

To the Graduating Class of 1972, my personal congratulations and the congratulations of the Alumni Society. We are always happy when new graduates are welcomed as members.

Over the years, the Alumni Society has served the University of Georgia well, although some members found that service to be difficult at times. Often their lives and the lives of their contemporaries were caught up in events of such overriding importance that their personal ambitions had to be postponed. Nevertheless, somehow their concern and effort brought about many advantages for you to enjoy.

These advantages helped to make you the best-informed, best-educated class ever. Enjoy your glow of accomplishment--you richly deserve it--but it is fleeting. The real worth of your years at the University will be determined 10 or 20 or 30 years from now when your achievements are measured against the advantages you were provided.

The parents of some of you were in the Class of 1942. That generation struggled for an education through the debilitating depression years of the 1930s, only to find themselves caught up in a global war. Following the war, they taxed themselves relentlessly to rehabilitate the shattered nations of the world.

Added to that generation's troubles was the stark realization that atomic bombs bursting over Japanese cities were undeniable proof

that man's technological abilities had outpaced his moral and spiritual development.

The Class of 1952 saw service on two fronts--a hot war and a cold war. The Korean War, the hot version, ended in July of 1953, but the nuclear diplomacy of the cold war remained a nerve-wracking irritant.

The ever-present tensions of those years did not prevent the Nation's 1952 graduates from helping to create the world's most productive society; from furthering the social reforms begun in the 1930s; from conquering polio; or from helping to feed a hungry world.

For the Class of 1962, the years were astoundingly eventful. The news was a kaleidoscope of assassinated leaders, Peace Corps beginnings, war news from Asia, and astronauts orbiting the earth and moon.

But, the 1960s was the most remarkable decade of research and development ever experienced. Space research generated the most sophisticated technology in the history of mankind.

The Class of 1972 lives in a better world as a result of the effort and sacrifices made by your parents and grandparents. Bergen Evans of Northwestern University has pointed out:

"Because they gave you the best, you are the tallest, healthiest, brightest, and probably best-looking generation to inhabit the land.

"And because they were materialistic, you will work fewer hours, learn more, have more leisure time, travel to more distant places, and have more of a chance to follow your life's ambition. . .

"If your generation can make as much progress in as many areas as these two generations have, you should solve many of the world's remaining ills. . .

"But it won't be easy. And you won't do it by tearing down or belittling. You may, and can, do it by hard work, humility, hope and faith in mankind."

I can only add that the methods used by past generations in their magnificent achievements had their genesis in earlier development programs. And you will be working toward an even better world for future graduating classes--assuring them the enjoyment of the advantages you have, as well as a great many more.

Education is of prime importance in the technology-oriented society in which we live. The Alumni Society has a variety of programs designed to help the University of Georgia continue giving its students the best education possible. We need your support, and I speak from experience when I say that you will find your association with the Alumni Society rewarding.