

Transcript

Dedication of the Evergreen
State College
Speech by Governor Daniel J. Evans
Olympia, Washington
April 21, 1972

President McCann, Mrs. Tourtellotte, Trustees, faculty, students, friends of Evergreen, skeptics, doubters, (and I am sure there are some of those).

I can tell you that I'm proud for one to be here. I'm proud to be part of Evergreen, in at least some small way, and most of all I am proud of what Evergreen has meant and what it's doing. This is an opportunity that comes to a Governor once in a very, very long time; in fact, I look back into history and it was before the turn of the century that we created our last four-year college here in the State of Washington. I think it's a particularly appropriate date on which we meet here. Tomorrow, April 22, is Earth Day, or it was the celebration of Earth Day a couple of years ago, and you remember the interest and the nationwide dedication to a quality environment and to a better future for this country. Two years have passed. This month two years ago war turmoil struck this nation from one end to the other. Two years have passed. And I wonder sometimes what's happened to the turmoil and to the activism which struck so many and involved so many of two years ago. Have those who have set out to reorder our priorities and to reorder society given up? Or (and I hope this is true) in a very different way succeeded or are in the process of succeeding.

Four years ago I gave a keynote address to the Republican National Convention. Perhaps it wasn't a time for listening then, but I'd like to repeat part of it today. When I said then we are frustrated by the fourth most costly war in our history; a war in which we spend one million dollars every twenty minutes; a war which has cost us nearly 150,000 casualties and more than 20,000 lives; a war which we have not won in Saigon, cannot negotiate in Paris and will not explain to the American people. But if we are frustrated by a war on the mainland of Asia, we are even more burdened by the crisis in the main streets of America. A crisis of violence and of stolen hope; a crisis of lawlessness and injustice; and impulsive and reckless dissatisfaction with what we are and a desperate outcry for what we could be once again. We have stood for twenty years in defense of a free world. We have given as no other nation to the securing of world order and to the pursuits of human progress and for it, for it we have paid a heavy price on the ledger of neglect. Not neglect in terms of ignorance, but neglect in terms of our priorities. This does not mean that the United States should abandon its international commitments. A great power cannot view the world from behind the walls of political isolation nor economic protection. Nor does it necessarily imply that we should withdraw from our obligations and responsibilities to ourselves and to the people of South Vietnam.

To have entered the war by the path of error does not mean we can leave through the door of default, but it does mean that the first priority of the United States is in the resolution of our internal conflict; the recognition that if we cannot unite our own nation then we cannot preserve the hope of others. It is time now to reach inward, to reach down and touch

April 21, 1972

the troubled spirit of America. It is time to confront the issues of poverty and disease and human dignity which lie beneath the violence that tears at every conscience just as it strikes fear in every heart.

We have a long and a serious agenda before us and no easy road to its accomplishment. The problems of environment, of congestion, of urban decay and rural stagnation did not suddenly occur. They are the residue of years, even of decades, in which we devoted too much of ourselves to size and to quantity, too little to shape and to quality. They are the residue of years in which we believe that welfare was a substitute for pride and that public charity could replace individual opportunity. But Black America and poor America are teaching us a new language, the language of participation. They say let us share in your prosperity, let us not have another generation of servitude but a new generation of opportunity.

That was four years ago. Four years have not changed those words nor have they changed my views. Four years later we are still engaged in a war that has not only devastated Southeast Asia but has torn this nation asunder as no other event and no other war in this nation's history.

You heard earlier this morning a single cry for peace, a cry which is echoed by millions, each one saying it in his own way--some quietly, some louder than others--but they are saying it and they are crying out and they are reaching out for peace. They are saying this war must end. This war will pass, as others have, but the neglected question is, What comes next? We can be so imbued with today we forget tomorrow. I pointed out four years ago that the unfinished agenda is long, and too many today view the future with little or no hope. Some refuse today to bring new children into the world, feeling that those children have little hope to grow up in a future which is desirable. Many are advocating absolute and strict controls on population with the view that no additional population can be taken care of on this earth. Some suggest that we must limit severely basic energy consumption because we too are running out of our basic energy potential. Some are suggesting that we need to put strict and very tough limits on our economy; that we cannot afford a continued growth in our economy but must find economic stabilization and some are frightened over the thought that, if each citizen of the world were to have the same material goods in the same quantities as the citizens of this nation, we simply could not, under any circumstances, provide the natural resources, the material goods necessary to serve the world's population. But if Evergreen means anything, if it means anything to the faculty and to the administration and to the student body, and if it means anything at all to the citizens of this State, then I believe it must mean that the tackling of this unfinished agenda must be foremost; that somehow and in some way what Evergreen does helps to replace hopelessness with hope.

In twenty-eight years the millennium will have come again. The year 2000 will be here and those of you who are students at Evergreen today will be my age (heaven forbid!). I think the question you ought to ask yourselves today, and I hope it is being asked by many, is, What will I think then? Do you ever really think about it or do you ever really care? I think the real question is not what will it be like in the year

April 21, 1972

2000 but how can I help make it what it should be in the year 2000, not for just myself but for the entire community. If Evergreen is to fulfill its commitment, it, as an institution, must dream not the small dreams but the very large dreams. The change between now and the year 2000, in just twenty-eight years, is likely to be as great as the change between the year 1900 and today.

We could, each of us, look ahead to the year 2000 and suggest what we might like to see or what might happen. Let me suggest only a few: I believe by the year 2000 we will have discovered how to make cities livable once again; the great urban communities of this nation, in their urban cores, will have long since abolished the individual automobile and have made the pedestrian the human being once again the master of the cities; I believe in our cities we will group together some of our neighborhoods and some of our present square and uninviting and not very unique city blocks into larger urban blocks with the homes or town houses surrounding a center individual and very personalized park or recreational facility. I believe by the year 2000 we will be working less than four days a week in order to sustain ourselves better than we can sustain ourselves today. And that means that ever-increasing attention must be given to how and how effectively we spend our leisure time. I believe perhaps all or virtually all our citizens by the year 2000 could join those who are in the academic field and on a regular basis take sabbaticals and move away from the work we are now engaged in to some different kind of experience for a year and then return to the life of work. I believe by the year 2000 it is possible that every young citizen of this country will contribute, or will be asked to contribute, a year of action to this nation and to his community. Not by being drafted for a military service but by contributing to the many, many community activities which today simply cannot be handled, which I believe could be handled with the response to this challenge of a year of contribution, each young citizen as a regular part of his or her life to the community, to the state or to this nation. I hope by the year 2000 that education will be much more individualized and personalized than it is today and that much of that education will occur in the community and within the life of the community and not solely in the separate and sometimes rather isolated campuses of our colleges, universities and even high schools. I believe by the year 2000 there will be an extensive interchange of people from one country and one continent to another, and through that exchange and through that better understanding at the person-to-person level, perhaps we have the best single hope of reaching a peace that is lasting. By the year 2000 we must have resolved the basic rights of each citizen of this nation to adequate medical care, adequate food, and adequate housing for each citizen; but most of all by the year 2000 I hope we have reached the society where success is not measured by the accumulation of material goods, but by how satisfying, how useful and how personally rewarding a life becomes.

Now each of you could draw a better portrait, a more personal portrait of the year 2000. The important thing is to begin to attempt to draw it. These are not or should not be the unattainable dreams of the next generation. If anything they are too modest. But they do need nurturing by a new generation of those who really care.

April 21, 1972

Some word got around this community that I was going to participate in an unusual event today--Willi Unsoeld suggested that I rebel down the clock tower. I told Willi this morning and I will tell you today, I intend and will return this spring and I hope to leave my mark on that clock tower. What is vastly more important is that you leave your mark on Evergreen to President McCann, to students, to the faculty members of this college. Today the potential for doing that is unlimited because you have no footsteps to follow. Tomorrow's generation will travel in your footsteps so I hope and trust that each of you will make these first steps innovative and bold and decisive, but most of all make these first steps taken with a conviction that there is a future, that it is not pre-ordained but that it will be what we make it. That must be the Evergreen challenge.