

However, now that I am an alumnus I promise to visit your campus at least as often as Father Hesburgh.

Joyful moments are too often dampened by solemn speakers. What I have to say today will certainly be sober stuff but it will not be unrelieved gloom. Oliver Edwards earned immortality when he said to Samuel Johnson: "You are a philosopher, Dr. Johnson. I have tried too in my time to be a philosopher; but, I don't know how, cheerfulness was always breaking in." For my part, Mr. President I am a realist but somehow optimism always keeps breaking out.

Occasions such as this, by their very design, are intended to place our lives in perspective. As does each one of you, I regard the future with a mixture of excitement and apprehension. Humanity is confronted with formidable challenges. Governments are perplexed in the face of those challenges.

Our times are "interesting", as the Chinese might say not only due to the sagging health of the industrialized societies but also because of the menacing confrontation between the two super-powers and the simple, terrible fear that we all could be caught up in a thermo-nuclear exchange.