

MEMORANDUM

file

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 6, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: DAVE GERGEN
FROM: RAY PRICE *Ray Price*
SUBJECT: Florida Tech Speech

Basically, I'm with Andrews on this one -- though the sweep of his memo suggests something that may be a bit ambitious for a single speech (top of the head, I find it difficult to figure how it could all be gotten in), I think he's on the right track, and that just another national defense pitch would be very much the wrong track.

To go to Florida Tech, of all places, and beat the national security drums again would run the risk of getting him laughed out of court -- or into court. It was appropriate on May 22 to point out the national security reasons for those actions he took that later got entangled in Watergate; it was appropriate to make a defense pitch on Armed Forces Day; but Florida Tech? It would be perceived -- and bitterly resented -- as further evidence, by those many disposed to find such evidence, that he's merely trying to wrap the flag around Watergate itself. It would be a disastrously wrong mistake.

He's got to show that he has other strings to his bow than national defense -- and I think John's got a good idea in terms of some of the other things that are happening and must happen in the years ahead -- addressing the graduates as inheritors of the future, and doing it not so much in a hortatory moralizing way as with the voice of a practical leader who sees the dimensions of the challenges, and also the dimensions -- and directions -- of the opportunities to meet and master those challenges. We're particularly going to need practical people like those Tech graduates to help do so.