

**Rackham Symposium: Emerging Concepts of Democracy in China,
Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union**

Thursday, April 5, 8:00 pm, Rackham Amphitheater

**Format: JJD Opens with Welcome, then JD'A with opening and
introduction of keynote speaker.**

TALK POINTS

Colleagues, friends, distinguished guests

I am delighted to be here this evening

to welcome you to this Symposium---

Emerging Concepts of Democracy in China,

Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Who can doubt that this past year will be forever noted

in the history books

From Warsaw to Berlin to Bucharest, from Prague

to Moscow and Beijing

We have seen the power of ideas literally change our world.

Recent world events offer a sobering and also, I think,

inspiring reminder to us as scholars,

that what we do---

what scholars, writers, artists and intellectuals do---

is powerful--

In the day to day work of the academy,

we may sometimes lose sight of our critical role

in society.

But what more important calling can there be

than preserving, transmitting and advancing truth?

and thus helping to extend the foundation

of freedom and justice in the world.

**What more precious trust than ours to prepare the young
to be leaders in the search for truth.**

Events of this year have moved at a breathtaking pace.

**It has been difficult to absorb the changes,
to assess their immediate implications
let alone to try to understand what they mean
for our collective human future.**

**I think it is important that we try to do that--
that we try to analyze recent political events
in their historical and cultural context
and in relation to global political and social realities.**

Our University has always been known

**for its international programs and connections,
so it is very appropriate that we should take this initiative
to bring scholars and scholar activists together
to think about the extraordinary events of this year
on the front lines of freedom.**

Because one thing is certain in today's world.

**We are all in this together. Events in any part of the globe however
remote
now affect all of us in ways that would have been unimaginable.
even a few years ago.**

**We each have a stake in how freedom fares in countries around the
world.**

**We all have a lot to learn about each other and to teach one
another.**

as we enter this new world in the making.

Congratulations and thanks to Dean D'Arms and his colleagues

who have helped organize this meeting.

Best wishes for a very stimulating and significant set of discussions.

