

BIPV Bessok Dir September 1970. (B. Groep). Nelson Mandela 466/64. October 1, 1970, Rakgach 40 Ra legang,

I find it difficult to picture you living elsewhere than in Victoria East, the place where you spent the best years of your life. I suspect you badly miss Alice, & why not? It was home sweet home for you & was in many ways ideal. It was less than 15 miles from your brother, R. J., & if he had once dared to irritate you, you could easily have walked the distance complete with bags & baggage. There, you were comparatively near the marital homes of the children - the Phillips, Magubela's, Letsameyane's & the Ngeakani's. Alice lay in the heart of a cluster of old & famous institutions, making it possible for you to give the children the best education without depriving them of the immense advantage of a home environment, where they could discuss their daily problems with you & receive much help & guidance. It was within easy reach of such lecture places as the West Hill & the Kai, Grahamstown & King, of seaports & industrial areas like East London, P.E. & Uitenhage, & the picturesque scenery of the Hogsback added to the natural beauty of the area. The whole region was well-suited for the purpose of stimulating talent & ambition.

In my remembrance of Fort Hare you come up over & over again. Often I recall seeing Prof. on Sunday mornings, long-jawed, grave & ponderous, rolling past Wesley House for service at Beta Hall, with you floating softly next to him, greeting us with a warm smile & relieving the grim atmosphere as marigolds would brighten their surroundings. Fort Hare & the execution of centres of learning around it, enabled you to make important contributions in the cultural field. I have in mind, for example, the reference to your efforts made by Peter Seeger in "Choral folksongs for Bantu music lovers." No place is like home & this applies all round. But Jabotone will probably compensate for much that you lost when you fled from the land of Roraba. As capital of a new Republic, it has an infinitely far better future than Alice could ever hope for. It is developing very rapidly, & it is quite possible that even ^{our} own generation will see it explode into a gigantic industrial city. Already it is mentioned respectfully in bank reviews & commercial & industrial publications. It offers golden opportunities for investment in a wide variety of skills. It is the place which, perhaps more than any other, needs trained & experienced people. It is the place where you should be. In fact there is something symbolic in your having lived in both towns. Alice, old & inert, & deriving its name from a British princess, forms part of the countless institutions which remind us of the imperialist era, an age that is gone or going. On the other hand, Jabotone takes its name after a nobleman who is inalienable to our own soil.

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You are fortunate to witness the crumbling of the old world & to serve the new generation - a generation which, we are sure, you will serve with the same zest & devotion with which you worked in the olden days.

I have reason to believe that the debt we all owe to Z.K. has been the subject of oration & prose of the highest order. Many people knew him as a prominent educationist & vice-principal of Fort Hare. To others he was a moderate or conservative politician who was associated with the N.R.C., Institute of Race Relations & the Church.

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Each party or group may be justified in choosing its own premise for evaluating his achievements, & there may even be some evidence to support each viewpoint.

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As lecturer at Fort Hare he played an important role in producing that generation of trained thinkers in Eastern & Southern Africa who were to serve as pioneers in many fields of endeavour, & who today form the nucleus of the statesmen, diplomats, civil servants & technicians who are displaying tremendous initiative in the tasks of national reconstruction in the new African States. Many of us associate him with crucial turns on questions of principle

tactics in the course of our political evolution. Of course our progress has been the result of the collective effort of all our people, & no single person can justly claim this credit. But Z.K.'s influence is clearly to be seen. He was one of the principal architects of the African Claims [1944] which embodied the views of the people of South Africa on the Atlantic Charter. He led the Resolutions Committee which drafted the 1949 Programme of Action - our blueprint on questions of strategy & tactics. ~~Like many highly qualified intellectuals Z.K. had no anti-left prejudices & worked in harmony with those of freedom from all schools of thought. There are many people inside & outside the movement who were critical of his cautious attitude. But I'm not so sure now whether some of the criticisms we levelled against him were not wild.~~

~~I believe firmly that there is something of rustless steel in a man who, in spite of being holder of a lucrative & secure post,~~

~~If we accept these facts, as we must, then the question whether Z.K. was liberal, conservative or agitator becomes a purely terminological one which we must leave to academicians.~~

~~Rakgadi, we remember him with much affection.~~

I believe your eldest baby, Bakwe, the roving specialist, has been reined in at last, that he & Tiki now live with or near you. What a stupendous achievement! Perhaps even the Universe may now rest from being tramped by his feet. Perhaps even I have found a correspondent. He is one of the few men I know who will never resist the temptation to reply. Meanwhile my fondest regards & love to him, Tiki, Sumie & Abazukhu.

Sincerely, Nelson.

Mrs Z.K. Matthews, Public Library, Taborone, Botswana.