

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
IOLA JR. COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT

IOLA, KANSAS
SUNDAY, MAY 13, 1979

COMMENCEMENT DAY. IT IS A DAY OF CONFLICT FOR MANY OF YOU, AN AFTERNOON OF ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS, OF GOODBYES AND UNCERTAINTY AND SNAPSHOTS AND PARENTAL PRIDE. THE STANDARD KIND OF COMMENCEMENT SPEECH WOULD REASSURE YOU THAT THE WORLD IS YOUR OYSTER.

IT WOULD BE DISHONEST, AS WELL AS UNIMAGINATIVE, FOR ME TO PROMISE YOU SUCH A RECEPTION OUT THERE, IN THE REAL WORLD. AN UNCERTAIN ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURAL UPS AND DOWNS MAKE PREDICTIONS UNCERTAIN AT BEST. WHAT YOU CAN RELY UPON IS THE QUALITY OF THE EDUCATION YOU HAVE RECEIVED HERE, BUTTRESSED BY THE FRIENDSHIPS AND INSIGHTS YOU HAVE GAINED INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM. IF COLLEGE PREPARES ONE FOR LIFE AS WELL AS EARNING A LIVING, YOU WILL LEAVE THIS PLACE WELL PREPARED.

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IN THE MONTHS TO COME, YOU WILL PONDER MANY THINGS, NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH IS SELF-SUPPORT. YOU WILL SEEK TO PUT INTO PRACTICE THE CONCEPTS YOU WERE TAUGHT ON THIS CAMPUS. YOU WILL ENTER INTO THE TIMELESS CYCLE OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY AND YOU WILL BECOME TEACHERS YOURSELVES. FOR YOU WILL TAKE WITH YOU MORE THAN HIGHLY DEVELOPED SKILLS OR TECHNOLOGICAL EXPERTISE. YOU WILL CARRY INTO THE WORLD BEYOND IOLA AN OUTLOOK ON LIFE ITSELF. YOU WILL PASS IT ON TO ALL YOU KNOW. YOU WILL INSTILL IT IN YOUR CHILDREN. YOU WILL ADHERE TO IT IN YOUR CAREERS.

WHAT IS THAT OUTLOOK IMPARTED BY YOUR EDUCATION? NO TWO GRADUATES WILL LOOK AT THE WORLD IN THE SAME WAY, BUT LET ME TRY AND DEFINE A VISION OF THE FUTURE THAT MIGHT APPEAL TO THE IDEALISM AND THE TALENT WITH WHICH THIS COLLEGE HAS SO RICHLY ENDOWED YOU.

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MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, RALPH WALDO EMERSON ADDRESSED A CLASS LIKE THIS, AND SET FORTH A VISION TO LIVE BY.

"DO THE DUTY OF THE DAY", HE URGED HIS LISTENERS. "JUST NOW, THE SUPREME DUTY OF ALL THINKING MEN IS TO ASSERT FREEDOM. GO WHERE IT IS THREATENED AND SAY, 'I AM FOR IT, AND DO NOT WISH TO LIVE IN THE WORLD A MOMENT LONGER THAN IT EXISTS."

THE WORLD HAS TURNED OVER MANY TIMES SINCE THAT DAY.

IN THE YEARS THAT HAVE PASSED SINCE THEN, EMERSON'S NATION HAS BECOME A FORMIDABLE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY POWER. WE HAVE ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROTECTION OF THE SUNLIT PORTION OF THE GLOBE THAT CALLS ITSELF FREE.

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BUT, AT HOME, WE HAVE CONFUSED FREEDOM WITH SECURITY. WE HAVE TRIED TO GUARANTEE THE GOOD LIFE, WITHOUT REALIZING THAT WE MAY HAVE BLUNTED INDIVIDUAL INCENTIVE. HERE, IN THE WIDE OPEN SPACES OF KANSAS, WE BELIEVE IN PRODUCING OUR OWN SOLUTION TO OUR OWN PROBLEMS. WE WANT NO GOVERNMENT TO PLACE US ON THE TREADMILL OF DEPENDENCY.

POISED MIDWAY BETWEEN COASTS, LODGED BETWEEN THE URBAN AMERICA AND THE OLD FRONTIER, YOU AND I ARE IN A UNIQUE POSITION TO LOOK OUT OVER THE LANDSCAPE AND ASK WHERE IS AMERICA GOING. WHAT IS WRONG, AND WHAT CAN WE DO TO RIGHT THE WRONGS?

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THE BRIEFEST EXAMINATION OF OUR HISTORY WILL REVEAL THAT OUR GREATEST CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE NOT COME THROUGH WEALTH OR THROUGH WEAPONS. OUR GREAT GIFT TO MANKIND HAS BEEN AN IDEA. WE BELIEVE IN HUMAN LIBERTY. WE ADVOCATE SELF-REALIZATION. BE ALL THAT YOU CAN, WE SAY TO THE WORLD. WE EDUCATE OUR YOUNG SO THAT THEY CAN DEVELOP THEIR GOD-GIVEN TALENTS, THAT THEY MIGHT LEAVE BEHIND A WORLD MADE A LITTLE MORE LIVABLE, A LITTLE MORE CARING, A LITTLE MORE PROGRESSIVE.

BUT THE LAST FEW DECADES HAVE SEEN AN INTRUSION INTO THE AMERICAN IDEA BY GOVERNMENT. IN THIS THIRD YEAR OF OUR THIRD CENTURY, WE FIND OURSELVES ENGAGED IN A GREAT DEBATE. WE ARGUE THE MERITS OF GOVERNMENT; WHETHER OUR STRENGTH IS BEING SAPPED BY ECONOMIC DEFICITS, BY FEDERAL PATERNALISM GROWN TOO ARROGANT, BY POLITICS GROWN TOO CORRUPT, BY TAXES GROWN TOO HIGH, BY MORAL STANDARDS TOO LOW. OVERWHELMED WITH AN AWARENESS OF AMERICAN POWER, WE SEEM UNAWARE OF AMERICAN PURPOSE.

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MANY OF US, AND PARTICULARLY THE YOUNG, WONDER WHERE WE GOT LOST IN THE LAST DECADE. IN WHAT STRANGE AND LURKING FOG OF CONFUSION DID WE LOSE OUR WAY? HOW DID WE REACH THE CONCLUSION, SHALLOW AND DANGEROUSLY MISLEADING, THAT GOVERNMENT COULD SOLVE PROBLEMS WE DID NOT WISH TO SOLVE OURSELVES? SINCE WHEN DID WE SHIRK A VISION OF FREEDOM FOR ALL MEN? HOW COULD WE THINK TO DENY OUR HERITAGE?

GOVERNMENT IS NOT GOING TO GO AWAY. MILLIONS OF AMERICANS RELY UPON IT FOR THEIR VERY SURVIVAL. IN AN ERA WHEN OUR ECONOMY DEFIES PERSONAL MANAGEMENT, WHEN AMERICA HAS GLOBAL COMMITMENTS TO FREEDOM, GOVERNMENT MUST BE LARGE ENOUGH TO BE EFFECTIVE.

BUT GOVERNMENT NEED NOT BE CORRUPT OR LAZY OR IMPERSONAL. THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR A GOVERNMENT THAT TAKES YOUR TAX DOLLAR AND WASTES IT ON MARGINAL OR COUNTERPRODUCTIVE SPENDING. THERE IS NO LOGIC TO A GOVERNMENT THAT PROCLAIMS ITSELF A FRIEND OF FREE ENTERPRISE, THEN REGULATES OUR ECONOMY TO THE DETRIMENT OF PRODUCTIVITY AND JOBS.

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GOVERNMENT MUST PURSUE ITS GOOD INTENTIONS. THE ELDERLY, THE POOR, THE HANDICAPPED--ALL THESE AND MORE DESERVE SOMETHING BETTER THAN MERE SYMPATHY. BUT GOVERNMENT GROWN FAT AND COMPLACENT CANNOT CARRY OUT GOOD INTENTIONS. GOVERNMENT RUN AMUCK CAUSES INFLATION. IT CAUSES ECONOMIC RECESSION. IT CAN DIRECTLY HARM THE LIVELIHOOD OF THE FARMER, THE FACTORY WORKER, THE SMALL BUSINESSMAN OR WOMAN.

WORST OF ALL, GOVERNMENT GROWN TOO BIG CAN WEAKEN THE VERY INCENTIVE WE HAVE TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS WE CONFRONT. IT CAN PUT US ON THE ROAD TO SUBSERVIENCE.

FOR ALL THE CYNICISM AND THE DISAPPOINTMENTS, THE GOVERNMENT WE PUT IN POWER IS STILL OUR OWN, A REFLECTION OF OUR AMBITIONS AND OUR WEAKNESSES. IN THIS COLLEGE, YOU HAVE BEEN TRAINED TO APPROACH PROBLEMS WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THE HUMAN MIND CAN SOLVE ALMOST ANY PROBLEM PUT BEFORE IT. YOU HAVE A HEALTHY RESPECT FOR INDIVIDUAL GENIUS, AND FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR WHICH RELIES UPON THAT GENIUS FOR ITS EFFECTIVENESS.

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DON'T LOSE THAT RESPECT. DON'T TURN OFF TO THE IDEA THAT AN ECONOMY BASED UPON INCENTIVE AND PROFIT IS ALSO THE MOST HUMANE ECONOMY THE WORLD HAS YET DEvised. DON'T EVER LOSE A SENSE OF OUTRAGE AGAINST INCOMPETENCE AND WASTE AND ALLOWANCE.

THIS IS AN EXCITING TIME TO BE YOUNG AND COMMITTED TO AN OPEN AND COMPETITIVE MARKETPLACE.

IT IS A TIME FOR FRESH BEGINNINGS, FOR GREAT DEEDS AS WELL AS SMALL ADVANCES. IT IS A TIME RIPE FOR RETURNING TO THE IDEAS THAT MADE US GREAT. AT HOME, WE ARE WITNESSING A TAXPAYER'S REVOLT, DETERMINED TO REDUCE THE SCOPE OF WASHINGTON'S INTERVENTION IN YOUR LIFE AND MINE.

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IT'S NOT JUST DEFICITS THAT ARE BAD, OR EVEN WASTE AND INEFFICIENCY. YOU WILL BE CALLED ON TO OVERCOME A SLOW, STEADY EROSION OF LIBERTY ITSELF. YOU, WHO BELIEVE IN THE FREEDOM TO PRODUCE, TO THINK FOR YOURSELVES, YOU WILL BE HANDED THE TORCH BY A GENERATION THAT HAS WRESTLED WITH BIG GOVERNMENT FOR FORTY YEARS, AND ONLY NOW HAS BEGUN TO QUESTION ITS EFFECTS UPON OUR DAILY LIVES.

YOU WILL BE CALLED UPON TO SUPPLY SOMETHING BETTER. YOU WILL BE ASKED TO DEMONSTRATE A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE THAT KNOWS NO LIMIT AND RESPECTS NO INHIBITIONS. YOU WILL BE ASKED TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP FOR TOMORROW'S AMERICA.

LEADERSHIP IS MORE THAN CHARISMA--FOR CHARISMA UNSUPPORTED BY CHARACTER IS DANGEROUS. IT IS MORE THAN POLITICAL SKILL--THE HISTORY BOOKS ARE FILLED WITH MEN WHO MANAGED TO HOLD ONTO POWER WHILE BARGAINING AWAY AUTHORITY. LEADERSHIP ABHORS TIMIDITY, BUT UNDERSTANDS SUBTLETY. IT MAKES THE MOST OF OUR RESOURCES, WITHOUT POLLUTING THE PHYSICAL OR SOCIAL LANDSCAPE. IT SPEAKS THE LANGUAGE OF THE PEOPLE, WITHOUT HESITATING TO EXTEND THEIR FIELD OF VISION.

MOST OF ALL, LEADERSHIP GIVES TO OUR ACTIONS A SENSE OF DIRECTION, AN IDENTITY AND A PLAN. WITH IT, WE CAN OVERCOME THE ORDEAL OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. WITHOUT IT, WE LIVE POISED AT THE BRINK, OUR VERY SURVIVAL PROBLEMATICAL.

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SALT AND A PEACEFUL WORLD

EARLIER THIS WEEK, THE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED AGREEMENT ON A NEW SALT TREATY. I CONGRATULATE HIM AND HIS NEGOTIATING TEAM. BUT I MUST ALSO RAISE QUESTIONS. WHY DID ANY OF US IN THE SENATE SUPPORT SALT I AND YET HARBOR SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT SALT II? SALT I WAS, BY AND LARGE, A BALANCED TREATY CONCERNING DEFENSIVE MEASURES. SALT II MAY NOT BE A BALANCED TREATY; BUT IN ANY CASE, IT DEALS EXCLUSIVELY WITH OFFENSIVE FORCES.

THIS IS CRITICAL SINCE IT IS THE OFFENSIVE MIGHT OF THE SOVIET UNION WHICH CONSTITUTES THE PRIMARY STRATEGIC THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES. SECOND, AND FAR MORE IMPORTANT, SALT I WAS CONCLUDED AT A TIME OF U.S. NUCLEAR STRATEGIC SUPERIORITY, AND WITH LITTLE PROSPECT OF OUR STRATEGIC PREMINENCE SOON DECLINING. SALT II IS BEING NEGOTIATED IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF, AT BEST TO OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS, STRATEGIC EQUIVALENCE AND WITH THE PROSPECTS OF THE STRATEGIC BALANCE IN THE 1980'S VERY OMINOUS.

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THE SOVIETS HAVE MADE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS ON MIRVING THEIR MISSILES, ON CIVIL DEFENSE, ON "KILLER SATELLITES" WHICH THREATEN OUR COMMUNICATIONS AND CONTROL SYSTEMS, AND ON IMPROVED ICBM ACCURACY--THE CRITICAL VARIABLE IN ICBM EFFECTIVENESS.

MEANWHILE, THE U.S. HAS UNILATERALLY CUT BACK ON OUR STRATEGIC FORCE. CANCELLATION OF THE B-1 WAS CRUCIAL IN THIS RESPECT GIVEN THE UNCERTAINTY SURROUNDING ITS REPLACEMENT, AND DEFERMENT OF THE MX LAND-BASED MISSILE SYSTEM EXTENDS THE TIME SPAN WHEN U.S. ICBM'S ARE VULNERABLE. PRESIDENT CARTER'S DEFENSE BUDGETS HAVE REPRESENTED SELF-DENIAL IN ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY FOR STRATEGIC FORCES AND THIS ONLY INCREASES THE URGENT NEED FOR CAREFUL CONSIDERATION BY THE UNITED STATES SENATE UNTO THE STRATEGIC EQUATION--NOW AND INTO THE 1980'S--WHILE SENATORS CONSIDER THEIR STANCES ON SALT II.

ALL OF US PRAY FOR PEACE. I HAVE LIVED WITH THE WOUNDS OF WAR. I HAVE SEEN MEN DIE AT MY FEET. NO ONE YEARNs FOR A PEACEFUL WORLD MORE THAN I. BUT I INSIST ON A PEACE AMONG EQUALS, AND A PEACE THAT WILL LAST. TO OUR CHILDREN--AND YOURS'--WE OWE NOTHING LESS.

WHEN YOU LEAVE THIS PLACE WHERE YOU HAVE LIVED AND STUDIED AND GRAPPLED WITH THE DEMONS UNIQUE TO YOUTH, DO NOT FORGET THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT EDUCATION CONFERS UPON YOU. YOU TAKE AWAY FAR MORE THAN A SHEEPSKIN AND LOAN VOUCHERS. YOU TAKE WITH YOU THE KNOWLEDGE OF OTHERS, ALONG WITH THE HOPES AND DREAMS OF THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE. YOU ARE ENTRUSTED TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN, AND TO EXTEND THE BOUNDARIES OF KNOWLEDGE STILL FURTHER.

MOST OF ALL, YOU ARE CHARGED AS CUSTODIANS OF OUR DREAMS. WE DREAM OF A DAY WHEN AMERICA LEADS THE WORLD WISELY, WHEN NO ONE DRAWS A SWORD AND NO ONE DRAGS A CHAIN. WE DREAM OF AN AMERICA AT PEACE, WHERE INDIVIDUALS REPLACE FACELESS GOVERNMENT, WHERE PRODUCTIVITY IS ONCE MORE ADMIRERD AS THE ULTIMATE SOCIAL JUSTICE. WE DREAM OF A LAND THAT DOES NOT SWALLOW CONFORMITY LIKE PILLS, THAT REFUSES TO SUBMIT TO THE TYRANNY OF MODERN POLITICS, THAT INSTEAD CHERISHES THE DIVERSITY THAT SET AMERICA APART FROM HER BIRTH.

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THOSE ARE DREAMS WORTH WORKING FOR. THEY ARE DREAMS THAT YOUR YEARS HERE HAVE PREPARED YOU TO REALIZE. THEY ARE DREAMS TO MOTIVATE A CAREER, AND ENNOBLE A LIFE. DON'T EVER LOSE THE ABILITY TO DREAM, NOR THE COMMITMENT TO MAKE REALITY OF YOUR DREAMS.

EACH OF US WILL ONE DAY MOVE ON TO TAKE OUR PLACE IN THE SHADOWS. BEFORE THEN, MIGHT WE FIND COMFORT IN HAVING ACHIEVED THE POTENTIAL FIRST--GLIMPSED ~~IN THE~~ IN THE CLASSROOM AT IOLA. MIGHT WE BECOME ALL THAT WE CAN, RECALLING COMMENCEMENT DAY AS BOTH ENDING AND BEGINNING, BUT, MOST OF ALL, A DAY FOR REDEDICATION. MAY GOD BE WITH EACH OF YOU AS YOU REALIZE YOUR INDIVIDUAL DREAMS.