

SPEECH DAY, UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRAAFF-REINET, 20 OCTOBER, 1979

MR CHAIRMAN, MR HEADMASTER, STAFF, BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE UNION HIGH SCHOOL, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IT WAS WITH GREAT PLEASURE AND A SENSE OF PRIVILEGE THAT I ACCEPTED THE INVITATION TO ADDRESS YOU THIS EVENING. MY WIFE AND I COME FROM A COMMUNITY THAT TAKES A GREAT PRIDE IN ITS SCHOOLS, AND SO WE UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THIS SCHOOL ASSUMES IN THE LIFE OF GRAAFF-REINET AND ITS ENVIRONS. THIS IS NOT OUR FIRST VISIT TO YOUR BEAUTIFUL TOWN. ON AN EARLIER OCCASION WE ADMIRERD THE SCHOOL FROM THE OUTSIDE, AND ALSO FROM ABOVE AS WE SAW IT LAID OUT BELOW US ON THE WAY UP TO THE VALLEY OF DESOLATION. WE ARE DELIGHTED THEREFORE TO HAVE BEEN INVITED RIGHT INTO THE HEART OF THE GEM OF THE KAROO.

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GRAHAMSTOWN AND GRAAFF-REINET HAVE A GREAT DEAL IN COMMON. EACH HAS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT AND PROUD ROLE IN THE EARLIER HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY. BOTH ARE CONCERNED TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THIS HERITAGE. THEY ARE COMPARABLE IN SIZE AND CAN EASILY BE SEEN AND COMPREHENDED FROM CONVENIENT VANTAGE POINTS, SPREAD OUT LIKE A MAP BEFORE THE VISITOR. EACH HAS FAMOUS BUILDINGS AND INSTITUTIONS WHICH ARE KNOWN FAR AND WIDE. SOME OF THESE INSTITUTIONS ARE LIVING PEOPLE RATHER THAN MADE UP OF BRICKS AND MORTAR. ONE SUCH LIVING INSTITUTION WHICH RHODES AND UNION HIGH HAVE IN COMMON IS MR HERBY ARNOTT, OLD RHODIAN AND HEADMASTER OF YOUR SCHOOL FROM 1947 TO 1968. AT PRESENT LIVING IN RETIREMENT IN

GRAHAMSTOWN HE IS ONCE AGAIN SERVING HIS OLD ALMA MATER AS AN ACTIVE AND ENTHUSIASTIC MEMBER OF THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL.

I CONVEY TO YOU TONIGHT HIS WARMEST GREETINGS.

A SPEAKER ON OCCASIONS SUCH AS THIS MUST CHOOSE HIS SUBJECT CAREFULLY. HE MUST BE EDIFYING AND HOPEFULLY INTERESTING ALSO TO PUPILS, STAFF AND PARENTS ALIKE. AFTER CONSIDERING ALL THE TRAPS AND PITFALLS I HAVE DECIDED TO TALK ABOUT VIRTUE. EVERYBODY ALMOST BY DEFINITION MUST BE IN FAVOUR OF SUCH A SUBJECT : IT IS LIKE MOTHERHOOD AND WHOLESOME APPLE PIE.

THERE ARE OF COURSE VIRTUES AND VIRTUES. IN AN EARLIER AGE IT USED TO BE FASHIONABLE, EVEN DE RIGUEUR TO RECEIVE ONE'S RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION BY MEANS OF A QUESTION-AND-ANSWER CATECHISM. IN SOME RESPECTS IT IS A PITY THAT WE STILL DO NOT DO SO. ALL THE WORLD'S PROBLEMS WERE SO TIDILY AND NEATLY DISPATCHED IN SUCH DOCUMENTS. TAKE FOR EXAMPLE WHAT USED TO BE CALLED THE PENNY CATECHISM, ALTHOUGH THE EDITION I CONSULTED SOLD FOR 5P. INFLATION, IT WOULD APPEAR, CATCHES UP EVEN WITH CATECHISMS. THE PENNY CATECHISM SETS OUT THE ROAD MAP OF LIFE IN ITS FIRST TWO QUESTIONS:-

"1. WHO MADE YOU?

GOD MADE ME.

2. WHY DID GOD MAKE YOU?

GOD MADE ME TO KNOW HIM, LOVE HIM AND SERVE HIM  
IN THIS WORLD, AND TO BE HAPPY WITH HIM FOR EVER  
IN THE NEXT."

THIS ADMIRABLE COMPENDIUM PROCEEDS LATER IN ITS TEXT TO  
DISCUSS VIRTUES. IT FINDS SEVEN VIRTUES ALTOGETHER,  
CONVENIENTLY DIVIDED INTO TWO CATEGORIES. THERE ARE FIRSTLY  
THE FOUR CARDINAL VIRTUES OF PRUDENCE, JUSTICE, FORTITUDE AND  
TEMPERANCE. THEN THERE ARE THE THREE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES OF  
FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY.

IT IS OBVIOUSLY IMPOSSIBLE TO COVER SUCH A WIDE FIELD WITHIN  
THE AMBIT OF A SHORT ADDRESS, AND SO TONIGHT I SHOULD LIKE TO  
SAY SOMETHING TO YOU ABOUT WHAT I CONSIDER TO BE PERHAPS THE  
MOST NEGLECTED OF THESE VIRTUES, NAMELY HOPE. ALTHOUGH HOPE  
IS CATEGORISED IN THE CATECHISM AS ONE OF THE THEOLOGICAL  
VIRTUES, IT IS OF COURSE A VIRTUE AS OLD AS THE HUMAN RACE.  
YOU WILL RECALL THE GREEK MYTH OF PANDORA, THE FIRST WOMAN,  
WHO HAD BEEN GIVEN CUSTODY OF A BOX WHICH THE GODS HAD WARNED  
HER NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES TO OPEN. THEY HAD NOT HEARD  
OF WOMEN'S LIB IN THOSE DAYS, AND SO A WOMAN WAS BLAMED FOR  
THE DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES. OF COURSE HER CURIOSITY OVER-  
CAME HER AND SHE COULD NOT RESIST OPENING THE BOX. OUT FLEW



ALL THE WORLD'S ILLS THAT HAVE PLAGUED US EVER SINCE - VICES, SINS, DISEASES AND TROUBLES. IN A GREAT PANIC SHE SHUT THE LID AGAIN QUICKLY AND THE ONLY THING THAT WAS LEFT WAS HOPE, MAN'S LAST COMFORT. THE ROMANS TOO RECOGNISED THE IMPORTANCE OF HOPE. ONE OF THEIR MOST FAMOUS MOTTOS WAS "DUM SPIRO, SPERO", "WHILE I BREATHE, I HOPE".

WHAT IS THIS HOPE AND WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT? ONE OF THE THINGS WE MUST NOT CONFUSE IT WITH IS A SHALLOW OPTIMISM, A LIGHT-HEARTED POLLYANNA-TYPE EXPECTATION THAT EVERYTHING WILL TURN OUT FOR THE BEST IN THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS. THIS ATTITUDE WAS WELL EXEMPLIFIED IN DICKENS' IMPROVIDENT, MUDDLE-HEADED CHARACTER, MR MICAWBER, WHO WAS ALWAYS SAYING

THAT "SOMETHING WOULD TURN UP" TO SOLVE ALL HIS PROBLEMS. WE MISS THE WHOLE POINT IF WE EQUATE HOPE WITH SUCH FATUOUS EXPECTANCIES. THE FIRST POINT WE MUST UNDERSTAND IS THAT HOPE IS A VIRTUE, AND AS SUCH HAS SOMETHING OF THE HEROIC ABOUT IT. THE WHOLE POINT ABOUT A VIRTUE IS THAT IT IS SOMETHING WE MUST WORK HARD AT TO ACQUIRE; WE DO NOT STUMBLE UPON IT BY ACCIDENT. HOPE IN FACT IS A WHOLE CAST OF MIND, AND IS NOT JUSTIFIED UNLESS WE HAVE STRIVEN HARD TO ACQUIRE IT. WE ARE NOT REALLY JUSTIFIED IN HOPING THAT SOMETHING WILL HAPPEN UNLESS WE HAVE DONE ALL IN OUR POWER TO CONTRIBUTE TO ITS HAPPENING. HOPE MUST ALSO BE REALISTIC. LET ME GIVE YOU AN

UP TO THE MINUTE EXAMPLE. AT ALMOST EXACTLY THIS TIME GERRIE COETZEE WILL HAVE, OR WILL BE ABOUT TO STEP INTO THE RING AT LOFTUS VERSVELD IN PRETORIA TO FACE BIG JOHN TATE. DOUBTLESS HE HAS INFORMED HIS ARMY OF SUPPORTERS THAT HE HOPES TO WIN. THAT WOULD BE A LUDICROUS STATEMENT UNLESS HE HAD, AS WE KNOW HE HAS, DONE HIS UTMOST IN HIS TRAINING, BY WAY OF BOTH MENTAL AND PHYSICAL PREPARATION, TO GET HIMSELF READY FOR THE FIGHT. SECONDLY, IT WOULD ALSO BE LAUGHABLE UNLESS HE IS, AS WE KNOW HIM TO BE, A BOXER IN THE SAME CLASS AS TATE. IF YOU OR I HAD TRAINED JUST AS HARD AS GERRIE HAS AND THEN HAD TAKEN HIS PLACE WE COULD NOT POSSIBLY SAY WITH ANY CONVICTION THAT WE HOPED TO WIN. ALTERNATIVELY, IF GERRIE HAD BEEN CARELESS ABOUT HIS TRAINING HE EQUALLY COULD NOT HOPE TO WIN.

HOPE THEN IS A REALISTIC EVEN IF HARDLY WON VIRTUE. A GOOD WAY TO DEFINE IT WOULD BE TO SAY THAT IT IS REALISTIC EXPECTATION. THE OBJECTIVE HOPED FOR MUST NOT BE UTTERLY UNATTAINABLE BY MEANS OF LACK OF ABILITY, NOR YET MUST IT BE EASILY GRASPED WITHOUT EFFORT. THE OBJECT ITSELF MUST ALSO BE WORTHWHILE IN ITSELF, AND NOT SOME TRIVIAL AND WORTHLESS MIRAGE.

HOPE, WE MUST UNDERSTAND THEREFORE, IS NOT JUST A FLASHY OPTIMISM, BUT A REASONED BASIS FOR ACTION IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD. IF WE ARE DISCUSSING CERTAINTIES OR NEAR CERTAINTIES

THEN WE USE THE WORD KNOWLEDGE, NOT HOPE. IF GERRIE WERE TO STEP INTO THE RING WITH YOU OR ME HE WOULD NOT SAY "I HOPE TO WIN"; HE WOULD MORE APPROPRIATELY SAY "I KNOW I SHALL WIN". THE ONLY UNCERTAINTY WOULD BE "HOW MANY SECONDS WOULD IT TAKE HIM?".

OUR GRANDFATHERS AND GREAT-GRANDFATHERS UNDERSTOOD AND PRACTISED THE VIRTUE OF HOPE ON A TRULY GRAND SCALE. ONE ONLY HAS TO LOOK AT THE MAP TO APPRECIATE THIS. OUR COUNTRY IS REplete WITH TOWNS WITH NAMES LIKE HOPETOWN, HOOPSTAD OR KAAPSCHE HOOP. IN PREPARING THIS ADDRESS I AMUSED MYSELF BY CONSULTING ONE OF THOSE LARGE-SCALE MAPS OBTAINABLE FROM THE GOVERNMENT PRINTER, IN THIS CASE SHEET 3326 CENTRED ON GRAHAMSTOWN. IN A BY NO MEANS EXHAUSTIVE SEARCH I FOUND THE

FOLLOWING FARM NAMES : DE HOOP, GLEN HOPE, GOOD HOPE (3), HOPEDALE, HOPEFIELD (2), HOPEFOUNTAIN, HOPEVALE, HOPEWELL (2), MOUNT HOPE, NICO'S HOOP, SIDNEY'S HOPE AND THE HOPE. THIS LONG LIST MAY WELL BE TELLING US SOMETHING OF THE UNCERTAINTIES AND VICISSITUDES OF AGRICULTURE IN SOUTH AFRICA; IT IS CERTAINLY TELLING US A GREAT DEAL ABOUT THE STEADFASTNESS AND DETERMINATION OF OUR ANCESTORS.

WE MAY ALSO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOPE BY CONSIDERING ITS CONTRARIES, CYNICISM AND DESPAIR. DANTE IN HIS GREAT INFERNO INFORMS US THAT ABOVE THE ENTRANCE TO HELL IS WRITTEN "ABANDON HOPE ALL YE



WHO ENTER". ARE WE NOT ALMOST OVERWHELMED ON EVERY SIDE BY TIRESOME, NEGATIVE, CASSANDRALIKE PEOPLE WHO ARE CONTINUALLY HARPING ON THE WEAKNESS, FOLLY AND IDIOCY OF MANKIND? THEY ALMOST SEEM TO REVEL IN PULLING PEOPLE APART. WE ARE SOMETIMES TEMPTED TO AGREE WITH SUCH A PESSIMISTIC VIEW UNLESS WE NOTICE ONE SIMPLE LITTLE FACT. SUCH PEOPLE NEVER INCLUDE THEMSELVES AS THEY DESCRIBE WITH SUCH EVIDENT RELISH AND MOCK DISGUST THE WICKEDNESS, VENALITY AND WORTHLESSNESS OF THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE. THEY ALSO NEVER ATTEMPT TO DO ANYTHING EXCEPT CRITICISE, FOR FEAR THAT THEY TOO MIGHT BE EXPOSING THEMSELVES TO THE BARBED AND VENOMOUS TONGUES AND PENS OF THOSE WHO IN THEIR ARROGANCE SET THEMSELVES UP AS JUDGES APART FROM AND ABOVE US MERE MORTALS.

YOU HAVE ONLY TO OPEN YOUR DAILY, OR EVEN MORE APPROPRIATELY YOUR WEEKEND, NEWSPAPER TO DISCERN WHAT I MEAN. LET ME QUOTE A PROMINENT JOURNALIST, MR ROBERT SHNAYERSON, TO ILLUSTRATE THE POINT.

"FOR 20 YEARS I HELPED EDIT THREE OF THE WORLD'S BEST MAGAZINES: TIME, LIFE AND HARPER'S. LAST YEAR, AFTER FIVE YEARS AS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF HARPER'S, I TOOK A LONG, HARD LOOK AT MY PROFESSION.

JOURNALISM HAD TRAINED ME TO ASSUME THAT EVERY DAY IN EVERY WAY, THINGS WERE GETTING WORSE AND WORSE. I

ENJOYED THAT NOTION. YET ALL AROUND ME WAS CONTRARY EVIDENCE. NEW LIFE-STYLES, INVENTIONS, WORKS OF ART, WORLD RECORDS. THE QUIET HEROISM OF ORDINARY PEOPLE COPING, HEALING, TEACHING. THE UNKNOWN BEST AND BRIGHTEST IN A BILLION CORNERS OF THE EARTH ... UNKNOWN BECAUSE GOOD NEWS ISN'T NEWS.

I'M TIRED OF JOURNALISTIC MYOPIA. FED UP WITH PUBLICATIONS THAT APPEAL TO OUR WORST INSTINCTS. LET OTHER EDITORS DRAG READERS THROUGH CESSPOOLS OF MEDIOCRITY. I'M INTERESTED IN PEOPLE AS THEY REALLY ARE ... AND COULD BECOME.

SO I'VE STARTED A NEW MAGAZINE ABOUT THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE ... THE SEARCH FOR THE FULLY LIVED LIFE, YOURS AS WELL AS MINE".

THUS WAS BORN THE MAGAZINE "QUEST" WHICH DEVOTES ITSELF TO DESCRIBING EXCEPTIONAL AND ENCOURAGING ACHIEVEMENTS OF MEN AND WOMEN ALL OVER THE WORLD, MEN AND WOMEN WHO PAR EXCELLENCE EXHIBIT THIS VIRTUE OF HOPE WHICH I AM EXTOLLING THIS EVENING. THESE MEN AND WOMEN HAD A CHEERFUL AND POSITIVE ATTITUDE TO LIFE, WERE NOT DETERRED BY EVEN APPARENTLY INSURMOUNTABLE DIFFICULTIES AND WENT ON TO CROWN A REALLY SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT WITH SUCCESS. SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE SEEN A



TELEVISION PROGRAMME SOME MONTHS AGO CONCERNING A SCOTTISH LASS WHO HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO BE BORN WITHOUT ARMS. IN SPITE OF THIS APPALLING HANDICAP SHE HAD MANAGED TO LEAD AN ALMOST COMPLETELY NORMAL LIFE, TEACHING HERSELF TO DRIVE A CAR, USE A TYPEWRITER AND DO VIRTUALLY ALL THE USUAL HOUSEHOLD CHORES, ENTIRELY WITH HER FEET. HERE WAS A PERSON WHO NEVER GAVE UP HOPE. WHEN WE THINK OF SUCH A TRIUMPH OUR OWN ATTITUDES OF TIMIDITY AND LACK OF RESOLUTION IN THE FACE OF MUCH MORE MODEST OBSTACLES SHOW UP IN A VERY POOR LIGHT. SUCH A PERSON'S ACHIEVEMENTS ARE AN INSPIRATION TO US ALL.

NOBODY CAN DENY THAT HOPE IS A VIRTUE OF WHICH WE STAND IN GREAT NEED AS WE CONTEMPLATE THE SOUTH AFRICA OF 1979.

SURROUNDED AS WE ARE BY EXTERNAL THREATS AND A HOST OF UNRESOLVED INTERNAL TENSIONS WE HAVE BEEN DESCRIBED AS THE POLECAT OF THE WORLD. THE TASK OF FINDING A PEACEFUL, NON-VIOLENT AND EVOLVING ROUTE TO A VIABLE, PROSPEROUS AND JUST WAY OF LIFE WITH A PROPER PLACE FOR ALL OF OUR COUNTRY'S PEOPLE, IS A TASK CALCULATED TO DISCOURAGE EVEN THE MOST COURAGEOUS, FAR-SEEING AND OPTIMISTIC AMONGST US. IN THE FACE OF THE OBSTACLES BEFORE US MANY HAVE IN FACT GIVEN UP HOPE. THE REACTIONS OF SUCH CASSANDRAS HAVE BEEN MANY AND VARIED. FIRSTLY, THERE HAVE BEEN THE EMIGRANTS. THEY CANNOT FORESEE ANY WAY IN WHICH OUR PROBLEMS CAN BE RESOLVED,

EITHER IN THEIR TIME, OR MORE IMPORTANTLY, IN THE TIME OF THEIR CHILDREN. THEY THEREFORE WASH THEIR HANDS OF SOUTH AFRICA AND SEEK THEIR FORTUNES ELSEWHERE. BEFORE WE JUDGE SUCH PEOPLE TOO HARSHLY WE MUST REMEMBER THAT IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES THAT IS THE RIGHT COURSE OF ACTION. IN THE EARLY DAYS OF NAZI GERMANY THOSE JEWS WHO LEFT WHEN THEY COULD WERE THE ONES WHO DID NOT GO TO AUSCHWITZ, BELSEN OR DACHAU. DAILY WE HEAR OF THE TERRIBLE DECISIONS THAT HAVE HAD TO BE TAKEN BY PEOPLE WHO HAVE FLED FROM THE IRON CURTAIN COUNTRIES, FROM CHINA OR MOST SPECTACULARLY AND DESPERATELY OF ALL, FROM VIETNAM AS THE BOAT PEOPLE. I AM NOT SUGGESTING FOR A MOMENT THAT CIRCUMSTANCES IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE TO BE COMPARED WITH THE TIMES AND PLACES I HAVE MENTIONED. I AM

MERELY INDICATING THAT A BLIND DETERMINATION TO HOLD ONE'S GROUND UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES CAN HAVE A TRAGIC ENDING.

IN A SECOND CATEGORY, AND MUCH MORE OMINOUSLY, THERE ARE THOSE YOUNG PEOPLE, WHO, DRIVEN BEYOND ENDURANCE BY THE HOPELESSNESS OF THEIR POSITION AND SEEING NO PROSPECT OF REMOVING BY NEGOTIATION THE DISABILITIES WHICH THEY SUFFER, HAVE FLED THE COUNTRY WITH THE INTENTION OF REMOVING BY THE FORCE OF ARMS THE PRESENT ORDER AND REPLACING IT, TRAGICALLY BUT PROBABLY UNREALISED BY THEM, BY A SYSTEM INFINITELY WORSE AND INFLEXIBLE. THEIR EXISTENCE DEMONSTRATES ONE OF THE CARDINAL ASPECTS OF HOPE:

ITS INDIVISIBILITY. IF OUR HOPES AND WHAT WE ASPIRE TO ARE SUCH AS TO DENY REASONABLE HOPES TO OTHERS, THEN THEY CANNOT BE A TRUE HOPE. MAN IS MADE IN SUCH A WAY THAT HE CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT HOPE : DEPRIVE HIM OF IT, AND THERE IS NO KNOWING TO WHAT DESPERATE EXTREMES HE WILL BE DRIVEN.

THIRDLY, WE HAVE THAT GROUP OF PEOPLE, QUITE A NUMEROUS ONE, WHO REALISE DEEP DOWN THAT THE PRESENT DISPENSATION CANNOT CONTINUE INDEFINITELY, AND YET ARE NOT PREPARED TO ACKNOWLEDGE IT. THEY ARE THE "BITTER-EINDERS" WITH THE MASADA COMPLEX. MASADA, YOU WILL REMEMBER, IS A VIRTUALLY IMPREGNABLE FORTRESS-LIKE ROCK WHERE THE REMNANT OF THE JEWISH FORCES, AFTER THE FALL OF JERUSALEM IN A.D. 70 HELD OUT HEROICALLY AGAINST THE

ROMANS AND WHO COMMITTED MASS SUICIDE RATHER THAN CAPITULATE. THESE ARE PEOPLE WHO CLING DESPERATELY, LITERALLY TO THE LAST BULLET AND HECTARE OF SCORCHED EARTH, TO DEFEND A SITUATION WHICH IS LITERALLY WITHOUT HOPE.

FINALLY WE HAVE THE LARGEST GROUP, PROBABLY THE MAJORITY, WHO SIMPLY DRIFT ALONG WITH THE TIDE, TOO IDLE AND TOO COMPLACENT TO GIVE ANY THOUGHT AS TO WHERE THEY ARE DESTINED.

"COMPLACENCY" IS THE KEYWORD TO DESCRIBE THEM. JUST AS CYNICISM AND DESPAIR ARE THE OPPOSITES OF HOPE, COMPLACENCY, AN UNCARING AND THOUGHTLESS IRRESPONSIBILITY, IS A TRAVESTY AND CARICATURE OF HOPE. HOPE IS ACTIVE, REALISTIC AND HEROIC : COMPLACENCY PASSIVE, WOOLLY AND UNREDEEMING IN EVERY RESPECT.



MEMBERS OF THESE FOUR GROUPS, THE EMIGRANTS, THE EMBRYO  
TERRORISTS, THE "BITTER-EINDERS" AND THE UNCARING, COMPLACENT  
MOB, VASTLY DIFFERENT FROM EACH OTHER THOUGH THEY BE IN BASIC  
CHARACTERISTICS, HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON : THEY HAVE EITHER  
GIVEN UP HOPE OR ELSE HAVE NO CONCEPTION OF WHAT IT IS. NONE  
OF THEM IS GOING TO MAKE A CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO OUR  
PRESENT PROBLEMS. THOSE WHO WILL BELONG TO A SMALL BUT  
GROWING GROUP OF PEOPLE, WHOM, FOR WANT OF A BETTER TITLE, LET  
US CALL THE BAND OF HOPE. A CONSPICUOUS RECRUIT TO THIS BAND  
IS OUR PRIME MINISTER, MR P W BOTHA. THROUGH HIS RECENT  
UTTERANCES HE HAS INDICATED WITH GREAT CLARITY AND COURAGE AT  
LEAST SOME OF THE FIRST STEPS ALONG THE ROAD WE MUST PURSUE IF  
WE ARE TO ASPIRE TO A PEACEFUL AND HAPPY FUTURE FOR OUR BELOVED

COUNTRY. AT THE VERY MOMENT WHEN WE SEEM TO BE LOCKED INTO A  
SEEMINGLY INFLEXIBLE PATH OF ESCALATING RIGIDITY AND  
INTRANSIGENCE LEADING TO INEVITABLE CONFRONTATION, VIOLENCE  
AND INSTABILITY, HE HAS GIVEN US A GLIMMERING OF HOPE IN A  
FUTURE THAT HOLDS MORE PROMISE. THE SACRED COWS WHICH WE HAVE  
WORSHIPPED FOR SO LONG ARE BEING SLAUGHTERED ONE AFTER THE  
OTHER. IT BEHOVES EVERY ONE OF US, NOT TO BE CONTENT WITH THE  
FIRST FEW HESITANT STEPS WHICH HE HAS INDICATED FOR US, BUT  
BOLDLY TO MARCH FORWARD AND CONSOLIDATE THE LEAD WHICH HE HAS  
GIVEN US.

LET ME REITERATE : HOPED FOR PRIZES, NOT ONLY FOR SOUTH AFRICA AS A WHOLE, BUT FOR EACH ONE OF US INDIVIDUALLY, WILL NOT BE ATTAINED UNLESS WE PUT EVERYTHING WE HAVE INTO THE EFFORT. YOU HAVE ALL HEARD OF THE DEROGATORY EXPRESSION "YOUNG HOPEFULS". THAT, BOYS AND GIRLS, IS RESERVED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LIKE YOURSELVES WHO WISH TO ATTAIN THEIR OBJECTIVES WITHOUT THE COMMENSURATE ABILITY AND DEDICATION. IT IS NO USE SAYING "I HOPE FOR TWO DISTINCTIONS IN MATRIC" OR "I HOPE TO GET AN A-AGGREGATE" IF YOU KNOW PERFECTLY WELL THAT YOU HAVE BEEN BONE-IDLE ALL YEAR. THE SAME IS TRUE OF ANY UNDERTAKING IN LIFE, BE IT A BUSINESS VENTURE, A SPORTING AMBITION OR MARRIAGE. EVERY YEAR A LOT OF DEWY-EYED YOUNG COUPLES GET MARRIED WITH THE ATTITUDE "I HOPE IT WILL WORK OUT". THEIR

DEGREE OF SUCCESS IS BELIED BY THE STATISTICS. IN SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY WE ARE REACHING THE PARLOUS SITUATION WHERE ALMOST ONE MARRIAGE IN TWO BREAKS UP. UNDETERRED, A SURPRISING NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARE WILLING TO TRY AGAIN, OFTEN WITH THE SAME DEGREE OF FECKLESSNESS. DR SAMUEL JOHNSON ONCE DESCRIBED A SECOND MARRIAGE AS "THE TRIUMPH OF HOPE OVER EXPERIENCE". BELIEVE ME, I AM NOT TRYING TO DISCOURAGE YOU FROM GETTING MARRIED (INDEED I AM HAPPILY MARRIED MYSELF), BUT MERELY ENDEAVOURING TO DEMONSTRATE THAT YOU HAVE NO BUSINESS SAYING "I HOPE IT WILL WORK OUT" UNLESS YOU ARE PREPARED TO USE EVERY OUNCE OF DETERMINATION TO ENSURE THAT IT WILL WORK OUT.

THE ESSENCE OF WHAT I AM ENDEAVOURING TO LEAVE WITH YOU THIS EVENING, BOYS AND GIRLS, HAS NEVER BEEN BETTER EXPRESSED THAN IN THE WELL-KNOWN PIECE BY THE NINETEENTH CENTURY POET ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH:

"SAY NOT, THE STRUGGLE NAUGHT 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, TEARS 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 A 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."

IF I MAY RETURN FINALLY TO OUR OVERALL SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, ABOUT WHICH WE ARE ALL SO DEEPLY CONCERNED, FOR FAR



TOO LONG WE HAVE BEEN BOMBARDED BY THE RATHER DESPERATE "FIVE MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT" ANALOGY. THE WAY SOME PEOPLE TELL IT, ALL THE CLOCKS IN SOUTH AFRICA HAVE BEEN STOPPED FOR THE LAST TWO DECADES AT 23h55. IT IS NEVER FULLY SPELLED OUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN MIDNIGHT FINALLY TOLLS, BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT WE SHALL TURN INTO SOMETHING FAR WORSE THAN PUMPKINS. NO MORE THAN MIDNIGHT DO WE WISH FOR A HIGH NOON, THAT BRIGHT AND STARKLY ILLUMINATED TIME OF OMINOUS CLIMAX SO BELOVED OF COWBOY EPICS. NO! THE CLOCKS OF SOUTH AFRICA ARE TICKING ONCE AGAIN, BUT THEIR TIME IS ADVANCING THROUGH THAT DARKEST HOUR OF THE NIGHT, ITS VERY DARKNESS ENLIVENED BY THE IMMINENT PROSPECT OF THE FIRST FAINT RAYS OF A NEW AND HOPEFULLY A HAPPIER DAWN. JUST AS PRINCE HENRY THE NAVIGATOR WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE NAME "CABO

TORMENTOSA" BUT CHANGED IT TO "CABO DE BOA ESPERANZA", SO WE MUST SEE THE NEWLY DAWNING DAY AS ONE OF GOOD HOPE.

JUST AS THE RECORDED HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICA BEGAN WITH A GOOD HOPE, SO WILL THE NEW DAY WHEN ALL SOUTH AFRICANS STRIVE TO ACCEPT EACH OTHER AS HUMAN BEINGS OF EQUAL AND INFINITE VALUE. IF WE SURVIVE ALL THE STORMS THAT LIE AHEAD PERHAPS WE SHOULD THINK OF CALLING RATHER MORE THAN A TINY SOUTH-WESTERN PROMONTORY OF OUR LAND GOOD HOPE. IN A FEW SHORT YEARS WE OF THE OLDER GENERATION WILL BE HANDING OVER THE BATON FOR YOU OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION FOR YOUR LEG OF THE RELAY. TAKE MAXIMUM

ADVANTAGE OF ALL THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT HAVE BEEN AFFORDED  
YOU THROUGH MEMBERSHIP OF THIS RENOWNED SCHOOL. YOU ARE THE  
HOPE FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE. GOOD LUCK AND GOD GO WITH YOU.

D S HENDERSON

20 OCTOBER 1979