FOR FILES

Major

FOR WEDNESDAY PM's

REMARKS

VICE PRESIDENT HUBERT HUMPHREY

CLARK UNIVERSITY

WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

OCTOBER 12, 1966

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Universities are, of course, hostile to geniuses which, seeing and using ways of their own, discredit the routine."

We are here today to honor Robert Hutchings Goddard and, in so doing, to honor the university that was not hostile to his genius.

It is typical of Clark to remember Dr. Goddard through a great, new library. Out of the collected thoughts of men who came before him, Robert Goddard evolved his own historic contribution, and from the library that will bear his name will come other fruit from other men, in an endless perpetuation of learning.

Columbus Day is exactly the right time for us to make a start of this memorial. It falls exactly halfway between the day of Goddard's birth, on October 5, 1882, and the day as a seven-year-old boy that he first dreamed of traveling in space.

It is appropriate in another way. It is hard for us, involved as we are, to appreciate that we live in a time of vast enlargement of man's horizon, as hard for us as it must have been for the people of Europe to know the significance of Columbus crossing the Atlantic.

We are actors in this drama, so we have trouble seeing it in perspective. Perhaps those who come after us will see it plainly only when they look back on our time.

Here some day will come future generations to see the campus where Goddard experimented and to study the collected Goddard papers in their official repository. This spot, today, gains recognition as a threshhold to space.

What an astonishing change Goddard made in a short time!

For all practical purposes, 40 years ago the American space effort consisted of a man working in a laboratory 100 yards from here.

He launched the world's first liquid-fueled rocket from a farm only a few miles from this campus. It went up 41 feet.

We are told that an assistant standing beside Dr. Goddard remarked that he could throw a baseball higher than that. Even at the time of his death, in 1945, the idea of travel in space was considered a fantasy or a joke.

Yet at this moment the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland, is tracking 33 active, man-made satellites, producing 200 miles a day of data tape on conditions outside the planet. In the seconds I took to speak of the Goddard Space Flight Center, its receivers and computers were accepting messages from these orbiting laboratories around earth and

translating them into 300 feet of tape bearing important information about space.

Twenty years ago most people in the world would have alaughed at the idea but we know now that we shall land men on the moon and explore the moon thoroughly. Children of today's college students will be able to take trips to Venus and Mars.

(2) I am chairman of the National Aeronautics and Space Council and there are times that I remember longingly that Robert Goddard often needed only 10 thousand dollars for a major breakthrough. But I know that the result of a successful seed is a great forest and forests take more nourishment. In the last eight years we have spent 30 billion dollars on space work.

It is the largest endeavor in history designed consciously to advance the frontiers of knowledge.

Out of it has come a fruitful partnership of government, industry, science, and the academic community.

We enjoy such side benefits as new medical and surgical techniques.

There is hardly a part of our industrial and technological life that has not been refined and accelerated by discoveries made in space research.

Yet all this started with one man with an idea. It was born in a lonely field near here, in a modest laboratory right on this campus.

It is easy to look upon this achievement as just a happy accident but I think that would be a mistake.

We were lucky to benefit by Goddard's unique creativity.

But we cannot leave such things entirely to accident.

It is no accident, for example, that we have in this country institutions of learning that are not afraid of genius.

We are told that in Dr. Goddard's first year at Clark there came to this campus for their first lectures in America, Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung.

The chairman of the physics department was A. A. Michelson, the first American scientist to win a Nobel Prize.

It is no accident when a country has places that harbor men of original thought.

We need to remember something else.

Robert Goddard worked here, at Clark, which has always been a small university.

Bigness is a characteristic of our times.

There are many things that are more efficient, more specialized or more profitable because they come in large units, and we have no need to bewail that fact. But we need to remember that there is something to be said for small units in which the individual is not lost.

Robert Goddard and Clark University tell us that excellence need not come in giant packages.

They remind us that especially in a mass production and mass consumption society, the individual and the individualistic institution must play a creative role.

(3) Let us beware of the homogenized society. Let us shun that condition in which everyone is expected to have the same opinions and the same habits. This is not only abhorrent to freedom but it poisons the source of growth.

Goddard had a stubborn faith that helped him survive discouragement and ridicule, and even a local fire marshall who considered him and his rockets a menace.

But along the way, at crucial times, he found other unorthodox men, men capable of listening to the unusual, of imagining the future, of believing the impossible.

They came from unexpected places. Some were airplane pilots and some were philanthropic businessmen with imagination. If ours were a completely conformist country, we would not be here today.

I wouldn't be honest if I didn't confess, as one who has often been at both ends of protest, that this can be an uncomfortable state of affairs. But there has never been a moment of doubt that we must have a society where men can speak their minds. Our nation must have people free to nurture men and ideas whose impact, as Emerson said, may "discredit the routine."

We in government learned part of the Goddard lesson the hard way. At times other governments paid more attention to his work than his own, a fact we came to regret during the rocket attacks of World War II.

In science and scholarship we must be open to discovery and look beyond the quick and easy result. But most of all we must remember that society may encourage genius or discourage it; apply scholarship constructively or destructively; make men beneficiaries of their ingenuity or the victims of it.

Robert Goddard's great germinal research in space came only after heartbreak and failure.

We recognize the need for endless trial-and-error in science and technology.

And -- today as never before -- we must have the same faith and endurance in the search for harmony in human affairs.

I know the familiar assertion that man is an aggressive animal and that conflict and war are inevitable. Yet the goal of a just and peaceful world can be worth no less than our highest commitment.

Man has been completely human in his biology for about 50,000 years. But only in the last 100 years have most major nations begun to look upon all their fellow citizens as truly deserving of equal treatment.

For centuries men believed in charity at the same time that they believed in slavery.

For hundreds of years men said they believed in the Golden Rule but they really meant, "Yes, but..."; our generation is the first to drop the "but":

It is not yet perfect or universal but it is one of the most profound changes in human relations and it came to fruitation in a very short time.

I believe man does have great capacity for harmony and reason.

But we do not have limitless time.

We do not have the luxury of another 50,000 years to end fatal rivalries.

In the past we lost a tribe or two; today we could lose all of civilization.

Nor do we have 100 more years to achieve a fuller social and economic justice.

Men no longer accept hunger and humilitation in silence. They know there is no need for misery in the midst of plenty.

Here in our own rich country we face problems generations in the making -- problems of an urbanizing, technological society... problems of transport...of pollution...of human relations...

of education and health...of sustaining a strong healthy economy.

In the endless search for solutions we have had some setbacks. But this should discourage us no more than reverses discouraged Robert Goddard or Thomas Edison.

Ours is a system of government blessed with the talent for change and growth.

We are the least likely people to die of social hardening of the arteries -- so long as we realize our unique strength as an open society.

Neither need we be discouraged in our search for creative answers in the quest for peace.

Today we are exploring every avenue for an honest and durable peace in Southeast Asia. We are moving too, to avert another danger: The danger of an expanding number of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of an expanding number of nations.

Reason tells us that the world cannot become increasingly crowded with these rival systems of destruction without a growing peril of fatal accident, miscalculation, irresponsibility, or even madness.

This country has been ready to take steps to lower the peril without lowering legitimate defense. Yet to persuade non-nuclear nations to reject the costly course of entry into the atomic club, and to have nuclear nations place provable restraints on further excess weaponry is a new experience among nations.

It touches many old scars and revives traditional fears. Yet we must never cease trying to overcome the catastrophe that would be further nuclear proliferation.

We seek, too, to make the exploration of space an endeavor where nations may rise above the bitter memories of battlefields on earth to find a constructive outlet for their ingenuity, their energy, and their ambition.

Is it not possible that exploration beyond our own planet might convert the present frantic race for earthly destruction into a mutual effort at cosmic discovery?

Already the exploration of space has helped us to put our own world into proper perspective.

By taking our thoughts into the upper sky it has given us a new appreciation that the family of man is on earth as the creatures of the Bible were on Noah's Ark, floating through space together, the fate of one the fate of all.

Today, as it huddles on its planet, the human race is divided by differences of wealth and of ideas.

But the same ingenious mechanisms and enormous energies that took the human mind into space have also opened for the first time the possibility of ending poverty and the dissension that comes from a world of haves and have-nots.

We live in a historic time because there is the beginning of this feeling of kinship and there is also the realistic means at hand to end the worlds

hand to end the morbid condition that some men live well only because others do not.

The prospect of sustenance for the whole human race by itself can change the tribal fears of this globe, if we have the faith to pursue it.

Robert Goddard, by making men's ascension from earth possible, helped sharpen their consciousness of their common fate.

His technical achievements have become engines of war but even they, by deterring careless adventures in conquest, have made nations pause, have given the world a short time in which to consider its ultimate fate.

By helping us see how great is the universe, Robert Goddard helped us perceive how tightly knit is the human family.

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not used for Clark College speech

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In the endless search for a more just and peaceful world, we have suffered many setbacks. But this should discourage us no more than reverses and failures discouraged Robert Goddard or Charles Edison.

Progress, not perfection, must be the measurement of our purpose.

A burning faith that man was intended to be free must give us the strength for the long freedom march. If we are to defeat man's ancient enemies of hunger, ignorance, and disease, we must believe that it can be done and order our lives to the fulfillment of that goal.

These are times that try men's souls. It is a time of danger but also a time of adventure.

We must dare to dream of a world in which men of different races can live in harmony -- in which nations big and small live in mutual respect -- a world that accepts the imperative needs of disarmament, self-determination,

peaceful co-existence, economic and social progress, and above all, international cooperation.

I think this is what Toynbee meant when he held before us the promise of our generation. Let me recall his words to you:

"Our age will be remembered not for its horrifying crimes or even for its astonishing inventions, but as the first generation to dare to make the benefits of civilization available to the whole human race."

Minnesota
Historical Society