

## COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

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Thank you, Ambassador Wolf, President Gee, happy graduates, happy families, distinguished friends, ladies and gentlemen.

When I left Israel yesterday at noontime, I still was able to meet the Secretary of State of the United States, Warren Christopher, and when he had disembarked from his plane, the first thing he told me was that Scott O'Grady is free. I remember the call of Ohio, "With God All Things Are Possible." With God and brave people. And that is what you have in your state.

For me it's a real treat to come to this great occasion thinking to myself that what Texas has in oil, Ohio has in learning. You have the greatest University in the United States. And then Ohio itself is a place of special meaning to all of us. Ever green in its fields, ever inventive in its industries, and then you have something which is called Limited which is unlimited in an industrial sense. And the land totally committed to the great American Constitution.

I know that you are called Columbus after the great discoverer. Then you have two discoverers of your own, Neil Armstrong and John Glenn. May I say as a citizen of another country, with all my great respect for these discoveries, what is really meaningful about the United States of America is not only the discoverers and discovery of new continents but the creation of the American Constitution. A constitution which is more important than the continent because it stands the test of time and shows that you may have power, that you can fight, that you can win, but you never take for yourself but are always offering to other people freedom and democracy. In all the wars you won, you never took for yourself any sort of assets or privileges. A continent and a constitution which is so rich and wealthy yet always generous, understanding and tolerant. A young generation

which is always looking for the new, a grown-up generation which is always offering tolerance. And an assembly of different people who have shown that you can live in peace and understanding and in creation.

I ask myself occasionally, "How come this gathering is called commencement and not graduation?" And I think there is a real reason for you, particularly for you graduates at this time and this year. "It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers," said James Thurber. In an age where it is so important to know the questions not less than to learn the answers.

We are living in a totally changed world. And what you have learned, some of it you will have to forget. But what you will remember is how to learn. The new world and new opportunities.

When I look back on the last decade and I see the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union, when I see the unbelievable understanding between blacks and whites in South Africa, when I see that even the Irish and the British can find a common language, and when I see that the Palestinians and us, Arabs and Jews, can offer peace to a troubled area, I am asking myself, "What brought all those changes?" Clearly nothing of the classical measures or instruments.

The Soviet Union did not collapse because of a military intervention of the United States of America, or Europe, or China. Not because the Communist Party brought to creation another party, not because the Red Army itself intervened in the political structures of Russia. South Africa was reborn without revolution. Even the negotiations themselves were done so quietly.

So what really brought these tremendous changes? And the answer is that those changes represent a deeper change which will affect your future and that you will affect the future of all of us. The basic changes that are the sources of wealth, and the sources of strength, in our time, are no longer material, no longer territorial, no longer national. The sources of strength and wealth nowadays are science, technology, information and the moral preference. Then science does not possess sovereignty. Technology does not know borders. And information does not require any visa to pass from one place to another place. It is open for all of us. It is rather global, universal,



intellectual. And every country, if it desires so, can become rich, powerful and meaningful if they will go for the freedom of learning, for the quality of human beings.

Not only that, even the armies are becoming a victim of this great change. How can you defend a nation when the missiles are no longer impressed by frontiers or fronts or distances. They fly above rivers and mountains and oceans. They don't stop at any marked lines. They became dangerous to other places. How can you really answer the danger of nuclear power falling into the hands of irresponsible people unless you make a global effort, unless you turn from the arts of military strategy to the wisdom of political responsibility.

With the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States has lost its enemy. Now, how can you form a foreign policy if you don't have an enemy? It's a very complicated situation. You have lost your enemy but you, like all of us, discovered new dangers, new menaces which are not less dangerous and not less menacing than the old enemies.

I know it is hard to confront it because when you have an enemy, your president, your administration, your Congress are ready to be forthcoming with foreign aid, with armies, with mobilizing the nation, with making clear before them what do you stand against. But when you look at the dangers they are not as tangible, nor are they defined, and clear and mobilizing as the old enemies.

Yet if the world will fall in the hands of nuclear craziness, if pollution will overflow borders, if drugs will kill talents of young people, if maladies will wander from place to place, if poverty, fundamentalism, and protest movement and crazy organizations will penetrate our lives they will find us totally unprepared to meet them. Actually what you will have to do is to go over from a world of enemies to a world of dangers, from a world of material accomplishments to a world of intellectual mobilization under entirely new rules, new philosophies, new strategies, new coalitions, new contributions.

What happened in the world happened in our country, in our region as well. And you know, undoubtedly, today what makes a country great, like Japan, is high technology. And what doesn't make a country great is the size of the land. For me as an Israeli, Japan all told in matter of land is not more than 15

times the size of Israel. They have neither oil, nor water, and part of their land is being eaten up by volcanoes.

The Soviet Union is a thousand times the size of Israel. We are 24,000 square kilometers; they are 24 million square kilometers. Not only do they have land but a lot of water. The Soviet Union has three million lakes. In Israel we have two lakes, one is dead. They have 100,000 rivers; we have one river, the Jordan River, which is more famous for its history than for its water.

And yet Russia is short of food and Israel is exporting food. One of the first things that the Russians bought after we renewed our relations were cows. Why cows? Because it came out that the Israeli cow produces three times as much milk as a Russian cow. It is the same cow with the same horns. The difference is in the technology. And the moral of the story is that you can have more milk from the system than from the animal. That we are a land, not just of milk and honey, but of electronic chips.

When we look around we know there is no sense, no possibility to defend the land on its frontiers or to measure the danger in geographic terms. That we do have, like you have, new dangers. A movement like the fundamentalism spread among a billion, three hundred million Moslems with the same old philosophy of Communism, namely, that goals justify means. That you have a permission to terrorize, to kill, to cheat, to put on a double face. And we know that we cannot overcome the danger with rifles, or planes, or tanks. We need to do more than we are used to doing, differently from our present strategies. And in order to do so we have embarked upon a strategy of four points:

A. To bring an end to all the wars between our Arab neighbors and ourselves. Not because we are weak, not because we lost a war (we won five wars in 50 years), not because somebody is pressing upon us. But because we ourselves, out of our own free choice, we decided that the moral wisdom of a historic nation like your own, is never to try and dominate another people. Let them be free; let us be free. All people that have dominated the Jewish people in four thousand years disappeared from history. Why should we follow them? We stood to our moral code and we still exist. As a result we made peace with Egypt, with Jordan. We are now negotiating peace with the Palestinians and we shall succeed in these negotiations as well. We are



negotiating with the Syrians. Not that this is easy. But this too will be crowned with an agreement for peace. If we shall reach peace with the Syrians, this may be the last peace in the Middle East. So nobody will have a reason to supply arms and none of the local countries will have an excuse to go to war.

The second thing is to promote the standard of living. The better the people do live the less belligerent they are becoming. Israel has a flourishing economy but it will be foolish on our part to be an island of prosperity in a sea of poverty. We would like to see our neighbors as prosperous as we are so we can be neighbors in equality or neighbors in peace. We know that we have not to turn everytime to ask other people to pay for it. We have to by ourselves to cut the expenses for the arms race. We spend 70 billion dollars a year. We have to halve it. And instead of investing in the metals of hostility, let's invest in the education of the children.

We know that the Middle East, because the rate of birth, is becoming a huge desert and we have to fight the desertification of the land and fight together. You know, water is apolitical. You don't have left wing waters and right wing waters. And rain doesn't go through the customs. And rivers don't follow frontiers. But together we can take out the desert from the land, the salt from the sea, the violence from the people. It goes together. And that's what we intend to do.

Then, at that point, we have to invest more in the young generation. Over 60 percent of the people in the Middle East are below the age of 18. Many of them are condemned to remain illiterate. In Israel we have computerized our education completely. We have a computer for every eleven children from the age of four on. And the results are really promising. We suggest to computerize the education of all the youngsters in the Middle East.

And the fourth point, not the least, is to bring together the three major religions that were born in the Middle East, Christians, Moslems, Jewish. To live like you do, in tolerance, in understanding. To understand that the meaning of democracy is not only the right of every person to be equal but the right of every group to be different. We want religions without knives, without daggers, without hostility. We want every person to be able to pray to the Lord without censorship; to attend the holy

places without security arrangements; to live as a believer, to pray, maybe differently, but clearly, to the same Heaven.

We just concluded an agreement with the Vatican to exchange ambassadors. In our eyes it is not a routine event because it happens once in 1,994 years. And it happened this year. We would like to have the same relations with all religions, Christians and Moslems. And to create a world where clearly, historically speaking, it is the end of the hunting season in human experience and the beginning of the creative enterprise in human relations.

I came here not only to pay tribute to your large (not only large) but great university but also to express to old and young in this impressive stadium our deep thanks for your support, our deep commitment to go together and fight not only for a new era in science but for an old commitment in the Bible: to fight for peace, for freedom, for tolerance and understanding.

When you will get your graduation, it will your commencement and our hope.

Thank you.