

Remarks upon the Opening of the Academic Year 2010 by Dr. Venko Andonovski

University American College Skopje Academic Year Inauguration, Aleksandar Palace, Skopje, 22 September 2010

Good evening to all, to the complete staff of UACS, starting from the Provost, then to the pro-rectors. Usually when you say Provost you should say the name too, but I am not doing that because we are friends. That is Professor Marjan Bojadziev.

Good evening to my colleagues, deans, professors and most importantly, those to whom this night belongs, for they are our future citizens. To be a citizen of this country doesn't just mean to pay your electricity and water bills. To be a citizen of this country doesn't just mean to think about satisfying the personal material need. To be a citizen of this country doesn't just mean to obediently fulfill orders. To be a citizen of this country means to be an educated human being. I congratulate these people here and thank you for the invitation. I congratulate their professors who have been with them along the way. I had the privilege to be part of the team of those who gave lectures and I can say that with UACS, the Macedonian educational environment has gained in speed. Every speed in an environment where everything stands still means progress. I congratulate UACS for this advancement.

Now it is expected from me to say something wise and to send a message to these people. When we talked to your Provost, in was to let you know what comes next in life. First, I'll tell you what is next: You, same as me, will be teachers, and will see how other people get diplomas, and complain just like I did, because there were none left for me here tonight. That is the first thing I have to say to you. The second thing that awaits you is that finally, society will oppose you or you will oppose it. Or, if you prefer, you won't feel the family closeness when you uncover your bedcover. Starting from today, society has come to your bedcover. When you lift your bedcover, society will be in your dark room. Society will be here waiting for you to give something and not to take. Knowing the quality of the staff who taught you, I'm deeply convinced that they taught you that whatever you do, you should give to society, and not to take. We have had enough from those who are just taking. What especially makes me happy about this whole ceremony is that these people that sit on my both sides, have a calm look, and it is known that the peace comes only then when one knows. When one is ignorant he is upset and usually attacks. I am sure that these people sitting here will know that when they lift up the bedcover and face society, they will know how to offer it knowledge in a creative way. Our society is anorexic in terms of knowledge. We, no matter how much we brag or do analytical statistics, don't know anything. We are drained from not knowing. We need people with knowledge, and I truly believe, and with my short experience with these students here, I know that these people know and can help our society.

Just few more moments, I don't want my speech to be understood, especially not from these young people here, for which roses will be awaiting in life from now on. A man is not born in gynecological-obstetric institution nor is he born in a hospital; he is born in his future. We are in a period when our country can hardly handle that future. But the point is that the future does not exist until you start creating it. These people need to create their future starting from their first idea or their first word. They need to begin brainstorming, now that they have received their diplomas. With the act of getting their diplomas they have become something. For every one of them stands the verb "is something". But no one is something until it begins to do something that he is qualified to do. That



means that the verb “is” and the verb “do” are in a strong connection. These people will have to do, to justify their diplomas and in that way they will create their future. That is my third message. I have only one or two more. These people will face another problem. We all know that in our lives, that two verbs have a judgmental role: one is the verb “want” and the other is the verb “must”. We all want certain things, these people wanted something, and that thing came true tonight and that is the biggest holiday you can imagine. Starting from tomorrow, when they lift up their bedcover and enter society, they will have to do something. But, the biggest art of life, and I tell you this from my modest life experience because I plan to live long, is to love what you have to do. I am certain that these people will do this with no problems. Just one more message: You, who graduated today, who became something, yours is the verbs “is”. From tomorrow, you will begin to do something. Do not complain that society is not giving you anything, for you will eventually take from it. However, you will come into a situation where you will have to understand that the belief that “our education is over” is false. You are just beginning to learn. You will learn your entire life and by learning you will gain as a student. I am begging you, as your colleague and from my personal experience, do not let your students, the ones you will teach (no matter if you are a teacher as a profession), to be weaker than you. The only sense in being a good teacher is that the teacher leaves better students than himself. That is what your professors did, so you should do the same thing and there will be no problem.

Thank you.

Dr. Venko Andonovski