

Mr. Mayor it is with a grave sense of responsibility that I rise at this Council Meeting. I cannot think of any more critical or crucial state of affairs that has existed in South Africa since the War years.

We are at the cross roads and need to revise our method of approach. This is the time when thinking people of all sections should be prepared to face facts and work in the interests of South Africa and not in sectional interests. I believe that with good sense and tolerance there is no reason why there should not be a place for black and white in this country to live and work amicably together. But the white man has, to my mind, failed to consult the black man, and I am convinced that until proper contact is established with urban native leaders, and consideration is given to the legitimate aspirations of the natives, we will have no peace. The urban native has come to the cities to stay, and until we recognise this we are doomed to failure. I would urge that the Government appoint an all-party commission to consider the causes of the unrest amongst the Non-European population.

Mr. Mayor, I feel that my fellow Councillors would wish to be given an up-to-date picture of the position in our South Western Townships. This morning I made a tour of these townships in company with the Manager of the Department. We were in the townships for two hours and visited all the points at which we had offices established and which were main causes of trouble last night. There were no incidents during our inspection and while there were more people in the streets than yesterday, this I believe is because of the difficulty of transport arrangements this morning. As far as we could trace the loss of life was limited to that reported in this morning's newspapers, but I am pleased to report that no member of our own police department was killed as was stated in this morning's paper. This is incorrect. The damage to property is superficial and not of a serious nature, but, Mr. Mayor, the position can change at any time and the fact that there was peace this morning does not mean that there may not be trouble tonight. There was trouble at the Railway line where a compressor had been thrown across the line and rediffusion poles thrown across electric wires, but that was being repaired. We did not pass the Dutch Reformed Church so did not see what damage had been done. The damage is very much less than I expected. There was an uneasy quiet in the townships and groups there were large numbers of the younger element gathered, people of ages between approximately

Mr. Mayor, at a time like this statesmanship is called for rather than any attempt to make political capital out of an explosive situation. All responsible people condemn violence. While the leaders of the Pan Africanist Congress and African National Congress have stated that they wish to obtain their objectives without violence, they are not in a position to prevent violence and there is an element in the population which is only too ready to exploit such situations. It is apparent from the occurrences of yesterday that persons in the age group of approximately 16-25 were largely the trouble makers. I am convinced, Mr. Mayor, that the majority of our urban population are law abiding people who do not want trouble. They are the victims of this lawless element who attack them on trains and in the townships. But, Mr. Mayor, this law abiding element feel terribly fristrated. They feel that from time to time they have put their point of view and it has not been listened to. Members of the Advisory Boards we consulted last week stated that they had a feeling of frustration, that they have no contact with the Government. They feel also that their own people victimise them, that if they have contact with the white man their own people regarded them as "sell-outs", and that is a bad situation. Last week we called a meeting of the Advisory Boards to ask them to do all in their power to help us in this critical situation. At that meeting it was apparent that there was urgent need for contact to be made between urban natives and the authorities. The Pan Africanists know of the hardship imposed on their people by the Pass Laws and that they will obtain a certain measure of support from the more responsible element if the abolition of the Pass Laws was part of their programme. In the old days exemption certificates used to be issued to all responsible natives. This was a treasured possession and gave the holder a feeling of status and privilege. Persons with exemption certificates in most cases acted responsibly, and did anything to avoid losing that exemption. I understand there were 40,000 holders of these Certificates. Most of them were responsible people who now feel humiliated at having been deprived of these Certificates.


On Thursday afternoon I had an appointment with the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development. It was felt that the Minister should be personally advised of the situation in Johannesburg as we saw it, and the inherent dangers should violence be resorted to in the South Western areas in which 380,000 people live. This step was made

necessary by the unrest caused by incidents at Sharpeville and Langa which resulted in a large loss of Life. I acquainted the Minister with the position and told him of the urgent matters it was necessary to consider to alleviate the position. The discussion with the Minister was frank and friendly and will be followed up by the submission of a Memorandum and further contact.

I want to refer to the cutting in the 'Star' last night which seems to have had unfortunate repercussions in Cape Town. In that statement it suggested that the steps to alleviate the Pass Laws were largely as a result of my trip to Cape Town. I made no such statement. I do hope that my visit had some effect, but I would not claim that it had the effect of the instructions which were given on the Saturday morning. So I think the 'Star' has blown me up bigger than I really am.

Mr. Mayor, one of the most urgent matters to be considered is establishing contact with urban native leaders. Another matter which requires urgent attention is finding methods of usefully employing the 18-25 group. These are not all bad people, but large numbers of them find it extremely difficult to find employment.

Before I resume my seat I would like to pay tribute to the Police for the manner in which they acted yesterday under extremely provocative and difficult circumstances. I am sure you would all wish to join me in passing on that tribute. I appreciate the difficulties of the police in administering laws which are unacceptable to the people. I also, Mr. Mayor, wish to pay tribute to our own staff who have an extremely difficult task. Large numbers actually are isolated in offices with not even telephone contact, and I think they have acted in a most exemplary manner under very difficult circumstances. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.



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