

JOHANNESBURG COLLEGE OF EDUCATION GRADUATION ADDRESS

SATURDAY 29 NOVEMBER 1980

I STAND BEFORE YOU THIS MORNING EXPERIENCING THE MIXED EMOTIONS OF PLEASURE AND HUMILITY. I AM HONOURED TO HAVE BEEN ASKED TO SPEAK AT THIS AUGUST GATHERING AND TO HAVE BEEN INVITED FROM SO FAR TO DO SO. IT IS FURTHERMORE A PLEASURE TO BE REPRESENTING A UNIVERSITY, ONE OF WHOSE MASTERS (IN THE DAYS WHEN IT WAS A UNIVERSITY COLLEGE) WAS NONE OTHER THAN SIR JOHN ADAMSON, FORMERLY A DISTINGUISHED DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION FOR THE TRANSVAAL, AFTER WHOM ONE OF THE AWARDS ON YOUR PROGRAMME IS NAMED. IT IS WORTH NOTING IN PASSING THAT ONE OF SIR JOHN'S DECLARED OBJECTIVES ON

- 2 -

ASSUMING THE OFFICE OF DIRECTOR WAS TO ENSURE THAT ALL THE TEACHERS IN THE SCHOOLS UNDER HIS CONTROL HAD AT LEAST A STANDARD TEN EDUCATION. WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS IN SOME DIRECTIONS DURING THE PAST SIXTY YEARS, BUT IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THIS VERY QUESTION OF A STANDARD TEN EDUCATION IS ONCE AGAIN A LIVE ISSUE, THIS TIME IN THE BLACK SCHOOLS. A THIRD REASON FOR MY PLEASURE IS THAT RHODES UNIVERSITY HAS TAKEN OVER THE MANTLE, BOTH PHYSICALLY AND FUNCTIONALLY, OF THE FORMER AND MUCH RESPECTED GRAHAMSTOWN TRAINING COLLEGE. "T.C.", AS IT WAS AFFECTIONATELY KNOWN, WAS, UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE SISTERS OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION, THE ONLY NON-STATE CONTROLLED TEACHERS' COLLEGE IN THE COUNTRY. IN

1975 RHODES UNIVERSITY TOOK OVER ITS BEAUTIFUL BUILDINGS, AND WITH THEM THE OBLIGATION TO TRAIN PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS. IF I NOW ADD THE FACT THAT MY WIFE ATTENDED YOUR COLLEGE IT COMPLETES THE PICTURE AS TO WHY I AM SO PLEASED TO SHARE THIS OCCASION WITH YOU TODAY.

I AM HUMBLE AS WELL AS PLEASED BECAUSE, AS A SUCCESSOR TO SIR JOHN ADAMSON I HAVE A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY TO GIVE A SATISFACTORY ACCOUNT OF MYSELF. FURTHERMORE, I AM HUMBLE BECAUSE I HAVE TO CONFESS THAT I KNOW LITTLE OR NOTHING ABOUT PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION, HAVING ONLY ATTENDED AN ORTHODOX PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR STANDARDS FOUR AND FIVE. WHEN I TURNED SEVEN THE PRINCIPAL OF THE LOCAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

ISSUED ALL SORTS OF THREATS AND IMPRECATIONS IF I WAS NOT AT SCHOOL THE FOLLOWING JANUARY. I RATHER SUSPECT THAT HIS ZEAL WAS NOT UNRELATED TO THE FACT THAT THE SCHOOL WAS ON THE POINT OF REACHING SOME NUMBERS THRESHOLD THAT WOULD HAVE ENHANCED BOTH HIS PRESTIGE AND HIS SALARY. THE POOR MAN HAD NO IDEA WHAT HE WAS UP AGAINST. WHEN HE CAME TO OUR HOME IN JANUARY 1937 TO MAKE GOOD ON HIS THREATS, HE DISCOVERED THAT MY MOTHER AND I CONSTITUTED A UNIQUE PRIVATE SCHOOL, WITH ONE QUALIFIED TEACHER AND ONE PUPIL, DULY AND PROPERLY REGISTERED IN PRETORIA. A TEACHER/PUPIL RATIO OF 1:1 IS, I CAN ASSURE YOU, A HIGHLY SATISFACTORY STATE OF AFFAIRS.

I AM ALSO SUPREMELY CONSCIOUS THAT I AM SPEAKING TO YOU, THE DIPLOMATES, PRIOR TO YOUR FORMAL AND SOLEMN ACT OF DEDICATION, AND THAT THIS IS THE CLIMAX OF OUR GATHERING. DEDICATION IS A COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP. AT THE VERY LEAST IT REQUIRES DEFINED AND UNDERSTOOD GOALS. THE OBJECTIVES TO WHICH YOU WILL BE DEDICATING YOURSELVES ARE CLEARLY AND UNAMBIGUOUSLY SET OUT IN YOUR ACT OF DEDICATION. IT WOULD BE SUPERFLUOUS AND PRESUMPTUOUS ON MY PART TO EXPAND OR MAKE A GLOSS ON SUCH ADMIRABLY WORDED SENTIMENTS. RATHER LET ME OFFER SOME THOUGHTS ON SOME OTHER ASPECTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF DEDICATION. IN ADDITION TO OBJECTIVES, DEDICATION REQUIRES INSTRUMENTS. THE MOST OBVIOUS

INSTRUMENTS ARE YOURSELVES, ABOUT TO GO FORTH FROM THIS COLLEGE INTO THE ACTUAL WORKFACE OF THE CLASSROOM. BEFORE YOU REACH THAT POINT, HOWEVER, THERE HAS HAD TO BE DEDICATION ON THE PART OF OTHERS, BY YOUR MENTORS HERE AT JCE FOR EXAMPLE, WHOSE DEDICATION WE CAN SAFELY ASSUME AS SELF-EVIDENT, AND THEN DEDICATION ON THE PART OF THOSE WHOSE MANDATE IS TO PROVIDE THE RESOURCES, PHYSICAL, FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE, WITHOUT WHICH THERE WOULD BE NO SCHOOL SYSTEMS.

LET US CONSIDER FOR A MOMENT A FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION: IS THE GOVERNMENT OF THIS COUNTRY SERIOUSLY DEDICATED TO

EDUCATION? CERTAINLY, IF ONE JUDGES BY THE AMOUNT OF DISCUSSION TAKING PLACE, THE ANSWER MUST SURELY BE "YES". NOT ONE BUT THREE COMMISSIONS AND IN-DEPTH INVESTIGATIONS ARE CURRENTLY IN OPERATION. THEY ARE BUSY ON SUCH ISSUES AS THE PROFESSIONAL STATUS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF EDUCATORS AND ON WHAT EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO URBAN BLACKS.

ALL THIS ACTIVITY IS DOUBTLESS VERY LAUDABLE, BUT ONE OF THE EARLIEST LESSONS WE ALL HAVE ABSORBED IS TO JUDGE BY DEEDS AND NOT BY WORDS ALONE. ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE MENTAL STANCES IN MY EXPERIENCE IS TO MAKE THE EFFORT OF

IMAGINATION NECESSARY TO CONSIDER ONESELF A VISITOR FROM OUTER SPACE, LOOKING AT THE PROBLEM DISPASSIONATELY AND UNEMOTIONALLY. FROM SUCH A VANTAGE POINT THE QUESTION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S DEDICATION TO EDUCATION ASSUMES FAR MORE PROBLEMATIC DIMENSIONS. OUR LITTLE GREEN VISITOR WOULD CALL FOR VARIOUS STATISTICS AND MAKE VARIOUS COMPARISONS WITH OTHER PUBLIC SECTOR ACTIVITIES.

WHAT WOULD HE FIND? THE MINISTER OF STATISTICS WOULD INFORM HIM (UNLESS HE HAS CHANGED HIS MIND SINCE ANSWERING A QUESTION IN PARLIAMENT IN FEBRUARY) THAT THE FOLLOWING PERCENTAGES OF THE GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT WERE DEVOTED TO EDUCATION:-

WHITE	2.62
COLOURED	0.51
ASIAN	0.25
AFRICAN	<u>0.66</u>
TOTAL	<u>4.04</u>

THIS INFORMATION HE WOULD FIND PUZZLING IN A NUMBER OF RESPECTS. PERHAPS HE MIGHT CONCLUDE THAT THE PROVISION OF NOT ONE BUT FOUR ANSWERS TO A STRAIGHTFORWARD QUESTION IMPLIES THAT EDUCATION IS TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY INDEED. ON PROBING A LITTLE DEEPER HE WOULD FIND THAT QUESTIONS WERE FORMING IN HIS MIND AT A GREATER RATE THAN ANSWERS WERE BEING RECEIVED. HIS PUZZLEMENT WOULD DEEPEN AS HE

DISCOVERED THAT COUNTRIES WITH WHICH SOUTH AFRICA LIKED TO BE COMPARED WERE SPENDING SIX, SEVEN OR EVEN EIGHT PERCENT OF THEIR RESOURCES ON EDUCATION; THAT THERE WERE MANY MORE AFRICAN THAN WHITE CLIENTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM; AND THAT THERE SEEMED NO OBVIOUS CATEGORY FOR HIS OWN LITTLE GREEN CHILDREN. PERHAPS HE WOULD CONCLUDE, MORE IN PERPLEXITY THAN IN ANGER, THAT THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE CLASSIFIED AS "OTHER COLOURED".

IF WE TURN NOW WITH OUR MYTHICAL "REASONABLE MAN" FROM OUTER SPACE TO EXAMINE OTHER GOVERNMENT AND QUASI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE GENERALLY REGARDED AS IMPORTANT, SUCH AS DEFENCE, TRANSPORT, HEALTH,

AGRICULTURE, FINANCE, OR THE PROVISION OF ELECTRICITY, STEEL OR SYNTHETIC LIQUID FUEL, WE SHALL OBSERVE THAT LARGE SUMS OF MONEY ARE ALSO EXPENDED ON THESE ACTIVITIES, CERTAINLY LARGER IN THE CASE OF DEFENCE THAN EDUCATION. IN THE CASE OF THE QUASI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES DIRECT FINANCIAL COMPARISONS ARE NOT EASY TO FORMULATE. IN NEARLY EVERY CASE, HOWEVER, WE SHALL DISCOVER THAT THE OVERALL CONTROL IS ENTRUSTED TO SENIOR MEN WITH CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN THE FIELD AND FURTHERMORE, MEN WHO REMAIN FOR LONG PERIODS IN THE SADDLE. IN ADDITION THESE MEN PRESIDE OVER SINGLE, UNIFIED ENTERPRISES NOT FRACTURED ALONG RACIAL CLEAVAGE LINES. ONE MERELY HAS TO LIST SOME OF THE MINISTERS WHO HAVE BECOME PROMINENT IN

THESE VARIOUS PORTFOLIOS TO TAKE THE POINT IMMEDIATELY:-

<u>PORTFOLIO</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>YEARS IN OFFICE</u>
AGRICULTURE	H SCHOEMAN	7
DEFENCE	P W BOTHA	14
FINANCE	N C HAVENGA	21
FINANCE	T E DONGES	8
FINANCE	N DIEDERICKS	8
FINANCE	O P F HORWOOD	6
HEALTH	S W VAN DER MERWE	6
TRANSPORT	B J SCHOEMAN	20

IN THESE PORTFOLIOS THE GOVERNMENT HAS FOR LENGTHY PERIODS
PLACED MEN PROFESSIONALLY QUALIFIED FOR THE JOB, AND LEFT

THEM THERE FOR SUFFICIENT TIME TO CREATE ENVIABLE REPUTATIONS FOR THEMSELVES. THE CONTRAST WITH THE EDUCATION PORTFOLIO IS STARK: SINCE 1975 WE HAVE HAD FIVE MINISTERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION, NOT TO MENTION THE MYRIAD OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR ASPECTS OF EDUCATION OTHER THAN WHITE. NOT ONE OF THE INTERVENING MINISTERS BETWEEN THE FIRST AND THE LAST STAYED IN OFFICE FOR MORE THAN TWO YEARS, NOR HAS HE BROUGHT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE TO BEAR ON THE TASK. WITH THE ADVENT OF DR GERRIT VILJOEN WE HAVE AT LAST A MINISTER WITH IMPECCABLE QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE, WITH ARGUABLY THE BEST PROSPECTS OF SUCCESS SINCE THE DAYS OF J H HOFMEYR. IT IS PERHAPS MORE THAN A COINCIDENCE THAT BOTH HOFMEYR AND VILJOEN WERE PROFESSORS

OF CLASSICS, UNIVERSITY PRINCIPALS AND PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATORS OR THE EQUIVALENT BEFORE ASSUMING THEIR PORTFOLIOS. IT IS REMARKABLE, TOO, THAT BOTH PERIODS SAW FORMER UNIVERSITY PRINCIPALS IN THE CRUCIAL PORTFOLIOS OF EDUCATION AND FINANCE, THE ONLY DIFFERENCE BEING THAT HOFMEYR OCCUPIED BOTH POSITIONS SIMULTANEOUSLY.

LET US HOPE THAT THE NEW MINISTER, TOGETHER WITH THE VARIOUS COMMISSIONS THAT WILL SHORTLY BE REPORTING TO HIM, WILL PROVIDE CLEAR EVIDENCE OF A MORE CREDIBLE LEVEL OF DEDICATION TO EDUCATION ON THE PART OF THE AUTHORITIES. A FURTHER HOPEFUL SIGN IS THE AGREEMENT THAT UP TO FORTY

BLACK AND BROWN STUDENTS MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO ENTER YOUR PORTALS NEXT YEAR.

SO MUCH FOR THE DEDICATION OF THE AUTHORITIES. LET US TURN NOW TO YOUR OWN. THE MORE CYNICAL AMONGST YOU MAY WELL BE TEMPTED TO SAY "HOW CAN WE BE EXPECTED TO BE DEDICATED WHEN OUR PROSPECTIVE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE ARE SO DISCOURAGING - SALARIES UNPAID FOR LENGTHY PERIODS, DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN, ESPECIALLY MARRIED WOMEN, AND IMMIGRANTS, NOT TO MENTION SALARY SCALES THAT HAVE DRIVEN OUT OF THE SERVICE 3 000 TEACHERS IN THE LAST YEAR IN THE TRANSVAAL ALONE, AND A WILD SUPERFLUITY OF EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURES AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS?" IF

THIS IS HOW YOU ARE TO BE TREATED, WHEN POLITICIAN AFTER POLITICIAN ASSURES YOU AND THE PUBLIC THAT YOU ARE FRONTLINE TROOPS IN THE BATTLE FOR HEARTS AND MINDS IN THE FACE OF TOTAL ONSLAUGHT, THERE IS INDEED AMPLE ROOM FOR CYNICISM. ONE IS REMINDED OF THE STORY OF ST TERESA OF AVILA, THE GREAT SPANISH CARMELITE MYSTIC, WHO WAS NEARLY DROWNED WHILE ATTEMPTING TO CROSS A SWOLLEN RIVER, DURING A JOURNEY BETWEEN TWO OF THE CONVENTS WHICH SHE HAD FOUNDED. "IF THIS IS HOW YOU TREAT YOUR FRIENDS, DEAR LORD", SHE SAID, "IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT YOU HAVE SO FEW".

LIKE ST TERESA WE MUST NOT BE TEMPTED TO GIVE UP IN THE FACE OF SUCH TRIALS. LET US ALSO NOT CONCENTRATE TOO MUCH ON THE PAY QUESTION. STUDY AFTER STUDY HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT SALARY IS NOT THE PRIME MOTIVATOR IN THE WILLINGNESS TO UNDERTAKE A TASK. THE WORTHWHILENESS OF THE JOB IN ITSELF, THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND THE SCOPE FOR INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE PLAY A SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER ROLE IN PEOPLE'S EMPLOYMENT DECISIONS.

OF THE WORTHWHILENESS OF THE TASKS YOU ARE ABOUT TO ENTER INTO THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT WHATEVER. OUR NEWSPAPERS CARRY DAILY ITEMS ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA'S TRAINED MANPOWER CRISIS. A HEADLINE IN ONE OF LAST SUNDAY'S NEWSPAPERS IS

REPRESENTATIVE - "WANTED IN S A: 700 000 TOP WORKERS". THESE TECHNICALLY, PROFESSIONALLY OR MANAGERIALLY QUALIFIED PEOPLE WHO ARE IN SUCH SHORT SUPPLY, NO MATTER WHAT THEIR SUBSEQUENT QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERTISE, ALL HAVE ONE SIMPLE FACTOR IN COMMON: THEY ALL ATTENDED PRIMARY SCHOOL. THAT IS WHERE IT ALL BEGAN, WHERE THE ESSENTIAL FOUNDATIONS OF THEIR EDUCATION WERE LAID. WITHOUT ADEQUATE FOUNDATIONS WE ARE SIMPLY BUILDING ON SAND. LET US HOPE THAT THE AUTHORITIES WILL CREATE THE NECESSARY OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND PERSONAL INITIATIVE, BY EASING THE HEAVY HAND OF BUREAUCRACY THROUGH MORE DECENTRALISED CONTROL, SO THAT

YOU MAY EXPERIENCE THE PERSONAL SATISFACTION SO NECESSARY FOR YOU TO ACCOMPLISH THE VITAL TASKS FOR WHICH YOU HAVE PREPARED YOURSELVES.

THERE ARE SOME FURTHER ASPECTS OF DEDICATION, BOTH EXPLICIT IN YOUR ACT OF DEDICATION AND IMPLIED, TO WHICH I SHOULD LIKE BRIEFLY TO REFER. SEVERAL OF THE SPEAKERS WHO HAVE STOOD ON THIS PLATFORM IN EARLIER YEARS HAVE LIKENED YOUR ACT TO THE HIPPOCRATIC OATH OF MEDICINE OR TO MONASTIC VOWS, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE HASTENED TO ADD THAT THE INJUNCTIONS LAID UPON YOU ARE NOT SO ONEROUS AS THE LATTER. THE OLDEST AND MOST BALANCED OF THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS, THE BENEDICTINES, IN ADDITION TO THE TRADITIONAL

VOWS OF POVERTY, CHASTITY AND OBEDIENCE, ADDED A FOURTH, STABILITY. NOVICES HAD TO UNDERTAKE TO REMAIN IN THE MONASTERY TO WHICH THEY WERE ORIGINALLY ASSIGNED, UNLESS QUITE UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES AROSE. THE PROVISION ENSURED AN EXTRAORDINARY SENSE OF STABILITY AND BELONGING IN EACH RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY. TO MY MIND IT IS A GREAT DISADVANTAGE THAT MORE OF THIS SPIRIT DOES NOT PREVAIL TODAY. PEOPLE NOW TEND TO DART FROM JOB TO JOB, SCHOOL TO SCHOOL OR EVEN CITY TO CITY, WITHOUT MUCH THOUGHT AS TO HOW THESE ACTIONS STEADILY ERODE WHAT LITTLE COHESION REMAINS IN OUR MOBILE SOCIETIES. STABILITY FULLY UNDERSTOOD ALSO IMPLIES PERSERVERANCE. MANY OF THE OLDER MEMBERS OF THIS AUDIENCE WILL BE ABLE TO RECALL WITH

GRATITUDE AND AFFECTION THOSE DOUGHTY "MR CHIPS" FIGURES WHOSE LIFETIME OF SERVICE TO A SINGLE SCHOOL HAD HELPED TO MOULD AN INDISPENSABLE ESPRIT DE CORPS AND SENSE OF CONTINUITY WITH THE PAST WITHOUT WHICH IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR A SCHOOL TO WIN A SECURE PLACE IN THE HEARTS OF ITS ALUMNI AND THE COMMUNITY IT SERVES. HOW MANY TEACHERS REMAIN IN SERVICE TODAY WHO HAVE GIVEN THIRTY, TWENTY-FIVE OR EVEN TWENTY YEARS OF GENEROUS AND DEVOTED SERVICE TO ONE BELOVED SCHOOL? HOW MANY WILL THERE BE IN THE FUTURE? THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS ARE DEPRESSING IS A MEASURE OF WHAT WE HAVE LOST.

THIS BRINGS ME ONTO THE QUESTION OF LOYALTY TO ONE'S COLLEAGUES, AND MORE ESPECIALLY TO ONE'S SCHOOL, A CONCEPT WHICH IS MENTIONED EXPLICITLY IN YOUR ACT. SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSETT, THE DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN SOCIOLOGIST, IN ANALYSING THE DISTURBANCES THAT RENT APART THE BERKELEY CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AND PROVIDED THE CATALYST FOR A WHOLE DECADE OF WORLDWIDE STUDENT UNREST, WAS QUITE UNEQUIVOCALLY OF THE OPINION THAT THE LACK OF LOYALTY OF THE JUNIOR MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMIC STAFF TO THEIR INSTITUTION WAS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE ESCALATION OF THE DISTURBANCES. MANY OF THEM EITHER EXPLICITLY SIDED WITH THE STUDENTS, OR ELSE KNEW NO LOYALTY OTHER THAN TO THEMSELVES AND THEIR ADVANCEMENT IN

THEIR CHOSEN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE. IN THE HOUR OF CRISIS THEY FAILED THEIR UNIVERSITY LAMENTABLY. NO INSTITUTION, UNLESS IT SUBSIDES INTO THE MOST DEPRESSING FORM OF AUTHORITARIANISM, CAN HOPE TO SURVIVE WITHOUT THE DEDICATION AND LOYALTY OF ITS STAFF.

THIS SENSE OF COMMITMENT TO THE SCHOOL TO WHICH YOU ARE ASSIGNED IS FAR MORE READILY EVIDENT IN SOME INSTITUTIONS THAN IN OTHERS. WELL ESTABLISHED ONES IN GOOD URBAN AREAS ARE UNDERSTANDABLY MORE POPULAR THAN THOSE IN LESS AFFLUENT NEIGHBOURHOODS AND IN RURAL AREAS. NOT EVERYBODY CAN BE ACCOMMODATED AT THE POPULAR PLACES, BUT YOU WILL FIND THAT ALLEGEDLY LESS DESIRABLE SCHOOLS HAVE THEIR

COMPENSATIONS. THE CHILDREN ARE OFTEN LESS SPOILT AND JADED, AND FREQUENTLY MUCH MORE EAGER TO LEARN. DO NOT BE UNDULY DISAPPOINTED IF YOU ARE NOT ASSIGNED TO ONE OF THE FIVE-STAR ESTABLISHMENTS. THE LESS WELL-ENDOWED SCHOOLS AND PUPILS HAVE FAR GREATER NEED OF YOUR LOYALTY AND DEVOTION. IF WE NEGLECT THEM WE SHALL NEVER BE ABLE TO GIVE EVERY CHILD THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP HIS FULL POTENTIAL, AND WITHOUT THAT WE SHALL NEVER ATTAIN GREATNESS AS A PEOPLE.

EVEN THE OPTIMIST MUST BE DAUNTED BY THE PRESENT CONDITION OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA. IF THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE TRANSVAAL'S WHITE SCHOOLS GIVES CAUSE FOR CONCERN IT

IS POSITIVELY IDYLIC COMPARED WITH THE BLACK SCHOOLS IN THE EASTERN CAPE, MOST OF WHICH ARE BOTH CLOSED BY AN ALMOST TOTAL BOYCOTT AS WELL AS BEING HEAVILY DAMAGED BY ARSONISTS, VANDALS AND STONETHROWERS. THE BEST THAT CAN BE ANTICIPATED IS THAT WE ARE WITNESSING THE DARKNESS BEFORE THE DAWN.

IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES GREATER DEDICATION AND DETERMINATION, RATHER THAN DESPONDENCY AND DESPAIR, ARE ABSOLUTELY VITAL. CONSIDER BY ANALOGY THE WOEFUL STATE OF BRITAIN'S DEFENCE PREPAREDNESS IN THE THIRTIES. A FEW CLEAR-SIGHTED VISIONARIES LIKE CHURCHILL WERE ATTEMPTING VALIANTLY TO DRAW THEIR COUNTRY'S ATTENTION TO THE

IMPENDING DISASTER. A PITIFUL HANDFUL OF DEDICATED YOUNG MEN, IN SPITE OF OFFICIAL NEGLECT AND DISCOURAGEMENT, STUCK TO THE BUSINESS OF MASTERING THE ART OF FLYING. THESE WERE THE MEN WHO WON THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN AND SAVED THEIR COUNTRY. CHURCHILL'S STIRRING WORDS, TOO WELL KNOWN TO BEAR QUOTATION, ARE THEIR PANEGRIC.

IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION YOU YOUNG DIPLOMATES ARE THE FIGHTER PILOTS OF TODAY. AS THE COUNTRY SLOWLY WAKENS TO THE TRUE PROPORTIONS OF OUR EDUCATIONAL CRISIS YOU WILL BECOME THE HEROES, NO LONGER THE FORGOTTEN MEN AND WOMEN. YOUR POSITION REMINDS ME OF A FEW LINES FROM KIPLING'S POEM, TOMMY, EULOGISING THE ARCHETYPAL BRITISH PRIVATE

SOLDIER, TOMMY ATKINS, WHOSE CONTRIBUTIONS ARE SO EASILY FORGOTTEN IN PEACETIME:

"I WENT INTO A PUBLIC-'OUSE TO GET A PINT O' BEER,
THE PUBLICAN 'E UP AND SEZ, 'WE SERVE NO REDCOATS
HERE'.

THE GIRLS BE'IND THE BAR THEY LAUGHED AND GIGGLED FIT
TO DIE,

I OUTS INTO THE STREET AGAIN AN' TO MYSELF SEZ I:
'O IT'S TOMMY THIS, AN' TOMMY THAT, AN' TOMMY GO
AWAY';

BUT IT'S 'THANK YOU, MISTER ATKINS', WHEN THE BAND
BEGINS TO PLAY".

WE IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE RIGHTLY PROUD OF OUR AGRICULTURAL,
MINING, INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ACHIEVEMENTS, OF OUR
CHAMBERS OF MINES, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, OUR ESCOMS,
ISCORS, SAR'S AND SASOLS. WHAT WILL ALL THESE EVIDENCES
OF HIGH ACCOMPLISHMENT AVAIL US IF THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH
COMPETENT PEOPLE OF ALL POPULATION GROUPS TO RUN THEM,
BECAUSE OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM IS NOT EQUAL TO THE TASK?
EDUCATION, ESPECIALLY PRIMARY EDUCATION IS AT THE BASE OF
IT ALL. THE DELETERIOUS EFFECTS OF INADEQUATE OR TOO FEW
POWER STATIONS ARE IMMEDIATELY APPARENT. UNFORTUNATELY,
EDUCATION CAN BE WOEFULLY NEGLECTED FOR A DOZEN OR MORE
YEARS BEFORE THE CONSEQUENCES ARE FELT AT ALL ACUTELY IN
THE MARKETPLACE. THE CHICKENS ARE FINALLY COMING HOME TO

ROOST. WE NOW DISCOVER TO OUR COST, BECAUSE OF THE LONG LEAD TIME IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS, THAT IT MAY TAKE AS LONG TO REMEDY THAT NEGLECT AS WE ALLOWED IT TO CONTINUE. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT WITH THE AID OF A LOT OF MONEY, TWO-WAY CABLE TV, CASSETTE TAPES AND COMPUTER TERMINALS WE MAY BE ABLE TO ACCELERATE THE PROCESS. EVEN SO, THAT WILL ENHANCE YOUR IMPORTANCE RATHER THAN RENDERING YOU REDUNDANT. THE MODERN SOLDIER HAS FAR MORE SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY AND ELECTRONICS THAN WAS EVER DREAMED OF IN THE DAYS OF KIPLING'S TOMMY ATKINS, BUT IT IS THE QUALITY OF THE SOLDIER AND NOT THE EQUIPMENT THAT ULTIMATELY COUNTS.

THE YOUNG TEACHERS PARTICIPATING IN THEIR PASSING-OUT PARADE TODAY, TO CONTINUE THE MILITARY ANALOGY FOR THE MOMENT, WILL BE FACING THE UNCERTAINTIES OF AN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN ALL THE TURMOIL AND DISCOMFORT OF A MAJOR RE-EVALUATION AND UPHEAVAL. DO NOT BE DISCOURAGED BY THE SHORT-TERM PROSPECTS, NOR LET YOUR IDEALISM AND SENSE OF DEDICATION FALTER. AS I CLOSE BY CONGRATULATING YOU ON THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF YOUR STUDIES AND BY WISHING YOU EVERY SUCCESS IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREERS I CAN DO NO BETTER THAN TO ECHO THE WORDS OF THE VICTORIAN POET ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH, WORDS THAT HAVE OFTEN ENCOURAGED ME IN MOMENTS OF TEMPORARY DESPONDENCY:

"SAY NOT, THE STRUGGLE NOUGHT AVAILETH
THE LABOUR AND THE WOUNDS ARE VAIN,
THE ENEMY FAINTS NOT, NOR FAILETH,
AND AS THINGS HAVE BEEN THEY REMAIN.

IF HOPES WERE DUPES, FEARS MAY BE LIARS;
IT MAY BE, IN YON SMOKE CONCEALED,
YOUR COMRADES CHASE E'EN NOW THE FLIERS,
AND, BUT FOR YOU, POSSESS THE FIELD.

FOR WHILE THE TIRED WAVES, VAINLY BREAKING
SEEM HERE NO PAINFUL INCH TO GAIN,

FAR BACK, THROUGH CREEKS AND INLETS MAKING,
COMES SILENT, FLOODING IN, THE MAIN.

AND NOT BY EASTERN WINDOWS ONLY,
WHEN DAYLIGHT COMES, COMES IN THE LIGHT,
IN FRONT THE SUN CLIMBS SLOW, HOW SLOWLY,
BUT WESTWARD, LOOK, THE LAND IS BRIGHT."

STUDENTS OF THE JOHANNESBURG COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, GO INTO
THE SCHOOLS AND INTO THE WORLD TO DO YOUR DUTY AND FULFIL
YOUR VOCATIONS. BE MEN AND WOMEN OF COURAGE. DO NOT BE

DISPIRITED BY THE DIFFICULTIES. DIFFICULTIES ARE LIKE
COINS: TURN THEM OVER AND THE OBVERSE SIDES ARE
OPPORTUNITIES. USE THEM.

D S HENDERSON

29 NOVEMBER 1980.