

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (10/13)

Justin Chadwick (8 March 2013)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK “I don’t care what is written about me as long as it is not true” Dorothy Parker

WHY REWARD ANARCHY?

This year my daughter enrolled at Bloemfontein University – an excellent decision!! I am sure many will question why a “soutie” would be delighted to have his precious daughter enroll at a predominantly Afrikaans university some 700 km from home!! Simple – the University of the Free State subscribes to good old fashioned values like discipline, ethics and integrity; with an unapologetic focus on academics. The leadership at the University is first class – lead by the inspirational Professor Jonathan Jansen.

Now why bore you with these details? At his address to first year students Prof Jansen warned that should a student pick up a stone to either damage property or hurt anybody that person would be expelled – no story, no excuse; you are gone. Where was this type of leadership when labour went on the rampage in the Western Cape? Instead of deploring the acts of violence the Union leaders insisted that those who were arrested be released otherwise more anarchy would follow. And the government rewarded the wanton acts of violence by increasing the minimum wage level – a short term decision that is going to swell the ranks of the unemployed and lead to more grievances (and related strikes and violence) in the future.

The thing about Prof Jansen is that in terms of his vision for education he knows he is unflinchingly right – and so he can say and do what he does with this knowledge, without worrying about reproach. And it is not only him – he has surrounded himself with like minded and similarly committed leaders who all share his vision. And then it has caught on with the students – they are proud of the rich heritage of the University and its leadership’s commitment to academic excellence. So now you have a groundswell of all that is right at the institution. And rather than becoming an island of excellence in a sea of despair, Prof Jansen has lead his team in uplifting those around them – breathing life into the 23 worst performing schools in the Free State. Education is their passion – and they are committed to make it work. Where was the voice of reason when the action started in De Doorns? There are procedures and structures in place for those with grievances to have their say; they do not have to resort to intimidation and violence. We live in a civilized society and there is no need to resort to barbaric behavior.

This is not about who is right or wrong in terms of the grievances of those who took to the streets, burning packhouses, cars and other assets. This is about who is blatantly wrong in their behavior. Instead of taking a strong stance on this criminal behavior, limp wristed labour union representatives (to call them leaders would be an insult to real leaders) and government officials tried to make political mileage out of the turmoil. The saddest part of this story is that it is the poorest (who are used as pawns by the unions and government) who will suffer most – jobs will be lost, crime levels will increase, people will be injured or killed in the cross fire and the squatter camps will grow.

The University of the Free State have shown that strong leadership relies on the following (1) knowing that you are right – that you are fighting for the right cause and that you are doing it the right way (show people the future) (2) getting people to follow you, creating a groundswell that ensures that the right path is followed (taking people along the path to the future) (3) Not being afraid to speak out, even if it leads to criticism from those who stand in the way of progress (being strong – strength comes from knowing you are right and the support of like minded individuals) (4) Making sure that ALL are included in your vision of the future (spread the love and ensure that everybody gains from your future vision). (5) Action – words are easy; action shows commitment and leads to change.

Imagine if agricultural leaders had stepped up to the plate at De Doorns, listened to the plight of those who are dissatisfied, given their vision for the future, demanded that no harm be done to people or property and united all parties behind a common goal of creating a united, non-racial and prosperous agricultural sector.

If only we could clone Prof Jansen – we in agriculture desperately need one of those clones to give real leadership to a sector under siege.

GROWER ADVISORY CITRUS BLACK SPOT (CBS)

In order to keep growers up to date on the latest CBS-EU news a grower advisory was distributed on Wednesday 6 March – CGA members who have not received the advisory can contact justchad@iafrica.com.

SHIPPING RATES

Is this statement that appeared in the media recently “Maersk Line has sacrificed market share since levying a hefty increase in freight rates for refrigerated cargo, but says it is prepared to accept that loss” the inverse of “Maersk line has increased market share since charging lower rates, but is prepared to accept that loss to gain market share”, with reference to earlier behavior when specialized reefer vessels were driven out of business?

AGRIBEE CODES AND BEE CERTIFICATION

Much interest was generated during the recent road show meetings around the new AgriBEE codes and BEE certification, as presented by Jacomien and Sam from the Citrus Academy. Jacomien is putting together an overview document with the information presented during the meetings, and some useful contact details. Please get in touch with her at jacomien@citrusacademy.org.za to get hold of the document. She can also send you the AgriBEE codes as they were published and other useful information.

**SOUTHERN AFRICAN CITRUS GROWERS' FUND THEIR FUTURE THROUGH THE LEVY
ADMINISTERED BY THE CGA**