

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

by

John Hume

Member of Parliament



Tusculum College

Greeneville, Tennessee

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Senate

(Legislative day of Wednesday, May 18, 1988)

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., on the expiration of the recess, and was called to order by the Honorable DENNIS DECONCINI, a Senator from the State of Arizona.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Richard C. Halverson, D.D., offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.—Joshua 1:9.

... I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.—Hebrews 13:5.

Father in heaven, omnipresent Lord, I pray for the loneliness of leadership when the moment of decision comes—when personal destiny hangs in the balance. When all counsel has been given and received—advisers, staff—friends have done all they can do and the leader stands alone in the decisive moment; when cosmic issues of profound significance challenge with critical implications for people, nation, and world: when conscience struggles with ambivalence and simple solutions do not apply—help leadership remember there is One who never leaves—never forsakes. His counsel is instantaneous and trustworthy—whether by strong certainty despite political risk—a still small voice within—persistent, intuitive impulse or gentle restraint. In these moments of maximum test for leadership, grant to Senators the courage to trust You and discover the reality of the presence of Him who never fails. In His name we pray. Amen.

JOHN HUME'S COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS AT TUSCULUM COLLEGE

● Mr. SASSER. Mr. President, many of my colleagues are familiar with the extraordinary work of John Hume, a member of Great Britain's Parliament from Derry, Northern Ireland. Mr. Hume has dedicated himself to working for peace in that troubled part of



U. S. Senator James R. Sasser, D-TN.

the world. As the leader of the Catholic Social and Democratic Labor Party of Northern Ireland, Mr. Hume has sought to use the party as a means of achieving equality and justice for Catholics in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Hume recently visited Tusculum College in my home State of Tennessee. Mr. Hume honored the college by providing the commencement address for the class of 1988. At the same time, Mr. Hume was honored by Tusculum College as he was awarded the honorary degree of doctor of laws.

Tusculum College is the oldest educational institution of higher learning in America in a covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church. Moreover, Tusculum has a rich heritage as one of the oldest institutions of higher learning in Tennessee.

My good friend, D. Bruce Shine, serves as the chairman of the Board of Trustees for Tusculum College. Bruce had the distinct pleasure of awarding Mr. Hume's honorary degree earlier this month. Bruce made some observations about Mr. Hume that I would like to share with my colleagues:

John Hume is a servant of peace. He has dedicated his public life to achieving in Northern Ireland a pluralistic society where Catholic and Protestant can enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness without regard to their mode of worshiping their God. ... Daily we read of the continued and senseless violence in Northern Ireland and yearn as Christians for the day when Christ's children can live together with peace and justice in Ulster. We applaud those whose life and conduct is motivated by a desire to end the "troubles" in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Hume is certainly worthy of the praise bestowed upon him by D. Bruce Shine. We would all do well to follow his example of peacefully striving for justice. Mr. President, my colleagues would benefit greatly from taking time to review the remarks of this remarkable man at Tusculum's College spring commencement. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of Mr. Hume's commencement address appear in the RECORD at this point.

The remarks follow:

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS BY JOHN HUME, M.P., ON THE OCCASION OF THE AWARD OF AN HONORARY DOCTORATE AT TUSCULUM COLLEGE IN TENNESSEE, MAY 1, 1988

I am deeply honoured to accept this award. It is a particular pleasure to come to Tusculum which has a long tradition of educational excellence combined with a concern to be involved in the community in which it is based. Tusculum offers an example in which the various elements which go to make an education; academic ability, practical endeavours, and community awareness are brought together to produce a well-rounded approach to education. I am conscious that in Cicero's Tusculan Disputations, he argues that virtue joins man to God, and Cicero would later write that man's first rule must be regard for his fellow men and the avoidance of any personal gain when this can only be acquired by harming another. I am aware too of the strong Christian ethic and the Presbyterian roots of this college and I would like today to dwell on some of the links which such roots establish with my own homeland.

The Presbyterian heritage in Ireland is long and complex and represents a close connection between Ireland and Scotland. The crude Protestant-Catholic divide which is so often taken as the condition in Ireland, and sometimes indeed considered the principal cause of our difficulties, masks the much more subtle interplay between the various traditions which exist in our island. The development of Presbyterianism was

not without considerable hardship and rejection from those of the more established Churches in Britain and in Ireland. Seventeenth century Presbyterians knew discrimination and oppression as did Catholics, and as with many Catholics they made the decision to come to the United States to seek a new freedom and tolerance.

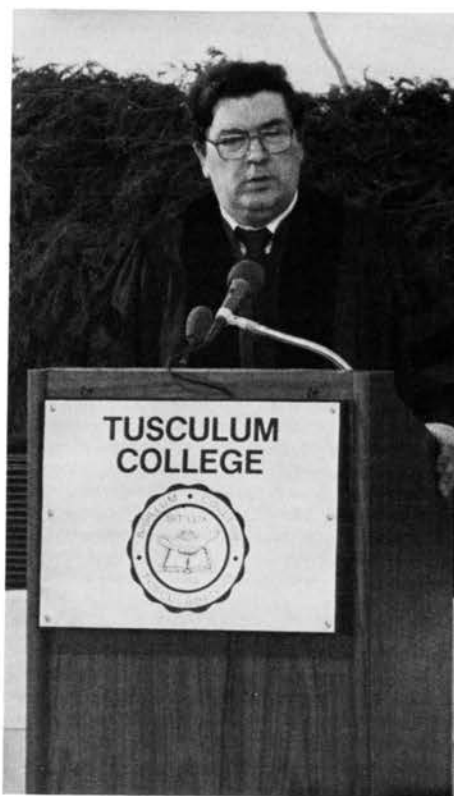
The influence of Presbyterianism on the structure of American government has been profound. The fundamental principles upon which the United States is built, equality, respect for human and civil rights, and a check on the possible abuse of central authority, all coincide closely with the principal tenets of Presbyterian libertarianism. The form of government in the U.S., is very similar to that of the Presbyterian church itself, with secular modifications. The American public school system has grown out of the parish school system established by Presbyterians. Indeed, it has been said that the most lasting testimony to Presbyterianism is the American Constitution. It is often forgotten too, that the nonconformist tradition established by Presbyterians, the distrust of elaborate ecclesiastical hierarchies and the search for direct access to God, was also a basis for political reform in eighteenth century England, attacking corruption, excessive monarchical and executive influence and unrepresentative Government.

The influence of the Scottish-Irish Presbyterian in this thirst for reform was very significant. The virtual founder of the American Presbyterian Church, Francis Makemie was born in Ireland and educated in Scotland. (I am happy to say that cross-community efforts are being made to preserve a meeting house associated with Francis Makemie in a town called Ramelton, County Donegal, not far from my own home city of Derry.) Makemie was commissioned to be a missionary to the Barbadoes and other American colonies. During the late seventeenth century, he did much to encourage a notable immigration of Presbyterians from Scotland and Ireland who sought to escape religious oppression.

The Armagh-born Presbyterian, Frances Hutcheson, who died in 1746, promoted the idea of a contract between governor and governed, and a doctrine of religious toleration which would be carried into American revolutionary thinking. Even in the nomenclature of church architecture, the use of the term "meeting house" in place of church, can we detect a direction towards community involvement and cohesion which Presbyterians found lacking in order faiths. By the time of the American Revolution, almost two thirds of the colonies' total population of three million were Calvinist. Scottish-Irish Presbyterians were greatly to the fore in the struggle that would ensue to establish a new nation which would never again lapse into exclusion of its own citizens from meaningful participation in their own Government.

Democratic ideals then, conveying a deep religious significance for the Presbyterian, also had profound political meaning in their expression as goals for society, and one of their greatest political expressions can be found here in the U.S., in the principles enshrined in your Constitution. Accommodation of difference, and toleration of diversity are the hallmarks of a strong democracy and these can only be based on a willing acceptance of the challenges represented by a system in which you may seek to maximise support for your point of view but you may never demand dominance as of right.

These principles reflect dimensions of the Calvinist belief in self-reliance—the primacy of the individual ordered with a strong sense of community. They were also a response to the religious intolerance, social



John Hume, M. P.

discrimination and political alienation which many Calvinist communities had witnessed in Europe.

That such a radical, constructive and tolerant approach could emerge from a dearly held religious outlook and the experience of exclusion and persecution is perhaps remarkable to our eyes today. Most examples today would suggest that such factors create exclusivist, intolerant and vengeful political attitudes which serve only to regenerate the prejudices and injustices to which they react. Where we see social, cultural or territorial disputes interlocked with strong religious attachments we see, perhaps, the most intractable problems.

In so many conflict situations we see how religious intensity manifests itself as a crusade to exclude alternative interpretations of the word of God. Religion often falls to sustaining an exclusivist, self-righteous and supremacist sense of identity in areas of conflict. Intense and self-righteous religious attitudes create in people a certitude of mind that demands dominance of its values in everything. It seeks to impose values and behaviour patterns of a narrow origin on entire populations. In the political dimension this intolerance creates positions which are maximalist, to the point of excluding all others. Dialogue, negotiation, tolerance and compromise are all seen as evidence of weakness or corruption in one's position. In these circumstances it is possible to create a society in which the frames of mind are set so hard, they become brittle. It then requires or is mutually felt to require rupture of one or another to create movement.

This same certitude and value-prescriptive approach to society also commonly manifests itself in post-independence situations. The impetus is to justify the struggle for independence by maximising the distinctiveness of the new political entity which includes enshrining particular values in its structures and laws. Constitutions and legislation are often used less as a shield to protect the rights of all in the society than as a badge to proclaim the values of some.

Those who delivered the American constitution mitigated all these possible tendencies. Democratic ideals, conveying a deep religious significance for the Presbyterian and other faiths who sought a new order in a new world, had profound political meaning in their expressions as standards for society. The principles enshrined in your constitution give those ideals substantive political expression. Accommodation of difference, tolerance of diversity and provision for change are the hallmarks of a strong democracy. These can only be based on a willing acceptance of the challenges represented by a system in which you may seek to maximise support for your point of view but you may never demand dominance as of right or in perpetuity.

Such tolerance and accommodation cannot be dismissed as mutual submission by communities uncertain of their values or lacking real commitment in their beliefs. Nor can they be downgraded as convenient acquiescence before fears of the prevalence of other cultures, values or identities. On the contrary this acceptance reflected self-confidence. People believed sufficiently in their communities that they were not reduced to fear of difference. They believed sufficiently in the integrity of their values that they did not demand the insulation of those values by their imposition on the entire society and its succeeding generations.

When we look at situations where difference has generated into conflict we often lament the hatred and distrust which prevent accommodation. Such hatred and distrust generally derive from a fear of others and their intentions. That such fear can reduce people to violent expressions betrays in them a lack of self-confidence. Their self-confidence may well have been broken under victimisation. This condition leads to an inability to reach an accommodation with others. Without a wider vision, without guarantors to the survival of those locked in the conflict no quarter appears possible. What we are left with is, to use an urban American term, gridlock. Very often, it is a deadly gridlock with the lives of ordinary people clogged by the use of violence and each act of violence causing a further retreat into hardened positions.

Such, to a greater or lesser degree are some of the features in the British-Irish problem particularly in the politics of Northern Ireland. There we have two traditions. British and Irish—who have not yet engaged in a means to resolve their old fears, suspicions and hurts. Too much of the political impetus is to rehearse old injuries and old victories and dictate these as the terms of current politics. Pre-occupations with the supposed threat to their own tradition by anything which acknowledges or nourishes the political standing of the other side leads to repudiation of dialogue and compromise. That fears and suspicions can paralyse political development points to the shortage of self-confidence. Self-confidence is that quality by which we come to terms with our fears, get them into context and act without being intimidated by them. A task of real political leadership in a divided society must be to engender and express self-confidence in their community. It cannot be acceptable that people in positions of leadership should simply replay all fears and blame the mistrust of the other community. I am under no illusions that leaders can quickly replace historic distrust. What they must try to do, however, is to fashion a self-confidence which can overcome the paralysing effects of that distrust. Self-confidence is not about not knowing fear but about not fearing fear.

Leaders in Ireland are faced with starker choices than in most Western societies. Treading a path which neither neglects or

over-indulges the fears of their communities and which ultimately seeks to transcend the low common denominator of fear and mistrust and offer a positive alternative, is never easy in even the best ordered political environment. In Ireland, where we must overcome a legacy of the deadliest mistrust, a sequence of hurt and injustice piled high upon one another, with each section of the community with its own valid tale to tell of the wrongs which have been inflicted upon it, the effort must be supreme.

This lack of self-confidence displays itself in one way by the demand to hold all power in one's own hands. It shows itself in anxieties to have political structures made in the image of one tradition. It shows itself in the rejection of tolerance and the requirement for dominance. We see it in the abandonment of peaceful processes for violent excesses. We see it in the attitudes which want victory and cannot understand accommodation. We see it when the despair expressed in the status quo is exceeded by antipathy to any change.

In the Unionist community, with its British identity and a rich Protestant heritage there is tremendous pride in their tradition. Pride in their service to the Crown, pride in their industrial achievements and work ethics and pride in their maintenance of their faith. Many of them celebrated victories in old battles as proof of their special mettle. Can such pride not be fashioned into self-confidence instead of archaic supremacy? If unionist leaders really had confidence in the values they claim for their community and in their peoples intelligence and abilities, they would not allow suspicions of the tendencies of others to inhibit them from seeking accommodation.

Similarly the nationalist tradition takes pride in its Irish culture, pride in their progress against colonisation and for many pride in their adherence and contribution to the Catholic faith. Many instance various geo-political facts to indicate Ireland's nationhood and the contribution it can make to the world through that nationhood. But for some their faith in the Irish people and the values and abilities they claim for them is not sufficient to believe they can survive alongside another culture. Their assertions about Ireland's potential among the nations of the world do not apparently run to believing that Irish representatives can ever hold their own in a political relationship with the neighbouring island of Britain. If such people really had the self-confidence to match their pride and protest they would not refuse to acknowledge the political realities of a divided people. They would not indulge in the ugly despair of violence in an attempt to force one's terms on others. Nor would they demand that only the ultimate is acceptable now, suggesting a fear that their identity or tradition could not cope in a scenario which fell short of the ultimate.

In a society such as Northern Ireland, where religion, whether helping to divide or unite, plays such an important role in everyday life, there falls a great responsibility upon religious leadership to offer something of the strength which is needed to lift those who are in entrenched positions. The Presbyterian faith, through its beliefs and indeed in its very construction places emphasis upon self-reliance, personal responsibility and the need to include the views of all its community in decisions which affect the direction of the church in matters of faith or social organization. These are guiding principles which ought to inspire the practice of politics in Northern Ireland. To cut oneself off from dialogue, to place oneself in a position where compromise will mean loss of face or erosion of support and to eschew improvements without victory as



E. G. Marshall, distinguished American actor who attended Tusculum's Commencement and spoke of his long standing admiration and friendship with John and Pat Hume.

selling out is to have lost sight of the great objectives which arguably inspired so much of our mutual christian heritage.

Ireland may be a small island but there is room there for all who wish to share with their neighbour. Reconciling our differences require the strength to know one's own identity and the willingness to see it as dependent upon others for its definition and meaning. No one in Ireland can today adopt the slogan "ourselves alone" and seriously propose this as a means to resolve disunity. Acceptance of diversity and its meaning for one's self and one's society is a prerequisite for the kind of progress we need to make in Britain and Ireland.

That such progress will be gradual almost goes without saying, but it bears repetition in the circumstances of Northern Ireland, where the defence mechanisms of all sides are so sharply honed that each step towards dialogue is often seen as a harbinger of one's own total capitulation or annihilation. If we are to heed the words of the song and give peace a chance, we must first give ourselves a chance by restoring respect and tolerance.

This brings me back to the inspiration provided by those who fashioned your Constitution. Your system has fashioned unity out of diversity. It is a unity not of assimilation but accommodation. I have often observed that perhaps the richest principle of the United States is to be found even on your cheapest coin, "E Pluribus Unum". Here is the assertion that from many threads, one cloth can be woven, all the stronger indeed from the addition of more threads. The self-confidence in a society based on such a principle is not the naive belief that somehow differing elements can all be made to pull in the one direction. Rather it derives from the deeper realisation that a society which can absorb the tensions created by varying interests emerges stronger with each absorption. It derives from the acceptance that diversity can be complementary and not simply com-

petitive or conflicting. These are lessons for us in Ireland and in the Lebanon and Middle-East and other areas where different identities are gridlocked in conflict.

It is not for me to pretend that you do not still face issues concerned with the full acceptance of diversity. Diversity can only be fully accommodated and reconciliation made truly real when there is equality. But as a leader of a minority community who entered politics in a Civil Rights Movement against political discrimination, economic disadvantage and social inequality. I am struck by the emphasis on self-confidence in the political development of the black and the Hispanic communities here.

Throughout my work in politics I have been greatly inspired by Martin Luther King. He outlined brilliantly the futility of violence as a means of change in a divided society. His inspirations on the power and processes of non-violent approaches have been profound. His dream of equality, reconciliation and tolerance should be a motive force of all in political and social affairs. But many people seem to be unaware that so much of his leadership was aimed at generating and inspiring self-confidence.

He did not only challenge the injustices of the powerful, he also challenged the pessimism of the oppressed. Much of his writing attacked what he called the inferiority complex of those black activists who rejected his dream of reconciliation and who instead sought exclusivism or victory through violence.

In a political environment such as my own background we have much to learn from Martin Luther King's leadership. Where two communities act as threatened or victimised minorities and where there is such a strong tradition of violence as a means of political expression we would do well to read King's analyses of the politics of fear, despair and violence. In circumstances where so often rage can be portrayed as strength and reason as weakness it is appropriate to note King's views:

"Courage is the power of the mind to overcome fear. . . . the determination not to be overwhelmed by any object, however frightful. It is the power of life to affirm itself in spite of life's ambiguities. This requires the exercise of a creative will that enables us to hew out a stone of hope from a mountain of despair. Courage is an inner resolution to go forward in spite of obstacles and frightening situations; cowardice is a submissive surrender to circumstance. Courage breeds creative self-affirmation; cowardice produces destructive self-abnegation. Courage faces fear and thereby masters it; cowardice represses fear and is thereby mastered by it."

Consistent with such principals my party and I worked to establish the Forum for a New Ireland. There, representatives of the nationalist tradition throughout Ireland tried to come to terms with the fears, inhibitions and prejudices that exist in our politics and to address our aspirations and approaches in a manner which would be sensitive to the real needs of the Unionist tradition and which could engage the British. I have long believed that it would be helpful to all if those of the unionist tradition could engage in a similar exercise of "creative self-affirmation".

In the absence of such a movement however it is still the responsibility of others to proceed in a creative will to create hope. I believe that, deriving from the Forum exercise, the talks between the British and Irish governments leading to the Anglo-Irish Agreement displayed such a will. That Agreement does give us a stone of hope.

By acknowledging that the real context of the problems in Northern Ireland is not simply those six counties but rather relations there, relations between North and South in Ireland and relations between Britain and Ireland, it offers to liberate politics in Northern Ireland from the "narrow ground" of that region and its peoples prejudices and pressures.

By recognising and guaranteeing the rights and identity of both traditions in Northern Ireland it offers a basis for equality. Only on a basis of equality can reconciliation take place. These recognitions and guarantees are expressed by the two sov-



E. G. Marshall discussing Hume's address with Betsy Shine, wife of Tusculum College's Board of Trustees Chairman, Dr. D. Bruce Shine.

eign governments who represent the identities which the two communities in Northern Ireland claim and fear. In doing this the governments have tried to create a break from the old animosities for the people in Northern Ireland. In many respects it is similar to the federal civil rights interventions in the American South where local politics could neither maintain the status quo nor deliver, of itself, such change as was necessary.

The Agreement threatens the rights of no tradition. It rules out no aspiration. No community is offered any advantage over another community. It has been opposed by people in both traditions precisely for that reason. For myself and my party we have resolved that a framework offering equality, recognition of diversity and challenging people of new relationships and co-oper-

ation is enough for us. We have sufficient respect for other people and sufficient self-confidence in ourselves to believe that in such a framework we can determine our future in peace and stability.

Irish poet and playwright, Oscar Wilde, on his return from a visit there, is supposed to have said of America, "It will be a great place when its finished". The work of establishing a great nation in the United States is of course complete, and in the twentieth century, the United States has become a major focus of political attention for the Western World. What we must do in Ireland is to begin the work of completing our own business of ending the ancient quarrels which have sown division among our people and among the peoples of the two islands for so long. We now have an instrument to do so, if we are willing to use it.●



John Hume visiting with Tusculum's graduates and their families at a reception prior to Commencement. Pat Hume long identified as a partner in Hume's advocacy of peace in Northern Ireland, accompanied her husband to Tusculum.

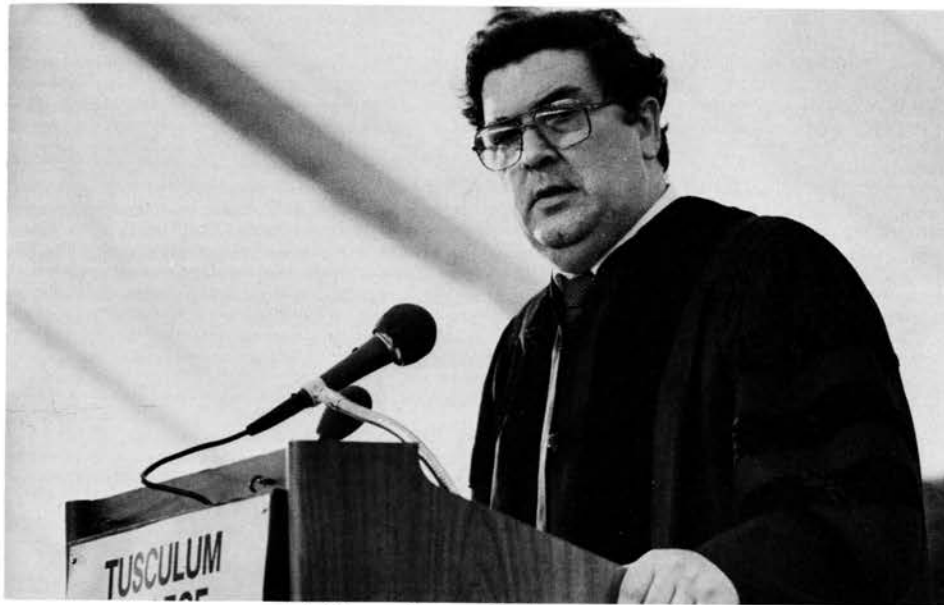
EDITORIAL

Hume Led Impressive Ceremony

The Tusculum Commencement weekend was noteworthy not only for the significant restructuring made in the college's top leadership structure. Completely apart from that behind-the-scenes development, the weekend included one of the most interesting and impressive commencements in Tusculum's history.

The primary reason was the presence here of John Hume, the noted Roman Catholic political leader from Northern Ireland who was the main speaker for the Sunday afternoon occasion. Hume, a member of the British Parliament for 18 years, is the leader of the moderate Catholic Social and Democratic Labour Party in Northern Ireland.

More important than these titles and the others he holds, however, is the fact that he is known and respected around the world as a spokesman for peaceful change in his strife-torn homeland. His is a difficult — and dangerous — position in an area of the world where most political leaders among both the Protestant majority and the Catholic minority seem unwilling to consider compromising on a governmental arrangement providing just and meaningful participation for both groups.



John Hume, of Derry, Northern Ireland, 1988 Tusculum College Commencement Speaker and Leader of the moderate Social Democratic and Labour Party.

Tusculum College
Spring
Commencement
of
The One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth Year



May First
Nineteen Hundred and Eighty-Eight
Greeneville, Tennessee

An indication of the significance of his presence here was the fact that it made major news in Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland. Why? Because a Presbyterian college was giving both a platform and an honorary degree to a Roman Catholic leader. In Northern Ireland, such an action would be unheard of because of the decades of bitter, bloody conflict.

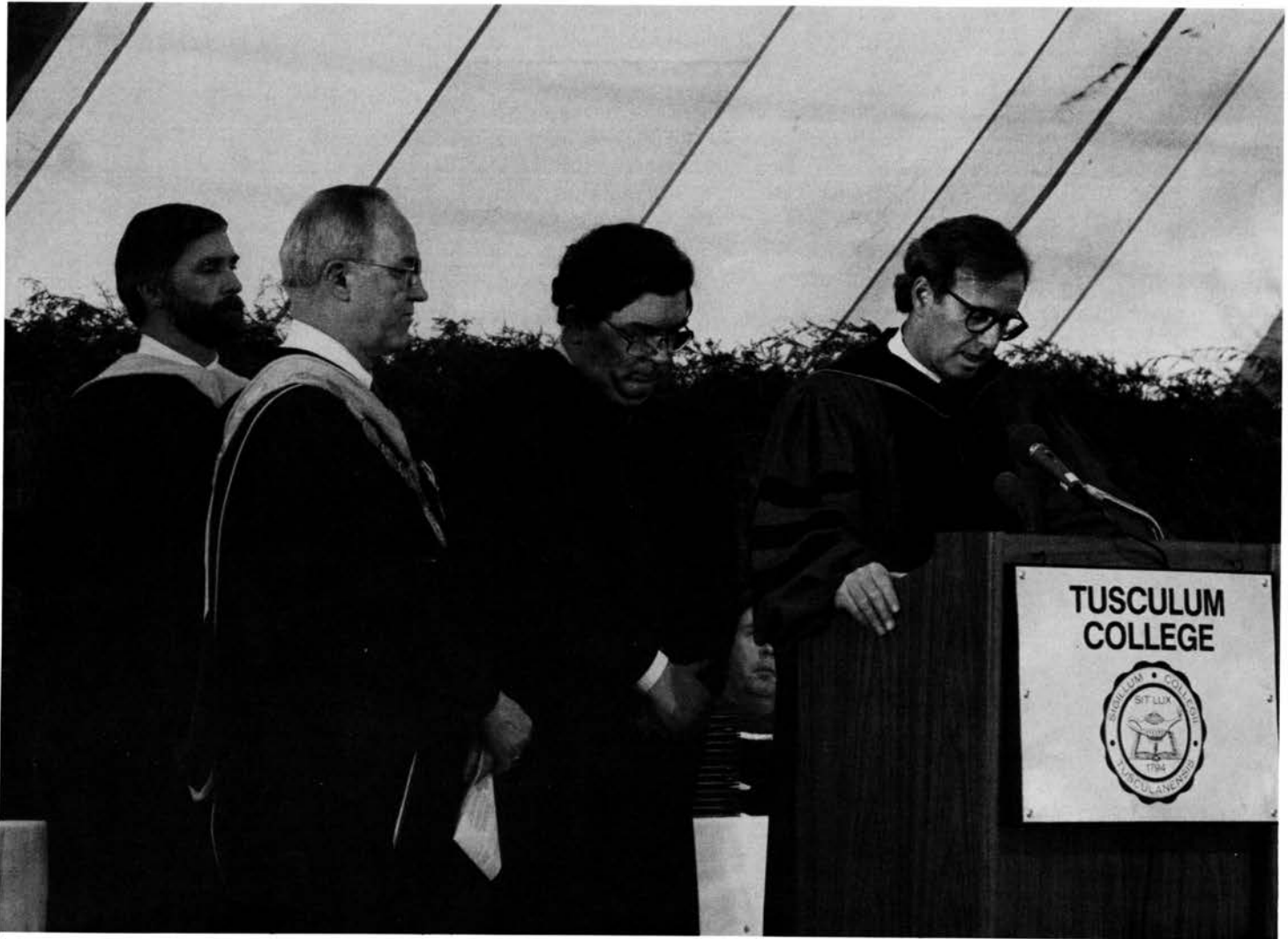
Hume gave considerable attention to this situation in his remarks, in which he spoke admiringly and wistfully of the way that the United States has managed to forge a workable unity out of great diversity. It is not an easy achievement, it does not always work perfectly, it must be fine tuned again and again. But, basically, it does work, and has for more than 200 years except for our own Civil War.

Because of the many difficulties that go along with our system of government, it was good for us to hear how enviable the U.S. system looks to those whose governmental environment does not yet include workable "unity in diversity."

John Hume is a man of courage and of peace living in a time and a place where it takes much courage to be a man of peace. It is good to know that he finds encouragement and strength in America — its Constitution, its way of working with diversity, its nonviolent leaders like the late Dr. Martin Luther King.

It became clear Sunday afternoon, however, that Mr. Hume is a giver as well as a receiver, and has much encouragement and wisdom of his own to offer us.

Presentation of Candidate John Hume, M. P. For the Degree of Doctor of Laws



(Left to Right) Dr. Donald R. Clardy, Dean, Tusculum College; Dr. Earl R. Mezoff, President, Tusculum College; John Hume, M.P., and Dr. D. Bruce Shine, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Tusculum College, awarding Hume the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws (LL.D.).

Mr. President, I take great pleasure as a representative of this collegium to present to you The Honorable John Hume, Member of Parliament, from Derry, Northern Ireland. I present him with the recommendation the degree of Doctor of Laws, honoris causa, be conferred upon him and make this recommendation in behalf of the Faculty, the Board of Trustees, and in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of Tusculum College.

A member of the House of Commons for five (5) years, and the European Parliament since 1979, John Hume is a servant of peace. He has dedicated his public life to achieving in Northern Ireland a pluralistic society where Catholic and Protestant can enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness without regard to their mode of worshipping their God.

The highly respected British based publication The Economist has described Mr. Hume as a "one-man think-tank". As the leader of the moderate Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) of Northern Ireland, he has directed the SDLP as a vehicle for achieving equality

for Catholics through constitutional rather than violent means.

As the oldest co-educational institution of higher learning in the United States in a covenant relationship with Presbyterian Church (USA) we honor and salute John Hume for his dedication to achieving social justice and equality for all citizens of Northern Ireland.

Daily we read of the continued and senseless violence in Northern Ireland and yearn as Christians for the day when Christ's Children can live together with peace and justice in Ulster. We applaud those whose life and conduct is motivated by a desire to end "the Troubles" in Northern Ireland.

As American's we remember the words and lesson for life of our late President John F. Kennedy "that here on earth God's work must truly be our own." John Hume is a steward working here on earth to spread love, justice and caring among his fellowman.

Mr. President, I present to you a courageous leader of our time, John Hume: Statesman of the Troubles.