



Croatia Commencement: Zagreb School of Economic and Management

September 8, 2006

I am honored to be with you and to celebrate this great day with ZSEM. This is a day of accomplishment and anticipation of a great future for our graduates and Croatia.

Greetings and congratulations to the dean and other guests

Congratulations to the graduates, their families, and friends.

John Carroll University, where I serve as president, is one of 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States. You may know that this year, 2006, is a Jubilee year for the Society of Jesus. It marks the 450th anniversary of the death of Ignatius of Loyola (in 1556) and the 500th anniversary of the births of two other seminal figures in the Society, Francis Xavier and Peter Faber (in 1506).

In celebration of these three founding members of the Society, who met in Paris in 1529, Jesuit institutions throughout the world have organized a variety of international events and pilgrimages this year that exemplify the diverse ministries of the Society – education, music and the visual arts, theater, and missionary work to mention just some. John Carroll University, for example, planned and hosted a conference in Paris in June on the topic of “The Vocation of the Teacher in the Ignatian Tradition.” Participants included faculty, presidents and other senior administrators, and board members of most (24) of the Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States

Jesuits have a relationship with Croatia that goes back almost 300 years.

Rudjer Boskovic and Bartul Kasaic, for example:

- Boskovic --Dubrovnik in 1711-Milan in 1787--mathematician, astronomer, and philosopher.
- Kasaic , Bartul - Isle of Pag in 1575, and in Rome in 1650--writer, missionary, as well as "author" of the first? Croatian grammar.
- Currently a Jesuit Auxiliary bishop in Zagreb, Valentin Pozaic, SJ whom I meet in my visit last year and who then gave me a copy of his book, "Jesuit's among the Croats."

Croatia also has strong connections with Cleveland, Ohio, where John Carroll University is located. Ohio is a Midwestern state in the industrial and agricultural heartland of the United States. Cleveland is a port city on Lake Erie, one of the five Great Lakes that, collectively, contain 20% of the fresh water supply in the entire world. Fresh water -- for industrial processing, transportation of raw materials and finished goods, and recreation -- has been a critical resource in the region's economic development and quality of life for two centuries.

Cleveland is home to many immigrants from Eastern European nations -- Croatians, Hungarians, Slovaks, Czechs, Slovenians, Serbs, Romanians, Greeks, Ukrainians, and many other ethnic and nationality groups. Many of them came after the devastation of the Second World War and the expansion of the Communist bloc of nations. They came in search of freedom and in search of job opportunities, particularly in the steel, machine tool, automotive, and other durable goods industries.

There are approximately 20,000 persons of Croatian heritage living in the Cleveland area today, and 2.5 million persons of Croatian heritage living throughout the U.S. Just under five percent of the city is of Croatian decent. Croatian heritage is very much a part of building today's Cleveland.

Croatia's experience in being dominated by a foreign government power -- with the resulting economic stagnation, loss of freedom, and emigration of so many people -- brings to my mind the experience of another small European nation -- Ireland. Ireland's tragic experience was due to very different causes and very different circumstances, but it provides an instructive example nonetheless.

Ireland was ruled by a foreign power, England, for three centuries. The result for the Irish was physical deprivation, loss of freedom, and economic decline. Those conditions, coupled with the recurrent potato famines in the mid-19th century, drove many of the Irish to the United States, to England, and elsewhere in pursuit of employment and a better quality of life.

Now, contrast that dismal situation with what is going on in Ireland today. In the past few decades, Ireland has enjoyed an economic explosion. This is a result of independence after World War II, progressive economic and tax policies, and a highly educated labor force; Ireland has, in fact, the best educated labor force in Europe. Ireland today is referred to as "the Celtic Tiger." The economy is doing so well that some of those who left to seek jobs elsewhere in the '70's and '80's are returning. Bright, well educated, highly motivated people from other nationality groups are migrating to Ireland as well.

As perhaps another instructive lesson, you may know that most employment in the United States is created by entrepreneurs and by other small businesses. It is probable that the new businesses you create in Croatia will have the same effect -- you will create most of the new employment here.

Croatia has an opportunity to emulate the experience of the Irish, the entrepreneurs in America, and other successful economies around the globe. The new Croatia has freedom. With your leadership skills and professional capabilities now well developed, your task is to create conditions that will encourage Croatians to remain here and to contribute to the growth of the economy and the common good of society. You have been given the skills that you will need to succeed through the education that you have received. Your sustained commitment and diligent efforts are needed to create full employment and assure general well being in Croatia.

This is a new moment in the life of the world.

This summer I joined four thousand folks to hear Thomas Friedman talk about his book—*The World is Flat* and for us what is even more important—what does this mean for education. How can we train leaders for a new global economy that we are somewhat used to—but a global world!

There are eight characteristics that Friedman says are important for our future jobs:

- Great Collaborators
"Are those who have learned the power of teams and how to make them work and work better."
- Great Leverages
"Are those who do more and more with less"
- Great Synthesizers
"Are those who can make coherent and cohesive the multiple world views operative in our nationals and globally—knowledge, experience, language and priorities."
- Great Explainers
"Are those who help others to see the future opportunities and challenges."
- Great Localizers
"Are those who can engage in the global reality which a local connection."
- Great Adapters
"Are those with the ability to change--as change will happen more quickly and less predictability in our futures."
- Passionate People
"Are those who can change our views of the possible; and make it happen."

John Carroll and ZSEM are committed engaging that global reality in our vision because if we don't we have done you a disservice—you are not prepared for the future.

The future is more global and more competitive, but also can be less humane and even less hopeful for those who do not have their basic life needs met—unless we have engaged questions of leadership, power, justice, fairness and self-determination.

Part of what we celebrate today, in addition to your work, sacrifice, accomplishment, the support of your family and friends is the successful outcomes of your commitment and

self expression. All of you are here today because you make a commitment to learning and skill development. The skills you learned here will build a new Croatia. There is no point in building something new unless you can do better than the past. Can new possibilities be real for the future?

Congratulations again. Thank you for inviting me to share this milestone event for you, for ZSEM, and for Croatia.