



THE ADDRESS BY THE MAYOR OF JOHANNESBURG,
COUNCILLOR BOYCE EAGAR,

at the Special Graduation Ceremony in the Civic Theatre,
Braamfontein, on Wednesday, 10th August 1966,
to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the founding
of the City of Johannesburg and the 70th Anniversary
of the establishment of the South African School of Mines,
predecessor of the University.

Mr. Chancellor, Mr. Chairman of the University Council, visiting Reef Mayors, Mr. Deputy Mayor, Members of the Provincial Council, Fellow City Councillors, Members of the University Council and Senate, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On this historic night, it is a particular privilege for me to give a warm cordial welcome to you all, on behalf of the citizens and the Johannesburg City Council.

The City of Johannesburg has never been so honoured before, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of my fellow citizens and city councillors, I thank you and the University most warmly for such a magnificent presentation.

This may well be the beginning of a collection of official silver to grace this wonder city. Whoever was responsible for this inspired gift deserves congratulations.

This evening, we have witnessed an event indicating that the ties between Johannesburg, the Witwatersrand and their University grow stronger each year. Johannesburg, 80 years old this year as a city and 70 years old as a University centre, has gathered together this distinguished audience to honour both the University and the City. I particularly welcome the Mayors and Mayoresses of Germiston, Roodepoort, Springs, Vanderbijlpark, Krugersdorp, Brakpan, Vereeniging, Alberton, Edenvale, Randfontein and the Deputy Mayors and Mayoresses of Boksburg and Randburg whose centres have contributed manpower and capital to the expansion of the Witwatersrand University.

Ladies and Gentlemen, you have heard of the achievements of Mr. Stratten and Mr. Porter (now Dr. Stratten and Dr. Porter), both of whom have made worthy contributions to the life of the City, the one in the industrial field, the other in Local Government and Administration. It might seem that these two facets of our public life attain complete polarity. I don't think so. If Local Government is not of a high, impartial standard, industrial advancement must be stultified.

Johannesburg, which sprang instinctively from the discovery of gold, as typified by the original name of the University, the School of Mines, is today an industrial metropolis. This could not have been accomplished without the establishment of a local authority to administer the City efficiently and in the interests of its citizens.

The origin of the University as a School of Mines is probably not well-known, except by those closely associated with it. Today, the Witwatersrand University is a major seat of learning, by any standards, anywhere in the world. The University and the City have grown together; they have co-operated and worked in each other's interests over the last 70 years. Johannesburg's early days were devoted to the establishment of the mining industry and to transforming a temporary village of mining tents into the beginnings of a town and city, which grew into the mighty Witwatersrand.

I congratulate most sincerely Brian Porter on the part he has played in bringing Local Government in South Africa to its present high reputation. His services to Johannesburg are being worthily recognised tonight. What he has done for South Africa has been acknowledged in other ways. He is known for his grasp of Local Government and for his practical and wise counsel.

Mr. Stratten has added lustre to the industrial world and tonight's honorary degree indicates the recognition to which he is fully entitled. Since Johannesburg was established, she has produced many worthy sons. Two of them tonight are being honoured.

Honorary graduates since 1922 when this privilege was established at the University of the Witwatersrand, are headed by Field Marshal Jan Christiaan Smuts who was given a Doctorate of Laws at the first capping and six years later was followed by General James Barry Munnik Hertzog who was similarly honoured.

In 1924, the then Prince of Wales, now the Duke of Windsor, was also given a Doctorate of Laws.

Since then, many eminent persons have been honoured, all of whom in one way or another have served this City and the Witwatersrand. To name a few, one thinks of James Gray, a past Mayor of Johannesburg, a Doctor of Laws in 1933; the Hon. Richard Feetham (Johannesburg's Town Clerk in her early days) a Doctor of Laws in 1949; Dr. Walter Cohen, a world renowned worker for the blind, himself blind, a Doctor of Philosophy in 1962; our erstwhile but still active Director of the Johannesburg Art Gallery Dr. P. Anton Hendriks, capped in 1966.

Nearly 50 of a total of more than 150 honorary degrees conferred by the University since its formal constitution in 1922, have included men and women who live or have lived in Johannesburg, and whose work for the distinction which they achieved was performed mainly in this City.

The individuals I have quoted indicate that this City and this University have great, and permanent, contact with each other.

This is a City of consequence and stature. Its University is of equal importance and significance. It is the calibre of the citizens, and the quality of her students and her academic staff which have made Johannesburg and the University what they are today.

In this, our 80th year, one may well ask why should the City celebrate? I believe we must provide the opportunity for the people of today to honour the builders of the past, along with those of the present and to take from our history, albeit very brief, those good and worthwhile contributions made by all kinds of people, to utilise them to the best advantage, as we go forward into the future. This is how a City and its University become welded together, in the interest of the future well-being of the community they both serve, for the ultimate benefit of city and country.

This is the first time the Civic Theatre has been used for a graduation ceremony but perhaps as a civic amenity, we see it as the wheel coming round full circle. In the early days, when there was no University Great Hall, before the second World War, the City Hall was hired by the University for its graduation ceremonies. I am told that in those days, they were rather hectic, gay affairs. Today, the University graduation ceremonies are the premier academic functions in the Witwatersrand's university life. The very fact that three graduations take place — two in March and one in December — proves that not only are the students growing in number, but that their parents — who are primarily the citizens and ratepayers of Johannesburg and the Reef — are interested enough to want to be associated with these academic occasions. I feel that tonight, in the Civic Theatre, there is a definite sense of occasion. There is a joint coming together of the University and the citizens, both important to the progress of the Witwatersrand.

I am delighted that this Civic Theatre — one of Johannesburg's adornments — is constantly attracting fresh visitors. Obviously, tonight's audience, in the main, are individuals likely to patronise the Civic Theatre, but even so, for some of them, this may be a "first night". If so, I hope it will be the forerunner of many future visits.

Last week, the Civic Theatre promoted a very different enterprise. The Furniture Show brought yet another group of the population into "the Civic". I support this whole-heartedly, because it means that the Civic Theatre is being used by those who built and paid for it.

This evening, Ladies and Gentlemen, we greet two individuals and we salute our City and our University. I am glad, as Mayor, to represent Johannesburg and to offer to the University's Chancellor, greetings and salutations from an 80-year-old City to a 70-year-old University.

Long may our association flourish and prosper; long may we continue in this great Witwatersrand to contribute to the outside world and to give of our best, as citizens and as individuals, within human society.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this evening, to round off the ceremony, my colleagues and I look forward to offering you civic hospitality in the restaurant and foyer of this theatre.

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