



## Dean's Commencement Remarks June 12, 2010

Good morning. It is my great honor to welcome the graduating students of the Pardee RAND Graduate School, their parents, spouses, relatives and friends, members of the faculty and student body, honorees, alumni, and all members of the Graduate School and RAND community. I would like to give special recognition to those who came before us and had the vision to establish the Pardee RAND Graduate School forty years ago. We are most fortunate to have two of these visionary leaders with us here today – Harry Rowen, President of RAND when this idea was hatched, and Charles Wolf, our founding dean. Harry and Charles, please stand so that we might recognize you and all that you did to lead the way.

Neither Bob Klitgaard, who followed Charles, nor John Graham, our third dean, could be with us today but each sends their regards and good wishes to our graduates and our community during this 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary commencement. Particular recognition goes to the members of our Board of Governors who have joined us this fine morning and a sincere thank you to Fred Pardee, whose support continues to make a difference to every one of our students.

We are here today, celebrating forty years of excellence and the particular achievement of our new graduates, because each of us believes the world can be a better place and that our PRGS graduates are essential to making it so. We have each been called, or are now being called, to a life of service and leadership. By deciding to attend a school of public policy, our students have also declared that they are committed to taking on the challenges facing our nations and the world.

This morning, we recognize the achievement of the academy's highest credential – the degree of doctor of philosophy. The 35 new graduates we honor today, 22 of whom are here with us, have earned this degree from one of the most innovative programs in higher education. A unique program that combines rigorous cross-disciplinary education with demanding on-the-job training through RAND projects that address real-world policy questions and needs. This is real work. It is not made up as an academic exercise. And through it, our students quickly learn that the real world of [policy analysis and development] is far messier than the world presented in textbooks.

Each of these graduates is particularly qualified to tackle the world's most pressing problems: men and women from throughout the United States and across the globe who are not content to simply study these problems. Men and women who have committed to Be the Answer.

And, graduates, I believe each of you has also taken on the responsibility to lead – in your professional and personal lives, in your communities and in your companies, and from within and from outside of your governments. In each case shaping and leading the change that must occur. You will bring your exceptional intellect and training to bear on the challenges you've already begun to tackle in your dissertation research: responding to the effects of climate change and the oil disaster on the Gulf Coast, wrestling with the nature and future of our NATO alliance, developing public policies that encourage innovation and development in emerging and transitional economies, identifying the real value of new vehicle technologies in the face of rising energy demands, and working to improve the effectiveness of US public diplomacy in an age of ever increasing complexity. These critical issues are but the tip of the complex iceberg you will be facing in your careers. The leadership and service you are called to will not be easy. The brute reality, as written by Graham Allison, is that politics and governance are inherently controversial. Public service is not simply a noble calling. It is a combat sport. Your service will require integrity, persistence, understanding, courage, and vision. But, as evidenced by the diplomas you are about to receive, as graduates of the Pardee RAND Graduate School you have gained the knowledge and skills that are necessary – but not entirely sufficient. The last critical piece is the heart and commitment you brought into this program. And the strength of each of these will be tested and demonstrated throughout your careers.

I congratulate you for all you have accomplished. The entire PRGS community, as represented by those in attendance on this glorious day, eagerly awaits to see the difference you will be making. That will be your measure and the measure of this school.

I would now like to introduce the President and Chief Executive Officer of RAND, and the Pardee RAND Graduate School's long-time supporter, Jim Thomson.