

January 19, 1965

Dr. Palmer C. Pilcher, Dean, Academic Affairs

Adelaide R. Snyder, Director, University Relations

Return Tape - President Johnson's Speech

Attached is tape of President Johnson's speech.

RECEIVED

DATE

Mary Jo Kirk
Jan. 19, 1965

October 25, 1964

Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT AT THE
FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY DEDICATION
CEREMONIES, BOCA RATON, FLORIDA
OCTOBER 25, 1964

This is a proud occasion, President Williams: for you, for your colleagues, for this community, for Florida -- and for me.

It is an exciting thing to dedicate a new university.

The Bible tells us that "one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh." Well, we are opening a door to the future. Through it will pass generation after generation of those we care more about than we do ourselves.

This speaks well of America's character.

If I speak with special feeling about this, it is partly because I was a teacher once. I like to think I still am.

This feeling also goes back thirty years to my work with the National Youth Administration.

My job was to see that thousands of boys and girls were not denied an education because of financial hardship.

As the son of a tenant farmer, I almost did not get a college education.

I know how much difference a full education makes.

For me, it was the only valid passport out of poverty.

So it means a great deal to me, President Williams, to be here today.

I have looked into the plans you have made for Florida Atlantic University.

They are drawn from the experience of the past and from the specifications of the future.

You reflect in these plans what I see of the new future for education in America.

There are three elements in it.

First, it is a future of full equity in educational opportunity for all Americans.

Second, it is a future of new learning to meet new demands.

Third, it is a future of new methods which are necessary to teach much more to many more.

The great privilege and responsibility of the next President of the United States -- whoever he may be -- will be to participate in two great new prospects:

more

-- the conquest of outer space, and

-- the development of the inner man.

I believe every American boy and girl has a right to all the education he or she can make good use of -- and a responsibility to get it.

So far we have not recognized either this right or this responsibility.

Almost a million boys and girls drop out of school each year -- or they are pushed out by forces beyond their control.

The bitter truth is that these millions of untrained Americans face a jobless future.

What "drop-outs" used to do, is being done now by machines.

Jobs for high school graduates rose by 30% in the last ten years.

Jobs for those without a high school education dropped by 25%.

But even a high school diploma is not going to be enough.

Every year more than 100,000 high school graduates, with proved ability, do not go on to college because they cannot afford it.

More than 21 million youngsters now in grade school will end their education short of college -- unless we do something about it.

Science and technology have moved so swiftly that advanced education is no longer a luxury to be enjoyed by the children of fortunate families.

It is a necessity.

And it is the right of every American boy and girl.

To deny education to the children of poverty not only denies the most elementary democratic equality, it also perpetuates poverty as a national weakness.

And it deprives our democracy of well-trained citizens.

The children who entered the first grade this Fall will be the men and women who must cope with the challenges of the next century. They will have to decide

-- how to control the power which puts mankind one punch of a button away from extinction;

-- how to deal with a new geography in which world capitols are closer in time than county seats are in distance.

-- how to develop space as the open suburb of all the world's nations.

There is no protection against the ultimate disaster which an uneducated generation could bring upon itself.

And there is no limit to what a fully educated American public can do to enrich life in the next 50 years.

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In the last century, we decided in this country on a certain amount of free education for all children.

That decision put us at the forefront of civilization's advance in the world.

Then we devised -- again a century ago -- the Land Grant College Act, under which we created new centers of higher education throughout our land.

They became arsenals of knowledge which made possible America's revolution in agriculture and industry.

After the Second World War, we established the GI Bill of Rights. It provided college education for a wartime generation of young men who are now ascending to the leadership of our nation.

These are part of a proud history.

But they do not meet today's requirements, and they fall short of tomorrow's needs.

It is time for a new break-through -- for a new revolution in education in America.

During the past 20 years we have advanced far in our ability to kill each other.

If we can work miracles of destruction surely we can apply that same genius to educating our children.

Universal free education through high school -- the decision of a century ago -- no longer meets the test of the current times.

Our goal is to open the doors of higher education to all who can qualify.

The proud achievement of the GI Bill challenges us to programs of loans and scholarships enabling every young man and woman, who has the ability, to move beyond the high school level.

We must not rest until each child has the opportunity to get the kind of education he needs.

It isn't enough to try to entice or force children back into the same schools they dropped out of. They, too often, need a different kind of education and training.

There is no real disagreement in the country about this. We all want very much to do these things.

But we have stumbled in our efforts

-- because of differences regarding segregation;

-- because of difficulties about the relationship of public and private schools;

-- because of concern about local, state, and federal relationships.

These have been difficult problems, but they can be resolved. We can find ways of working cooperatively together to achieve our common purpose and we will.

more

Finally, we must turn the genius of science and technology to the service of education -- as we already have to the service of medicine.

The planners of Florida Atlantic University have placed special emphasis on bringing significant innovations to the methods of education.

By closed-circuit television instruction, programmed learning devices and automated library facilities, you are employing the tools of technology to improve the learning process.

Your special interest in oceanography recognizes the limitless future of this relatively new science.

Your development of a broad base of educational service to the entire community, and your involvement of neighboring junior colleges in your program, is in the fullest and newest university tradition.

You are moving far toward making the partnership between campus and country stronger -- so that the harvest of the future will be more fruitful for all our people.

A great challenge awaits you and your faculty.

You are starting new -- which gives you infinite opportunity. The road ahead will not be easy for a new university, but I urge you to remember the admonition: "Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due reason we shall reap."

The past is your teacher, but it holds you in no bondage.

I join you in dedicating Florida Atlantic University to the responsibility of meeting the future on its own terms -- and ours.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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corrected

copy given to Dean Sullivan
6-24-65

An Address

In Honor Of

The Dedication Of

Florida Atlantic University

Boca Raton, Florida

October 25, 1964

by

Lyndon Baines Johnson

President of the United States of America

There is something about this Florida air--clean and alive--that reminds me of Texas. There is much similarity between Texas and Florida that has nothing to do with oranges and grapefruits--but it has to do with people and climate. The sun is warm, the people are friendly, and the tomorrows are always bright with hope.

Thank you, President Williams, for your gracious welcome. Thank you, too, Dean Pilcher and Dean Miller. It's good for me to be with two of the great Senators of our time--your own Senior Senator and my long-time friend, Spessard Holland. Florida citizens have shown good sense and sound judgment in keeping this good man in the United States Senate where he can serve his state and his nation. And I'm so glad today to see my old colleague and my loyal friend for many years--your brilliant young Senator George Smathers. He has distinguished Florida by his record and his ability in the United States Senate. Thanks, Governor Bryant, for being ^{your} here with me too. I'm so proud to call you my friend, and I want to say here in Florida, how much all the people of the nation regard you as a good American. There are few Congressional delegations that have more competent representation than Florida--my friends Paul Rogers and Dante Fascell and Claude Pepper ^{and Dante Fascell} are in the forefront of all that is valuable for your state and your country. I was happy to have welcome me outstanding citizens of this great state--like Warren Goodrich and Tom Fleming and Mrs. Annette Baker, and I would like to pay tribute to the consistent leadership of the Florida State Cabinet. I commend the people of Florida for men like Tom Adams and Ed Larson, Ray Green, James Kynes and Tom Bailey, and Doyle Connor ^{O'Connor}.

This is a proud occasion, President Williams--for you, and for your colleagues, for this community, and for Florida, and for me. It is always exciting to dedicate a new university.

The Good Book tells us that "one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh." And if I speak with special feeling about this, it is partly because I was a teacher once. I like to think sometimes, that I still am.

This feeling also goes back thirty years to my work with the National Youth Administration. My job was to see that thousands of boys and girls were not denied an education because of the financial hardship of their families.

As a tenant farmer's son, I almost didn't get any college education, and I know how much difference a full education makes. For me, it was a passport out of poverty. Not long after I became President, I was having dinner one night with the Canadian Prime Minister and Secretary Rusk, and Dean Bundy and a number of other people, and they were talking about their college days. And finally I had to give the toast of the evening--and I said that it's such a privilege to be here this evening with three graduates of Harvard, two of Yale, four from Princeton, five Rhodes scholars and one graduate of the San Marcos State Teachers College.

So it means a great deal to me, President Williams, that you would ask me to come here today and give me this honor. Your plans for Florida Atlantic University are drawn from the experience of the past and they meet the specifications of the future. You reflect in these plans what I see of the new future for education in America, and particularly in our part of America. There are three elements in it:

First, it must be a new future of full equity in educational opportunity for all Americans.

Second, it must be a future of new learning to meet new demands.

Third, it must be a future of new methods which are necessary to teach much more to many more. And I wish that as we meet here on this Sabbath Day in all

the freedom and luxury and prosperity that is ours, we could count the blessings that are ours and somehow bring it home to each of us that we are no stronger than the weakest among us.

The great privilege and the responsibility of your next President of the United States--whoever he may be--will be to participate in two great new prospects. And I would hope that the modern, intelligent, imaginative, patriotic Floridian would furnish great leadership in these prospects.

The first prospect is the conquest of outer space, and I would remind you that we cannot be first on earth and second in space.

The second prospect is the development of the inner man.

I believe--I genuinely and sincerely believe--that every American boy and girl born under this Flag has an unqualified right to all the education that he or she can make good use of--and a responsibility to get it. Now if, in our local communities, we can make adequate provision for all the classrooms we need and we can man all those classrooms with adequately trained and properly paid teachers, well and good--because the best government is the government that's closest to the people. But if we find somehow in our economic operations that it's necessary to have some state support, then before we turn our back on realizing the ultimate potential of each individual, we must have the state join with us. And rather than to sit idly by and do a mediocre job or only do part of a job and ultimately wind up in the classification of 120 nations way down that list, it's necessary to draw upon the national government to support and to supplement and to do whatever may be required to see that every Florida, every Mississippi, every Alabama, every Texas, every New York boy and girl has all the training up here in this technological age that they can properly take because the competition in this century is great and is dangerous.

Now so far, we have not recognized in this country either this right of every boy and girl--all the little ones sitting at that fence--to all the education they can take or have we recognized this responsibility.

Almost a million boys and girls drop out of school each year--or they are pushed out by forces beyond their control. They face a jobless future. Every year, more than 100,000 school graduates with proven ability drop out and do not even go on to college for one reason--because they cannot afford it. How many world leaders, how many great admirals, how many imaginative generals, how many presidents and senators and congressmen and educators, and presidents of great universities we lose, we do not know.

But we do know that more than 21 million youngsters now in grade school, 21 million, one out of every nine, will end their education short of college--in a technological age when all the skill that they can acquire is not necessary just for them--but is essential to our survival. We do know that one out of nine are going down the drain unless you do something about it.

Science and technology have moved so swiftly that advanced education is no longer a luxury just to be enjoyed by the child of the banker or by the children of fortunate families. In this afternoon of our life as you sit here, I say to you that it is a necessity for every American boy, and I repeat and try to drum it in all of our heads, that it is the right of every American boy and girl.

To deny it to the children of poverty not only denies the most elementary democratic equality, it perpetuates poverty as a national weakness, and it denies our democracy and our great free enterprise system of government. It denies them the educated citizens that we must have if we are to lead and stay in the forefront

of the other 120 nations in the world. So what of it--we must therefore prepare the next generation for the great decisions that it will have to make.

When I was a boy, my grandfather moved away fifty years before I discovered America--from the prairies of Texas to the hills--^{in order} ~~so~~ that he could enjoy more freedom. He wanted to get away from the trains that passed through every night and disturbed him, and he went out into a new uncharted wilderness--and he chose well--because he settled Johnson City almost a hundred years ago and ^{there} a train ~~hasn't~~ come through there since.

But in the day and age now in which we live, it's not the question that the oldtimers said when they did bring the first train to the prairie where he was--they'll never get it started, and if they get it started, they'll never get it stopped.¹¹ Here in the state where we will send our first American to the moon, we must think in terms of the 21st century and the 22nd century and not the 18th century and the 19th century. And ask yourself tonight whether you want your grade school Florida boys, and you want your high school Florida girls competing with the ruthless Communists who have Ph.D's--and expect ^{ing} them to out-produce them and to out-think them and to out-lead them.

In the last century, we decided in this country in a very forward step on a certain amount of free education for all children.

Well, that decision, that decision more than any other, put America in the forefront of civilization's advance in the world. So I think it's time now, I think it's past time, for a new adventurous, imaginative, courageous breakthrough--for a new revolution in education in America.

I'm old enough to remember some of the voices of gloom and doom that opposed universal free education. I remember some of my state legislators talking about the loss of their freedom when we passed the compulsory attendance law in our state, but I would remind you that the freedom that we lost by educating our children is nothing to compare to the freedom we would lose if we didn't educate them.

Universal free education through high school--that was the decision of a century ago--but it no longer meets the test of the current times. The high school boys are not going to keep the Cape Kennedys ^{Canaveral} functioning in the year 2000. So our goal must be to open the doors of higher education to all who can possibly meet that standard and qualify.

^{He} Consider ~~the~~ proud achievement of the GI Bill. It doesn't seem to me that you ought to have to go into uniform and go to Boot Camp and spend two or three years in the Service in order for your government to have an interest in your education. And yet, there is not a member of Congress today that will look back on that GI Bill and say we made a mistake in making that great adventure and that great decision. The GI Bill challenges us to programs of loans and scholarships enabling every young man and woman, who has the ability, to move beyond the high school level.

So I think we just must not rest until each child, GI or no GI, boy or girl, rich or poor, has the opportunity to get the kind of education that he needs and that his country needs for him to have in order to defend it.

And I think it's a little wiser policy to do a little better planning--to take the boy out of the cotton field and train him in his normal high school years and his college years to develop himself rather than to issue an emergency order

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and jerk him off over night and send him on the train to a Boot Camp and then try to teach him how to fire a missile or handle a B-52 over Moscow without much notice.

So there is no real disagreement, I think, in this country about what I'm talking about. We all want very much to do these things. But we're not doing them. We've stumbled in our efforts. Why? Because of various differences--because of lack of initiative--becuase^{qu} of budget problems--becuase^{qu} of the differences^{that} we've had regarding segregation--because of the difficulties we've had about the relationship of public and private schools--because of the concern that I referred to a little earlier about local responsibility, and state responsibility, and federal relationships.

These have been difficult problems. They're still difficult. But if we're going to be the leader of the world, and if we're going to survive in this world, they must be worked out. And we can, and we will, and we must find ways of working cooperatively together to achieve our common purpose.

Now, finally, we must turn the genius of science and technology to the service of education as we have to the service of medicine and other disciplines.

The planners of the Florida Atlantic University have placed very special emphasis on bringing significant innovations to the methods of education. You're moving far toward making the partnership between campus and country stronger--so that the harvest of the future will be more fruitful for all our people^{of}.

President Williams, a great challenge awaits you and this faculty. You're starting here today new--which I think gives you infinite opportunity. The road ahead, as I must have implied, will not be easy for a new university; but I urge you to remember the admonition: "Let us not be weary in well-d^{being}ing; for in due season we shall reap." The past is your teacher, but it holds you in no bondage.

So I join you this evening in dedicating Florida Atlantic University to the responsibility of preparing the sons and daughters of Florida to meet the future-- to meet it on its own terms and on yours.

And a great son of Georgia came to Texas to become one of the early presidents of the Republic of Texas, and he said words that I shall always remember and that I would hope that you would not forget. He said: "Education is the guardian genius of democracy. Education is the only dictator that free men recognize. And education is the only ruler that free men desire."

Now I must go along, and I want to tell you what a pleasure it has been to be here with you. You're one of the modern states of America. The rest of the country looks to you folks that have come here from all the states of the union--those of you that were born here--to lead us into a fuller and better life. And your sons that represent you in the temples of justice and who are your spokesmen in the legislative chambers of the nation are among the most dependable and most enlightened. And I know that you would want to be able to say that about your grandsons, and about your grandchildren's children too.

So I implore you to recognize before it's too late that while the Soviet Union can put up Sputnik I, and while we're debating about it, Sputnik II is saying beep, beep, beep in the sky-- that we are sometimes mighty slow to start--but mighty hard to stop. Now, we don't need any argumentation about the desirability of preparing our children to think and to act with judgment. But remember--whether it's the man that picks up the telephone on the end of the hot-line that's calling from Moscow, or whether it's the man who ^{that} sits there with the responsibility of his thumb close to that button who must act at a moment's notice--that no man's judgment on any given question is any better than the information he has on that question. And

he can't get all the information he needs in this space age hunting and fishing. He can't get all that he needs on the football field or the baseball diamond. He's got to get it in grade school, high school, in college, in graduate work--because Americans must never be second to anyone.