

REMARKS

BY

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PRESIDENT

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

OPENING DAY CEREMONY

SEPTEMBER 14, 1972

ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVEN YEARS AGO THOMAS JEFFERSON
STOOD BEFORE A SMALL CROWD IN CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA,
TO ANNOUNCE THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE NATION'S FIRST
STATE UNIVERSITY -- THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA. HE TOLD
THOSE ASSEMBLED HOW PLEASED HE WAS THAT AFTER SIX YEARS OF
PLANNING AND PREPARATION THE NEW INSTITUTION WOULD OPEN FOR
A BEGINNING CLASS OF FORTY STUDENTS.

TODAY, I STAND BEFORE YOU TO ANNOUNCE THAT THIS NATION'S
NEWEST STATE UNIVERSITY -- FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY --
OFFICIALLY OPENS ON THIS DAY AFTER THIRTY-SIX MONTHS OF
PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR A BEGINNING CLASS NUMBERING
ALMOST 6,000 -- THREE TIMES MORE STUDENTS THAN ANY OTHER NEW
UNIVERSITY HAS OPENED WITH IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.

THOMAS JEFFERSON WAS JUSTLY PROUD TO BE THE FOUNDING
PRESIDENT OF THE NATION'S FIRST STATE UNIVERSITY. AND I
AM EQUALLY PROUD TO HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO BE THE FIRST
PRESIDENT OF THE NATION'S NEWEST STATE UNIVERSITY.

AS A GRATEFUL FIRST PRESIDENT, I STAND BEFORE YOU
WITH A FULL HEART:

. . . FULL BECAUSE YOU ARE HERE TO CELEBRATE THIS
HISTORIC DAY IN THE YOUNG LIFE OF THIS UNIVERSITY --
A DAY THAT REPRESENTS A DREAM THAT HAS BECOME A
REALITY FOR THIS GREAT REGION OF OUR STATE. AND
THIS DAY PROVIDES A DEEP SENSE OF SATISFACTION TO
SO MANY, ESPECIALLY THOSE MEMBERS OF THE 1965 DADE
DELEGATION WHO SPONSORED THE SUCCESSFUL LEGISLATION
THAT ESTABLISHED FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY.
THIS INSTITUTION SHALL ALWAYS REMEMBER SENATORS
HOLLAHAN AND HAVERFIELD AND REPRESENTATIVES BAKER,
DUBBIN, GONG, MACKENZIE, MYERS, PETTIGREW, POSTON,
SHEVIN, SPENCER AND WEISSENBORN FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION
IN MAKING THIS DAY POSSIBLE.

. . . FULL BECAUSE OF THE ASSISTANCE THAT FLORIDA
INTERNATIONAL HAS RECEIVED FROM ALL ELEMENTS
OF THIS COMMUNITY -- FROM BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY,
FROM THE PROFESSIONS, FROM THE PRIVATE COLLEGES
AND UNIVERSITIES, FROM THE PUBLIC COMMUNITY
COLLEGES, FROM THE POLITICAL AND GOVERNMENTAL
LEADERS, FROM THE YOUNG AND THE OLD, FROM THE
BLACK AND THE WHITE, FROM THE SPANISH SPEAKING
CITIZENS AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY --
FROM EVERYONE!

. . . FULL BECAUSE OF THE HIGH CALIBER OF FACULTY
AND STAFF THAT WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO BRING TO THE
UNIVERSITY FROM ALL AREAS OF THIS NATION AND FROM
VARIOUS PARTS OF THE GLOBE TO WORK WITH THE
OUTSTANDING GROUP OF STUDENTS WHO WILL BE IN
OUR FIRST CLASS.

. . . FULL BECAUSE OF THE HARD WORK, CREATIVE THINKING AND TOTAL DEDICATION THAT THIS UNIVERSITY AND ITS PRESIDENT HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE FACULTY AND STAFF DURING THE LAST 1,165 DAYS. THEIR ENTHUSIASTIC COOPERATION HAS ENABLED THIS INSTITUTION TO DEVELOP NEW AND EXCITING PROGRAMS THAT WILL MAKE FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL A LIVING AND VITAL FORCE IN SOCIETY.

. . . FULL BECAUSE OF THE CONTINUOUS ENCOURAGEMENT AND ASSISTANCE THAT THIS UNIVERSITY HAS RECEIVED FROM THE BOARD OF REGENTS, THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE. THEY HAVE REALLY MADE THIS DAY POSSIBLE AND WE SHALL ALWAYS BE APPRECIATIVE FOR THEIR SUPPORT.

. . . AND, FINALLY, MY HEART IS ESPECIALLY FULL BECAUSE OF THE LOVE THAT MY FAMILY HAS SHOWN FOR ME DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS. THEY HAVE PUT UP WITH AN ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION -- CONTINUOUS LONG HOURS, OCCASSIONAL SHORT TEMPER AND AN ABUNDANCE OF PROMISES TO SPEND MORE TIME WITH THEM, NONE OF WHICH CAME TRUE. FOR ACCEPTING THIS BURDEN WITH A DEEP AND SINCERE UNDERSTANDING, I SHALL ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL TO YOU BETTY, TO YOU TOM, AND TO YOU LYNN.

THIS DAY WILL BE RECORDED IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY AS THE BEGINNING. LET US REMEMBER, THEREFORE, THAT FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY WAS BORN TODAY TO SERVE ALL OF THE TOMORROWS THAT FOLLOW. AND LET US ALWAYS BE MINDFUL OF OUR CONTINUED COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION TO KNOWLEDGE, SERVICE AND UNDERSTANDING AS EXPRESSED IN THE GOALS OF THE UNIVERSITY.

Now, I AM HONORED TO DECLARE THAT AT 10:57 A.M.
ON SEPTEMBER 14, 1972, FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY IS
OFFICIALLY OPEN AND WE ARE VERY PLEASED TO TAKE OUR PLACE
AS A MEMBER OF THE STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA

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