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Additional comments [on the crisis of teacher supply].

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additional comments

DR. WHITMORE RICHARDS

Dr Richards, who has been chairman of the Witwatersrand Council of Education for the past thirty years, has taken the lead in suggesting ways and means of finding the teachers which the schools need.

Dr Richards has made the following comments:

"Over the last decade it has become increasingly clear that three and a half million Whites cannot provide all the skills needed for a total population of twenty-two and a half million. At a time of chronic manpower shortage it is unlikely that the teaching profession, especially English-medium teaching, will get more than its share . . .

"In the past there has been a sufficient surplus of able and dedicated Afrikaans teachers to provide for the needs of English schools. But this pool is drying up. There are more and more openings for young Afrikaans-speaking persons in commerce and industry and professions other than teaching . . .

"The shortage of science and mathematics teachers has become critical, not only in English schools. Unless something is done **all** our universities are going to run short of students registering in the faculty of science; and this will quickly be translated into a dearth of these skills in recruits to commerce and industry and to the technical branches of the Government service, especially the big, new ISCOR, ESCOM and SASOL ventures . . .

"The critical shortage of teachers calls for Cabinet action but the Government has been slow to move because certain sections have a rooted objection to bringing teachers from overseas, though the experience of history has shown that the impact of teachers could enrich and expand the profession . . . The Department of National Education should co-ordinate the needs of the provinces and send a recruiting team to London or elsewhere to select carefully a limited number of well-qualified young men to teach mathematics and science. Initially, they could be brought out on a three-year contract and the best could be invited to stay."

Editor's note:

At the time of writing this it has been reported in the Times Educational Supplement that there are over 7 000 unemployed teachers in Britain.

The Influence of English-speaking South Africans on Educational Policy and Decisions

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at that time. It was a sad thing that Adamson resigned in 1924 feeling that the political parties were against his ideals, when in fact they proved later that this was not so. His ideals were so strongly woven into the South African scene that they survived even his own disillusionment.

All through this time of development in education for South African Whites, there had been a steady effort to promote better facilities for Non-Whites. Such men as D Kidd, M Evans, and C T Loram, accepted the principle of separate courses of study and separate schools, but urged more adequate education. Edgar Brookes in his "History of Native Policy in South Africa" in 1924 insisted that such education must be neither assimilating nor subordinating. Others, like Bennie, Macquarrie and Rheinhalt-Jones felt that racial differences were not important, and Stuart of Lovedale tried to emulate the British public schools and give a special type of teaching for the Black elite. All of these men left distinct marks on the problems faced by workers in this field.

It has been said that the English have a tradition of victory in the things of the spirit. In South Africa, the English-speakers have always been a minority, but that they have been what Toynbee calls "a creative minority" is evident in the way that educational policies have been changed to fall into line with their inclinations. Pretorius refers to the 1820 settlers as "those, who, not seeking it, yet left behind them a greatness reaching out beyond our borders, and whose names are etched in the granite of our history for ever.' Many who followed them have won the right to be included in that description.