

South Africa

Speech given by Alan D. Harvey to Beckenham Young Conservatives

Let me first of all place on record what a great privilege I consider it to be to address you this evening, and to thank you for the respect that you have shown to me and the cause which I represent by inviting me to speak here tonight. I was originally asked to speak in general about the present deteriorating situation in South Africa, but with your permission I would like to talk more specifically about one section of the South African population - an oft-forgotten "suppressed" minority in the world today, but one which can even so still play a vital role in saving civilisation in Southern Africa from total collapse - the English-speakers of Natal.

Firstly, however, I feel that I had better say a few words about myself. I first visited Southern Africa in 1974, when I followed Willie John McBride's British Lions round the sub-continent. I fell in love with the country on that occasion, most particularly when I reached the coast and such cities as Port Elizabeth, East London and especially Durban. Prior to setting foot in South Africa I had always believed that the Afrikaner culture was the dominant factor in White society there. The reality, however, proved to be completely different. In all the cities which I visited (with the possible exception of Bloemfontein) it was the English-language which predominated, and in the coastal areas - the Eastern Cape and Natal - this predominance was almost total.

I was not only the matter of language itself which demonstrated that it was the British historic roots of White South Africa, not the Dutch, which had the biggest influence on the major cities of the country however. South Africans drive on the "correct" side of the road; their favourite sports are the same as in Britain, with rugby and cricket the most popular; the architecture of the country is much the same as in any British coastal resort, and in everyday life it is again the "Englishness" of the country's ancestry which is the most obvious. In fact, certainly whilst I was in the Eastern Cape and Natal, I had to keep on reminding myself that I was in a foreign country and not in Britain on a hot summer's day!

It was Tommy Bedford, the Natal and South Africa rugby captain, who first coined the phrase "The Last Outpost of the British Empire" to describe Natal during the course of this tour, a description which has lasted with increasing usage to this day. For a while the Province of Natal was also nicknamed "Bedfordshire" by the local press in honour of Tommy Bedford. Both of these terms are very apt, in so many ways Natal is more British than the United Kingdom itself!

1975, saw the Referendum on Britain's continued membership of the Common Market, and I am not afraid to say that I worked avidly for a "No" vote during this campaign. I was so depressed by the eventual result of this Referendum, however, that without hesitation I decided to emigrate to South Africa - to move to a country with a British culture and identity which was still free and independent. Not surprisingly, I decided to settle in Durban and Natal.

It was actually in 1976 that I eventually managed to emigrate, and from that date until I was forced to leave the country in 1990 I never failed to be amazed at the "Britishness" of so many facets of society. In spite of officially being a Republic, the British Royal Family is probably held in greater admiration in Natal than anywhere else in the world. Two cameo incidents stand out in this regard. In early 1977, when I was still waiting for my work-permit to be granted so that I could start my employment, I went to the cinema one afternoon to see a documentary about the Queen's Silver Jubilee. The cinema was absolutely crowded, and at the end of the film the

whole of the audience started to applaud! I don't think I have ever witnessed such a reaction in a public cinema either before or since! A few years later, at the time of the Prince of Wales's marriage, I went into one of the big department stores in the centre of Durban, only to find that there were practically no other customers present, and all the staff were watching the wedding on television screens which the management had specially installed for the occasion! (As an anecdote, I also heard that the hardline Afrikaner HNP party, which at the time I was supporting, had also installed television sets in their head office for this purpose, because, as they said, "it was all part of our Western heritage"!). All Natal-based South African regiments, the Durban Light Infantry, the Natal Mounted Rifles and the Natal Carbineres, still retain the Royal Crown on their regimental badges in spite of the country's republican status - with one regiment even sending an annual birthday telegramme to the Queen to this day!

If there is one facet of British life which White South Africans take even more interest in than the Royal Family, however, it is British football. The full British soccer results are broadcast on SABC every Saturday night, but not, mark you, the results from the Dutch League or any other European country! Prior to SABC television becoming firmly established, however, a fish restaurant in Johannesburg would have all the results 'phoned through to them and posted on a giant board every Saturday evening! At the end of each amateur soccer season in Durban a "Mini World Cup" tournament used to be held. The "European countries" were always represented by their respective expatriate clubs, but "England" was represented by Durban Collegians, the leading sports club in the city, and "Scotland" by Coedmore, the top south Durban team - which has now, moreover, even changed its name to Scotland Natal!

The City of Durban itself can easily be mistaken for anywhere on the British coast - a cross between Brighton and Southampton perhaps (one of the city's beaches is even called Brighton Beach). The Durban City Hall is built to exactly the same design as the Belfast City Hall, and regularly flies the Union Flag a number of days each year, such as on the Queen's birthday. The local yacht club is the *Royal* Natal Yacht Club, and again their club flag features the Union Flag in the top left-hand corner. Perhaps the most intriguing institution in the city is a restaurant called - I kid you not - "The British Middle East Indian Sporting and Dining Club"; a curry-house in the best traditions of the Raj, they still display a large portrait of Queen Victoria in the main dining room!

If anything Pietermaritzburg, the capital of Natal, is even more British in architecture and atmosphere than Durban, with a distinct feel of Cheltenham about it, and with the archetypal "English" public schools of Hilton and Michaelhouse nearby. Elsewhere the Province bristles with British placenames; Margate and Ramsgate on the South Coast (where the term "Thanet" is jokingly used in many business titles), Maidstone and Sevenoaks in the Midlands, and of course Newcastle and Dundee, the biggest towns in the North. It is not for nothing that these towns possess these names, for if it was not for the greater preponderance of non-Whites and the warmer climate they could easily be mistaken for their namesakes back in Britain.

There are two Natal-based organisations which I would also like to mention to emphasise the Britishness of the Province. The first is the Durban Parliament, a debating society that I was proud to belong to which is run strictly along British Parliamentary lines, and which is presided over by a charismatic gentleman named Ken Sutler-Gore who might have been plucked straight from the English shires. It was at a sitting of the Durban Parliament where I came into contact with the other organisation which I want to mention, alas towards the end of my stay in the

Province, and therefore before I had the chance to join. This is a body called "The Sons of England", and as the name suggests it is an organisation for those who take an active pride and interest in their English ancestry. Their speaker who addressed the Durban Parliament, Mr. Don Gilliat, furthermore informed me that they enjoyed very strong and fraternal relations with the local Caledonian Society, the Cambrian Society, and even a small Ulster Association.

Many of the hotels in Durban take a pride in resembling traditional English country inns, and none of them more so than the Bell Inn in Durban North. This establishment served the most sumptuous Sunday roast dinners in the traditional British style, which I often used to patronise in the company of a number of British expatriates, most notably Mr. Paul Roper, originally from Bournemouth, who was the life and soul of any gathering, and whose fancy-dress birthday parties were the talk of Durban society!

The phrase "The Last Outpost of the British Empire" is increasingly used to describe the Province of Natal. Nowhere is this more obvious than with the teeming car bumper-stickers of various designs, all of which proudly proclaim "Natal, The Last Outpost", complete with Union Flag and Natal coat-of-arms. Sales of the original Natal colonial flag (basically the "Red Ensign" with the Natal coat-of-arms in a white roundel in the bottom right-hand corner) - something never seen during my earlier years in the Province - are also escalating throughout the souvenir outlets of the Province, and these flags are now prominently flown by supporters at Natal's cricket and rugby matches etc.. Even before I was forced to leave the country in 1990 it seemed as if sub-consciously Natal was already slating to secede from the rest of South Africa.

It is against this background that the present plight of the English-speakers of South Africa, and of Natal in particular, must be viewed. The Afrikaners have never taken such great pride in their ancestry, or in their Dutch, French or German origins. There is no fanaticism amongst them for the Dutch Royal Family; they do not demand that French soccer results are given out on SABC; sauerkraut is not served in the hotels of Durban North. Instead of identifying with their racial roots the Afrikaner establishment - in the guise of the National Party, the NGK and the Broederbond - now seem more interested in emphasising their "Africanness", hence their current obscene desire to suck-up to the Xhosa-dominated ANC terrorist organisation.

The Afrikaner people have made a great mistake by this, a great, great mistake. But it is not the Afrikaners who I am most concerned about in this context, but the people who are probably suffering even more by the imposition of Black terrorist rule - my own kith and kin, the English-speakers of Natal. The English-speakers of South Africa have historically made one big mistake concerning their own well-being, and this is that they have never become actively involved in the politics of the country. If they did, however - as in the case of Tommy Bedford himself - it was weirdly by supporting some of the more obnoxious Left-wing parties. I can remember once canvassing for the HNP in Durban when I called at a house festooned with pictures of the Queen and the Royal Family. I naturally assumed that the occupants would be supporting the Right-wing candidate - only to be informed that they were members of the ultra-Leftist Progressive Federal Party! It was unreal, and something akin to somebody in this country belonging both to the Monarchist League and to Militant Tendency! The reason for this strange ambiguity was historical rather than political, for the parties of the Right, the National Party and the HNP, were always perceived as Afrikaner parties first, and only Right-wing parties second. Thus, when in the early 1980's the National Party lurched radically to the Left and the Conservative Party broke away (which, incidentally, I myself eventually joined, where I found myself far more at home

than I was in the HNP), the "newness" of its name and its far more British-orientated title meant that significant numbers of English-speakers - particularly in Natal - "jumped" all the way from the middle-of-the-road New Republic Party to the new Conservative Party, by-passing the National Party en route.

The total White population of South Africa is approximately 5 and a half million. In spite of official statistics to the contrary English-speakers make up well over half of this figure (official figures say the opposite only because people listed as bi-lingual are automatically classified as Afrikaans-speakers). Thus there are probably well over three million Whites in South Africa of full or partial British descent, with about 800,000 of them being in Natal.

It is not only amongst the Whites where one particular group predominates in Natal, for approximately 88% of the Black population of the Province are Zulu. The Zulus, of course, are the traditional enemy of the Xhosa, so there will thus be no more place for the Zulus in the "New South Africa" of the ANC/NP axis than there will be for English-speaking Whites. There has always been a curious mutual respect between the Zulus and the English-speakers in Southern Africa, dating back to the Zulu Wars of the 1870s. At the present moment, moreover, it is only the Zulu Inkatha movement which is being prepared militantly to oppose the ANC terrorist takeover of the country, and the vast majority of Whites in Natal admire them for this.

There have been many plans for an Afrikaner "homeland" secession in South Africa, but these are merely lines drawn on a map and therefore stand absolutely no chance of being allowed by the ANC/NP axis, or of being internationally accepted. The boundaries of Natal, on the other hand, are both long-established and legally recognised. The prospect of a Natal/KwaZulu breakaway from the rest of South Africa is therefore a possibility - particularly as Chief Buthelezi, the leader of Inkatha, is fully in favour of a federal structure. Buthelezi, unlike the ANC leaders, is a wily-enough old fox to realise the necessity for a continued White presence in the country in order to maintain an advanced and prosperous Western state. The prospect of a federal Natal/KwaZulu being established under the leadership of Buthelezi and someone like Carl Werth (a former leader of the Conservative Party in Natal) is therefore not outside the bounds of possibility.

The people of the UK must not turn their backs on their kith and kin in Natal therefore, and indeed must give them every support and encouragement to go their own way. With the collapse of the ERM and the probable eventual disintegration of the EU, Britain must start to look for new, and perhaps more traditional friends and trading partners. A newly-established federal Natal/KwaZulu could prove to be the first such ally in this new direction. Due to its strong British connections in the past, South Africa could be a good candidate to join the Commonwealth Federation. It would gain from increased prosperity and investment.

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