

JUNE 1963

Univ. of Calif. - Berkeley  
"Charter Day" Address by J.F.K.

et. 3242

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Mr. President -- [Applause, shouts, whistles 36 sec] Mr. President, Governor Brown, Dr. Pauli, -- Chancellor, Members of the Board of Regents, Members of the Faculty and Fellows, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The last time that I came to this stadium was twenty two years ago when I visited it in November, of nineteen forty as a student at a nearby small school for the game at Stanford and we got a much -- I must say -- I had a -- I had a much warmer reception today than I did on my post [Muffled laughter 1 sec] -- than I did on that occasion.

In those days we used to fill these universities with football and now we do it for aca-academic events and I am not sure this doesn't represent a rather dangerous trend for the future of our country. [Applause, whistling, 7 1/2 sec]

I am delighted to be here on this occasion which though it is the 94th anniversary of the Charter, in a sense this is the hundredth anniversary.

This is a great anniversary of a great university. It is in fact a double anniversary. One hundred years ago this July Abraham

--Lincoln signed the Morrill Act, establishing a nation-wide system of land-grant colleges and universities. Six years later the University of California received its charter; and, from the moment of its foundation, its remarkable contributions to state and nation have proven the wisdom of the land-grant college program. The first graduating class at Berkeley produced, I am informed, a governor of California, two regents of the University, a college professor, a clergyman, a state assemblyman and assorted lawyers, engineers and civic leaders -- all out of 12 graduates!

For this university, and so many other universities across our country owe their birth to the most extraordinary piece of legislation which this country has ever adopted. And that is the Morrill Act, signed by President Abraham Lincoln in the darkest and most uncertain days of the Civil War, which set before the country the opportunity to build the great land-grant colleges of which this is so distinguished a part. Six -- years later, this university obtained its charter and in its first graduating class it included a future governor of California, a future congressman, a judge, a dis--s--state assemblyman, a clergyman, lawyer[s], doctor, all in a graduating class of twelve students. [Background reaction 1 to 2 sec] This college, therefore, from its earliest beginnings has recognized and its graduates have recognized that the purpose of education is not merely to advance the economic self-interest of its graduates.

The people of California as much if not more than the people of any

other states have supported their colleges and their universities and their schools because they recognize how important it is to the maintenance of a free society that its citizens be well educated. Every man, said Professor Woodrow Wilson, sent out from a university should be a man of his nation as well as a man of his time. And Prince Bismark was even more specific. One third, he said, of the students of German universities broke down from over-work; another third broke down from dissipation; and the other third ruled Germany. I do not know which third of the students are here today. [Laughter 1 to 2 sec] But I am confident [Laughter continues 1 sec] I am confident that I am talking to the future leaders of this state and country who recognize their responsibility to the public interest.

Today, you are doing nearly as well. When I observe the men who surround me in Washington -- when I reflect that the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, the director of

Today [Applause 8 sec] today you carry on that tradition. Our distinguished and courageous Secretary of Defense, our distinguished Secretary of State, the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, the director of

the Central Intelligence Agency and the Ambassador to India are all graduates or former students of this University -- I am forced to confront an uncomfortable truth, and so are you: that the New Frontier may well owe more to Berkeley than to Harvard.

This has been a week of momentous events around the world. The long, painful struggle in Algeria drew nearer to solution. Both nuclear powers and neutrals labored at Geneva to renew the quest for disarmament. The foreign ministers of the Soviet Union and the United States met once again on the subject of Berlin. The Congress opened hearings on a trade bill of far-reaching importance to the growth and strength of this nation and the Atlantic community. And my wife had her first ride on an elephant.

But history may well remember this week for an act of lesser immediate impact -- the decision by the United States and the Soviet Union to seek concrete agreements

the CIA and others, all are graduates of this university. [Background of applause, 1 sec] It is a disturbing fact to me, and it may be to some of you, that the New Frontier owes as much to Berkeley as it does to Harvard University. [Loud applause 15 sec]

This has been a week of momentous events around the world. The long and painful struggle in Algeria is coming to an end. Both nuclear powers and non- labor at Geneva for a solution to the problem of a spiraling arms race and also to the problems that so vex our relation with the Soviet Union. The Congress opened hearing on a trade bill which is far more than a trade bill but an opportunity to build a stronger and closer Atlantic community. And my wife had her first and last ride on an elephant. [Laughter 8 sec]

But history may well remember this as a week for an act of less immediate impact. And that is the decision by the United States and the Soviet Union to seek concrete

on the joint exploration of space. Experience has taught us that an agreement to negotiate does not always lead to negotiated agreements. But should such a joint effort be realized, its significance could well be tremendous. In terms of space science, our combined knowledge and efforts can benefit the peoples of all nations: Joint weather satellite systems to provide more ample warning against the destructive powers of storm--joint communications systems to draw the world closer together--and cooperation in space medicine research and space tracking operations to speed the day when man will explore the moon and even beyond.

But the scientific gains a joint effort would offer might be small compared to the gains for world peace. For a cooperative Soviet-American effort in space science and exploration would emphasize the interests that unite us instead of the conflicts that divide us. It offers us an area in which

agreement[s] on the joint exploration of space. Experience has taught us that an agreement to negotiate does not always *mean* a negotiated agreement [s]. But should such a joint effort be realized, its significance could well be tremendous *for us all*. In terms of space science, our combined knowledge and efforts can benefit the people[s] of all *the* nations: joint weather satellite, to provide more ample warnings against destructive storms; joint communication systems to draw the world *more closely* together and cooperation in space medicine research, and space-tracking operations, to speed the day when man will *go to* the moon and beyond.

But the scientific gains *from such* a joint effort would offer, I believe *less realized return than* the gains For world peace. For a cooperative Soviet-American effort in space science and exploration would emphasize the interest[s] that *must* unite us *rather than those that always* divide us. It offers us an area in which

the stale, sterile dogmas of the Cold War can be left literally a quarter of a million miles behind. And it would remind us on both sides that knowledge, not hate, is the passkey to the future--that knowledge transcends national antagonisms--that it speaks a universal language--that it is the possession, not of a single class, a single nation or a single ideology, but of all mankind.

I hardly need to emphasize the pursuit of knowledge here. Your faculty includes more Nobel Laureates than any other faculty in the world--more in this one community than our principal adversary has received since the awards began in 1901. I am happy to pay honor to those winners who are here on the platform today--and to the community which has sought and sustained them. And I know that the University of California will continue to grow as an intellectual

the stale and sterile dogmas of the Cold War could be *literally left* a quarter of a million miles behind. And it would remind us [Faint applause 2 1/2 sec] on both sides that know-ledge, not hate, is the passkey to the future--that knowledge [Applause 6 1/2 sec] --that knowledge transcends national antagonisms--that it speaks a universal language--that it is the possession, not of a single class, or of a single nation or a single ideology but of all mankind.

I *need hardly* emphasize the happy pursuit of knowledge *in this place*. Your faculty includes more Nobel laureates than any other faculty in the world--more [Applause 7 1/2 sec] *more* in this one community than our principle adversary has received since the awards began in 1901, and we *take pride in that only from a national point of view because it indicates, as the Chancellor pointed out, the great intellectual benefits of a free society.* [Applause 7 sec]

*This University of California will*

center because your presidents, your chancellors and your professors have vigorously defended that unhampered freedom of discussion and inquiry which is the heart of the intellectual enterprise and the soul of the free university.

We may be proud as a nation of our record in scientific achievement but at the same time we must be humbled by an understanding of the interdependence of all knowledge. I am certain that every scholar and scientist present today would agree that his own work has benefited immeasurably from the work of men and women in other countries. The prospect of a partnership with Soviet scientists in the exploration of space opens up exciting prospects of collaboration in other areas of learning. And cooperation in the pursuit of knowledge can hopefully lead to cooperation in the pursuit of peace.

Yet the pursuit of knowledge itself

continues to grow as an intellectual set up because your presidents and your chancellors and your professors have vigorously defended that unhampered freedom of discussion and inquiry which is the soul of the intellectual enterprise and the heart of a free university. [Background of applause]

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[Applause 9 sec]

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implies a world where men are free to follow out the logic of their own ideas. It implies a world where nations are free to solve their own problems and to realize their own ideals. It implies, in short, a world where collaboration emerges from the voluntary decisions of nations strong in their own independence and their own self-respect. It implies, I believe, the kind of world which is emerging before our eyes --the world produced by the revolution of national independence which is today sweeping everywhere across the earth.

I sometimes think that we are impressed too much by the clamor of daily urgencies. The newspaper headlines and the television screen give us the short view. They so flood us with stop-press detail that we lose sight of the grand movements of history. Yet it is the profound tendencies, and not the passing excitements, that will shape the future.

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The short view gives us the impression as a nation of being shoved and harried, everywhere on the defense. But this impression is surely an optical illusion. From the perspective of Moscow, the world today may seem even more troublesome, intractable and frustrating than it does to us. The leaders of the Communist world are not only confronted by acute internal problems in each Communist country -- the failure of agriculture, the rising discontent of the youth and the intellectuals, the demands of technical and managerial groups for status and security. They are confronted in addition by profound divisions within the Communist world itself -- divisions which have already shattered the image of Communism as a universal system guaranteed to abolish all social and international conflicts.

Wisdom requires the long view. And the long view shows us that the

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Wisdom requires the long view. And the long view shows us that the

revolution of national independence is a fundamental fact of our era. This revolution cannot be stopped. As new nations emerge from the oblivion of centuries, their first aspiration is to affirm their national identity. Their deepest hope is for a world where, within a framework of international cooperation, every country can solve its own problems according to its own traditions and ideals.

It is in the interests of the pursuit of knowledge--and it is in our own national interest--that this revolution of national independence succeed. For the Communists rest everything on the idea of a monolithic world--a world where all knowledge has a single pattern, all societies move toward a single model, all problems have a single solution, and all roads lead to a single destination. The pursuit of knowledge, on the other hand, rests everything on the opposite idea--on the idea of a world based on diversity, self determination and

the revolution of national independence is a fundamental fact of our era. This revolution will not be stopped. As new nations emerge from the oblivion of centuries, their first aspiration is to affirm their national identity. Their deepest hope is for a world, where within a framework of international cooperation, every country can solve its own problems according to its own traditions and ideals.

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freedom. And that is the kind of world to which we Americans, as a nation, are committed by the principles on which this republic was formed.

As men conduct the pursuit of knowledge, they create a world which freely unites national diversity and international partnership. This emerging world is incompatible with the communist conception of world order. It will irresistibly burst the bonds of Communist organization and Communist ideology. And diversity and independence, far from being opposed to the American conception of world order, represent the very essence of our vision of the future.

There used to be much talk a few years ago about the inevitable triumph of Communism. We hear such talk much less now. No one who examines the modern world can doubt that the great currents of history are carrying the world away from the monolithic idea toward the

the kind of world to which we Americans, as a nation, are committed by the principles upon which the great republic was founded. [Applause 10 sec]

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pluralist idea--away from communism and toward democracy and freedom. No one can doubt that the wave of the future is not the conquest of the world by a single dogmatic creed but the liberation of the diverse energies of free nations and free men. No one can doubt that cooperation in the pursuit of knowledge must lead to freedom of the mind and of the soul.

Beyond the drumfire of daily crisis there is arising the outlines of a robust and vital world community, founded on nations secure in their own independence, dedicated to freedom of choice, and united by allegiance to world peace and justice. It would be foolish to say that this world will be won tomorrow, or the day after. The processes of history are fitful, halting and aggravating. There will be frustrations and setbacks. There will be times of anxiety and gloom. The specter

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Beyond the drumfire of daily crisis, *therefore*, there is arising the outlines of a robust and vital world community, founded on nations secure in their own independence and united by allegiance to world peace. It would be foolish to say that this world will be won tomorrow or the day after. The processes of history are fitful and *uncertain* and aggravating. There will be frustrations and setbacks. There will be times of anxiety and gloom. The spectre of thermonuclear war will *continue* to hang over mankind; and we must heed

of thermonuclear war will hang over mankind; and we must heed the advice of Oliver Wendell Holmes of "freedom leaning on her spear" until all nations are wise enough to disarm safely and effectively.

Yet we can have a new confidence today in the direction in which history is moving. Nothing is more stirring than the recognition of public purpose. Every great age is marked by innovation and daring--by the ability to meet unprecedented problems with intelligent solutions. In a time of turbulence and change, it is more true than ever that knowledge is power; for only by true understanding and steadfast judgment are we able to master the challenge of history.

If this is so, we must strive to acquire knowledge--and to apply it with wisdom. We must reject oversimplified theories of international life--the theory that American power is unlimited, or that the American mission is to remake the world in the American image

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We must seize the vision of a free and diverse world--and shape our policies to speed progress toward a flexible world order.

This is the unifying spirit of our policies in the world. The purpose of our aid programs must be to help developing countries to move forward as rapidly as possible on the road to genuine national independence. Our military policies must assist nations to protect the processes of democratic reform and development against disruption and intervention. Our diplomatic policies must strengthen our relations with the whole world, with our several alliances and with the United Nations.

As we press forward on every front to realize the flexible world order, the role of the university becomes ever more important, both as a reservoir of ideas and as a repository of the long view.

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"Knowledge is the great sun of the firmament," said Senator Daniel

Webster. "Life and power are scattered with all its beams."

In its light, we must think and act not only for the moment but for the century. I am reminded of the story of Marshal Lyautey, who once asked his gardener to plant a tree. The gardener objected that the tree was slow-growing and would not reach maturity for a hundred years. The Marshal replied, "In that case, there is no time to lose. Plant it this afternoon."

Today a world of knowledge -- a world of cooperation -- a just and lasting peace -- may well be years away. But we have no time to lose. Let us plant our trees this very afternoon.

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Webster. "Life and power are scattered *along* its beams."

In its light, we must think and act not only for the moment but for *our times*. I am reminded of the story of the great French Marshal Lyautey, who once asked his gardener to plant a tree. The gardener objected that the tree was slow growing and would not reach maturity for a hundred years. The Marshal replied "In that case, there is no time to lose. Plant it this afternoon."

Today [Applause 3 sec] today a world of knowledge, a world of cooperation, a just and lasting peace, may be years away, but we have no time to lose. Let us plant our trees this afternoon. [Applause]