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A TRINITY OF PROSPECTS

Address
by
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Delivered at
Inauguration of President Dearing
State University at Binghamton
Binghamton, New York
September 25, 1965

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May I tell you first of all what a pleasure it is for Mrs. Gould and for me to be here this morning and to share in this happy occasion. This is our first visit to Binghamton; and, although it has been delayed overlong, such a visit could come at no better time. I assure you that I shall not let another full year pass before another visit. In fact, if my calendar doesn't deceive me, I expect to be back next week.

We look to a trinity of prospects today, and all three give us good reason for celebration.

To begin with, we have the inauguration of a man to a post of high and sober responsibility. Only those of us who are his colleagues can appreciate fully the burden Bruce Dearing is shouldering. The work of a president, in spite of all efforts at definition, still has mystery about it. It is carried on in a sort of all-inclusive amorphousness encompassing salaries and sciences, housing and humanities, cafeterias and creativity. But the unmistakably clear elements of the job are that it is almost cruelly hard, maddeningly complex, and tremendously exhilarating. All this Bruce Dearing is already beginning to discover, and I am sure Mrs. Dearing is discovering it with equal swiftness.

The State University at Binghamton can truly be congratulated on its new leader. He is a scholar, a keen student of administration and a skillful practitioner, and above all, he is a man of character and taste who does not flinch under pressure and who prizes integrity more than expediency. All these traits are essential to educational leadership, and never more so than now. I predict that Bruce Dearing will be an able, competent, and inspiring president whose love of the intellectual life will reflect itself strongly on this campus.

Second, we have, in a certain sense, the inauguration of a campus to go with the man we are honoring. This is to be one of the major campuses of the University, expanded to provide graduate instruction and research, destined to be an example of the academic rigor and intellectual capacity for which the whole University strives, dedicated to the highest ideals of advanced scholarship and humane development. Having performed its first mission so admirably through Harpur College, now this campus is called upon to undertake a new and even more demanding task. The strength of its faculty and the vitality of its students give it the tools to meet such a demand.

And third in our trinity of prospects is that of the entire State University of New York. Along with Binghamton, it, also, has opportunities facing it, huge not only in size but in their educational significance

for this State. It is stirred as never before to a realization of its future role and to a forthright dedication to the fulfillment of that role. Slowly but surely the University is beginning to draw together its far-flung and diverse parts to become a unified entity that all will come to recognize, to know, and to respect. Slowly but surely its passion for excellence is being transformed into tangible programs and people to shape them. It is as though one were watching a slumbering giant awake and begin to test his strength.

We have, therefore, a most felicitous combination of circumstances today. Representing the State University, I congratulate Bruce Dearing and wish him well; I congratulate all of you on your leader and the opportunities toward which he will guide you.

Let me remind you of a statement William Ellery Channing made more than one hundred years ago, a statement even more appropriate today. He said:

"There are seasons, in human affairs, of inward and outward revolution, when new depths seem to be broken up in the soul, when new wants are unfolded in multitudes, and a new and undefined good is thirsted for. There are periods when the principles of experience need to be modified, when hope and trust and instinct

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claim a share with prudence in the guidance of affairs,
when, in truth, to dare is the highest wisdom."

This is one of those periods in the life of the State University of
New York, in the life of the University at Binghamton, and in the life
of Bruce Dearing. May all of us rise to the occasion and the need.