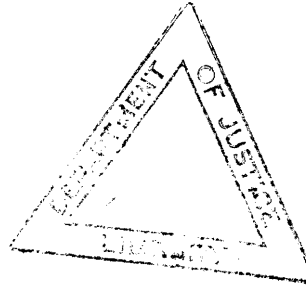


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AN ADDRESS BY



TOM C. CLARK

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

BEFORE

CENTRE COLLEGE

DANVILLE, KENTUCKY

NOVEMBER 15, 1947

It is good to be back in the blue grass - the land of Daniel Boone - of the Iroquois and Cherokees - of fine horses - beautiful women - spectacular football teams - and most important of all - Centre College. I remember well the exploits of Bo McMillen and the Praying Colonels. Their fame reached even to Texas.

Little did I dream then that I would be at this time participating in this heart-warming home-coming celebration. I am thrilled at the opportunity of joining you in inaugurating Centre's great "Forward Program" - indicative of the real spirit of our America of today.

Ushering in this new era of progress, we today induct Dr. Walter Alexander Groves into the Presidency of this renowned institution. It is fortunate that Centre has such a world scholar and educator to lead her in this next phase of her outstanding contribution to American life. He will carry on with renewed energy the courage and foresight of those Presbyterian pioneers who established your school here 128 years ago. Congratulations, Centre College - and Godspeed, Dr. Groves.

It is with a feeling of deep humility that I receive the degree which Centre College is this day bestowing upon me. I am fully aware of its repute. The distinction which goes with it I shall always cherish as a tribute to the office of the Attorney General of the United States.

Rooted in a tradition that goes back to the "dark and bloody ground" of Indian days, Centre College is identified with the history of a great Commonwealth. From its soil came immortals like Lincoln, Harlan and Brandeis.

In present-day life its Senior Senator Alben Barkley - a noble Kentuckian - a true American - has helped shape the legislative policies of our nation for

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a quarter of a century.

Today three of its sons sit among the nine justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson, Associate Justice Stanley Reed and Associate Justice Wiley Rutledge.

Centre is - and should be - proud of the Chief Justice of the United States. It was here that he secured the education that led him to the heights in all three branches of our Federal Government - Legislative, Executive and Judicial. It is my good fortune to know him - and to know him is to love him. With you I pay homage to him and the devoted life he has led for his fellow Americans.

Centre furnished another distinguished member of this highest tribunal, Mr. Justice John M. Harlan of the Class of 1850. His bequests to Centre are well known to you.

In the shadow of these great figures of our national life, two of whom have emanated from this little giant among the schools of America, Centre College has always occupied a foremost place in the educational world.

In the midst of this home-coming celebration, I find that you are engaging in a form of rededication. Your "Forward Program" will give Centre the physical means to discharge her important obligations. Proud of her past - and of those who have graduated from her halls - Centre realizes full well its obligations to Kentucky - to America and to the world. This "Forward Program" is a most necessary endeavor for never in the history of American education have the schools been so heavily taxed by demands for space and housing and for breadth of curricula - and never in history was it more necessary for the spread of true education than at the present. Your brilliant record assures overwhelming success in this building-and-endowment campaign.

Many heavy responsibilities rest upon the colleges of America in this hour. The thrusts of international affairs have been delivered with rapier-like rapidity. Sitting in our rocking chair back in 1941, we were thrust into war; victory has now brought home thousands of young men and women thirsting to commence or complete their delayed schooling. Too, on our domestic front war's end has brought many problems. Victory, too, thrust us into the position of the foremost world power for the restoration of peace.

This series of events has made it imperative that America produce an ever-replenishing stream of young, intelligent leadership schooled not only in domestic knowledge, but in the affairs and problems of the world.

Your new President - Dr. Groves - is peculiarly fitted by background to lead you in this new era of international relations. His studies and teachings in foreign lands - Istanbul - Teheran - Iran; his religious and philosophical approach; his war experience; his scholarly attainments, all point to his fitness as a true minister of democracy.

The Great Teacher gave us the fundamental concept of leadership in these eternal words:

"Who so would become great among you shall be your minister; and who so would be the first among you shall be your servant; even so the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Service to others is the test of true greatness. It is the test of each of us - in our homes, our communities, our nation and in the world.

I have been acutely conscious of the demands made upon the men and women who operate our Government in meeting the crises and the new obligations of

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peace. Under this staggering load, they have performed well, and have ably demonstrated that in Washington, as in the field, or at Lake Success, or in the American Embassies throughout the world, there is little place for persons without talent or training; that the need for more and even better trained leadership is imperative, if we are to keep pace with the demands upon America. The colleges of America - like Centre - are the true workshops of peace.

As President Truman said: "In preparing our veterans and our other young men and women to live in the new atomic age, education faces the greatest challenge in history. What may have been sufficient yesterday is not sufficient today."

I believe our young people realize this. It cannot be only chance that there are 2,300,000 students enrolled in the nation's colleges this year, the largest number in our history, an increase of 1,000,000 over the pre-war peak year of 1939-40. I am happy to learn that the United States Office of Education believes "There is no time in the foreseeable future when college attendance in this country will decline."

In Russia young people are the recipients of Komsomol Pravda - a newspaper published by the party and devoted to youth. Literally translated Komsomol means "youth" and Pravda means "truth." What a travesty on truth! The copy I had translated and read was deceptive propaganda.

This edition purported to give an account of the conditions under which American women live. It depicted those conditions as virtual slavery without rights and privileges. How ridiculous! Would that Russian women, and women throughout the world, could live, work and grow under the conditions that America offers to its womanhood.

It also rails against lack of opportunity for youth in America - here

where opportunity for youth is never fenced in - where youth is free to think and do - limited only by his own ability and ambition.

In addition to a curricula devoted to our aim, we must develop an exchange of students. This will make a significant contribution to international understanding and good will. By bringing foreign students to our shores, we give them at first hand a lesson in true Americanism. The law permits the application of foreign currencies, derived from the sale of surplus materials which were lying overseas at the end of the war, to finance a program of education abroad.

Thus we are beating the sword of surplus war material on foreign soil into the ploughshares of education. By carrying out this program with foreign currencies, it becomes feasible reality in this day of critical "dollar" shortages throughout the world.

In general the funds will be used for financing studies, research and other educational activities by American citizens in the schools and institutions of higher learning located in foreign countries.

In addition, the citizens of foreign countries may pursue studies in American schools and institutions of higher learning. Exchange of students will, indeed, be world democracy at work.

Our educational institutions as well as our Government cannot permit themselves to mark time. They must assume a leading role in the new discoveries of this age. The physical sciences have in a sense become specialties in our educational institutions. It is interesting to note how indispensable they were in the development of atomic energy.

While atomic energy is one of the major issues of our time everywhere in the world, its international control is at this point far from achievement.

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It hangs as the Sword of Damocles over the world. We must devote our best efforts to control its use.

Democracy must build its strength not only on military might, but on the broad basis of world friendship - and religion. It has been so well said "a mighty fortress is our God." Yet about half of our people are not connected with any church. There can be no physical freedom without spiritual freedom. We must prepare ourselves to fight Godless ideologies. In so doing, we must attract back to the profession the 350,000 teachers who left our schools during the war; we must increase the salaries of those remaining now - and above all - we must secure qualified teachers.

It is regrettable indeed that we have neglected this important aspect of our life.

Our greatest statesmen in the past understood the importance of education in the building of a nation.

They understood that a real democracy was impossible without an educated people. Today that necessity looms stronger than ever.

A person who could not read and write was a being not contemplated by the genius of our Constitution. The founders of our political system expressed again and again that no people that are not enlightened can long remain free.

Education is the best means by which freedom with all that it implies - its privileges and its obligations - is understood and its principles maintained. Yes, we hear much about freedom today.

This is one of the outstandingly heartening signs of our times - the people's concern over liberty. But talk alone will not guard it.

Freedom has never been permitted to go unmolested. It has always been in danger.

In the words of Thomas Jefferson, "Enlighten the people generally and tyranny and oppression of body and mind will vanish like evil spirits at the dawn of day."

Democracy can be advanced but little faster than the general level of intelligence.

It therefore becomes the responsibility of a nation to provide the means whereby the intellectual and physical energies of the forgotten and neglected groups of our citizenship are not only cultivated but aroused to an effective loyalty to our country.

In the words of Henry Van Dyke, "We want American education, so that every citizen shall not only believe in democracy, but know what it means, what it costs and what it is worth."

And when only a fraction of our citizenry knows what the Constitution and the Bill of Rights are - when only a segment of our population is familiar with the basic precepts on which the country is founded - then our liberties are truly in peril.

It is in such a climate of limited knowledge that the purveyors of false ideologies find fertile ground for their sinister activities. Here is provided the opportunity from within our shores for the subverters of the American ideal to do their insidious work. Our neglect becomes their ally.

The solution must be found in education, both spiritual and academic. It is particularly important that we have a knowledge of the history of our country and its basic institutions.

Let us face some cold facts. In a recent test of American historical events among a certain group of teachers some believed and told us that George Washington singlehandedly wrote the Declaration of Independence; that

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the Bill of Rights guaranteed free education for all; that the Monroe Doctrine guaranteed equal rights; that Robert E. Lee was President of the Confederate States, and that the United States acquired the western States from Spain in the Spanish-American War.

No wonder such guess answers are given when you learn that only 18% of our colleges and universities require the study of United States history as a prerequisite to a degree, and only 28% require it for admission.

In the light of my experience as Attorney General, I would emphasize the teaching of history. The American schools and colleges should infuse into such teaching the excitement, the romance and the drama, now too often gathering dust in the libraries of the country.

They should give a graphic picture of our basic rights - to which the American people are entitled, and which they so eagerly seek. This is touchingly illustrated by the vast multitudes greeting the Freedom Train everywhere in the hope they may get a glimpse of the sacred historic documents it is carrying.

This is indicative of how vital it is that the school and college facilities be expanded.

This gathering here has been an inspiration to me. I am sure that this soul-stirring challenge to the educational leaders of our country will be met.

Your three-day launching of this "Forward Program" is a green light on the modern highway of education.

At this critical period of our history, every citizen should have an understanding of our democracy and its way of life. The best defense against destructive ideologies is to have an inventory of what we have in our house -

what we are defending.

As has been truly said: "Men will always fight for their Government according to their sense of its values. To value it right, they must understand it. They cannot do this without education."