

Daniel J. Evans
Speech to Staff
September 15, 1977

I guess I'm just about to find out what Evergreen is really all about. The last three months have been a time of learning, a time of getting acquainted, but frankly I've been somewhat apprehensive about a quiet and peaceful campus without very many people. It was very pleasant this summer, but I expect there will be a change starting next week as new students come aboard, classes starting the week after that, and then the reason we're all here becomes readily apparent. I suspect there was some wariness in the course of the last four or five months, wariness perhaps on both sides. Wariness from long-time Evergreeners over first the new president, someone who didn't come in the normal academic framework. I told the faculty this morning that I guess that was driven home to me most forcefully when I received my first memo from the Council on Post Secondary Education addressed to the Presidents of all the institutions. It was addressed to Dr. Hogness, Dr. Terrell, Dr. Frederickson, Dr. Olscamp, Dr. Brooks, and Mr. Evans. It showed me, I guess, where I was in the scheme of things. But I suppose there's some wariness on my part, too. I've been familiar with political administration, certainly the fact that I've been involved in public enterprise, and you're in a great public enterprise, puts us in the same ball park in many respects, but there are great differences. The last three months have been really enjoyable months. Perhaps it was fortunate that I came during summer when I had a chance to get acquainted, to learn a little bit of what Evergreen is all about, to even find my way from one building to the next, to learn what such exotic words as SPLU, and similar acronyms really meant. I think that that served me in good stead and I'm a little better prepared to meet students and the full faculty as they come. It's not only been a joy of acquaintanceship, but it's been, in many respects, a learning for the first time about an institution I thought I knew rather well. As Dean pointed out I was in at the creation, and during the early days of Evergreen. I've watched it, I've

been out here a number of times, I've participated -- and yet in the last few months I've learned more of Evergreen and what it really can do and what it has done, than I ever did in the ten years of it's previous history and those same ten years in my contact with Evergreen. I think if there's a real untold story in this state perhaps it is the untold story outside of the boundaries of this campus. Of all of the excellence of what Evergreen really stands for, and what it has done, and what it can do. It's much better known inside the campus and outside the state, that[^] it is in the remainder of this community and perhaps in the remainder of the state as a whole. But that's a good place to start. If people on the campus have a good feeling and understanding of what they're doing and why and how well it's working; and if we've already earned as we have a national reputation, then it's a much easier task to translate that success to the Olympia community and to the rest of the people of this state, including most particularly those who serve in the legislature. I've seen several things, I guess, in that acquaintanceship period in the last several months. First, this is a beautiful campus. It's a beautiful campus made even more so by those of you who work so hard to keep it that way. It's maintained in an outstanding fashion. I am continually pleased, just in walking across the campus, to see what it looks like. To get that special feeling from a place of beauty, a place which makes it that much easier to learn. I might say also that I've had the opportunity, and I will take many more opportunities, to invite friends and acquaintances, people who have some reason to be more aware of Evergreen, to the campus. I've had exactly the same reaction from them. For the most part it's the first time they've been on the campus. They're astonished at the physical plant we have, even more pleased by the surroundings and the way in which Evergreen is maintained. My real gratitude goes to those of you who are particularly responsible for that operation. In fact, if you want to be a little crass about it, there's even less graffiti in the restrooms than is the case in most other institutions. What little there is is of a higher intellectual content. But I think in all respects we have a great deal to be proud of in our physical plant, and the campus we have. I've also had a

chance in the last several months to get to know at least a few of the students. There aren't all that many during a summer time period, but I've taken a couple of rather interesting ways of getting acquainted with students. The many hitchhikers around the campus are easy prey ss far as I'm concerned. I stop invariably to pick them up, to use that as a way to find out what students are thinking about the campus and I get one of two reactions invariably. When they open the door and get in they look over at me and say "Oh my God"; and then some will get in and they'll sit down and look over at me and say "Well, where are you going?". That way I can divide out absolutely and precisely which are in-state students and which are out-of-state students. But, whether they're in-state or out-of-state, one thing seems to come across. This I think is totally unscientific from only those who are hitchhiking and those who happen to be on campus during the summer. I think I can contrast those reactions from a number of students with reactions I've had from talking with students over the years from many, many other institutions. From being on the campus a number of times at every public institution in our state during the last dozen years, and most of the private institutions. Students here are more enthusiastic about what they're doing, and more eager to tell you about what they're doing, and more coherent in talking about a program or a whole sense of study, than is usually the case at other institutions. When you ask somebody about what they're doing at most other schools they will tell you "Well, I'm taking Psych 101 and I'm taking Literature this", and they can recite the courses. But to put it together in some sense of what it is they're really trying to learn, and what they're trying to do, it's much more frequent to find that sense here than in students you talk to elsewhere. That, too, is a positive way in which we can continue to build out from this time forward. I'm struck by the record of accomplishment at Evergreen which probably not all of you are thoroughly aware of it. I know I wasn't, and I suspect there's no one on this campus who is totally aware of all these individual elements of real accomplishment which typify Evergreen. I'm finding out about them daily. Students who have acquired some significant grants from various national foundations and governmental organizations

on a student initiated and student originated research program. I'm finding the faculty have been able to reach out and acquire grants and then carry out study programs that have in turn convinced some real skeptics in the state, some of our major private business organizations and others, who were skeptical in the beginning but after seeing how Evergreeners could perform, both faculty and students, the whole Evergreen family, have come back again to ask us to participate with them in carrying on some research project or some other function. So the ingredients of greatness in this institution are all around us. They come because everyone really has been concerned. Perhaps when you are under some fire from outside, you tend to be that much more aware and willing to participate that much more heavily in making an institution you believe in really work and work well. But with all of that, the times ahead are not going to be particularly easy. Evergreen's on trial, both collectively and individually. Collectively with other higher education institutions because we're just in a tough time. * We share that with other functions of state government, we share it even with other states. Higher education is no longer viewed in the same fashion it was ten or a dozen years ago. But we're also at a point when government itself is viewed in a different fashion. The budget balancers, those who believe that we should shrink, not expand, the services of government, are in full sway now in most states. It's measured in this state by our most recent budget, under which we are not operating. It's a tough budget. It's going to require all of us to do just a little bit more, and a little better, in order to carry on our activities and responsibilities. At least half, if not more, of the major budget units within Evergreen are going to operate during this fiscal year with fewer dollars than a year ago. That's fewer dollars in spite of inflation, in spite of serving more students, and so it means * that we are simply going to have to do a somewhat better job than we've done in the past to carry on our responsibilities. We have a sort of individual trial to go through. While this may have pointed itself particularly toward our educational format, and as such directed itself toward the faculty primarily, I think there is at one and the same time a danger and a real challenge, a real opportunity, for us.

The Council on Post Secondary Education has been given a charge, or responsibility, through the budget to conduct a very interesting study. Let me read you the paragraph which was in the budget document and you can get some picture of our individual trial that Evergreen will face: "To the Council of Post Secondary Education not more than twenty five thousand dollars shall be expended to study and make recommendations on the curriculum and the costs of The Evergreen State College. The study shall determine the actions necessary to broaden the institution's clientele base by introducing traditional undergraduate and graduate course offerings, and reduce the institution's total operating costs per FTE student to the average cost per FTE student of the other three state colleges." Now that's sort of a wild way of doing things. Here is a study being called for which they want to invest \$25,000 when the answer is already provided in the question. You would think at the beginning that that's going to cause some enormous difficulties. I choose to look on it as a real opportunity for Evergreen, to perhaps once and for all, to still the voices of some of the critics who criticize without really knowing. Because I am convinced that a thorough study, one which does take the truth and lay it out in terms for the outside world to look at, will show first that the way to broaden the clientele base is not to move toward a traditional system of education, but rather to retain the innovative ideas and ways in which we are doing things. Those same students that I've talked to so many times when I've picked them up have by and large come here to Evergreen because they like what they know about it or have heard about it and many of them have come after trying out other more traditional institutions and find that they are either stifling or do not provide the opportunity for students to follow directions they choose to follow. So the opportunity here is to prove that we can at least serve a broad clientele base and serve some students better than any other institution, not by being more traditional but by being innovative and different. There is no more reason for us to move to a totally traditional format than there would be for other traditional institutions to broaden their clientele base by moving to innovative, or Evergreen style, interdisciplinary programs. There is a place for each, and each set of institutions will

serve a particular need. It's to the great credit, I think, of the legislature and the people of this state that over these past ten years they've been willing to invest in a school like Evergreen. Not all states have the same privilege. Not all students of all states have the same privilege to choose between the different institutions and the ways in which they carry out their educational format. That challenge is a big one. I hope and believe that our faculty and our academic side of things can show conclusively that tradition is not necessarily the way for us to follow. The other half of the study is one in which we'll all be directly involved. Certainly everyone in this room, everyone at Evergreen, will be involved in the question of operating costs per FTE student. I've already sort of jumped the gun on the study that will be conducted by asking our own budget office to put together a measure of Evergreen financially as if we were to have 4,000 students on campus this fall rather than 2500 or 2600. We're built for approximately 4,000. We have the physical plant in virtually all respects to serve 4,000 students. What would it cost on a per student basis if we were to fill the existing plant? I'm confident that that will show that our cost per student then would be very much in line with other institutions. I'd like very much to have the study show us that the way to bring the cost in line would be to let Evergreen grow and serve more students and fill the fine physical capacity we have. Although I'm sure there are plenty of people here who delight in the availability of equipment and the facilities we have and don't particularly want to share it with a whole lot more people. That goes for a number of people in the Olympia community who have found Evergreen, and who delight in using its facilities, and who have already told me "for heaven sakes don't go out and over sell Evergreen", because we'll have too much competition out there in the use of these fine facilities. So that's our individual trial and we share with other institutions the common problems we have. I have not mentioned the real dangers that may afflict all of us financially with the two initiatives on the ballot this fall. The arguments for and against will become more and more apparent as we get closer to November. But the initiative which would eliminate the gas tax increase doesn't really affect us, at least directly. The other

one which would eliminate the sales tax on food, does affect us directly. There is, I think, a great likelihood that the people will vote for that initiative and pass it. Frankly I can't say that I'm opposed to taking the sale tax off food, after all we tried to do it several years ago. But we tried to do it with some sense of replacement knowing that there were responsibilities for government, and we had to meet those responsibilities. This one has no replacement built in. Believe me there are going to be some difficult times if the people vote overwhelmingly to take the sale tax from food as I suspect they will. Then a legislature will have to meet with that overwhelming vote behind them and face up to one of two challenges. Either find alternative tax revenues somewhere to maintain the current budget we are now operating under; or do some serious and severe cutbacks in current budget. There aren't many places they can make those cutbacks. There are only three major expenditures of the state's general fund. They take up about 92% of all the money that goes out of the general fund, that's for common schools, higher education and human resource services, almost all of which come out of the Department of Social and Health Services. They aren't likely to be able to take it from common schools because they are already under court order to provide more, not less, from the state level for the support of public schools. That leaves just higher education and human resource services. I think you can already guess what's likely to happen is we're going to be faced with that alternative. It's pretty tough to take money from the blind, or the elderly, or the sick, or the retarded, the mentally ill, or all the people who are pretty helpless to serve their own needs. The concentration almost assuredly will be on higher education. So I think we've got to do what we can to operate as well and as efficiently as we can possibly show and then hope that we can give sufficient support to a legislature to deal with the difficult problems they're likely to face in January or February if that initiative does pass. Let me turn to some of the things I talked to the faculty about this morning. They deal most directly with the educational clientele we're likely to have the next few years, but that's important for everyone here to know, as well as the faculty to know. In

fact I really have appreciated the fact that here faculty and staff are not as sharply divided as is the case in most other institutions. The fact that many of you do carry some individual contracts and share in some of the teaching modes, and many others tape classes and share in the learning process, means that there is a lot closer relationship between the faculty and staff at Evergreen. That's one of our strengths, and it also means that you ought to understand as clearly as the faculty, where we are going and what kind of future we're likely to face. It's important to understand just what kind of people we have in Washington particularly. The rest of the nation is important because we have a lot of outside students, but in Washington what's likely to happen in the next ten years? Most people can listen to or see the projections on total population and they understand those pretty well but that's where they stop and that isn't good enough. We've not only got to know how many people we're going to have, but also what ages they will be. There are some drastic differences between the growth in the total population and the number of people in each of our age groups. Just a few statistics, I probably should have put them on the board before we started, but I think they are reasonably easy to understand. Going from 1975 to 1985, just during this next ten year period. 1975 we had about 3 1/2 million people in the state of Washington; in 1985 it's expected we will have about 4.3 million, a 21 percent increase. Washington has been discovered by the rest of the nation. People are migrating to Washington in ever increasing numbers. The last few years it's been very strong in migration. That's likely to continue as long as our economy is good, right now it's better than the rest of the nation, and as long as we have the kind of living conditions and opportunities for people which are as unique as they are. But listen to these figures remembering that the total population is going to increase by 21 percent: 1975 the number of people in Washington between 15 and 19 years of age -- that's our traditional next consumer class for higher education -- 350,000 in 1975; 329,000 in 1985. So in spite of a great increase in total population the numbers in that age group are going down by 6%. 20 to 24 -- 333,000 now; 377,000 ten years from now. That's up 13%. It's an increase but not as

much as the total population. 25 to 29 -- 297,000 now; 408,000 ten years from now. That's a 38% increase. You see, That's what's going to happen to us. We're going to grow in population, but we'll have fewer youngsters, more young adults, and although I haven't got the figures here, many more who will be in retirement years as well. So we have different challenges. If we were just halfway smart, like almost any private enterprise that looks at a market, if you are going to sell a product or a service you've got to look out there and see who I'm selling to and how many of them are there going to be out there to serve? We in higher education must realize that there's going to be sharper and sharper competition for the high school graduate just coming out of high school. The numbers will drop radically in the next few years. By the same token there are a lot of people who didn't finish a college education in the late teens and early 20's. Many of them got married, they got jobs, they went away to service, but for one reason or another didn't return to complete a college education. Many of them went through a community college because they could afford to stay in their own community and go that far, but they couldn't afford leaving their homes and going to a residential campus for the extra cost involved. So we've got some different kinds of students we're likely to have in the next few years. If we're smart, we ought to couple that set of statistics which tells us something about where the students are going to be and where they're not going to be with Evergreen's particular strength and charge. When Evergreen was started ten years ago, it was started really with three thoughts in mind: 1) to serve southwest Washington, where there are no four year colleges; 2) to provide a different or an alternative form of higher education; and 3) once the selection of Olympia as a site was announced, the obvious close association with state government to both give Evergreen a chance to learn from state government and state government people to learn from Evergreen. So those are the challenges we have. Right now I think we're doing a reasonably good job of serving southwest Washington, 60% of our student body is from southwest Washington. We certainly have been maturing in terms of our alternative form, and the end result is that we have been discovered nationally

20% of our student body from outside of the state as opposed to three to four percent at the other state colleges. We ought not to be defensive about that, in fact we ought to really brag about it, the fact that we are recognized throughout the rest of the country. Students are coming here because they know about Evergreen, they know about it in a positive way, and they feel that this is where they can get the kind of education they want. Where do we go then with those three charges and with this changing student body out ahead of us? I would like to embark on, and will embark on, essentially a five year plan. After thinking about it, and talking with the Vice Presidents, I may want to change that to a 5.8 year plan so we don't get mixed up with some of our communist society neighbors who are commonly engaged in 5-year planning. But if we were to think ahead for instance to the enth of the 1981-83 biennium. That's the remainder of this biennium plus two more. What do we want to be by then? How many do we want to serve and what kind of students do we want to serve? We have a unique opportunity right now to embark on that kind of relatively short range planning but it's planning that's nonetheless very important given the fact that we're going to have, if we're to be successful, a different clientele to serve. We need to do some things, although I'm going to really seek all of the participation I can from you, from the faculty, and from everybody at Evergreen including the students, to get a better sense of what we should be doing. Some of the things that come to mind right away are taking Evergreen out to the community. We've done it very successfully in Vancouver where we have had students for the past year and will embark shortly on a second year of study programs in Vancouver with an Evergreen format which helps students down there finish off a college career and get their degrees. Eight of those sixty in last year's program got their degrees at the end of the year. I'm confident that the numbers, as I point out in their late 20's, and even older, who did not get to finish their college career will jump at the chance to be able to finish in their home communities where Evergreen is particularly well suited with an interdisciplinary type program to reach out and offer education in Aberdeen and Port Angeles and Bremerton and other communities as well as in Vancouver, and of course right here in our own

Olympia community. That's one possible change. Another special commitment I believe in very strongly here at Evergreen is that because we have been innovative and because we have been different, I think we also have a chance to really respond well to an important commitment in affirmative action and particularly in the opening of opportunities for education to many students who haven't thought very much about the possibility of higher education in the past. Here to, I think, it's important for us to reach out and find out from the communities themselves what the needs are and where students are located and how they can best be served particularly in the southwest region of the state. I've asked that this budget this year, in spite of it being a very tight budget, have some money set aside to initiate especially an educational opportunity program. I'm sure that that relatively small amount of money can be expanded with grant monies from other levels of government and that we will as a result be able to expand on that special commitment which I believe Evergreen has and can discharge better than most other institutions. But, when you get right down to it, the important end result of any educational institution is how well we carry out the educational functions. That's what we're really all here for. I guess that I share with you a particular responsibility. We, as compared with the direct teaching faculty and the student body, are in something of a support role. We have got to do our job well enough so that the faculty and the students can do a most effective job of education, of providing academic excellence, that will make Evergreen known in the state as well as outside of the state. The success of what we do depends on academic rigor and excellence and the devotion of the faculty to that and the devotion of the student body to that and devotion of the staff to insuring that we do what is necessary to make sure that academic programs can be carried out in the best fashion possible. We have a pretty good measurement of how well we're likely to do. After all, students, and where they choose to come and how long they choose to stay and how successfully they carry out their studies are the measure of the success of an educational institution. They'll tell us with their feet whether they like what we provide. They'll either come to Evergreen in increasing numbers or they'll shy away from Evergreen and go else-

where. It's our job to make sure the feet are coming our way and that they come our way in increasing numbers so that we can fulfill the potential that's out ahead of us. Let me just talk to one or two other somewhat different items. I've had a chance to get acquainted with other national educational foundations, with people who have higher education responsibilities at the federal government level, and some of the major foundations, and I find that in Washington, D.C. And in New York and at the Carnegie Commission and other prestigious areas throughout the nation, The Evergreen State College is widely and favorably known. We have a good national reputation. I'm not sure it's always equal right here in Olympia. That's part of our next challenge -- to make sure that the people right here at home know of the excellence of Evergreen just as intimately as people outside the state know, and those who are engaged nationally in education know. I don't know really what all the causes have been over the years but I do know, just after three months, that it's easy to get on the campus and to stay on the campus, it's a little inconvenient to get from here to downtown Olympia and take part in some of the activities of the community. We have most of the facilities we need here on campus, and it's a pleasant place to stay. But that isn't good enough. Each one of you, each one of us, has a particular responsibility to be a total part of the community in which we live. That's whether you live in Olympia, or Lacey, or Tumwater, or from Tacoma or wherever you live. Be a continuing advertising agent for Evergreen, but do it by being a total part of the community. Olympia's still recovering from something of a cultural shock six years ago when a thousand long haired rather different students landed on their doorstep. The same thing was happening in communities all over the country. It happened in Bellingham and it happened in Cheney and it happened in Ellensburg but citizens of those communities had had seventy years to get acquainted with student bodies. They had watched them slowly evolve from short hair and rather good looking clothing into the longer hair and the blue jeans costumes that populated college campuses everywhere. Olympia didn't have that privilege and I'm not sure the cultural shock has worn off. We've got to help it wear off. I think we can best do that by each one participating as actively and ~~totally~~².

totally in the Olympia community or in the surrounding community as we can. There are plenty ways to do that. To aid in what we're trying to do, closer coordination with the other educational institutions, with the Olympia Technical Community College, St. Martin's with the various school districts, where a closer relationship and better understanding between us will help all of us. There are a number of ways you can take part in the Olympia community. I think this audience particularly, just to give you an example, could be of assistance to the Olympia Chamber of Commerce. The Olympia Chamber of Commerce is by and large pretty favorably inclined toward Evergreen. They don't share all of the apprehensions that some of the rest of the community does. In the first place I think they understand pretty accurately the economic benefits of a college -- the twenty-million dollars a year in expenditure directly by the college, and by the students and faculty and staff here at the college. But I think they also recognize the advantage in the community of having an outstanding educational institution, and having not just one but two. One at the four year level and the community college to boot. The community is fortunate in that respect. They're building a new building, and I'm not providing a commercial for the Chamber of Commerce but merely to point out that they're trying to do it on a boot strap operation and they're reaching out and asking people, their own members and friends of the Chamber, people in the community that just sign up to help them for a day or so, to help get the building built. I can sign up, and will as a common laborer because I don't have any particular construction skills, but many who do could be of great help. That would be one more small way to tie Evergreen to the local community. We will shortly have a United Way campaign in Olympia. That United Way campaign, well really it's the Thurston County campaign, will provide the essential support for twenty-two community agencies. I suspect virtually everyone in this audience uses one or another of those twenty-two community agencies from time to time. An increasing number of those agencies are staffed now by Evergreen graduates. A number of them are headed by those who have had much of their training here at Evergreen. There's a close relationship between some of those institutions and ours, but there has not been a very good support, frankly,

of the United Way within the Evergreen community. We are not very good supporters. Not anywhere near as good as those who represent the common schools, those who represent other businesses and public agencies in the Thurston County area. I don't intend ever to twist anyone's arm to engage in any kind of charitable contributions. I do think it's important to point out the opportunity, and to encourage those who feel they can, to contribute even if only a small amount to a broad community support operation, and in doing so build one more bridge between Olympia and Evergreen.