

Daniel J. Evans
Speech to Faculty
November 9, 1977

This has been the first election night in twenty years, I guess, that I watched as an interested observer. I spent more time watching issues than candidates and the people of the state proved themselves to be as usual unpredictable, irrational, but decisive. We now end up with a state dedicated to cleanliness, male superiority, and no taxes. I'm not sure what kind of a state that is, but we may well find out in the course of the next few months. It was hard to find, you know the old good news, bad news, it was hard to find the good news in the course of the election last night; but perhaps there was one, an Evergreen graduate in a first advanced to the august state Senate. So Representative Eleanor Lee won a seat in the Senate, we'll have an Evergreener now in the Senate; and Denny Heck, an Evergreen graduate, in the House of Representatives. So slowly, but surely, we're infiltrating. If you can figure out a way to get us a majority quick in both houses it would do us some good. There have been a number of events, many of them unsettling and certainly some of them jarring, since the opportunity I had to speak to you at the beginning of fall quarter. I've been really grateful for the response of the faculty. I have not had the opportunities I hoped to have to spend time with each of you, each of the programs, and to get a little better acquainted with some of the things going on. I have had some opportunity to sit in on some of the seminars and the programs. I think that the deans deliberately aimed me in the direction they did so that I would sit in on some programs which I only vaguely understood. Some of the biology and genetics and photo-synthesis, I can understand some of the words but when they string them all together they don't make very much sense. It has been really worthwhile to do a little bit of that, and I hope to have the opportunity to do more. I am grateful, however, for responses such as the really outstanding response of both faculty and staff to community affairs like the United Way fund drive. The participation with many of the community groups which a good many of you have undertaken. And I recognize that in some of these arenas there

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-2-

are differences of opinion, people choose for one reason or another, and some of you have written to me explaining those reasons not to participate, and I fully understand and respect that. The opportunity to take part, however, is one which I think we should continue to make available in each of these activities which represent an opportunity to tie Evergreen a little more closely to the Olympia community. Let me speak to about three or four things that are of particular concern, I know, to me and I'm sure they are to you, they are to all Evergreeners. For the first time since the opening of Evergreen we ran into an enrollment drop this year. We've done some surveying of that to try to find out if it was a certain area, whether the increases in tuition drove away out-of-state students, whether somehow our part-time offerings kind of went over an enthusiastic hump last year and dropped. There appears to be, at least in all of the analysis I've done, no particular place, no specific thing that we could zero in on that represents the reason for enrollment drop. The percentage of out-of-state students is exactly the same as it was last year, a little bit less but so are in-state students a few less. The part-time programs are again almost an identical percentage as those of last year. So it doesn't appear to be any diffinitive area that we could analyze and attack as being responsible for the enrollment drop. Unfortunately Evergreen received most of the publicity on enrollment drop, although almost lost in that news article was the fact that four out of the six state four-year institutions had a drop in enrollment. Only the University of Washington and Western Washington University had increases. The focus on Evergreen really came because we had predicted, or in the budget was a prediction for enrollment growth at Evergreen; whereas at Central, at Washington State and at Eastern they were really contracting for essentially level enrollments. They had drops and so do we. The ultimate result of that could be the return of about \$180,000 to the state because we have not achieved the contracted enrollments which were in the budget. We'll have an opportunity to renegotiate or to work with the legislature in the second year's contracted enrollments. We have to make some real decisions as to how enthusiastic or optimistic we want to be or

conversely how conservative we want to be in enrollment projection. We'll talk a little later about some of the strategies which I hope we can use to give ourselves a little more flexibility during that upcoming legislative session. How do we react to the immediate problem, then, of an enrollment which by the time we've counted everybody, and we really did reach out and try to count everybody, was a little over 2400 full time equivalents, 2404. That compares with a contracted enrollment, remember this is an annual average enrollment of 2500 as our goal. The difficulties of course occur in looking at traditional patterns. We almost in every year have had a drop in enrollment from fall, to winter, to spring quarter. In order to achieve an average of some particular level, you need something close to 106% of that at the fall quarter in order to allow for that drop. Of course we're starting out behind. We'll need to reverse that traditional decline if we are going to avoid the loss of that reasonably substantial amount of money. That's what gave birth to some of the strategies, the programs which have been initiated, to try to reach out and encourage enrollment of new students in winter and spring quarter. We are looking at part-time students, the possibilities particularly in the state government to encourage a broader use of Evergreen as an educational opportunity. Questionnaires have been sent out to a number of current students. That along with the trial balloon helps give us a better sense of what their needs and desires are. The same kind of questioning is intended for the community to try to get a better sense of what it is they would like to see as educational offerings here at Evergreen. We will continue, as we have in the past, the typical recruitment process in community colleges and in high schools but hope to add to that some rather unique opportunities. Drawing teachers from high schools and community colleges to this campus hopefully to have an opportunity to see what's here personally, particularly to see what's here in their own fields of expertise, so that we can add them to student advisors or counselors as advocates for Evergreen. This fall, out of all of the Thurston and Mason County high schools which graduated last spring something close to 2,000 seniors, eight came to Evergreen. Now, we depend

very heavily on community college transfers, and maybe that's the direction we are particularly capable of going. We have a very heavy emphasis on upper division as opposed to lower division course offerings. But nonetheless, there's little question in my mind that a far greater number than eight of last spring's high school graduates from this area would find Evergreen not only a good but very likely the best place they could come for their next stage of education. Somehow we have not gotten through to them and I'd be anxious to get any ideas that you or any member of the Evergreen family can institute to help encourage a broader representation of these local high school graduates on the Evergreen campus. Well, some may not like all of these tactics. It appears to, I think, some that we are responding to an immediate problem with sort of an immediate answer rather than continuing toward our long-range goals at Evergreen. But it is a crisis situation in terms of money. I think we ought to put every effort we can into reacting to that crisis without distorting our long-range goals, or without distorting the kinds of elements that make Evergreen unique. Well, if we do have to find \$180,000 how are we going to do it? It's my full intention to do it with the least possible disruption to our academic progress here at Evergreen. But it isn't going to be easy to do and there will have to be some cutbacks, some delays in things we would like to do; everyone must find ways to do things just a little bit better or perhaps find ways in which we can either delay or set aside items which have some costs. We have asked for the various program elements, the budget elements, of the college to find, on a ratio basis, about \$100,000. That doesn't meet the whole \$180,000 cut. I have purposely chosen not to do that because I believe we can get at the remainder with the amounts which will normally revert through vacancies, position control where when someone quits or retires or leaves if that position is not immediately filled there is an interim gap of some period of time when that salary is not being paid and where we can recapture or recover some money. That's happened in the past, it's not unique, it won't represent an unusual kind of thing in terms of pain to certain parts of the college. We can expect that that will retrieve a reasonably substantial amount

of money. We set aside some reserves at the beginning of the year. It's my belief that we ought to not just retain those reserves clear through to the last month of the year before figuring out some fast way of getting rid of them, but that we ought to creatively use our reserves as you have fewer and fewer months left in a year, you have less and less likelihood of a major problem that will require the use of that much in the way of reserves. But we've already found that major problem and some of the reserves may very well have to go into meeting a portion of this \$180,000. I'd much prefer that the \$180,000 not have to be used. The likelihood of that happening, I think, is slim. It would require us not only holding our own in winter and spring quarter, but finding a significant additional number of students part and full time in order to bring our enrollments back to the contracted levels. Let me turn then to the election results of last night. The last returns, as I was able to get them from Associated Press just a few minutes ago, show that the initiative which would lift the sales tax from food passed; passing by a somewhat smaller margin than I think most people anticipated, about 54 or 55% of the people saying yes. If there's any good news in that other than the fact that you won't have to pay sales tax on food and here is an issue that is unquestionably a case in my mind of a good idea, one which we should have embarked upon a long time ago, being done in a manner which will create some real disruption and puts us into a real dilemma with the beginning of the next legislative session. But the fact that there were so many no votes, and the fact that it was as close as it was, I think, will be of some help to a legislature and to an administration in potentially looking for alternative revenue sources rather than just seeking to cut back by the rather substantial amount required by the passage of this initiative. If the vote had been 65 or 70% yes, I think there would have been virtually no chance of a legislature looking for alternative revenue sources. The gas tax initiative at this moment is exactly even. There are darn few votes between the yes and the no votes. If you want to do a little praying or hoping, for heaven sakes hope that that one passes too, because if the highway men are able to ride off with their

loot then the legislative representatives of the highway interest will have little cause or impetus to help those who care about the other issues of the state. They will have theirs and you'll play hell getting some of their votes for an alternative to the sales tax reduction. It's a little ironic, really, in watching the advertising of the last month or two, as I'm sure you've seen it. Huge full-page ads and television showing how important it was to pass or to defeat the gas tax initiative so that our little children could walk safely down the side of the roads to a school which wouldn't have sufficient funding because there wasn't anybody willing to put money up to support or to defeat the other initiative. I guess we know where some have their priorities. But nonetheless that potentially puts us, as well as everybody else supported by state funds, in a difficult position. I cannot today predict the outcome of this initiative or the two initiatives. Let me paint for you a couple or three of the alternatives. One, of course, would be for the legislature to come into session called by the Governor and essentially to do nothing, at least at this current session, but instead to recognize that the sales tax initiative does not go into effect until July 1st of next year. It does not effect the first year of the biennium, but only the second year. There have been some excess revenues coming in and that will moderate to some degree the financial loss. I suppose it is possible, although hardly rational really, for the legislature to simply say we'll put the problem off until next year, conveniently right after the election instead of right before the election. I can understand that kind of legislative desire. There are however a number of legislative leaders, maybe that's why they are leaders, who are willing to stand up and speak up for alternative revenues feeling that the budget as it now exists is not fat in any respect and needs support financially. They need help. They need help from all of us, and they need help throughout the state. Whether or not they can prevail is an open question, but at least that too is one alternative; to find alternative revenue sources that will allow the current budget to go through to the end of the biennium. I suppose the third alternative is for the governor to look at the current situation, recognize that unless

something affirmative is done there will be a large revenue shortfall and feel that she should embark on an immediate cutback in the areas where she has some ability to do so because it's better to spread that cutback over an eighteen month period than just a twelve month period. That's another alternative, and one which if implemented would have an immediate effect on this college as well as all institutions of higher education and very likely on all of our human resource services. I wish I knew a little more of what we are going to face as a result of these initiatives. But let me talk about some of the strategies I hope we can utilize along with others to minimize our own exposure and to do our share of supporting a budget necessary to continue to do the job that we've been asked to do. Before that however let me speak just very briefly to three other items. A committee of the legislature was here this last week to look at the capital budget request of Evergreen. I was pleased to note that while there were a number of House members here there was only one Senator, but that was Senator Rasmussen, bless him. He came to the campus and he took part and he asked some tough questions, and it's a lot better to have him here and working with us and at least knowing why he's in opposition than otherwise. It was a worthwhile visit not only for the senator but for the members of the House as well. Those budget requests on the capital side are relatively small, they include essentially the missing pieces right now, some kind of a large floor gymnasium and an expansion of the outdoor recreation fields that along with some minor renovation and remodeling will complete our capital request for the upcoming legislative program. We are looking forward to at the invitation, the Council for Postsecondary Education to come to them in early spring with a proposal for graduate programs here at Evergreen which might be an interesting exercise given the current fiscal problems of the state, but I think that it is also an important adjunct for us to represent a full service to the area of the state in which we are attempting to serve as well as to the state as a whole. The third element is the long-range plan which I mentioned to you at our earlier meeting. We are in the process of gathering the demographic and other background, the historical

information on which to work on long-range direction and planning, that I hope will be done shortly, Ed Kormondy is in charge of that operation and we will be to you for your active participation in that process which I think can be a very important and a very worthwhile one for Evergreen which I hope if done well can present the college in a rather unique position as compared with our other institutions. Because to my knowledge none of them have ever presented to a legislature or to the people of the state for that matter a comprehensive in-depth concept of what they wanted to achieve in the course of some reasonable interval of time. There may have been those long-range efforts, but they've been hidden pretty well in most institutions. What are the strategies, then, for a legislative approach? First, as I think I mentioned before, I am dissatisfied with the salary decisions made at the last session of the legislature. I think they did not fully take into account the current situation at Evergreen. They did not fully understand the concepts of an unranked faculty. They did not understand how that coupled with the requirements that any so called increments should come out of the salary increase. I don't think there was much understanding on the part of the legislature or OFM staff as to the end result of those salary decisions. We have had an opportunity already to tell some of the top educational analysts at OFM about this. I think they are aware and frankly were surprised at the end result as it affects the faculty members here at Evergreen. We will next Friday come before the Legislative Budget Committee where the faculty utilization analysis will be presented. Almost all of the other institutions have had the same analysis done of faculty utilization. We do not intend to draw some odious comparisons with other institutions, but I'm going to make darn sure that the members of that legislative committee understand the differences. Because those differences I think in virtually every respect show a greater devotion to teaching, a much greater contact with students, a much better defined class size, in virtually every major respect the results of that faculty utilization analysis are a tribute to Evergreen, it's methods and the faculty which serves here. I think that's something we ought to be willing to

talk about and again without drawing the odious comparisons, we'll draw the comparisons in some other way, making sure that somebody understands that Evergreen faculty members for instance in the number of contact hours with students are about 30% higher than those of any of the other institutions in the state of Washington. We have far fewer classes of very small size, and we have far fewer classes of very large size than any of the other institutions. In a good many other respects the results of this faculty utilization analysis will be an important tool, I think, in legislative strategy and the resulting fiscal support for Evergreen. I think it's important for us to let legislators know something I think they've overlooked, the fact that we do have, not by our choice but by the legislature's decision, a physical plant designed for about 4,000 students. The fact that we only have 2,500 means that we're in very much the same condition as a family who went out to buy the dream house of all time, got a mortgage that was right up to the absolute hilt, and moved into a lovely house but can't afford to cut the grass. That means that for some period of time we're going to have to have the recognition and the support of a legislature, not so much just for the maintenance and the heating and the lighting of a physical plant because that's pretty well taken care in the current formulas, but where we are short in in personnel for faculty support. The personnel and the technicians to keep our equipment running to manage the laboratory and other sophisticated buildings and spaces that we have here, and that isn't taken into account the fact that we are operating a very large plant but don't have by formula the personnel to do a full support job for that plant. I think we've even got some pretty good ways of showing the legislature that after all we're producing some of the income that ought to allow us to have a little extra resources for a time at least. With 20% of our students coming from out of state as compared with the 3-4% at the three regional universities we are earning for the state a whale of a lot more money on a per capita basis on tuition than any other institution in this state, with the possible exception of the University of Washington. Perhaps we ought to get a little of that back. We're also embarked on a study which

will produce for us I think a darn good tool. It will take today's level of expenditure and today's costs and project Evergreen as if it had 4,000 students in the fall of 1977. I'm confident that that report when completed will show that the cost per student when this campus is at that level no more than the cost at any of the other regional institutions. I think we need to work very closely together to build all of these elements and whatever other elements are necessary to develop a good legislative story. We're going to have to go to the legislature and we shouldn't be ashamed of asking when we go there for the extra support needed to insure that we're able to do an effective job and carry on the rather unique program here at Evergreen. I think that, I hope that will be possible. I guess maybe a good indication of how some can be educated in a very short period of time is the experience of our two newest trustees who in early October went to Denver to take part in an Associated Governing Board's workshop essentially aimed at new trustees. Now neither one of them had had very much experience with Evergreen. They knew from a couple of meetings of the Board of Trustees and some of the initial work that they'd gone through a little bit about the institution and I think were perhaps aware of some of the mixed feelings of legislators and people in the local community about Evergreen. They went to Denver and they had their name tags on which identified them and also their institution, and both came back really astonished and pleased that they were approached by so many people from across the country who were very much aware of Evergreen, who had high regards for it and were envious of these trustees for the position they had at Evergreen. So there's plenty of potential. I'm, I guess to use a crass business advertisement, feel bullish on Evergreen, and I think we all ought to be. You've been for a lot longer than I, most of you, and you've struggled through the growing years of Evergreen. We're now facing a very tough financial future for at least the next year or so. We've got to do everything we can to convince the legislature that not only is this an institution worth saving, which I don't think there's much question of, but an institution worth supporting to the level to allow us to do the best job possible. I'd like to as I

Daniel J. Evans
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-11-

said earlier, I'm going to have the opportunity to meet with and to sit in on a good many and eventually, I hope, all of the programs and activities which you're carrying on academically. In the meantime maybe there's some opportunity to respond now to whatever questions, whatever comments you may have that may be helpful to both of us in trying to do the job.