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HENDERSON, NORTH CAROLINA

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THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME TO BE WITH YOU TODAY  
DURING YOUR GRADUATION EXERCISES.

I AM GLAD TO BE HERE BECAUSE I AM GLAD TO BE  
ASSOCIATED, EVEN IN A SMALL WAY, WITH THE CAREER EDUCATION  
MOVEMENT WHICH IS GETTING INCREASINGLY MORE IMPORTANT TO OUR  
STATE'S ECONOMY.

FOR SOME TIME NOW, OUR WAY OF LIFE HAS BEEN  
CHANGING IN NORTH CAROLINA, ESPECIALLY IN THOSE COUNTIES WHICH  
HAVE BEEN CLASSIFIED AS "RURAL AREAS."

EACH YEAR THAT PASSES SEES MORE AND MORE PEOPLE  
LEAVING THEIR FARMS AND SEEKING JOBS IN INDUSTRY.

AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE EXISTENCE OF THE SMALL  
FAMILY FARM IS IN DANGER.

A MAN WITH A MULE AND A FEW ACRES JUST ABOUT CAN'T  
MAKE A LIVING ANYMORE.

THE TREND IN AGRICULTURE IS TO LARGER FARMS, AND  
MORE MECHANIZATION, AND SOMETHING THAT'S NOW CALLED "AGRI-BUSINESS."

DEMOGRAPHERS, WHO STUDY PEOPLE AND WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THEM, SAY THAT DURING THE NEXT 10 TO 20 YEARS MOST OF OUR RURAL COUNTIES WILL LOSE POPULATION.

THIS MERELY REFLECTS THE EXODUS FROM THE FARMS BY THOSE PEOPLE WHO ARE BEING DISPOSSESSED BY THE ECONOMICS OF OUR TIMES. THEY ARE BEING FORCED TO LEAVE THEIR FARMS AND MOVE TO INDUSTRIALIZED AREAS IN THE HOPE OF GETTING A JOB AND MAKING A LIVING.

AND THIS CREATES A PROBLEM FOR US IN NORTH CAROLINA.

FOR ONE THING, WE MUST SEEK TO AVOID CREATING HUGE INDUSTRIALIZED CITIES WHICH WILL BRING THE URBAN SPRAWL AND CONGESTION THAT IS FOUND IN THE NORTHEASTERN UNITED STATES.

BIGNESS ISN'T ALWAYS GOODNESS, ESPECIALLY WHERE NORTH CAROLINA'S CITIES ARE CONCERNED.

WE ALSO DON'T WANT TO SEE OUR RURAL COUNTIES BECOME ECONOMICALLY DISTRESSED, WITH LOWER PER CAPITA INCOME, LARGER WELFARE ROLLS AND MORE FOOD STAMPS.

THE ANSWER IS MORE INDUSTRY FOR RURAL AREAS.

AND THIS IS WHERE THE TECHNICAL INSTITUTES, WHICH WERE REALLY STARTED IN NORTH CAROLINA DURING THE LUTHER HODGES ADMINISTRATION, ASSUME A LEADING ROLE.

SCHOOLS SUCH AS THIS ONE -- SCATTERED ACROSS NORTH CAROLINA -- HAVE BEEN PROBABLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN BRINGING INDUSTRY TO PLACES WHERE THERE WAS LITTLE OR NO INDUSTRY BEFORE.

THEY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN GIVING NEW INDUSTRY SOMETHING THAT IT MUST HAVE IF A NEW PLANT IS TO BE STARTED WITH A MINIMUM OF LOST EFFORT AND A MAXIMUM OF EARLY PRODUCTIVITY.

THE TECHNICAL INSTITUTES HAVE OFFERED NEW INDUSTRY A SOLID SUPPLY OF TRAINED, TECHNICALLY SUPERIOR EMPLOYEES, SOMETHING INDUSTRY MUST HAVE AND SOMETHING FOR WHICH THERE CAN BE NO SUBSTITUTE.

THE EFFORTS OF THE STATE'S INDUSTRY HUNTERS TO PERSUADE COMPANIES TO LOCATE PLANTS IN AREAS THAT PREVIOUSLY HAD LITTLE OR NO INDUSTRY HAS HELPED MEDIUM SIZED CITIES SUCH AS HENDERSON ACQUIRE NEW PAYROLLS.

ALL SORTS OF GOVERNMENTAL EFFORTS HAVE ENTERED INTO THIS SEARCH FOR DIVERSIFYING OUR ECONOMY.

TRANSPORTATION PLAYS A MAJOR ROLE IN WHERE A PLANT LOCATES, BECAUSE TODAY INDUSTRY NEEDS GOOD HIGHWAYS ON WHICH TO CARRY ITS RAW MATERIALS TO THE FACTORY AND ITS FINISHED GOODS TO MARKET.

IN THIS RESPECT, THIS AREA IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE INTERSTATE 85 WHICH YOU WILL FIND WILL ATTRACT MORE AND MORE INDUSTRY IN THE YEARS AHEAD. YOU CAN LOOK AT A MAP OF NORTH CAROLINA TODAY AND SEE THAT THE INTERSTATE ROUTES ARE DOTTED WITH INDUSTRIAL PLANTS.

BUT THE REAL LIFE BLOOD OF INDUSTRY IS ITS EMPLOYEES AND THIS IS A PROBLEM THE TECHNICAL INSTITUTES HAVE ANSWERED SO WELL.

WE HAVE NOT FOUND THE COMPLETE ANSWER TO OUR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, BUT A LONG, LONG STEP WAS TAKEN WITH THE CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM OF WHICH THE TECHNICAL INSTITUTES ARE A PART.

BUT NO MATTER WHAT IS DONE IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES OR EVEN AT A STATEWIDE LEVEL, OUR EFFORTS ARE BADLY HAMPERED IF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY IS IN DISORDER.

AND PERHAPS DISORDER IS AN UNDERSTATEMENT FOR WHAT WE ARE GOING THROUGH ECONOMICALLY IN THE NATION TODAY.

WHEN WE HAVE INFLATION AT A YEARLY RATE OF OVER 10 PER CENT WE ARE IN TROUBLE.

WHEN WE HAVE 60-CENT GASOLINE AT THE SERVICE STATION, GETTING ABOUT IN OUR CARS BECOMES AN EXPENSIVE PROPOSITION.

WHEN A HOUSEWIFE VISITS THE SUPERMARKET AND FINDS FOOD FOR THE FAMILY GOING HIGHER AND HIGHER, WEEK AFTER WEEK, THEN IT BECOMES A PROBLEM TO STAY WITHIN THE GROCERY BUDGET.

AND WHEN IT BECOMES IMPOSSIBLE FOR A PERSON TO PURCHASE A HOME BECAUSE OF EXORBITANT INTEREST RATES, THEN WE HAVE VIOLATED THE DREAMS OF FAMILIES TO HAVE A HOME OF THEIR OWN.

AND THIS IS THE SITUATION THAT YOU GRADUATES ARE GOING TO FIND AS YOU LEAVE THIS INSTITUTE AND ENTER THE WORLD OF BUSINESS AND COMMERCE.

OUR ECONOMY HAS GOTTEN OUT OF HAND AND NO ONE SEEMS EXACTLY SURE WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT.

YOU ARE MORE FORTUNATE THAN MANY PERSONS WHO ARE TESTING THE WATERS FOR THE FIRST TIME.

THROUGH YOUR EDUCATION HERE YOU HAVE ACQUIRED DEFINITE SKILLS THAT ARE IN DEMAND IN TODAY'S BUSINESS WORLD.

IN THIS, YOU ARE EXTREMELY FORTUNATE BECAUSE A PERSON GOING FROM SCHOOL TO A CAREER WITHOUT SUCH A SKILL COULD WELL END UP IN THE NEARLY 6 PER CENT OF OUR PEOPLE WHO TODAY ARE UNEMPLOYED.

BUT EVEN THOUGH YOU SECURE A JOB AFTER YOUR GRADUATION, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXPECT BETTER THINGS FROM YOUR GOVERNMENT AND YOUR COUNTRY.

YOU SHOULDN'T EXPECT TO BE RIPPED OFF AT THE GASOLINE STATION, WHILE THE GREAT OIL COMPANIES ARE RAKING IN UNHEARD OF PROFITS.

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO EXPECT THAT BUYING A HOUSE TO LIVE IN WILL BE HOPELESS BECAUSE YOU CAN'T AFFORD THE HIGHEST INTEREST RATES SINCE THE 1860'S -- JUST AFTER THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES. AND EVEN IF YOU COULD SOMEHOW PAY THE INTEREST, YOU MAY NOT FIND MORTGAGE MONEY AVAILABLE.

THESE ARE NOT THE BEST OF TIMES WHICH YOU FACE AS YOU LEAVE THIS CAMPUS.

AND IN TIMES SUCH AS THESE, PEOPLE NATURALLY LOOK TO WASHINGTON AND THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT WHERE POLICIES WHICH CONTROL OUR ECONOMY ARE MADE.

WASHINGTON HAS MUCH TO ANSWER FOR.

OUR GOVERNMENT, BY SPENDING MORE EACH YEAR THAN IT TAKES IN, HAS HELPED CAUSE THIS INFLATIONARY STATE IN WHICH WE FIND OURSELVES.

AND EVEN THOUGH BY NO STRETCH OF THE IMAGINATION DOES THE GOVERNMENT OWE YOU OR ME OR ANYONE ELSE A LIVING, IT DOES HAVE A DUTY TO CREATE A CLIMATE IN WHICH WE CAN EARN A LIVING.

MOST PEOPLE DON'T DEMAND TOO MUCH.

THEY WANT A CHANCE FOR A PERSONAL LIFE THAT THEY FEEL IS WORTH LIVING.

THEY WANT TO LIVE IN A WORLD WHERE THEY CAN BREATHE CLEAN AIR, DRINK PUR WATER AND EAT UNADULTERATED FOOD.

THEY WANT TO BE ABLE TO BELIEVE IN THE INTEGRITY OF GOVERNMENT AT ALL LEVELS.

AND THEY WANT A CHANCE TO ACHIEVE THEIR DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR CHILDREN.

THIS COUNTRY WAS FOUNDED ON THE PREMISE THAT ALL OF US, NO MATTER OUR COLOR, OUR SEX OR OUR CREED, CAN ACHIEVE TO THE LIMIT OF OUR TALENTS AND ENERGIES.

YOU, BY FINDING AND MASTERING A TECHNICAL SKILL THROUGH YOUR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE COURSES OFFERED HERE, HAVE MADE A WISE INVESTMENT FOR THE ROAD AHEAD.

YOU HAVE INVESTED WISELY BECAUSE YOU HAVE INVESTED IN YOURSELVES.

YOU ARE NOW TECHNICALLY EDUCATED, TECHNICALLY TRAINED.

THERE IS A JOB OUT THERE THAT YOU CAN DO BETTER THAN OTHER PEOPLE.

NOBODY CAN EVER TAKE THAT AWAY FROM YOU.

AND SO, IF YOU ARE WILLING TO APPLY YOURSELVES TO  
THE TASK AHEAD, YOU HAVE CREATED OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOURSELVES  
THAT MANY, MANY OTHER PEOPLE DON'T HAVE.

TAKE THOSE OPPORTUNITIES AS THEY COME, AND MAKE THE  
MOST OF THEM.

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