

HONORARY GRADUATE

Wayne Fredericks

Wayne Fredericks, a quiet, modest and self-effacing man, has been a friend of this country and this university for many years. He has worked tirelessly for the advancement of democracy in South Africa and for the establishment of truly equal education for its disadvantaged people. This work is but one facet of a life of noble dedication to his own country and to the world as a whole in times of war and peace.

Wayne Fredericks was born in the United States in 1917. In 1928 he graduated as a Bachelor of Science in Engineering with the highest honours from Purdue University. From 1940 to 1946 he served in the United States Air Force, attaining the rank of lieutenant colonel. His gallantry as a bomber pilot and his work as operations officer in the 8th Air Force in England led to the conferment on him of four decorations: the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Legion of Merit, the Order of the British Empire and the Croix de Guerre.

After his discharge from the armed forces Mr Fredericks spent a decade in the Foreign Division of the Kellogg Company, broken by recall from 1951 to 1953 by the Air Force during the Korean War. It was during this decade that his association with South Africa began. He established a factory for the Kellogg Company in Springs. While the factory was being built he was confronted by the newly introduced legislation on job reservation. He abhorred it and opposed it. His interest in this country was kindled.

In 1956 Mr Fredericks began what turned out to be two periods of service with the Ford Foundation of New York: from 1958 to 1960; and from 1967 to 1973, when he was head of the Middle East and Africa Program. Between these periods he was Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs in the United States Department of State. In 1973 and 1974 he was a Vice President and Director of International Relations of the Chase Manhattan Bank. Thereafter, until 1985, he was executive Director for International Affairs of the Ford Motor Company.

In these thirty and more years, throughout his occupation of several high offices and to the present day, Mr Fredericks has played an innovative role in making known in his own country the real educational needs of South African Blacks; has been actively involved in extensive programmes for the education and general upliftment of the disadvantaged in our country and in many other countries; and has never ceased to strive for greater understanding between his country and our country. His influence and impact are unparalleled. All the while he has known and commanded the trust and respect of Black leaders in the whole of Africa.

Despite his many international obligations, Mr Fredericks has visited South Africa on important missions on more occasions than any other American of international stature. In 1986 alone he was an active participant in four major deputations to this country, all reflecting his deep concern for the education and general welfare of our people. Within the United States he works unceasingly to attain the same ends. He has been a key member of the American National Advisory Council of the South African Education Program, which dispenses vast amounts of Congressional funds for educational projects in South Africa.

The University of the Witwatersrand is particularly indebted to this noble man. He has done so much to facilitate contacts between our university and major American educational and other bodies; to make known our declared policies and special educational role to organizations and to public figures in the United States.

Nor has Mr Fredericks confined his support to our university - he has extended it to the Institute of Race Relations, Funda Centre and the Urban Foundation. His advice and help were vital in enabling the Urban Foundation to raise loans at the end of 1979 from three banks in New York amounting to thirty million dollars for the use of Blacks in South Africa under the newly created 99-year leasehold system - this at a time when it was impossible to raise money for the purpose in South Africa. Recently he agreed to establish and become the President of the Urban Foundation USA Incorporated, a body formed to draw greater resources from his country into the work of the Foundation. It has a Board composed of men and women of distinction in finance, commerce and political life.

It is understandable that we of this university draw particular attention to the contribution Mr Fredericks has made to our welfare and to the welfare of South Africa as a whole. But it would be remiss of us not to draw attention to the exceptional breadth of his interests in the well-being of others, reflected in his membership of bodies concerned with welfare and progress in Africa, the Near East, the Far East, Spain and Germany.

Wayne Fredericks is an extraordinary man who has never ceased to strive for universal peace, tolerance, human rights, and social and economic progress. He has fought and continues to fight ignorance and prejudice against our country. For decades he has been a true friend of this university, one who has championed its cause, its policies and its aspirations. Were he ever to speak of himself, which will never be, he could with justification cite the lines of his countryman Walt Whitman,

'Behold, I do not give lectures or a little charity,
When I give I give myself'.

The University of the Witwatersrand has sought to honour this man of quality. It could do so only by offering him the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* to signify the magnitude of his public service. It is very conscious of the greater honour he has done it through his graciously accepting the offer; through his becoming thereby a member of its body, lending such lustre to it.