

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE**  
UNTIL 10:05 A.M. EDT

**AUGUST 29, 1974**

Office of the White House Press Secretary

-----

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD  
COMMENCEMENT OF OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
FRIDAY, AUGUST 30, 1974  
COLUMBUS, OHIO

So much has happened in these few months since you were kind enough to ask me to speak here today. I was then America's first Instant Vice-President -- and now, America's first Instant President. The United States Marine Corps Band is so confused, they don't know whether to play HAIL TO THE CHIEF or YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY!

It's a great honor to be here at Ohio State University today -- sometimes known as the Land of the Free and the Home of Woody Hayes! Woody Hayes is so popular here in Ohio, it's unbelievable. We just had our picture taken together and when that picture appears in today's DISPATCH, I'm pretty sure what the caption will say: WOODY HAYES -- AND FRIEND.

As many of you know, I've always had a great interest in football. I played center for the University of Michigan and I still remember my senior year back in 1934. The Wolverines played Ohio State and we lost 34 to zero. And to make it even worse, that year we lost seven out of our eight games. But what really hurt was when they voted me, Their Most Valuable Player! ... I didn't know whether to smile or sue!

But I want you to know that I have a great feeling of kinship with this graduating class. I understand that you all have taken your final examinations this week. As your new President, I feel as if I'm just beginning mine.

Instead of dwelling on how my team lost here in 1934, I would prefer to advance the clock to 1974 and talk about winning against the odds that confront today's graduates and all America.

The first of these problems is summed up by the editor of your campus paper. She reports that one dominant question on the minds of this year's graduates is: How can I get a job that makes sense as well as money?

Your professors tell you that education unlocks creative genius and imagination and that you must develop your human potential. And students have accepted this. But then Catch 22 enters the picture. You spend four years in school, graduate, go into the job market and are told the rules have changed. There is no longer a demand for your specialty -- another educational discipline is now required. And so one or two more years of study follows and you return again to the job market. Yes, what you now offer is saleable except that competition is severe. To succeed, you must acquire further credentials. So you go back to the university and ultimately emerge with a Masters or even a Ph.D. And you know what happens next? You go out to look for a job -- and now they say you're over-qualified!

In one form or another, this is a Three Shell Game society has been playing with our greatest natural energy source -- you! This has got to stop.

Although this Administration will not make promises it cannot keep, I do want to pledge one thing to you here and now: I will do everything in my power to bring education and employers together in a new climate of credibility -- an atmosphere in which universities turn scholars out and employers turn them on.

MORE

Ever since President Abraham Lincoln initiated the concept of Land Grant colleges, set up to bring educators closer to the people and students closer to the land, the Federal government has been interested in the practical application of education.

Take the example of Project Independence. Frankly, I am not satisfied with the progress we are making toward energy independence by 1980. This is a problem that I can appropriately discuss at a Labor Day weekend commencement. It concerns both the academic community and the great labor organizations.

I am not speaking of gasoline for a Labor Day trip to the lake or seashore. I am speaking of fuel and raw materials for our factories which are threatened by shortages and high costs. Skills and intellect must harmonize so that the wheels of industry not only hum but sing.

I propose a great new partnership of labor and academia. Why can't the universities of America open their doors to working men and women, not only as students but also as teachers. Practical problem solvers can contribute much to education, whether or not they hold degrees. The fact of the matter is that education is being strangled -- by degrees.

I want to see labor open its ranks to the researchers and problem-solvers of academia whose research can give better tools and methods to the workman. I want to see a two-way street speeding the traffic of scientific development, speeding the creation of new jobs, speeding the day of self-sufficiency in energy, and speeding an era of increased production for America and the world.

What good is training if it is not applied to jobs? What good are factories if they are shut down? What good is business and industry without those who solve their problems, perform their jobs, and spend their paychecks?

Next year, I will ask Congress to extend two laws which are expiring. One provides for higher education, the other for vocational education. Both are essential because we need new jobs and new skills.

Your government will help you by creating a vocational environment responsive to your needs. But the Government cannot achieve personal fulfillment for you. You are the essential ingredient. Your determination will make the difference.

For you, the time has come to test the theories of the academic world in the laboratory of life. As President, I invite students and graduates and faculties to contribute their energies and genius in the solution of the massive problems facing America. I invite your ideas and your initiatives in combating inflation, in providing realistic education, in making sure our free enterprise system continues to offer freedom as well as enterprise.

Show us how to increase productivity. Show us how to combine new lifestyles with the old responsibilities. Show us how universities can work with industry and labor unions to devise a whole new community of learning across America. Show us how work-study programs can be a part of the ongoing educational process. Show us how new skills can improve technology while humanizing its use.

(MORE)

A French statesman once observed that war is much too important to be left to Generals. Our Nation's future is too important to be left only to Presidents or other officials of Government. I like the phrase of Theodore Roosevelt: "The Government is us; we are the Government, you and I." Your vote and your voice are as essential as mine if each American is to take individual responsibility for our collective future.

As you move into that job that makes sense and money to you -- and you will find it -- you move from a position of strength. With the war over and the draft ended, your duty now to your country is to enlist in the campaigns being waged against our urgent domestic threats -- especially inflation which is Public Enemy No. 1.

Abroad, we are seeking new peaceful relationships, not only with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China but with all peoples. There will be continuity in our foreign policy and continued realism in our self-defense.

At home, the Government must help people in doing things they cannot achieve as individuals. Accordingly, I have asked the Secretaries of Labor and of Health, Education and Welfare to report to me new ways to bring the world of work and the institutions of education closer together. For your Government as well as for you, the time has come for a fusion of the realities of work-a-day life with the teachings of academic institutions.

As a starter, the Department of Labor will shortly announce a new program to improve occupational information for graduates and others in making career choices. There will be grants for State and local initiatives -- to provide data on occupations available and to help channel potential employees into positions which are not only personally satisfying but financially rewarding.

The States have always assumed the primary responsibility for public education. That tradition is sound. But there is now too much confusion about which level of Government is to play which role in support of post-secondary education. I am directing the responsible agencies of Government to make a new evaluation of where we are, where we want to go, and where we can reasonably expect to be five years from now. Discussions will be held with Governors, State legislators, academic leaders, Federal officials, and the consumers of education.

Our goal of quality education is on a collision course with the escalating demands for the public dollar. Everyone must have a clearer understanding and agreement on who is responsible for specific aspects of the direction and financing of college education.

The Federal Government sometimes tries to do too much and achieves too little. There are approximately 380 separate Federal educational programs beyond the high school level, some duplicating others, administered by some 50 separate Executive agencies and offices. The result is a bureaucracy that often provides garbled guidelines instead of taut lifelines to good and available jobs.

Let us look for a moment beyond this campus and beyond Washington.

In 1972, I visited the People's Republic of China. With four times the population of the United States, growing at the rate of two New York cities a year, that vast nation is making significant technological progress. Chinese productivity is gaining momentum, and the majority of Chinese are young people, highly motivated and disciplined.

As fellow human beings, we celebrate the rising capacities of the Chinese nation, a people with a firm belief in their own destiny.

As Americans motivated by free competition, we see a challenge. And we accept it.

We must compete internationally not only to maintain the balance of trade and our own standard of living but to offer to the world's impoverished examples and opportunities for better life.

Let this peaceful competition animate the last quarter of the twentieth century. America's youth will make the difference. You are our greatest untapped source of energy. But energy unused is energy wasted.

We must make extraordinary efforts to apply our know-how, our capital, our technology, and our human resources to increase productivity at a faster pace. Inflation is creating a national state of anxiety. Productivity must improve if we are to have a less inflationary economy. In the long run, it is the only way we can raise wages without inflationary price increases. It is essential in creating new jobs and increasing real wages. In a growing economy, everyone -- labor, management and the consumer -- wins when productivity expands.

At this very moment of our history, we have the knowledge and the material resources to do almost anything we can imagine. We can explore the depths of the oceans. We can put a man on the moon. We can reach for the stars.

But great problems confront us. To face these problems we need even more than new technologies and programs. We need a belief in ourselves. We need the will to take action.

Let us take a new look at ourselves as Americans. Let us draw from every resource available. Let us seek a real partnership between the academic community and society. Let us aspire to excellence in every aspect of our national life.

May I close with a word between friends? Sometimes feelings can get lost in words. I don't want that to happen here today. And so I want to share with you something I deeply feel: The world is not a lonely place. There is light and life and love enough for us all. I ask you and all Americans to reach out and join hands with me --- and together we will seek it out.

#

#

#