

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

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Academy of Music

I consider it a privilege,--more than that,--an almost supernatural gift to be able to address the Class of 1999.

So often in life we wish we had said the right thing at the right time but how seldom one has a second chance! So, you see, having given that rather prosaic commencement address to the Class of 1979 at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine just twenty years ago this month when they honored me with a degree honoris causa, it is extraordinary that your president, knowing nothing of how much I wanted to speak to PCOM, invited me back. And a considerable risk he took, too, at my age of eighty-two! It is too bad that our scientists who keep our bodies looking twenty-five years younger than our ancestors looked at the same age could not have kept the mind young, too.

How little did your president know how close the timing would be!

I don't have much time so without great choice of words and immortal rhetoric, I will say what I should have said by way of warning twenty years ago.

Yet, I cannot resist a short digression in remarking on the changes here in twenty years. Driving in from the airport last night on the automat highway, I could not get used to the driver of the van reading his newspaper while the magnetic tightline guided us along the road. I noticed that gas on Penrose Avenue was \$16 a gallon. I guess you will all be pleased when the solar energy from the satellite is available for private cars.

Last night I misplaced my electronic Social Security card which really is an internal passport such as we denounced the Russians for having in the 1970s. So there was a long delay in getting out of the detention center. That detention center used to be the Hahnemann Hospital twenty years ago. It gave me a lot of time to read the rules of the new American Way program. That is a euphemism for what I would call Teen Age Snoopers. I can't imagine that you have to let a teenage squad check the inflation of your tires and the level of water in the toilet tank? I feel sorry for you who are diagnosed as "incorrigible wasters". Apparently, the punishments are stiff. This nonsense could never have come about if the AMA, the John Birch Society, the Episcopal Church and the Sierra Club had not joined forces with the government. Mao Tse Tung would have been very happy here. You see, I ramble. Forgive me.

You know why I did not have the courage twenty years ago to say what I wanted to say? I must tell you. I gave a commencement address at Wheaton College in 1973 and I shocked the administration because I talked about abortion. They were so shocked that they broke a time honored custom and did not print what I said in their alumni magazine. I guess I was overly sensitive and that is why I pulled my punches here with the Class of 1979. You see, Wheaton missed a chance,--I made ten prophesies in my talk and they all came to pass within two years. They could have made a scoop; it went to the Human Life Review instead. I don't think I was responsible for the police smashing

their presses in 1982, but who knows? Wheaton only lasted five years longer. PCOM almost went down the drain at the same time. So many schools failed that year. It was the merger of the Medical College of Pennsylvania, Hahnemann Medical School, and PCOM which saved all three institutions. I was really tickled when yours was the school that kept its name in the merger. Let me digress again for a moment: my professional life has been an extraordinarily satisfying one. Not only did I grow up with my specialty, being the sixth surgeon in this country to totally confine his surgical practice to children, but I assumed the duties, if not the title, of surgeon-in-chief at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia at the age of 29 so that my first job was my last one. I retired in 1981.

Pediatric surgery in the late forties and early fifties was so poorly understood and so poorly represented that the few pediatric surgeons in the land were in great demand as teachers and as speakers at medical convocations. I found myself speaking at osteopathic meetings and teaching at the College out on Spruce Street several times a year. When a large organization of M.D.s suggested that it was inappropriate for me to be teaching osteopaths, I said I was quite willing to resign from the society, but resign or not, I would continue my osteopathic teaching connections. I won that skirmish and I was right. I began rotating surgical residents from osteopathic programs through my training program in pediatric surgery in 1976. They proved to be among the best. My successor in 1983 graduated the

first osteopath trained in pediatric surgery.

Well, to get back to 1979. I really wanted to speak on the celebration of life and I apologize to any member of the Class of '79 who might be present. I could not have changed the world, but I might have made you more aware of the dangers.

Let me put it in capsule form. Your grandparents knew something about the sanctity of human life. By the '70s that kind of talk was almost passe. Life began to be cheapened when several states in the late '60s and early '70s liberalized the abortion laws. Then the first of several dominoes fell in 1973 when the Supreme Court gave women the right to have an abortion-on-demand. The medical profession then made it obvious they supported the abortion industry.

I was teaching pediatric surgery at the University of Pennsylvania at the time and I,--as alert as I thought I was,--missed the fact until it was too late. We lost the fight in the medical schools. There was no voice defending the right of the unborn. There was no medical voice saying that life was precious to God. Secular humanism became the state anti-religion in 1989. I will be punished for speaking of the Lord, I know. The continual plebiscite predicted by Tofler in my day made it illegal to mention God seriously after 1984. But, I really do not care about the punishment; you will see why in a few minutes. I only hope I can finish before the Doctrine Squad hears of my misbehavior.

The poor medical student of the late seventies did not know that

the very word "abortionist" was loathsome just a few years before. You see, the most active abortionist the medical student knew was the chairman of the department of obstetrics and gynecology in the medical school.

Well, after abortion-on-demand had been here for ten years and we fell far below population zero growth and your grandparents' Social Security checks could not be funded because there were not enough young people to pay the bill, infanticide was finally made legal. Innocent newborns with defects easily correctable were sacrificed because it was in vogue to worship the perfect.

Not that it mattered! Infanticide had been practiced for years without the law even looking in that direction. Pediatricians who were once the advocates for children thought the quality of life to be preferable to the ethic of life itself. Pediatric surgeons,--and I say this to their great shame,--who knew more than anyone what could be accomplished in the rehabilitation of youngsters with congenital defects jumped on the band wagon of perfectionism. It is ironic that the program gathered steam in what was called the Year of the Child.

You will remember it was 1985 when it became illegal for an obstetrician to deliver a defective baby that could have been diagnosed before birth. Then in 1987, the Nobel Prize winner, Watson, famous for discovering the double helix of DNA, had his way. No child was declared alive until seventy-two hours after birth in order to let its parents decide whether they wanted the baby or not. So

progressively fewer babies grew up. You were among the more fortunate. It is amazing to look out there and see only perfect specimens--no defects, no eyeglasses, no balding young men! I cannot get used to seeing such a preponderance of boys. But now that sex determination is possible, people get what they want but I am sure we had more fun when it was more like 50-50,--boys and girls. You know I predicted back in 1977 that prostaglandin tampons would be sold over the counter and that a woman would never know whether she was having a menstrual period or an abortion. They came on the market in 1984 and a year later, we had the artificial insemination-sex determination kits also available over the counter.

There used to be a number of graduate schools in Greater Philadelphia. PCOM is one of the few that is left. I could not believe the signs outside Franklin Field when I drove by it last night. Bullfights on weekends and Kung Fu to the death on Wednesdays. People used to go to the movies and plays in my day but they priced themselves out of existence about 1982. It was 1986 when the government made two-way television mandatory in every home. I guess PCOM has no resident basic science faculty since the video faculty exchange program in 1990. You see, I am rambling again, and I am sorry.

Well, you see, the second domino that fell was infanticide and the third was euthanasia. It began with the living will. The organization called Concerned for Dying, which was called the

Euthanasia Council in my day, knew that if they repeated the term "Death with Dignity" often enough, you would buy it and you did. Then the living will was by their own later acknowledgement, the thin edge of the wedge that brought in the Supreme Court decision on voluntary euthanasia which, of course, led to the compulsory euthanasia decision of the Supreme Court in 1995 for the infirm, the senile, and finally for those over eighty who failed the comprehensive test for longevity. I am eighty-two and a little more efficient this year than I was at eighty-one a year ago, but they don't think so.

You see, I knew in 1979 that these things would happen and I should have told the class about them then. It might have made a difference. Who knows what gifted fighter might have heard what I said and mounted his white charger and have gone out to do battle?

Francis Schaeffer and I got so mad in 1977 that we went to work on five documentary films and a book entitled: "Whatever Happened to the Human Race?". They had their premier here in this very auditorium on September 7-8, in 1979. They made a stir but the time had gone too far. Francis succumbed to his lymphosarcoma before he realized how we had failed. I am glad for that. Even the thousands of lives he changed were not aware of what was going on.

Perhaps your parents were not aware either. You see, when I was your age, a democracy such as this country made laws by representative government. Then gradually, sociologic law crept in. A small elite group working through the courts was able to bring about

abortion-on-demand, infanticide, the illegality of being delivered imperfect, voluntary euthanasia, and finally that which I face soon, compulsory euthanasia.

Ladies and gentlemen,--I think of you as boys and girls,--what I should have said in 1979 was that the most important event in American history since the Civil War was the Supreme Court decision about abortion-on-demand in 1973. I apologize for not screaming from this podium twenty years ago. Why? Because that decision and all that followed it has made your way of life what it is today and will determine how you will die and perhaps when.

After the relative failure of the films I did with Francis Schaeffer, some of you may remember that I brashly sued Planned Parenthood because they had not planned a single parenthood in years. Converted adolescent innocence into sexually active (their term) teenagers is more like it. How could I have won? The American Civil Liberties Union, fresh from guaranteeing the right of the Neonazi Party to heckle the Jews short of violence defended Planned Parenthood. I spent all the money I made on the Schaeffer films to fight Planned Parenthood while they were supported by almost half a billion dollars,--tax dollars of your parents.

I lost that lawsuit as you must know. The only satisfaction I have is that I believed then in the worth of every creature and still do. God (oh, I said it again, and you must know church and state are forever separate) God created man in His image and still does.

Speaking of Planned Parenthood, they really might not look so good by 2020. They almost single handedly got our population down. But then the Legionnaire's disease epidemic of 1986 killed 17,000,000 Americans and the group called Ecology Forever claimed credit in 1987 for adding chemicals to the water supply of New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. which rendered 11,000,000 sterile,--permanently. I have always thought this over-concern with population was a national suicide, a death wish. Malcolm Muggeridge was right.

I understand two of you graduates are test tube babies. I fought that experimentation in 1979. I am glad you are here but I cannot say I look with any pleasure on the Rockhead Foundation support of 100,000 homosexual and lesbian test tube babies to give the gay movement more political clout in the future.

If I can be forgiven one more digression, I have to add that under-population has finally united Russia, Europe, Canada and the United States to stand against the territorial need of overpopulated Asia and Africa.

I cannot tell whether the nuclear holocaust on the horizon will be initiated by China, Russia, or us,--but those of you who survive and I hope it is all of you,--begin again with a Biblical view of the sanctity of human life, with a concept that every life is precious. Inasmuch as I am going to be punished for what I have said here today, I might as well be punished for something worthwhile as well as for

something trivial.

Our Judeo-Christian heritage was responsible for more than religion. It was the consensus upon which our culture, our law, and our government were based. It certainly taught that life is precious.

Well, I see that my time is up. Forgive an old man for rambling on. Forgive me for not being more honest with your predecessors.

I see that a member of the Doctrine Squad is at each exit and there are two in the wings so I guess I will spend the night in a detention center. But I do have the last laugh. You see, I got my notice to report to the Suicide Center before June 30th. If I don't, you know the consequences. I will be taken to Byberry,--that was a hospital for the insane when I was your age. There I will undergo the demise provided by the compulsory euthanasia rule. I hope it is quick and that I am not experimented upon. However, if my Christian faith is what I think it is, I will be in heaven soon.

God bless you in your careers to the extent that you realize that your patients like you were created in His image. Thank you and goodby.