

WITS. APARTHEID REJECTED BY 800 GRADUATES Meeting Unanimously Condemns Nat. Policy

"R.D.M." STAFF REPORTER

MORE than 800 graduates of the University of the Witwatersrand voted unanimously last night, at a convocation meeting in the Great Hall, against the Government's announced policy of compelling the university to bar non-Europeans from its student and teaching body.

There were lifetimes of learning symbolised by the brilliant hoods and graduate gowns of many of the speakers last night, but the one who was applauded at every second sentence was the youngest graduate who spoke—a squat, stout, black medical man, Dr. W. F. Nkomo.

His volume of voice was so great that the public address microphones were switched to low while he spoke.

The 800 graduates cheered when Dr. Nkomo concluded his appeal for equal opportunities for all races:

"When the sky is the limit for everybody, we shall be able to say, 'Ons vir jou, Suid-Afrika'."

BITTERNESS

Dr. Nkomo said in his speech that when he was at Fort Hare, he saw the segregated students become embittered against other people. Exclusive universities on the other side of the colour line had not been free from racial animosity.

"We need a new relationship in this country. It must not be based on colour, but on character and integrity."

Dr. Winifred Hoernle, who graduated in 1907, said that whatever the Government promised about its proposed all-black colleges, it could not obtain the teachers, or have the equipment or libraries commanded by the two great open universities, the Witwatersrand and Cape Town.

Professor I. D. MacCrone said: "The two open universities resent being politically butchered to make a Roman holiday for racial ideologists."

Mr. Walter Pollak, Q.C., said that he followed the United States

Supreme Courts decision of two years ago in saying:

"The doctrine of separate but equal has no place; separate facilities are inherently unequal."

The 800 graduates present had attended in response to appeals sent to 10,000 former Wits. students all over the world. Messages of sympathy were read from the United States, Britain and other countries.

The only voice of dissent at the meeting was in a message from an unnamed medical graduate. The audience applauded his courage in saying that he supported the Government.

The resolutions affirming the freedom of universities to decide whom they would teach, and how they would teach, were carried unanimously.

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