SPEECH FOR OXFORD, NOVEMBER 13th, 1948

It is with a feeling of great humility that I accept the great honor that Oxford University has conferred upon me today. I recognize the fact that the ties created during the last World war, between the United States and Great Britain were built in large part through the cooperation of my husband and your great war leader, Mr. Winston Churchill.

I realize full well the appreciation that the British people have for the role which my husband played in bringing the United States to a full realization of Great Britain's courageous stand alone against the onslaught of nazism and fascism. My husband's sympathy helped to strengthen the British people in their darkest hours, and in return the gratitude of your great
your great nation is constantly expressed.

In conferring this honor on me,
you are through me, also expressing your
appreciation to the people of the whole United
States. I am sure that every generous gesture
of this kind adds a strength to the bond which
draws our two countries together. We may differ
on many questions, but in our basic beliefs
and loyalties, we always find in times of trouble
a common meeting ground.

Since the war, the British people have
shown a staunchness in helping their country
to recover from the losses of war that should
bring them the respect of the people of all
the nations of the world. I hope that with
the aid that is now coming to Europe through
the Marshall Plan, it will before too long, be
possible for Great Britain to arrive at a

position
position where her people can return to a
greater ease of living, and to higher standards
for all people as a whole even than was possible
in the past.

All of us have learned, from the
lessons of the war, and the even harder lessons
which we are now facing, what are the values
that we feel we must live by in the future.

For the United States and Great Britain I think
it is clear that the people want peace with
all their hearts, but they also want freedom.

That combination of peace and freedom is difficult
to achieve in some parts of the world. That is
because of the fact that we are still beset with
serious difficulties in world cooperation.

We haven't yet found a way whereby the great
nation which shuts her people away from the
rest of the world and whose government acts
through decrees instead of through the democratic
processes familiar to us, can be brought to
cooperation with other parts of the world.
Where people move freely; are allowed to make
their own observations and decisions and
have some control over their own government
and its actions when they choose to exercise it,
it is difficult not to be suspicious of areas
which are closed, and naturally the governments
of these nations must be fearful of free contacts
with other nations.

This is really the major problem that
our people are facing at this time and the solution
of it spells for the future peace - or chaos in the
world. Solidarity between our two nations,
and other
and other states bordering the Atlantic, will,
we hope, spell greater economic security,
better living conditions for the people of our
nations and therefore a gradual demonstration
that in freedom, the democracies can develop and
bring about through the action of the people
themselves, the same ends which the Soviet states
feel can only be brought about through the wisdom
of a few people at the top level and the control
of the life of their people. This is a demonstration
of two opposing ways of achieving what we believe
are the objectives of all nations. Since as
individuals we must each of us work in our own
small sphere to bring our ideals and those of
our nation to practical reality, I hope you in this
great university will feel that in conferring this
degree upon me you have made me more conscious of the need to strive with such small gifts as have been granted me, to achieve these great ends.

Every recognition of a woman is in a way a recognition given to all women and so I thank you today for your recognition of women and of their contribution to the new world which is slowly and painfully evolving. Women the world over want peace. They want better conditions and greater security for the future generations and every opportunity given them for greater participation in responsible fields of work, means I believe, hope for the eventual achievement of the ends which not only women but all humanity desires.