

12th May 1960.

May 1960

Mr. Mayor,

At the last Council Meeting, Councillor Cutten advised that he had tendered his resignation as a Councillor to the Town Clerk and gave a number of reasons why he had done so.

Mr. Mayor: I regard it as a tragedy that a person such as Councillor Cutten should have felt it necessary to withdraw from the Council.

Councillor Cutten has marked ability; he has a vast knowledge of Town Planning; was painstaking in investigating those subjects which interested him and had the time to give to Council affairs. He also had a social conscience and a considerable knowledge of Council affairs.

Why should a man of these capabilities not succeed in the Council and feel his fellows were all against him? Was it the much maligned Caucus system? If so, does it mean that all those who are parties to the Caucus system are not conscientious; have no social conscience; are not honest.

I would suggest, Mr. Mayor, that Councillor Cutten was such an ardent individualist that he found it hard to be a member of any team. I can picture him now at a Caucus meeting bringing up a subject with which most people would have been prepared to agree with him, but in introducing the subject he suggested the other members of the Caucus were such fools that they would not understand what he was saying - so of course he got everybody's back up. In Caucus he came and went when it suited him and did not appear to have any idea of trying to carry people with him.

Mr. Mayor, while those who cannot get their own way all the time find the Caucus system an irritant, I cannot see any alternative and I have found that while the

Caucus may make mistakes, it is not because of sinister goings on but because not all humans are wise all the time.

The Council is not the only place where Councillor Cutten has found his fellows to be out of step. He was not always in step for long with his beloved four musketeers. He went to court with his neighbour about a barking dog.

Mr. Mayor, it is my experience that one of the facets of Council work which is most important is getting people to work together. To do this one must recognise the contribution the other person makes and give credit where credit is due.

Councillor Cutten found this hard to do. I remember well the crisis we had on June 16th last year when the Central Beer Halls had to be closed and the Minister gave us permission to open new ones in the worked-out mining area. We were given the seemingly impossible task of constructing the new ones in three to four days. The officials of the Council responded magnificently and the change over went off without a hitch. Those who were in on it regarded it as a miracle. Councillor Cutten was not actively connected with this venture and when I remarked to him on the great achievement of the officials his reply was "It was nothing at all. In the Army we did that sort of thing everyday." Why not give credit where credit is due?

Councillor Cutten has resigned because he gave his constituents a promise that if he resigned from the United Party, he would tender his resignation from the Council. He resigned from the United Party on and from the Council at the end of April. Why the delay if he had given the undertaking to resign as soon as he left the Party.

In the Caucus, Councillor Cutten stated that if the Council gave the assurances asked for by the Departmental Committee in August, 1958 he would immediately resign from the Party. The Council gave its assurances. Councillor Cutten did not resign. Why? If he was so honest!

I can assure you, Mr. Mayor, that to get popular applause at the time, one should have to refuse to have given those assurances. While I feel that the Government had no right at that time to wield the "big stick" by trying to withhold housing loans, it is the tragedy of our times that no politician ever likes to lose face by admitting he has made a mistake and is prepared to drag the whole world down with him rather than admit he was wrong. I think that at the time the assurances were given the Council had to admit that it would carry out Government Policy in so far as it was embodied in Statutes and that it required greater courage in Johannesburg to submit than to seek cheap popularity by defying the Government with consequent detrimental effects to those the Council were seeking to house.

Mr. Mayor, Councillor Cutten has in my opinion enjoyed the role of "odd man out". I often felt that if you agreed with him, he felt there must be something wrong with what he said. Even in his games he behaves the same way. He is a reasonably good tennis player who cannot hide his impatience if one of the set is not of an equal standard and so spoils the game. If he loses a set he finds it hard to admit that it was his bad play and not his partner's.

What a complex character. Capable, unpredictable, a penetrating mind, a brave soldier, outspoken, prepared to devote his talents to the good of the community but with all these qualities he finds it difficult to translate his love

for his fellow man in the abstract to love and tolerance for his immediate neighbour.

He has enjoyed being in the public eye as a rebel, being purposefully provocative and has often forgotten that sometimes it is the backroom boy who quietly gets on with his job who achieves the more permanent and satisfying results although perhaps less spectacularly.

I would, therefore, say how much Councillor Cutten could have achieved if only he had not regarded all his fellows as fools and knaves and made an effort to use his great talents to the building of good constructive local government instead of always sniping at those who perhaps not possessing his gifts were, however, in their small way trying to make a contribution to the common weal.

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