

***MR. TIRO**, FORMER PRESIDENT of the S.R.C., University of the North, was elected by the students to deliver the address at the graduation ceremony in April 1972. The University authorities subsequently suspended Mr. Tiro and mass protests by the student body followed. The entire student body was then expelled and told to reapply for admission. Mr. Tiro was refused readmission. Protests then erupted on both black and white campuses and government reaction followed.*

**Speech delivered on Graduation Day
on behalf of the Graduands**

Mr. Chancellor, Mr. Vice-Chancellor and Rector, Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to start off by borrowing language from our Prime Minister, Mr. Vorster. Addressing A.S.B. congress in June last year Mr. Vorster said: 'No Black man has landed in trouble for fighting for what is legally his'. Although I don't know how far true this is, I make this statement my launch pad. R.D. Briensmead, an American lay preacher says: 'He who withholds the truth or debars men from motives of its expediency is either a coward, a criminal or both'. Therefore Mr. Chancellor I will try as much as possible to say nothing else but the truth. And to me truth means 'practical reality'.

Addressing us on the occasion of the formal opening of this University Mr. Phatudi, a Lebowa Territorial Authority officer said that in as much as there is American Education there had to be Bantu. Ladies and gentlemen I am conscientiously bound to differ with him. In America there is nothing like Negro Education, Red Indian Education, Coloured Education and European Education. We do not have a system of education common to all South Africans. What is there in European Education which is not good for the African? We want a system of education common to all South Africans.

In theory Bantu Education gives our parents a say in our education but in practice the opposite is true. At this University U.E.D. students are forced to study Philosophy of Education through the medium of Afrikaans. When we want to know why we are told that the Senate has decided so. Apparently this Senate is our parents.

Time and again I ask myself: How do black lecturers contribute to the administration of this University? For if you look at all the committees they are predominantly white if not completely white. Here and there one finds

two or three Africans who, in the opinion of students are white black men. We have a students' Dean without duties. We feel that if it is in any way necessary to have a students' Dean we must elect our own Dean. We know people who can represent us.

The Advisory Council is said to be representing our parents. How can it represent them when they have not elected it? These people must of necessity please the man who appointed them. This Council consists of chiefs who have never been to University. How can they know the needs of students when they have not been subjected to the same conditions. Those who have been to University have never studied under Bantu Education. What authentic opinion can they express when they don't know how painful it is to study under a repugnant system of education?

I wonder if this Advisory Council knows that a Black man has been most unceremoniously kicked out of the bookshop. Apparently, this is reserved for Whites. According to the Policy, Van Schaiks has no right to run a bookshop here. A White member of the Administration has been given the meat contract to supply a University—a Black University. Those who amorphously support the policy may say that there are no Black people to supply it. My answer to them is: Why are they not able to supply the University? What is the cause? Is it not conveniently done that they are not in a position to supply these commodities?

White students are given vacation jobs at this University when there are students who could not get their results due to outstanding fees. Why does the Administration not give these jobs to these students? These White students have eleven Universities where they can get vacation jobs. Does the Administration expect me to get a vacation job at the University of Pretoria?

Right now, our parents have come all the way from their homes only to be locked outside. We are told that the hall is full. I do not accept the argument that there is no accommodation for, in 1970 when the Administration wanted to accommodate everybody a tent was put up and close-circuit television was installed. Front seats are given to people who cannot ever cheer us. My father is seated there at the back. My dear people, shall we ever get a fair deal in this land?—the land of our fathers.

The system is failing. It is failing because even those who recommend it strongly, as the only solution, to racial problems in South Africa, fail to adhere to the letter and spirit of the Policy. According to the Policy we expected Dr. Eiselen to decline chancellorship in favour of a Black man. dear parents, these are the injustices no normal student can tolerate—no matter who he is and where he comes from.

In the light of what has been said above the challenge to every black graduate in this country lies in the fact that the guilt of all wrongful actions in South Africa, restriction without trial, repugnant legislation, expulsions from and work for the eradication of the system breeding such evils. To these who whole-heartedly support the Policy of Apartheid I say: *Do you think that the white minority can willingly commit political suicide by creating numerous states which might turn out to be hostile in future?*

We black graduates, by virtue of our age and academic standing are being called upon to greater responsibilities in the liberation of our people. Our so-called leaders have become the bolts of the same machine which is crushing us as a nation. We have to back them and educate them. Times are changing and we should change with them. The magic story of human achievement gives irrefutable proof that as soon as nationalism is awakened among the intelligentsia it becomes the vanguard in the struggle

against alien rule. Of what use will be your education if you can't help your country in her hour of need? If your education is not linked with the entire continent of Africa it is meaningless.

Remember what Mrs. Suzman said: 'There is one thing which the minister cannot do: He cannot ban ideas from men's minds'.

In conclusion Mr. Chancellor I say: **Let the Lord be praised, for the day shall come, when all men shall be free to breathe the air of freedom and when that day shall come, no man, no matter how many tanks he has, will reverse the course of events. God Bless you all!**

A. Tiro.

On the White English language campuses there was widespread support for the demands for a common education system and an equalisation of educational opportunities for black and White. The government, the D.R.C., the Afrikaans press and the authorities of the Afrikaans Universities reacted with the usual argument that the student "unrest" was part of an international leftist conspiracy seeking the complete overthrow of law and order and of the South African way of life.

As an example of the way in which these power groups reacted with authoritarianism and lack of insight into the real issues involved, we publish the following extracts:

Joint Statement issued by the Rectors of the Afrikaans Universities

"The demonstrations have been so protracted and carried out soblatantly, while the points of view advanced by students, as well as lecturers, contrasts so radically with our educational system and also with the entire foundation upon which our community and Government structure rest, that we are forced to express our views on the matter.

"We welcome it that students should show a lively interest in matters of national importance in the educational, social and political field. This interest must, however, be expressed in such a way that the first priority should continue to be devoted to their studies.

"We express our alarm and disapproval of the extent to which student demonstrations have recently disturbed the peace and order so essential for academic work. We express our support to the authorities in the execution of their responsibility to maintain law and order in difficult and delicate circumstances ...

"Political activity in South Africa should follow the proper constitutional channels. We regard demonstrations as a channel of political action unworthy of an academic community. They appeal to the emotions and not to reason. We stress that especially in our time it is a responsibility of recognised political parties and organisations to create better measures to involve our youthful citizens, including students, effectively in the exchange of ideas and decision-making which is the foundation of the formation of political policies.

"In recent times, sharp criticism has been levelled at the educational system in South Africa. We are convinced that the provision of separate opportunities for the different national groups is completely reconcilable with education of a good quality.

"From our personal knowledge and from the experience of our lecturers

who co-operate in various ways with universities for Non-Whites, it is our conviction that work of a particularly high standard is being done at those universities.

"We would also point out that the State's expenditure per student at the Non-White universities is much higher than at the White universities ...

"There is no reason why universities limited to one particular national group should not maintain exemplary academic standards.... We support separate educational provision for the different groups as a necessary prerequisite for the full development of each national group. We emphasise that educational integration inevitably implies that integration will take place in all other spheres of society.

"Our conclusion is that the demonstrations are aimed at a radical revolution of the social and political order in our country. We and our universities will oppose this with all our might."

The statement was signed by the following rectors and vice-chancellors: Professor H.J.J. Bingle (University of Potchefstroom for C.H.E.), Professor J.N. de Villiers (Stellenbosch), Professor E.M. Hamman (Pretoria), Professor B. Kok (Free State), Professor E.J. Marias (Port Elizabeth), and Professor G.V.N. Viljoen (Rand Afrikaans).

The Broad Moderature of the Ned. Geref. Church

"The Church wishes heartily to thank the authorities and particularly the police, for timely and responsible steps ... to control this permissiveness and these carefully planned methods of creating chaos and destroying peace and order in our country".

It also praised the "loyal, responsible and dutiful efforts of thousands of students who refused to "sing in the same choir" as the protesters. The Church was proud of them and wished them "the Lord's richest blessing."

Transvaal Director of Education

Dr. A.L. Kotzee, Transvaal Director of Education, said at a meeting in Johannesburg on the 22nd June 1972:

"Student unrest on the campus is being planned internally by communist and nihilist groups—their aim is anarchy and the destruction of Western civilisation, piece by piece," he said. They used the strategies of "shocking, freaky apparel, bad language, the degradation of sex to animal level, and drugs."

(Rand Daily Mail, 23 June, 1972)