

GRADUATION SPEECH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NATAL, PIETERMARITZBURG, 3 MAY 1984

GRA 3/2/1 (1)

Mr. Chancellor, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Vice-Principals, Ladies & Gentlemen:

I am deeply indebted to you, Professor Clarence, not only for inviting me to speak at this graduation ceremony, but also for your kind introduction. It goes without saying that as a businessman and the Managing Director of a large public company, it is with great trepidation that I stand before you in this academic environment of great wisdom and knowledge. The first 3½ years of my working life was spent lecturing at a University College in Africa and this left me in no doubt that I wasn't bright or intelligent enough to continue with an academic career!

For the majority of graduands here, tonight, marks the completion of your studies for the degrees which will be conferred on you, and also marks the end of your sojourn at the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of Natal. You will be going out, as the cliché has it, into the wide world, and those of you who have not been made an offer you can't refuse - two years with the Defence Force - will have sought employment in commerce or industry. I hope successfully.

It is primarily to these graduands and guests that I wish to address my remarks this evening. To the lucky graduands who have the opportunity to continue with an educational or academic career devoted to teaching and/or research, I would like to express my sincere good wishes and a great deal of envy. The role of teachers, post graduate students and academic staff is vital to the development of our country and the success of our commerce and industry, as I hope will become evident in the course of what I have to say.

To the Science and Commerce graduands who are about to discover the enormous opportunities which exist in commerce and industry for young people with talent and determination, I will attempt to identify what seems to me to be the major challenges which undoubtedly face the business community now and in the future. The challenges will also face you if you aspire, as I am sure you will, to move beyond the strictly technical disciplines of science, engineering, accounting or finance into the mysterious world of management.

I say it is a mysterious world because management is a discipline that has, I think, established a certain mystique in the popular consciousness. I am not sure whether

this is due to the Press, the business schools or managers themselves, who certainly can be accused of cloaking what they do in a certain amount of mystery in the interests of self protection! It is not entirely inappropriate, however, that management is perceived as mysterious, because it isn't really a science - certainly not a precise science like physics or chemistry. Perhaps the nearest we can get to it is as a social science because, more than anything else, management deals with people. With due respect to all the professional and technical specialists, there is no doubt that in the years ahead, the role of the manager is going to be increasingly important and difficult in the South African business world. He is the person ultimately responsible for getting things done through people of all races, colours and creeds by leadership and not simply by instruction, and this applies whether the manager is a first line supervisor or a senior executive.

It has been widely reported that South Africa faces a dire shortage of competent managers which neither business, nor the educational system, nor society is doing enough to rectify. In the past it has been too easy for University graduates and Chartered Accountants to become managers. Given the more complex business environment of the future, it is going to require more talent, education, dedication and understanding to be a really successful manager. If the South African economy is going

to provide employment opportunities for, and meet the basic needs of our rapidly growing population, then an increasing number of Black South Africans will need to enter the ranks of management. The Unit for Futures Research at the University of Stellenbosch has estimated that an average of at least 4 300 Black executives will be needed each year for the next twenty years. In addition, economic growth will require corresponding increases in the number of people doing skilled jobs, and most of these people will have to come from the Black, Coloured and Indian communities. It is therefore a fact that not only will the ranks of management become increasingly mixed, but the workforce to be managed will be thoroughly mixed at all levels.

This process has already begun and is demanding new management skills to overcome historical prejudices and fears and to deal with real cultural differences - a pre-requisite to achieving harmonious teamwork. While individual leadership and motivation are vitally important in this regard, so is the skill to deal with workers collectively and to negotiate with their elected representatives. For this reason industrial relations has become an increasingly important aspect of the management function at all levels and will continue to occupy the time and attention of management to an ever-increasing degree.

It is worth reminding ourselves of how far we have come in this regard in a comparatively short period of about ten years insofar as the emergence of effective 'black' Trade Unionism is concerned. Contrary to almost everyone's expectations, the last ten years have not been marked by tumultuous labour unrest or serious upheaval in our economic life, in spite of the fact that a veritable revolution has been taking place in the relationships between management and the workforce, particularly with regard to Black workers. My own company has to date signed well over 20 recognition agreements with Trade Unions representing the majority of employees involved in an operation, factory or industry. A similar number of wage negotiations have just taken place, or will take place shortly, to establish the wages to be paid in the forthcoming year. The delicate nature of these negotiations and the time involved is something that was totally unheard of a few years ago and a very far cry from the paternalistic management style we once enjoyed.

It would be untrue to say that there haven't been any problems, or that there won't be problems in the years ahead, but we do have a reasonably flexible legal and institutional framework in place and I am fairly confident that if we create mutual goodwill and understanding, the conduct of industrial relations in our lifetime as managers need not be characterized by sharpening conflict. On the contrary, by

adopting a positive and far-sighted approach, management and unions have the opportunity to achieve enormous growth, both in profits attributable to shareholders, and in the take-home pay and standard of living of workers. Recent history in the so-called developed world, however, has shown us very clearly that, in the long run, neither will be sustained without, or at the expense of, the other. In this regard, and indeed also in industrial, commercial and technical fields, one great advantage South Africa has is to learn from the western and eastern business and industrial communities. We are not unique, and as a country cannot afford to re-invent the wheel. I hope you will remember this and take advantage of the coming opportunities whenever you can.

Perhaps the most difficult problem the next generation of management will have to face in Industrial Relations is the 'grey area' between strictly defined industrial matters and politics in the broadest sense at the central, regional and municipal levels. It has frequently been pointed out that Trade Unions are likely to be under considerable pressure from their members to use the collective bargaining process to make demands on Government. That they should wish to use this channel to express these political aspirations is, of course, entirely understandable.

On the other hand, employers, even when acting collectively, can do no more than try to persuade the central government to implement desirable changes on which there is consensus amongst them. However, as business is structured on a competitive basis and not on political lines, the number of issues on which real consensus exists among businessmen is rather more limited than one might imagine. Notwithstanding this, there are many political issues in the arena of local government in which business does have strong interests at stake and with which the manager of the future must be involved. Matters such as housing, infrastructure and all the ramifications of urbanization bear directly on employers in so much as they affect labour, transport, markets, etc. As my Chairman, Dr. Chris Saunders, told the Centenary Dinner of the Pietermaritzburg and District Chamber of Commerce earlier this year:-

"It never ceases to amaze me how, as enlightened employers, we accept the principle of equal opportunity within the factory gate and during hours of work, but once the shop door closes, or the whistle blows to mark the end of the day, we allow and accept the destruction of the productivity of the Black employee and deny that Black employee every entry to the promotion of family life - the essence of a capitalistic society. We do little or nothing to motivate him towards our free

enterprise ethic we lose all moral initiative and basically advance Black revolutionary attitudes."

That businessmen will have to pay more attention to these issues in future and make a real effort to understand the social circumstances of their employees is inescapable. Furthermore, we cannot avoid greater involvement in trying to solve the complex problems posed by the growing phenomenon of black urbanization. We are told that South Africa's black urban population is estimated to grow from 6,5 million in 1980 to 23 million by the year 2000 - an increase of nearly 17 million. Put another way, the urban population is expected to multiply 3,5 fold, while the population as a whole will merely double. It is a fact that Durban is already surrounded by half a million so-called "squatters" and the Natal Region of the Urban Foundation has stated that the housing backlog in Durban's metropolitan area has already reached crisis proportions. As complex and unpalatable as the problem is, we must never forget that for each of these "squatters" or new urban dwellers, as they consider themselves, the cities represent the hope of a better life than they are presently experiencing, that the individual decision to urbanize is a perfectly rational economic decision and in many countries around the world urbanization has proved to be the "engine" of rapid economic growth.

The challenge and problems of urbanization cannot be glossed over by commerce and industry with the statement that they are the problems of the Government or municipality alone. Somehow we must turn the fact of urbanization to advantage - to the benefit of the whole community, including business.

We frequently talk of labour productivity and how, as a country, we are uncompetitive in world markets for our manufactured goods. I am quite sure that the lifestyle of the black urban dweller, whether in a township or as a new urban dweller, is one of the main reasons for this. I cannot give you a solution, but I can assure you that urbanization will not disappear. On the contrary it will continue at an ever-increasing rate in line with the statistics that I have quoted, and it is going to be a major factor in which we must become more and more involved both now and in the future.

It is interesting (if a little paradoxical) that the process of urbanization is a pre-requisite for effective rural development and the improvement of agricultural output. Nowhere is this more true than in South Africa where over-population of 'black' rural areas is as daunting as urbanization, the dire consequences of which are over-cropping and over-grazing, which undeniably lead to erosion and the loss

of productive land.

Our Government has been committed for 20 years to a policy designed to try to stem the tide of urbanization by promoting decentralized industrial development through a system of special subsidies and tax allowances/rebates and is fully committed to the continuation and extension of an industrial decentralization policy. It is not for us to decry or denigrate this policy, but we must recognise that it will not solve the fact of urbanization. There is no doubt that it will help, but we must question the speed at which it can be implemented, its cost-effectiveness, and whether we can or how much we can really afford it as a country.

As practical people, we must face up to urbanization as one of the multi-faceted areas where a solution has to be found, and where Government, society and the business community need to work more closely with the academic community in order to make progress. The need to create a better quality of life for the new urban dweller is of paramount importance and will involve investigations and studies in many different fields and disciplines, which will include the following:-

- * Housing methods and the provision of related infrastructural services;
- * New approaches to the financing of housing and infrastructure from both the public and private sectors;
- * Transport engineering and economics;
- * Social services involving training techniques, affirmative action programmes for the advancement of people with ability, cross-cultural communication techniques, and the management of industrial relations generally.

Fortunately there is an increasing interaction between the business and academic worlds which is evidenced not only by research commissioned by individual business organisations, but also by the activities of organisations such as the Urban Foundation, that have been formed to represent private sector interests collectively. The University of Natal is also making a major contribution to this research effort through its Centre for Applied Social Sciences, inter-disciplinary research units such as the Development Studies Research Group, the Institute of Natural Resources and the Subsistence Agricultural Study Group. Your language departments and the Faculty of Education are also engaged in projects which will be of direct value to industry. In broader fields we, in business, have always derived great benefit

from the research conducted in the Departments of Commerce and Business Administration, the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences.

If I may digress here for a moment to say that as important as the university's research contribution is, it is through their continuing teaching activities that the universities make their greatest contribution to the economic life of the country. We in commerce and industry who employ new graduates are perhaps not always as appreciative as we should be of the real value of the university product. In addition to knowledge, it is the qualities of idealism and enthusiasm which new graduates exhibit, which are important and which can so profitably be brought to bear in the changing society and business environment in which we are operating today. I hope that the graduands who receive their degrees tonight will try to retain these qualities and attempt to inject them into the organisations in which they intend making their careers. Certainly, you will find in the years ahead that the scope and necessity for your involvement in "affairs outside the factory gate" will increase dramatically because, as I have said, business simply cannot ignore the problems with which employees have to cope outside working hours. A very wise businessman and philosopher said many years ago that few men have original ideas.

over the age of 45. They may put new ideas into practice when they are older, but if they are honest with themselves, they will find that these ideas originated before the age I have mentioned. This is important because it cuts down dramatically the time period during which you will derive your original thoughts. It is therefore very important that you use your youth, your ideals and your enthusiasm to best advantage and as soon as you possibly can. If you want inspiration in this regard I can do no better than to recommend to you a book which has been top of the popularity lists - "In Search of Excellence" by Thomas Peters and Robert Waterman.

Let me now deal briefly with the economic climate with which I believe business will be faced in the future. It has been said from many platforms that the choice we face as a society is between being mixed, Marxist and dominated, or being mixed, capitalist and free. That we will be a mixed society in future is no longer at issue. What remains at issue and in the balance is the economic system we will follow and the extent of individual liberty we will enjoy.

The Prime Minister and the government have committed themselves to pursuing the path of free enterprise as the only way to offer opportunities to all for an improvement in their quality of life, and the Prime Minister is on record as saying

that he foresees the State interfering less and less in competitive actions. He has successfully established a much more constructive and indeed co-operative relationship with the private sector. It is also a fact that the Prime Minister will be remembered as the man who stopped South Africa on the brink of socialism some four years ago. The Carlton Conference, although stage managed, gave a new direction of free enterprise - a direction to which the business world has been slow to react and indeed the real implications of which the politician has been slow to understand or admit. The Chairman of Anglo American Corporation, Mr. Gavin Relly, pointed out last year that "the free enterprise system is more honoured in the breach than the observance" in many vital matters, none more important than the freedom of movement of all South Africans. It must be recognized that the impediments imposed on Black South Africans in the form of influx control regulations represent a severe obstacle to the successful "marketing" of the free enterprise system. Closely related to these are the shortcomings of the land tenure systems in both urban and rural black areas. The absence of a system affording secure and exclusive title to land is a major obstacle to capital formation by Blacks. Both these issues should be addressed urgently by Government and the business community, if we are seriously adopting the free enterprise ethic.

Furthermore, it is a fact that much of South Africa's industrialisation over the past 25 to 30 years has taken place behind protective barriers of tariffs and import controls, which have shielded our "infant" industries from the winds of international competition. Also, much of our industrialisation over this period has involved State or para-Statal organisations such as Iscor, Escom, Sasol, ADE - Atlantis, SATS, etc.

The magnitude of the Government's change in policy can therefore be appreciated and industry can be forgiven if it thought that in order to attract investment, create jobs and produce strategic products, protection had to be given forever.

With the free enterprise ethic it is clear that there comes a time when the "infant" industry argument can no longer be used to justify what amounts to a subsidy by local consumers of the local producers of various goods. The consequences of this change in policy can be extremely serious for certain industries. However, sound theoretical reasons are advanced in its support and concern the need to control inflation so that we can remain or become competitive in export markets for manufactured goods. The popular expression is that we have no alternative but to find ways and means of exporting our way out of unemployment. While this is true,

it is also a fact that commerce and industry are continually faced with extraordinary price increases from State or para-Statal service and industrial organisations, and particularly from agricultural control boards - witness the price of maize increasing by 30% since January of this year, albeit as a result of the drought and the need to import a large proportion of our requirements.

Clearly the problem of inflation must be tackled if we are to survive economically as a nation in an increasingly competitive world and as part of what is becoming a world economy. What is not quite so clear in my mind is whether the "carrot" of export incentives will be more effective in achieving our objectives in the short term, than the "stick" of withdrawing protection.

This is a real dilemma at the present time and to achieve the right balance between the "carrot" and the "stick" will require a good deal of fine-tuning by Government and the private sector over a considerable period of time. At the same time, commerce and industry must attend to the problems of our low productivity by international standards. Some of the factors which are important in this I have

spoken about this evening, such as the need for enlightened and enthusiastic management, skills training and black education, about which much has been spoken elsewhere and which the De Lange Report deals with in detail, and also a concern for the quality of life of all our employees, particularly when there are problems caused by rapid and unavoidable urbanization.

All this has to be done at a time when our economy remains in recession and the drought of the past three years has ravaged much of our agriculture; also when the Government does not have the financial resources to carry out all the educational and infrastructural programmes and services which are desirable and necessary.

There is no doubt that we will emerge from our recession possibly a little later than the present predictions, and our economy will grow again at real rates which will be envied by most industrialised countries. It is possible, however, that we will not see again the boom times of the seventies and early eighties.

The economic future is therefore like a jigsaw in pieces, and the challenge for the future is to make sure that Government and industry put the pieces together in the correct way. We cannot afford double digit inflation, but at the same time we

must provide jobs for our increasing population, which is being better educated and will have greater expectations. We want the free enterprise ethic, but we dare not dismantle the protection and controls in a way which in the short term will add to the problem of unemployment both in industry and agriculture. We would like to decentralize our industry, but at the same time we have to cope with and find a solution to the ever-increasing urbanization around our cities.

All in all, and whichever way you look at it, I am sure you will agree with me that all of us are going to find ourselves faced with problems that will often appear daunting in the extreme. But to my mind it is these problems that will present this generation and the next with their most exciting challenges. If you, who are graduating this evening, honestly face up to these challenges, your business lives will not be easy, but they will be richly rewarding, not just in the business sense, but in the sense that you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you will be contributing to the economic development of your country in the most practical of ways. I don't know what your private thoughts are as you come forward to have your degrees conferred upon you. I do remember very clearly, however, that when I graduated some 35 years ago, I believed that my degree would enable me

to aspire in the possible future to a salary of £1000 per year.

My sincere congratulations to all of you who are graduating this evening and thank you again for allowing me the honour of talking to you all and for listening to me so attentively.

Speech to the University of Natal on receiving an Honorary Doctorate
4 May 1984

GRA 3/2/1 (2)

MR CHANCELLOR, THE PRINCIPAL, CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL, ACADEMIC staff, distinguished guests and graduates: I thank the University of Natal for this great honour. I have had the privilege of being honoured in many circles and many countries but this means the most to me, not because of the title but because I have been honoured by my own Province.

CARL GUSTAV JUNG THE SWISS PSYCHOLOGIST ONCE SAID, "EACH of us has first to stand by his or her own truth, which is then reduced to common truth by mutual discussion." He said too that it was the individual's experience that was most important in life. So tonight all I can talk about to those of you who graduated today, is my own truth, my own experience.

I LOOK BACK DOWN THE YEARS AS THROUGH A KALEIDOSCOPE and see many incidents. As a boy of 12 a promising sporting career was ended by a knee injury which left me partially crippled. What seemed a disaster, later became a driving compulsion for greater understanding of life. At 17 I left school and joined the army and witnessed the end of the 1939-45 war. I saw a Europe smashed by advancing and retreating armies, ancient buildings destroyed and women and children searching rubbish bins for food.

I RETURNED TO SOUTH AFRICA WHICH WAS IN THE THROES OF an industrial depression and worked on the gold mines 6 000 feet below the surface for 10/- a day. It was claustrophobic work but deep underground I met the black men of our continent and learnt to work with them.

I left the mines to canoe.../2.

I left the mines to canoe in a canvas canoe in the valleys of the Umsinduzi and Umgeni rivers, and later participated in those gruelling canoe marathons. I did not know it, but each experience was a step on an indistinct path.

IN 1952 I BECAME A GAME RANGER IN THE NATAL PARKS BOARD and walked in the Umfolozi game reserve with Magqubu Ntombela in the great riverine forests that were empty and silent after the game had been eliminated in the tsetse fly campaigns. We sat around fires at night sharing putu from a three-legged pot. Each day brought a new lesson: an animal footprint, the call of a bird, the smell of a plant. There were days when we did not speak. He respected my silence and the unconscious process that brought it about.

I SAW SERVICE IN EVERY GAME RESERVE IN ZULULAND AND RETIRED after 22 years with the Natal Parks Board. I cannot look back and say that any day was wasted.

I HAVE NOW SERVED CONSERVATION FOR 33 YEARS AND IT IS easy to slip into the conservationists' hand wringing lament of doom and gloom. But over the past seven years I have helped to organize and have attended three world wilderness congresses where some of the best brains in the conservation, political, philosophical, scientific and artistic worlds have spoken. And the truth is that we are in a serious position. Every day, satellites show us the destruction of rain forests, the desert encroachment, and soil erosion. I remember crossing the Mediterranean in a troopship in 1944. I saw it again 35 years later and was sickened by the muck on the once lovely beaches. There are now authentic stories of fish with cancerous growths...../3.

of fish with cancerous growths being caught off the coast of Britain. The way our country pours effluents into the sea and rivers is appalling and reckless and successful prosecutions are rare. Acid rain is damaging the lakes and forests of Sweden, Germany, Canada and the United States. To put it in the bluntest of terms, man is fouling his own nest. And those of us who care are outnumbered by the ruthless, the ignorant and the apathetic. A Zen poet said, "What we need in our time today is to hear within us the sounds of the earth crying."

SO THE EDUCATORS AND THOSE WHO WILL BE WORKING WITH the land have a personal responsibility: to encourage a new generation to understand man's plight. We are on the edge of an abyss and man is becoming an endangered species, perhaps an extinct one if the nuclear holocaust is unleashed. The exploding human population is one reason for our dilemma. Population increases can end in violent crashes, as we know from the study of animals. Man is an animal with all the qualities of an animal but in addition he has consciousness, the divine spark. We can solve our problems but we need a deeper knowledge of ourselves

ONE OF THE MOST BRILLIANT PIONEERS IN THIS FIELD WAS Carl Gustav Jung. Jung has had an enormous influence on my life. The indistinct path that I once stumbled along has been illuminated by the work of this great man and those scholars who follow in his footsteps. My introduction to Jung was Laurens van der Post's book, Jung and the Story of our Time, and Dr Gloria Gearing of Mariannhill furthered the understanding by leading me to recognize the unconscious and its power. Laurens van der Post dedicated this book to his wife Ingaret and to

Dr T C Robertson. Ingaret Giffard is a Jungian psychologist, a healer of the mind, and T C Robertson is our most prominent soil conservationist, a healer of the earth. These are two of the most urgent priorities of our age.

JUNG AND THOSE WHO FOLLOWED IN HIS FOOTSTEPS ARE PROVIDING many answers to our modern predicament. Laurens van der Post told me that both Dr Jung and Dr Meier--who took over from Jung--often said that no cure of the sick and ailing soul works unless it enables man to experience religion. Wilderness is an instrument enabling man to recover his lost capacity for religious experience.

MY WHOLE LIFE HAS BEEN BOUND UP WITH WILDERNESS. IT IS the basis of everything I have done: the establishment of wilderness trails in the Natal Parks Board, the Wilderness Leadership School and the world wilderness congresses. Wilderness has many values such as the historical, the cultural and the scientific, but its power to transform human lives makes it essential for us to retain every acre we can. I have taken over a thousand people into the wilderness areas of Zululand and I know that Professor Frank Fraser Darling was right when he said, "To deprive the world of physical wilderness would be to inflict a grievous wound on mankind."

I HAVE BEEN INTIMATELY INVOLVED IN MANY FIGHTS OVER 30 years to keep some of our country wild. But I do it gladly because I owe the wilderness a great debt. I was transformed by it, it gave me purpose and understanding. I have seen it do the same for many other people. One has only to read the hundreds of reports that come

from the young people who participate..../5.

from the young people who participate on our Wilderness Leadership School trails to see how the experience has opened up an awareness of themselves and of the outer world. They learn to appreciate that the environment does not consist of the benign human ruler confronted by stinging insects, snakes and dangerous animals, but that they all form an interlocking pattern of which man is part. Some of their remarks are profoundly religious too. But this is not surprising because man has always returned to the wilderness for inspiration and understanding of himself. Older cultures, such as the North American Indians, were close to the heartbeat of what they called Mother Earth. So were our Bushmen and one can sense it in their delicate paintings in the rock galleries of the Drakensberg. In our Christian culture some of those who went on the wilderness journey were Moses, Jacob, Joseph, and Christ. The leaders in our modern world need this archetypal experience to more fully understand leadership.

WILDERNESS HAS ALWAYS BEEN SYNONYMOUS WITH REJUVENATION AND renewal. I cannot count the number of times I have seen men and women change in three days from desperate unhappiness to calmness. The wilderness experience in the bushveld is a great leveller and nothing dissipates human arrogance more quickly than being chased by a snorting, angry black rhino.

MY EXPERIENCE HAS PROVED TO ME THAT RACIAL AND INTERNATIONAL barriers can be quickly broken down by a wilderness journey. Sitting around a fire under an African sky in isolated wild country, people become human beings and not black or brown or white or German or English. A warmth of truly human understanding emerges from this experience.

ON SOME OF THE TRAILS I HAVE TAKEN...../6.

ON SOME OF THE TRAILS I HAVE TAKEN I HAVE INSISTED on silence for three days. The people then heard the flow of the river, the wind in the grass and the falling of leaves. They smelt the woodsmoke and the scent of the early morning earth. They became aware of the diurnal and nocturnal rhythms: the jackal screaming from a kloof, the lion roaring on the night of the full moon, and the long cry of the fish eagle at dawn. They returned from that experience having touched something within themselves that is beyond expression in words, because it is seen by the inner eye.

WILDERNESS IS ONE OF OUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCES and the true wilderness areas in South Africa, defined by legislation, comprise a tiny fraction of our country. They are confined mainly to Forestry areas. There are some small pockets controlled by the Natal Parks Board. There is not a single hectare of proclaimed wilderness in the Kruger National Park or in any national park, although paradoxically wilderness trails are being run in the Kruger National Park and are over-subscribed. In contrast to South Africa, the United States has some 80 million acres of wilderness. No country can claim to be civilized if it does not set aside wilderness areas. Civilization and wilderness are complimentary. Along with the wilderness without, there is a wilderness within man and we destroy the outer one at great peril to the inner.

I HAVE NEVER CEASED TO PRAY AND TO HOPE THAT SOME rising politician would take on the great task of fighting for a Wilderness Act along the same lines as that of the United States.

I can think of nothing that would bring...../7.

I can think of nothing that would bring greater kudos and national gratitude, and hope for a more enlightened future.

I HAVE SPOKEN, FOR LONG ENOUGH NOW, SO LET ME ONCE again thank the University for the honour it has bestowed upon me. It is also a recognition of the friends, colleagues and organisations I have worked with, because no man ever does anything alone. To those who graduated today, again I congratulate you and wish you good fortune in the life that lies ahead of you.

I BEGAN WITH A QUOTE OF JUNG. I WOULD LIKE TO END with one from Teilhard de Chardin who said:-

"Some day after we have mastered the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity we shall harness for God, the energies of love. Then for the second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire".

Address

delivered by Dr. Anton Rupert
at the Graduation Ceremony
of the University of Natal

Pietermaritzburg: 5 May 1984

HAPPINESS IS A BY-PRODUCT

May I start by expressing my heart-felt appreciation for the great honour which the University of Natal has bestowed upon us, the honorary graduates of today.

For the opportunity to have made but a small contribution to the well-being of my fellow-man, I am personally truly thankful, and accept this honorary degree in a spirit of humility and gratitude.

On this memorable occasion I should like to address myself to the leaders of tomorrow - the new graduates present here today - and in choosing the theme 'Happiness is a by-product', I wish to share a few thoughts with you.

On the question of happiness, George Bernard Shaw once said: "We have no more right to consume happiness without producing it than to consume wealth without producing it".

Happiness is something you will never find if it is your sole aim in life.

Happiness is a by-product - an unexpected reward for helping others to help themselves; for sharing one's time, means and talents with the under-privileged; for making oneself indispensable through unselfish service.

Almost 18 years ago in an address to the convocation of this university I mentioned that we were no longer living in a world of rapid change, but indeed in a world of radical change.

I emphasised that many aspects of life were changing so rapidly that we could no longer think of society as a stable and fixed entity. The previous landmarks were in a state of flux and, as directives, they had become misleading.

I could then have added that norms and values were changing; that rising expectations were starting to part company with reality; and that people's demands on the wealth of the economy were beginning to exceed their personal contributions.

What was true then is certainly no less true today. At the present moment technology is advancing at a relentless pace, almost independent and in defiance of those human beings by whose hands it has been developed.

As the world becomes smaller, so its problems become more evident - problems of ever-increasing debt, inflation, poverty, famine and political revolution.

In a period of constant change and technological development it is understandable that people may feel that they are becoming obsolete, that the machine and the micro chip are taking over.

This social malaise is threatening our society, and the responsibility rests upon us, the leaders of today and tomorrow, to ensure that our youth will not lose interest and a sense of purpose in a world where technical advances are changing the structure of society.

We are fortunate to live in a multi-racial country. Our varied and diverse society makes for interesting living and it keeps up our vitality. For our youth it creates opportunities for pioneering and for experimentation. Seeing so much work to be done, they are challenged and become conscious of a purpose in life. This is different from many countries in the west where young people face a crisis brought on by a lack of purpose.

Today I find myself among the privileged few - people on the threshold of their careers, people for whom there will be no time for boredom.

Every generation must face the challenge of change and adaptation and the future is determined by the way in which it responds to that challenge.

One of the challenges confronting the current generation is the new industrial revolution. We are at present in a state of rapid transition from an old to a new, highly technological society. There is already a serious imbalance between 'technological' and 'sociological' progress, or, one might say, between the progress of technology and the progress made by man.

We need only contemplate the miracle of the micro chip, the regular space flights by Columbia and Challenger and the marvels of modern communication to realise what progress has been made in the field of technology.

And yet strange as it may seem, man has made little spiritual progress. Today people are arguing and fighting over the very issues which led past generations to cross their swords.

The crucial question is whether the transition to a highly sophisticated technological society will be orderly or chaotic.

The current predictions are that during the next 10 to 20 years there will be more technological changes than have ever been experienced before. The prospect evokes both hope and despair.

For the low-skilled worker this new revolution could spell out despair. A survey conducted in America's mecca of high technology - Silicon Valley - has shown that low-skilled production workers are the most vulnerable. There is little job security for them.

But for those who are prepared to avail themselves of the opportunity, the new revolution could spell out hope. The promise of improved educational standards. The new technology can be harnessed in our efforts to increase the literacy level of our ever-increasing population.

In educating our people we should, however, guard against a mass or steam-roller approach and we should be careful not to reject the creative capabilities of the exceptional mind. Creative ideas emanate from individuals, not from groups and certainly not from committees. A Rembrandt painting like a Beethoven symphony cannot be achieved by a committee.

Our young people are up against a tough proposition. They are living in times when they need to know about things that were not dreamt of during their fathers' times. They are entering an age when what they have learnt at school and at university will not be sufficient. They will have to keep on learning to keep abreast of the times - and that also applies to the not so young among us.

In their search for excellence, our young people would do well to remember the advice given by Winston Churchill that the price of greatness is responsibility. To be patriotic without responsibility is easy - in fact, too easy.

It is our responsibility to face the challenges of our present times. We still have new worlds to conquer today, new ideas to explore and new techniques to put to the test, conflicting philosophies to understand and to reconcile.

To accomplish this we need versatile people. Versatility embraces more than just knowledge. It implies a broader humanity, one facet of which is reflected in the courtesy and consideration we display in our daily round.

The versatile man is not over-specialised to a degree where his individuality is lost. Today, unfortunately, there is a tendency towards premature specialisation.

Where are the days when a course in the classics was an integral part of medical training? Where are the days when medical men like Theo Wassenaar, AD Keet, Louis Leipoldt and AG Visser penned some of our loveliest Afrikaans poetry?

In South Africa there is a crying need for versatile people - people who can give momentum to efforts to raise the educational, moral and economic standards of the less privileged among us.

And in doing so, they will discover a sense of fulfilment for true happiness springs from what you do for others. In this respect the academic staff of this university and of all other educational institutions set an excellent example.

They are men and women who do not live merely for the moment, but they devote their lives to train young people for the future. By drawing upon the examples and precepts of the past, they teach our students to be of greater service in the future.

What then are the requirements that we set the leaders of tomorrow in Southern Africa?

Firstly: They must take note of the fact that leadership requires moral, as well as intellectual qualities - both character and knowledge are required.

Secondly: They must seek their happiness in the service of their fellow-man and they must place their own interests second.

Thirdly: They must make themselves indispensable through purposeful labour.

The importance of physical fitness and a healthy life-style are today extolled by the media and those with interests in the health industry.

Although important, perfect health and a perfect body are not prerequisites for dynamic leadership or a successful career.

Roosevelt was a cripple, Caesar an epileptic and Napoleon had ulcers. Neither obesity nor scrawniness seems to make any difference. Bismarck was grossly overweight, while Gandhi was mere skin and bone. Yet all of them had boundless energy.

More important than being physically "sound" is a "sound philosophy of life". And this means that we must strive not merely to be successful but to be people of value. The successful man often gets more out of life than he gives. Whereas the man of value gives more than he receives.

Both these qualities lie within your reach. As successful graduates you now have the opportunity to prove to yourselves that you are people of value. In Southern Africa we need your capabilities, your talents, your enthusiasm and your dedication to build a better future for all our peoples. Do not underestimate your own abilities; do not be afraid to rely on your own judgement, and do not seek to avoid your responsibilities.

The challenge is yours to devise a 'modus vivendi' in Southern Africa, a way of living peacefully together. White, Brown and Black must come to realise that they simply have to co-exist in peace. And if ever there has been an opportunity of finding a solution to this problem of coexistence, it is now.

To build a strong country we need young people like you who have something to strive for - a notable cause to which they are dedicated.

The greater the cause, the greater should be the spirit of service, culminating in selflessness. It was Dale Carnegie who said that the rare individual who unselfishly tries to serve others has an enormous advantage: he has little competition.

May I ask you today to fulfil your vocation as human catalysts - modern young men and women of value who are determined to improve the quality of life by giving to society more of themselves than is expected of them.

This attitude was subscribed to by Albert Einstein who said: "The value of a man should be in what he gives and not in what he is able to receive".

As new graduates you are faced with wonderful opportunities. We need your skills:

- * to foster good relationships between the various peoples of Southern Africa;
- * to promote good neighbourliness;
- * to alleviate the huge demand for skilled and semi-skilled labour in our country;

- * to create job opportunities for our rapidly increasing population;
- * to preserve our natural and cultural heritage, but, more important still, to enrich it with contemporary contributions.

In all our endeavours self-help should be the maxim; helping others to help themselves as the Chinese proverb puts it:

Give a man a fish
and he profits but a single dish;
teach him the art of rod and reel
and he will never lack a meal

In thanking you for the honour bestowed upon me today and for the opportunity to address this gathering, I wish to leave you with a few basic tenets by which I live. A long time ago I set them for myself, and I hope also for those I serve.

These are:

1. He who covets all will lose all.
2. One cannot trade with paupers;
3. One cannot create goodwill or wealth by mere give-aways; one must share and participate;

4. Prosperity is contagious - if one shares success, it breeds success;

5. One must show confidence to gain confidence. To trust is a risk, but to mistrust entails an even greater risk which could lead to disaster.

I trust that in the years to come you will measure your own greatness by the only true standard - not by what you have achieved for yourself but by what you have achieved for others. Thus you may achieve happiness which is a by-product of a life of service, not an aim in itself.