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1960-09
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https://hdl.handle.net/10539/24298
Richards, M.W. (1960, September). European education and industry. Symposium: A Journal for Education in Southern Africa, p. 64.

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European Education and Industry

by M. W. RICHARDS

TODAY most of the top leadership in Industry is in the hands of scientists and technologists who have come into Industry through the Universities or through technical institutions coupled often with special Training Within the Industry courses. Accordingly, however important their basic education in the schools may be, Industry really looks to the Universities and their post-school training to give entrants their final slant.

But, of course, ours is not a European industrial society but a multi-racial one and all Whites are called to exercise a degree of leadership, even if their scholastic ability has only enabled them to scrape through primary school followed by an unwilling period in the 'C' stream of a high school. It is accordingly in this group that we may best judge whether the schools are providing the sort of training in leadership which Industry needs.

In the Industry with which I am primarily connected, namely, the Transvaal and Orange Free State Gold Mining Industry, we have deposits which, in many parts of the world, would be unpayable and are only payable here due to the well-disciplined and willing brawn of the Non-European worker who in the bowels of the earth has to be led by White miners and artisans and bosses of all types.

With this large labour force comprising men of varying degrees of civilisation, of culture and of mental training and adjustability it is of utmost importance that there should be goodwill and understanding from the European to the Non-European and vice-versa, and the management does all in its power to secure this by every means and in particular by encouraging the learning of a basic language called Fanakalo. Nevertheless in many cases the newly arrived Europeans tend to show a lack of responsibility towards the labourers they are called on to lead, and I fear that our young people leaving school often have a poor conception as to the dignity, rights and contribution to the common weal of other sections of our multi-racial society.

Whether it is the schools or the home background or national policies which are to blame is hard to say, but it seems to me that the schools must teach, day in and day out, that the White man's prestige must depend not on the colour of his skin but on his superior abilities, training, judgment and moral fibre. If a young man is not prepared to apply himself, he is liable, despite job restrictions and all other protections, to sink into the mire.

I would think that every classroom might borrow from Mr. Harold Macmillan's speech and have a large notice "Merit and merit alone . . . the sole criterion for man's advancement, whether in the political or economic field". I would not want to be provocative. Macmillan's name need not be mentioned and even the last seven words of the quotation could be left out. But boys or girls could be reminded that over the next fifty years the colour of their skins is quite unlikely to protect them unless they are prepared to make the effort to equip themselves for the superior positions of leadership which society offers to them, provided they are able and competent to carry such positions. The aim of their curriculum, their teachers and their parents must be to launch them on life with all possible mental and technical skills and with a sound character which makes them wish to work happily and contentedly with men and women of different religions, races, colours and social backgrounds.

When I had finished drafting this, I came on the text of Mr. Brian Rose's address at the Union Festival at Potgietersrust, and I would like to finish by agreeing with him that the White man will remain dominant so long as he *is* dominant; and that he must use head and heart to better advantage. His parents and his teachers must, it seems to me, impress on him this fact above all others.

The purpose of knowledge is not only to control nature but to promote human happiness. The truly educated man will find greater joy, greater fulfilment, and deeper expectancy than the ignorant individual. While the ignorant man will live an unexamined way of life, the educated individual will be sensitive to the beauties of nature, the glories of art, and the achievements of society.

Frederick Mayer.