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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
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Contact: Jennifer Hillings
Tele.: (202) 366-4570

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ELIZABETH DOLE
CLARKE COLLEGE DEDICATION
DUBUQUE, IOWA
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No one can visit this state, and indeed this campus, without experiencing for himself or herself some of that hospitality made famous by Meredith Wilson's "The Music Man." "You really ought to give Iowa a try," sang the good citizens of River City to Professor Harold Hill. And he did. And soon, he found himself unable to leave this magnificent landscape of corn and cattle, of Grant Wood paintings and Wells Fargo Wagons. The barbershop quartets may be rare now, but Iowans remain just as generous, just as warmhearted. And I'm sure glad to be back. I still remember fondly my visit to Clarke College ten years ago.

I think of a man who was born in Iowa and went on to serve his country and all mankind as the Great Engineer, and the even greater humanitarian. For many years, Herbert Hoover's name was linked with hardship instead of hope. Today, we remember Iowa's most famous native son as a healer of hurts and a feeder of children. We recall his enduring Quaker faith and his abiding prairie virtues. We think of a lonely orphan boy, who rose through his own initiative to become one of the most influential figures of the twentieth century.

Hoover spelled out some principles which are timely in their value and universal in their application. "A nation is strong or weak" he said. "It thrives or perishes upon what it believes to be true. If our youth is rightly instructed in the faith of our fathers; in the traditions of our country; in the dignity of each individual man, then our power will be stronger than any weapon of destruction that man can devise."

As Americans, we might do well to reexamine what it is we believe, what we hold onto in this fast spinning world, what we assert every time we plow a furrow or say a prayer or cast a ballot or listen to those seventy-six trombones which forever echo above the rooftops of River City. Tonight, we might well acknowledge that we live in a time of constant change. Times of change are times of challenge. But they are also times of profound opportunity for those with the vision to see and the dedication to apply. Opportunity is what our country is all about: the opportunity to live as you choose, free from the dictates of government, and yet bound up with the conscience of a caring community.

The opportunity to test oneself on the running track of life, knowing that competition is the key that unlocks every closed door, and levels every artificial barrier. It is a confident people who believe in their own ability. It is a self-assured people who extend a helping hand to others. It is a prosperous people who give generously of their bounty. Such are the people of Iowa, never more so than in times of stress. Your work in rebuilding this college is an outstanding example.

A miracle has taken place. You've experienced a terrible tragedy in the fire but Sister Catherine didn't miss a beat. She refused to accept defeat! It shows the power of prayer and faith -- and the tremendous energies of an extremely capable person with a loving, caring heart. Sister Catherine is an extraordinary example, taking charge of adverse circumstances rather than allowing defeat to take hold. She's had tremendous support from people who were very confident that it was going to work because she was leading the charge. Beautiful modern facilities a blessing in disguise. Sister Catherine is a national symbol now -- when private institutions are in such dire straights, Clarke College is stronger than ever.

Certainly, the Alumni have an extraordinary high level of giving at this school. People shaped by this college obviously have a deep sense of commitment. And you're truly an inspiration to me!

Earlier, when young women were having trouble securing quality education they could come to Clarke College and obtain the finest education -- a solid science curriculum, a solid fine arts curriculum. The beginning of the liberal arts.

When you didn't know if Clarke College could attract enough young women to remain open, you shattered tradition and admitted men. And demonstrating that you are very much a part of changing American society, last spring you offered full free tuition to area farmers who had been forced off the farm or out of farming. And you are helping farmers retrain for new professions.

You are a marvelous example of the energy President Reagan has sought to revive in this country, a renewed confidence in the spirit of public service and the helping hand of friendship that built our great nation in the first place. And you certainly are an inspiration to me as I try

through my public service to make a difference -- a positive difference -- in people's lives.

And here at Clarke College, you uphold the ideal that so long as books remain open, minds can never be closed. Students at this college have been given both practical experience and a special perspective on the working world. I can think of few educational approaches better-suited to our changing society, where expertise has a short shelf life. I am told that the average engineering student will undergo retraining of some kind at least seven times during his or her professional life. My parents' generation talked wistfully of two chickens in every pot -- my own of two cars in every garage -- and now, it seems as if America's newest standard of achievement is to have two computer terminals in every living room. As a matter of fact, my mother, who is in her eighties told me when I was home recently that, as a child, she traveled from my hometown of Salisbury, North Carolina, to Statesville -- 27 miles away -- by horse and buggy. And that was a big trip. Now, in her lifetime, we at the Department of Transportation are in charge of space transportation. That's how fast we are moving. And you will recall that President Reagan, in his state of the Union message, talked about looking forward to flying to Tokyo in two hours.

Clarke College also gives character to its students, and to Dubuque. Many of you who are students will go on to shape the events of your time. All the better, then, to realize that you cannot make good public policy without first having a set of private principles.

Whether on the floor of Congress or in the boardrooms of corporate America or in the corridors of a local hospital or in the classrooms of small town America, there is no body of professional expertise and no anthology of case studies, which can supplant the force of character. To educate in mind and not in morals is to make bricks without straw. Along with higher learning must come higher yearning. And so it is not enough merely to seek individual success. We must continue the educational process all our lives through. Above all, in seeking to be useful to others, we must continue to develop in character as well as knowledge.

Character counts for more than any bank balance, any bloodline, any resume and, yes, any diploma. It counts most of all when shared with others. We have a rare opportunity to help shape the character of our country and our times. The inheritance of this great college includes a land in the throes of national renewal -- an America born again, yet, as never before, in need of leaders, whose character is matched by their commitment. In the words of Woodrow Wilson, "We should not only use all the brains we have, but all that we can borrow."

Today, America herself applies for a very special loan -- borrowing not only the brains assembled in this hall, but the character, the sensitivity, and the courage that guides them. To be sure, as a nation we require all the breakthroughs of which modern science is capable. We need inventive thinkers to guide our economy, protect our environment, secure our rights

and establish our place in the world. But most of all, we need individuals -- committed men and women, for whom conscience is the North Star by which they guide their steps -- and those of the nation they love.

My mission field, so to speak, is transportation -- an agenda that can hopefully make that difference -- a positive difference -- for people. Transportation is an \$800 billion dollar industry representing nearly 20 percent of the Gross National Product. My department is responsible for quite literally everything that moves and my highest priority is safety across all modes of transportation --air, rail, waterways and highways. I even found my little footnote in history at the Department of Transportation -- as the first woman to head a branch of the armed services -- the U.S. Coast Guard. I am so proud of the humanitarian work they do on a daily basis -- search and drug interdiction. And in addition to saving lives through safety initiatives, I hope to leave a legacy of better government organization redefining government. If you will.

It's my goal to get the government out of the business of running railroads and operating airports.

Each of us must strive to make our contribution in our own individual way, to America and her people. I especially hope those of you who are students will consider the life of a public servant. While you may not get rich, you will enrich lives of millions of your countrymen. Your rewards may not be material, but rather the satisfaction of service -- making that difference in people's lives.

Sometimes, I must admit, the challenges seem almost insurmountable. It's at those times that I remember something President Reagan shared with me. He recalled how he first learned to deal with stress as the newly elected governor of California. "Each morning began with someone standing before my desk describing yet another newly discovered disaster," he said. The feeling of stress became almost unbearable. I had the urge to look over

my shoulder for someone I could pass the problem to. Suddenly, one day it came to me that I was looking in the wrong direction. I looked up instead of back, and I'm still looking up. I couldn't face another day in this office if I didn't know I could ask God's help and it would be given."

Ladies and gentlemen, with all my heart, I agree with that statement. I think that's what it takes in this day and age with the challenges that we all face.

Ours is neither the time nor the place for men or women with faint hearts, feeble courage, weak commitment or selfish motives. All of you associated with this great college have proven your strength and demonstrated your commitment. I'm so grateful for the opportunity to thank you personally for this honorary degree and to congratulate you on rebuilding this outstanding campus. May God bless you richly as you continue to serve in such a powerful way.

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