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WHAT CAN THE INDIVIDUAL DO?

Mrs Kleeman

Commencement Address By
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Antioch College
Yellow Springs, Ohio

June 24, 1961

I am pleased and proud
to be a part of Antioch College
today.

The pleasure comes from
a sense of identity with
Antioch, with its traditions
and purposes. I can think of

no ^{other} community of Americans
to which I would rather
express the ideas and
challenges I consider so
important today.

The ~~pride~~ pride comes from a
sense of honor for being
chosen as your commencement
speaker. My respect for this
college is unlimited, and I
come to you not with the
superiority of a lecturer,
but with the humility of a
learner.

Last spring, I learned

something new from you, and my respect for Antioch College deepened.

I learned that American students can offer to students all over the world a noble example of active expression of beliefs and responsible involvement in the affairs of society.

I speak specifically of the demonstration by Antioch students last April in Columbus, protesting America's role in the Cuban

incident.

It does not matter if I agree or disagree with the position those students expressed. But let me go on record now with unequivocal support of their conduct and their right to demonstrate.

I commend them. I laud them for using responsibly the freedom which America has and so often takes for granted.

This student demonstration was certainly not unique, but

involve themselves in matters of social action."

Thank you, Antioch College; thank you, Dr. Dixon, for giving me a key answer to the question to which my remarks today are addressed.

That question is: "What can the individual do?" How can the individual respond to the President's inaugural plea to "ask what you can do for your country?" Where is the path of action for the individual American aware of

but often overwhelmed by the massive and complex problems of a great nation and a tense world?

∟ The answer for every American -- and not just the student -- is: Become involved -- consciously, actively, completely and constantly.

∟ It is not enough to advise Americans to support ~~the Administration's~~ ^{Foreign and Domestic} programs or to be willing to pay the costs of those programs through taxes.

Frankly, such advise
is too vague for the
concrete challenges facing
America and freedom. We are
a pragmatic people, and we
want specific answers *and responsibility!*

I would add a basic and
specific plea to the now-
famous inaugural request
of the President.

I would say to each
individual: "Ask what
thousands of your fellow-
Americans are already doing
for their country and for

freedom, and join their efforts."

The generalities stop here.

Examples of individual sacrifice and dedication ~~by~~ ~~Americans~~ are endless. The opportunities to act and work by those examples are infinite.

There is a young man from Minnesota who volunteered through a private organization two years ago to share his agricultural skills and his ^{work force} muscle with the people of

Southeast Asia. He ducked
bullets in a war and lost
a leg in an accident in Laos.
But he returned, and today is
helping ^{the} people of that region
help themselves to progress.

There is a middle-aged
couple of modest means who
adopted two Korean orphans a
few years ago. In a few
months, they will bring four
more Korean orphans -- girl
quadruplets -- into their
physically average but
spiritually magnificent home.

There is a 30 year old doctor who will soon leave the comforts of the United States to work and heal in a hospital in the remote hills of Burma. He and his young wife, a trained social worker, do not plan a token period of service.

They have committed themselves permanently to that hospital and the people it serves.

There is a young teacher from Minnesota -- a liberal arts graduate with no specialized training and no

money -- who traveled to a leper colony overseas and trained the lepers to build their own hospital. He taught them how to produce goods to sell, to allow them to buy medicine and equipment for the hospital.

There is the elderly California businessman and his brother who contributed their valuable bank stock to an isolated town in Italy. They did not contribute a part of that stock; they gave

all of it to the people of that Italian town. —

↳ There is the community in Maryland which has established a "Sister City" affiliation with a village in the Philippines to share friendship and understanding and, when necessary, help.

↳ A 5 year old Filipino boy will be able to walk again because the people of that Maryland community arranged for medical treatment of his crippled legs.

The individual may reply to these examples that they are impressive, but that he has no agricultural skills or home to open to orphans, or that he is not a doctor or a teacher, or that he owns no stock or wealth, or that his community is not affiliated with a "Sister City" overseas.

Again, I offer a specific suggestion to that individual.

He may write to the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for a publication

which lists 77 voluntary
agencies working in the
field of technical assistance
overseas.

Doing
great
work

He may write to the
State Department for a
directory listing several
hundred private organizations
or projects helping the
people of other lands help
themselves to progress.

He may write to the
American Municipal Association
for information and guidance
on the "Sister City" program --

and a list of 150 foreign
communities which are waiting
for answers to their requests
for affiliations in America.

 I have the addresses --
number, street and city --
of these organizations. I
shall be glad to give them
to anyone who asks, who seeks
to find out how and where he
can best contribute his efforts
for his country's goal of a
world of peace, freedom and
justice.

 There is a place, there

is a project, there is work
for each of us and all of
you. / There is so much which
can be done -- and must be
done -- by individual
Americans and groups of
Americans.

/ Today there are 160 "
"Sister City" Affiliations.
There should be 5,000. Today
there are thousands of
Americans working voluntarily
overseas. There should be
tens of thousands. *more.*

/ We need skilled Americans,

experienced Americans,
dedicated Americans to work
overseas -- and not just
through the Peace Corps.

We need to bring many more
of the citizens of other
lands to America to learn
the techniques and methods
they need, and to teach us
about their countries.

We need more exchanges
of farmers, of labor organizers,
of cooperative officials, of
educators, of businessmen,
of doctors, of students, of

artists, *of Teachers.*

*Each State could
+ should undertake
a Teacher Exchange
program for
Latin
Amn.*

We need a tremendous
increase in individual efforts,
yes. But we need also the
initiative and the leadership
of specific organizations --
unions and business associa-
tions, churches and clubs,
professional groups and trade
associations.

*Mobilize China
& car, A Jeep
A Scholarship,
Books,
Machinery
Medicine.*

Some may wonder why I --
a United States Senator and
an elected, ~~dedicated~~
official of the Federal govern-
ment -- place so much emphasis

on non-governmental ^{*The Voluntary*} efforts.

The reason is my awareness of the limits of government in a free society and the need today to mobilize the total physical and spiritual power of our Nation.

Government in the ~~free~~ United States is but a part of our strength. Our government is like the tip of an iceberg; it can be seen from afar, but the real power, the real strength is below -- in the people.

This is a major distinction between our free society and the totalitarian ~~ism of the Soviets~~ ^{state}. Their government represents and is the total power of the nation, able to dominate, control, dictate and organize every resource to its own purpose.

The Soviets ~~have~~ a distinct purpose, and we know what it is. Mr. Khrushchev has told us. It is to "bury" us, to dominate, control and dictate to all of the world,

~~to obliterate human freedom
and individual dignity.~~

The continuing contest
with totalitarianism will be
long and arduous and tough,
and our government -- alone --
can not win it,

That is why we must
learn to mobilize the real
power of our nation, the
power of the people, the
power in each of you. We
must learn to mobilize our
private and voluntary resources,
without government dictation

or domination.

Our government can help
to direct that power and
coordinate that power. *yes Coordinate
not Dominate!*

That is what we mean by
leadership in a free society.
We seek the type of leadership
which educates, persuades and
convinces ^{*inspires*} the people to give
the best of themselves.

Our leadership must also
define and outline our objectives
and goals. It must clear away
the confusion and doubt. It
must show how individual effort

can fit into the national pattern for progress and freedom. There is no reason to ask the people to sacrifice or contribute their best efforts only for the sake of activity, or only for a policy or program of negative anti-communism.

Our policy of anti-communism has failed. We must have a policy based on the human principles so important to us. We must be pro-people, pro-freedom.

We must concentrate on our goals -- positively, constructively, actively.

And, We must know what those goals are: a world at peace, a world of freedom, a world in which mankind is lifted above the ancient conditions of poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance, a world in which ^{peopl. may} ~~men~~ enjoy individual dignity, a world in which every ~~man~~ ^{one} has the means to understand the mysteries of the universe and to fulfill

the potential of his own
soul, a world of kindness --
of love.

We cannot approach or
hope to reach those goals
until we define and then
work for our immediate objectives.

↳ We need to know how
many classrooms are needed
in Bolivia, how many doctors
are needed in Burma, how much
wheat is needed in Nigeria,
how much electrical energy is
needed in India, how much
capital is needed in northeast

Brazil, how much medicine is needed in Iran.

We need to know what is needed country-by-country and region-by-region. We need to know what resources are available to meet those needs, and how long it would take to channel them to the people who are desperate for help.

I suggest that the individual ^{*citizen*} ~~American~~ cannot know confidently how he should contribute or sacrifice, that our allies cannot be called on

to accept their full share of the free world's responsibility and that our government cannot plan effectively to achieve our goals until those questions are answered and our immediate objectives are defined.

I suggest that planning is not a secret method reserved for totalitarian states, but that free men can and must develop informed, enlightened and specific plans to build the type of world they seek, ~~for~~ ~~mankind.~~

~~I thus~~ propose that this

~~nation take steps to establish
the necessary means through
which such planning can be
developed.~~

We need first a Commission
on International Goals, within
the United Nations Organization,
to determine the needs of each
country for economic development,
education, health, and food and
fiber. > ~~This Commission should
have the responsibility, the
staff and the research facili-
ties to produce the detailed
information required for~~

~~The U.N. Sec~~

~~efficient planning and action.~~

And the United Nations must be strengthened. ~~The United Nations~~ ^{It} is the ally and the hope of mankind. It is ^a ~~the~~ means to independence ^{and security} for ^{millions of} people throughout the world.

We must strengthen all of its agencies, and channel more of our aid funds through them.

^{And} We need, ~~secondly~~, a National Resources Planning Board in our own Executive Branch of government. This board, appointed by and

responsible to the President, would seek to determine the availability of resources and people which could be mobilized to meet our *Domestic and* international goals. It would seek to determine our capacity and potential to produce the resources, to recruit the people to do the job which must be done. It would ~~have the responsibility, the staff and the budget necessary for its purpose and would~~ work in coordination with related

agencies of the government
and private or voluntary
organizations involved in
assistance to the people of
other lands.

~~I would hope that our
allies would establish
comparable boards in their
own nations to work with the
International Commission on
Goals.~~

These are practical
suggestions which I intend
to spell out in more detail
to the proper leaders. ~~I deeply~~

~~believe the means I suggest~~
~~are necessary if ^{we} ~~you~~ as~~
~~individuals and ~~we~~ as a nation~~
~~are to reach our goals.~~

My remarks today have been confined mainly to what the individual can do and what our nation must do on the international level.

I wish to add this thought:
None of our efforts internationally can succeed if our own nation is lacking in the basic elements required for strength and integrity. We must move to end

unemployment, to utilize the blessings of our agricultural abundance, to provide adequate schools and hospitals, to remove slums from our cities.

Belgard and improve our educational system
Above all, we must

remove the most threatening and dangerous blight of all on our nation's greatness -- the denial of human rights to millions of Americans on grounds of race^{or} or color.

I suggest that it is not enough for most Americans to support civil rights, to

Speak opposition to bigotry,
to hope for equal rights and
opportunities for all Americans.

We need to work for full
equality for all Americans, in
every community and state, in
the north as well as the south.

↳ We must become actively
involved, because we are
involved in the needs, aspira-
tions, and conflicts of mankind.

We must keep our eyes on
the horizon of a peaceful world
and a free mankind.

But remember this: Before

Just at
Better to have Freedom Riders than Secret Police?
Sit-ins than the Knock on
the Door at Night

you or your country or mankind reach that horizon, you will have to knock down many walls and barriers -- barriers of bigotry, of misery, of hunger, of ignorance, or poverty.

This is our enemy.

If the goal seems too far away, if the walls and barriers seem too high or too strong, do not sit down in the pleasant meadow of content.

This affluent America could sink, or disappear beneath the revolutionary wave which is pulling mankind away

from the intolerable conditions
of the past.

But I do not believe it
will, because I believe in you --
and the nobility and power
within each of you and every
other American to serve the
cause of peace, freedom and
justice for all men.



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