

CHAPEL - June 1, 1932

--President Wright

Scripture lesson:

This is your Commencement--it is not ours; it is yours and we are helping you with it. I hope it will be one of the greatest Commencements we have ever had. I know you want what you do to stand out and this is a chance to make it stand out; to make your Commencement the best one ever held at East Carolina Teachers College. It does my heart and soul good to see young people start out to accomplish something and keep right on until they do it. I have known girls to cry at Commencement; have seen them boo-hoo after they get their diplomas and Bibles--because they hated to leave. That's not a bad spirit. And you know we have put in a graduate course for those who can't stand to leave.

I haven't yet said anything to the student body about registering for the fall quarter. Those of you who are reasonably sure you will come back for the fall quarter put in an application before you leave. We are not requiring you to pay your fee now, but it will be better if you do.

Missing P2

\$2,977. This means that one and one-half people with \$1,737 must do the work of 2.31 people with \$2,977. When we look at it from that angle we realize that the state is doing a great deal, relatively speaking.

During the first thirty years of this century North Carolina made a larger per cent of advancement in its educational work than any other state in these United States. The District of Columbia made a larger per cent than North Carolina. Counting the District of Columbia in with the states, North Carolina is next to the top in improvement made in the first thirty years of the century. We have all kinds of reasons to be proud of our state. This isn't a time for us to decry what has been done in our state. We ought to realize the situation and then be willing to go forward and to help. I don't remember how many Commencement speeches I have made this spring, but quite a number. Last week I made three and more than twenty-five hundred people attended these Commencements. In each place, and the seating capacity in one place was more than a thousand, there were more people than could be seated. This means that the people of North Carolina are intensely interested in the education of their children. That has a great deal to do with us because in its final analysis this college is a part of North Carolina's educational scheme. This college is the only A-grade college in North Carolina devoting its entire energies to the training of teachers. Don't be too quick to say you can't get a job for county superintendents will not know until July how many teachers they can employ. You want to leave your influence wherever you can for the backing of North Carolina and the education of its children.

America stands out before the world as the one great nation that is not handicapped by tradition and is determined to give every human being an opportunity to make the most possible out of his life. There isn't another government on the face of the earth that has that great fundamental purpose underlying it.

We want to serve the republic. It has been and still is being attacked very seriously in the last few years. Any number of people are saying that a republic cannot last; are taking the position that we should have some kind of absolute monarchy, or some other similar form of government; that we do not know how to govern ourselves. That is the spirit we have to fight. Your opportunity to come to college, for more than half of you, has been made for you by the spirit of our state and the spirit of our nation. I believe you, each one of you, have that spirit. The finest college spirit I have ever had any experience with is right here in this institution, and I believe in a large measure that spirit is here because of the type of students who come here.

Young friends, and especially those who are graduating in June, you are the finished product of your Alma Mater, and the people in this state are going to judge East Carolina Teachers College not by its president, dean of women, or any teacher ^{or officer} connected with the college, but by you. And that is the way it should be. The state is going to keep its good opinion of this college, and add to it, when you young people go back as teachers and former students of this college. I am perfectly willing to leave the verdict of the people of this state in your hands, because I know the type you are; the spirit that dominates your life; I know the characteristics of an East Carolina Teachers College student and I thank God for that spirit. It is a fine spirit and it carries with it a willingness to serve--more than a willingness, a desire to serve, a yearning to be of service, and that spirit is going to make a good place for you in this world. After all is said and done it is the spirit that counts, the spirit that dominates human life, the motive power and generator that makes a human being. And I am proud of the spirit in this college.

You who are going back home, send somebody in your place. I have been so busy trying to keep the place open that I haven't asked the registrar

about the applications for next year. If there is an unusually large enrollment next year it will do the college more good than anything else. You know we always send a number of people to the legislature who can do nothing but count. How many students? is the first thing they ask. How many vacant places? I don't think it ought to be that way, but it is.

The Board meets tomorrow and I have a long list of students to present to the Board tomorrow and the faculty the next day who will graduate next week. I hope every one of you passes. That will make me as happy as it will make you.

My sincere wish for you is that ~~the~~ richest blessings come to you.