would not be depersonalised. The public would not then get the impression that they were reading "news" with which there was no call to identify, about impersonal generalisations which bear no resemblance to themselves or to their environment as they know it. They would be reading about people, men and women who think and feel and hurt and react, human beings whose motives could be understood even if or when they might not be condoned.

This may appear to be a simple exercise in semantics, but it implies a significant change in emphasis. It is all too easy for people to remain uncommitted, unconcerned, unmoved, when other people are viewed as categories with convenient labels attached and not as people like themselves. In its determination to present the facts without emotion the Press has fallen into the trap of half-facts, for by-and-large the facts are about people and people are larger than facts. The vocabulary used to describe them is inadequate. Poor people are poor people. The term "the underprivileged" does not even begin to convey the realities of poverty. neitheir does the term "the wounded" begin to convey the sufferings of people who have been grievously hurt. It is possible to stir emotions without writing emotionally, but simply by writing about people. If emotions are stirred and complacence is disturbed human beings will once more assume significance as individuals with whom other individuals can and will identify. The news media can play a fundamental role in helping to bring about this change in emphasis which. in its turn. might eventually lead to a rejection of violence. of peace and harmony for all people. Few people commit violence on their neighbours. Let the news media, with their enormous coverage. make neighbours of the world.

Education and the Public

F. E. AUERBACH

Frans Auerbach is a well-known South African educationalist. He spoke to a meeting of the Black Sash in Johannesburg and this is the text of his address.

EDUCATION IS NOT ONLY what takes place in schools. Much of it takes place in the home; most of it reflects the society in which we live. Ours is a divided society; this shows itself in the way we arrange our social relationships, in our attitude to people of different ethnic or language background; and, of course, in our segregated school system. All these are educative influences on all children in South Africa.

Because of the way we run our society, we have not yet developed a common culture — not even a common 'white' culture. There are deep divisions of opinion about censorship, Sunday observance, attitudes to authority and many other matters between English- and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans; these are reflected also in the schools. Many of the stresses about the content of education, such as the place of the theory of evolution in biology or the balance between national and world history in the syllabus, derive from the rather divergent group cultures which exist side by side in our society.

This shows us that teachers do not stand aloof from society: they are part of it, and even when they play a leading role in determining the content and character of education, this role will reflect the cultural background of the group to which the teacher belongs. I am not suggesting that this is wrong; I am merely reminding you that this is so.

In discussing the role of the public in education, I wish first to deal with the role of the public in school education; I shall return to its broader role later in my talk.

Financing education

Firstly, then, the public provides the money to run the schools. In a democracy, the share of public spending allotted to education must reflect the importance accorded to it by the majority of the voters; if the voters feel that the education their children receive is not satisfactory. they will soon insist that more money should be spent to improve its quality. Society needs to supervise public spending on education. Yet here we must make a distinc-

tion: In common with other professions, the teaching profession maintains that it is capable of ensuring its own standards of professional competence.

The teaching profession would like to control the quality of its members by having its own professional council, as have doctors and lawyers — though this brings its own problems. However, we would be prepared to handle these problems, and have in fact asked for this for fifty years. It is encouraging that, after the issue had been shelved once again in 1967, the new Minister of National Education has revived it, and active work on forming a Teachers' Council for White teachers is in progress. In present circumstances we cannot hope to get a single Council — even if it must have separate registers — for all teachers in South Africa; but we have asked for parallel Councils to be established for teachers of other population groups.

Until such a Council has been established, the public will continue to have to concern itself with the quality of the teaching force in the schools.

This is a very serious question, and affects the education of all children in South Africa. I am aware that there are grave shortcomings in the quality of teachers, and particularly in the academic level of recruits to the teaching profession, in the education systems for White, Coloured and Indian pupils. However, it is certain that the problem is gravest in African education; therefore I wish to enlarge on this a little.

The Bantu Education Department, in a public statement, professed itself satisfied with "six thousand students enrolled in 34 training schools". In spite of this, the number of unqualified people employed continues to rise. This is not surprising, for in 1951 the Eiselen Report estimated that there should be 15,000 teachers in training by 1959 not six thousand ten years later. As the pupil increase from 1955 to 1968 has been 137%, the teacher increase 87% (double sessions were introduced in 1955) and the student teacher increase only 7%, it is hardly surprising that the percentage of teachers who had neither Matric nor a professional certificate has jumped from 7.2% in 1961 to 19.4% in 1968. And all these teachers -- 6,568 of them in 1968 (Transkei excluded) — were paid a fixed salary of R276 per year for women — most of them are women — R366 per year for men. Can one justify such pay for people who are doing teaching even if they are unqualified? Since last year, their pay has been increased — by ten per cent.

Thus the public must watch the reports of education departments on this aspect of the quality of the teaching force, until teachers can control this quality themselves through their own Teachers' Council.

Public authorities should, in addition, see that children and teachers have grounds, buildings and equipment as adequate and up-to-date as the country can afford, and that the teaching force is well-trained, adequate in number and stable.

And since in most Western societies there is a regretable tendency for public services to be less efficient than work carried out by private enterprise, the public needs to watch the efficiency of the educational system as it needs to watch the efficiency of other public services.

Mutual Trust

How the public can exercise this watchdog function is a problem we have not yet solved. Public interest in schools arises spontaneously from the interest of parents in their children's schools. I am aware that there is at times some doubt about what is considered parental interference in the classrooms and teacher interference in the home, but I agree with a basic contention of Dr. Emrys Davies, who was President of the National Union of Teachers in England, who says "Recent evidence has established that the greatest single factor in a child's educational development is the attitude of the parent towards the school and the education it provides. If co-operation between teachers and parents is fruitful it must be based on mutual trust and the honest and frank exchange of information about the child's life at school and at home."

Parents' Watchdog

This kind of relationship most commonly finds expression in Parent-Teacher Associations, and their development is generally welcomed and has, indeed recently been recognised in our National Education Policy Act. Yet the attempt to federate such associations into a body such as the Home and School Council — a body that can act as the Parent's watchdog in education — has not been as successful as it deserves to be.

The reason for this is that it is impossible to press for desirable and possible improvements in education without proving the need for these by pointing to present shortcomings. That must mean, anywhere in the world, blaming the shortcomings on the political party

in power at the moment, and is therefore not so easily done by the supporters of the party in power. I wish to suggest that women and men must be found to ignore political divisions when organising parents for constructive democratic pressure for educational improvements.

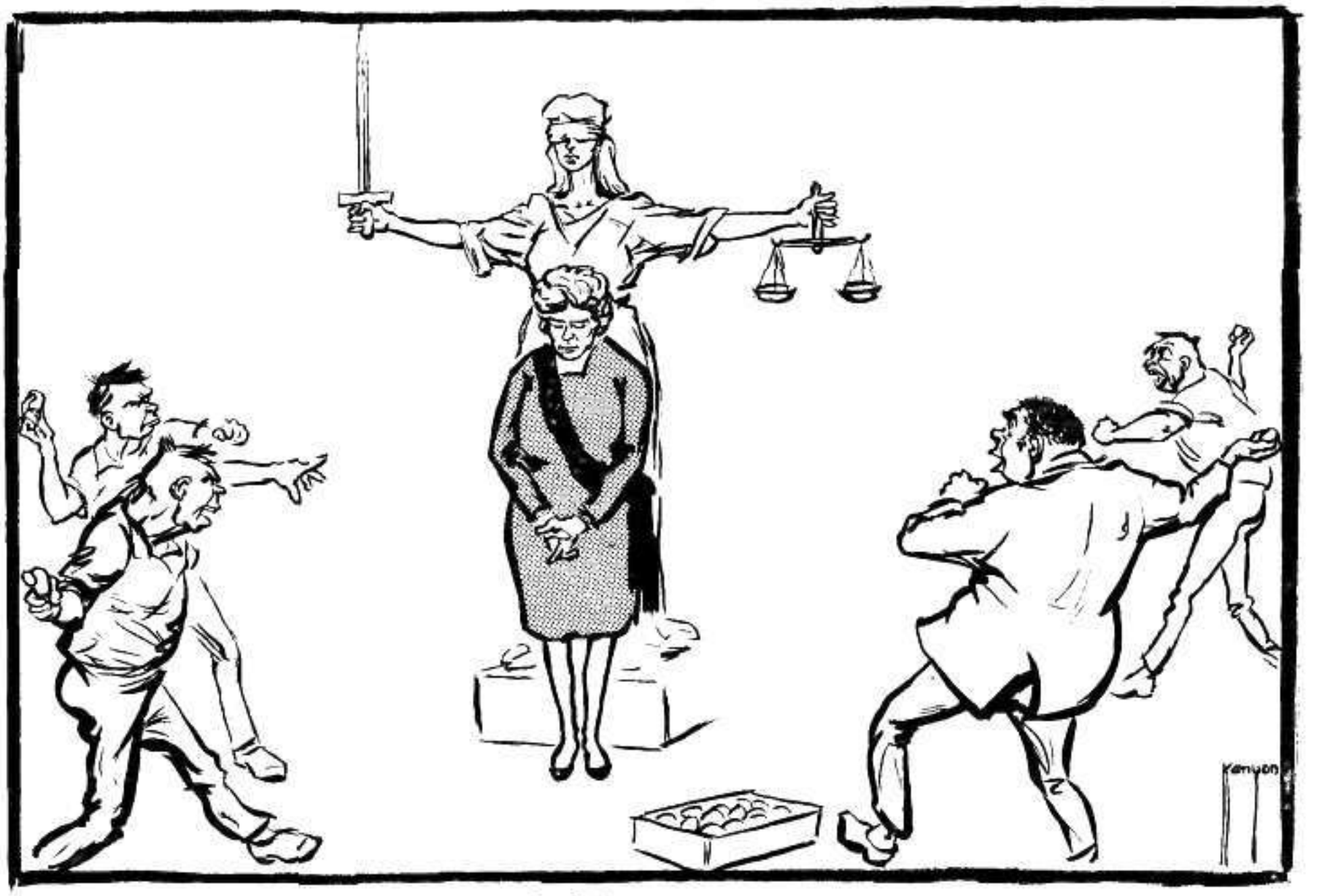
However, I am not convinced that the public generally is in favour of significant improvements in the quality of education in South Africa.

Let me give you one example. For almost five years there has been a brake on public building, including the building of schools, in order to contain inflation. Not a stoppage, but a brake. One result of this is that the Transvaal Education Department had to shelve improved staffing scales for high schools, worked out in 1965, because you can't have more teachers, even if they are available, if there are not more classrooms in which they can teach. This has affected the efficiency and happiness of several thousand high school teachers — and their pupils. They have still not been introduced, and by now the extra teachers required are not available anyway.

An Investment

Yet if the State decided to exempt education from the credit squeeze, the private sector would have accused it at once of adding to inflation, in spite of the excellent case that can be made out for regarding education not as an expense but as an investment. There is no doubt whatever that that in general better educated citizens contribute more to the national economy. And remember that the better-educated citizen contributes more not just for a year or two, but for the whole of his working life. A Russian economist has calculated that a person with four years schooling produces 44 per cent more than an illiterate, one with a high school education 108 per cent more and one with university or college education 300 per cent more.

If, therefore, the public is serious about regarding education as important, leaders of the private sector of the economy should sup-



Pro Patria

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port the case for regarding education as investment and as an important factor in the economic growth of the country.

It should be apparent to the private sector of the economy that if the quality of the teaching force drops, all future workers will be less well educated. Nevertheless private enterprise often actively entices teachers away from the profession.

At this stage one might say that if teachers' salaries were higher this kind of poaching would not happen. Yet teachers' salaries have been raised three times in six years. Therefore, the basic causes must be deeper. They concern two fundamental national questions: the value of education in our scale of national priorities, and the chronic shortage of skilled labour.

Public Spending

It is by now fairly well-known that in South Africa we spend less of our national income on education than do most other countries. In general, developing countries spend a far greater share of their national income on education than the developed countries of Western Europe and North American. And since four-fifths of the population of our country are in the developing stage educationally and economically, we should spend at least 10 or 15 per cent of our national income on education. Even if we wished to go no further than Britain, and spend 7% of our national income on education, this would mean an increase of at least R250 million a year in our educational expenditure.

No government will introduce "new" spending of that order without strong public pressure. An extra R250 million on education as capital investment is not such an enormous increase. If the public of South Africa is serious about valuing education, I challenge them to press for that kind of spending now.

Quality and Turnover

If significantly more money were spent on education grave dissatisfaction among serving teachers would be overcome and there should be staffing improvements in four directions. Firstly, the overall intellectual quality of recruits will improve. Every Rector of a teachers' training college in the country is concerned about the fact that not enough of our ablest matriculants go into teaching. The long-term effects of the present position affect the entire quality of our national life.

Secondly, more recruits will offer themselves, so that it will become easier than it is now to reject unsuitable students. Above all, more men would come forward. At present, 37 per cent of the teachers in the service of the Transvaal Education Department are men, but as the Administrator has told us that the number of men who entered our colleges of education has dropped by half during the last few years or so, this percentage must drop further, unless present trends are reversed.

Thirdly, the alarming instability of staff would be arrested. Staff turnover obviously affects the efficiency of education — and, therefore, the value the public gets for public funds spend on education. It also affects the emotional health of the rising generation, because, as every parent knows, staff changes are unsettling to children.

The Transvaal Teachers' Association recently collected statistics which suggest that the staff turnover in our schools is nearly 30% a year — in other words, on the average, a quarter or perhaps a third of the staff of all schools changes every year. Of course there is much changing in other fields of work as well, but all parents know how unsettling this is for children. It also makes for less efficiency in learning.

Fourthly, many people who left teaching for financial reasons only would probably return to the profession and thus work in the field for which they have been trained. While they work elsewhere, we are really wasting skilled labour.

Skilled Labour

This then brings me back to the whole position of skilled labour in South Africa. Turning first to the effect of the shortage of skilled labour on the teaching profession, I should like to quote at some length from the excellent report, "Education and the South African Economy" published in 1966 by the "1961 Educational Panel". This report deserves to be more widely known than it is.

Discussing the supply of White teachers, the report states . . . "It is a well-known phenomenon that wherever there is a shortage of skill

> "Admittedly the Bantu can do the work we Whites do without further training but their problem is that they cannot organise, and will never be able to. Therefore we cannot allow them to run the mines of this country."
>
> *Mr. H. J. Vermeulen.*

in a country for a prolonged period the shortage tends to be concentrated in the Public Service (which in South Africa includes the teaching profession). This is partly due to the inflexibility of the salary and recruitment policies of the Public Service, which puts it at great disadvantage in competing with private business for scarce labour. But there is, we believe, a more fundamental reason. A shortage of skilled labour in the directly productive sector of the economy (whether publicly or privately owned) has an immediate impact on output and profitability, and, if it reaches a large enough scale, can lead to unemployment at the unskilled level, balance of payment difficulties and other immediate troubles. In education, on the other hand, a shortage of teachers can be absorbed almost indefinitely by allowing pupil-teacher ratios to rise. The result will be a fall in standards but the economic and cultural consequences will only make themselves felt over many years. The temptation to starve education in the interests of the directly productive sector of the economy is consequently very strong, for the public authorities and for society as a whole. In the end the only escape from the dilemma is to ensure that there is not an overall shortage of skill.

From this it follows that if the barriers in the way of employment of non-whites in skilled occupations are not reduced quickly enough or if the expansion of non-white education (including vocational and technical training) is allowed to lag, greater demands for skill will be made on the White population than it is capable of meeting and one of the chief sufferers as a result will be white education. For the long-term survival of the white groups as cultural entities, nothing could be more disastrous."

It is doubtful whether immigration has made as large a contribution to skill levels as is often believed, because we tend to forget emigration. True, something like a quarter million immigrants have entered our country during the last decade or so. Yet how do their skills compare with the skills of the 206,000 whites who left the country since 1959 to 1966.

Quite obviously, we have a vast reservoir of undertrained manpower in our non-white population. And I do not think we can do anything significant to resolve our manpower crisis until those who have the power — the voters of South Africa — insist that our non-white manpower be trained and used in the South African economy — trained to the limit of their individual capacities. To take this decision is a matter of politics; to implement it would be a matter for education.

I see no prospect of such a decision being taken, and therefore the wage spiral is likely to continue. And we shall go on wasting enormous reserves of human talent that, by training, could be available to us within a few years — not in that distant future when the Transkei and Tswanaland and Zululand have enough of their own State revenues to run adequate education systems.

One can quote endless figures to show to what extent we waste this talent. One of the best ways is to express the number at high school as a percentage of the total school population. This was 34% for whites, 23% for Indians, 10.8% for Coloureds and 4% for Africans in 1967.

You will see, then, that the public determines some very basic educational issues, like total spending and limiting the training of four-fifths of the children in schools. Again, I am not arguing that it is wrong that such decisions should be taken by the public. I am merely trying to show that, in fact, they are in the last analysis taken by the public.

Power and Responsibility

The power of the public is shown even more strikingly in the role of the home and society in education. Here I speak not only as a teacher, but also as the parent of school-going children, and as a citizen. The standards observed by children in basic moral issues such as honesty and tolerance are set in our homes. Schools — which in any case reflect the social environment — do little to alter moral standards 'caught' in the home.

I agree with Albert Schweitzer that 'example is not the main thing in influencing others: it is the only thing'. Every time we as parents are courteous or unselfish; every time we lose our temper or use swearwords; every time we return lost property we have found or excess change we have been given in error; every time we bend the truth or break a promise — we are providing moral instruction for our children, consciously or unconsciously.

Our influence in this field is enormous, and as adults we should be aware of it. Cheating the Receiver of Revenue, or telling children of thirteen to pay half-fare is giving moral instruction, and so is fair dealing and politeness to people irrespective of what group they belong to: if adults did not use insulting names for members of other population groups, chil-

dren would not do it either. Every single adult, by his words and actions, by civic concern or callous indifference sets some example to the young — in other words, contributes for good or ill, to their education. Particularly every parent.

If we wish our children to become responsible citizens, able to take over the running of our complex society, we should also set them a better example when manifest wrongs are revealed in the Press and elsewhere. This happens everywhere in the world, and public indifference is not confined to our country. Yet as a South African I must choose my examples from what happens here. The entire national ingenuity of South Africa was unable to find a place for Sandra Laing in our public education system; she found a place only in a private school. We try to tighten the laws against homosexuality while actually encouraging it by endorsing African women out of Cape Town so that in that city there are 72 adult men to every 28 women. All our Churches warn against the moral evils of the migrant labour system, yet the Cabinet is apparently going ahead with the destruction of the regular family life of millions of South Africans by turning the men from settled members of a stable community into migrant workers with week-end family life.

I know the Black Sash has protested vigorously about this, but as yet these protests have not been widely echoed — and this lack of protest at clearly immoral policies is, in its own way, helping to educate our children to be equally indifferent to the welfare of their fellow-men, indifferent to some of the basic values of our Western heritage. They will "catch" our indifference.

Selfish Ends

I know that I have pleaded for more spending on education, and that we can only do if our country remains economically sound. Yet I have been concerned for some time with the excessive emphasis our leaders have placed on economic strength during the past decade or so. This emphasis on material wellbeing strengthens man's natural inclination to put material before spiritual considerations. It does not encourage children to put service before self, nor to enter what are essentially service professions, such as teaching and nursing.

Let me end with an appeal to all citizens especially to all parents. Take an interest in the education of all children in the country — not only your own. For example, do not try to get the best teachers by bribing them with offers of free houses if you can afford to make such offers — for you are depriving other children of teachers; children who even wthout selfish action on the part of the wealthy already start off with social and economic handicaps.

Rich Harvest

Press for education to get a fairer share of the national income even if it has to be by extra taxation. The capital we could thus invest in developing more adequate human beings will pay a rich harvest in the long run, both materially and spiritually. Set a decent example in your private and public conduct, so that society will reinforce and not, as it all too often does, contradict the ethical teaching we try to give in the schools.

Encourage Teaching

Encourage your own children to take up teaching. As a citizen, work for adequate educational opportunities for all children.

I appeal to all members of the public, as well as our leaders, to emphasise the importance of service to our fellow-men above economic strength. Both are important, but I fear our emphasis has become too selfish. We must relearn the satisfaction of mutual help, 'helpmekaar'. We must restore, in private and in public life, the place of the Golden Rule which sums up our moral teaching, "Do unto others as you would they do unto you".

Everywhere the young people of the world are asking urgent and basic question. As responsible adults, let us set them a better example than we have done in the past. By service, integrity and tolerance, let us give them the moral leadership they crave.