

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS  
SENATOR ERNEST F. HOLLINGS

1983

Introduction of Senator Hollings by General James A. Grimsley,  
President of the Citadel.

Commencement ceremonies seem to symbolize the mission and purpose of a college, indeed, they do. Not only is there the joy of achievement, and the excitement of venturing forth by those graduating, but there is also a time of taking stock and a moment of introspection. Generations come together to reaffirm their shared faith in their alma mater, in man and in the future. Central to this event is the Commencement speaker. Today we are especially honored as our speaker, always special to the Citadel, is also a national celebrity. A graduate of the Citadel, class of 1942, South Carolina's junior senator has an outstanding career of public service, and public achievement. During World War II, Ernest Frederick Hollings served in the United States Army in Europe and North Africa, earning several campaign decorations. After the war, he entered the University of South Carolina Law School, from which he was graduated in 1947. His political career began with service in the South Carolina House of Representatives in 1949, and from 1951 to 1954 he served as

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Speaker Protempore. In 1954, the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce selected him as one of America's ten outstanding young men. In that same year, he was elected Lieutenant Governor of South Carolina, and in 1958, Governor. In both of these posts, he was one of the youngest persons ever to be elected. In 1966, Senator Hollings began his tenure in the United States Senate, where he has been characterized as a man that can make things happen, as a legislator with national concerns and national perspectives. It is my pleasure, indeed a privilege and a honor to welcome Senator Fritz Hollings to his alma mater, and to present to you a friend and a classmate, a candidate for the Democratic nomination for president, our junior senator, but his greatest claim to fame, he is a dedicated supporter of the Corps of Cadets of the Citadel. Senator Hollings.

Thank you General Grimsley, General Clark, General Seignious, former President Anderson, Congressman Harnett, Mayor Riley, members of the Board of Visitors, distinguished faculty, for which we are very, very grateful. The friends and families of the Class of 1983, and the distinguished Class of 1983.

When General Grimsley called, he said the class had first opted for President Reagan as a graduation speaker, and then Bob Hope, and then me, and I said, "Three clowns, eh?".

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I was told at a Citadel party last night to make it short. I want you as graduates to know that I do know how to make it short and perhaps even better as a talk.

My last evening as governor of South Carolina, I drove down from Columbia, we fired the cannons and I made a one word speech. "Amnesty". I wish I had those powers today, but I don't think anybody is left on that quadrangle, I hope not.

As my mind goes back to the talk of Colonel Holliday, mine goes back to this campus when it consisted of Bond Hall, the Padgett-Thomas barracks, the laundry-mess hall building behind the Alumni Hall, and a seven hole golf course. I was just talking to Colonel McAllister and he said, "Yes, I remember complaining to General Summerall when he started building buildings, I said, you are messing up my golf course".

My mind goes back to 1936, right out in front of PT Barracks, listening to President Franklin Roosevelt, where I stood just below the stand as a young boy looking up in awe. My mind goes back to forty years ago at graduation when I stood looking down in gratitude. Not so much for having completed the course, but because they took me off the quadrangle and ended my walking tours once and for all.



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Two hours later our class received orders to report to World War II. Hopefully you will have more than two hours to celebrate before you report to a world of confusion, as challenging as World War II.

The world has changed. It took us two weeks to cross the Atlantic for the invasion of North Africa. Now planes jet daily from Charleston to North Africa in eight hours. It took us three years fighting from North Africa to Corsica, Italy, France, to Germany, to Austria. Now we wonder if war breaks out whether the world will last three hours.

Clearly this smaller, faster, interdependent, dangerous world gives the class of '83 a greater responsibility. Our world has become transient. The sense of community has been lost. Introspection and self gratification replace concern for the common good.

Family patterns have changed, just this past week the U.S. News and World Report predicted that serial marriages would be the wave of the future. I guess that would work alright, so long as they don't have serial honeymoons. Parents and Grandparents have become a separate class of senior citizens. Racial barriers have been removed, but racism persists. We are healthier today and more affluent. But hunger, once vanished, is now on the return.

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We are less disciplined as a nation. We live in a ??????? fragmented society. Single interest have taken over. Hard work is considered a character flaw. Excellence is discouraged. Inattention to duty the norm. We deal in perceptions and expectations rather than reality. The pollster in our society today is supreme. Rather than talk of the threat of the Soviets, or the threat of nuclear war, rather than demonstrate my ????? in ?????? or high tech or information age, or how to balance the nation's budget, rather than talk about frontier of genetic engineering, I want to talk about the Citadel.

Here we take the genes we have and make a citizen. First and foremost, this is a liberal arts college. A study of history shows that the greatness of America evolved from the small liberal arts colleges. This is not the wandering institution of higher learning where you wander down the cafeteria line of subjects making your own smorgasbord selection. Here, rather, you are inculcated with the fundamentals of English, mathematics and science, and the fundamentals of sound life habits. Required attendance at class, plus graded participation imparts a sense of duty.

"Duty is the sublimest word in the English language", as you know, PT Barracks says and Robert E. Lee says. As a consequence, you learn at the Citadel, not merely how to make a living, but

how to live. You will find this a gift hereafter, whether you attend graduate school or go immediately to seek your fortune.

There is a special humanity on the Citadel campus. "Remember, now thy creator in the days of thy youth", is the admonition on the chapel. Maybe it was because my class went immediately to battle, many a time it was a jeep hood that served as an altar. We weren't bashful, we didn't wait around for special services. We were God fearing. Your class will be no less, and as you grow older, you will appreciate this touch from your Citadel days.

The hallmark of the Citadel is discipline. There is no greater need in our society today, in our families, in our work, in our communities, there must be discipline. Those unaware confuse discipline with marching to a shouted command, or shooting a gun, or standing up at football games. But discipline is awareness. It is concentration. It is the search for truth. Discipline constitutes the search for life. You learn to analyze, you learn your limits, but more importantly, you learn your potential. Timed with set goals, you measure yourself. Before long you realize time can be your best friend, and time can be your worse enemy. There is never enough time, be it for work or play. It reminds me of my first camera. I began to observe, I looked for



special scenes, the right lighting, new perspectives, the right exposure. I saw things I had never seen before. Here at the Citadel in the discipline of life, you observe. You study yourself. You develop values. Here on the Citadel campus, values are preeminent. As Horace wrote, "Discipline strengthens the heart". There comes a declaration of purpose, a rhythm of life. You learn what to take seriously and you learn to work hard and enjoy it, and you learn to relax at play. You can't last long around here without developing a sense of humor. Most of all you develop a sense of duty.

Many who have not been through it, fail to understand the value of four years of living together on this campus. Ignorantly they equate the locked barracks with a lost experience. To them life behind the wall is unreal, and the Citadel graduate lost in the real world. If it is the real world they seek, let them meet reveille, engage in a set program of study and drill, sports and recreation, all in an atmosphere of learning and competition. Then they will see a life more than real. Then will they feel the sense of direction and feel the unity of purpose. Then will they realize what preparation for the real world is all about.

Here at the Citadel, there is always the goal of learning, growing, of accomplishing, and of excelling. I'll never forget

Herbert Hoover addressing the Corps of Cadets as my fellow students. He knew that so long as you remain a student, so long as you continue to learn, you continue to live. Here at the Citadel you learn the joy of learning, here you learn the joy of living.

In today's world, the lack is discipline. As a public servant, let me say this is particularly the lack of government. We go from a proposal to balance the budget to two hundred billion dollar deficit, from tax cuts to tax increases, from embargoes to no embargoes, from human rights to no human rights, from a negotiated settlement in El Salvador to a military victory in El Salvador. No one follows the United States, because no one knows where it is headed. There is no discipline. More than a lack of consistency is at stake. There is a lack of credibility. America's defenses are weakened for lack of discipline. The services today are submitting their entire wish list and wreaking the economy. The cost of a B 17 bomber when I graduated was \$97,000, one plane. The cost of a B 1 bomber today, one plane is \$410,000,000. With this amount of money we could operate the entire Citadel for twenty years.

There is no way to afford all the sophisticated weaponry that the mind of man can devise, or all that we can use. On the other



hand, the manpower that we can use is not called. The volunteer army is lacking. The number of men and women are available because of unemployment, but they are lacking in skills. And for the most affluent of nations to depend on for its defenses, the least advantaged in our society is a dangerous ???????. More than a demonstration of military power, we need in this land, a demonstration of will power. We need a return to the patriotic call of John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country". If we want to put the world on notice, there is a better way than ???????. All we need is a draft. Domestically we are in shambles. We have yet to learn the injunction of James Madison in the Federalist papers, "But what is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature. If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern man, neither external or internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by man over man, the great difficulty lies in this, you must first enable the government to control the governed, and in the next place oblige it to control itself".

We are operating in Washington with an open throttle. These devastating deficits will burden generations to come. Everywhere the cry is, "Discipline, Discipline", but there is no discipline.

writing about bravery in battle, emphasized the spirit of commonality of living together. "Men who have displayed valor in the face of fire, defending, advancing, holding an untenable spot, they were not thinking of the Declaration of Independence, or the Congress, or the court, they were thinking of their buddy. The fellow that they had been through boot camp with, the one they had trained with and lived with"

It is an innerdiscipline, a developed pride for the organization that you are a part of. This mutual respect develops the character of self sacrifice.

Finally, class of '83, you can not be confined together for the past four years and not live courteously. You recognize the slight and scorn and rudeness, but it doesn't last long on this campus, and it shouldn't last long in this life. The value of courtesy, associating it with manliness marks the Citadel man. Toughness of character does not eliminate sensitivity, for sensitivity is the beginning of understanding. There is every difference between brute strength and strength of character. That is why every class reserves for the most outstanding graduate the John O. Wilson ring. For manliness, purity, and courtesy. Courtesy is the hallmark of every Citadel graduate.

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It must be obvious to you that my only wish is that we could send the world through the Citadel.

I graduated at a time when walking tours stood me in good stead for the long marches, when my gunnery put me in shape for the long battle. But yours will be a different engagement. You will be marching through fragmented and lost terrain trying to put your own society back on course. Our battles were long, but yours will be longer. Our stakes were high, but yours will be higher. The discipline of learning and loyalty, of duty and honor, of courtesy, self sacrifice, and above all patriotism put you ahead as you leave Lesesne Gate today.

Shortly before he died, Henry Lucenjoin(?) said, "The need for two hundred million can do Americans is not the capacity to do but the courage to be". That courage to be is the Citadel's legacy to the class of '83.

Good luck, and God speed.

General Gimsley: Thank you very much, Senator Hollings. Your presence here today is a reminder of the Citadel man's commitment to service. Your words call these graduates, and indeed, the rest of us here present to renew the dedication to pursue the



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American dreams with an acute awareness of the hazards before us.

Thank you very much, sir.