

DOCTOR IN UTROQUE JURE

ἔρχεται τιμὰ γυναικείῳ γένει

Sic poeta Euripides¹, sortis femineae fautor antiquus, et de hoc saeculo, ut opinor, haud inepte vaticinatus est, ubique enim cernimus mulieres ad summos honores evectas esse. Atque in civitate nostra femina in praesidem nuper electa, velut mensis ille Aprilis ‘colore superbus’ (ut vatis Avonensis verba usurpem) horas vernaes redintegravit,

cuncta iuventatis perfundens corda vigore.

Animis laetis, Academici, recordamur Hiberniae praesidem primum alumnum nostrum fuisse, et nunc de praeside septima, alumna altera, iure gloriamur. Maximo igitur gaudio ad vos duco EXCELLENTISSIMAM MARY TERESE WINIFRED ROBINSON, Hiberniae Praesidem. Commendo vobis discipulam antea scholarem, et primae classis moderatorem. Commendo feminam iurisprudentiae valde peritam, professorem quondam nostram, quae nuper sociae titulo honoris causa cumulata, omnibus nominibus dignissima existit quae doctoratu in utroque iure hodie honoretur. Commendo Praesidem popularem, ut Collegii sic patriae decus ac delicias, praecipue cum velut Emma illa admirabilis, saltare, cantare exclamare gestiebat. Uno ferme post anno — gaudeo referens — adhuc ridet dum ministerii munera operosa summa comitate, summa facilitate exsequitur. Promissorum haud oblita, sermones cum pauperibus, cum invalidis communicavit, et lampas illa e Praesidis domo semper refulgens significat illam et maritum (iuris et ipsum haud imperitum) peregrinorum memores manere. Vigilat mehercle regio vespertina, cum duces duo ultra Senunam nati, una in Phoenicis, alter in Collegii hortis, inter nos Dublinenses dominantur! A socio quodam nostro seniore olim incitata, senatum prospere petivit, et in hoc officio pro universitate nostra multos annos versata, cum virtutibus illis quae Collegio iamdudum cordi fuerunt concinentem se semper praebuit — de *παρησία* loquor, et de adversariorum observantia. Vos igitur talem feminam primariam, tam bene de Collegio et de republica meritam, rogo plausu fervido cumulatissime augeatis.

¹ *Medea*, 416.

DOCTOR IN LAWS

Honour is returning to the race of women.

The words are those of that ancient Greek feminist the poet Euripides, and are, I think, aptly prophetic of our own age in which everywhere we see women advanced to the highest offices and honours. In Ireland too, the recent election of a woman to the Presidency brought back the spring into the year, and, like ‘proud-pied April’ in Shakespeare’s sonnet,

hath put a spirit of youth in everything.

As members of the College we are happy to recall that Ireland’s first President was a Trinity graduate, and we can now feel justly proud that the same may be said of the seventh. And so it is with the utmost pleasure that I present to you HER EXCELLENCY MARY TERESE WINIFRED ROBINSON, President of Ireland. I am commending to you a former scholar of the house, and a senior moderator. I am commending an eminent lawyer, a former holder of our Reid professorship, a recently elected honorary fellow, and therefore a candidate on all counts most worthy to receive our highest honours in law. I am commending the people’s President, the pride and darling of College and country, not least when, like the admirable Emma, ‘she was in dancing, singing, exclaiming spirits’. A year or so later I am happy to note that she still carries out her duties with a smile, a taxing round performed with ready rapport and enviable fluency. Nor has she forgotten her promise to keep in touch with the disadvantaged and the handicapped, and the light that shines unceasingly from the Áras is a token that she and her husband (himself no mean practitioner of the law) remain mindful of the emigrants. The West’s awake indeed, when two of our top people have come from beyond the Shannon to lord it over us in Dublin — one in Phoenix Park and the other in College Park! President Robinson was encouraged to stand for the Senate by one of our senior fellows, and throughout her long period of office as a university senator she always showed herself fully in tune with values long dear to the College — freedom of speech, and a tolerant pluralism. She is a most remarkable first lady who has deserved very well of the College and the nation alike, and I bid you endorse her merits with the tribute of your warmest applause.

DOCTOR IN UTROQUE JURE

Summum crede nefas animam praeferre pudori
Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.¹

Quod olim viro honesto suadebat Juvenalis tyranni minis oppresso, id, credo, cum scriptis atque gestis candidati nostri praesentis mirifice congruit, nam vultibus et violentia rectorum tyrannicorum capiti minaciter impendentibus causam tamen veritatis nunquam deseruit. Qua par est observantia ad vos nunc duco virum cum in fabulis scaenicis componendis fama per orbem totum celeberrimum, tum in patriae libertate promovenda gloria sempiterna cumulandum, PRAEHONORABILEM VÁCLAV HAVEL, Reipublicae Czechie Praesidem clarissimum.

In urbe Pragensi pulcherrima natus, theatri tirocinium admodum assiduum ibi explevit, qui non modo studiis dramaturgicis sese devoverit sed etiam scaenae supellectilem ipse saepe disposuerit. Ibi fabulas suas primo docuit, inter quas praecipue stabant *Festum illud in hortis celebratum* atque *Commentarium*, fabulae peregrinorum quoque in linguas mox translatae. Quod Flacco olim placuit id revera probavit:

Ridiculum acri
Fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res.²

Inter omnes iam constabat vocem novam et potentem per aulaeum ferreum resonare, ver Pragense vaticinantem. Cum veris illius flores procella ex oriente coorta subito eversi essent, ad Alexandrum Dubček, qui quinque ante annis in hoc pulpito stabat, epistolam aperte conscripsit, in qua virum illum indomitum (quem morte intempestiva nuper peremptum lugemus) personam sustinere edixit vitae melioris, honestioris, liberioris a civibus omnibus ex animo exoptatae. Nunc eadem ipse nationi suae significat.

Brevi post tempore civitatis ministri vetabant ne quis quem librum illius in manu teneret. Sed silentium hospiti nostri imponere nequibant. Ad praesidem Husák epistolam misit in qua rectores de administrationis ratione publice obiurgabat. Tunc undeviginti abhinc annos Kalendis Januariis certaminis novam viam inivit. Iuris civilis elementa per speciem iustitiae in legibus civitatis inhaerebant, sed revera rectorum arbitrio abrogata

¹ Juvenal, *Satire* viii, 83–84.

² Horace, *Satires* I, 10, 14–15.

Count it the ultimate sin to prefer survival to honour,
And from a longing for life to lose what makes life worth living.

In my opinion Juvenal's admonition to a man of honour under threat from a tyrant resonates powerfully with the words and actions of our present candidate, for even when the grim visage of the totalitarian state hung menacingly close over his head he never deserted the cause of truth. With all due respect, I now present to you an author whose plays are celebrated throughout the world and a statesman who has won undying fame as the champion of his country's freedom, His Excellency VÁCLAV HAVEL, the eminent President of the Czech Republic.

A native of the beautiful city of Prague, he there completed an arduous apprenticeship in the theatre, combining duties as a stage hand with studies in dramaturgy. There he produced his first plays, including his highly successful *Garden Party* and *Memorandum*, works that were soon translated into a number of foreign languages. He certainly proved the truth of the Horatian maxim: 'In politics ridicule often has a more decisive effect than denunciation.'

The world now became aware of a powerful new voice ringing out from behind the Iron Curtain, a harbinger of the 'Prague Spring'. When the flowers of that spring had been suddenly uprooted by a tempest from the east, he penned an open letter to Alexander Dubček (who in 1991 was standing on this platform) in which he proclaimed that in his own person this indomitable man (whose untimely loss we mourn) provided 'a symbol of all our hopes for a better, more decent, and freer life'. Now he himself sustains a similar role in the eyes of his countrymen.

In 1969 his works were banned in Czechoslovakia, but the authorities could not silence him. He addressed a letter to President Husák in which he openly criticised the government for its administrative policies. Then, on January 1st, 1977, he raised the struggle to a new level. Civil rights had been nominally written into the constitution, but in practice remained a dead letter. Together with a group of co-signatories, he published a document listing and emphasising these rights. In this way brave men laid the foundations of civic freedom, in this way 'the power of the powerless'¹ was

¹ The title of one of his most influential political essays, first published in 1979.

languebant. Quorum iurum tabulae, comitibus nonnullis subscribentibus, in medium plene promulgatae sunt. Sic libertatis fundamenta viri fortes posuerunt, sic impotentium potentia manifesta fiebat, sic Charta Septuaginta Septem Europae totius in annalibus inscripta manet.

Prius tamen quam hospes noster civium suffragiis in praesidem ascitus est, iniuriae permultae a capitalibus inflictae illi erant perpetiendae, nec non domi et in carcere custodiae longae et artae. Quae in vinculis hos per annos cogitaverit, quae somniaverit, quae toleratus sit, haec omnia stilo eloquenti per epistulas uxori carae Olga reddita in medium quoque sunt prolata. Quo in libro viri nobilissimi et humanissimi pectus inspicias, qui cuidam interroganti de odio cum custodibus respondit: 'Odisse nescio, quod mihi cordi est, odium enim oculos obnubilat et veritatis inventioni impedit'. Veritatem certe quaesivit, atque veritas illum patriamque liberavit.

Paucis antea annis civibus Czechiae et Slovakiae foederatis praeerat, quo in munere rempublicam liberatam atque velut in incunabulis iacentem in adulescentiam robustam provexit. Tunc autem cum Slovakiae consortionem solvere placuisset, rursus ille omnium assensu in praesidem civitatis suae de novo constitutae revocatus est. Inter eos qui nostra aetate recti conscii in vinculis iniuriose detenti manserunt, praecipue, Academici, eminet ille quem nunc in conspectu habetis. Nos mehercle honorat cui Universitatis nostrae in libertatem honorificam libenter procedere placuerit. Virum igitur tam festivum, tam disertum, tam constantem, simul litterarum reipublicae ornamentum, simul patriae antiquae decus et columen, rogo ut plausibus inter subsellia iterum iterumque geminatis benignissime salutetis.

made manifest, in this way *Charter 77* became part of the history of modern Europe.

But before the votes of his fellow citizens could elevate Dr. Havel to the Presidency, he had to endure continual harassment by the police, followed by close confinement under house arrest, and then a prison sentence. His thoughts in these long years, his dreams, his sufferings, all these he described in an eloquent series of letters to his dear wife Olga, letters that have appeared in book form. In this volume you may see into the heart of a man of outstanding compassion and integrity. When asked by a reporter about any feelings of hatred towards his captors, he replied: 'I don't know how to hate, and that pleases me. If for no other reason, then because hatred clouds the vision and makes it difficult to seek the truth'.² He has indeed sought the truth, and the truth has made him and his country free.

Between December 1989 and July 1992, as elected President of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic, he helped to guide the liberated and nascent state towards a new found maturity, and in 1993, after Slovakia had decided to withdraw from the federation, he was again elected as first President of the Czech Republic. President Havel is one of the most notable 'prisoners of conscience' of our generation, and does us much honour in his ready acceptance of the honorary freedom of our University. This man of wit, eloquence, and constancy is at once a bright star in the republic of letters, and the glory and bulwark of his ancient nation, and I ask you to welcome him with a generous and prolonged burst of applause.

² *Open Letters* (1991), p.244.

DOCTOR IN SANCTA THEOLOGIA

Agmen claudit vir si quis alius in theologia dogmatica diu et perite versatus, qui vi ingenii nobilis et copiosi instigatus disciplinam suam venerabilem ita tractavit ut librorum serie longa et eximia verba bonae spei et solacii ad saeculum nostrum curis admodum sollicitatum enuntiaverit. Qua par est observantia ad vos duco Ecclesiae docentis doctorem fama inter gentes valde conspicuum, JOHANNEM KUNG, apud Tubingenenses theologiae ecumenicae professorem insignem, ibique Instituti quoque ad investigationes ecumenicas promovendas constituti rectorem approbatum. Re vera gentes ubique vocem eius audiverunt, et verba in ultimas terrae partes emissa sunt. Si quis vestrum, Academici, aderat ei aliquot ante annis apud nos in coetu frequentissimo disserenti, in memoria certe tenebit cum argumenti amplitudinem tum rationis convenientiam. Ad rem contionatur, religionis placita sic mentis acie probans ut fundamentis firmioribus stabiliantur. Animi vigore indefesso incitatus ceterorum causas ad imum perscrutatur ut quicquid religionis verae ipse conspexerit intra terminos quam amplissimos in medium proferatur. Cum de vita sempiterna inquirat, artibus theologicis posthabitis, ad ea magis vult spectare quae poetae ominati sunt. Rerum experientia fretus lectores hortatur ut in fidem Dei se committant, magno enim in discrimine versamur, atque ἀξιον κινδυνεύσαι οἰομένῳ οὕτως ἔχειν, ut verba Platonis mihi assumam.¹ Nonne partem egit scribae boni in Sancta Scriptura laudati, qui ‘similis homini patrifamilias perfert de thesauro suo nova et vetera’?² Non sine impedimento, non sine obstaculis, in vineto laboravit, sed veritatis auditor a veritate emancipatus est. Theologus acutus et accuratus, sed imprimis vir humanissimus, multum tribuit Concilio Vaticano Secundo, multum a Concilio accepit, cui animus vere ecumenicus in venis medullisque infixus semper insederit. Honoribus permultis iam cumulatus honoris coronam a nobis quoque hodie accepturus est, in Academia quae doctrina et pietate ex origine insignita est, atque ad res divinas ratione nova investigandas et fovendas nuper sese erexit. Evangelii prophetem in conspectu habetis fortitudine, sapientia, magnanimitate praecipue dotatum. Vos eum plausibus maximis excipere rogo festinetis.

¹ Plato, *Phaedo*, 114d.

² St Matthew, 13, 52.

DOCTOR IN THEOLOGY7th July 1995

Our last candidate has had a long and professionally brilliant career in the study and teaching of dogmatic theology, and the noble scope of his mind and imagination has inspired him to work in this old and respected discipline in such a way that in an outstanding series of publications he has succeeded in proclaiming a message of hope and renewal to an angst-ridden generation. With all due respect I present a world-famous doctor of the teaching Church, HANS KUNG, distinguished Professor of Ecumenical Theology and esteemed Director of the Institute for Ecumenical Research at the University of Tübingen. His voice has indeed been heard in all the world, and his words have gone out unto the ends of the earth. If any of you heard him lecturing here to packed audiences some years ago, you will, I am sure, remember the breadth of his treatment and the appositeness of his reasoning. He speaks to the point, testing religious dogma with intellectual rigour in order to establish it on ever firmer foundations. With mental energy he pursues each rival argument to its end, seeking ever broader and more inclusive horizons in which to locate his vision of religious truth. In his discussion of eternal life he tends to pay more heed to the intuitions of poetry than to the contents of theological textbooks. Above all, on the basis of human experience, he urges his readers to a 'venturesome trust in God', for much is at stake, and (to borrow a phrase from Plato) 'the risk of committal is worth taking'. Has he not fulfilled the role of the good scribe praised in Holy Writ as being 'like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old'? Not without let and hindrance has he laboured in the vineyard, but he has listened to the truth and the truth has made him free. An exact and acute theologian, but above all a man of the widest human sympathy, he gave much to, and received much from, the Second Vatican Council, and the spirit of ecumenism has been the life-blood of his work. Already the recipient of numerous academic honours, he comes today to receive an accolade from our University, a University which from its foundation has been distinguished for learning and piety, and which has recently roused itself to prosecute and cherish the study of theology on a new basis. You see before you a herald of the Gospel endowed with exceptional courage, insight and magnanimity. Do not hesitate to welcome him with your loudest applause.

DOCTOR IN UTROQUE JURE

En heros celebrandus adest et fortis et insons,
Pectore qui indomito, spe meliore viget!

Qua par est observantia, Academici, ad vos nunc duco virum inter omnes qui nostra aetate de iuribus humanis vindicandis contenderunt facile principem, PRAEHONORABILEM NELSON MANDELA, Reipublicae Africae Meridionalis antea Praesidem admodum venerabilem. E gente primaria apud Tembuenses ortus, atque in terra viridi et amoena ultra flumen Keianum nutritus, puero David consimilis patris oves custodiebat, nec sciebat fore ut ad populos suos regendos vocaretur. Patris post mortem intempestivam patronus regius illum in domum magnam ascivit, ubi simul gubernandi rudimentis imbutus est, simul discipulus apud Wesleianos in moribus et doctrina feliciter procesit. Tunc iuvenis in urbis Johannis vicos suburbanos translatus est, quo in loco iter longum et heroicum inivit libertatis ad finem pertinaciter directum. Illic tirocinium forense explevit; illic iurisconsultus cum socio et amico caro Olivero Tambo diu et impense pro patriae incolis subiectis laboravit; illic cum comitibus fidis inter cohortes Congressus Africani Nationalis iuvenum sodalitatem condidit, quo facto in Congressu iuventutis spiritu renato eminere mox incepit. Hastam illam incudit qua acrius contra vim rectorum certatum est. Si vero, ut verbis eius utar, certamen ei vita tota fuit, ipse certe, si quis alius, certamini impetum vitale addidit. Illi in carcere diro multos per annos custodito pugilis Chosani animus obstinatus nunquam defuit, nunquam hortulani exspectatio bona illum deseruit. Tyranni vultui gravius instanti pugnum fortius opposuit, et cum demum vox mitior audita est, concordiae manum inimicis ultro obtulit. Haud raro soli in vias novas illi progrediendum erat, sed cum orationis eloquentia tum consilii prudentia sodalibus cursum semper expedit, donec multa post discrimina, quod e puero de patria emancipata somniabat, id die Aprili sex ante annis evenit, cum Africae Meridionalis senatus omnium civium suffragiis electus est. In conspectu habetis virum constantia eximia, magnanimitate singulari dotatum, quem fas est mihi more antiquo 'patrem patriae' nuncupare. Dum nomen valde honorabile in Album nostrum inscribit, vos illum, Academici, plausibus per subsellia iterum iterumque geminatis salutate.

Ring in the valiant man and free, the larger heart, the kindlier hand.¹

With all due respect I now present to you the most outstanding champion of human rights from our past century, HIS EXCELLENCY NELSON MANDELA, the universally esteemed former President of the Republic of South Africa. A member of one of the ruling families of Thembuland, his youth was spent in the green and pleasant realm of the Transkei, where, like the boy David, he used to guard his father's sheep, all unaware that one day he would be called to be the shepherd of his people. After the untimely death of his father, the Regent as his guardian summoned him to the great house, where his initiation into the art of ruling went hand in hand with an excellent formal education in Methodist schools. A sudden change of scene then brought him as a young man to the native townships around Johannesburg, the milieu where his long, heroic, and unwavering walk to freedom began. There he completed his legal training; there as a lawyer, in partnership with his close friend Oliver Tambo, he worked long and arduous hours with the oppressed members of his nation as his clients; there with loyal comrades he founded a Youth League within the ranks of the African National Congress, and soon emerged as a leading figure in a rejuvenated institution. He forged the spear that sharpened the struggle against institutionalised violence. If, to quote his own words, the struggle was his life, assuredly he, if anyone, added vital impetus to the struggle. During the long harsh term of his imprisonment he never lowered the stubborn guard of the Xhosa boxer, neither did the good hope of the gardener fail him. In the face of heavier oppression he clenched his fist the firmer, and when at last a milder voice was heard, he was quick to hold out the hand of reconciliation. He has known the loneliness of the leader, but he never failed to smooth the way forward for his followers by the eloquence of his words and the wisdom of his advice, until finally, after many a crisis, his boyhood dream of freedom for his country was realised on that April day six years ago when a parliament for South Africa was elected by the votes of all its citizens. You see before you a man of exceptional tenacity and exemplary magnanimity whom I think it appropriate to salute in the old Roman fashion as 'father of his country'. As he inscribes his name on our Roll of Honour, see to it that the thunder of your applause re-echoes through this Hall.

¹ Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, preceded by the 'millennial' line: 'Ring in the thousand years of peace'.