITUAL OR INTELLECTUAL ARROGANCE.

TO MOVE ON TO A PERHAPS MORE PRAGMATIC APPROACH TO THE FUTURE THAN THE ONE I HAVE OUTLINED PREVIOUSLY, WE NEED TO BE AWARE THAT IN THE 21ST CENTURY, WHERE MOST OF YOU WILL SPEND THE GREATER PART OF YOUR LIVES, A GREAT MANY JOBS WHICH ARE TAKEN FOR GRANTED TODAY, WILL SIMPLY HAVE DISAPPEARED.

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT EARLY IN THE NEXT CENTURY, WITH THE WIDER APPLICATION OF AUTOMATION AND ROBOTIZATION, SUFFICIENT MATERIAL GOODS

FOR ALL WILL BE PRODUCED BY ONLY TEN PERCENT OF THE POTENTIAL LABOUR FORCE. A SUPERIOR EDUCATION WILL, NO DOUBT, IMPROVE YOUR POSITION IN THE LABOUR MARKET, BUT EVEN IF BY SOME MIRACLE AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM COMPARABLE WITH THAT OF, SAY WEST GERMANY WERE TO ARISE IN SOUTH AFRICA, THAT WOULD NOT IN ITSELF CREATE JOBS FOR ALL.

MUCH INCREASED LEISURE FOR ALL, WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE NEVER FINDING WORK, IS A VERY PLAUSIBLE SCENARIO. THIS LEADS ME TO BELIEVE THAT THE WELL-FORMED MIND OF THE CLASSICAL UNIVERSITY WILL BE A GREATER ASSET THAN A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ALONE, WHICH MAY CONDEMN MANY TO FRUSTRATED HOPES.

ALTHOUGH THIS WILL BE THE LIKELY COURSE OF EVENTS, WE MUST NOT FORGET THAT IN SOUTH AFRICA WE HAVE A STRANGE MIXTURE OF THE FIRST- AND

THIRD-WORLDS. ALTHOUGH THIS CREATES MASSIVE PROBLEMS, IT ALSO CREATES GREAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE WHO ARE PREPARED TO PUT THEIR TALENTS AND SKILLS TO USE IN IMPROVING EDUCATION, COMMERCE, INDUSTRY, MEDICINE AND THE POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNTRY.

WE ALSO, PERHAPS, NEED TO RE-DEFINE WHAT WE MEAN WHEN WE SPEAK OF PROGRESS. WE TEND TO JUDGE THE PROGRESS OF A COUNTRY IN TERMS OF ITS GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT, BUT THIS MAY NOT BE SUCH A GOOD IDEA. THERE MAY BE A PLENITUDE OF MATERIAL POSSESSIONS AVAILABLE IN A COUNTRY THAT IS YET BESET BY THE PROBLEMS OF THOUSANDS OF STARVING, ILL-EDUCATED CITIZENS. QUALITY OF LIFE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN QUANTITY.

IN THIS AGE OF MASS PRODUCTION AND MASS MEDIA, WE SOMETIMES FORGET THAT THE INDIVIDUAL IS IMPORTANT. INDIVIDUALS, BY THEIR SKILLS AND

GIFTS, ARE ABLE TO OFFER A GREAT DEAL TO THE WORLD - I HAVE TO CITE MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA ONCE AGAIN. BY SEEING THE POOR, DYING ON THE STREETS, AS INDIVIDUALS WITH A RIGHT TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT, SHE HAS TAUGHT BOTH THE WESTERN AND EASTERN WORLDS A TRUTH THAT THEY WERE IN DANGER OF FORGETTING.

THERE ARE ANY NUMBER OF AREAS IN THIS COUNTRY WHERE MEN AND WOMEN OF VISION AND INTEGRITY CAN MAKE THEIR CONTRIBUTION. YOU MAY ARGUE THAT IF YOU ARE TO REACH THE PINNACLE OF SUCCESS IN YOUR CHOSEN CAREER YOU WILL NEED TO MAKE YOUR MARK IN EUROPE OR THE USA. THIS MAY BE TRUE, BUT PERHAPS YOU SHOULD ALSO ASK YOURSELF WHETHER YOUR SUCCESS, AS JUDGED BY OTHERS, IS MORE WORTHWHILE THAN KNOWING THAT YOU HAVE MADE YOUR CONTRIBUTION WHERE YOU ARE MOST NEEDED. I BELIEVE THAT AS

INDIVIDUALS WE ARE TO LEAD OUR LIVES TO THE GREATER GLORY OF GOD, LOVING OUR FELLOWMEN BETTER THAN OURSELVES. ANY OTHER MOTIVATION WILL ONLY TRIVIALISE YOUR LIVES, NO MATTER HOW GREAT YOUR GIFTS, HOW GOOD YOUR EDUCATION OR HOW HIGH-MINDED YOU MAY THINK YOU ARE.

OFFICIAL FIGURES SHOW THAT ONLY TEN PERCENT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S MANPOWER IS BEING TRAINED IN A TECHNICAL FIELD, WHEREAS 75 PERCENT IS REQUIRED. IT IS ALARMING TO THINK THAT IN TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED COUNTRIES THE RATIO OF ENGINEERS AND SCIENTISTS TO TECHNICIANS IS 1:2, WHILE IN SOUTH AFRICA WE HAVE THREE ENGINEERS TO EVERY TECHNICIAN.

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT WELL-TRAINED TECHNOLOGISTS CAN PERFORM 30 PERCENT OF THE WORK CURRENTLY DONE BY ENGINEERS. THIS IS TO THE DETRIMENT OF BOTH THE ENGINEERING PROFESSION AND THE UNTAPPED TALENTS

OF THE THOUSANDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO COULD BE FRUITFULLY EMPLOYED AS HIGHLY SKILLED TECHNOLOGISTS. CLEARLY SOMETHING IS WRONG, AND OUR PRIORITIES HAVE BEEN UNPRODUCTIVE. IF WE HAVE A SITUATION WHERE HIGHLY TRAINED ENGINEERS AND SCIENTISTS ARE DOING TECHNOLOGICAL WORK BECAUSE THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH PROPERLY TRAINED TECHNOLOGISTS.

RECENTLY, THE GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT SUBSIDIES TO UNIVERSITIES CANNOT KEEP UP WITH THE GROWTH IN STUDENT NUMBERS. THE WRITING HAS BEEN ON THE WALL FOR SOME YEARS, BECAUSE SUBSIDIES HAVE NOT COME UP TO EXPECTATIONS FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS. THIS IS A PROBLEM THAT UNIVERSITIES ARE GOING TO HAVE TO FACE HEAD-ON AND SOLVE IF THEY ARE TO SURVIVE.

FOR YOU, THE PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITIES, THERE IS ALSO A PROBLEM. IF YOU TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE FIGURES I HAVE JUST MENTIONED, YOU MAY FIND THAT A TECHNICAL EDUCATION WILL GIVE YOU A BETTER MEANS TO MAKE WORTHWHILE AND FULFILLING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIETY THAN A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION.

PERHAPS YOU ARE SURPRISED THAT I, THE VICE-CHANCELLOR OF A UNIVERSITY, AM SAYING THIS, BUT WE CANNOT ESCAPE THE FACT THAT UNIVERSITIES DO NOT PROVIDE THE BEST FORM OF TERTIARY EDUCATION FOR EVERYONE WITH A MATRIC EXEMPTION. EVERY YEAR AT RHODES UNIVERSITY, ABOUT 30 FIRST-YEARS LEAVE BY THE MIDDLE OF THE YEAR BECAUSE THEY HAVE FOUND THAT UNIVERSITY LIFE IS NOT FOR THEM. THIS PATTERN APPLIES AT ALL UNIVERSITIES IN THE COUNTRY. THIS IS A TRAGIC WASTE OF TIME AND MONEY FOR BOTH THE

STUDENTS AND THE UNIVERSITY CONCERNED. I WOULD URGE YOU, THEREFORE, TO RESEARCH CAREFULLY THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION WHICH ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU. DON'T JUST ASSUME THAT A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION WILL BEST FIT YOU FOR YOUR FUTURE. ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE RIGHT KIND OF EDUCATION FOR MOST OF YOU HERE, IT MAY NOT BE FOR ALL OF YOU.

I HOPE I HAVE GIVEN YOU SOMETHING TO CONSIDER WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE, BOTH FOR YOURSELVES AND FOR YOUR COUNTRY, BUT AT THE MOMENT I AM SURE THAT YOU ARE MORE CONCERNED WITH THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE - WHAT IS IN STORE FOR YOU IN THE NEXT TWO DAYS.

YOU WILL, I AM SURE, FIND THE WORKSHOPS AND EXCURSIONS STIMULATING. I HOPE YOU WILL ALSO FIND THEM FUN. WHAT A WEALTH OF MATERIAL IS BEING MADE AVAILABLE TO YOU - FROM A CONSIDERATION OF ISAAC NEWTON TO COAL

IN THE KRUGER PARK; MATHEMATICS IN ACTION, TO SOCIETY AND ITS ILLS; WATER IN THE NORTHERN CAPE TO MODERN MUSIC, NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY, COMPUTERS, DRAMA, ECONOMICS.... I HOPE YOU WILL ALL GO HOME WITH YOUR HEADS FULL OF NEW IDEAS AND INTERESTS, HAVING ENJOYED THE SOCIAL EVENTS AND EXCURSIONS AS MUCH AS ALL THE OTHER ASPECTS OF YOUR PROGRAMME. I WISH YOU ALL WELL, AND CONGRATULATE THOSE WHO HAVE WORKED SO HARD TO ORGANISE THE CENTENARY FUTURES CONFERENCE ON PRODUCING SUCH A VARIED AND INTERESTING PROGRAMME.

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