

LORET RUPPE

Thank you very, very much for that wonderful introduction. Way too kind. You know I've learned in Norway we're supposed to be very humble, so not a word of it was true but thank you so very much! I've always felt I had two of the best jobs in the world--one being director of the Peace Corps, I had the best job in Washington. I got to work for world peace, travel, and everyone thanked me for the work of the volunteers. And now I'm in Norway, I get to represent our great country there to another great country, see the fjords, see the wonderful partnerships between the schools that you attend and schools in Norway, and have the great opportunity to be thanked for all the tremendous partnerships that have been crafted by people like Ambassador Vibe and Consul General Grindam and all you great Norwegian Americans in this audience. And I've often thought that it's very interesting to me that Wisconsin, the state I was born in, Minnesota, Iowa, the places where we've got large numbers -- North Dakota, South Dakota, any other schools out there? -- Oregon, Washington. But it is interesting the places where Norwegians settled in great numbers are interested in peace, seem to have a special sensitivity, and also seem to be very much involved with social concerns. So I'm very proud to have had two of the best jobs in the world. And all I can say is I wish I had been at St. Olaf when the first Peace Prize Forum opened, and I had the honor of being at Augsburg and last night and

this morning has been a very special time in my life. Inspirational, educational, emotional. I mean just to see President Arias stand there, to hear Betty Williams, Sara Ruddick, all of them. I've been deeply moved. And where do we go for next year? Concordia? Augustana--bravo, I can hardly wait for that to come too, even before this one is over because I've learned so much. So I want to thank everyone who has made this happen, especially Dr. Preus. You should be so very proud of bringing this all together. We owe you a great debt. And Vice President Mondale, Al Quie, Gier Lundestad, Janice and Tom Kraabel who've had us all over the place, and my mother and sister, students and faculty, and those great singers, musicians, and actors, Dr. and Mrs. Anderson also must be so proud of this tremendous place that Luther has given us to have this Peace Prize Forum. Tusen tak -- I speak Norwegian! And Betty Williams, I agree with you. Who else should I greet? Certainly you and your fellow Nobel laureates, certainly this great audience, and yet that's not the word because we're all in this together. So great group, you are great and those Norwegian students who are here, I've met a number of them. You're representing your country proudly and I'm very pleased that you're in my country, the United States. And my excellent colleague Kjell Vibe and all these other ambassadors who've been given a bad rep. You know there are only about three or four of us here, and you know we're feeling a little uncomfortable. We really are just like you

all. We're just as interested in peace and are working for peace, and I hope that many of you will consider going into the foreign service of the United States or of Norway. That's what's needed -- the best and the brightest. And if President Arias has called you to really be the next century, the first century in our world at peace, then that's where you're needed also. So please work on your schooling and your experiences to fit yourself into a mold like that. So what an honor, what an opportunity, what a responsibility to speak to you. I'm overcome. I feel like Sara Ruddick only I wasn't even, I was never a Peace Corps volunteer, I wasn't in the foreign service, I do thank President Reagan and President Bush for the best jobs I've mentioned. And I'm not even an intellect, an intellectual is that it? But it is a privilege to be back here in Iowa. Last May how proud I was to be the class of 1990's graduation speaker, and I am a permanent honorary member of a great Luther class. Say class of '91, I just met with your upcoming graduation speaker, Simon Estes. What a man, what a great Iowa voice. He brought down the house in the concert hall in Oslo and he said he hopes to do the same thing when he comes to the commencement for the great class of '91. I told him it was really cold out there on the field and he better wear a warm coat. Do you remember how hot it does get? Of course there are a number of classes of '91 here, and '92 and '93 and '94. What special graduates. I know you all will be so special because you're from such

special campuses coupled with Norway in the Peace Prize Forums. It is such an honor to be here. To Oscar Arias Sanchez of the great country of Costa Rica, the Peace Corps always has been honored to serve there. The only country on earth that has been mentioned that abolished their army. He has been an individual army for peace. And Betty Williams, what ceaseless effort you've made and make for peace. To return the Emerald Isles to the color and calm of a common community dream and now you're making that red neck riviera lose its red. Many of you in this audience got a chance last year at Augsburg. We all heard former President Jimmy Carter, Elena Bonner, Flora Lewis, Max Kampelman, Amnesty International, Gier Lundestad, and of course former Vice President Fritz Mondale. All these, they've all lived up to their commitment to peace, their work for peace, in this intervening year. Yet let's see, the former president and his peace center in Atlanta see more starvation in Ethiopia than ever and total instability. Elena Bonner cries out that a return to the old times is imminent and it just could be. She wants to return Dr. Sakarov's Nobel Peace Prize. Flora Lewis, retired somewhat, still has plenty of chaos and crisis to crank out articles about on her PC. Max Kampelman after years of total dedication to working for a Europe whole and free sees the CSCE process in potential peril. Also I regret to say Amnesty International certainly hasn't closed its door because of a lack of human rights abuses. They keep pouring in from all around the world, the Baltics

a newly aggravated sore. And as Betty Williams pointed out, we are at war, a war affecting everyone on earth. If we're going to discuss the qualities needed for future global leadership, and Vice President Mondale discussed them superbly last night -- people of peace gathered here, we must accept, predict, be prepared for, and hence be better able to advance and handle our cause. Peace does not seem to be our natural state. Through some terrible abhorration in our human nature we seem to be schitzoid on this subject. The vast majority crying out for peace, for education, for health, for the environment, for better life for all, yet falling so short of the mark century after century. Oh President Arias yes, may these students make the next century different! Yes. The road to peace is a hard, rocky and difficult one. We must be in for the long pull. Certainly a characteristic, a quality of a global peacemaker will have to be patience, which has been mentioned often, coupled with fortitude. This is not the stuff for cowards. And not a patience that means, and I quote, "settling for less, making an inner deal, a kind of laziness that allows one to toss the beer can out of the car window, leave politics to somebody else, take a hiatus from involvement." We must be patiently, eternally involved while eternally impatient about the pace of progress for peace. Is that contradictory? Yes. But ambiguity, contradiction, complexities, strew the road to peace. As long as we're at a peace forum trying to formulate, track, learn, absorb, I

have to admit I drifted along on a lovely soft cloud of what I fear was incredibly naive. For years I refused to face this nonreality, I mean really thinking that peace could come right now. I wanted instant gratification, that I would see it during my space of time on mother earth. I wouldn't have to go off on star trek--gads, there were quite a few villians up there, exported from earth no doubt now that I think of it. Talk about illusions of grandeur. I was like the Peace Corps volunteer who thought his or her village would be straightened out the first three weeks on the job, or maybe a month, just because it was my time on earth, my span of life on this infinitely precious planet. I would be a major part of building it right here and now. I know you students are thinking, "Well she has had quite a bit of time! Didn't she really know how complicated and complex it all is?" Now look team, yes I've been around since 1936. World War II, Korea, Viet Nam and a thousand other conflicts have gone by, and even with all of that -- and we must not forget right now Liberia, Cambodia, the Philippines, that are still going on. But even with all that I can assure you for some strange reason that it doesn't seem all that long to me. It's just zoomed by and I can assure you that I really used to -- really, really used to think -- that someone who was 55 years old was old. I can assure you I don't anymore. Turn around and look at some of your professors. They don't either. My great peace activist mother is here. She drove from Milwaukee because

when she heard there were 2,000 students, teachers, and townspeople who were pledging this weekend to work for peace she wanted to be among them. By the way, she's almost 80 and knowing her, I don't think that's very old either. Last Easter she was at the Nevada test site, last summer the Soviet Union, this spring Costa Rica, and of course she's here at the Peace Prize Forum now. Where are you Mom? Please stand up. And my sister Claire just is back from visiting her son and daughter-in-law, Peace Corps volunteers in Burundi. I'm very proud of my family in case you didn't realize it. But our family fellows are really young at heart. Let me assure you one of the qualities most needed for leadership in peacemaking for future global leadership is to be young at heart. I saw this so well in the Peace Corps, whether the volunteer was 21 or 85. To be perpetually engaged, to retain a burning zealotness in your heart for peace. Let me quote from a recent New York Times article that says, "Peace Corps is attracting the ageless. There is adventure for older people and Ruth Humlicher has found it. A year ago Mrs. Humlicher, a former associate director of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, joined the Peace Corps. 'I just could not play bridge for the next 20 years and I know many other older people want to do constructive work,' when she explained why she joined the Peace Corps. 'My husband died two years ago and I figured there was still time for adventure.'" Still time for adventure. Yes, that's what we need. How hope filled. The

patience coupled with perseverance and fortitude overshadowed with hope. Let us always be, we must be, this combination. Young at heart for peace. After eight years of watching the Peace Corps and then seeing the work for peace that Norway does and my own country, I still really believe it can and someday will happen. But a large part of that belief must be premised on the condition that we will ever better and better educate people for peace in far larger numbers. Many more thousands of people in the peace corps of the world, in Vista, in the Points of Light. How proud I am that in the last two years volunteerism in the United States has gone up 20% since the Points of Light started. The many volunteer activities on your campuses, the student exchanges that Gier Lundestad exemplifies are so positive, the teacher exchanges that are carried on on this campus and many others, the peace institutes, the peace courses, conflict resolution. This Peace Prize Forum is an important step, but it and the others must be multiplied around the world. Say, could we ever get the media to cover peace the way they cover this war? There was a wonderful conference held last August in Oslo and it should have been on our TVs. Ambassador Vibe spoke of it. The Anatomy of Hate Conference. It was co-sponsored by the Norwegian Nobel Committee. Yes, they do like to sponsor good things. It was led by the man who thought of the idea, Elie Wiesel, who as a young boy had seen hate, pure refined hate, in the flickering flames and greybone smoke of the crematoriums.



And by the way, everyone should go upstairs and see the pictures showing the concentration camps and remember, and let us be sure that it never, never, never can even be thought of to ever happen again. But coming out of that holocaust, Elie Wiesel states, "Hatred is a human plague that only human beings can contain. Man alone is capable of hatred and man alone is capable of establishing its boundaries, of fathoming its depth, of unmasking and disarming it." I sat there listening to Sakharov's widow, to the Chinese student leader from Tienaman Square, to Nelson Mandela, Bacla Pavel, and Betty William's co-partner Ms. McGuire, and many other people who had good cause to hate but somehow didn't. They not only didn't, they seemed to possess the opposite in some ultrasensitive way. They had come through their searing experiences, Elie Wiesel and all, with hope-filled love at their core, refined like alchemy, silver into gold, acceptance, tolerance, love not hate. Out of that conference came one dominant conclusion from within the innermost chambers of those who were there, that whatever hate was, it brought chaos and corruption, violence and war, and the only way it could be challenged, co-opted, conquered, was with the individual and through education. We have to change, we have to believe that we have the inner power, the conviction of love, to strengthen and commit to that, then go forth having conquered ourselves and committed ourselves. Then make ourselves outreach, conquer, overcome the hate in our own individual worlds.

And someday, because we do live in an interdependent world, it will all come together, a vast ripple effect. We will connect in interconnectedness, a tremendously woven tapestry of peace. We must go forth from this Forum with that same power. By the way, one way you can feel a little peace in your own life and that is essential, a true global peacemaker must be peace-filled in his or her own life, is if you're able to honor thy father and thy mother, your sisters, your brothers, your neighbor, no matter where on this planet. There are basic steps, building blocks. Fritz Mondale, President Arias, Betty Williams, Sara Ruddick -- all alluded to this, that if there's any hope at all of making a world at peace it has to continue to be built slowly but surely. This weekend we must be putting a few more building blocks, bricks, whatever we want to call them, in place. In our own lives, whether you're a teacher or a student, the world needs this kind of approach too. We need to help ourselves graduate and our world graduate. You might realize I love graduations, maybe because I never graduated myself. Maybe because lately I'm usually the speaker so I don't really have to listen to the speaker. Or maybe it's because usually one of our five daughters was graduating and my husband just plain looked so relieved--one less tuition. Or perhaps because I got to listen to one graduation speaker like Ted Koppel. His daughter was class of '87 at Duke, same as our youngest. I was a little hurt Nightline beat out Peace Corps for speaking honors. I've

always wondered which way my daughter did vote. No, no I didn't!. But I do remember Ted Koppel saying how he felt our world, well actually our daughter's class as they set out into the world, needed to renew its commitment to a defined sense of values. There was a lot of grey, but there was also black and white, right and wrong. I recall him saying, "Graduating class, just remember one thing. When Moses came down from the mountain, he didn't bring with him tucked under his arm the ten suggestions." Ted Koppel was so right, and Buddha, Allah, Jesus, if interviewed on Nightline would all give definitive guidelines for our human nature to live in peace on our mother earth. But you already know this. You come from campuses that know this. Go forth. So now we have a person, a global leader for peace, who knows right from wrong, has guidelines, who has patience and fortitude overshadowed with hope, a loving young at heart, perpetually dedicated for peace, and that's just the beginning. It fits part of the Webster's dictionary's definition of peace. Peace is on page 312 if you would open your textbooks, peace is "harmony in human and personal relations, a mental or spiritual state in which there is freedom from that which is disquieting, perturbing as fears, agitating passions, moral conflict." However, the first definition in Webster's of peace I personally think he had the cart before the horse, that's one of our problems. The first is "a path or agreement to end hostilities or to come together in amity between those who have been at war or

in a state of enmity or decension, a formal reconciliation between contending powers." Well, how timely. What personal qualities are needed to affect that? Well just from reading it it appears a good vocabulary. And then a strong sense or knowledge of history and a great deal of training or experience in negotiating and conflict resolution. Now just to show that I am in diplomacy and as I said before I hope some students here will train yourselves to be future diplomats, the century of President Arias demands that of you. But let us turn to Secretary Baker's testimony just two weeks ago. Congressman Jim Leech, you must have been there, but before I go on, as a former head of the Peace Corps, I must publicly thank you for the wise counsel, the total commitment privately and publicly, you have given year after year to the thousands of Peace Corps volunteers who have served and are serving. It was your testimony, your support, your amendment, the Leech Amendment, that propelled the Peace Corps forward in the 1980's. You've always been there. I was going to say my flawless Norwegian "tusen tak" but you cut me off, but a thousand thanks. Now back to the testimony which you listened to in the Foreign Affairs Committee on February 6th, this testimony of course covered all of the world's affairs, but given the incredible pace of events right now in the Gulf War and given the fact that the next business before this forum is a discussion of that war, let me go to page four in Secretary Baker's section which is post war

challenges. And I think as we really listen to a little bit of this testimony because I think it will lay a good base for your next discussion, I really think given the fact Ambassador Vibe was just telling me that there is another deadline of noon that something might either stop in the Gulf or go on. But I think it would be tremendously appropriate if we just had a moment of silence thinking about this and just trying to get our power out there to have this war end now. This was our secretary's testimony:

"Mr. Chairman: We and every nation involved in this conflict are thinking about the post war situation and planning for the future. It would be irresponsible not to do so. The war itself and the way it ends will greatly influence both the security of the Gulf and the rest of the area. The deepest passions have been stirred. The military actions now underway necessarily involve many casualties, great hardships and growing fears for the future. Tough times lie ahead. We should therefore approach the post war problems with a due sense of modesty, complete respect for the sovereignty of the peoples of the Gulf and Middle East must be uppermost. In any event, modern history has shown that no single nation can long impose its will or remake the Middle East in its own image. After all, that is partly why we are fighting Saddam Hussein. Yet among all the

difficulties we face one fact stands out: the peoples of the Gulf and indeed the entire Middle East desperately need peace. I truly believe that there must be a way working in consultation with all of the affected nations to set a course that brings greater security for all and enduring peace. We should therefore make every effort not just to heal the Persian Gulf after this war, but also to try to heal the rest of the region which needs it so badly. One challenge will be greater security for the Persian Gulf. After two wars in ten years this vital region needs new and different security arrangements. In our view there are three basic issues to be resolved. The purposes or principles of the security arrangements, the role of the local states, regional organizations, the international community, and in the aftermath of the war, the military requirements until local stability is achieved and thereafter. Deterrence of aggression from any border must be included. Territorial integrity. There must be respect for existing sovereignty of all states and for the inviolability of borders. Peaceful resolutions of disputes, border problems and other disputes that have long histories, and there are many beyond the Iraq-Kuwait example, should be resolved by

peaceful means as prescribed by the U.N. charter. These principles must be put into action first and foremost by the local states. We would expect the states of the Gulf and regional organizations such as the Gulf Cooperation Council to take the lead. No regional state should be excluded from these arrangements. Post war Iraq could have an important contribution to play and so could Iran as a major power in the Gulf. There's a role too for outside nations and the international community including the United Nations to encourage such arrangements and to stand behind them. Before security is assured however important questions must be answered. Should there be a permanent locally-stationed groundforce made up of local troops under U.N. auspices? How can the international community reinforce deterrence in the Gulf?"

He goes on to talk about a second challenge will surely be regional arms proliferation. "Five middle eastern countries have more main battle tanks than the United Kingdom, France, on and on. How can we cooperate to constrain Iraq's post war ability? How can we work with others to encourage steps toward broad regional support? Finally, what global actions would reinforce steps towards arms control in the Gulf and Middle East? These could include rapid completion of

pending international agreements like the Chemical Weapons Convention as well as much tighter supply restraints. A third challenge will be economic reconstruction and recovery. An economic catastrophe has befallen the Gulf. Kuwait has been looted and wrecked. And no one should forget that for the second time in a decade the people of Iraq will be recovering from a disastrous conflict. The time of reconstruction recovery should not be the occasion for vengeful actions against a nation forced to war by a dictator's ambition. The secure and prosperous future everyone hopes to see in the Gulf must include Iraq. Any economic effort he goes on to talk about reconstruction in economics must have a special place for water development. A fourth challenge is to resume the search for a just peace and real reconciliation for Israel, the Arab states and the Palestinians. By reconciliation I mean not simply peace as the absence of war but a peace based on enduring respect, tolerance and mutual trust. A fifth and final challenge concerns the United States. We simply must do more to reduce our energy dependence. As the President has stressed, only a comprehensive strategy can achieve our goals. That strategy should involve energy conservation and efficiency, increased development, strengthened stockpiles and reserves, and greater use of alternative fuels. We must bring to this task the same determination that we are now bringing to the war itself. As you can see Mr. Chairman



some of these elements are political, some are economic and some of necessity are related to security."

I'm reading you that to lay somewhat of a base for the next discussion but also to show you the complexities of if you're going to be a global leader in solving some of these problems, the type of background that you will need, the fact that you'll need conflict resolution, negotiating skills, language, cultural backgrounds. All of these things are extremely complex, and the reason why I read that was to kind of show you so that when you look at what courses you're taking and what you're studying, you'll think of ways that you will be in the modern front of conflict prevention. You have to study all of what's been going on in Europe with the CFCE, the Helsinki Accords, all of this is important background for any young person who's going into the twentieth to the year 2000 because these are the type of decisions and things that have to be worked on and a peace conference has to think of them. So a personal quality needed by a global leader is the relentless pursuit of knowledge, to speak languages, know culture. Think about the foreign service. They need the best and the brightest. And global leaders must read the history which is prologue to the future. Here is a letter written by Alfred Nobel to Bertha Von Suttner. We have her quoted in the beautiful, beautiful play last night. She's credited with inspiring Nobel to add a peace prize to his scientific prizes. As a

matter of fact, a leader of Sweden or who was trying I guess to change the will a little bit, said "Your uncle was tackled or was pushed, was talked into this by fanatics, women folk mostly." Well here's to a fantastic women folk everywhere like Bertha! But he wrote, "My dear friend, I should like to allot part of my fortune to the formation of a peace fund. This prize would be awarded to the man or woman who has done most to advance the idea of general peace in Europe. I do not refer to disarmament which can be achieved only by very slow degrees. I do not even necessarily refer to compulsory arbitration. But what I have in view is that we should soon achieve the result, undoubtedly a practical one, that all states should bind themselves absolutely to take action against the first aggressor. Wars will then become impossible and we should succeed in compelling even the most quarrelsome state either to have recourse to a tribunal or to remain quiet."

Perhaps this war, this terrible war, will be able to be the one to make war impossible. God grant that it may usher in a new world order and we are prepared to take our seats at the table of peace. You students must be prepared to sit at that table. Another definition of peace is a state of public tranquility or quiet, freedom from civil disturbance or agitation within a community, a state of security or order provided for by law, custom, public opinion. This was an article "Should the Peace Corps Survive?" and it says,

"Not long ago if you wanted to find [Shawn Ober ?] you would have looked for him in a luxury resort in Iowa (Well it really says Colorado, but anyway!) where he managed the restaurant. You might have found Mary Frances Cotrell in Paris where she worked as a model after leaving her job as a banker. Lynette and Steven Shwartz were studying at Virginia Commonwealth University. Dawn Dix was working at a law firm. As Mary Frances Cotrell put it jokingly, 'I was your basic yuppie.' These five are U.S. Peace Corps volunteers, Americans who for reasons of altruism or adventure or even curiosity have decided to give two years of their lives to people whose need is greater than most of us can ever imagine. A generation ago their predecessors were celebrated in the media and lionized by politicians. Today's volunteers I discovered are every bit as dedicated, courageous, and tough as the volunteers of the sixties. Today more vital than ever it is still fulfilling the mission set down by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 to teach people in developing countries about America, to expose Americans to other cultures, and to work together for the common good. It now functions in 70 countries with 5500 volunteers. It turns down two applicants for every one it accepts today. It has made several new initiatives since Paul Coverdell took over in 1989. Among them are its first programs in eastern Europe, in Poland, Hungary, the Czechoslovakian republic, going into Bulgaria and Romania. A new program to help develop small business in Third World

countries. Contacts with the EPA and HHS to give volunteers special training and help in environmental skills. A worldwide school project which couples volunteers in countries with schools across the United States to bring home to the United States a better knowledge of the real world. The average age is around 31 now versus 24 in the sixties. The skill level is up. It's equally balanced between male and female. In the sixties it was mostly male. Recruiting and training are far more sophisticated, and throughout the world the Peace Corps has earned the kind of support that emanates from real respect. On a recent trip I watched the Peace Corps earn that respect in some of the world's poorest places. I found Lynn Schwartz, 25, in an orphanage in Morocco where a small, overworked staff tries to care for dozens of sickly babies. Steven Schwartz is an intense, passionate man who said the Peace Corps has changed him. "It has humbled me," he explained. "I wasn't raised in a ghetto per se, but I was raised in hard times, frugal times. I thought I'd been poor but I hadn't seen poor until I came here." Plenty of government officials and academics told them how valuable the Peace Corps was. They told them all the good work that they are doing. I had the opportunity to visit 65 countries where Peace Corps volunteers were serving and so many of them came off the campuses that you students are at school at. So many of them are still on your campuses, back, like Bob Shoffner who helped put this on. How proud I am of him as a return Peace

Corps volunteer, and the Johnsons, and so many on all your campuses. But there I would observe the beautiful works which the Peace Corps volunteers were involved in. I am not sure if the volunteers had not always had these incredible qualities and talents within them. But I saw them return from their years abroad as changed, matured. They were self-reliant and knowledgeable about other cultures including fluency in languages. They had developed new skills in communication, they had learned about the complexity of the problems faced by the world's poor. Virtue is indeed its own reward. This is true. Yes, both Senator Hubert Humphrey, President Kennedy, Sargeant Shriver saw in the sixties as did more recently President Reagan, Bush, myself, Paul Coverdell, that Peace Corps service overseas is a two-way street. And when I talk about Peace Corps please know I'm also talking about service in the Lutheran Volunteer Corps, the Jesuit Corps, all the wonderful work that is done by volunteers for peace. Returned Peace Corps volunteers in the U.S. play a significant part organizing and encouraging global education. These volunteers play a leading role helping to correct and overcome our nation's international illiteracy. More recently a test given in Dallas, Texas asking students to name the country that bordered them, and only 25% could name Mexico. According to a recent Gallup Poll survey taken in nine countries, American 18-24 year olds (of course they didn't give the survey on these campuses) came in dead last in their knowledge. In Norway

I'm glad to report and all of Europe virtually the geography is going very well and at least three or four languages that everybody has. So Peace Corps volunteers thank goodness are trained in over 180 languages. They are user friendly. And so we work with all of the volunteers from all around the world. Martin Luther King who's been mentioned many times was a thought-filled leader in many fields. He said in 1960's, "Even before you finish eating breakfast this morning you've depended on more than half the world. This is the way our universe is structured. We aren't going to have peace on earth until we recognize this basic fact of the interrelated structure of all reality." Employers think highly of returned volunteers, very highly. A recent survey showed them out earning Fulbright scholars. Statistics are impressive. Two senators, ten representatives, 200 staff members, 10 ambassadors, and hundreds of diplomats working for the State Department, USIA and AID. Up to 80% of the workers in CARE, Save the Children, Lutheran and Catholic Relief, Vice Presidents of Chase Manhattan Bank. Lee Iacocca offered this comment: "Service in the Peace Corps develops qualities I look for when I hire Chrysler managers." The continued growth of America is going to depend more and more upon the skills, perspectives, and cross-cultural experiences brought back by Peace Corps volunteers. That's an important quality and there's another one. And that is volunteers have a chance to really think while they're out there and reflect. A very important

thing. As Andre Elieen Brooks points out in her book Children of Fast Track Parents and I'm sure Sara Ruddick would agree, we need to take time to let our children understand that success should mean having a positive impact on society. Was Freud honored because he amassed a vault filled with cash? Was Pasteur lauded for building a pharmaceutical empire? Is Mother Theresa revered because she works 12 hours a day trying to crack the glass ceiling in order to make it into the board of a major corporation? Of course not. I think volunteers who teach a deaf Moroccan child to communicate, who help a Paraguayan farmer to stop soil erosion, or on your campuses those who shelter the homeless, teach the illiterate, build peace polls, raise dollars at dances for causes, recycle. You understand this moral bottom line. The world yearns for a return to higher ethical standards. Volunteers can help build and make come true the challenge of President Bush's inaugural address: a kinder and gentler America. Or John F. Kennedy: "Ask not what your country can do for you. Rather ask what you can do for your country." Peace. That beautiful five-letter word we all say we treasure, work, and pray for, is up for grabs in the nineties. A question must be answered above and beyond this special forum. Is peace simply the absence of war, or is it the absence of the conditions that bring on war? Preventable hunger, preventable disease, preventable poverty, preventable illiteracy, preventable despair. When 50% of the children in a village still die before they are

five, when women and children walk miles for water and then spend hours searching for wood to cook with, when men and boys flee their villages where there are no jobs to congregate in cities where there are no jobs, when only an ocean away this very year there are more starving in the horn of Africa than there were when we all made "We Are The World" a hit record. And in the nineties we plead donor fatigue and turn off the set to keep watching the war. When only a street away or a park away our homeless grow in ever increasing numbers and our capitol continues to be called the murder capitol of the world. Then let's face it America. The world has a long way to go to be at peace. Even if the Gulf War has ended while I speak. Augsburg, Augustana, Concordia, Luther, St. Olaf -- you are called, you are chosen. Students, faculty, families -- you have a special responsibility. You have been formed and informed. Peace is possible but only through you. Go back to your world, out into the world, as a strong force. A future candidate from one of your schools should be standing at this podium in another 15 or 20 years. That is what is expected of you. And now my mother's favorite poem, "God Sits Weaving."

The beautiful creation tapestry she wove with such joy is mutilated, torn into shreds, reduced to rags, its beauty fragmented by force. God sits weaving. But look, she's gathering up the shreds



to weave something new. She gathers our shreds of sorrow, the pain, the tears, the frustration caused by cruelty, crushing, ignoring, violating and killing. She gathers the rags of hard work, attempts at advocacy, initiatives for peace, protests against injustice, all the seemingly little and weak words and deeds offered sacrificially in hope, in faith, in love. And look, she is weaving them all with golden threads of jubilation into a new tapestry of creation, richer, more beautiful than the old one was. God sits weaving patiently, persistently with a smile that radiates like a rainbow on her tear-streaked face and she invites us not only to keep offering her the shreds and rags of our suffering and our work, but even more to take our place beside her at the jubilee loom and weave with her the tapestry of the new creation.

Thank you.

