

EXTRACTS FROM AN ADDRESS ON BILINGUALISM DELIVERED TO THE IMPERIAL PRESS CONFERENCE (undated).

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.....In relation to a country like SA, there are two types of politician that constitute a danger. First there is the sentimentalist, that is he who is either dominated by sentiment in his approach to political questions, or, worse still, who deliberately exploits the sentiments of others as a means to political advantage. The other type is the stern logician, who is no sentimentalist himself, and despises sentiment in others, who refuses to take account of it as a factor determining action, believing that the sharp sword of his triumphant logic will suffice to cut away the policies built upon it. If a politician is to become a statesman in SA he must prove his freedom from sentimental influence on his own mind, while retaining the capacity to make just and correct allowance for the power of sentiment over the minds of others.

.....My forbears were all of the older SA strains of Dutch, French, and German stock - I say that without any suggestion of an apology for the fact that I have not a drop of British blood in my veins. The tradition of my inheritance is therefore entirely Dutch - the language of my inheritance is Dutch. But I was born and grew up in a predominantly English-speaking town - this city of Capetown, and as a result my home was a bilingual one. The more intimate domestic language was Afrikaans, but contacts with the outside world were made mostly through English, and this affected the linguistic practice within the family circle, the more so as our parents consciously desired us to be bilingual. As a result I have in fact been bilingual for as long as I can remember. I cannot say which is the language I was first able to speak. Still, to me the language of tradition, of sentiment, of closer intimacies is primarily Afrikaans - but since all my education was through the medium of English, the language of my cultural contacts is primarily English.

(JHH went on to talk about early SA history of how Nederlands gradually gave way to Afrikaans and the growth of the Afrikaans language, in spite of the English influence, and of how the CAPE and Natal were English-speaking on the whole, and the Transvaal Afrikaans-speaking, while in the Free State English was widely used both educationally and officially. Then in 1878 the first Dutch political organisation was formed at the Cape by Onze Jan, and through his efforts Dutch was recognised as one of the official languages of the Cape Parliament. Spoke of the Afrikaner Bond and of how after 1902 Afrikaners had fought to preserve their language). His address showed very clearly his understanding of and sympathy with the bilingual issue, and his affection for the language of his forbears.