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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN... *df*

U. S. MILITARY ACADEMY COMMENCEMENT

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 1975

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SENATOR MATHIAS

DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

SECRETARY CALLAWAY

MEMBERS OF THE GRADUATING CLASS

HONORED GUESTS

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

*Montgomery
F. A. A. A.
Hilman*

ON MARCH TWENTY-SIXTH OF THIS YEAR, AT A WHITE HOUSE CEREMONY, I HAD THE GREAT HONOR TO PRESENT THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY'S AWARD TO ONE OF THE OUTSTANDING MEMBERS OF THIS GRADUATING CLASS -- THE CAPTAIN OF ARMY'S FOOTBALL TEAM -- CADET ROBERT E. JOHNSON. I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU HOW RICHLY DESERVING OF THIS AWARD HE IS.

AS THE CEREMONY ENDED, BOB URGED ME TO COME VISIT THE MILITARY ACADEMY AT WEST POINT -- AND FRANKLY, I DIDN'T NEED MUCH URGING. I'M DELIGHTED TO BE HERE WITH YOU THIS MORNING.

BUT LET ME TRANSFORM THAT DELIGHT INTO A MORE PRACTICAL

FORM OF EXPRESSION. IT HAS BECOME A TIME-HONORED TRADITION AT

THE ACADEMY THAT A VISITING HEAD OF STATE IS ENTITLED TO GRANT

REMISSION OF PUNISHMENTS.

I DON'T KNOW WHO STARTED THIS TRADITION. BUT AS GENERAL DOUGLAS

MacARTHUR ONCE SAID, 'THE LONG GRAY LINE HAS NEVER FAILED US' --

AND TODAY, I'M NOT GOING TO FAIL THE LONG GRAY LINE. SO WITH THE

POWERS VESTED IN ME AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES,

I HEREBY ORDER THE REMISSION OF ALL ORDINARY PUNISHMENTS,

IMMEDIATELY AND WITHOUT DELAY!

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN SOMETHING ELSE THAT
HAPPENED AFTER THAT WHITE HOUSE CEREMONY I JUST MENTIONED. WHEN
IT WAS OVER, BOB JOHNSON AND HOMER SMITH, ARMY'S DISTINGUISHED
HEAD COACH, HAD LUNCH AT THE WHITE HOUSE WITH A FEW OF THE OTHER
PARTICIPANTS.

AND HOMER SMITH FOUND HIMSELF SITTING BESIDE SOMEONE WHO HE LATER
DESCRIBED AS THIS "NICE-LOOKING GIRL." BUT HE DIDN'T KNOW HER
NAME -- SO HE LEANED OVER AND ASKED HER. SHE SAID, "RAQUEL."
HE SAID, "RAQUEL?" AND WHAT'S YOUR LAST NAME?" SHE SAID,
"WELCH!"

NOW IF YOU'RE WONDERING HOW ANYONE COULD DESCRIBE

RAQUEL WELCH AS JUST A NICE-LOOKING GIRL -- YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND

THE VERY SPECIAL PHILOSOPHY OF FOOTBALL COACHES. I KNOW,

BECAUSE I WAS ONE MYSELF. TO A FOOTBALL COACH, REAL BEAUTY

IS ANYONE WHO'S SIX FOOT FIVE, WEIGHS TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY POUNDS,

AND HAS NO FRONT TEETH!

HOMER, I HOPE YOU'VE FOUND A LOT OF THEM FOR THIS FALL

-- AND I WISH YOU AND THE ARMY ONE OF YOUR BEST SEASONS EVER.

AND THAT COMES FROM A FORMER NAVY MAN!

I AM DEEPLY HONORED TO BE HERE. THE TRADITIONS OF

WEST POINT RUN THROUGHOUT OUR HISTORY. THE LONG GRAY LINE

HAS EXTENDED FROM HERE TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD.

AND NOW YOU ACCEPT THAT INHERITANCE -- CARRYING WITH YOU NOT
ONLY THE TRADITIONS OF WEST POINT BUT THE HOPES OF YOUR COUNTRYMEN.

FOR TWO CENTURIES, THE UNITED STATES ARMY HAS STOOD
FOR FREEDOM. SINCE THIS ACADEMY'S FOUNDING IN 1802, WEST
POINT HAS PROVIDED LEADERS FOR THAT ARMY.

THE PURPOSE OF THE ARMY AND WEST POINT TODAY ARE ONE AND THE SAME
-- AS THEY WERE AT THEIR HISTORIC FOUNDINGS: TO BE READY AT THE
NATION'S CALL TO CARRY OUT -- WITH DEDICATION AND HONOR -- THE
DUTY OF DEFENDING THE LIBERTY OF OUR LAND AND OUR PEOPLE.

THE BATTLE FOR FREEDOM WILL TAKE MANY FORMS IN THE

YEARS AHEAD.

THE WILL OF AMERICA WILL ALWAYS BE TESTED.

IT IS OUR JOB -- YOURS AND MINE -- TO BE PREPARED FOR THOSE TESTS.

IN RECENT WEEKS I HAVE COME TO REALIZE, AS NEVER BEFORE,

HOW CLOSELY THE FREE WORLD WATCHES THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

NATIONS OBSERVE OUR EXAMPLE AND LEADERSHIP IN MEETING THE

TREMENDOUS CHALLENGES OF MAINTAINING THE PEACE AND THE MOMENTUM

OF ECONOMIC PROGRESS.

AT THE SAME TIME I HAVE SEEN HOW MUCH DEPENDS UPON THE SKILL

AND SUPERIOR PROFESSIONALISM OF THOSE WHO SERVE THE UNITED STATES

EITHER IN UNIFORM OR AS CIVILIAN REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR COUNTRY.

THE TREMENDOUS PRODUCTIVITY OF AMERICA'S FARMS AND FACTORIES, THE

SOPHISTICATION OF OUR TECHNOLOGY AND THE DURABILITY OF OUR POLITICAL

INSTITUTIONS ALL AROUSE THE ENVY AND ADMIRATION OF FRIEND AND FOE

ABROAD. BUT OUR ONE REALLY ESSENTIAL RESOURCE IS OUR PEOPLE --

OUR DEDICATION TO OUR NATIONAL PURPOSE.

YOU MAY HAVE READ OR HEARD THAT OUR ALLIES AND OTHER

OVERSEAS FRIENDS HAVE QUESTIONED THE CONTINUING RESOLVE AND UNITY

OF OUR GOVERNMENT AND OUR PEOPLE AND THAT I WENT TO EUROPE TO GIVE

THEM REASSURANCE.

FORTUNATELY, I DID NOT FIND THAT DEGREE OF DOUBT AMONG
THE LEADERS WITH WHOM I MET REQUIRING SUCH EXTENSIVE REASSURANCE.
NOR WOULD MERE WORDS BE ENOUGH TO CONVINCe THESE PRACTICAL POLITICAL
LEADERS. WHAT HAS IMPRESSED THEM AND WHAT WILL IMPRESS THEM
ARE DEMONSTRATIONS OF THE ESSENTIAL UNITY OF AMERICA IN THE PURSUIT
OF OUR NATIONAL GOALS AT HOME AND ABROAD.

ONE SUCH PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION WILL BE THE FATE OF
THE 1976 DEFENSE BUDGET WHICH I PROPOSED TO THE CONGRESS. BECAUSE
THE UNITED STATES IS TODAY AT PEACE, THERE ARE SOME WHO WANT TO
CUT BACK ON DEFENSE SPENDING AND PUT THESE DOLLARS INTO THEIR OWN
PET DOMESTIC PROJECTS.

THE HARD FACT IS THAT WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY DONE THIS IN RECENT YEARS
WHILE OUR POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES HAVE CONSISTENTLY INCREASED THEIR
MILITARY BUDGETS.

IN REAL TERMS, OUR DEFENSE SPENDING HAS DROPPED TO ITS
LOWEST LEVEL SINCE BEFORE THE KOREAN CONFLICT.

IT IS MY FIRM CONVICTION THAT WE CANNOT AFFORD FURTHER EROSION
OF OUR BED-ROCK DEFENSE BUDGET, AND I WILL FIGHT HARD TO
PREVENT IT.

I BELIEVE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT A NATIONAL DEFENSE POSTURE

THAT IS SECOND TO NONE; ONE THAT WILL MAINTAIN OUR QUALITATIVE

SUPERIORITY NOW AND IN THE FUTURE; \ ONE THAT WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO ENSURE

PEACE THROUGH THE MUTUALLY-HONORED COMMITMENTS WE HAVE WITH RELIABLE

ALLIES \ AND THROUGH THE DEDICATION OF THE HIGHLY-MOTIVATED AND

PROFESSIONAL MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT WHICH YOU ARE ABOUT TO ENTER AS

OFFICERS.

IT IS INSTRUCTIVE TO RECALL THAT THIS ACADEMY WAS

FOUNDED DURING THE JEFFERSON ADMINISTRATION. THOMAS

JEFFERSON WAS CONSISTENTLY SUSPICIOUS OF LARGE STANDING ARMIES

AND ARDENT IN HIS INSISTENCE ON CIVILIAN AUTHORITY OVER THE MILITARY.

NEVERTHELESS, HE WAS A CHAMPION OF QUALITY AND EDUCATIONAL

EXCELLENCE. PRESIDENT JEFFERSON KNEW THAT FREEDOM'S DEFENSE COULD

NOT BE ENTRUSTED TO AMATEURS IN A WORLD OF EXPANSIONIST POWERS AND

OPPORTUNIST PIRATES.

WHATEVER PRICE OUR POOR AND YOUTHFUL REPUBLIC HAD TO PAY FOR ITS

FULL INDEPENDENCE AND THE PROTECTION OF ITS LAWFUL INTERESTS,

JEFFERSON AND THE CONGRESSES OF HIS DAY WERE WILLING TO PAY.

I BELIEVE THE AMERICANS OF 1975 ARE JUST AS WILLING TO PAY

THAT PRICE. THAT IS WHY I CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR A COMPREHENSIVE

TEN-YEAR PROGRAM TO DEVELOP ENOUGH DOMESTIC ENERGY TO MAKE THE

UNITED STATES FULLY INDEPENDENT OF FOREIGN OIL AT EXTERNALLY FIXED

PRICES THAT THREATEN BOTH OUR ECONOMIC HEALTH AND OUR NATIONAL

SECURITY.

THIS WOULD BE ANOTHER CONVINCING DEMONSTRATION TO

OUR ALLIES AND OUR ADVERSARIES THAT AMERICANS HAVE LOST NEITHER

THEIR NERVE NOR THEIR NATIONAL WILL.

ALL OF THE ENCOURAGING DECLARATIONS OF COMMITMENT TO

MUTUAL DEFENSE AND MUTUAL PROGRESS WHICH I HEARD AT THE NATO

SUMMIT CONFERENCE IN BRUSSELS LAST WEEK WILL BE MEANINGLESS UNLESS

THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES HAVE ASSURED SOURCES OF ENERGY TO POWER

BOTH THEIR ECONOMIC AND MILITARY EFFORTS. ONCE AGAIN, THE

UNITED STATES IS LOOKED TO FOR LEADERSHIP AND EXAMPLE.

OF COURSE ~~ENERGY~~ INDEPENDENCE IS GOING TO COST US

SOMETHING.

OF COURSE ~~AN~~ ADEQUATE LEVEL OF DEFENSE IS GOING TO

COST US SOMETHING.

BUT ~~THE~~ PRICE OF SACRIFICE IS FAR LESS THAN

THE PRICE OF FAILURE.

FREEDOM IS NEVER FREE; BUT WITHOUT

FREEDOM, NOTHING ELSE HAS VALUE.

NO PREVIOUS GRADUATING CLASS IN THE HISTORY OF WEST
POINT WILL BE CALLED UPON TO FILL SO MANY DIFFERENT ROLES AND TO
PERFORM SO MANY EXACTING MISSIONS AS THE CLASS OF 1975.

LIKE THOSE WHO PRECEDED YOU, YOU MUST KNOW MILITARY
STRATEGY, TACTICS AND LOGISTICS. YOU MUST MASTER THE
INCREASINGLY COMPLEX MACHINERY OF WARFARE.

YOU MUST LEARN THE LESSONS OF LEADERSHIP.

BUT TODAY AS NEVER BEFORE YOU WILL NEED A SENSE OF
HISTORY, A GRASP OF ECONOMIC PRINCIPLES, AN APPRECIATION OF
SCIENCE, A MASTERY OF GEOPOLITICS AND DIPLOMATIC CONVENTIONS.

THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF CAN STATE A POLICY AND ISSUE AN ORDER;
BUT ONLY DISCIPLINED AND DEDICATED SUBORDINATES CAN SUCCESSFULLY
CARRY IT OUT.

YOU MUST ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT IN THE COMPLEXITIES
OF TODAY'S WORLD, WE MUST PURSUE COMPLEX POLICIES.

WE MUST BE AT THE SAME TIME BOTH STRONG AND CONCILIATORY.

WHILE WE MUST AT ALL TIMES MAINTAIN A DEFENSE SECOND TO NONE,

WE MUST ALSO PURSUE BETTER RELATIONS WITH OUR ADVERSARIES.

DETENTE, TO BE EFFECTIVE, MUST BE A TWO-WAY STREET, PRODUCING

BENEFITS FOR EACH SIDE BASED ON GENUINE EFFORTS OF BOTH SIDES.

TO COMBINE THE QUALITIES OF GOOD CITIZEN AND GOOD
SOLDIER, THE ABILITY TO LEAD AND THE ABILITY TO OBEY LEADERSHIP; TO
USE YOUR OWN INTELLECTUAL POWERS AND JUDGMENT TO THE FULLEST
WITHIN THE STERN DEMANDS OF DISCIPLINE AND DUTY; THESE ARE PERSONAL
CHALLENGES WORTHY OF THE HIGHEST CALLINGS TO WHICH MAN ASPIRES.

I KNOW THAT YOU WILL MEET THEM AS HAVE ALL THE WEST
POINTERS WHO PLEDGED THEMSELVES TO DUTY, HONOR, AND COUNTRY.

AS A YOUNG CONGRESSMAN, I WAS ONE WHO URGED ONE OF
YOUR GREATEST GRADUATES TO RETURN FROM EUROPE AND CAMPAIGN FOR
ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

I REMEMBER LISTENING TO GENERAL EISENHOWER SPEAK OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THOSE THREE WORDS IN HIS OWN DISTINGUISHED CAREER.

HE KEPT THEM IN THE FOREFRONT OF HIS THOUGHTS DURING HIS YEARS AS PRESIDENT; IT WAS HIS DEVOTION TO DUTY, HONOR AND COUNTRY THAT BROUGHT PEACE TO THE WORLD, RESPECT TO AMERICA AND PROGRESS FOR ALL OUR PEOPLE DURING HIS EIGHT YEARS IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

I THOUGHT OF PRESIDENT EISENHOWER OFTEN DURING MY VISIT TO EUROPE; HOW HE LED MILLIONS OF AMERICANS AND ALLIED FORCES TO LIBERATE WESTERN EUROPE; HOW HE RETURNED TO UNIFORM, ~~TO~~ ORGANIZE AND COMMAND THE FIRST NATO DEFENSES WHILE EUROPE REBUILT ITSELF;

AND HOW HE SEARCHED DILIGENTLY FOR PEACEFUL AND POSITIVE RELATION-
SHIPS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE THROUGHOUT HIS
PRESIDENCY, TO ALL THESE GREAT RESPONSIBILITIES HE BROUGHT THE
QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP AND DEDICATION TO DUTY FOR WHICH YOU HAVE
BEEN TRAINED THESE PAST FOUR YEARS.

NOT ALL OF US WILL BE CALLED UPON TO MAKE THE GREAT
DECISIONS THAT PRESIDENT EISENHOWER MADE. BUT EACH OF US
WILL BE CALLED UPON TO MAKE DECISIONS UPON WHICH THE WELFARE OF
OUR COUNTRY MAY DEPEND. I CONGRATULATE YOU AS YOU ACCEPT
THAT CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY FOR SERVICE TO THE ARMY AND TO
AMERICA.

YOUR CAREER WILL EXACT HIGH DUES; PERIODIC DANGER,

SEPARATION FROM LOVED ONES, MOVES SO FREQUENT THAT YOU MAY HAVE

TROUBLE PUTTING DOWN ROOTS ANYWHERE, BUT IT WILL ALSO OFFER

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES.

IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ANY OF YOUR CIVILIAN CONTEMPORARIES OF THE
CLASS OF 1975 WILL SO SOON FACE THE CHALLENGES WHICH SOME OF YOU

MAY FACE WITHIN WEEKS. YOU WILL BE CHARGED WITH THE UPKEEP

AND OPERATION OF TECHNOLOGY MORE EXPENSIVE AND COMPLEX THAN

SOME AMERICANS WILL EVER HANDLE.

MORE IMPORTANT, YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WELL-BEING OF
OTHER AMERICANS, \SOMETIMES IN SITUATIONS WHERE YOUR DECISIONS

MEAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH. YOUR APPRENTICESHIP,

WITH ITS BASIC EDUCATION, IS ENDING; BUT YOU MAY BE EXPECTED

TO USE ITS LESSONS AT ANY TIME.

IT IS AN ENORMOUS HUMAN TEST, BUT TESTING MAKES MEN AS WELL AS
NATIONS STRONGER AND MORE CONFIDENT.

HAVING MET THE TEST OF WORLD WAR TWO, DWIGHT D.

EISENHOWER SAID IN 1946 THAT "WE MUST NOT LOOK UPON STRENGTH AS A

SIN; WE MUST LOOK UPON IT AS A NECESSITY -- BUT ONLY ONE OF THE

CONTRIBUTIONS WE ARE MAKING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PEACEFUL WORLD."

AS YOU KNOW, LAST NIGHT I RETURNED FROM A TRIP TO EUROPE TO STRENGTHEN THE PEACE. IT WAS MOST ENCOURAGING AT THE SUMMIT MEETING OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY NATIONS TO FIND A NEW SENSE OF UNITY AND CONFIDENCE IN THE UNITED STATES. IT WAS MOST INSPIRING TO RECEIVE FROM HIS HOLINESS POPE PAUL THE SIXTH THE ADMONITION THAT RIGHT AND JUSTICE MUST GUIDE ALL OUR EFFORTS.

I AM CONVINCED OUR MAJOR ALLIANCES ARE STRONG AND FIRM; I AM CONVINCED OUR ALLIES' CONFIDENCE IN US IS NOT MISPLACED. I AM CONVINCED OUR CAUSE IS JUST AND RIGHT.

IN SALZBURG, I MET WITH EGYPT'S PRESIDENT SADAT, TO CONTINUE OUR EXPLORATION OF NEW STEPS TOWARD PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

THAT IS THE MOST SERIOUS INTERNATIONAL ISSUE OF OUR TIME. THE
UNITED STATES IS IN A UNIQUE POSITION TO HELP PROMOTE A PEACEFUL
SOLUTION -- AND I ASSURE YOU WE WILL MAKE THAT EFFORT.

THE AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO FREEDOM SINCE WORLD WAR TWO

-- THE SWEEP OF A GENERATION -- HAS BEEN SO VAST AND ENDURING
THAT IT SERVES NO PURPOSE FOR ME TO RECOUNT IT HERE.

BUT IT DOES SERVE A PURPOSE TO REMINDE OURSELVES, OUR FRIENDS
AND OUR POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES THAT AMERICANS ARE STILL PREPARED
TO PAY THE PRICE OF FREEDOM -- THAT WE WILL HONOR OUR COMMITMENTS
-- THAT WE WILL DO OUR DUTY.

*Buildings / individuals / traditions
achievement*

THIS IS WHY I AM HERE TODAY AT WEST POINT. THIS IS

WHY YOU ARE HERE TODAY.

LET US RENEW TOGETHER OUR FOUNDING

FATHERS' PLEDGE TO OUR COUNTRY OF OUR LIVES, OUR FORTUNES AND OUR

SACRED HONOR.

AND LET US ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT FREEDOM IS

NEVER FREE.

END OF TEXT