

Chronological: Boston University Photonics Center Opening Celebration

Senator Daniel K. Inouye Papers
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**Boston University Photonics Center
Opening Celebration
Friday, June 13, 1997**

**Thank you Ted. Senator Kennedy,
Mayor Menino, President Westling,
Chancellor Silber, Dr. Fraser,
distinguished guests.**

**As Dr. Fraser has already pointed
out so eloquently, an investment in
photonics is an investment in the future
of our nation.**

● **The development of the photonics industry and the development of new photonic technologies are crucial to maintaining our competitive edge in today's worldwide economy.**

● **Not only does photonics play a role in a multitude of key industries, including telecommunications, medicine, electronics, manufacturing, and consumer products, it is also essential to the defense of our nation.**

Virtually every military system has key components based on photonics.

Let me give you some familiar examples:

-- most of you will remember the images from Desert Storm, images that were transported back from our smart munitions system;

--you also have seen the images of earth from space, images that we use to keep an eye on the world;

● --photonics is central to the night vision equipment which enables our soldiers to see in the dark;

--and next time you fly in a new airliner, take a peek into the cockpit.

● The colorful, easy-to-use displays make it easier for the pilot to fly the plane safely, and are even more important to our military pilots.

● This list is endless, and that is why photonics is a key defense technology, with nearly 200 products in development at the Department of Defense.

● And, despite this concentration, the Department of Defense will be a minor consumer of photonic products.

It is vital that we create a robust photonics industry in the United States.

● **Without it, we will lack the essential domestic sources of equipment which is vital to our national defense.**

This Photonics Center at Boston University will play a major role in developing the next generation of instrumentation that will help ensure our nation's defense. It will also pioneer a new way to utilize the resources of America's universities for the common good.

● I understand from speaking with Dr. Fraser earlier, that already, before the Center has even moved into this beautiful new building, several important new technologies have been developed by engineers working at the Center in collaboration with business partners: a detection system that operates in the ultraviolet and can detect heat-seeking missiles even against the bright background of the sun;

a device that detects contaminants in water that will ensure that the drinking water for our soldiers is safe; and, a polarizing detection system that can recognize ships at the horizon that might otherwise be masked by ocean surface glare.

And this is only the beginning. This Center at Boston University will continue to generate important new technologies and play a leadership role in assuring the safety of our nation.

It is truly a pleasure to be here today, at the dedication of this wonderful building, and this wonderful Center, and to look to the future with the knowledge that the Photonics Center and Boston University are creating a new paradigm, which will create the technologies that maintain the security of our nation and ensure that we move ahead as a world technology leader. Thank you very much.