

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 20, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
(Dover, New Hampshire)

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT
DOVER HIGH SCHOOL

9:35 A.M. EST

Thank you very, very much, Elizabeth.

Mr. Huddleston, students, faculty and supporters of the two greatest basketball teams in New England, and, finally, friends and fans of Dennis McEvan:

Let me, on behalf of Mrs. Ford and myself, express our appreciation and warmest gratitude for the wonderful enthusiasm and the great turnout here this morning. It is just great being in the Dover High School to have the opportunity to say a few words to all of you.

I have heard a great deal about this wonderful facility you have here, the great times, as Mr. Huddleston told me. From a school which was built in 1851 you have made a lot of progress.

But the most important thing is not the brick and mortar. The most important thing is the quality of your faculty and the quality of each and every one of you as students. I happen to have a great deal of faith in the educational system of our country, and that represents you and your faculty. Congratulations.

Last night in Keene, New Hampshire, after I had an opportunity to meet with some 2,500 people at a meeting at the Keene High School, I went to -- Mrs. Ford and I went to a home with maybe 100 or more of our older Americans. I said to them -- and I feel it very strongly -- that they have been through a tough time. These were people anywhere from 65 to over 80 that lived through a depression, two wars, but, at the same time, they have kept the faith with our country and our Government and they have passed it on to younger generations of better Americans.

Now I think all of us -- that is, you and me -- should appreciate what these fine people have done because we do have a better America, a better place to live. But now all of you are moving into a period in your life where you can make a contribution, where you can be an active participant in local, State and national elections. That is the best way that I know for you to do something affirmative for yourself, but, more importantly, for your country.

MORE

What you learn here in this fine high school will pay big dividends as you meet the challenges to make it a better America -- a better America in Government, a better America technologically, a better America economically, a stronger America morally and philosophically.

I was asked on several occasions over the last several months, what are the important ingredients, one, for people in public office, and what is the most important thing for the public as they look at the political problems that they face?

I think one of the most important, if not the most important ingredient for a person in public office is candor, frankness and complete and total honesty. I don't believe that anybody in public office should promise more than they can produce. I think we have got to be frank and promise what we can do.

But the most important thing for all of you to have -- and I don't know how many are Democrats or how many are Republicans, that is immaterial -- you are all Americans and all of you should have an open mind as you look at candidates, as you look at political parties, as you look at political philosophy.

You are well educated. You have an opportunity to make major decisions and you should look at the candidates and the political parties and the political philosophies with an open mind, and once you adopt that attitude you can contribute very, very significantly to a better America.

I thank you all for the wonderful chance to be here. Mrs. Ford and myself are just delighted to be in New Hampshire and New Hampshire is an important State, and some time next year we are going to bring the family up here and enjoy your wonderful skiing again.

May I introduce my wonderful wife, Betty, to all of you.

Thank you again. I appreciate it, Elizabeth Gardner and Mr. Huddleston. We are just overwhelmed. We think you are great people. Thank you for being so nice to us.

END (AT 9:43 A.M. EST)