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Bishop Maher's Speech, USD Alumni Reception

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BISHOP MAHER'S SPEECH, USD ALUMNI RECEPTION, JANUARY 24:

I am exceedingly proud and honored to be welcomed as the Chancellor of the University of San Diego at this the annual alumni reception. I am also pleased that it comes at the beginning of the 1970's which hail a new era in this nation and for this university.

The tremendous changes which have altered all our lives in the past twenty years since the founding of the University of San Diego have made it a new world, with a set of circumstances hardly to be imagined twenty years ago.

The struggle to build and maintain a Catholic university in San Diego, to serve the people of Southern California, has been great. The time, energy and financial interest shown by the diocese and the Religious of the Sacred Heart, and their generous supporters, has been immeasurable.

What we have achieved together is plain for all to see on the heights of Linda Vista in the beauty of the Alcala Park campus. It reflects the prayerful and powerful guiding spirit of those visionaries Bishop Buddy and Mother Rosalie Hill.

But now we must deal with things as they are; not as they used to be, or even as we would like them to be. There are many changes which have occurred in the world; some unwelcome, many which are great and wonderful and many which are still being evaluated.

Nobody is quite sure what will come of these assaults on the standards of the past; and nobody is sure what the structure and the role of the university of the future will be.

What we, at the University of San Diego, have to do, is to reconcile to the fact that we are in an era of great change. In our planning we must strive for goals which reflect the good of the past and the greatness of the future for both

the university and the community it serves.

There is much that is unique about the University of San Diego -- and one aspect in particular is worth noting. It is unique in that it is the happy partnership between diocesan enterprise and the dedicated work of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. It will always have that special stamp of higher education for Catholic women which is the hallmark of the Sisters, who have specialized in this vocation for nearly two centuries. The special place of women in this community -- reflected here by the presence of so many tonight -- is paramount in the future of the university.

The success of our young alumni from the hill is well known throughout the state and nation.

This university is a pearl of great value for all the people of Southern California and beyond. It heads into the Seventies with the assurance of finding its rightful place in the forward spirit of national and private education.

We are certainly on the road which will lead to more independence, both financially and philosophically. A university, we pray, will emerge with all the assets of the dual relationship of the past and the added strength which comes from the present steps towards final unification.

The diocese of San Diego and the Religious of the Sacred Heart have more than a mere financial interest in the university. Both have the dedicated service and ardent sponsorship of priests, nuns, and laymen who helped mold the founding institution. Now we look to the future when both the diocese and the religious will relinquish this control and wish God speed to the new University of San Diego, marked by its oneness.

So we must now start to hand over the burden to others -- to you the alumni;

to you our friends gathered here; and to the community at large, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. It is a burden which has been great on the Catholic people of the diocese and on those supporters of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. We have taken the infant institution so far; now as it grows to maturity it is up to others.

Within the coming months the unity which has been shown by the students and faculties must next be shown in administration and corporate control. Our Boards of Trustees are now engaged in the final arrangements for this corporate merger, protecting the interests of both the parents and the child--the university of the future.

We need not remind you, the alumni, that it is your university. It is -- and always will be -- your alma mater. It is in your interests to work for it and to sacrifice for it and to promote its future well being.

And you, friends of USD, we need your support and pray for your continued support, and know that with us you will share in the satisfaction arising from the excellence and growth of the new University of San Diego and its "Plan for the Seventies."