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UA3/3/1 Senior Day Address

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This morning as a representative of the graduating seniors of 1961, it gives me great pleasure to express for the class and myself, our sincere appreciation to all of you who have contributed so greatly to the achievement that is represented by our appearing before you as the Graduating Class of 1961.

On all such occasions the speaker indulges in a bit of reminiscing. This morning, I should like to think in terms of two different views we, as seniors, have enjoyed from the top of this hill.

Today we are wearing the academic robes that graduating seniors traditionally wear on this occasion. This robe signifies a completely different meaning for those of you who are at different levels of development in your educational progress.

Those of you that are now freshmen, sophomores, and juniors and make up the largest portion of the student body probably have never stopped to realize the true meaning that is portrayed as a class of seniors walk down the aisle for the last time ending a college career. Chances are that you look upon this class of seniors as just another group of people that happened to be lucky enough to graduate from college. We, who are now seniors, probably shared this attitude with you only a short time ago when we were in the early stages of our educational development.

But today in the light of experiences whereby we have achieved this Seniority, we are able to see in this procession a symbolic meaning that lets us look into the depth of the individual within each robe and get a true
a true picture, as it has been painted over some 4 or 5 years since we graduated from high school. Now it seems such a short period of time, and only now are we able to look back and see the great evolution that has taken place since we entered college here at Western.

As I look back in the first of the two views from the hilltop, I remember very distinctly the time that I graduated from high school and then entered College here at Western. I came here with a complete misconception of my purpose in college. As many others were then, I was a young, inexperienced, high school hero from a small town. I had been told so many times that I was good in this and good in that, that I, myself, had come to believe I really was something special. I felt as though I was now an intellectual and important person—that I was ready to go out and conquer the world and all that future life held for me as an individual. I walked about the campus in such a manner, that, I'm sure, it appeared to others that I felt as though I was God's gift to society—that I was here on campus to teach the college a few things rather than be taught by the college.

It was not long, however, until I began to decrease to man's normal size. For a while college seemed to be a school of hard knocks. This reduction in my concept of self importance was brought about by the best teacher of all, Mr. Experience. With this experience, I gradually began to see through this false pride and the self-centered attitude and to realize that there were a few other people in this small world that we live in today.

Only now as graduating seniors are we able to really appreciate whole-heartedly those individuals and elements of Western that have combined so
effectively to shape and mold our college life and prepare us to face the future with an adult attitude.

In the second view from the hilltop, we as seniors in looking back to cherish the past now realize that we have only arrived at the beginning of wisdom, a product that comes with an understanding of the individual and his or her relation to the rest of the world.

Today we can see our educational personality that mirrors the background that has been afforded us by this institution. It reflects the personal relationships that we have had with our fellow students which come only to those who live or have lived within the portals of this institution. Also this personality reflects the close contact and association that has been given us by the faculty and administrative staff. Reflections such as these are the result of the individual becoming better able to understand himself as well as his fellowman. With this understanding, we feel that we have developed ourselves in the true, distinctive, Western tradition that features friendliness and wholesomeness.

We, as students through our college experiences, have developed an appreciation for democratic institutions and formulated personal, ethical, and moral values. For these we give you, our sincere thanks.

With the entire structure of the school--curriculum, faculty, organizations, campus, and physical plant--being surveyed, overhauled, enlarged, and reshaped to meet the needs of the changing world today, it instills within us the burning zeal and ambition to achieve progress.
These accomplishments have encouraged us to set higher goals in this swift and moving world without sacrificing the tangible assets, and then strive harder to develop our potential to a maximum degree. The sense of "moving forward" has continuously gained momentum in our minds as we approach this milestone.

Western has played a very important role in identifying and developing our leadership potential through the extra-curricular activities which provide participation in departmental clubs, cultural activities, athletic events, social occasions, and many other such experiences. We feel these activities are essential in preparing and developing us for the different areas of our human endeavor.

For this high type of executive and administrative proficiency that has been so competently demonstrated by vision, wisdom and planning for our intellectual, academic, and moral growth, we, the graduating Senior Class of 1961, salute Western and her president, Dr. Kelly Thompson, and his most capable staff. We hope that we can serve this institution in the long tradition of being the most "loyal" alumni in the State.