

Speech by: Robert Morgan
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To: University of North Carolina
AFROTC Dining-Inn

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Let me tell you how delighted I am to be speaking to such a distinguished group tonight. As a Major in the U. S. Air Force Reserves and as Attorney General, I have been associated with many outstanding officers, but most of the time such relationships have been on strictly business, or military basis. Therefore, this evening presents a welcomed opportunity to meet with you officers and cadets in an atmosphere of pleasure and not of business.

Throughout North Carolina and throughout our nation today there is considerable debate about what the function of the University and other institutions of higher learning should be. Recently, I spoke to the faculty club here in Chapel Hill on this very subject.

Some people see the university as a place for scholarly research and study; some see it as a place to broaden one's understanding of other people through interaction and through mutual learning experiences; some people believe the university should be a major instrument of social change;

many people believe the university is just a place to party, to have a good time, and perhaps, incidentally, avoid the draft; and finally, many observers see the function of the university as one of teaching the student to learn and to cope with life through the inquisitive process, teaching him to question all that he believes about life and reality, so that he may come to a greater understanding through the process of "rediscovery" of knowledge.

In a way a university embodies all of these functions. To successfully complete four years of college, and possibly a few years of graduate school certainly requires hard work and study. But it is not all work for I can remember from my own experience that my college days were among the best of my life.

The opportunities for fun and relaxation on a campus are unlimited, and they are a major part of the college experience. In addition, one of the greatest values gained from four years of college is learning how to deal with people on a personal basis. And there is hardly anyone today who doubts that movements born and nourished in college and university settings have had tremendous impact on national policy and direction. So, in a way all of us can see and understand/ ^{how} our nation's universities have acted as a stimulus for social and political action.

But I also mentioned the "inquisitive process" a moment ago. It is this latter function of the university to which I would like to address my remarks tonight: that function of the university regarding the questioning process and the discovery or "rediscovery" of knowledge through personal, individual seeking.

Such early philosophers as Plato and Aristotle were among the first to assert the value of the questioning process. They were quick to point out to their followers that the essential value of knowledge was not in the mere possession of that knowledge itself, but in the method used to derive that knowledge. They argued that few facts are static and constant; on the contrary, the world is in a constant state of changing. Therefore all knowledge, in order to be valid, must be adaptable to the changing conditions of the world. And the essence of making knowledge adaptable lies in the development of a system of deriving new knowledge and revising old ideas to meet the reality of changing conditions. The Greek philosophers, especially Plato, found such a system in the questioning process.

The inquisitive process involves essentially four steps:

1. Recognizing the existence of a certain body of facts and ideas concerning a given subject.
2. Raising questions about these facts and ideas to see if they actually conform to the reality and the needs of the world.

3. Carefully investigating the facts and ideas in an effort to answer the questions raised.
4. Revising old facts and ideas, on the basis of the questions and the answers, to fit the needs of reality.

So far my remarks have been fairly theoretical which is contrary to my nature and inclination. So let me get down to earth for a few minutes and relate the inquisitive process, the questioning procedure so often exemplified by the teachings of university professors, to two questions which are now plaguing both college students, military officers, and politicians; the role of ROTC on the college campus, and the character of the controversy concerning civilian control of military forces.

There are many people in our country today who say that ROTC has outlived its usefulness on the college campus, and that its very presence there is an insult to academic freedom and the democratic process that the university should seek to uphold. As student leaders, as Air Force ROTC cadets, and as future officers in the United States Air Force, what should your reaction be to such direct attacks against an institution with which you are so intimately connected, if not ideologically, and if not on a full-time basis, at least now to the tune of \$50 per month?

First of all, let me say that the controversy over ROTC

is not a new one. The program was conceived in controversy.

Shortly after the turn of the century the United States Army had great manpower shortages, and after World War I the Army brass wanted to continue the draft during peacetime to ensure the rapid availability of a military force to meet any attack from abroad; in fact, they felt only universal military training could supply their needs. The more liberal members of the United States Senate, however, were opposed to such a plan; they felt it was a violation of individual freedom to insist on a peacetime draft when the chances of such an attack were slim. As a result, a compromise was struck and the Army was authorized to establish reserve training units on those college campuses as would be applied for the program. These units were modeled after the student regiments and military organizations that had been established on many college campuses during World War I.

So we see that ROTC's establishment on the campuses of our nation was both conceived and implemented in controversy. And the position of ROTC has not been static throughout the years. Enrollment was at a high during the late 1930's, only to be depleted by the manpower drain that World War II put on our nation's campuses. After the war, however, ROTC enrollment grew at an amazing pace, increasing through the 1950's and reaching a peak in the early 1960's. Since then, there has been a rapid decline, as pointed out by the decreasing enrollment

of the 590th Detachment here at Chapel Hill.

With this decrease in enrollment has come an increase in criticism of ROTC, including verbal attacks, demonstrations, fire bombings, and the ousting of ROTC from several campuses, including Harvard. So once again I raise the question, what should your reaction be to such attacks? Can you reconcile your membership in ROTC in the face of such direct and blatant criticism?

I sincerely believe it would be unwise to try to stifle this questioning of ROTC and to avoid judging the merits of such questions on rational grounds. Leaders, students, professors, and officers should be receptive to new ideas; and when a new idea has come to the fore, it must be judged rationally, intellectually, and practically on its relative merits and demerits.

Any appeal to emotion, any attempt to justify the continued presence of ROTC on campus by saying "That's the way it has always been," will only play into the hands of those who say that ROTC is too rigid and inflexible to retain a place on a modern university campus.

The essence of a democratic government is its adaptability; and the military, as a branch of the government, must also be receptive to change and adaptation. Therefore, I contend that we must accept the legitimate questioning of ROTC

with open minds, and follow whatever course of action that is dictated by a rational and careful study of the problem.

ROTC is founded in a tradition that has been accepted and adhered to by American policy-makers since the early Twentieth Century. But I think it important to note that it is only one small part of a larger tradition that has characterized American government since the time of the Founding Fathers: that of civilian control over the military.

Like the role of ROTC, the concept of civilian control over military affairs has also been under fire recently. But this time the criticism comes from a different section of society. Whereas ROTC has been criticized mainly by so-called liberals, and most of these college students, the tradition of ultimate civilian authority most often has been criticized by those members of the defense establishment who feel that the practice prevents them from fulfilling their proper military function.

The idea of civilian supremacy in military affairs is sanctioned in the Constitution of the United States, but it has a much longer historical tradition. Many historians believe that perhaps the greatest contribution of George Washington, as Commander in Chief of the Continental Army of the American Revolution, was that he always surrendered his powers as Commander to the final authority of the Continental Congress.

When a conflict arose between the course of action deemed best by him as a military general and that desired by the Legislature, Washington always yielded to the ultimate authority of the people. By doing so he laid the foundations of civilian control that is a pillar of our Constitution and that pervades our defense establishment today.

But history shows us that the concept of civilian control does not always work as smoothly as the Founding Fathers had hoped. During the Civil War control of the Union Army passed through the hands of half a dozen generals before President Lincoln found one who was willing to accept wholeheartedly the authority of the President as Commander in Chief; that man was General Grant.

The conflict arose again during the Korean War between President Truman and General Douglas MacArthur. General MacArthur, as Commander of the United Nations Forces, thought his army should pursue the Communists across the Yalu River and invade mainland China. President Truman, on the other hand, insisted on fighting a defensive action aimed at concluding with a cease-fire, and not a total military victory. And when MacArthur spoke out openly against the President for restricting his army from fighting the type of war he thought best, President Truman relieved him of his command.

One final example is common knowledge to all soldiers

and pilots who have fought in Southeast Asia. We have all heard stories of how American soldiers are prohibited from firing their weapons, even in the face of enemy bullets, because they are not in a free-fire zone. And in order for a Commander to order a B-52 raid on a suspected enemy area, that order must be cleared through countless channels, from the village chief to the Defense Department to even the President.

In the fact of such conflicts, many members of the United States military openly contend that the concept of civilian control, and the red tape and politics that it entails, prevents them from successfully fulfilling their mission in the defense of our country's security. How, they say, can a civilian, who knows very little about military conflict and who is located thousands of miles from the battlefield--how can that man tell an on-the-scene commander how to conduct his military operations?

In my earlier remarks I stressed our obligation as present and future Air Force officers to be open and receptive to a legitimate questioning of the role of ROTC on the college campus. In same manner, I must now emphasize our similar obligation to be cognizant and equally receptive to a questioning of the sanctity of civilian supremacy in all military operations. The one quality that has enabled our Constitution to survive for almost two centuries is its adaptability; and as a tradition

founded in the text of the Constitution, our attitudes concerning civilian authority should also be adaptable. If deference to such a tradition hampers the achievement of our national and military objectives in a theatre of war, perhaps that tradition should be changed or modified. At any rate, responsible officers of the U. S. Air Force should keep their minds open to all possibilities.

I have just taken you through the first two stages of the inquisitive process with respect to two specific questions. The two stages are (1) the definition of a problem and (2) the raising of questions concerning that problem. As I see it, the two specific problems are (1) the role of ROTC on campus and (2) the problem of civilian control over the military. But what about the two final stages of the questioning process: the answering of the questions, and the subsequent modification of the problem area?

I cannot answer these questions with regard to the future. I cannot tell you what the future role of ROTC should be, and I cannot tell you how to resolve the military-civilian controversy. But I can tell you one thing: your presence, both here tonight as well as within the ranks of the cadet corps, provides much of the answer for both AT THE PRESENT TIME.

As college students destined to become future Air Force officers, you represent both members of ROTC and a civilian

input into the military establishment. And as college-educated officers, you will possess the intellectual capacity as well as the open-minded receptiveness needed to answer these questions, to complete the final states of the process I have outlined. My theme tonight has been that military officers should be open-minded, receptive, and rational with regard to questions and proposed changes in the existing system. And you gentlemen are the most qualified people I know to deal with these problems.

You will have the task of finding a solution to the ROTC question; you will have the task of resolving the military-civilian controversy. And because of your qualifications, because of your integrated university and military background, and because you represent a civilian input into the military system, the presence of ROTC here at Carolina and the continuance of civilian supremacy are completely justified AT THIS PARTICULAR MOMENT IN HISTORY. You cadets yourselves, and the role you will play in the Air Force, justify the existence of both institutions in the year 1971. And, ironically, you will be the ones to justify, to question, or perhaps to abolish both institutions in the years to come. And it is this task to which I challenge you tonight.

both as military officers and as members of the civilian society. They are only two examples from an endless array of questions, but the answers that I have proposed are universal. Those answers dictate that each problem must be faced squarely and individually, with minds open and receptive to questioning and change, and without relying on such stereotyped slogans as "right and left," "liberal and conservative." Indeed, tonight I have raised questions from both ends of the political spectrum. The answers to those questions lie outside of the political spectrum, however; they are to be found within the hearts and minds of each individual. And to your generation is given the task of finding those answers.

The decade of the 70's presents its challenges. I think that the words of Franklin Roosevelt are as relevant to you in this day as they were to me in mine when he said,

"There is a mysterious cycle in human events. To some generations much is given. Of other generations, much is expected. This generation of Americans has a rendezvous with destiny."

This generation's problems are not the problems of the last. Yesterday's ideas will not suffice, and neither will knowledge gathered from past experience alone provide the answers. But by continually questioning your own existence and the existence of the world around you, by keeping your minds

open and your heads clear, you can find many of the answers to the problems you face. And this is the challenge I offer you tonight.

It is a privilege to have the opportunity to come to the campus of this great university and speak to young men who are engaged in its ROTC program. The heritage you represent here tonight is a great one, and I appreciate more than I can ever tell you the opportunity you have given me to participate in this program.

Statement by
ROBERT MORGAN, Attorney General
of North Carolina
Premier of "The Goodliest Land"
New York, New York
April 28, 1971

Almost 200 years ago, English explorers visited the region of what is now the eastern part of North Carolina - that part of the State I call home - and when they returned to their native land, they described this part of the New World as "The goodliest land under the cope of heaven".

Phillip Amadas and Arthur Barlow also wrote that the soil of Carolina was "sweete, fruitful and wholesome, the trees sweete smelling and the cedars the highest and reddest in the world".

Of course many things have changed in our State since these two English gentlemen made this profound observation in 1584.

However, we still feel that ours is indeed "the goodliest land". And for the past few years this has been our promotional theme. It is the title of our State travel movie and also of the abbreviated version you are about to see.

It is perfectly natural for people to be proud of their heritage and their native land. And, as a result of this pride, we want others to come and enjoy these good things with us.