

(Introductory trumpet music) The Angry Men, with Don Ecroyd. [Don Ecroyd] Great speeches arise to meet great issues. Angry men who care deeply speak out with firmness and certainty against the bumbling, the dishonesty, and the pettiness of those around them. Some of their words still speak to our time. [Dave Smith] "The last hopes of mankind rest with us. Let our age, therefore, be the age of improvement. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony." [Don Ecroyd] So spoke Daniel Webster at Bunker Hill. Some years later, Henry W. Grady spoke of- [John Walker] "The indissoluble union of American states and the imperishable brotherhood of the American people." [Don Ecroyd] And at the end of his first inaugural address, President Eisenhower said- [Tom Long] "We must be ready to dare all for our country, for history does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak or the timid." [Don Ecroyd] It's not an easy thing to build a feeling of a heritage. When the United States first began its existence as a nation, we need to remember that there were people in the group who were new citizens of this new country, who already had a long history of having been citizens of Virginia or of the Carolinas or of Pennsylvania or of New York. There were few real feelings of loyalty or of love for the United States itself during the first few years of our existence as a nation. After all, even the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 were basically wars against Great Britain rather than wars for something, certainly not wars for America in the minds of most men. Thanks to the split between the industrial north and the agricultural south, which was deepened by the institution of slavery, the building of a real national spirit was even more difficult. And then in 1820, after the famed Missouri Compromise, the slave and the free states were divided by a geographical line drawn through space by two surveyors named Mason and Dixon. When Jefferson heard this, 73 years old, retired to his home in Monticello, he wrote a letter to John Holmes in Maine, a casual acquaintance who had written him on the subject, and to Mr. Holmes he said, "this momentous question, like a fire bell in the night awakens and fills me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the union. It is hushed, perhaps, for the moment, but this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence. A geographical line coinciding with a marked principle, moral and political, once conceived and held up to the angry passions of men, will never be obliterated. And every new irritation will mark it deeper and deeper." The feeling that Jefferson had was one that was reflected by many who were thoughtful and concerned about the development of our country. And among them, among those who heard the fire bells in the night, was Daniel Webster, one of America's greatest orators of all time. Webster was a constitutional lawyer, a statesman senator, a secretary of state, and a patriot par excellence, almost alone of the great men of his day. Webster made the thesis of his life that strange mixture of love and of duty, which we call patriotism. Out of his deep feeling, he spoke again and again for his country and urged others to love her above the state, above themselves, above their region. Henry Cabot Lodge, in what is accounted by many historians to be the most accurate study of Webster's life, says of him, "he stands today as the preeminent champion and exponent of nationality. Here lies the debt which the American people owe to Webster, and here is his meaning and importance in his own time and to us today." It's interesting the way his early life prepared him for this role. As a child, he grew up in a family tavern, an inn by the side of a main stagecoach route that went from Boston to Albany, New York. And when the travelers stopped there in the evening, Daniel Webster was frequently stood on a small table and asked to recite the things which he had memorized. For even at this age, he had a copious memory. He knew by heart, by the time he reached young manhood, practically the whole of the Bible, most of Shakespeare, long quotations from the important English poets of the day, and practically all the words of the hymns of Watt. And these things again and again he used as allusions in his speeches. And to them later he added,

when he was studying the law, a complete knowledge of the Constitution and of many of the more important of our national documents. And thus as a child and as a young man studying to be a lawyer and as a student at Dartmouth College where he was the class orator and editor of the student paper, he was developing a respect for law and for learning and for fellow human beings and for his nation. In 1825 was the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill. Daniel Webster, as you might expect with his great love of his nation, was serving as chairman of a group that was trying to build a national monument atop Bunker Hill to remind the nation of the heroes who had fallen there in the early days of the Revolutionary War. The setting was an important one for us to consider as we think of the speech. Almost 100,000 people were said to have gathered, standing on the hillside, looking up to the place where the monument was to be. For at this occasion, the monument was not as you see it now, but was instead just having its cornerstone laid by the great French hero, Lafayette. Lafayette was an old man, almost fragile at this time, and in the group watching him, there were some 200 veterans of the Revolutionary War, including 40 who had fought at Bunker Hill itself, and all of these people, and Daniel Webster. Webster said far more than the occasion might have called for in the sense of prepared words or ideas, for here was an opportunity for him to use the chief drive of his very being, the drive of patriotic fervor. He was a man of great dignity, five feet, ten inches tall, weighed something over 200 pounds, had a massive organ-like voice. It is said that he began the speech rather slowly and quietly, but that toward the end, his tones began to soar. And even though his delivery was never flowery or flamboyant, there was great power in what he said. In a recent book, Houston Peterson, who is one of our best commentators on public speaking today, said of Daniel Webster, "if Webster had died at 48 instead of 70, he would stand clearly with the supreme Americans. Looking back at him now, we're apt to see him as the fallen idol who defended the fugitive slave law of 1850, or as the valuable tool of New England financial interests, as a great man with small ambition, as the disappointed Emerson once called him. But if we see him thus, we forget that mighty decade from 1820 to 1830 when he was a kind of a homer, molding the spirit of a nation with speeches at Plymouth, at Bunker Hill, at Faneuil Hall, on the floor of the Senate, speeches which only Lincolns were to replace many years later" [Dave Smith] "Those who established our liberty and our government are daily dropping from among us. The great trust now descends to new hands, let us apply ourselves to that which is presented to us as our appropriate object. Let our age be the age of improvement. In a day of peace, let us advance the arts of peace and the works of peace. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony. In pursuing the great objects which our condition points out to us, let us act under a subtle conviction and an habitual feeling that these 24 states are one country. Let our conceptions be enlarged to the circle of our duties. Let us extend our ideas over the whole of the vast field in which we are called to act. Let our object be our country, our whole country, and nothing but our country. By the blessing of God, may that country itself become a vast and splendid monument, not of oppression and terror, but of wisdom, of peace and of liberty, upon which the world may gaze with admiration forever." [Don Ecroyd] There were many, however, who did not catch the vision as Webster did. They did not see the importance of building in time of peace and of looking to a greatness of a nation as a whole, nor did they see the importance of 24 states forming a single union and operating as a single unit. The fire bells in the night rang out strongly in the 1860s, and that line which Jefferson had talked of as being drawn in both geography and principle was bathed in bitterness and in blood. After the Civil War, for 30 years,

politicians waved the bloody shirt, stirring up the bitter hatreds of the Civil War period. The Republicans in the North urged the Republicans to support the party of the northern side in the war, and the Democrats in the South urged the Southerners to support the party of the South. It was not allowed to die. There were, however, those who did heed the words of Webster and the words of Lincoln's second inaugural, and strove to bind up the nation's wounds with malice toward none, as God gave them to see the right. And among these was Henry W. Grady, editor of the Atlanta Constitution. Grady was a man who cared for his country with an almost passionate fierceness, a fierceness that led him to speak out again and again in her behalf. In the South, he urged enthusiasm for the new industrialism, and in the North, he proclaimed this new industrialism as the hallmark of the South. As with Webster, whose theme was our country, our whole country, and nothing but our country, Grady urged the men and women of America to forget their differences and to take pride in their common past and to strive to improve their common future. His words were not popular words in many quarters, both South and North. Born in Athens, Georgia in 1850, he entered school at the age of nine, but had only gone two years when the Civil War interrupted his education. After the war, when the University of Georgia in his hometown was once again open, he was permitted to enter as a sophomore, even though he was only 15. He graduated and went on to the University of Virginia for a year of work. And he studied while both at Georgia and at Virginia, the arts of journalism and of oratory, for these were to be the place in which he makes his career. It is interesting how interested he was in oratory. He let two papers fail, one that he owned first in Rome, Georgia, and then a second one in Atlanta, because he became so excited about political campaigning and went out to give so many speeches that the quality of the editorial work on the paper suffered. And ultimately, the subscribers stopped buying and the advertisers stopped advertising. But after he bought into the Atlanta Journal, which was a big enough operation that he could indulge his passion for oratory and still be a good journalist, his life as a journalist and a speaker was uniquely successful. He spoke in what is referred to by his contemporaries as the oratorical manner. And if a writer of the 1880s and 1890s says he was oratorical, he truly must have been. Of course, he had a slight southern accent. We know that he had an easy, graceful manner of gesturing, and that ordinarily he began the speech in a very conversational way, but was capable of rising to a soaring climax. His secretary says that he prepared careful manuscripts, but that he made it a rule never to take them with him when he went into a speaking situation. And his lifelong friend, Judge W.T. Turnbull of Rome, Georgia, wrote, "in the delivery of a speech, Grady always tried to get what he called the swing of it. He said that whenever he arose to address an audience, he felt the same sensation he had felt as a child trying to jump in a swing, that if he could succeed in moving off easily and gracefully, gradually increasing in length and sweep the back and forth, as he always called it, then he would be secure. And he said he knew that these were the warning symptoms of a real good speech." Grady was the first Southerner ever to be invited to address the New England Society of New York. At the time he was invited to give this speech called, the New South, the one that catapulted him into national fame and made of him a figure of importance in American history, he was only 36 years old and virtually unknown outside of his own state. We're not real sure why he was invited to give the talk. We know that he was the first Southerner in 85 years to be given the honor, and there were certainly other Southerners whose fame was greater than his. The membership of the New England Society included J. Pierpont Morgan, Russell Sage, Seth Thomas, Elihu Root, and many others. And it seems strange that they would have selected this unknown young man to come and speak in their august gathering. The New England Society customarily held one meeting a year, to which they invited

five or six orators, each one spoke in turn for 10 to 20 minutes. The first speaker of the evening was De Witt Talmadge, the famous divine of his day, who spoke in moving terms about the return of the federal trooper to his home, victorious at the end of the war between the states. When he finished, there was five solid minutes of applause. The second speaker was General Sherman, who opened his talk by saying, "I know that the Civil War is next to the hearts of most of you" and proceeded to tell the details of his famous march to the sea and the burning of Atlanta and when he finished those who were there stood on their seats and sang that rousing song that had been sung by the federal troopers around their campfires marching through Georgia and the third speaker was Henry W. Grady, can't you imagine how he must have felt. Can't you think of what he must have been like at this moment? The tensions that must have been his and the anxieties. He says of himself, "Every nerve in my body was strung as tight as a fiddle string and all were tingling. I knew that I had a message for that assembly and as soon as I opened my mouth, it came rushing out." He began with a forceful statement of his purpose, not in his own words, but in the words of somebody else that he knew would be immediately acceptable to those who were there. And then, almost abruptly, he broke off for a light personal comment to gain goodwill for himself. [John Walker] "There was a South of slavery and secession. That South is dead. There is a South of union and freedom. That South, thank God, is living, breathing, growing every hour. These words, delivered from the immortal lips of Benjamin H. Hill at Tammany Hall in 1866. True then and truer now, I shall make my text tonight. Mr. President and gentlemen, let me express to you my appreciation of the kindness by which I am permitted to address you. I make this abrupt acknowledgement advisedly, for I feel that if when I raise my provincial voice in this ancient and august presence, I could find courage for no more than the opening sentence. It would be well if in that sentence I had met in a rough sense my obligation as a guest and had perished, so to speak, with courtesy on my lips and grace in my heart." [Don Ecroyd] But levity was not Henry Grady's purpose. His deep concern was one of national patriotism, and his voice rose to a moving climax as he concluded his oration. [John Walker] "In my native town of Athens is a monument that crowns its central hills, a plain white shaft. Deep cut into its shining side is a name dear to me above the names of men, that of a brave and simple man who died in brave and simple faith. Not for all the glories of New England from Plymouth Rock all the way would I exchange the heritage he left me in his soldiers death to the foot of that shaft I shall send my children's children to reverence him who ennoble their name with his heroic blood but sir speaking from the shadow of that memory which I honor as I do nothing else on earth, I say that the cause in which he suffered and for which he gave his life was adjudged by higher and fuller wisdom than his or mine, and I'm glad that the omniscient God held the balance of battle in his almighty hand, and that human slavery was swept forever from American soil, the American Union saved from the wreck of war. This message, Mr. President, comes to you from consecrated ground. Every foot of the soil about Atlanta, the city in which I live, is sacred as a battleground of the Republic. Every hill that invests it is hallowed to you by the blood of your brothers who died for your victory, and doubly hallowed to us by the blood of those who died hopeless but undaunted in defeat. sacred soil to all of us, rich with memories that make us purer and stronger and better, silent but staunch witnesses in its red desolation of the matchless valor of American hearts and the deathless glory of American arms, speaking an eloquent witness in its white peace and prosperity to the indissoluble union of American states and the imperishable brotherhood of the American people." [Don Ecroyd] The feeling of frustration and anger that resulted in Webster's message to his unheeding day and the urgency of the plea of Grady are echoed in the motivation of President Dwight D. Eisenhower's first

inaugural, although perhaps not echoed in his plain and unvarnished delivery. Inaugural addresses as a group defy definition. There are among them a few that are truly great, perhaps here we should include Lincoln's second inaugural with its famous conclusion, perhaps the second inaugural of Woodrow Wilson, and probably the first of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. There are a few that were tremendously important to the course of our history, both as a nation and as the world in a whole. For instance, the inaugural speech of Harry Truman, in which he outlined his famed point four. But most of them are simply ceremonial speeches of reasonably effective delivery. Many of them do not have as yet any particularly assigned position in history. It is my personal feeling that among those that were- that will be considered great, is the first inaugural of Dwight Eisenhower. The first part of the speech, perhaps not, but when he comes to the conclusion, he moves into those important and abiding simple truths which motivate an honest man of deep sincerity. And as we listen to what he had to say, and as we hear the reader give us his words in a few moments, we will be motivated and we will feel deeply that what he said was of importance to all time. Eisenhower's own personality is at once his biggest oratorical asset and his biggest oratorical liability. This quality of sincerity comes through. We feel it and respond to it. And yet at the same time, there is a sort of a flat plainness about his Kansas voice that is almost as dull and as uninteresting as his prairies from which he comes. There's a provincial quality to the speech that makes him say truth instead of truth and other words that stick out as not being customarily the way we say these things. And then, too, the labor of his preparation shows through, and he tends to put emphasis upon the obvious and the homely virtues such as the family, the church, and the nation. His lifelong friend and principal biographer, Kevin McCann, writing in a special article for the Quarterly Journal of Speech immediately after the first campaign, says, "Because Eisenhower deals in simple ideas, platitudes to a hostile critic, and eternal truths to one who is friendly, his language is a composite of the very general and the very specific. He talks of stove lids, of guns in the kidney, of cracker barrels and tractors and pitchforks. At the same time, he is more concerned with words like opportunity, duty, obligation, privilege, rights, words that in this day and time mean a thousand different things to a thousand different people. The down-to-earth simile and metaphor and phrase, however, tie the universal idea gone fuzzy from too much talk about it into the day-to-day life of his listeners." [Tom Long] "We must be ready to dare all for our country, for history does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak or the timid. We must acquire proficiency in defense and display stamina in purpose. We must be willing, individually and as a nation to accept whatever sacrifices may be required of us. A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both. So each citizen plays an indispensable role. The productivity of our heads, our hands, and our hearts is the source of all the strength we can command for both the enrichment of our lives and the winning of peace. No person no home no community can be beyond the reach of this call. We are summoned to act in wisdom and in conscience to work with industry to teach with persuasion to preach with conviction to weigh our every deed with care and with compassion. For this truth must be clear to us. Whatever America hopes to bring to pass in the world must first come to pass in the heart of America. The peace we seek then is nothing less than the practice and the fulfillment of our whole faith among ourselves and in our dealings with others. It signifies more than the stilling of guns, easing the sorrow of war, more than an escape from death, it is a way of life, more than a haven for the weary, it is a hope for the brave this is the hope that beckons us onward in this century of trial, this is the work that awaits us all to be done with bravery, with charity, and with prayer to almighty God." [Don Ecroyd] We need to hear words like these our nation cannot be sustained unless it has the heart level support

of all of us. Unfortunately, we are not encouraged by our culture today to feel anything deeply, and the articulate patriot has become almost as suspect in our time as has the articulate subversive. Everett Lee Hunt of Swarthmore College once said, "it is a great thing in this day and age to be able to have an opinion", and that is certainly true when you're thinking of an opinion about your nation and the importance of that nation and of belief in it, and support for it. Webster faced men who had to be taught to care for their nation because it was new to them, and they didn't know it yet or understand it or respect it. Grady spoke to men who had to be taught that their own selfish interests had to be submerged in the interest of the group. Eisenhower faced men who were not ignorant of what was necessary, but cynical about it, skeptical rather than selfish. We have heard the ideas that he expressed, it is true, and in some ways they sound trite, and yet their very triteness tells us of the great importance that is involved in saying these things again and again. These men spoke from anger, indignation, if you prefer, or even from dedication. And if you will, next week, join us. We will hear some people who spoke out of the same feelings for the brotherhood of nations in the world. Wilson, an idealistic dreamer. Franklin D. Roosevelt, a practical dreamer. and Winston Churchill a practical realist. And as we talk together, I hope that we can perhaps consider what the course of history might have been if we could have had our realists first and our dreamers last instead of the other way around. And so, good night. [Narrator] The readers this evening, all members of the speech faculty, were Dave Smith reading Webster, John Walker reading Grady, Tom Long reading Eisenhower, your host Don Ecroyd, assistant professor of speech. This program is a presentation of the College of Communication Arts, directed by Jack Caldwell and produced by Jean Ackermann. Next week, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Winston Churchill on The Angry Men. This is Michigan State University Television.