

PARKTOWN GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL.

SPEECH DAY.

20TH. JUNE 1962.

P R O G R A M M E.

1. Welcome - Chairman of the Governing Body - Professor G.R. Bozzoli.
2. Annual Report -- Headmistress.
3. Address -- Councillor P.R.B. Lewis, M.P.C.
4. Presentation of Books and Certificates -- Mrs. Lewis.
5. Vote of Thanks - Vice-Chairman of Governing Body - Mrs. S. Morris.
6. Songs by the Choir:
 1. Rise Up, Shepherd, an' Foller. American Negro Carol
(Tradiional).
(Arranged: Ruth Heller, London)
 2. Lullay my Liking --- 15th. Century Carol.
Gustav Holst.
 3. The Kerry Dance --- J.L. Molloy.
(Arranged: Alec Rowley.)
 4. BY SPECIAL REQUEST:
I Have Searched The Earth. (From 'Land of Smiles.')Franz Lehar.
Conducted by *Sullivan* --- Sylvia Sullivan.

I was glad to receive the invitation to be present today, as I am anxious to know as much as I can about the Schools in the Parktown Constituency.

But then I began to wonder what I would say to you - what I would speak about - and I began to ask advice. One person said it really didn't matter, because nobody would remember a word I said. I told another person of my dilemma, saying that I had belonged to a family of boys, and my children are teenage boys, and that I really knew nothing about nice little girls. This person's advice was "Tell them about the boys - nothing could be of greater interest".

I may be wrong, but I don't think that was in the minds of those who asked me to speak, so I had to think of something else.

Attendee farewell to J.H.W.
Graves from about 1944

You have probably heard of the expression 'One half of the world doesn't know how the other half lives'. This also applies to a town. So I thought I would try and give you a brief sketch of how the Bantu people in Johannesburg

live and what the City Council has endeavoured to do to improve their lot.

About a year ago I was looking at an old map of Johannesburg, compiled about 1900. One of the suburbs marked was called Kaffir Town. This area was where the Newtown Market now stands, and it extended through to Vrededorp. This area was a dreadful slum and in 1904 plague broke out in this area, and all the Bantu were moved out and settled on the Klipspruit Sewage Farm, which is beyond where the Baragwanath Hospital now stands, at a place called Pimville.

At that time the number of Bantu in Johannesburg was 59,000 of whom approximately 49,000 were men, 5000 women and 5000 children. In other words there were ten men to every woman or child. Why was this - because the custom was for the women and children to stay in the Reserves while the men came to the city to work, returning to the Reserves after a period of say six months or a year in the city.

By 1911 the Bantu population had nearly doubled, being 102,000: by 1921 it was 116,000, by 1927 it was 136,000 of whom 117,000 were males and 19,000 females - still six men to one woman. By 1939, just before the commencement of the War, the men had increased by 50% to 179,000 and the females by 300% to 65,000. By 1946 it was 395,231 of whom 211,322 were males, 100,000 females and 8,390 children. In 1961 it was 614,606 of whom 213,669 were men, 180,452 women and 220,485 were children, the percentages being 34, 30, 36. So that now the men have brought their womenfolk and children to the City.

Why did these Bantu people come to Johannesburg? First and foremost they came to work - to work in the Mines, in the homes, in the offices, the factories and the industries. They came because in the Reserves there was not sufficient food and work to enable them to live there.

Where Did They Come From

When the Bantu first came to Johannesburg, and the other cities, they lived where they could find accommodation.

Nobody cared very much where or how they lived. It was not until 1919 that the City Council built the first houses at a place called Western Native Township, when 2000 houses were constructed. The next large scheme was at Orlando, and by 1939, the year World War II commenced, 8700 houses had been built. Then came the War years when materials were scarce and expensive, when all the country's efforts were concentrated on the War effort, and it was during this period that the Bantu flooded to the cities - to work in the industries which had been extended to cope with the great expansion during the War.

There were not sufficient houses in which the people could live, and squatter camps developed, where people erected shacks of old packing cases, hessian, old petrol tins and any other materials on which they could lay their hands. One of their squatter camps was called Moroka Emergency Camp - another Shantytown. The Municipality laid on a water supply, provided sanitation and rudimentary health services. In all, some 70,000 people, men, women and children, lived cheek by jowl in appalling conditions.

What was to be done to rescue these people from their misery? They were poor - they could not afford to rent houses at the rentals commensurate with their cost. Municipalities could not afford to bear the cost of providing the housing and the cost of the services such as water, street lighting, roads, sanitation and health services.

After the War the Council built more houses and by 1953 9000 houses were added, and in addition Hostel accommodation was provided for single men, but thousands and thousands more houses were needed.

The Government introduced three measures - The Native Building Workers Act of 1951 - The Native Services Levy Act of 1952 and the Site and Service Scheme, and the Council established its own Housing Division.

Since 1953 40,000 houses have been built. That is an average of over 5000 houses per year - an average of 20 every working day for eight years. At one time, because of additional funds lent to the Council by the Mining Industry, it was ⁶⁴~~40~~ houses per day. *1 every 8 minutes*

We are still building 5000 houses a year and it is hoped that within the next four to five years the whole Bantu population will be adequately housed. Most houses are on a plot of ground 40' x 70' and we now supply an apricot and peach tree for the garden of every house we build - over 40,000 fruit trees have been planted. *25 sq miles*

Not only houses have been built. Eight large clinics, nursery schools, playgrounds within half a mile of every house, 70 soccer fields, 2 large sports stadia, a vocational training school and schools. Much has been done, but there is much more to do. To the end of last year R44.M had been spent by the Municipality on the facilities provided.

Amounts cont'd by City & Employed through S.L. & Dep NKR 20

For a few minutes I want us to think of the difficult period of adjustment for these Bantu people who have come to the cities. Let us for a moment consider a few of their tribal customs and contrast them with the conditions they have found when coming to the white Man's cities.

Henry

In most tribes the main duties of the men are to build the houses, look after the cattle - in the old days it would have been to do the fighting. The women's work was to till the fields, reap the crops, grind the corn, fetch the water from the nearest stream - sometimes miles and miles away - to cook the food and look after the children. The girls would help their mothers and the boys would herd the cattle.

How different they found it on coming to the cities. The house is built for the man and there ^{are} is no cattle to tend. Instead he must learn to work in a factory - go down a mine - drive a lorry - sell petrol - and whereas in the country the sun was his guide as to the time of day, now he has to work to a clock with seconds and minutes and hours. How different too for the women. No fields to till, no wide open spaces, and they too often have to go out to work.

How difficult to adjust themselves to weekly wages, to planning how to spend their cash, when before it was how to plan their feeding from the crops they grew.

Foot note eggs

In the kraal the Chief was the head of the tribe, advised by the elders of the tribe, and great respect was paid to age and law and order prevailed. In the cities there are no Chiefs - the people mix with people from all sorts of tribes. It is the business man, the taxi driver, the schoolmaster and clerk ^{the school boys} who are the important men, they have the money - often ² people who are selfish and have no feeling of responsibility for the people such as a Chief had.

In the kraals tribal customs catered for the many situations arising in day to day living. But in the cities the situations are so different. Their marriage customs for instance. Have you ever heard of lobola? At one time, before the true meaning of lobola was understood, it was thought that the giving of cattle to the bride's parents was really buying a wife. Nothing is further from the truth.

It was to establish a kinship between ^{families of different clans} clans, and protected the bride as well as the bridegroom. It gave the boys a respect for their sisters, because the cattle provided for the girls' lobola meant there was cattle for the family to find a bride for the son. Wouldn't it be nice if your brothers thought you were useful?

Young men depended on their father's kinsmen for the capital to pay lobola.

In the cities there are no cattle for lobola, and today this custom, while preserved in another way, by cash payments, is losing its meaning, and gives a girl little of the protection she had under the old tribal custom. *Education for a town.* Often a Bantu girl who, for instance, trains as a Nurse, which is a well-paid occupation, finds that her parents, because of her earning capacity and ability to support them, demand such a high lobola that her suitor cannot afford to marry her. *Quote*

Another little thing which may sound silly to you, is the introduction of baby feeding bottles. Because the habit of sterilising bottles is new to the Bantu, it is one of the chief causes of tummy upset among Bantu babies, causing many deaths.

I am afraid that at the time at my disposal I have only been able to give you a very rough sketch. What I hope I have been able to do is to let you understand some of the difficulties the Bantu people are experiencing in this new environment. It is a period of extremely difficult adjustment, and I have just given you a glimpse of it - a change from a simple life in the country to a life in an often unfriendly, industrialised community. Try to understand their bewilderment and confusion, their floundering, having broken away from the protection of their tribal surroundings. They require all the help we can give them during their period of readjustment. They, too, need to find an anchor while they find something to take the place of the old order.

You young people are growing up at a time of extraordinary challenge to the people of South Africa. Can we, the different races and peoples, live together in this great land and make it a safe and happy place? I believe we can - on one condition - that we are ladies and gentlemen. That sounds funny, doesn't it? What has being 'ladies and gentle-

men' got to do with making South Africa a better place? Just this. When you young folk grow older you will be surprised at the details you remember of some incident that occurred years and years ago. I don't mind how little of my address you remember, if you will just remember the definition of a lady, or a gentleman, which I heard some years ago. The definition has nothing to do with education, with culture, with one's manner of speaking, with one's financial position. "A lady, or a gentleman, is a person who puts more in than she, or he, takes out". You know people like that - people who are always helpful - people who always carry their weight - who pass you the ball and allow you to score instead of selfishly keeping the ball to themselves. You know the other sort who are always wanting as much as they can get for themselves. Who are the happy people? Those who give of themselves or those who always want to take?

That is what South Africa needs, what Africa needs - people who are ladies and gentlemen - people who are prepared to put more into life than they take out, and I can assure you that in so doing they are the happy people.

In closing I would like to wish you, not good luck or good fortune, but good understanding and may you be ladies and gentlemen.

June 18, 1962.

Address to Parktown High
School for Girls.

Collection Number: A1132

Collection Name: Patrick LEWIS Papers, 1949-1987

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: Historical Papers Research Archive, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Location: Johannesburg

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