

Chairman of the Board
Governor Levander, Mayor Henry, Faculty and Students, Ladies and Gentlemen:

We come together today for a ground-breaking ceremony of a Library - a Learning Resource Center, an "educational happening" that will enrich this college and this area.

About two centuries ago, Thomas Jefferson submitted to the Virginia legislature a "plan for the diffusion of knowledge." He and other famed founders of our country have believed that when people commit themselves to learning, a revolution of improvement of people begins that will never stop.

It was then, about two centuries ago, that this type of revolution began in Virginia, later in Minnesota and in surrounding states, and indeed in this country.

It is continuing today.

We who have worked closely in education, particularly during the last decade, have witnessed, and have been a part of, an incessant change in the higher educational systems - both public and private.

We have been greatly concerned during the immediate past years with plans for "spreading knowledge." Governor Levander has been concerned, the Minnesota Legislature has been concerned, the Federal government has been concerned. Witness the amount of money spent by the State of Minnesota for the "diffusion of knowledge." Recall the numerous federal programs which have aided in the construction of graduate and undergraduate facilities on our campuses. Also, recall that financial barriers have been reduced considerably for many students through new loan and scholarship programs.

We are here to break ground for one of the precious treasures of this world - a fine library. At this time I want to publicly thank all those who have made this treasure possible: Governor Levander, the Minnesota Legislature, the State College Board, and all those who were responsible for the specific plans - the consulting architects, the project architects, Dr. Luther Brown and the Library Committee, and Mr. Howard Walton, campus planner.

I referred to a library as one of the precious treasures of this world. I say

this because a fine library contains the products of that which is the world's greatest treasure - the mind of man. A library is the storehouse of what men and women have thought and felt and discovered throughout the ages and what they are thinking and feeling and discovering now. It is the link which binds the past with the present and the future, the work of the minds of scholars, present, past, and future, perfect and imperfect.

A former President of the United States has said: "To bring together the records of the past and to house them in buildings where they will be preserved for the use of men and women in the future, a nation must believe in three things. (1) It must believe in the past. (2) It must believe in the future. (3) It must, above all, believe in the capacity of its own people so to learn from the past that they can gain in judgment in creating their own future."

Great books do not spring from something accidental in the great men who wrote them. They are the expressions of their hearts and their minds: of their very lives. The purpose of a library, briefly, is to transmit to generation after generation what was good and true and beautiful of the past, linking it with what is the same in the present. In this glorious country of ours, we have known much progress, and we take legitimate pride in the civilization and the democracy which are ours and which we, like our forefathers, have sworn to preserve.

Books can transport us beyond the barriers of time and enable us to relive the life of vanished ages. James Russell Lowell said this about the ability to read: "It revives for us, without miracle, the age of wonder, endowing us with shoes of swiftness and the cap of darkness, so that we walk invisible like fern seed and witness unharmed the plague of Athens or Florence or London; accompany Caesar on his marches, or look in on Catiline in council with his fellow conspirators or take our place with Cicero as he, uncovers the conspiracy."

A book, like a magic carpet, can take us wherever we care to go. We can be members of Sam Johnson's club and hear the autocratic old doctor laying down the law to the wits of his time: we can stand at the side of Carlyle and, with him as our guide, view the mighty drama of the French Revolution and listen to the quaint and charming

discourse of Charles Lamb.

The reading of books does something to your sense of human values. I keep remembering Emily Dickinson's simple statement:

"He ate and drank the previous words
His spirit grew robust;
He knew no more that he was poor,
For that his frame was dust.
He danced along the dingy days,
And this bequest of wings
Was but a book. What liberty
A loosened spirit brings."

I want to say to our students at St. Cloud - those now present and those to come - that the construction of this library for the diffusion of knowledge, built by the people of Minnesota, will do much to enhance the quality of your education. You will soon have a facility to get a good education. Furthermore, you owe it to yourself to get a good education. You owe it to your country as well. The destiny of the United States is going to lie in the degree to which our people are educated, as much as anything else, and the great accomplishments of our country in future times are going to require an educated citizenry. You no doubt have heard it said that the quality and strength of a society is the sum total of the qualities and strengths of its individual members.

To that I would add the thought that the way for a nation to progress is for individuals to progress. Surely there shall be no occasion for future historians to say of the United States that we were like that former king of beasts - the dinosaur - which could not adapt when the climate changed and, therefore, became as extinct as the dodo. Nor do we ever want it said that any of our young people now coming up became dinosaurs in a modern civilization.

It is an educational happening.

Finally, may I say that this ceremony today is sacred. We break ground for another treasure of the world. We light, as it were, another powerful lamp of learning. May its beams of knowledge and love shine into the minds of all who come within its

radius, to the much-needed realization in this our day and age that all men are brothers.
May it light the paths of loyal Americans in the pursuit of justice and peace and truth.

Thank you.