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COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES, WEST CHESTER STATE
COLLEGE, WEST CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA,
MAY 23, 1971.

Dr Rosney

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

WHEN I WAS INVITED TO SPEAK AT THESE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES, I THOUGHT BACK TO MY OWN GRADUATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN¹ *subsequently at Yale Law School* AND TRIED TO REMEMBER WHAT THE SPEAKER^s THERE SAID. TO MY DISMAY, I FOUND THAT I COULD NOT RECALL A SINGLE WORD.

EITHER MY GRADUATION SPEAKER SAID NOTHING SIGNIFICANT OR I DIDN'T PAY THE SLIGHTEST BIT OF ATTENTION TO HIM. THAT, UNFORTUNATELY, IS THE FATE OF MANY COMMENCEMENT SPEAKERS.

WHAT ARE YOU^{as} GRADUATES THINKING ABOUT AT THIS MOMENT? I WOULD ^{*speculate*} ~~GUESS~~ THAT



MOST OF THE YOUNG WOMEN ARE DREAMING ABOUT MARRIAGE, NO MATTER HOW HARD THEY'VE TRAINED FOR A CAREER. AND MOST OF THE MEN PROBABLY ARE THINKING HOW TOUGH IT'S GOING TO BE TO FIND A JOB, NOW THAT THEY'RE CLOSING THE BOOKS.

YOU'VE NO DOUBT HEARD ABOUT THE YOUNG MAN WHO HAD JUST RECEIVED HIS COLLEGE DEGREE AND HE RUSHED OUT SAYING, "HERE I AM, WORLD, I HAVE AN AB." AND THE WORLD REPLIED: "SIT DOWN, SON, AND I'LL TEACH YOU THE REST OF THE ALPHABET."

WHEN I LOOK AT THE YOUNG LADIES IN THIS AUDIENCE, I AM REMINDED OF AN OLD / COUNTRY NEWSPAPER EDITOR WHO GAVE THE NEW BRIDES IN HIS AREA THE SAME ADVICE EVERY MAY OR JUNE. "JUST REMEMBER," HE WOULD SAY, "KISSIN' DON'T LAST, BUT GOOD COOKIN' DO."

AND WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT OF MARRIAGE, LET ME JUST MAKE THIS ONE COMMENT. ANY MAN WHO THINKS HE'S MORE INTELLIGENT THAN HIS WIFE IS MARRIED TO A SMART WOMAN.

AS FOR COLLEGE, /WHAT IS COLLEGE FOR A YOUNG MAN BUT AN INTERLUDE BETWEEN TWO WOMEN -- HIS MOTHER AND A WIFE?

SERIOUSLY, WHEN I SPOKE EARLIER ABOUT GOING OUT INTO THE WORLD WITH YOUR AB AND LEARNING THE ALPHABET I MEANT EVERY WORD OF IT.

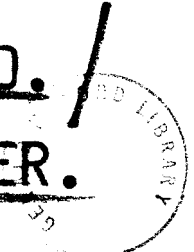
WEST CHESTER COLLEGE IS A FINE SCHOOL, AND YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE BEST OF TRAINING ~~HERE~~. BUT YOU WILL FIND THAT MUCH OF WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED HERE YOU WILL NOT OFTEN USE. INSTEAD YOU WILL FIND THAT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN AN EXCELLENT FOUNDATION FOR LIVING -- A BACKGROUND

WHICH WILL ENABLE YOU TO ADAPT TO THE ^{many of} VARIOUS SITUATIONS YOU ENCOUNTER IN THE CAREER WORLD.

MY GUESS IS THAT YOU HAVE LEARNED TO THINK ~~HERE~~ AT WEST CHESTER, AND THAT IS THE GREAT ESSENTIAL ^{, the fundamental,} IN A COLLEGE EDUCATION. FOR IF A COLLEGE DOESN'T TEACH A YOUNG PERSON TO THINK HIS OR HER OWN THOUGHTS AND TO SPEAK HIS OR HER OWN MIND, IT DOESN'T TEACH ANYTHING OF PRIME IMPORTANCE.

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT IS THAT YOU COME OUT OF COLLEGE WITH AN OPINION OF THE WAY THE WORLD IS GOING, AND THE NERVE TO STICK WITH THAT OPINION IN THE FACE OF SHARP -- EVEN VIOLENT -- OPPOSITION.

THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES WHEN A COLLEGE GRADUATE ENTERED A SMALL, ORDERLY WORLD. THOSE TIMES, OF COURSE, ARE GONE FOREVER.



INSTEAD YOU ARE ENTERING A
WORLD IN WHICH DEMOCRACY AND ITS
INSTITUTIONS ARE CONSTANTLY UNDER ATTACK,
BOTH FROM WITHIN THIS COUNTRY AND WITHOUT.

*at home
a small part*
A ~~WORLD~~ OF ROCK THROWERS AND WINDOW
SMASHERS AND RADICALS BENT ON SHUTTING THE
GOVERNMENT DOWN. A WORLD OF
AUTHORITARIAN AGGRESSORS WHO ARE NOT
CONTENT MERELY TO RULE TYRANNICALLY OVER
THE PEOPLES THEY HAVE SUBJUGATED BUT SEEK
TO EXTEND THEIR SWAY. IN SHORT, A WORLD
OF DESTROYERS.

- MOST DANGEROUS OF ALL IS THAT
IN THIS COUNTRY WE HAVE ENTERED UPON WHAT
I CALL THE AGE OF UNTHINK.

IN THIS AGE OF UNTHINK SOME
AMERICANS HAVE ABANDONED REASON AND THE
USE OF THE INTELLECT. THEY HAVE BEEN SWEEP
UP IN A FLOOD OF EMOTION WHICH HAS LEFT

THEM AWASH IN A SEA OF IRRESPONSIBLE
ACTIONS AND IDEAS.

SOME AMERICANS HAVE EMBRACED THE IDEA THAT THE WAY TO IMPROVE SOCIETY IS TO DESTROY ITS EXISTING INSTITUTIONS, INSTITUTIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN BUILT UP OVER A PERIOD OF 200 YEARS BY OTHER AMERICANS EQUALLY INTENT UPON IMPROVING THE HUMAN CONDITION.

SOME AMERICANS WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE THAT VIOLENCE AND COERCION ARE PERFECTLY JUSTIFIABLE IF THE OBJECTIVE IS TO RESTRUCTURE OUR COLLEGES AND OTHER SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS OR TO END THE VIETNAM WAR. THEY PREACH THE IMMORAL GOSPEL THAT THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS.

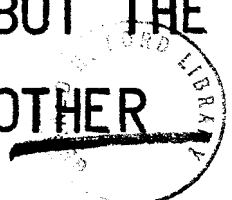
SOME AMERICANS INSIST THAT THE RIGHT OF DISSENT MEANS THE RIGHT TO SHOUT DOWN OTHERS OR TO FRIGHTEN THEM INTO KEEPING QUIET.

SOME AMERICANS CONTEND THAT THE WAY TO ENGAGE IN THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS IS TO DESTROY THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM AND ADOPT A SYSTEM OF STATE SOCIALISM.

SOME AMERICANS HAVE ADOPTED THE VIEW THAT SEXUAL MORALITY, FAMILY INTEGRITY AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR RAISING CHILDREN ARE OBSOLETE VESTIGES OF A REPRESSIVE SOCIETY AND NO LONGER RELEVANT TO LIFE IN THIS COUNTRY.

ALL CLASSES AND CONDITIONS OF MEN
ARE ALLERGIC TO THINKING. BUT THIS ALLERGY
IS MOST TRAGIC WHEN IT AFFLICTS THE YOUNG
PEOPLE OF A NATION AND THE FORMALLY
EDUCATED.

YOU AT WEST CHESTER HAVE RECEIVED A FINE EDUCATION. I HOPE YOUR SPECIALTIES WILL EARN YOU A LIVING. BUT THE KIND OF LIFE YOU LEAD WILL DEPEND ON OTHER



QUALITIES AND ON YOUR ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO THINK. IT WILL DEPEND UPON YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF AND COMMITMENT TO THE ABIDING PRINCIPLES THAT MAKE MEN AND NATIONS STRONG AND ON YOUR DEVOTION TO THE RULE OF LAW WITHOUT WHICH LIFE IS REDUCED TO SAVAGERY.

I LOOK AT WEST CHESTER STATE COLLEGE AND I SEE THE ANSWER TO THE IRRESPONSIBLE ANTICS OF THOSE STUDENTS WHO HOLD COLLEGE DEANS HOSTAGE IN THEIR OFFICES AND OCCUPY CAMPUS BUILDINGS TO ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVES. WEST CHESTER STATE COLLEGE IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF A SENSIBLE RESPONSE ^{by the responsible authorities} TO THE PRESSURES FOR CHANGE, THE ROUTE OF EVOLUTION AND NOT REVOLUTION. I VALUE YOUR KIND OF YOUNG PEOPLE HIGHLY, FOR YOU PURSUE THE GOALS OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY JUST AS AVIDLY AS THE

RADICALS BUT WITH RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS
OF OTHERS.

THESE OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE ARE
WILLING TO SACRIFICE PRINCIPLE IN RETURN
FOR POWER. IN THEIR IMPATIENCE TO RIGHT
WHAT THEY CONSIDER TO BE SOCIETY'S WRONGS,
THEY THEMSELVES VIOLATE THE CONCEPTS OF
FREEDOM AND JUSTICE. THEY ARE THEMSELVES
VICTIMS AND MUCH TO BE PITIED -- VICTIMS IN
THE AGE OF UNTHINK.

THERE ARE ANSWERS -- SOUND,
REASONED ANSWERS -- TO THE PLEAS OF THE
COERCERS THAT THEY ARE SIMPLY ENGAGING IN
DISSENT OR CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN RESPONSE
TO A CALL OF CONSCIENCE.

WHEN THE MAY DAY TRIBE SOUGHT TO
SHUT THE GOVERNMENT DOWN IN WASHINGTON JUST
A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO, THIS WAS NOT
DISSENT. IT WAS A DENIAL OF THE RIGHTS OF



OTHERS -- THEIR RIGHT TO GET TO THEIR PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT. UNLIKE THE APRIL 24 PEACE MARCH, THE ^{Subsequent} MAY DAY ACTIVITIES WERE NOT A LAWFUL USE OF MASS PROTEST/BUT THE UNLAWFUL USE OF MOB POWER. THIS WAS MOB ACTION, AN ATTEMPT AT MOB RULE. THIS WAS THE ARBITRARINESS OF ANARCHY.

THE MASS ARRESTS EMPLOYED TO DEAL WITH THE MAY DAY DISTURBANCES HAVE BEEN CRITICIZED BY CIVIL LIBERTARIANS. BUT THIS ACTION WAS INVITED BY THE DISTURBERS -- I WILL NOT CALL THEM DEMONSTRATORS -- AND IT WAS THE MOST SUITABLE WEAPON THAT COULD BE EMPLOYED TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF GOVERNMENT WORKERS.

TO PERMIT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE OF THE MAY DAY KIND TO PROCEED UNHINDERED IS TO INVITE ANARCHY IN THIS COUNTRY. AND ANARCHY CAUSES A SHARP REACTION ON THE PART



OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC, A DEMAND FOR REPRESSION.

LIBERTY IS A PRECIOUS RIGHT IN AMERICA, BUT LICENSE LEADS TO THE LOSS OF LIBERTY.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE DOES NOT ENHANCE DEMOCRACY, IT UNDERMINES IT. IT IS THE ANTITHESIS OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS.

WHENEVER THE CITIZENS IN A DEMOCRACY ENGAGE IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS, THEY MAKE A PROFESSION OF FAITH. WHEN SOME OF OUR CITIZENS ENGAGE IN CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, THEY MAKE A CONFESSION OF FAILURE BECAUSE THEY ARE REJECTING DEMOCRACY AND OPTING FOR COERCION AND AUTHORITARIANISM.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IS A DESTROYER OF DEMOCRACY. IT IS AN ATTACK ON OUR DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY AND ON

CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT. CIVIL
DISOBEDIENCE OFTEN, ^{almost inevitably} GENERATES VIOLENCE.
AND HISTORY TELLS US THAT DEMOCRACIES
WILL FALL IF VIOLENCE REPLACES DEMOCRATIC
PROCEDURES.

THE RIGHT TO DISSENT IS ONE OF
OUR MOST PRECIOUS FREEDOMS. BUT FREEDOM
TO DISSENT CANNOT SURVIVE IN ANY CONTEXT --
ACADEMIC OR OTHERWISE -- IF A REASONABLE
MAJORITY COMES UNDER THE TYRANNY OF AN
UNREASONABLE MINORITY.

NO ADEQUATE SUBSTITUTE HAS YET
BEEN FOUND FOR THE RULE OF THE MAJORITY.

THE GREAT WINSTON CHURCHILL ONCE
SAID: "MANY FORMS OF GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN
TRIED, AND WILL BE TRIED IN THIS WORLD OF
SIN AND WOE. NO ONE PRETENDS THAT
DEMOCRACY IS PERFECT OR ALL WISE. INDEED

IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT DEMOCRACY IS THE WORST FORM OF GOVERNMENT EXCEPT ALL THOSE OTHER FORMS THAT HAVE BEEN TRIED FROM TIME TO TIME."

YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY ARE IDEALISTS, I KNOW. BUT I WOULD HOPE THAT THEIR IDEALISM WOULD NEVER BE SO STRONG THAT IT WOULD DESTROY THEIR HUMANITY AND THEIR ABILITY TO REASON. IT IS THIS WHICH HAS PRODUCED THE AGE OF UNTHINK.

WHAT HAS THE AGE OF UNTHINK PRODUCED?

figuratively a handful

IT HAS PRODUCED INDIVIDUALS WHO SHOUT MEANINGLESS PHRASES BORROWED FROM MARXIST-LENINIST AND MAOIST WRITINGS, WHO DEMAND AN END TO THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM AND ATTACK OUR DEFENSE EFFORTS.

WHEN I GET UP EACH MORNING I MARVEL AT THE MIRACLE THAT IS THE AMERICAN



FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM. AS I SHOWER, EAT A NOURISHING BREAKFAST, TRAVEL TO WORK IN MY CAR, I THINK OF THE ABUNDANCE THAT THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM HAS PRODUCED. IT HAS WEAKNESSES, OF COURSE, BUT AMERICANS BY AND LARGE ARE THE BENEFICIARIES OF A REMARKABLE ECONOMIC MACHINE -- A MACHINE WHICH IS A MIRACLE OF COORDINATION, OF PLANNING, OF DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCES, OF CAPITAL INVESTMENT, AND OF MANAGERIAL KNOWHOW. IT IS A MACHINE WHICH GIVES AMERICANS, ON A REGULAR AND ROUTINE BASIS, WHAT MOST OF THE WORLD WOULD BE ONLY TOO HAPPY TO HAVE JUST ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS.

THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM HAS BEEN GOOD FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. IT HAS BESTOWED COUNTLESS BLESSINGS UPON THEM. IT IS TRUE THAT THESE BLESSINGS ARE NOT EQUALLY DISTRIBUTED, BUT AS SOMEONE ONCE SAID: "CAPITALISM IS THE UNEQUAL

DISTRIBUTION OF BLESSINGS, SOCIALISM IS
THE EQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF MISERY."

THE UNTHINKERS ARE EQUALLY
VOCIFEROUS IN THEIR ATTACKS ON THE MILITARY.
THEY WOULD SHUT DOWN THE RESERVE OFFICER
TRAINING CORPS PROGRAM IN OUR COLLEGES AND
UNIVERSITIES -- A DENIAL OF THE RIGHTS
OF THOSE STUDENTS WHO WISH TO PURSUE SUCH
A PROGRAM. AND THEY SEEK TO CLOSE DOWN
ALL DEFENSE-ORIENTED RESEARCH PROGRAMS AT
COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, THUS DENYING TO
THE NATION THE NATIONAL SECURITY BENEFITS
THAT WOULD FLOW FROM SUCH VITAL RESEARCH.

THE BEST ANSWER TO ATTACKS ON THE
MILITARY IS CONTAINED IN ONE OF THE MOST
MEANINGFUL SPEECHES EVER GIVEN BY AN
AMERICAN PRESIDENT, THE FAREWELL RADIO AND
TELEVISION ADDRESS TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
DELIVERED JANUARY 17, 1961 BY

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER.

THIS, MIND YOU, WAS THE SPEECH IN WHICH PRESIDENT EISENHOWER UTTERED HIS FAMOUS WARNING AGAINST THE DANGER OF "UNWARRANTED INFLUENCE" BY THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX.

BUT IN THIS SAME SPEECH, IKE ALSO SAID -- AND THE NATION SHOULD FOREVER MARK THESE WORDS: "UNTIL THE LATEST OF OUR WORLD CONFLICTS, THE UNITED STATES HAD NO ARMAMENTS INDUSTRY. AMERICAN MAKERS OF PLOWSHARES COULD, WITH TIME AND AS REQUIRED, MAKE SWORDS AS WELL. BUT NOW WE CAN NO LONGER RISK EMERGENCY IMPROVISATION OF NATIONAL DEFENSE, WE HAVE BEEN COMPELLED TO CREATE A PERMANENT ARMAMENTS INDUSTRY OF VAST PROPORTIONS."

A LITTLE EARLIER IN THIS MOMENTOUS ADDRESS, IKE SAID: "A VITAL



ELEMENT IN KEEPING THE PEACE IS OUR
MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. OUR ARMS MUST BE
MIGHTY, READY FOR INSTANT ACTION, SO THAT
NO POTENTIAL AGGRESSOR MAY BE TEMPTED TO
RISK HIS OWN DESTRUCTION."

THE UNTHINKERS CHARGE THAT AMERICA IS ENGAGED IN CRIMINAL ACTIONS IN VIETNAM -- THAT THE VIETNAM CONFLICT IS AN IMMORAL WAR. I PERSONALLY BELIEVE IT WAS A MISTAKE TO GET INVOLVED IN A MASSIVE LAND WAR ON THE CONTINENT OF ASIA AND TO FIGHT THAT WAR ACCORDING TO THE ENEMY'S RULES. BUT AS TO OUR MOTIVATION, WE ALL KNOW THAT AMERICANS DID NOT GO OFF TO WAR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IN PURSUIT OF SPOILS OR TERRITORIAL AGGRANDIZEMENT. WE DID NOT GO TO CONQUER A FREE PEOPLE, TO FORCE OUR WILL ON ANOTHER NATION OR TO ANNEX REAL ESTATE. WE RESPONDED TO THE CALL

OF A FRIENDLY GOVERNMENT TO HELP THAT
GOVERNMENT THWART A COMMUNIST TAKEOVER.
WE WENT BECAUSE IT APPEARED TO SERVE OUR
NATIONAL INTEREST AND THAT OF ALL FREE MEN.

*according
to 5 P. 100
stat.*

IT IS RIDICULOUS FOR THE
UNTHINKERS TO CHARGE THE UNITED STATES
WITH BEING IMPERIALISTIC. LET THEM
PRODUCE JUST ONE CASE IN HISTORY WHERE
ANY OTHER NATION HAS SINGLY BORNE THE
BURDEN OF DEFENDING SO MANY FROM THE
IMPERIALISTIC DESIGNS OF OTHERS.

THE UNTHINKERS CHARGE THAT WE ARE
A MATERIALISTIC AND DECADENT SOCIETY. THE
TRUTH IS THAT WE ARE FOR THE MOST PART A
SPIRITUALLY-MOTIVATED PEOPLE WITH A DEEP
AND ABIDING FAITH IN GOD, ENGAGING IN A
CONTINUING EFFORT TO ELIMINATE POVERTY AND
REMOVE THE ILLS THAT AFFLICT SOME OF OUR
NUMBER.

YOUR GENERATION NEEDS THE
CLEAREST FORM OF REASON, THE MOST BRILLIANT
KIND OF THINKING TO MEET THE DESPERATELY
PRESSING PROBLEMS WHICH FACE IT: THE
CONTINUING THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR, THE SHAME
OF OUR GHETTOS, THE CONTAMINATION OF OUR
ENVIRONMENT, THE RUIN OF OUR NATURAL
RESOURCES, AND THE POISON OF RACIAL
HATRED.

SOLUTIONS MUST BE FOUND TO ALL
THESE PROBLEMS. THEY WILL NOT BE FOUND
BY THE ADVOCATES OF UNTHINK. THE TIMES
AHEAD DEMAND ALL THE LEADERSHIP, ALL OF
THE INNOVATION, ALL OF THE IMAGINATION AND
ALL OF THE DEVOTION TO PRINCIPLE OF WHICH
YOU ARE CAPABLE.

IF YOU TRULY BELIEVE IN OUR
DEMOCRATIC FORM OF GOVERNMENT, THEN YOU
MUST PROVE YOURSELVES WORTHY OF IT.



IF YOU TRULY BELIEVE IN FREEDOM,
YOU MUST BE WILLING TO DEFEND IT.

THOSE OF US IN GOVERNMENT KNOW
THAT GOVERNMENT IS NOT AN END IN ITSELF
BUT ONLY THE MEANS TO AN END. THAT END IS
THE HAPPINESS AND FULFILLMENT OF THE
AMERICAN PEOPLE.

TO ACHIEVE THAT END WE LOOK FOR
HELP ^{from} YOU -- THE THINKING PEOPLE, THE
PEOPLE WITH EDUCATION, SKILL AND
KNOWLEDGE -- PEOPLE WHO KNOW HOW TO MAKE
WHAT'S CALLED THE ESTABLISHMENT WORK FOR
ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF OUR GREAT NATION.

YOUNG PEOPLE WANT SOMETHING TO
BELIEVE IN. BELIEVE IN AMERICA. IT IS
WORTHY OF YOUR FAITH.

TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA. FIGHT THE
GROWING TENDENCY IN THIS COUNTRY TO ACCEPT
THE POSITION OF SECOND-BEST, THE PREACHMENTS

OF THE CYNICS WHO BRAND AS A JINGOLIST ANY LEADER WHO URGES THAT AMERICA NOT TAKE A BACK SEAT TO ANY OTHER NATION.

THIS NATION'S POLICIES ARE DETERMINED NOT ONLY BY THE INSPIRATION OF ITS LEADERS BUT BY THE CHARACTER OF ITS PEOPLE.

LET US AS A PEOPLE NEVER LOSE THE VISION WHICH HAS MADE US A NATION DEDICATED TO JUSTICE AND EQUALITY.

WE STAND FOR SOMETHING UNIQUE IN THE WORLD: A NATION AS STRONG AS IT IS FREE, AS PRODUCTIVE AS IT IS PROGRESSIVE, AS BRAVE AS IT IS SELFLESS.

I BELIEVE WE WILL SOON MOVE OUT OF THE AGE OF UNTHINK, EMERGING FROM IT ON THE THRUST OF THE INTELLIGENCE, JUDGMENT, WISDOM AND ENERGY OF OUR CITIZENS.

LET US CONTINUE TO SEEK PEACE

AS WE SERVE, BY NECESSITY, AS THE SINGLE UNSELFISH BULWARK AGAINST COMMUNIST EXPANSIONISM ON MANY FRONTS.

LET US KEEP CONSTANTLY AWARE OF THE NEED FOR CHANGE, BUT LET US SEEK CHANGE BY BUILDING ON THE OLD REVOLUTION.

ABOVE ALL, LET US RETURN TO THE IMMUTABLE TRUTHS -- THE TRUTHS THAT ARE LAID DOWN IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS -- THE TRUTHS THAT GAVE RISE TO CODES OF ETHICS AMONG CIVILIZED PEOPLES -- THE TRUTHS THAT CAUSE MEN TO SPEAK OF INTEGRITY, HONOR, AND VIRTUE.

WE NEED A RETURN TO MORAL VALUES. THIS SHOULD BE OUR REVOLUTION. THIS SHOULD BE OUR ANSWER TO THE AGE OF UNTHINK.

I BELIEVE YOU AGREE, AS I DO, WITH PLUTARCH WHEN HE COUNSELED THAT "PERSEVERANCE IS MORE PREVAILING THAN"



VIOLENCE, AND MANY THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE
OVERCOME WHEN THEY ARE TAKEN TOGETHER,
YIELD THEMSELVES UP WHEN TAKEN LITTLE BY
LITTLE."

AND SO LET US, EACH ONE, USE
THE REASON THAT GOD GAVE US AND LIGHT A
CANDLE INSTEAD OF CURSING THE DARKNESS --
SO THAT TOGETHER WE WILL MAKE A GREAT
LIGHT WHICH SHALL ILLUMINE THE WORLD -- FOR
OURSELVES AND FOR ALL MEN.

--END--

*Distribution: Full
Hallway 5:00 p 5/21/71
Mail a 5/22/71* *M Office Copy*

AN ADDRESS BY REP. GERALD R. FORD, R-MICH.
REPUBLICAN LEADER, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AT COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES OF WEST CHESTER STATE COLLEGE
WEST CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA

MAY 23, 1971

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY

Ladies and gentlemen:

When I was invited to speak at these commencement exercises, I thought back to my own graduation at the University of Michigan and tried to remember what the speaker there said. To my dismay, I found that I could not recall a single word.

Either my graduation speaker said nothing significant or I didn't pay the slightest bit of attention to him. That, unfortunately, is the fate of many commencement speakers.

What are you graduates thinking about at this moment? I would guess that most of the young women are dreaming about marriage, no matter how hard they've trained for a career. And most of the men probably are thinking how tough it's going to be to find a job, now that they're closing the books.

You've no doubt heard about the young man who had just received his college degree and he rushed out saying, "Here I am, world; I have an AB." And the world replied: "Sit down, son, and I'll teach you the rest of the alphabet."

When I look at the young ladies in this audience, I am reminded of an old country newspaper editor who gave the new brides in his area the same advice every May or June. "Just remember," he would say. "Kissin' don't last, but good cookin' do."

And while we're on the subject of marriage, let me just make this one comment. Any man who thinks he's more intelligent than his wife is married to a smart woman.

As for college, what is college for a young man but an interlude between two women--his mother and a wife?

Seriously, when I spoke earlier about going out into the world with your AB and learning the alphabet I meant every word of it.

West Chester College is a fine school, and you have received the best of training here. But you will find that much of what you have learned here you will not often use. Instead you will find that you have been given an excellent foundation for living--a background which will enable you to adapt to the various situations you encounter in the career world.

(more)



My guess is that you have learned to think here at West Chester. And that is the great essential in a college education. For if a college doesn't teach a young person to think his or her own thoughts and to speak his or her own mind, it doesn't teach anything of prime importance.

What is most important is that you come out of college with an opinion of the way the world is going, and the nerve to stick with that opinion in the face of sharp--even violent--opposition.

There have been times when a college graduate entered a small, orderly world. Those times, of course, are gone forever.

Instead you are entering a world in which democracy and its institutions are constantly under attack, both from within this country and without. A world of rock throwers and window smashers and radicals bent on shutting the government down. A world of authoritarian aggressors who are not content merely to rule tyrannically over the peoples they have subjugated but seek to extend their sway. In short, a world of destroyers.

Most dangerous of all is that in this country we have entered upon what I call the Age of Unthink.

In this Age of Unthink some Americans have abandoned reason and the use of the intellect. They have been swept up in a flood of emotion which has left them awash in a sea of irresponsible actions and ideas.

Some Americans have embraced the idea that the way to improve society is to destroy its existing institutions, institutions which have been built up over a period of 200 years by other Americans equally intent upon improving the human condition.

Some Americans would have us believe that violence and coercion are perfectly justifiable if the objective is to restructure our colleges and other social institutions or to end the Vietnam War. They preach the immoral gospel that the end justifies the means.

Some Americans insist that the right of dissent means the right to shout down others or to frighten them into keeping quiet.

Some Americans contend that the way to engage in the pursuit of happiness is to destroy the free enterprise system and adopt a system of state socialism.

Some Americans have adopted the view that sexual morality, family integrity and responsibility for raising children are obsolete vestiges of a repressive society and no longer relevant to life in this country.

(more)

All classes and conditions of men are allergic to thinking. But this allergy is most tragic when it afflicts the young people of a nation and the formally eudcated.

You at West Chester have received a fine education. I hope your specialties will earn you a living. But the kind of life you lead will depend on other qualities and on your ability and willingness to think. It will depend upon your understanding of and commitment to the abiding principles that make men and nations strong and on your devotion to the rule of law without which life is reduced to savagery.

I look at West Chester State College and I see the answer to the irresponsible antics of those students who hold college deans hostage in their offices and occupy campus buildings to achieve their objectives. West Chester State College is a perfect example of a sensible response to the pressures for change, the route of evolution and not revolution. I value your kind of young people highly, for you pursue the goals of justice and equality just as avidly as the radicals but with respect for the rights of others.

These other young people are willing to sacrifice principle in return for power. In their impatience to right what they consider to be society's wrongs, they themselves violate the concepts of freedom and justice. They are themselves victims and much to be pitied--victims in the Age of Unthink.

There are answers--sound, reasoned answers--to the pleas of the coercers that they are simply engaging in dissent or civil disobedience in response to a call of conscience.

When the May Day Tribe sought to shut the government down in Washington just a couple of weeks ago, this was not dissent. It was a denial of the rights of others--their right to get to their places of employment. Unlike the April 24 Peace March, the May Day activities were not a lawful use of mass protest but the unlawful use of mob power. This was mob action, an attempt at mob rule. This was the arbitrariness of anarchy.

The mass arrests employed to deal with the May Day disturbances have been criticized by civil libertarians. But this action was invited by the disturbers--I will not call them demonstrators--and it was the most suitable weapon that could be employed to protect the rights of government workers.

To permit civil disobedience of the May Day kind to proceed unhindered is to invite anarchy in this country. And anarchy causes a sharp reaction on the part of the general public, a demand for repression. (more)

Liberty is a precious right in America, but license leads to the loss of liberty.

Civil disobedience does not enhance democracy; it undermines it. It is the antithesis of the democratic process.

Whenever the citizens in a democracy engage in the democratic process, they make a profession of faith. When some of our citizens engage in civil disobedience, they make a confession of failure because they are rejecting democracy and opting for coercion and authoritarianism.

Civil disobedience is a destroyer of democracy. It is an attack on our democratic society and on constitutional government. Civil disobedience often generates violence. And history tells us that democracies will fall if violence replaces democratic procedures.

The right to dissent is one of our most precious freedoms. But freedom to dissent cannot survive in any context--academic or otherwise--if a reasonable majority comes under the tyranny of an unreasonable minority.

No adequate substitute has yet been found for the rule of the majority.

The great Winston Churchill once said: "Many forms of government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all wise. Indeed it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time."

Young people today are idealists, I know. But I would hope that their idealism would never be so strong that it would destroy their humanity and their ability to reason. It is this which has produced the Age of Unthink.

What has the Age of Unthink produced?

It has produced individuals who shout meaningless phrases borrowed from Marxist-Leninist and Maoist writings, who demand an end to the free enterprise system and attack our defense efforts.

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This, mind you, was the speech in which President Eisenhower uttered his famous warning against the danger of "unwarranted influence" by the military-industrial complex.

But in this same speech, Ike also said--and the Nation should forever mark these words: "Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had no armaments industry. American makers of plowshares could, with time and as required, make swords as well. But now we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense; we have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions."

A little earlier in this momentous address, Ike said: "A vital element in keeping the peace is our military establishment. Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant action, so that no potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction."

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The unthinkers charge that we are a materialistic and decadent society. The truth is that we are for the most part a spiritually-motivated people with a deep and abiding faith in God, engaging in a continuing effort to eliminate poverty and remove the ills that afflict some of our number.

Your generation needs the clearest form of reason, the most brilliant kind of thinking to meet the desperately pressing problems which face it: the continuing threat of nuclear war, the shame of our ghettos, the contamination of our environment, the ruin of our natural resources, and the poison of racial hatred.

Solutions must be found to all these problems. They will not be found by the advocates of Unthink. The times ahead demand all the leadership, all of the innovation, all of the imagination and all of the devotion to principle of which you are capable.

If you truly believe in our democratic form of government, then you must prove yourselves worthy of it.

If you truly believe in freedom, you must be willing to defend it.

Those of us in government know that government is not an end in itself but only the means to an end. That end is the happiness and fulfillment of the American people.

To achieve that end we look for help to you--the thinking people, the people with education, skill and knowledge--people who know how to make what's called the Establishment work for all of the people of our great nation.

Young people want something to believe in. Believe in America. It is worthy of your faith.

Take pride in America. Fight the growing tendency in this country to accept the position of second-best, the preachments of the cynics who brand as a jingoist any leader who urges that America not take a back seat to any other nation.

This nation's policies are determined not only by the inspiration of its leaders but by the character of its people.

Let us as a people never lose the vision which has made us a nation dedicated to justice and equality.

We stand for something unique in the world: A nation as strong as it is

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free; as productive as it is progressive, as brave as it is selfless.

I believe we will soon move out of the Age of Unthink, emerging from it on the thrust of the intelligence, judgment, wisdom and energy of our citizens.

Let us continue to seek peace as we serve, by necessity, as the single unselfish bulwark against Communist expansionism on many fronts.

Let us keep constantly aware of the need for change, but let us seek change by building on the old revolution.

Above all, let us return to the immutable truths--the truths that are laid down in the Ten Commandments--the truths that gave rise to codes of ethics among civilized peoples--the truths that cause men to speak of integrity, honor, and virtue.

We need a return to moral values. This should be our revolution. This should be our answer to the Age of Unthink.

I believe you agree, as I do, with Plutarch when he counseled that "perseverance is more prevailing than violence; and many things which cannot be overcome when they are taken together, yield themselves up when taken little by little."

And so let us, each one, use the reason that God gave us and light a candle instead of cursing the darkness--so that together we will make a great light which shall illumine the world--for ourselves and for all men.

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Full Distribution

A Office Copy

AN ADDRESS BY REP. GERALD R. FORD, R-MICH.
REPUBLICAN LEADER, U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
AT COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES OF WEST CHESTER STATE COLLEGE
WEST CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA

MAY 23, 1971

FOR RELEASE ON DELIVERY

Ladies and gentlemen:

When I was invited to speak at these commencement exercises, I thought back to my own graduation at the University of Michigan and tried to remember what the speaker there said. To my dismay, I found that I could not recall a single word.

Either my graduation speaker said nothing significant or I didn't pay the slightest bit of attention to him. That, unfortunately, is the fate of many commencement speakers.

What are you graduates thinking about at this moment? I would guess that most of the young women are dreaming about marriage, no matter how hard they've trained for a career. And most of the men probably are thinking how tough it's going to be to find a job, now that they're closing the books.

You've no doubt heard about the young man who had just received his college degree and he rushed out saying, "Here I am, world; I have an AB." And the world replied: "Sit down, son, and I'll teach you the rest of the alphabet."

When I look at the young ladies in this audience, I am reminded of an old country newspaper editor who gave the new brides in his area the same advice every May or June. "Just remember," he would say. "Kissin' don't last, but good cookin' do."

And while we're on the subject of marriage, let me just make this one comment. Any man who thinks he's more intelligent than his wife is married to a smart woman.

As for college, what is college for a young man but an interlude between two women--his mother and a wife?

Seriously, when I spoke earlier about going out into the world with your AB and learning the alphabet I meant every word of it.

West Chester College is a fine school, and you have received the best of training here. But you will find that much of what you have learned here you will not often use. Instead you will find that you have been given an excellent foundation for living--a background which will enable you to adapt to the various situations you encounter in the career world.

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My guess is that you have learned to think here at West Chester. And that is the great essential in a college education. For if a college doesn't teach a young person to think his or her own thoughts and to speak his or her own mind, it doesn't teach anything of prime importance.

What is most important is that you come out of college with an opinion of the way the world is going, and the nerve to stick with that opinion in the face of sharp--even violent--opposition.

There have been times when a college graduate entered a small, orderly world. Those times, of course, are gone forever.

Instead you are entering a world in which democracy and its institutions are constantly under attack, both from within this country and without. A world of rock throwers and window smashers and radicals bent on shutting the government down. A world of authoritarian aggressors who are not content merely to rule tyrannically over the peoples they have subjugated but seek to extend their sway. In short, a world of destroyers.

Most dangerous of all is that in this country we have entered upon what I call the Age of Unthink.

In this Age of Unthink some Americans have abandoned reason and the use of the intellect. They have been swept up in a flood of emotion which has left them awash in a sea of irresponsible actions and ideas.

Some Americans have embraced the idea that the way to improve society is to destroy its existing institutions, institutions which have been built up over a period of 200 years by other Americans equally intent upon improving the human condition.

Some Americans would have us believe that violence and coercion are perfectly justifiable if the objective is to restructure our colleges and other social institutions or to end the Vietnam War. They preach the immoral gospel that the end justifies the means.

Some Americans insist that the right of dissent means the right to shout down others or to frighten them into keeping quiet.

Some Americans contend that the way to engage in the pursuit of happiness is to destroy the free enterprise system and adopt a system of state socialism.

Some Americans have adopted the view that sexual morality, family integrity and responsibility for raising children are obsolete vestiges of a repressive society and no longer relevant to life in this country.

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All classes and conditions of men are allergic to thinking. But this allergy is most tragic when it afflicts the young people of a nation and the formally eudcated.

You at West Chester have received a fine education. I hope your specialties will earn you a living. But the kind of life you lead will depend on other qualities and on your ability and willingness to think. It will depend upon your understanding of and commitment to the abiding principles that make men and nations strong and on your devotion to the rule of law without which life is reduced to savagery.

I look at West Chester State College and I see the answer to the irresponsible antics of those students who hold college deans hostage in their offices and occupy campus buildings to achieve their objectives. West Chester State College is a perfect example of a sensible response to the pressures for change, the route of evolution and not revolution. I value your kind of young people highly, for you pursue the goals of justice and equality just as avidly as the radicals but with respect for the rights of others.

These other young people are willing to sacrifice principle in return for power. In their impatience to right what they consider to be society's wrongs, they themselves violate the concepts of freedom and justice. They are themselves victims and much to be pitied--victims in the Age of Unthink.

There are answers--sound, reasoned answers--to the pleas of the coercers that they are simply engaging in dissent or civil disobedience in response to a call of conscience.

When the May Day Tribe sought to shut the government down in Washington just a couple of weeks ago, this was not dissent. It was a denial of the rights of others--their right to get to their places of employment. Unlike the April 24 Peace March, the May Day activities were not a lawful use of mass protest but the unlawful use of mob power. This was mob action, an attempt at mob rule. This was the arbitrariness of anarchy.

The mass arrests employed to deal with the May Day disturbances have been criticized by civil libertarians. But this action was invited by the disturbers--I will not call them demonstrators--and it was the most suitable weapon that could be employed to protect the rights of government workers.

To permit civil disobedience of the May Day kind to proceed unhindered is to invite anarchy in this country. And anarchy causes a sharp reaction on the part of the general public, a demand for repression. (more)

Liberty is a precious right in America, but license leads to the loss of liberty.

Civil disobedience does not enhance democracy; it undermines it. It is the antithesis of the democratic process.

Whenever the citizens in a democracy engage in the democratic process, they make a profession of faith. When some of our citizens engage in civil disobedience, they make a confession of failure because they are rejecting democracy and opting for coercion and authoritarianism.

Civil disobedience is a destroyer of democracy. It is an attack on our democratic society and on constitutional government. Civil disobedience often generates violence. And history tells us that democracies will fall if violence replaces democratic procedures.

The right to dissent is one of our most precious freedoms. But freedom to dissent cannot survive in any context--academic or otherwise--if a reasonable majority comes under the tyranny of an unreasonable minority.

No adequate substitute has yet been found for the rule of the majority.

The great Winston Churchill once said: "Many forms of government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all wise. Indeed it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time."

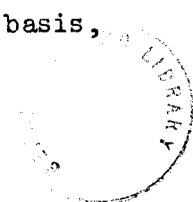
Young people today are idealists, I know. But I would hope that their idealism would never be so strong that it would destroy their humanity and their ability to reason. It is this which has produced the Age of Unthink.

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