

*Education  
and  
World Peace*

An Address given by  
**THOMAS J. WATSON**  
President of International  
**Business Machines Corporation**  
at the  
82nd Commencement of  
**BRYANT COLLEGE**  
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THOMAS J. WATSON

This Address, given at the **82nd** Commencement of Bryant College by Mr. Thomas J. Watson, President of International Business Machines Corporation, was so inspiring and informative that it is reprinted here in response to many requests.

Mr. Watson is head of a great and influential business which distributes its products throughout seventy-nine countries. His keen and kindly interest in men and women, his business acumen and **efficiency**, and his broad human sympathies, have won him world-wide homage. Fifteen universities and colleges have conferred upon him honorary degrees. He holds Directorships in numerous organizations. He is Honorary President of the International Chamber of Commerce and has been **decorated** by France, Italy, Sweden, Belgium, Finland, Greece, South American Republics, **Indo** China, Hungary and other countries. Few men could speak more authoritatively or with a wider vision of "Education and World Peace" than did Mr. Watson to the 1945 graduating class of Bryant College.

## *Education and World Peace*

Bryant College entering the field of Business education in 1863 is truly a pioneer institution in Business Education, and deserves great credit for the contributions it has made to educational and business progress.

The improvement in standards of living and in the welfare of our people has gone along with the broadening of educational opportunities in our country.

I emphasize these material gains because they are easily measured. But we all know that the benefits of development in education, research and invention are not limited to material things. In matters of public health, child welfare, recreational facilities and the care of the sick and aged, our gains have equalled those in material things.

In the 1860's when Bryant College was founded, the United States was spending \$1.64 per capita per year on education. (For 1869, earliest year available) In 1942 the United States spent \$17.25. In the 1860's industrial workers were averaging \$288 per year and the working day was as high as 12—sometimes 14 hours per day. In 1944 industrial workers averaged \$1810 in their standard 40-hour week, with overtime averaging about \$590 (\$588.12), or a total of about \$2400 for the year.

Our progress in developing higher wage standards and shorter working hours, as well as higher standards of living, has gone hand in hand with our development in education.

Every year marks a greater demand for more well trained minds in order to meet the challenge of a changing world. This causes us to give **consideration** to greater **financial** backing for educational institutions.

A few Sundays ago I heard a sermon, in which the preacher said in the course of his remarks, "Everything we have has been

paid for. The coal that heats our homes and cooks our food has been paid for by the men who go down into the mines and mine that coal and the railroad men who deliver it and the **truckmen** who put it into the cellar. And the bread that you had for your **breakfast** this morning was paid for, perhaps, by the men and **women** who worked all night in order that it might be fresh on your table."

That thought has remained with me because it makes me realize that my generation and your generation, through what we accomplish, are paying and will pay for the economic, educational, social and cultural advancement which will be enjoyed by future generations.

Everything that you young people have come in contact with so far has been paid for. Your education has been paid for by your parents or others who are interested in you, by the taxpayers, and most important to you as individuals, by the officers and faculty of Bryant College. Now you are prepared to make payment in kind toward your obligation as a citizen of the United States, by giving your best efforts to whatever line of endeavor you engage in and by taking an active part in civic **affairs** in your community.

The liberation of Europe was paid for by our Armed Forces, assisted by the Home Front. The defeat of our enemies in the Pacific is being paid for in the same way.

We all must participate as individuals in trying to pay in part for the sacrifices made by our Armed Forces by putting forth our honest efforts in **backing** the United Nations in building a peace program. Our educational institutions and educated people must assume their full responsibility.

For the first time in the history of international relations, the importance of education has been formally recognized in a general treaty.

The Charter for World Peace written in San Francisco pledges that the United Nations shall promote international,

cultural and educational cooperation. It establishes an Economic and Social **Council** with power to coordinate the work of the specialized agencies and to carry out the recommendations of the General Assembly.

The Charter for World Peace written in San Francisco can be regarded as a definite outline of a curriculum to be studied **and** worked on continuously.

It warrants serious consideration and a plan for definite action by every Board of Education, every faculty in all schools, **including** military and naval, from the primary class through post-graduate university.

The church, the family, the press, the radio, motion pictures, the labor and business organizations, the clubs, as well as every **informal** institution, can become study channels of international and interracial understanding.

Through this new organization we can keep every generation **educated** to the necessity of peace by teaching the advantages of peace as against the horrors of war with its toll of human lives and loss of material resources, and its devastating effect on the morale and morals of the people.

This can be done only by continuous education, generation through generation. We must never relax our desire for peace nor feel that the San Francisco Charter will do everything for our protection in the future. It will be necessary to make amendments and changes in order to keep abreast of the times, as has been done in the case of the Constitution of the United States. As the world progresses in a material way, we must progress spiritually and intellectually.

There is no saturation point in education.

The various conferences, from the Atlantic Charter meeting to the **Potsdam** meeting, have been held for the purpose of outlining and defining the aims of the United Nations, and the objectives of this war have been of great educational value to all of our people and those of our Allies.

Education is the basis of international understanding. It helps us to understand other people just as we hope they will learn to understand us. Through education we learn about their customs, achievements, aims and ambitions.

I have discussed world **affairs** at this time because the members of this class of Bryant College have reached a point where they will have to assume a larger share of the responsibilities of international citizenship. Up to the time you reach the age of 29, you unconsciously lean on older people, because up to that point there are more people in the world who are older than you are. Twenty-nine is the turning point, and from that time on there are more people younger than you, which means that you must prepare to assume greater responsibility in assisting and directing young people.

This graduating class is prepared to assume more than the average responsibility in this line because you have had better than average training.

Since your training has been in Business Administration, you are going to carry much of the responsibility for the success of our system of private enterprise and democratic policies in the interest of all of our people, regardless of race, religion or station in life.

You young people are starting out in the world at a time that in my judgment offers greater opportunities for trained minds than young people in any past generation have ever faced.

Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University, our Dean of American Educators, several years ago said, "I would divide the people of the United States into three **groups**—the small group who make things happen—the larger group who watch things happen—and the enormous multitude who do not know what happens." This graduating class, I am sure, will decide to be a part of the small group who make things happen and every young man and woman with your educational advantages can make things happen in whatever line of endeavor you engage.

Many years ago I appointed a man to an important position in managing salesmen. After he had been in the position for a few weeks, he came to me and said, "Mr. Watson, I am going to multiply business in this territory by five." I thought he was aiming too high and said to him, "How are you going to do it?" He said, "It is very simple, the only thing that I have to do is see that the men work who are not working now", and within three months from that date business was five times as large because he was in that small group, referred to by Dr. Butler, who make things happen.

Never be satisfied to be an average man or woman. Always remember that a lot of people have to do a much bigger job in order to make it possible to strike the average. Think big thoughts in regard to **your** job—aim high—it is always better to aim at perfection and miss it than it is to aim at imperfection and hit it.

You must look out upon the world through spectacles of optimism, based on confidence in yourself, in American institutions, in your country and in spiritual values.

You have completed your various courses in Bryant College and passed your examinations and now you must look upon the years that you have spent here as simply the first day of school in your educational lives. You are starting out with a solid foundation on which to build and broaden your education, make a real place for yourselves in the business world and play your part in the development of the San Francisco Charter and in the promotion of national and international, cultural and educational cooperation.

You must not look on this problem of world peace as something too big and complex for you to be a part of. We all have little worlds of our own in which we live and work, made up of our family, our friends and people who have faith in us. Let us take advantage of our education to study and prepare ourselves to impart knowledge to the people with whom we come in con-



tact and who believe in us. In that way we can feel that we are a part of this great world organization, The United Nations.

As you go out into the world always remember that wherever you go from now on you represent Bryant **College**, its officials, Trustees and faculty and I am sure you are all going to do credit to this fine institution which has done **so** much for you.

I suggest that you consider your life as a book in the world's library. Be sure that everything that is written upon the pages of that book is clean, wholesome and of a constructive nature. If you do that, you will be read. **If** you fail to do so, you will be discarded and placed on the shelf.