

REP. ELINOR Z. TAYLOR
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS - 1984

REVEREND CLERGY, MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY, PARENTS,
FAMILY, FRIENDS AND, OF COURSE, THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE HERE TONIGHT -
OUR GRADUATES, THE MEMBERS OF THE CLASS OF 1984. *- 1st of 2 graduates
special congrat - to Danyell & Maria - Excellence in Ed - off the
last page onto the first page*
I AM HONORED TO BE HERE TONIGHT TO SHARE IN THIS, THE CULMINATION OF A
DREAM FOR GRADUATES AND PARENTS ALIKE. I HOPE THAT THIS IS ONLY ONE OF
MANY DREAMS COME TRUE AND OF MANY MOUNTAINS THAT EACH OF YOU WILL CLIMB AS
YOU LEAD PRODUCTIVE LIVES.

GRADUATION CEREMONIES HAVE PROBABLY CHANGED LESS THAN ANY OTHER CUSTOM
OVER THE YEARS ... AND IF ANY OF YOU HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND A
GRADUATION CEREMONY, I'M CERTAIN THAT YOU ARE HOPING THAT ONE THING WILL
BE DIFFERENT DURING THESE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES ... THAT BEING THE LENGTH
OF THE COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS.

IN PREPARING THIS ADDRESS, I REMINDED MYSELF OF A COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS AT
BROWN UNIVERSITY BY THOMAS J. WATSON, JR. MR. WATSON TOLD THE GRADUATES,
"IT'S NOT AT ALL HARD FOR ME TO REMEMBER THAT VIVID DAY OF MY OWN GRADUATION.
STRANGELY ENOUGH, THE ONE THING ABOUT THAT DAY THAT I CANNOT REMEMBER IS
WHAT THE COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER HAD TO SAY. MY THOUGHTS, LIKE YOURS, WERE
TARGETED UPON MY FAMILY AND MY FRIENDS AND MY PLANS FOR THE SUMMER. BUT
OF ONE THING I'M SURE: IF THE SPEAKER MADE A SHORT SPEECH, I KNOW I
BLESSED HIM."

I WILL PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THOSE COMMENTS, AND I TRUST THAT YOU'LL
FEEL DIFFERENTLY THAN MR. WATSON 10 OR 20 YEARS FROM NOW WHEN YOU LOOK
BACK ON THIS SPECIAL OCCASION.

AS EACH OF YOU SIT HERE THIS EVENING, READY TO TACKLE THE CHALLENGES
AHEAD, BE REMINDED THAT YOUR GRADUATION IS THE INTERMISSION BETWEEN SCHOOL
AND REAL LIFE.

EACH OF YOU HAS BEEN SKILLED IN A TRADE WHICH SHOULD ENABLE YOU TO JOIN THE WORKFORCE AND ASSUME YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A CITIZEN OF THIS WORLD.

BUT AS I LOOK AROUND, I SEE MORE THAN EXCITEMENT IN YOUR EYES. I SEE APPREHENSION ... AND MAYBE EVEN SOME TEARS. ALTHOUGH READY FOR THE DAYS AHEADS, MANY OF YOU ARE PROBABLY RELUCTANT TO LEAVE BEHIND THE DAYS OF FRIENDSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP OF YOUR SCHOOL YEARS.

IN THIS DAY AND AGE WHEN NUCLEAR WAR IS ON THE MINDS OF EVERYONE, WHEN CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD ARE LEFT HOMELESS AND HUNGRY BY WAR, AND THE TENSIONS BETWEEN THE WORLD'S SUPERPOWERS ARE PAINFULLY EVIDENT ... I AM SURE THAT MANY OF YOU ARE WONDERING WHAT KIND OF FUTURE IS BEING LEFT TO YOU.

BUT LET ME REMIND YOU THAT THE CHILDREN OF AMERICA'S FIRST SETTLERS PROBABLY WONDERED WHAT KIND OF A FUTURE THEIR PARENTS WERE LEAVING THEM. THE CHILDREN OF SOLDIERS IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR WONDERED WHAT THE FUTURE WOULD BRING THEM.

THE CHILDREN -- BOTH BLACK AND WHITE -- OF THE CIVIL WAR PERIOD WONDERED WHAT KIND OF A FUTURE THEY WOULD HAVE IN AMERICA. AND THOSE YOUNG ADULTS OF WORLD WAR I, OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND WORLD WAR II HAD SERIOUS RESERVATIONS AND FEARS ABOUT THE FUTURE AS WELL.

THUS, IT'S APPARENT THAT THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THEY REMAIN THE SAME. AND ONE THING HAS REMAINED CONSTANT: DESPITE THEIR FEARS, AMERICA'S CHILDREN HAVE ALWAYS STOOD TALL IN FACING THE CHALLENGES BEFORE THEM.

TONIGHT, I WOULD ASK THE SAME OF YOU, THE GRADUATES OF 1984. BUT TO MEET THESE CHALLENGES, I BELIEVE YOU MUST FIRST BE AWARE OF THREE INGREDIENTS NEEDED TO BETTER INSURE SUCCESS.

1. A STRONG BASIC EDUCATION.
2. GOOD CITIZENSHIP - OF WHICH VOLUNTEERISM IS A PART
3. DREAMS.

THE BASIC INGREDIENT IN MEETING LIFE'S CHALLENGES IS AN EDUCATION. BECAUSE YOU HAVE BEEN TRAINED TO GO INTO SOCIETY AND PERFORM A TRADE, YOU HAVE ALREADY LAID THE FOUNDATION NECESSARY IN MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF TOMORROW. LET ME SHARE WITH YOU SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR VERY SPECIAL EDUCATION - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS A LARGE AND SUCCESSFUL ENTERPRISE IN THE COMMONWEALTH. THIS ENTERPRISE HAS BEEN CREATED THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP OF SUPPORT PROVIDED BY COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN THE COMMONWEALTH.

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU BUT I OFTEN FORGET HOW FAR WE HAVE COME IN A RATHER SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. DO YOU REALIZE THAT OUR PRESENT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM HAS ONLY BEEN DEVELOPED SINCE 1960. BEFORE THAT TIME VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CONSISTED PRIMARILY OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE, AND HOME ECONOMICS TAUGHT IN LOCAL HIGH SCHOOLS, WITH A SMALL SPATTERING OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING OFFERED IN LARGER METROPOLITAN AREAS. IN LESS THAN 25 YEARS A SYSTEM HAS BEEN DEVELOPED WHICH PROVIDES, OR WILL SHORTLY PROVIDE, PENNSYLVANIA CITIZENS WITH VOCATIONAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES IN 87 AREA VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOLS AND 13 COMMUNITY COLLEGES. I BELIEVE THAT ALL 501 LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS ALSO OFFER SOME VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES.

Financial - from federal level - state + local
DO YOU KNOW THAT THE ESTIMATED ANNUAL SUPPORT FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ~~IN~~ *has increased to 419.1 M - 3,400% increase in ~~the~~ over 25 years.* THE COMMONWEALTH IS OVER 4 MILLION DOLLARS. MORE IMPORTANTLY, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CONTRIBUTES TO THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA'S ECONOMY. IT HAS PREPARED YOU FOR ENTERING AND ADVANCING IN THE WORLD OF WORK. IN 1982-83 OVER 395,000 STUDENTS WERE ENROLLED IN AND RECEIVED SOME LEVEL OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION. THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE SHOWS THAT 82% OF SECONDARY STUDENTS WERE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED AND THIS WAS ACHIEVED IN A TIME WHEN THE ECONOMY WAS EXTREMELY DEPRESSED AND PENNSYLVANIA HAD A HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATES. SO TODAY THAT 82% IS PROBABLY UP TO OVER 90%. THE STUDENTS GAINFULLY PLACED SEEM TO INDICATE THAT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS PROVIDING QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION.

THE CITIZENS OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE LEGISLATURE HAVE RECOGNIZED THE NEED TO UPDATE THE EQUIPMENT IN OUR VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS. THE VOTERS APPROVED A \$190 MILLION ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOND ISSUE IN THE SPRING PRIMARY ELECTION. \$27 MILLION OF THIS TOTAL WILL BE ALLOCATED FOR EQUIPMENT IN AREA VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES. *I will offer, in a few days.* ~~THE~~ LEGISLATION TO DISTRIBUTE THESE FUNDS, ~~IS BEING DEVELOPED AT THIS TIME.~~ WHILE THIS SUM WILL NOT PROVIDE ALL OF THE NEW EQUIPMENT THAT IS NEEDED, THE FUNDS REPRESENT A CONTINUING EFFORT TO IMPROVE THESE PROGRAMS ~~AND THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF PENNSYLVANIA.~~ I AM CERTAIN THE STUDENTS, ADMINISTRATION AND FACULTY MEMBERS RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF USING THE MOST UP-TO-DATE EQUIPMENT IN THEIR PROGRAMS.

WHILE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION WILL CONTINUE TO ASSIST STUDENTS IN CAREER PATHS, IT, TOO, MUST CHANGE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF A CHANGING SOCIETY AND ECONOMY. THERE WILL BE NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES. PENNSYLVANIA'S ECONOMY CONTINUES TO REFLECT A CHANGE BACK TO ONE ON SERVICES AND INFORMATION. THIS CHANGING ECONOMY WILL HAVE A DRAMATIC EFFECT ON THE NATURE OF JOBS AND OCCUPATIONS.

IN FACT, THE FIVE OCCUPATIONS PROJECTED TO EXPAND THE MOST IN PRODUCING NEW JOBS ARE BUILDING CUSTODIANS, CASHIERS, SECRETARIES, OFFICE CLERKS AND SALES CLERKS. RUSSELL RUMBERG OF STANFORD UNIVERSITY STATES THAT 20 OCCUPATIONS WILL ACCOUNT FOR 35% OF THE NEW JOBS DURING THIS DECADE, BUT ONLY TWO OF THEM, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHING AND ACCOUNTING, REQUIRE COLLEGE DEGREES. *

THE SE
VITA

VOCATIONAL

EDUCATION STUDENTS HAVE A HOST OF OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO THEM

TH THROUGH VARIOUS RELATED ACTIVITIES. STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS:

- VICA - VOCATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CLUBS OF AMERICA
- FFA - FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA
- DECA - DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION CLUBS OF AMERICA
- FHA - FUTURE HOMEMAKERS OF AMERICA
- HOSA - HEALTH OCCUPATIONS STUDENTS OF AMERICA
- FBLA - FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA

ARE TO BE COMMENDED. YOUR PARTICIPATION HAS PROVIDED YOU WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD SELF-ESTEEM, DEVELOP LEADERSHIP, IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS AND DEVELOP HIGHER STANDARDS. EFFORTS OF THIS NATURE SHOULD ALWAYS BE RECOGNIZED AND ACKNOWLEDGED. I WOULD PARTICULARLY LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE TWO AWARD WINNERS FROM THIS SCHOOL IN THE RECENT STATEWIDE VICA COMPETITION:

JOHN SHANK - FIRST PLACE IN AIR COOLED GASOLINE ENGINE REPAIR

MIKE MOYER - SECOND PLACE IN BRICK LAYING

THE STATE COMPETITION WINNERS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADVANCE TO THE NATIONAL COMPETITION, TO DEVELOP THEIR TALENTS, AND TO LEARN FROM OTHER STUDENTS AND THEIR EXPERIENCES.

SO GIVE OF YOUR TIME AND TALENTS TO HELP OTHERS. WORK WITH THE YOUNG, THE ELDERLY, THE SICK, THE LONELY, THE DISABLED. JOIN A SERVICE CLUB. YOUR COMMUNITY WILL BE A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE AND YOU WILL BE A BETTER PERSON BECAUSE OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT.

FINALLY, I BELIEVE THAT IN ORDER FOR EACH ONE OF US TO FACE THE CHALLENGES AHEAD, WE MUST HAVE THE COURAGE TO DREAM. ALL THROUGH HISTORY WE CAN SEE THAT BETTER TOMORROWS ARE THE FRUITS OF YESTERDAY'S DREAMS. DREAMS ARE WHAT TOMORROWS ARE MADE OF.

AND THIS IS THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE I PRESENT TO YOU ON THIS SPECIAL OCCASION: DON'T BE AFRAID TO DREAM. THIS NATION'S FOREFATHERS DREAMED OF A LIFE IN THE NEW WORLD, AND THEIR CHILDREN DREAMED OF A NATION BEHOLDEN TO NO OTHER NATION.

THOSE WHO WERE NOT AFRAID TO DREAM OF A WORLD FREE FROM POLIO AND OTHER DISEASE SUCCEEDED IN MAKING OUR WORLD BETTER.

YOUR DREAMS DON'T NECESSARILY HAVE TO BE OF GREAT MAGNITUDE. RATHER, YOU MIGHT DREAM OF A DAY WHEN YOU ARE YOUR OWN BOSS, HAVE A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS OR A STRONG FAMILY LIFE. THESE DREAMS ARE JUST AS IMPORTANT.

THE KEY, REGARDLESS OF THE SCOPE OF YOUR DREAM, IS TO HAVE ONE.

ALTHOUGH EACH OF YOU HAS LAID A FIRM FOUNDATION ON WHICH TO LEAVE HERE TONIGHT AND LIVE A FRUITFUL LIFE, THOSE OF YOU WITHOUT A DREAM, I'M SORRY TO SAY, COULD BECOME STAGNANT AS THE WORLD PASSES BY.

BECAUSE THOSE WITHOUT VISION ARE WITHOUT HOPE, IT'S NECESSARY TO REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF A VISION FOR THE FUTURE -- YOUR FUTURE. DON'T BE AFRAID TO DREAM ... AND DON'T BE AFRAID TO PURSUE YOUR DREAMS.

HENRY THOREAU SAID ... "IF ONE ADVANCES CONFIDENTLY IN THE DIRECTION OF HIS DREAMS, AND ENDEAVORS TO LIVE THE LIFE WHICH HE HAS IMAGINED, HE WILL MEET WITH A SUCCESS UNEXPECTED IN COMMON HOURS."

SO AS YOU GO FORTH TONIGHT, SEARCHING TO TAKE YOUR PLACE IN THIS SOCIETY, ARM YOURSELF WITH A VISION FOR TOMORROW. AND FOREVER REMAIN STEADFAST IN YOUR PURSUIT OF THOSE GOALS.

ALSO, AS YOU LEAVE HERE TONIGHT, CONSIDER YOUR ROLE IN THE FUTURE OF THIS NATION AND WORLD. IT MATTERS NOT WHAT YOUR JOB IS. WHATEVER THE TASK, GET IT DONE AND DO IT RIGHT. THERE IS AS MUCH DIGNITY AND IMPORTANCE IN HARVESTING THE FIELDS AS THERE IS IN PERFORMING A HEART TRANSPLANT.

BE PROUD OF WHAT YOU DO IN LIFE. DEMAND THE SAME HIGH STANDARDS OF OTHERS AS HAVE BEEN DEMANDED OF YOU. AND REMEMBER, DON'T BE AFRAID TO DREAM.

THIS IS WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT ... AND I WISH YOU ALL THE SUCCESS IN REALIZING YOUR VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE. MAY GOD GRANT YOU HIS EVERY BLESSING.

THANK YOU.

#