

The original documents are located in Box 15, “9/13/75 - Remarks at the Opening Autumn Convocation at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Acknowledgments

Thank you President Zumbuye

Chancellor Tate

Senator Tower

Congressman Steelman

President Elect

Pat Hunter

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT
SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

DALLAS, TEXAS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1975

*Bill Clements
Alan Steinhorn
John Tower
Jim Collins*

S.M.U. OPENING:

JUST BEFORE I LEFT WASHINGTON YESTERDAY MORNING

I RECEIVED A BIT OF VERY GOOD NEWS. BILL CLEMENTS,

OUR DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, AS WELL AS THE FORMER

CHAIRMAN OF S.M.U.'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS, INFORMED ME

THAT I HAD BEEN NAMED THE FIRST AND ONLY HONORARY MEMBER

OF YOUR SENSATIONAL MUSTANG BAND. ALL I CAN SAY IS:

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN PROUD TO BE A FORD. IN THE FUTURE,

I WILL BE EVEN MORE PROUD TO BE A FORD MUSTANG.

THANK YOU ALL VERY, VERY MUCH!

I AM HONORED TO ADDRESS THIS OPENING AUTUMN
CONVOCATION MARKING THE BEGINNING OF THIS HISTORIC YEAR
OF S.M.U.'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY AS WELL AS YOUR PARTICIPATION
IN THE NATIONAL BICENTENNIAL.

I AM PLEASED TO CONGRATULATE YOUR NEW PRESIDENT,

DOCTOR JAMES H. ZUMBERGE. I KNOW JIM ZUMBERGE

FROM HIS DAYS AS PRESIDENT OF GRAND VALLEY STATE COLLEGE

IN MICHIGAN. I KNOW HIM NOT ONLY AS A DISTINGUISHED

EDUCATOR AND SCIENTIST BUT AS AN AMERICAN WHO BELIEVES

IN THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE HUMAN INDIVIDUAL.

I AM CONFIDENT THAT UNDER HIS PRESIDENCY, S.M.U. WILL INSTILL
INTO THE BICENTENNIAL YEAR A VISION OF THE FUTURE -- A VISION
THAT TYPIFIES THE GREAT STATE OF TEXAS AND THIS DISTINGUISHED
UNIVERSITY WHICH HAS DONE SO MUCH TO DEMONSTRATE WHAT'S
RIGHT WITH AMERICA. AND I HAVE NO DOUBT TEXAS WILL INSTILL
IN YOUR DISTINGUISHED NEW PRESIDENT AN EVEN GREATER
APPRECIATION OF WHAT'S RIGHT WITH TEXAS.

I HAVE ALWAYS FELT AT HOME IN TEXAS BECAUSE
I ADMIRE SO MUCH THE TEXAS SPIRIT AND TEXAN ACHIEVEMENTS.
THERE IS A TOUCH OF TEXAS IN ALL AMERICANS AND I AM NOT
IMMUNE TO THE STARDUST CAST BY THE LONE STAR STATE.

IN TEXAS, EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE. AND THERE

IS JUST ENOUGH TEXAS OPTIMISM IN ME TO BELIEVE THAT,

IN AMERICA, NOT ONLY IS EVERYTHING POSSIBLE BUT OUR FATE

AS A NATION IS IN OUR OWN HANDS.

THE PROPHETS OF GLOOM AND DOOM HAVE

PREDICTED:

- THAT THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN AMERICA WILL WORSEN;
- THAT DEMOCRACY, AS WE KNOW IT, IS FINISHED;
- THAT WE FACE ECONOMIC COLLAPSE;

-- THAT WE ARE EITHER BEING POISONED BY THE FOOD
OR WILL STARVE TO DEATH;

-- THAT CRIMINALS ARE CAPTURING OUR CITIES;

-- THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES IS NO
LONGER SAFE IN GREETING CITIZENS IN THE NATION'S STREETS;

-- THAT IF THE EARTHQUAKES DON'T GET US, A NEW
ICE AGE WILL.

I REJECT SUCH PESSIMISTIC SCENARIOS.

I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU TODAY SOMETHING
OF MY OWN VISION FOR THE FUTURE. I WOULD BUILD UPON
OUR PROUD PAST. IN AMERICA'S FIRST CENTURY, WE
DEVELOPED POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS RESPONSIVE TO THE PEOPLE.

A GREAT NATION WAS PAINFULLY CONSOLIDATED WITH UNITY

GROWING FROM DIVERSITY. OUR SECOND CENTURY TRANSFORMED

AN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY INTO THE MOST PRODUCTIVE NATION

THAT EVER EXISTED.

AMERICA REFLECTED THE PIONEER SPIRIT, THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF
INDUSTRY, AGRICULTURE, THE INCENTIVES OF FREE ENTERPRISE,
THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF FREE TRADE UNIONS, AND THE WIDESPREAD
SHARING OF ECONOMIC GAINS AT HOME AND ABROAD.

AS WE APPROACH OUR THIRD CENTURY, I SEE THIS
ERA AS ONE OF FULFILLMENT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN.

I SEE A CENTURY DEVOTED TO EDUCATION WHICH EQUIPS YOUNG
MEN AND WOMEN, LIKE THE STUDENTS OF S.M.U., TO MAKE THEIR
OWN DECISIONS RATHER THAN PERMIT THEIR FUTURE TO BE
PROGRAMMED BY MASSIVE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES THAT AN
IMAGINATIVE WRITER FORESAW FOR "1984" -- A NIGHTMARISH
FANTASY OF WHAT OUR THIRD CENTURY COULD BE.

IT IS MY DEEPEST CONVICTION THAT A GOVERNMENT
BIG ENOUGH TO GIVE YOU EVERYTHING YOU WANT IS BIG ENOUGH
TO TAKE AWAY EVERYTHING YOU HAVE.

LET US USHER IN A THIRD CENTURY IN WHICH THE
INDIVIDUAL RATHER THAN THE GOVERNMENT MAKES PERSONAL
CHOICES AND DECIDES HOW INDIVIDUAL INCOME IS TO BE SPENT.
MEN AND WOMEN MUST PREVAIL OVER THE ENDLESS AGENCIES AND
BUREAUS THAT WOULD REDUCE HUMAN BEINGS TO COMPUTERIZED
ABSTRACTIONS AND PROGRAM PEOPLE INTO NUMBERS AND STATISTICS.

I PLACE A PREMIUM ON CREATIVITY, ORIGINALITY
AND YOUR RIGHT TO DIFFERENTIATE YOURSELF FROM THE MASS.
TODAY'S MOUNTING DANGER IS FROM MASS GOVERNMENT,
MASS EDUCATION AND MASS TECHNOLOGY.

I AM DETERMINED TO DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO PREVENT
CONFORMIST PRESSURES FROM SMOTHERING INDIVIDUAL EXPRESSION
OR STIFLING INDIVIDUAL OPPORTUNITY. INDIVIDUALISM MUST
STAND AS THE SENTINEL OF 1976 AGAINST THE MONOLITHIC THREAT
OF SAMENESS IN OUR SOCIETY.

NEVER FORGET THAT, IN AMERICA, OUR SOVEREIGN
IS THE CITIZEN. GOVERNMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS EXIST TO
SERVE PEOPLE. THE STATE IS THE SERVANT OF THE INDIVIDUAL.
IT MUST NEVER BECOME AN ANONYMOUS MONSTROSITY THAT
MASTERS EVERYONE AND IS RESPONSIVE TO NO ONE.

THESE PROPOSITIONS ARE THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR
BICENTENNIAL.

MY VISION OF AMERICA'S THIRD CENTURY IS ONE OF
AN ERA OF ACHIEVEMENTS RATHER THAN APATHY, OF FOSTERING
THE ENNOBLING AND TRANSCENDENTAL QUALITIES OF THE INDIVIDUAL
SPIRIT RATHER THAN BUILDING HUGE NEW BUREAUCRACIES.

TWO CENTURIES OF SACRIFICES AND STRUGGLE, OF CONFLICT
AND COMPROMISE, HAVE WON AN UNPRECEDENTED MEASURE OF
POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE FOR EACH OF US. I AM
PROUD TO BE THE PRESIDENT OF A FREE GOVERNMENT THAT CHECKS
AND BALANCES ITS OWN EXCESSES.

I AM PROUD OF OUR FREE ECONOMIC SYSTEM WHICH CORRECTS
ITS OWN ERRORS, CONTROLLED BY THE MARKET PLACE OF FREE
AND ENLIGHTENED CONSUMERS. AND I AM ESPECIALLY PROUD
OF THE ROLE OF FREE EDUCATION IN PRESERVING INDIVIDUALITY.

EDUCATION IS VITAL TO MY VISION OF OUR THIRD
CENTURY. ONLY EDUCATION CAN EQUIP INDIVIDUALS TO TAKE
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN LIVES IN THE FACE OF THE
PRESSURES OF MASS SYSTEMS OF SOCIETY. EDUCATION MUST
PROVIDE THE PERCEPTION UPON WHICH RESTS THE QUALITY OF
INDIVIDUALITY.

I CHALLENGE EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS TO REGAIN
THE EXCITEMENT THAT MADE AMERICA GREAT. EACH GENERATION
BRINGS A NEW SPIRIT OF COMPETITION, NEW RESERVOIRS OF
ENTHUSIASM, NEW RESPONSES TO THE HUMANITARIAN NEEDS OF
OTHERS AND REGENERATED PRIDE IN PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE.
THIS GENERATION BEARS A SPECIAL TASK -- THE PRESERVATION
OF INDIVIDUALISM.

YOU ARE THE BULWARK OF INDIVIDUALISM. SO IS
YOUR FAMILY. SO IS YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY. AND,
ESPECIALLY, SCHOOLS LIKE S.M.U. WHICH JOIN THE PUBLIC
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE CROSS-GERMINATION OF IDEAS.

MY OWN BACKGROUND INCLUDED TWO EXPERIENCES

IN HIGHER EDUCATION. ONE, THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN;

THE OTHER, YALE UNIVERSITY. ONE PUBLIC; THE OTHER

PRIVATE. I VALUE BOTH. I BUY AN OPEN MARKET FOR

IDEAS.

EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO THE DIVERSITY WHICH WILL DETERMINE

THE KIND OF PEOPLE WE WILL BE. IT MUST NOT BECOME

A MASS PRODUCT.

ALL THE ARMIES AND WEAPONS SYSTEMS OF OUR DEFENSE
WILL MEAN NOTHING WITHOUT SELF-RELIANT INDIVIDUALS WHO RETAIN
THE CHERISHED QUALITIES OF AMERICANISM. THAT IS ONE GREAT
PURPOSE OF EDUCATION.

EDUCATED MEN AND WOMEN NOT ONLY PROVIDE ANSWERS
TO PROBLEMS BUT KEEP OPEN THE OPTIONS IN SOCIETY THAT MAKE
LIFE WORTH LIVING.

OUR REAL FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE IS IN THE QUALITY OF INDIVIDUAL
LIFE -- IN MORAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES, COMPASSION,
COURAGE, LOVE OF COMMUNITY AND COUNTRY, CREATIVITY,
INNOVATION, ENTERPRISE, ORIGINALITY -- AND HEALTHY
SPORTSMANSHIP AND FAIR COMPETITION. NONE OF THESE
ATTRIBUTES OF INDIVIDUALITY CAN BE MASS PRODUCED.
THEY MUST BE ENCOURAGED AND GROW WITHIN EACH MAN AND WOMAN.

BUT THAT GROWTH CAN BE NOURISHED. ON THE
PORTICO OF ANGELL HALL ON MY OLD CAMPUS AT ANN ARBOR,
THERE IS AN INSCRIPTION FROM AN ACT OF THE CONGRESS ADOPTED
IN 1787 -- THE NORTHWEST ORDINANCE ACT WHICH STATES:

"RELIGION, MORALITY, AND KNOWLEDGE, BEING NECESSARY TO
GOOD GOVERNMENT AND THE HAPPINESS OF MANKIND, SCHOOLS
AND THE MEANS OF EDUCATION SHALL FOREVER BE ENCOURAGED."

THE AMERICAN TRADITION CAN INSPIRE THE HIGHEST
VIRTUES. BUT THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT ACHIEVE PERSONAL
FULFILLMENT FOR YOU. YOUR FUTURE DEPENDS UPON YOUR
OWN DETERMINATION TO DEVELOP YOUR HIGHEST POTENTIAL.

LET US APPLY THE THEORIES OF EDUCATION IN THE
LABORATORY OF LIFE. I URGE STUDENTS AND GRADUATES
AND FACULTIES TO DIRECT THEIR GENIUS AND THEIR ENERGY TO THE
SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEMS FACING AMERICA.

I CHALLENGE YOU TO HELP MAKE NOT ONLY AMERICA

BUT AMERICAN LIFE BEAUTIFUL AND INSPIRING.

LET US TAKE A NEW LOOK AT OURSELVES AS AMERICANS.

BY SEEKING A REAL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY AND

THE REST OF SOCIETY, YOU CAN GIVE GREATER MEANING TO YOUR

OWN LIFE AND HELP ALL AMERICANS ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF THEIR

LIVES.

I LOOK TO S.M.U. AND OTHER PRIVATELY-SUPPORTED
INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING -- BOTH IN HARMONY WITH
AND IN COMPETITION WITH PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS -- TO HELP
REGENERATE THE VALUES THAT MAKE AMERICAN LIFE SO SPECIAL.

STUDENTS WHO PREFER DIFFERENT PHILOSOPHIES

OF LEARNING SHOULD BE ABLE TO CHOOSE AMONG THE WIDEST

POSSIBLE VARIETY OF OPTIONS.

THIS INSURES THE DIVERSITY ESSENTIAL TO EDUCATE

THE "WHOLE PERSON" -- THE PHYSICAL PERSON, THE INTELLECTUAL

PERSON AND SPIRITUAL PERSON.

IN PRIVATE EDUCATION, THERE IS DIRECT CITIZEN

PARTICIPATION IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS. S.M.U. IS NOT

DEPENDENT ON GOVERNMENT FUNDING THAT ESTABLISHES RIGID

REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES.

TO MAINTAIN ITS UNIQUE QUALITIES, S.M.U. TAKES RESPONSIBILITY
FOR ITS OWN SUPPORT. I COMMEND ITS SUPPORTERS.

I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE HEAVY BURDEN FALLING
UPON THE WORKING, MIDDLE-INCOME CITIZENS WHO ARE
STRUGGLING TO PAY TUITIONS AND COSTS AT BOTH PUBLIC AND
PRIVATE COLLEGES.

I AM ALSO CONCERNED THAT PRIVATE HIGHER
EDUCATION IS NOW IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY. PRIVATE
INSTITUTIONS PROVIDE A LEAVENING AND STIMULATING INFLUENCE
FOR THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES. THEIR
CONTINUING VITALITY IS ESSENTIAL TO ALL HIGHER EDUCATION.

EDUCATORS MUST INNOVATE AND RESPOND TO THE
WORLD IN WHICH STUDENTS -- OF ALL AGES AND OF ALL
BACKGROUNDS -- FIND THEMSELVES.

PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS CAN BEST SERVE BY
EMPHASIZING THEIR UNIQUENESS -- NOT BY SUCCUMBING TO
ANY TEMPTATION TO IMITATE THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY. BUT
NEITHER STUDENTS NOR GOVERNMENT WILL SUPPORT A PRIVATE
COLLEGE JUST BECAUSE OF ITS ANTIQUITY OR HISTORY.

THEY MUST OFFER SOMETHING TRULY DIFFERENT AND IMPORTANT.

PRIVATE EDUCATION -- FREE OF GOVERNMENTAL CONSTRAINTS --

ENJOYS BOUNDLESS FREEDOM TO EXPERIMENT IN VITAL AREAS THAT

MAY FALL OUTSIDE GENERAL PUBLIC SUPPORT.

LET US ENCOURAGE HUMAN GROWTH WHICH CAN TRANSCEND FROM
DESPAIR TO DYNAMISM -- FROM CONFUSION TO CLARITY --
AND FROM HOPELESSNESS TO HOPE UNLIMITED.

AMERICA IS GOING THROUGH AN UNPRECEDENTED PERIOD
OF TECHNOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE AND DISLOCATION.

WE HAVE BEEN JOLTED BY SHOCK AFTER SHOCK. BUT THIS NATION
IS NOT DISINTEGRATING. IT IS GOING THROUGH A PERIOD
OF TRANSITION.

IT IS EXPERIENCING THE GROWING PAINS OF A MIGHTY NATION
OF OVER 214 MILLION WITH THE WORLD'S GREATEST RECORD OF
ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SHORT TIME SPAN OF TWO CENTURIES.

WE WILL TRANSCEND THIS PERIOD OF TRIAL. I BELIEVE IN AMERICA
AND AM CONVINCED BY ALL THAT IS RIGHT ABOUT AMERICA.

I AM PROUD TO REPRESENT AN ADMINISTRATION

THAT HAS CREATED A NEW CLIMATE OF PEACE ABROAD

WHILE STRIVING FOR SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX PROBLEMS AT HOME.

IN THE FINEST AMERICAN TRADITION, WE HAVE SERVED

AS PEACEMAKER IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE CONGRESS WILL TAKE QUICK ACTION
TO RATIFY NEW AGREEMENTS INVOLVING EGYPT AND ISRAEL.

ALL AMERICANS CAN TAKE UNIFYING PRIDE IN OUR INITIATIVE
IN MAKING PEACE, NOT WAR.

I HAVE THE DEEPEST CONFIDENCE IN AMERICA'S FUTURE

AND OUR EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES.

THE SCHOOLS OF THIS NATION -- PRIVATE AS WELL

AS PUBLIC -- CAN HELP INSPIRE THE LIVES OF AMERICANS

WITH NEW MEANING AND NEW QUALITY. BOTH PRIVATE AND

PUBLIC EDUCATORS MUST COMBINE THEIR GENIUS IN PREPARING

MEN AND WOMEN FOR OUR THIRD CENTURY.

I URGE YOU, IN THE WORDS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON,
TO "ENLIGHTEN THE PEOPLE GENERALLY, AND TYRANNY AND OPPRESSIONS
OF BODY AND MIND WILL VANISH LIKE EVIL SPIRITS AT THE DAWN
OF DAY."

I THANK YOU.

END OF TEXT

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 11, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: PAUL A. THEIS *JUST*
SUBJECT: GOP Women and SMU Speeches

Attached are revised drafts of speeches for use at the Republican Women's Federation meeting and at Southern Methodist University.

Since you have already seen drafts of the other speeches and remarks for use on the trip, texts of them were delivered this evening to Terry's office to take along tomorrow. The speechwriter assigned to the trip is Pat Butler.

Attachments