The
Henry M. Jackson
Memorial Lecture

Vice President
Walter Mondale

The Current International Scene

Presented by
The
Henry M. Jackson
Foundation

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The Henry M. Jackson Foundation was established in 1983 following the death of its namesake. A non-profit, charitable organization, the Foundation supports educational programs related to fields where Senator Jackson played a major leadership role. These include international affairs; public service; the environment and natural resources; and human rights.
The Henry M. Jackson Foundation is grateful to the 
Everett Community College for their co-sponsorship of the 
Henry M. Jackson Memorial Lectures 
as part of the Everett Centennial Lecture Series.

The Henry M. Jackson Memorial Lectures are presented 
periodically by the Henry M. Jackson Foundation to advance 
public discussion of important national and international 
concerns. The purpose of the Jackson Memorial Lectureship is to 
provide a significant forum in which major issues of public policy 
may be forthrightly addressed and critically examined. 
Views expressed in the lecture series are those of the speakers.
Walter Mondale, elected Vice President of the United States in 1976. Mr. Mondale was the first Vice President to have an office in the White House and served as a full-time active participant within a Presidential administration. As the 1984 Democratic nominee for President of the United States, Mondale selected Geraldine Ferraro as his Vice Presidential running mate. During his eight years in the Senate, he served on the Committees on Finance, Labor and Public Welfare, and the Budget. He was chair of the Intelligence Committee's Domestic Task Force and the chair of the Select Committee on Equal Education Opportunity. He has written numerous articles and has authored the book *The Accountability of Power: Toward a Responsible Presidency.*
**WELCOME**

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**Dr. Susan Carroll**

Good evening, I'm Susan Carroll. I'm president of Everett Community College and it gives me pleasure to welcome you to the final lecture in our Centennial Lecture Series. This particular lecture has been arranged by the Henry M. Jackson Foundation and introducing our guest lecturer will be a very esteemed member of our community, Helen Hardin Jackson.

Mrs. Jackson is a graduate of Scripps College. She took her undergraduate degree there and then received her Master's Degree at Columbia University. While she was serving on the Senate staff of Clinton Anderson of New Mexico she met and later married Senator Henry M. Jackson. They have two children, a daughter living in the Seattle area with a beautiful two and-a-half year old grandson and a son who is attending college now at Georgetown University in D.C.

Mrs. Jackson is very active in the community, particularly in health care issues. She's a member of the board of the General Hospital Foundation and a trustee of the General Hospital Medical Center. She has particular interest in the prenatal unit there and the Helen Jackson Center for Women's Health. Helen is also the Chairman of the Board of the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, which receives and grants funds in order to help carry out the work to which her husband devoted his life. Our guest lecturer will be speaking on one of the fields of interest in which Henry Jackson worked. Here to introduce him is Helen Hardin Jackson.

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*Dr. Susan Carroll is President of Everett Community College.*
INTRODUCTION

Helen Hardin Jackson

Thank you, Doctor Carroll, for that kind introduction and I want to add my warm welcome to all of you who have gathered here this evening. It’s very appropriate that Everett Community College has chosen Vice President Walter Mondale to deliver the final lecture in this distinguished series celebrating the Centennial of the City of Everett. After all, it was as a college student that Walter Mondale first plunged into politics, when he volunteered to work for the then obscure Mayoral candidate Hubert Humphrey. From those early political wars in Minnesota, Mr. Mondale rose to attain the second-most important leadership role in American government, and some would say the most difficult to survive. No one could doubt that the Vice President chosen by President-elect Carter was well prepared for that job. After managing Senator Humphrey’s successful campaign in 1948, he served in the Army and received his law degree with honors from the University of Minnesota Law School.

After a brief practice of law, Mr. Mondale was asked to serve as Minnesota’s State Attorney General, a post he held until he was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1964. During his Senate years, he chaired the Intelligence Committee Domestic Task Force and served on the Committees of Finance, Labor and Public Welfare, and Budget. Following the election victory of the Carter-Mondale ticket in 1976, Mr. Mondale became the first Vice President to serve as a full-time active participant within a presidential administration. He occupied the first White House Vice Presidential office and involved himself in many key policy decisions of the Carter era. In his bid for the Presidency in 1980, Mr. Mondale made history in his groundbreaking decision to choose a woman candidate, Geraldine Ferraro, as his Vice Presidential running mate.

Currently, Vice President Mondale practices law as a partner in a Minneapolis-based firm.* He remains deeply engaged in American public life and focuses particular attention on international affairs. He serves as the Chairman of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, an organization that promotes democracy around the world. Under the auspices of this group he has led delegations to advise the new Polish Parliament, and to observe Hungary’s national elections.
The Henry M. Jackson Foundation is pleased to join Everett Community College in sponsoring this lecture tonight. Vice President Mondale's address will be published as part of our Jackson Memorial Lecture Series. The Vice President was a political colleague of my late husband and won Scoop's respect and admiration during their years of service together in the Senate. It is thus most fitting that he is here with us tonight in Scoop's home town to share his insights regarding the course of world events. Ladies and gentlemen, it is a privilege and a great personal honor to present to you this evening Vice President Walter Mondale.

Helen H. Jackson is Chairman of the Jackson Foundation and wife of the late Senator Henry M. Jackson.

*On August 13, 1993, Walter Mondale was sworn in as the new U.S. Ambassador to Japan.
ADDRESS

Walter Mondale

Thank you very much, Helen, for that kind introduction. Any community that’s good enough for Scoop Jackson to live in, from the day he was born to the day he died, must be a wonderful community. I understand that Helen continues to contribute to this community every day, in every way, and that doesn’t surprise me at all. Tonight we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the City of Everett. I want to thank the community college for hosting tonight’s event and, above all, I want to thank Helen for receiving me in her home, introducing me with those wonderful words, and to tell you how much I admire her and love her, and how much we all appreciate what she’s doing, not just for this community and state, but for our nation through the Jackson Foundation. Helen, God bless you. We’re proud of you.

I’m glad to be a part of this distinguished lecture series. Every one of your previous speakers contributed to the intellectual and public life of our country. I know each of them and they have been superb.

Henry Jackson, Scoop Jackson, was responsible for inspiring literally several generations of Americans who are honored to call themselves “Scoop Jackson Democrats”. There were a few “Scoop Jackson Republicans”, too. It’s a tribute to a leader who had a clear set of values and who had the strength and the integrity of his convictions. He never forgot why he was there and what he was doing at any time in his long public career. People always knew where he stood. He believed in an active and compassionate federal government. He believed in a foreign policy that was internationalist and that stood up against totalitarianism, communism and dictatorship wherever they were found. He is remembered in part solely for that, but he was a lot of other things as well. He led the movement in this country to adopt virtually all of the present laws that protect our nation’s environment. All of the basic legislation for air and water, to clean up toxic waste dumps, all of the institutions that are established to protect and monitor the condition of our environment, were adopted under his leadership.

He helped this nation shape what is now a central part of America’s foreign policy – a consistent emphasis on human rights – so that America is seen not just as a passive participant in that great cause of human liberty, but is expected to be involved wherever it can on the
side of human liberty. Senator Jackson was a central part of the effort to bring about that basic change in American life. He always sought to elevate the standards of public service. He did it partly by his own example. He was in public life for 43 years and never once was there any suggestion that Scoop ever did anything to use that office to help Scoop Jackson. He believed in public service and believed that the best instruction is example. But he did more than that and the Jackson Foundation is contributing to this same service. He always believed that the federal government had a role as an instrument for economic and social justice in our society.

Scoop was always a United States Senator. He saw the broader role that a Senator must play in our nation and in international affairs. It was a remarkable career: he arrived in the House of Representatives at the age of 28 in 1941. It was the first time he’d ever been to Washington. He ended up staying there during the terms of nine Presidents, from Franklin Roosevelt to Ronald Reagan. For four decades he and Senator Warren Magnuson were a formidable team. Together they put in 87 years of service in the Congress. Someone once said that politicians either grow or they swell. The thing about Scoop was that he was still from Everett. He never swelled at all, but he grew a lot. He became one of the most admired public servants we have ever had.

Most of what he fought for and what his generation fought for, we’ve now won. The Cold War is over. The countries of Eastern Europe have been liberated from Communist domination. The Soviet Union itself, unbelievably, does not exist any more. And Russia, at least for the time being, is our friend and even our ally. This does not mean, however, that we can be complacent. Nor does it mean that we can retreat from the world. I think that Scoop Jackson would have been the last to suggest such a thing. Let's remember that he was not just against Communism; he was for human rights and human dignity. He was not just against the Soviet Union; he was for democracy and all that it means. He was not just for increased defense spending; he was for a world that was secure and at peace. I'm sorry that he could not have lived long enough to see a lot of these changes that he worked for all of his life.

There are still plenty of challenges to peace and freedom in this world, however. The leadership of our country will continue to be absolutely crucial. When our current President, Bill Clinton, was born, Scoop was already in the middle of his third term in the House of Representatives; Truman was President; Stalin still ruled the Soviet Union; and World War II had just ended. But the Cold War had already started. And this global confrontation between the superpowers would last for 40 years. Bill Clinton is the first President to take office since the
end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union.

I know that our new President said that he very much wanted to concentrate "like a laser beam" on domestic and economic policies. Our economy desperately needs revitalization. We've had years of slow growth and lagging productivity. Our national debt, now more than $4 trillion, is nothing short of an enormous national scandal. The federal government's interest payments on this debt now exceed $200 billion per year. That's just the interest. Our health care system is also in crisis. Thirty-seven million Americans who work have no health insurance. We are the only Western society without universal health care. We have the highest health care costs, by far, of any nation on earth. Our nation has permitted the existence of a growing underclass, with millions of increasingly embittered and nonthriving Americans. Then there are millions of Americans who work full time, but cannot earn enough to make ends meet. We call them the "working poor," and their numbers are growing into the millions.

Even worse, there are now widespread fears about the American dream itself. This was something my generation always took for granted, assuming that we would do better than our parents economically. That dream is in doubt now. For the first time, we have a generation that wonders whether this dream is coming to an end.

Despite all of this, despite the need to work on these problems, and no matter how much the President may wish to concentrate on them, international issues will inevitably command much of his attention. We do not have to put that in the future tense. We can see already how the Russian situation took his time, as well as the Bosnian situation, the Cambodian elections and the Middle East talks. I remember when I was in the White House, Carter would try to save time for domestic affairs. Yet a President quickly realizes that the management of foreign and national security problems cannot be escaped.

Of all the reasons why President Clinton must be involved in international affairs – and why we must all be – I want to concentrate on the issue of Russia and how that situation unfolds because of Scoop's special role. Scoop was often criticized for being too preoccupied with the Soviet threat, of wanting to do too much in a military way to defend against it, of being unwilling to go for certain steps that certain people recommended. But he knew what the fundamental character of the Soviet Union was, and he knew what a victorious and successful Soviet Union, so committed, could do to the world. He used to say that they will try every door to see if it's locked. And he made certain that every door was locked.

After 40 years, we won and they collapsed. Now that the threat is gone, what will take its place? History is not all that hopeful about the
Russian culture and where it is going to go. The real issue is about whether Russia will or will not join Europe and the values of the Western nations. At the very heart of Russian culture is a profound ambivalence about the western ideals of individual freedom and democracy that are at the center of everything in our lives.

The dilemma for Russia has been well described by the historian Michael Ignatieff, who has written:

“At every turn in the road, Russians will have to choose in effect whether they listen to Solzhenitsyn or whether they listen to Turgenev, the great 19th century novelist. Whether they believe in the separate destiny of the Slavic soul, or whether they believe as Turgenev did that there is only one civilization, Europe, and that Russia belongs at the heart of it.”

At this point it is still very much an open question how far Russia might be able to move toward Europe and the Western model, whether the Russian people can embrace democracy and the concepts of private property and competitive enterprise.

So far, President Yeltsin and the Russian people deserve a tremendous amount of credit. They are persevering and pushing ahead with change under circumstances that put their hope and patience to the most severe tests. I talked to a top official in our State Department the other day, asking him, “Did the Russian elections surprise you?” He said, “Yes. We thought it was going to come out all right, but we had no idea of the strength and the energy behind that push for Westernization and support of Yeltsin. Not only for Yeltsin personally, but also in support of these programs.” It was something that I think astonished the whole world. How the Russian situation evolves will be very important to everybody, particularly to the young people tonight. The future of Russia will have much to say about our own future.

It is hardly possible to exaggerate the stakes that are involved. My generation, however, can tell you this. We were cursed by nearly 50 years of Cold War with the old Soviet Union. For my generation of politicians, everything we did – the trillions we had to spend on defense, the wars that had to be fought, the unholy alliance that we sometimes were forced to make with others just in order to line up a group against the Soviets, the fears that our children had about survival itself – it seemed that practically everything we did for all of those years, one way or another, was dominated by the cruel reality of the Cold War. Thankfully, for the past few years we were permitted to believe that the nightmare may be finally behind us, that the confrontation between East
and West had ended. The Soviet Union is gone. Most of the newly free countries in Eastern Europe are at least trying to embrace democracy and the market economy. We have reached new far-reaching agreements to reduce and eliminate the use of nuclear weapons. Russia has become a responsible and cooperative nation in the family of civilized nations, striving to strengthen the United Nations.

During all of my time in public life, every time that the Soviets could put a monkey wrench in something that had to do with peace and civility, they would do it. Now you see them trying to help to curb terrorism, to slash military budgets and to actually work with us on the international scene. Altogether, it is one of the most astonishing and hopeful developments in human history. I'm sorry that Scoop didn't live long enough to enjoy this moment.

Nevertheless, the future remains very uncertain. The people of Russia are struggling to build a democratic society and a market economy. If they succeed, the benefits promise to be great in the reduced threat of nuclear war, lower military spending, the opening of vast new markets that can fuel global prosperity and the creation of jobs for Americans. But if this reform fails and if Russia reverts to dictatorships of the kind that have often been seen there, or collapses into anarchy, the consequences could be absolutely appalling for all of us. I think this is our choice: either we do all we can to help reform succeed in Russia, or we stand aside and take our chances. To his credit, I think President Clinton has stepped up to that challenge. Here is an area where we clearly need bipartisanship in our foreign policy. Assisting the republics of the former Soviet Union is not a matter of charity. It is something that we must do to secure our own interests and defend our own values.

The Secretary of State was recently in Minnesota, and he said that helping democracy succeed in Russia is probably the wisest and least expensive investment that we can make in America's security. Throughout the Cold War we had to spend, in a conservative estimate, $150 billion a year just to build NATO and hold the Soviets at bay. If you counted all of the other resources that we used to try to deal with Soviet threats around the world, it would go much higher. We are now talking about spending one percent of that amount to try to make certain that the alternative, democracy and openness to human rights, can prevail. The Russian people have encouraged us now. Over 60 percent of the Russian people voted in the April referendum. That is a lot better than what happens right here. Sixty percent in a presidential election is almost unheard of in our country. Here was an election in which unemployment was maybe 25 or 30 percent, and inflation was probably 100 or 200 percent, nobody knows for sure. Whole industries were going out of business. The military was being closed down. You
couldn't imagine a witch's brew like that for a politician. Yet, Yeltsin went to the people of Russia and they saw that they had to fundamentally change the Russian system, and they voted for him.

As Sergei Schmemann, a New York Times reporter in Russia and himself a great grandson of a Russian noble, wrote:

“If history has left Russians ignorant of democracy, it has nonetheless nurtured a patience bordering on fatalism and a tolerance for disorder bordering on anarchy. These qualities may sometimes drive Western advisers up the Kremlin walls, but few other nations could cope with the sort of political and economic convulsions Russia has endured without going berserk. The unending conflict of authority, the economic chaos, the soaring inflation, the lack of any clear future, all that would have long ago plunged any Western nation into suicidal panic like that of the Weimar Republic. But the Russians have grumbled and gone on. For all of the political passions and doomsday scenarios, there has been no famine, no major riots. More, not a single theatre in Moscow has closed. Cosmonauts continue to circle the globe and traffic jams become ever thicker. It may still crack and Russia may still fail to break out of her history, but with every passing day and with every passing vote the odds get better.”

Thus, it is not a hopeless cause. I think, as Americans, we ought to try to join with all of those who are trying to make a difference. This is a bipartisan effort. This does not mean that there is nothing we could or should do. I believe our strategy has two parts: The first is what we do between the two governments of the United States and Russia. We are trying to provide advisers and seed money for privatization. The more they can privatize those old Soviet plants that were building armaments and move them into the private economy, the more they can get people out of state dependencies. The old Soviet system built plants and communities in a way so that it gave them political control. So in a sense, these old white elephants that really are not productive should be dismantled and privatized. It will contribute a lot to the possibilities there.

There can be a substantial program to help in privatization. Technical help can be provided to produce oil and gas, which is plentiful. Russia is a very rich nation. But their wealth is found in things that God did, because the Soviet Union could not produce a thing except a military. There was virtually nothing that they produced during
those 60 years that anybody wanted to buy that I knew of. This idea of
trying to bring American and Western technology to bear, to get their
oil and gas industries producing new energy, helps the world, helps them,
gives them hard currency and is a way that we can help them. We also
need to assist them in dismantling their nuclear weapons. That is
important for all of us. It scares me that all of those weapons over there
can be sold or peddled. They are very dangerous. We also need loans and
grants to help them purchase food and agricultural products.

The second part of the strategy is multilateral. The package of aid
through international institutions such as the World Bank totals more
than $28 billion and is important because it gives help on credit, on
currency, and on the divestiture of those enterprises. It also has the
advantage for us that the rest of the world has to pitch in. It is not just
the United States, because the rest of the world has just as high a stake
in this as we do. Many countries are as wealthy or wealthier than we are
and they ought to put up their share. After spending trillions to fight the
Soviet Union, how can we possibly choose not to invest these relatively
modest amounts needed to support a successful transition to democracy
and a market economy? It is important to put this challenge in the
context of recent history, which is what the Secretary of State did in my
hometown the other day. I think it is a very important lesson,
particularly for young people to keep in mind.

This is not the first time that Americans have been forced to make
fundamental choices about our role in the world. At two other points in
this century we faced similar decisions. America's first call to leadership
came in 1918 after the end of World War I. Europe's old order had
committed mass suicide. The German government, the Russian
government, everything had ended up in debris. Empires that existed for
centuries had disappeared. The continent lay demoralized, and we
decided to go home and go to sleep. The world turned to us for
leadership and for moral vision. President Wilson tried to lead this
country into the League of Nations and then into an active
international involvement. He tried to lead the world toward open
trade and collective security, but most Americans did not want to hear
about it. They wanted to go home. My state was one of the great
isolationist states in the union. The consequences, as we know, were
tragic. Protectionist policies here and around the world triggered a
worldwide depression. The economic convulsions produced Adolf
Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo. Japan began its conquest of Asia and the
Pacific region, and the systematic persecution and destruction of
Europe's Jews occurred. Yet America still thought it could isolate itself.
Finally, it was the attack on Pearl Harbor that shattered our false sense
of security. America got involved heavily, and we made the difference.
But before it was over 300,000 American lives were lost, and three or four times that number were badly injured for life.

The year 1945 was the second choice we had. It was the second call to leadership. This time Scoop Jackson and a new generation were around in Congress. I think they had learned their history well, but it was not easy. We had won the war, but it was tough. You will recall that most of the Western democracies were on the edge. They had been destroyed by the war, and it wasn't clear where they were going. Their economies were in ruins. Communist dictators began to take hold in Eastern Europe and, as Churchill said, the Iron Curtain fell across that region. Once again, they looked to America for leadership to help build peace from the ruins of war and this time, thank God, we responded. It was that generation of Harry Truman and Scoop Jackson, Warren Magnuson, my own Hubert Humphrey and other leaders of both political parties, who said we cannot do after this war what we did after World War I. That leadership gave us Bretton Woods, which was a sensible, international, economic world banking and trading system which still today is the basic plan, and the Marshall Plan, which helped the Western democracies in Europe quickly get on their feet and helped fuel American prosperity for some 40 years. The establishment of NATO, the first effective collective defense structure, brought a more lasting peace to Europe than there had ever been in the last 500 years. We built a world where our former adversaries, Germany and Japan, became our allies and our friends. In short, we built a world where America itself enjoyed unprecedented liberty and prosperity. We didn't just help them. We found out it helped us as well. This was the challenge of Scoop Jackson's generation. History will say that they met it with clear eyes, with strength, with courage. They did it with effectiveness and they won. They've given our generation and this generation an entirely new chance for a stable and sensible world.

Now we face the third choice. There is yet another call for American leadership, and once again, the stakes are enormous. The people of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union seek a future of peace, democracy and economic freedom. If we can help them along this path, we will go a long way toward guaranteeing our own long term security. But if we do not, the next generation may inherit a world of few choices and many burdens. History teaches us that we cannot ignore the world's problems. We are the strongest and most influential nation on earth. If we don't lead, it won't happen. One of the things that always impressed me in the years that I was privileged to represent our country around the world as Vice President was the way in which political leaders in other countries often criticized us, but when you got alone with them, how desperately they reached out for the United States to
take the lead. There is no other nation on earth that can really generate the energy and the strength and the focus for the rest of the world, the free world, like we can. We always hope that the United Nations one day will be strong enough to do that. We certainly need a strategy where the rest of the nations carry their burden. But in terms of leadership, it's still our responsibility and still the decision of our people as to whether we want it.

So to the young people here who want to be like those who preceded you, to be left alone to live in peace, your generation's time has come. These problems can seem overwhelming. Someone said we don't yet have this new world that everybody is bragging about. What we have is a massive, global nervous breakdown. Sometimes one can think so with these exploding ethnic and religious problems that dominate the news. But we can make a difference just like the generation that preceded us. You can make the difference. It's now your turn. We need your commitment, we need your challenge, we need your good minds, we need your energy, and we need your leadership. Reject the ignorant and the hateful. Forget the demagogues. Ask others what they are for, not just what they are against. Try to use your life to embrace understanding and enlightenment. There is so much that the human mind can learn and understand that helps us. The Bible tells us to light a candle rather than to curse the darkness. That is really what we must do.

We now have a new generation of leadership. They're young; they're strong; they're restless; they're pressing for change. But we can see that even they are running into severe difficulties. These are tough times. It is not that a president must always have his way, but some substantial changes are needed in the treatment of the presidency by the press. I believe that we have developed the habit of criticizing our presidents unmercifully.

If you look at the last eight presidents, only one of them - Eisenhower - completed two terms largely intact. Kennedy was assassinated. Johnson was forced to retire. Nixon went home in disgrace. Jerry Ford was there for a little under two years. Carter was there for four years and then the American people asked us to go home. The last two years of Reagan's presidency were pretty much lost. Bush was there for four years, then he's out. President Clinton has been in only a short time. I'm not saying that this Administration has been perfect. Yet I think we ought to give a person a little time in this most difficult of all jobs. It is the toughest job on earth. In our system, we can and often do elect governors as presidents and we forget that they have to learn all of those federal issues afresh. A governor doesn't have foreign policy, or national defense, or federal reserve board, or congressional experience. A new person has to learn all of that from scratch. The worst thing is to
have somebody who is so cautious that he never makes mistakes. I make mistakes, you make mistakes. So while we pile on the criticism when they’re wrong, let’s also try to give whoever is in there some praise when they are right. I’ll say this: I am a Democrat, but in the early years of the Republican administration you never heard me out there criticizing them because I am an American, too. There is no salvation for any of us, no matter how partisan we are, in the failure of a presidency. We are all needed.

A wonderful philosopher of our time, one of our nation’s wisest men, John Gardner, who used to be Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, likes to tell a story about a grandfather and grandmother with their five-year-old granddaughter. One day, she looked at an American coin and saw *E pluribus unum* on it. She asked, “What does this mean?” The grandfather said, “Well, it means out of many, one.” The granddaughter was confused and said that she didn’t understand. So the grandfather scratched his head for awhile and said, “Well, it means in America that we’re a collective whole, a single people.” That didn’t work either, so she said, “Grandpa, I don’t understand.” Finally the grandmother spoke up and said to her granddaughter, “It means that we need each other.” I think that is the essence of America. If we understand that, we will be all right.

Thank you very much.
Discussion

Question: Mr. Mondale, in your long and distinguished career as a public servant, what was your most significant and memorable experience?

Answer: Let me give you a couple of them. We had an issue in about 1978 about the Boat People. This was a vicious effort under the Vietnamese communists, with a racist dimension to it, in which they were driving ethnic Chinese out of Vietnam, just like the Jews in World War II. They were forcing these Chinese to give them all of their money. They would make them buy boats that would sink. They would rip them out of there and put them in these boats. They were pilloried by pirates, if you could believe it. Thousands of them never made it. There was no international system to do anything to stop this barbarity. Some friends came to me and talked about it, and I got very actively involved as Vice President. I think that I helped make a difference because I wouldn’t relent. I went everywhere I could. One of the big issues was the use of the Navy to pick these people up and save them. At the time, the military didn’t want to do it. They thought it was an inappropriate use of naval forces. Some others in the government were against it. I went to the President and others, and I talked them into it. Suddenly the Sixth Fleet was out there, picking up these people, saving their lives and taking them to camps in Hong Kong, Thailand and so on.

The second part of it was that we needed a system for relocating these people so that they could have a different life. We also needed to put pressure on the Vietnamese to stop it. So I asked the President if I could go to Geneva to the United Nations Refugees Conference and speak for the country. I really let them have it good. I think I moved them, and we put in place something that never happened before. Almost two million people were relocated all over the world, nearly a million of them in the United States. I think I had something to do with it. Every time I see a young Vietnamese or Hmong family walking downtown in Minneapolis, they don’t know me but I feel pretty good.

The other thing was a tragedy. I was with President Carter all through the Iranian hostage ordeal, which was a horrible experience for all Americans. We sent the rescue mission to Iran knowing that the odds were not good, but feeling as if we had to do it. I was there alone with the President in the small personal office, not the Oval office, when he took the call from the commander on the ground telling him that he had to evacuate and that 16 American kids were dead. I saw the
President turn ashen white and he said, “Of course, I order you to leave.” I had to get on the phone at three in the morning to call the Speaker of the House and the Majority Leader of the Senate, neither of whom knew what we were doing, wake them up in the middle of the night, and tell them what happened. I got home at about five in the morning. I woke Joan up and I said, “We’re all done. We’ll never ever get by this. We did our best, it failed, and I don’t think the American people are going to give us another chance.” I think that’s what happened to us. And I’ll remember that minute as long as I live.

**Question:** I would like to personally thank you for choosing a woman as your running mate.

**Answer:** I am going to call Gerry tomorrow and tell her what you said. This country has tended to lead in human rights in almost all areas. For all of our problems, we’ve done better in inter-group relations than almost any other society. Never perfect, but at least we have tried to have some relationship between our ideals and how we practice our lives. But for some reason there has been a glass ceiling keeping women down in politics and in business. It’s changing, and I think changing rather rapidly, but many other nations have gone further than we have in having women national leaders. England, Israel, Norway, India, all over the world there have been women Prime Ministers. Almost all of them have worked out very well, and all of them have had a reputation for being very tough. For some reason, we have had trouble breaking that barrier. We’re starting to move in the Senate. We have six women senators now. There has never been more than two before. There are, I think, about 45 or 50 women in the House right now. That’s almost double or triple what it was when I was there. At the governor’s level, the legislative level, and the mayoral level, women are coming up very impressively. So I would hope that Gerry’s selection will help encourage more women to become involved.

At the convention in 1984, I talked about the world I hoped to see 10 years from then. I said I wanted to see young women come up and tell me that they wanted to be President of the United States. Since then, you cannot imagine how many women have come up and told me that they want to be President of the United States. One of them, I think, is going to make it.

**Question:** How do you think the Carter-Mondale Administration is going to stack up in the history books against some of the other administrations?

**Answer:** I think that history is already starting to answer that question. People my age remember that everyone thought Harry Truman was a bum when he left office. Everybody would say, “That guy was terrible.”
But if you read the latest McCullough book on Truman, he’s vindicated by history. The generation to which Scoop belonged set in place during those two or three years right after World War II almost the whole structure that dominated the world for 45 years. Even today, it is hard to improve on it.

I think the same thing is going to happen and is happening to Carter. It has been 13 years since we left office. When he went home, he was thought to be a bum. Nobody was taking him seriously, and I could tell that he was a shaken man when he left. He was defeated. Everything he tried to do had failed. But the decency of Carter cannot be hidden. He’s a Christian. He believes what the faith tells him. What he did when he was President, he did before he was President. And you can say, “Well, he did that for politics.” You can go down to Plains next Sunday and you can go to the Sunday School class he’s teaching. If he’s doing that for votes, he’s wasting his time.

This is what Carter does: he and Rosalyn get on a bus and they go up to New York to spend a week fixing up an old apartment for Habitat for Humanity so people can live there. He’s been to Haiti, I think, seven times trying to get democracy restored there. He was down in Paraguay, he was in Zambia. He goes all over the world using his prestige to try to bring about honest elections, to try to nail the fraudulent. In Panama, he ran Noriega out of there because he labeled him a crook and a thief after the election. Because Carter was down there and so respected in Panama, that was decisive. He has gone all over the world trying to help with health problems in poor nations, for instance, with river blindness, and with several kinds of facial diseases that they suffer from in Africa, for which there are easy cures which haven’t been applied. He has been developing new agricultural techniques that permit poor and disadvantaged nations to produce crops. He has been trying to aid in conflict resolution around the world. He does none of this for money and all of it trying to use his influence to help.

His wife Rosalyn is doing the same thing. They have a project now in Atlanta. They are trying to make one center city in America work. They are working full time on health, education, mental health, and crime trying to make that city a desirable place to live. He pulls resources from every place he can to try to make it work. I don’t think the American people can resist that kind of person. That’s what we need in this country. We need a new sense of involvement, of principles, of values.

Question: Please discuss Bosnia-Herzegovinia and the potential for violence and terrible problems in Kosovo.

Answer: The situation in Bosnia, which we all see on television, is about the most dreadful thing going on anywhere on earth. It is racial and
ethnic, and there are historical hatreds that apparently have no bounds. Some of these disputes go back hundreds of years. One of the things that makes it so difficult for our country to engage there is that this used to be called the "Eastern Question." For two hundred years, if you lived in Europe, they would always talk about the Eastern Question which was shorthand for what happened to the part of southeastern Europe controlled by the Turks, the Ottoman Empire. As the Ottoman Empire collapsed, it was a question of which nation – Russia, Prussia, Austria-Hungary, Britain or France – would get to pick up the pieces. Time and time again, one or another country would make a move to try to gain control of this region that we called the Balkans. In the 19th century, the Czar went into the region on the pretense that the Turks were beating up on the Christians in Jerusalem, but what they really wanted was to take over the Ottoman Empire. The British wouldn’t stand for it, so the Crimean War started. That was the Charge of the Light Brigade. The British lost 24,000 lives, the British Prime Minister lost his office, and the British went home defeated. But the Russians didn’t get anything either before it was over. The next move was made in the early 1900s when the Germans started moving down into Croatia, Serbia and south. Then the British went into that area to try to block the Germans. That’s where Gallipoli happened, in which the British went down there and were slaughtered. It was in the midst of this great power conflict over this area when the Archduke was killed on the main street of Sarajevo. Next, the French got involved in 1934-35. The President of Yugoslavia, Alexander, came to visit the Foreign Minister of France and a Croat assassin killed both of them.

So the bloody history of this region historically is the reason for European reluctance to get involved in the Eastern Question again. Every time they have done it in two hundred years, they always get stung. The Czar lost his head there. For Stalin, Yugoslavia was the one area where he could not get involved. The Germans don’t dare go back down there anymore, because they are remembered for different reasons, particularly the Nazi involvement. The British don’t want to get back in there because of their experience all those years ago. So any American President who tries to go into that area has to do it alone. I very much wanted a muscular policy there. But the more I think about it, I don’t know what you do. The one thing that I think we should try to do is to surround the area collectively so that the war doesn’t spread into coastal Macedonia and start another serious major war which could involve Russia and Turkey. I would hope that the United Nations and the Western alliance, and now with Russia trying to do something along this line, that we could at least put a fence around it. I get no comfort out of this answer, because thousands of people have been killed. You know the
things that have gone on there. Raping women and forcing them to bear these children is apparently a medieval torture that dates back to the 15th century. They consider it the ultimate insult, that you would have to bear their children. It’s a sad day for Western civilization.

On behalf of Everett Community College, the City of Everett and the Henry M. Jackson Foundation, we want to thank all of you for attending. We would also like to thank Mr. Mondale for participating in this lecture series and particularly for his words of encouragement. These are times of great ambiguity, and we are going to be dealing with that in the next decade, I'm sure, before we get any real answers. To have the kind of dedication to the strengthening of this nation that Mr. Mondale has had over his entire lifetime is admirable.
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