M-Club (10/16/89)

Introduction

I don't know about you folks,
but there were times in that fourth quarter
up in East Lansing when I began to get
a bit worried...
and wonder what kind of a talk I was
going to have to give today!

But Michigan came through with
a spectacular victory over Michigan State...
...in the typical Michigan style...
...challenging the strength of our opponent,
and taking the best shots they could deliver...

In fact, this great victory in many ways
symbolizes all that is special about
Michigan football...and Michigan athletics
in general...
Great courage...
Great intensity and commitment...
A class effort!!!

I must confess that it is quite an
honor to be President of a University with
such a tradition of excellence and
leadership in intercollegiate athletics...
...particularly as an old Yale football player
...and a Caltecher from Pasadena

Thus far during my term of office
we've been undefeated against
Michigan State and Ohio State...
...and undefeated in two appearances
in the Rose Bowl...
...and won an NCAA basketball championship!

Of course, we still have to lick the
Notre Dame jinx...but I've got
great confidence in Bo and the boys

Traditional Images of Michigan

You know, in many ways the Michigan State
victory is typical of the way the University
of Michigan itself approaches its mission.

Before commenting further on the
importance of the Michigan tradition in
athletics, let me make a few comments
about this broader subject.

When we hear the words
"The University of Michigan",
we think of those traditional images of any college...
Great faculty challenging and exciting students
in the classroom..
students studying in our many libraries
Scientists toiling away late in the evenings in our
laboratories stiving to understand the universe
Scholars pouring over ancient manuscripts in
our collections of antiquity

But there are some very special images of Michigan
Ann Arbor on a Saturday afternoon in the fall...
afternoons in the fall as 105,000 fans cram into
Michigan stadium to watch the Wolverines...
...Great memories such as that incredible
goal line stand up in East Lansing...
...or the onsides kick against UCLA
...and who will ever be able to forget Rumeal Robinson
stepping to the line in Seattle with 3 seconds
left in overtime and calmly sinking two free throws to
win the national championship against Seton Hall.
...and the Cinderella story of Steve Fisher and his
team "with a mission"

But there are other important images...
Then there is the Michigan of the Big Chill...
The tradition of student involvement helping to awaken the
conscience of a nation...

There is Michigan of the Arts
...or Leonard Bernstein celebrating his 70th birthday
in Hill Auditorium with the Vienna Philharmonic...

There is also the caring Michigan as seen by the over
750,000 patients treated by the UM Medical Center,

Or the Michigan as Silicon Valley East, building the
high-tech infrastructure necessary to create new companies
and new jobs...as evidenced by the $5 B industry in
industrial automation now building up in the Ann Arbor-
Detroit-Warren crescent...

Or the Michigan which attracts to our state almost
a quarter of a billion dollars of federal R&D each
year...not to mention many of the world's
leading scientists and engineers

Or the Michigan of the “cutting edge”,
which conducts the research that changes our lives...
as evidenced, for example, by announcement earlier this
past month that a Michigan team had identified and cloned
the gene responsible for cystic fibrosis,
thereby opening up the possibility of saving
thousands of lives every year.

Or Michigan as the unifying force in our families...
Camp Michigania

Of course, there is the Michigan as the educator,
attempting to provide,
"an uncommon education for the common man"
an education as good as any available
in the world
for all citizens, regardless of race, creed, and
socioeconomic background.

What is Michigan?
The prototype, the flagship, of the large,
comprehensive, public research university which
has served America so well in the 20th Century

With a serious commitment to quality
ranked among the top 10 in virtually everything
it does (not just football and basketball)

Unusual breadth, rich diversity of academic disciplines,
professional schools, social and cultural activities...
...our intellectual pluralism...

Unusual activism of students and faculty
liberal spirit, progressive vision

Extraordinary array of extracurricular activities
performing arts
intercollegiate athletics
Ann Arbor, itself!!!!

Well-balanced portfolio
1990 is cross-over year:
  Tuition revenue > state support ("private public")
  Federal R&D > state support ("national state")

Unusual ability to control our own destiny
The embodiment of the hopes and dreams,
commitment and stewardship of eight generations of Michigan alumni!

But that is the University of Michigan of yesterday and today.

What about tomorrow?

Challenges before America
Few realize the ever-accelerating pace of change in our nation...and in the world!

Think about it for a moment...
The students we are educating today will spend most of their lives in the next century...they will be citizens of the 21st Century...

Our students will inherit a much different America than you and I have known...
i) It will be future in which our nation becomes a truly multicultural society, with a cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity that will be extraordinary in our history
ii) It will be a future in which America will become "internationalized"...in which every one of our activities must be viewed within the broader context of participation in the global community...

Today we are evolving rapidly to a new post-industrial, knowledge-based society, just as a century ago our agrarian society evolved through the Industrial Revolution.

In a sense, we are entering a new age, an age of knowledge, in which the key strategic resource necessary for our prosperity, security, and social well-being has become knowledge--educated people and their ideas.

Knowledge will play the same role that in the past were played by natural resources or geographical location or unskilled location...

In the knowledge-intensive future that is our destiny it seems clear that education in general...higher education in particular...and the research university most specifically are rapidly becoming the key ingredients determining the strength, prosperity, and social-well being of our nation.

Just think of the challenges which cry out for attention
- the plight of our cities,
  the development of an underclass
  polarization of American society
- greenhouse effect and global change
- international competition
  Pacific Rim or Europe 1992
- health care: cancer, heart disease, AIDS
- new frontiers: outer space
  or spaceship Earth

But the greatest need of all is for leadership and this is the University of Michigan's great contribution to America...through its teaching, research, and service...through its graduates and their achievements

Indeed, leadership is both our heritage and our destiny!

Importance of Football at Michigan
And, of course, the achievement of the Michigan Football Wolverines is one vivid example of
that leadership.

We are intensely proud of our athletic teams...

Michigan is unique in its combination of
world-class academic programs...and its
winning tradition in athletics...

...if you compare the two top ten lists...

the top ten universities in academic quality...
and the top ten athletic programs in football...

You will find only one name on both lists...Michigan.

Yet, as important as winning is, we are also
proud of our programs for their integrity...
The Michigan way is the right way!
Not to say we can’t and don’t make
mistakes from time to time...

But when we do, we face up to them,
take the necessary corrective action,
and then take steps to make certain that
things don’t happen again.

And of course, we have long taken great pride in
having many of the nation’s leading coaches...
including its leading football coach...

But perhaps of most importance of all is the way
in which Bo and his coaches dedicate themselves
first and foremost to the education of the
student-athletes who don the maize and blue.

Michigan belief

Athletic competition can play an important role
in our fundamental mission: education

Intercollegiate athletics can provide
students with a marvelous opportunity to develop those
qualities so important in later life...particularly when led
by inspiring and enlightened coaches such as Bo Schlembecher and his staff.

But it can do more, for these programs also serve as models
not simply for the university community, but for many others
throughout their society...

How many youngsters dream of the day they could play in the
Rose Bowl...and learn from others the qualities necessary
to get there?

And how many of us as adults tend to identify with these teams
...sharing their thrill in victory...and suffering with them
through defeat.

Football...indeed, all intercollegiate athletics...is a game, to be sure...
but it is also a remarkable model of life... those factors which
lead to a program's long term success are also the factors
which prepare young men and women for life itself!

While it is important that we always keep it in perspective...that we
always place primary emphasis on
the first word in "student-athlete"...

it is also important that we acknowledge
that the lessons that Coach Schembecher
and his colleagues teach to the young men who don
the maize and blue of Michigan
are some of the most important lessons
of life...lessons everything bit as important
as those we teach in the
classroom or laboratory...

It has sometimes been said that the purpose
of a college education is to learn the art of life...
And in this, we believe our student athletes have
a certain edge, since they benefit
from a full-range of experiences on our campus,
from the intellectual to the athletic to the cultural...

Concluding Remarks

You know, Michigan football
is really something very special
since it demonstrates the very best attributes
of sports in America today...
...it has become the standard against which
all other programs are compared

But then, the University of Michigan
is also a very special place....

Indeed, it is one of only
a handful of universities which have,
throughout history, set the standard for
all of higher education in America.
of truly changing not only higher education,
but the nation and the world.

But even beyond that,
the University of Michigan is one of the
few institutions in our society capable
of truly changing not simply higher education,
but the nation and the world.

And that is exactly what we intend to
do as we prepare to enter
the last decade of the 20th Century.

The 1990s will be a time of great challenge
opportunity, and responsibility.

But they will also be years of great excitement.
We urge you to join with us
in this great adventure in which
the University of Michigan prepares
to become the University of the 21st Century!