President John F. Kennedy
Visits
The University of North Dakota

One Magic Hour
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JOHN F. KENNEDY

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President John F. Kennedy traveled to the University of North Dakota on September 25, 1963, and addressed thousands of people at the University Fieldhouse. This book, compiled by members of Theta Sigma Phi, women's journalism honorary, relates in chronological order his one-hour visit.

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The experience of that day will long live in the minds and hearts of all who took part in the visit of President John F. Kennedy to the University of North Dakota. From the first wave of his hand as he alighted from the helicopter to the time he departed, he radiated the poise, confidence and dignity that were so much a part of him.

The University was especially proud to host his visit to this state and to make him an honorary alumnus because our cause — education — was a cause which was dear to President Kennedy. He was devoted to education as an instrument of peace, international progress and human rights. By his actions and his example he gave impetus to a national surge of interest in matters intellectual. He relished the vigorous life of the mind and believed strongly in applying the principle of reason to the solutions of the complex problems of today.

It is fitting that this volume be published to remind us of the visit of the President and to keep fresh the ideals and goals he expressed so eloquently as a challenge to us all.

GEORGE W. STARCHER
President
University of North Dakota
Grand Forks, North Dakota
September 25, 1963 . . .

Thousands crowded the restricting fences awaiting the arrival of President John F. Kennedy.

20,000 Persons Awaited Their President

Intent, watchful, reflective . . . different generations found personal historic significance in the visit of the President.
The Long Wait Was Over . . .

Helicopters jumped the gap from the Grand Forks Air Force Base, where the Presidential party arrived by jet, to the University.

The Magic Hour Had Arrived . . .

President Kennedy stepped down from the helicopter, followed by Sen. Quentin Burdick and Gov. William Cuy.
Some Onlookers Lined the Street to the Fieldhouse

Flanked by Secret Service men, the President smiled at crowds as he was driven to the Fieldhouse.

Thousands of persons, some having waited for hours, jammed the Fieldhouse doors hoping to push their way inside.

While Others Jammed Its Doors, Hoping For Admittance
Wearing an academic robe, President Kennedy entered the Fieldhouse amid cheers from 20,000 spectators and military salutes from advanced ROTC cadets.

On the stage, the President was greeted by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education.

To Salutes, Cheers and Handshakes
After Briefly Viewing the Program . . .

President Kennedy briefly studied the convocation program . . .

And thoughtfully viewed the audience.

And A Quiet Moment Of Thought
The President Was Introduced . . .

Joining University President George W. Starcher, President Kennedy acknowledged the thunderous applause.

President Starcher and Mrs. Elvira Jestrab placed the Doctor of Laws hood over the head of . . .

He Received
An
Honorary . . .
A Doctor Of Laws Degree . . .

. . . The University's newest alumnus.

And Addressed the Audience . . .

President Kennedy began to speak to the audience.
"It is appropriate that we should come here to North Dakota where this whole struggle for the maintenance of the natural resources of this country, in a sense, began," he said.

The remarks reproduced here are those actually delivered at the Fieldhouse. (This is not the "advance" text released before the President's arrival.) President Kennedy spoke at a Resources Week convocation in the University Fieldhouse.

Mr. President, Governor Guy, Senator Burdick, Secretary Udall, Senator Mansfield, Senator Metcalf, other members of the Senate who may be here, ladies and gentlemen: Politics is a somewhat abused profession in the United States. Artemus Ward once said, "I am not a politician and my other habits are good also." But I would want to say that it has some advantages. It permitted me from being a somewhat indifferent lieutenant in the United States Navy to becoming Commander-In-Chief in the short space of 15 years, and it has also permitted me to become a graduate of this university in 30 seconds, when it takes you four years.

So in determining what career you should follow, you might consider this lowly profession.

I am glad to be here at this college. Prince Bismarck, who was named after Bismarck, North Dakota, once said that one-third of the students of German universities broke down from overwork, another third broke down from dissipation and the other third ruled Germany. I do not know which third of the student body of this school is here today, but I am confident I am talking to the future rulers of not only North Dakota, but the United States, in the sense that all educated citizens bear the burden of governing, as active participants in the democratic process.

I have come on a journey of five days across the United States, beginning in Pennsylvania and ending in California, to talk about the conservation of our resources, and I think it is appropriate that we should come here to North
“I Am Glad To Be Here . . .”

Dakota where this whole struggle for the maintenance of the natural resources of this country, in a sense, began. I do not argue whether it was Harvard University or North Dakota that made Theodore Roosevelt such a man and such a conservationist, but I am sure that his years here in North Dakota helped make him realize how expensive, how wasteful was indifference to this great resource and how valuable it could become. He put it on much more than a material plane. He said it was the moral obligation of a society in order to preserve that society to maintain its natural endowment.

In 1963 we face entirely different problems than we faced at the time of Theodore Roosevelt. The fact of the matter is that because we have so much in surplus in the United States, there is some feeling in many parts of the country, and I am sure not here, that we can afford to waste what we have. I don’t believe that at all. I think what we have to decide is how we can put it to best use, how we can provide in 1963 and in the whole decade of the 1960’s a use of our natural and scientific and technological advances so that in the years to come the 350 million people who will live in the United States in the year 2000 can enjoy a much richer and happier life than we do today. And unless we make the proper decisions today on how we shall use our water and our air, and our land, and our oceans, unless we make the comparable effort, an effort comparable to what Theodore Roosevelt and others made 50 years ago, we are going to waste it.

* * *

The fact of the matter is that in the field of conservation, every day that is lost is a valuable opportunity wasted. Every time, particularly in the East, where they have such concentration of population—every time an acre of land disappears into private development or exploitation, an acre of land which could be used for the people, we have lost a chance. We will never get it back. The fact of the matter is that land will rise in value, and unless we set it aside and use it wisely today, in 1970 or 1975 we won’t have the chance. As you know, along the Atlantic Coast, nearly all of the sea, the beach, is owned by comparatively few people.

We were able to set aside, a year ago, Cape Cod Park, which is near to all of the people of New England. We are talking about doing the same now on the Delaware River. We are talking about doing the same in Northern Indiana, near Gary. We have to seize these opportunities—we are talking about now doing the same in northern Wisconsin—we have to seize these opportunities to set aside these wilderness areas, these primitive areas, these fresh water areas, these lakes. We have to set them aside for the people who are going to come after us. And we have to not only set them aside, but we have to develop them. We have to purify our water. We have to make this a richer country in which to live, and it can be done. This state of North Dakota should know it better than any. This state had 30 years ago, three out of every hundred farms lit by electricity, and now nearly all are. What was 30 years ago a life of affluence, in a sense today is a life of poverty. This country moves ahead. This is a much richer country than it was 15 years ago, but it is so because decisions were made in those days which made it possible for us to live much better today. You cannot live in North Dakota, you cannot fly over this state, without realizing how wise were those who went before us and how necessary it is that we make the proper decision.

Theodore Roosevelt once said that the White House is a great pulpit from which to preach, and I would like to preach not only the vigorous life which he preached for us physically, but also for us in our time, facing entirely different problems, to make the same wise, vigorous decisions which he made for the conservation of our natural resources so that you and your children can enjoy this great and rich country. Nature has been so generous to us that we have mistreated her. Now, when our country is becoming increasingly crowded, when science and technology wastes so much of what we have, we have to realize that time is running out for us.

So we come on this trip to remind the American people of what they have, and to remind the people of what they must do to maintain it. Here, only a few minutes from here, is the Garrison Dam.
He Spoke Seriously . . .

Just to show you what decisions made by us today can do for the people of North Dakota in the 1960's, that one dam alone will have a water area, man made, as great as the total water area in North Dakota when this project was begun in 1946. And man improves what nature has done. Nature put the lakes there 50 years ago. Now man makes them. I have strongly supported the Garrison reclamation project, which will use water stored behind the Garrison Dam, and I am confident that it will make a major contribution to the development of America.

* * *

This is a matter of concern to all Americans. I think sometimes we read too much about the problems of particular areas, and maybe North Dakota may not be so interested in the beaches along the Atlantic coast or along the Gulf, or along the West coast, and people in the East not so much interested in the Garrison project in North Dakota, which it far away, but this country is not far away. It is closer than it has ever been before. When you can fly across it in five hours, when more importantly than transportation, is the fact that we are one people, living in 50 states and living in hundreds of communities, what happens on the East Coast where your children may some day live, what happens in the Middle West, where the children of people in New England may some day live, and what happens on the West Coast are of concern to all of us.

Therefore, this impressive chain of dams, which includes Garrison, has been called with some accuracy the Great Lakes of the Missouri, which belongs to all of the people behind these dams. The Big Muddy is turning blue, and soil is being saved, crops are being irrigated, recreation opportunities are growing. And this whole problem of recreation is going to be one of our most promising and important areas of human activity in the next 10 or 15 years.

Automation, which is a technical word, and which brings grief, can also bring a good deal of pleasure. If you realize that we are moving more on the railroads of the United States with half as many people working on them as work-15 years ago, the question is what has happened to those 50 percent of the people and what are they doing, and how are they spending their time, and what is true on the railroads is true on the farms, where with a steadily diminishing population we farm more and more.

* * *

How are we going to find work for those people? Those of you who are studying here and are concerned with the social sciences, which you must be, must wonder how you are going to find work for the millions of people who are coming into the market every year seeking jobs. I said, in speaking on our tax bill the other night, that we are going to have to find 10 million jobs in two and a half years. How are we going to find them? What individual actions must be taken to find 10 million

"I am confident I am talking to the future leaders of not only North Dakota, but of the United States."
And He Joked

The President smiled with his audience after one of his numerous quick-witted quips.

jobs for your sons and daughters in the short space of two-and-a-half years? What are you going to do with eight million people coming into the labor market in the rest of this decade and who haven't graduated from high school? How are they going to find work? Fifty years ago, 30 years ago, they might have worked on a farm, or could have done heavy labor. But today what is needed are skills and the un-educated man or woman is left behind. It is as inevitable as nature.

These are the problems which face this great democracy of ours. They cannot be solved by turning away, but can be solved, I believe, by the united, intelligent effort of us all. And what is true of people is true of animals. We have only about half as many cows as we had 30 years ago and they are producing about 25 percent more milk. What is going to happen to all of the people who once did all of the jobs which are no longer needed? By wise national policy, involving monetary and fiscal policy, I believe that we can stimulate this economy of ours to absorb these people. And also, we should make life in this country so beautiful that as the hours of work lessen, and there are no 40 hours, and some day they will be less, people will have some place to go and some place to find close to nature to enrich their lives.

So what I am saying now, in a sense, is that we are the heirs of Theodore Roosevelt, and that what we must do today is to prepare for those who are our heirs. The steps we take in conservation and recreation will have very little effect upon all of us here immediately and in this decade. What we are doing in the real sense is preparing for those who come after us.

We are gradually narrowing the difference between the standards of living of our city and rural populations. Parity of farm income is important. But beyond that we are gradually, too slowly but gradually, achieving a parity between urban and rural people in other aspects of life, in their ability to obtain electric service, in their power and resources available for economic development, in their facilities and opportunities for recreation. We are seeking, in short, a true parity of opportunity for all of our people, north and south, east and west. It will not come overnight, but the example of what has been done to light the farms of this state in 30 years shows what can be done when the government and the people, working together, work for the common interest.

When I think what REA has done for this state and all of the fight against it when it was first put into effect, isn't it astonishing to you that this country after the end of World War I, in many ways a much more virgin country, passed through a recession in 1921, 1922, and 1923, a depression, in fact, and a panic, passed through a period of low farm income and depression on the farm through the rest of the 20's, and then moved through a depression of such staggering dimensions that it existed from 1929 to the outbreak of World War II, and yet from 1945, while we have moved through periods of recession we have almost tripled our wealth in the short space of 18 years. And we
Some found an isolated spot to listen to the President's remarks, which were broadcast by loudspeakers to those who could not find seats in the Fieldhouse.

... While inside, television cameramen transmitted the occasion to state citizens who could not have found seats in the capacity-filled arena.

Others In The Midst Of Activity
Sometimes the President Paused . . .

Even the president of the United States must pause occasionally . . .

. . . To briefly study his notes . . .

To Glance At His Notes . . .
have not passed through a period in any way comparable to the early 20's, or the desperate days of the 30's. And a lot of that is because of the decisions which the government and the people made together in the 30's which makes it possible for us, moving on that base, to determine wise policies in the 60's.

* * *

There is an old saying that things don't happen, they are made to happen. And we in our years have to make the same size judgments about what policies will ensure us a growing prosperity as were made in the years before. The whole experience between two world wars, which was so tragic for this country, should tell us that we cannot leave it to mere chance and accident. It requires the long range judgment of all of us, the public judgment, not only the pursuit of our private interests but the public judgment of what it takes to keep 180 million people gradually rising. And anyone who thinks it can be done by accident and chance should look back on the history of 1919 to 1939 to know what can happen when we let natural forces operate completely freely.

Five billion dollars were advanced under REA to 1,000 borrowers. More than 1,500,000 miles of power lines have been built serving 20 million American people. This has been a sound investment. Out of roughly 1,000 borrowers, co-ops, only one is delinquent in payment, and the total losses on the $5 billion advanced are less than $50,000. Here in North Dakota, REA-financed rural co-ops serve on the average nearly more than one electric meter per mile of line,
compared to the average in urban-based utilitys systems of 33 meters to each mile of line. These are the things which can make the great difference. What I urge upon those of you who are students here is to make determinations based on life as it is, on facts as they are, not merely here in this community, not merely in North Dakota, not merely in the United States, but in this varied and dangerous world of ours in which we play such a leading and responsible part. Unless the United States can demonstrate a sound and vigorous democratic life, a society which is not torn apart by fraction and faction, an economy which is steadily growing, unless it can do all those things we cannot continue to bear the responsibilities of leadership which I think almost all along have prevented this world of ours from being overrun. The fact of the matter is that here are many things happening in the world which should serve to encourage us, as well as discourage us.

If five or six years ago anyone had ever realized what has happened behind the iron curtain and the bamboo curtain they would have been regarded as completely unrealistic. All of the pressures which have been brought to bear on life in the communist world have been brought to bear in part only because of the inner contradictions of the communist system itself. But also because the United States chose in 1945 to assume the burdens of maintaining a watch at the gate of freedom when so many other countries which so long had carried a heavy responsibility around the world were prostrate and defeated. So this country has done a good deal.
He relaxed with a quick smile...

... and a moment of reflection.
“All educated citizens bear the burden of governing,” he emphasized.
"We are seeking a true parity of opportunity for all of our people, North and South, East and West."

The John Fitzgerald Kennedy Scholarship was established following a $100 contribution from the late President. The University of North Dakota received the check in October, following his visit on campus. The check was sent with a letter to the UND Alumni Office. The letter read:

"I was most impressed with the University of North Dakota during my brief visit there. Nothing is more important than educating our youth. I am pleased, therefore, to send you a contribution for the University Development Fund. Enclosed is my check for $100 with every good wish."

Sincerely,
John Kennedy
Conservation of Resources

He urged students to help.

"How are we going to find work for those people?"
He Concluded
To Tumultuous
Applause . . .

As the President returned to his seat, the crowd expressed their approval of his challenge with a standing ovation.
And Turned to View His Audience
Some of the Crowd Dispersed

The convocation over, the thousands flocked from the Fieldhouse.

Photographers and newsmen pressed forward for last pictures of the President.

While Others Pressed Forward,
Tightly surrounded by Secret Service men, the President made his way to the official limousine.

Heedless of His Guards

... While crowds converged on him with hands outstretched for just a touch of his hand.
To Shake Hands And See Him Off

Some were fortunate and managed to squeeze through the wall of guards to greet the President personally.

Seated with Gov. Guy and Sen. Burdick, Presidnt Kennedy took a last look at crowds surrounding the Fieldhouse.
With A Wave, 
A Final 
Smile . . .

A smile, a wave and a final goodbye to the University and North Dakota.

The Magic Hour Ended

Scattering leaves above its blades, the President's helicopter left the campus.
“Things Don’t Just Happen . . .
They Are Made to Happen”

The clear September day dawned early for many University students and area citizens. As early as 6 a.m., those who were anxious, excited and curious stood before the locked door of the University of North Dakota fieldhouse in anticipation of a very special visitor.

Soon it would be the “Magic Hour.” Inside the fieldhouse preparations had been made for the appearance of John F. Kennedy, 34th President of the United States.

Doors were thrown open and crowds surged into every available seat . . . some never got in. Scores of press, television and radio employees set up equipment for the state-wide coverage while in the background, University music groups began last minute rehearsals.

Ten thousand clamored at the doors for entrance, while another 10 thousand studied, talked, slept and kept a watchful eye on the ramp leading to the dignitaries platform.

Those crowding around the fieldhouse got their first glimpse of the presidential party as nine Air Force helicopters settled down upon the intra-mural field north of the football stadium.

President Kennedy and his party of news men, White House aides and North Dakota dignitaries were escorted by limousines to the east entrance of the fieldhouse.

Inside the crowd grew hushed with the realization that the President would soon arrive. With a fanfare of “Hail To The Chief,” the executive party mounted the platform while an elated crowd rose in applause.

Presiding at the convocation was Dr. George W. Starcher, UND President who gave a brief welcome to the President, dignitaries and crowd.

Among the dignitaries on the speaker’s platform were Secretary of the Interior, Stuart Udall, Senator Quentin Burdick (D - N.D.), Governor William Guy, and members of the State Board of Higher Education.

Invitations to the convocation had been sent to the North Dakota congressional delegation in Washington, legislators, presidents of state colleges and universities, state officials, and representatives of such groups as the Water Conservation Commission, State Park Board, State Soil Conservation Committee, and the Garrison Diversion Conservancy District.

Dr. John S. Penn, UND Convocations Committee chairman, was in charge of general arrangements for the President’s visit.

In honor of “Natural Resources Week,” the Chief Executive chose the topic “Conservation” for his fifteen minute address. After completing his discourse, President Kennedy received the honorary Doctorate of Laws degree from the University.

Upon conferring the degree Dr. Starcher read the following citation:

“JOHN F. KENNEDY: From the eminence of the highest office in our land you have shown exemplary concern for our nation’s natural and human resources. Your vigorous and imaginative leadership in the cause of American education has brought new assurance for the welfare of our colleges and universities. The University of North Dakota, founded on the Dakota frontier by early pioneers, recognizes in you a pioneer on a new frontier, and is honored to confer upon you this degree.”

President Kennedy left the fieldhouse amid the standing ovation of the enthusiastic crowd. The President chose to get out of the car carrying him from the fieldhouse to his waiting helicopter and shake hands with spectators crowding against the snow fences erected for the occasion.

Although the visit was all too brief, the image of the youthfully vigorous, suntanned Chief Executive remains alive in the hearts and minds of all those who experienced “One Magic Hour.”
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To further interest in journalism and to recognize journalistic ability among women on campus are the purposes of Theta Sigma Phi. Founded nationally in 1909 at the University of Washington, Theta Sigma Phi has expanded to include chapters from throughout the country. The UND chapter, the only one in North Dakota, was established in 1947.

“One Magic Hour” was the project of fourteen Theta Sigs at the University. Supervising the publication were Archie N. Hill and Joe Hughes.