

G 20 CONFERENCE

**HOSTED BY ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE (GRAHAMSTOWN) AND
DIOCESAM COLLEGE (CAPE TOWN)
26 APRIL TO 01 MAY 2007**

“LEADERSHIP IN FRONTIER SPACES”

Introduction

- 1 The G20 was an initiative of David Wylde (St Andrew's College, South Africa) and Anthony Seldon (Wellington College, UK). It brings together the heads of 20 English-speaking schools from Australasia, South Africa, England, the USA, Canada, Jordan and Peru. All of the schools are seen as leading schools with a commitment to educational excellence and innovation of some sort.
- 2 It aims to provide an annual opportunity for the heads of the schools to talk through some key issues facing the world, education and themselves as educational leaders. It is small to enable deep connection and discussion. It is not exclusive in that anyone else is free to have a similar initiative. The idea is that the meeting will be hosted alternately between the northern and southern hemispheres. In 2006 the first conference was hosted at Wellington College (just outside London) and explored the theme, *Sharing with the world's great schools*. The second conference is the subject of this report. The third conference will be hosted by the King's Academy (Head: Dr Eric Widmer) in Jordan from 06-09 March 2008 and intends to explore themes associated with Islam in the world today.
- 3 The format of the conference involves talks by local invited speakers or some of the participants themselves and then discussion and debate, generally in open forum, broadly based on the theme of the conference. Social activities are planned to enhance the professional sharing and connection between the participants.

Session 1: Leadership Lessons – David Wylde (St Andrew's) and Session 3: Crossing Personal Frontiers – Eric Widmer

- 4 David led the discussion with input on leadership lessons raised in Mandela's autobiography “A Long Walk to Freedom”. The ensuing conversation together with the discussion session “Crossing Personal Frontiers”, made various points about leadership.
- 5 It is important to build consensus decision – making and guard against autocratic decision-making in a school. This is based on the African tradition of broad-based consultation (the Imbizo or Legotla) in which all are heard before serious decisions are made. In running a school this will be affected by the nature of the decision. Some matters require significant deliberation and discussion and therefore need the input and ownership of lots of people over time. Others require more immediate attention and therefore a more autocratic decision needs to be made in such a context.
- 6 The trust in the head's ability to consult and consider a range of opinions grows the longer he / she is in his / her position. Integrity in all respects and particularly in the decision-making process is the most important element in the role and functioning of the head. Personal

behaviours not attitudes are the most important elements of a head's function because these are modelled throughout the organisation. This reinforces the importance of integrity.

- 7 There is a distinction between power and authority. Power is exercised through position and is used to impose the decision of the head on the staff and school. Authority is more legitimate and comes from a process of involving as many as possible in the decision making process. It is about creating consensus through listening and consultation. It results in a more legitimate form of leadership. This form of leadership, by authority rather than power characterised Mandela's leadership, but not perhaps the subsequent leadership of the country. It certainly is not characteristic of what is happening in the US (and therefore the world, today) which is polarising by the minute and which is more reliant than ever on power politics rather than leadership by authority.
- 8 The American delegates were able to explain the depth of the polarisation of the US where only about 10% of Congress seats are now contested, because the vast majority are defined as either Red (Republican) seats or Blue (Democratic) ones. This means that whole communities including schools are seen as either "belonging" to one camp or another. This has resulted in a stifling of democratic discourse and, in the context of "national security" concerns, poses a real threat to the operation of democracy in the USA.
- 9 Leadership by authority also allows for the protection of deep values in any institution and indeed in a country. So while the simple majority might want a return of the death penalty, the supreme value of the sanctity of life is written into the ground of the nation in the Constitution (in South Africa). Hence the personal search for integrity, for self-acceptance, for self-love, away from the ego is crucial to a good leader. This requires of the leader to make the time away from "the block hole" of the school to reflect, to re-collect, to learn and to rejuvenate in the role of the head.
- 10 The schools represented at the 2007 G20 Conference were:
 - Australia: St Peter's College; Melbourne College and Ivanhoe Grammar School
 - Jordan: King's Academy
 - USA: Buckingham Brown & Nicholas School; Harvard-Westlake School and Lakeside School
 - UK: Wellington College and Marlborough College
 - South Africa: Bishops College; Tiger Kloof College; St Andrew's College; St John's College; St Cyprian's School; St Stithians College
 - Peru: Markham College
- 11 Other schools that have been invited to participate in the G20, but which were unable to attend this year are:
 - Australia: Sydney grammar; King's School (Parramatta)
 - Canada : Appelby College; UCC Canada
 - Hong Kong: Diocesan School for Girls
 - India: The Doon School; Daly College; Mayo College
 - Switzerland: International School of Geneva
 - UK: North London Collegiate School; Sevenoaks School; Eton College
 - USA: Deerfield Academy; Phillips Exeter Academy; Phillips Academy Andover; Lawrenceville School; Westtown School

Session 2: “Lessons from Mandela” – Peter Vale, Prof of Politics, Rhodes University

- 12 Prof. Vale spoke about some key thoughts on leadership that one can discern in examining Mandela and his leadership-style.
- 13 He had a very stable youth under the protection of his regent, and discovered deliberative participatory democracy through seeing the operation of the regent within the community. His excellent education reinforced these democratic values and the liberal values of honesty, integrity, courage, hard work, etc, that is associated with the English Public Schooling system.
- 14 Once he started work he had a deep sense of professionalism in that he tried hard to be a good professional lawyer. He believed and lived out the ideas of disciplined politics. Still today he sees himself as a disciplined and loyal member of the ANC. This was crucial in the years of early negotiations when he was out of touch with the exiled leadership. He took from his childhood a sense of place, of status, of command. He has an absence of dogmatism. He was never dogmatic even when a member of the communist party, which he was very briefly.
- 15 There were a number of paradoxes in the global context through which he lived his life. Throughout most of his life, the dominant paradigm in the world was the Cold War. However, towards the end of the Cold War, the nation – state started to loosen its ascendancy and economic forces became a more powerful determinant of life for most citizens of most countries. Mandela was a prisoner of the old Cold War paradigm, but he became a symbol of the new. He was a bridge at this time between rich and poor, black and white, reconciliation and bitterness. He managed to cross the divides, especially in SA, as a symbol of stability in a time of chaos. Even in today’s fluid times the country is easier to handle because of his presence.
- 16 Long before he was released from prison, he had emerged as a huge figure. It is important to remember that during the 1980s there were an immense set of conversations, struggles and negotiations that led to the changes of 1994. It included the government reaching out to the ANC in a range of different ways. It was a process in which all South Africans not just Mandela, the ANC, the NP and other political parties were starting conversations with one another. Mandela tapped into this sense of conversation, of the crossing of frontiers that many people were making. He made a number of acts of reconciliation, for example having tea with Betsie Verwoerd, supporting the Springboks at the World Cup 1995.

Session 3: Anthony Seldon - What frontiers is your school facing?

- 17 Anthony argued that in the UK, League Tables have seriously damaged education because it has made schools focus on the exam results as the only educational measurable outcome and not on other elements in the education of children. He commented that Heads get drawn into this, because they want to keep their governors happy, most of whom are drawn simplistically into these so-called “measurable” results.
- 18 Drawing on Howard Gardner and Kurt Hahn, he argued that developing the holistic school pupil should be the aim of education and not just preparing them for exams. There are seven such areas to focus on:
 - Logical and sequential thinking
 - Communication / linguistic thinking
 - Kinaesthetic / dance
 - Art / Music / Culture

- Inter-personal / Relationships
- Intra-personal / self-knowledge
- Spiritual / Moral

Session 5: Sharing management experiences

- 19 Many ideas were shared concerning initiatives in each of the schools. The ones listed below are of particular interest to St Stithians:
- St Andrews: Fish River journey, 21 days of grade 10's in DSG & St Andrews. They do self-journey, botany, history, and geography. Camp out for 21 days of canoeing, cycling, walking etc. It develops the boys/girls team in time for matric. They are taught how to make a fire, handle personal hygiene in the bush. A group of about 140 participate. the journey forms part of the usual school fee and involves a massive operation of staffing, canoes, bicycles, and so on.
 - Markham College (Peru): Introducing performance-based pay structure at the College.
 - Bishops: Ensuring a transparent approach to decision-making at the College, for example by making the minutes of all meetings open to scrutiny.
 - Lakeside School, Boston: Introducing departmental based curriculum and teaching reviews, including external review.
 - St Peter's College (Australia) inherited an autocratic boy's only bullying culture. Got a new leadership team to develop a more compassionate pastoral approach.

After Dinner Talk: Clem Sunter – Anglo American Corporation

- 20 Clem is well known for his work in scenario planning and in particular the work he did on scenario planning for South Africa in the mid 1980's. It is credited by a number of commentators for helping the National Party shift their thinking towards the transition that occurred in the 1990's.
- 21 He has recently been to China at which he had the opportunity of meeting with some of the top intellectuals from the main university that provides training for the leadership of the Communist Party. The Communist Party is 50 million strong (the entire population of South Africa!) and acts as the government at national, regional and local level throughout the country.
- 22 Some of the observations:
- China is the fourth largest economy in the world and intends to overtake Germany to become the third within the next 5 to 10 years and to be the largest economy by 2040.
 - Its economic growth is based on taking world brands and copying them, producing them far cheaper than in the West (wages are sometimes 10 times lower than that which would be paid in any Western countries) and marketing them aggressively around the globe.
 - They are the fourth largest economy and yet they own no single world brand e.g. Toyota, Coca Cola, Braun etc.
 - This economic growth is fuelling the international demand for resources which is why China has recently turned to Africa as its continent of choice to source raw materials, hence they were able to organise a summit in China which included 50 of the 53 African heads of state, an unprecedented attendance of leaders of countries hosted by a single nation.
 - They have a 2000 year history as a unitary state: far longer than any other nation in the world. The state was weakened at about the time of the voyages of discovery and the

renaissance which is why for the last 400 or 500 years it has been a third world developing country. Its intention is to reclaim its place in history as the largest prosperous unitary state in the world.

- Its people are very willing to work for the wages they earn, work extremely hard and are fully committed to the concept of the nation state that it is developing. \
- Its energy demands are enormous, e.g.. It is in the process of commissioning 32 nuclear power stations. It increases its energy consumption annually by an amount that is equal to the entire energy usage of the UK in one year.
- It has to build a city to accommodate the size of the population of Australia every year, in order to keep up with its population growth.

23 Clem is of the view that there were two key problems that China faces:

- The environmental impact of its energy demands and general industrialisation process. The damage to the atmosphere through CO2 emissions is huge and unless this is curtailed, will have catastrophic implications for the world and for China. He believes that if America moves on this question, China will as well because it cannot afford to alienate America in any way.
- Its one child policy may severely undermine its economic growth as the population starts to age in the next 10 years and onwards.

Conclusion

24 The conference discussed in some detail its future and value. Most agreed that as the world globalises and as our pupils are increasingly facing an interconnected world, we as educational leaders need to meet to share on some of the issues that face our students. It was agreed that each conference should attempt to focus on a key challenge facing humanity. In that regard it was agreed that the 2008 conference should focus particularly on Islam and its role in the world going into the future.

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RECTOR

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