Granddad Zimmerman’s Presidential Remarks to UNM Graduating Classes 1927-1943

During the depression years, when UNM apparently chose to save on guest commencement speakers, “Dr. Zim” gave the commencement address as well.

“The University and the Graduate” 1927
A young, poor, small university in historical perspective

“The Conflict in Modern Thought” 1928
Were you a radical or conservative?

“Necessary Adjustments” 1929
Lead into the future. Be in the front ranks of those accepting change.

“Checking Up Along the Way” 1930
“The lines which separate our thought-life today have greater significance for the future of human society than have the lines which separate nations and races.”

Nothing in the files 1931

“In These Difficult Years” 1932
The depression and the story of struggles versus fun-and-folly, dishonesty, “secret marriages” on campus

“The College Graduate and Human Values”
Appraising capitalism, socialism, or communism in relation to human values. Society’s depression about our scientific, democratic, and educational systems. Those Americans wanting some form of dictatorship. The Lausanne Conference and the US relation to a world economy. The doctrine of prosperity for the few and insecurity for the many. Five elements in realizing human values.

“(Four) Danger Zones in Thinking” 1933
Is industrial age prosperity the only Utopia? FDR “Brain Trusters” and a New deal for youth. The role of government versus the individual refusing to surrender his thought to any state. The mistakes of education. Morality and religion versus Bertrand Russell’s “Gospel of Despair” (Dr. Zim’s
personal journey through philosophy studies.)

“Final Word” 1934
(First graduating class since UNM received recognition by the Association of American Universities – of which Dr. Zim was very proud. Promise to be brief this year!) The depression versus having a firm belief in the future golden age of achievement for the human spirit.

“The New Deal and the Old Real” 1935
(Commencement address at West Texas Teachers College) The New Deal = need for economic recovery.
“Old Real #1: Faith in the Reality and Significance of Work” Jobs = Invention of TV “just around the corner”; soil conservation, water & land utilization. Macro-economic factors are improving. Social security.
“Old Real #2: Morality” (Margin notes)
“Old Real #3: Faith in the Democratic Ideal” versus Hitler and Mussolini
“Old Real #4: Faith in the Intellect and Spirit of Man” Suicides for those losing material prosperity during the depression versus quotes from Wordsworth’s happy warrior, Tennyson on freedom, Keats, religious faith, and Blumenschein

“Work and Freedom” UNM Class of 1935
Public enemy No. 1 are those in this country who would suppress your freedom. May you be spared the degradation of living under any form of dictatorship.

“An Old Human Custom” 1936
Our Country’s failure to practice what we preach: KKK, lagging equality of opportunity. Quotes Plato. Think things through before acting. “Unite with workers of every land . . . constructing a bridge for the ideals of man over into practical experiences.”

To The Class of 1937
(with cover letter from 522 Fifth Ave., NYC before sailing to Europe for Rotary International meeting) “Nobility of character is the supreme need of the human race.” Admonition to have regard for the general welfare of others.
To the Class of 1938
See through the sound and fury of international shouts of treaty-breaking, aggression, tyranny, and anarchy.

To the Class of 1939
(50th anniversary of UNM's founding. Please be here for the 100th in 1989.) Our American way of life is being contrasted to nations dominated by totalitarian ideals. Need for a free ballot to make democracy succeed. Fear of un-American intolerance to experimentation; the cave of unreasoning nationalism is threatening democracy. Rapidly approaching disaster.

To the Class of 1940
We're in a war age. Europe's war and US $5 billion military preparations. Germany's desire for power was not solved by WWI. We must not enter WWII without first demanding peace terms agreements. Outlook for democracy bleak; plea for good neighbor diplomatic policy. We must prevent enemy foothold on our mainland or adjacent island territory. (Obviously full of anxiety!)

"The Outlook for Peace" 1941
(Ohio University Commencement; truncated version delivered at UNM) Treatise on international relations. Hated war: far more spent for destruction than construction; need peace-machinery. Men into uniform after graduation. Power-politics leaders are concealing, rather than revealing, the truth. "Democratic nations won the military victory in 1919, but they failed to establish a world order based on economic stability and political justice." League of Nations was deserted. The US is the best nation for planning for world peace. (History of 1915 League to Enforce Peace.) Most earnestly advocates the formulation of a powerful peace plan before going to war (gives specific suggestions.) Predicts cold war. US lacks unity of purpose for WWII. Need for democracy to re-capture world leadership. "... a world without peace is a world that must be re-made."

Nothing in the files 1942

To the Class of 1943
Educational budgets have suffered during the war effort. Stressed importance of liberal education in this technological time. "We have to realize that democracy, instead of having a continuously successful future assured for it, is in danger from without and also from within. Other civilizations have died following military successes." (He said at least 4 times during the speech "I wish I could assure you....")
“One Way To Think About The War and the Post-War Period”
(Commencement address to Captain High School - 1943)
The 4 freedoms; Wallace’s New Democracy; specifics of a new World Order. Historical perspective very important. Cultural values – search of mankind for spiritual values. References to the Bible. Libraries have never been nationalistic. Quotes Goethe: “Above all relations is humanity.”

Graduation Program for 1944
Indicates that his role in this graduation was limited to handing out diplomas. (Perhaps due to health reasons?)

Addendum

“Introductory Statement -- The University and Research” – Year?
(A special convocation of research scholars on campus)
Perspective on New Mexico’s Indian and Spanish cultures. P.2 “It will continue to be advisable to cooperate fully with all Federal Governmental Agencies . . . in any worthwhile research which they may undertake.” (The Manhattan – Trinity Project ??)

“Daring, Dubious and Diversified Dogmatics of a Don”
(Ten Don Meeting – May 1, 1935)
Lets his hair down a bit with philosophical “ramblings.” Proposes limited economic communism; dangers of the military-industrial complex. Autobiographical portions.

“Introduction” – to UNM Semi-centennial Celebrations - 1939
May be more oil on university lands. Outlook for UNM’s next 50 years (1940-'89)

Inaugural Address (1928) and Stanford University President Ray Lyman Wilbur’s compliments to “Dr. Zim” (p. 30 last Paragraph)
Oil wells on University land. Fear of ROTC on campus. Mussolini and dictatorships in Europe. Education is the only hope for the progress of popular government in the new human society. We have mastered our material resources; now we must master our human forces. Ideas are the electrons of our social universe. TB research here in NM. Need research by professors, who are not “dry as dust,” on NM’s natural resources and on archaeological ruins. Tourism. Indian Art, Southwest history, Latin American Studies.