

SPEECH BY SENATOR BOB DOLE
BETHANY COLLEGE CENTENNIAL
LINDSBORG, KANSAS
OCTOBER 10, 1980

I'D LIKE TO THANK PRESIDENT HAHN, THE STUDENTS AND ALUMNI, AND THE PEOPLE OF LINDSBORG FOR BEING HERE TODAY.

I'M PLEASED TO BE BACK IN THE HEART OF LITTLE SWEDEN, AND I AM ESPECIALLY HAPPY TO BE A PART OF THIS GATHERING AS BETHANY COLLEGE EMBARKS ON ITS CENTENNIAL YEAR.

STANDING BENEATH THIS TENT REMINDS ME A BIT OF BEING AT A REVIVAL. AND I GUESS THAT'S REALLY AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF WHY WE ARE HERE TODAY. WE'RE HERE TO PRAISE BETHANY COLLEGE -- WHAT IT IS, WHERE IT HAS COME FROM, THE TRADITION THAT MAKES IT UNIQUE AMONG COLLEGES.

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IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ACCURATELY MEASURE JUST WHAT BETHANY COLLEGE MEANS TO LINDSBORG AND TO KANSAS AS A WHOLE. AT A TIME WHEN PRIVATE AND SECTARIAN COLLEGES FIND THEMSELVES IN INCREASINGLY TROUBLED FINANCIAL STRAITS, AND AS SCORES OF COLLEGES LIKE THIS ONE ARE SHUTTING THEIR DOORS TO STUDENTS, BETHANY STANDS AS A SOLID REMINDER OF THE POWER OF WILL.

JUST AS BETHANY HAS GROWN IN THE PAST 100 YEARS -- FROM ITS FIRST CLASS OF 10 STUDENTS BACK IN 1881 TO ROUGHLY 900 NOW -- SO HAS LINDSBORG GROWN.

WHEN SWEDISH IMMIGRANTS FOUNDED LINDSBORG IN 1869, THEY CAME IN SEARCH OF A PLACE WHERE GOVERNMENT, ARTS, MUSIC AND FAITH WOULD FLOURISH.

AND WHEN CARL AARON SWENSSON, A LUTHERAN PASTOR -- AND, I MIGHT ADD, A STAUNCH REPUBLICAN -- CREATED BETHANY, HE SOUGHT TO PROMOTE THOSE SAME GOALS THROUGH EDUCATION.

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TODAY, AS IT DID THEN, THIS COLLEGE PLACES HEAVY EMPHASIS ON MUSIC AND THE ARTS. THE VIRGER SANDZEN (SAND 'ZANE) MEMORIAL ART GALLERY STANDS AS TESTIMONY TO THE IMPACT THIS COLLEGE HAS HAD ON THE ARTS IN KANSAS.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS YEAR, THE FAMOUS MESSIAH FESTIVAL WILL BE TWO WEEKS LONG, INSTEAD OF ITS CUSTOMARY ONE, WHICH WILL GIVE US A GREATER OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE IT HERE FOR THAT EXTRAORDINARY EVENT.

BUT BETHANY HAS ALSO BEEN A PIONEER IN ACADEMICS, AND OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AT THE TOP HAS ENSURED THAT. DR. ERNEST PIHLBLAD (PEEL BLAD) WON A SPECIAL PLACE IN KANSAS EDUCATION DURING HIS 30 YEARS AS BETHANY'S PRESIDENT, BEGINNING IN 1905.

CERTAINLY BETHANY PRESIDENT DR. EMERY LINDQUIST, WHO LATER SERVED AS PRESIDENT AT KANSAS STATE, ALSO DESERVES MENTION.

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IT IS UNDENIABLE THAT ACADEMICS COMES FIRST AT BETHANY. I KNOW THAT THE MEMBERS OF YOUR FINE FOOTBALL TEAM WILL TESTIFY THAT FOOTBALL COMES SECOND, AND THAT ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIPS ARE NOT HANDED OUT HERE LIKE SO MANY PIECES OF CANDY.

BUT WE CAN BEST MEASURE THE HEALTH OF BETHANY BY TAKING A LOOK AROUND US AS WE SIT HERE. MANY OF THESE BUILDINGS HAVE BEEN BUILT WITHIN THE LAST 15 YEARS. I HAVE SPOKEN AT MANY SMALL COLLEGES ACROSS THE COUNTRY THAT WOULD BE ENVIOUS OF SUCH FRUITFULNESS. SURELY MUCH OF THE CREDIT MUST GO TO PRESIDENT ARVIN HAHN, WHO HAS STEERED THIS COLLEGE IN THE DIRECTION OF PROGRESS FOR THE PAST 11 YEARS.

AND MUCH OF THE CREDIT MUST GO TO THE COMMUNITY OF LINDSBORG, WHICH HAS PROVIDED FERTILE GROUND FOR THIS COLLEGE TO TAKE ROOT AND GROW. BUT MOST OF ALL, WE MUST HONOR THE DIVERSITY AND ENERGY OF THE BETHANY STUDENT BODY AND ALUMNI.

THEY HAVE PROVIDED BETHANY WITH A PROGRESSIVE TRADITION THAT HAS DRAWN STUDENTS HERE SINCE 1881. THAT TRADITION WILL BE RENEWED THIS YEAR, AS BETHANY CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL. MAY IT BE A PROSPEROUS ONE.