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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE
DEDICATION OF U.S. COAST GUARD RESERVE TRAINING CENTER
OCTOBER 25, 1985
YORKTOWN, VIRGINIA

What a joy to be here at this outstanding training center and to have this opportunity to tell you how much I appreciate the work of everyone associated with the United States Coast Guard. You are a credit to the Department of Transportation and an invaluable asset to the Nation you serve. I'm proud of each and every one of you.

This facility is here today because twenty-six years ago the Coast Guard, typical of its nature, looked at the Navy Mine Warfare School, then located here, and saw a challenge and opportunity. The Coast Guard extended the life expectancy of these old white buildings and developed a training center for one of the most active reserve forces in this country. Since the Coast Guard came here in 1959, its vision has expanded and so has its effectiveness.

The Reserve Training Center in Yorktown is now a major training facility in the Coast Guard. But more important than just size, RTC Yorktown's commitment to quality has led the way for other training facilities. RTC Yorktown's pursuit of excellence is easily seen by anyone passing through the gate, meeting the students, or participating in events such as this. Its ability to achieve excellence was formally recognized by the National Society for Performance and Instruction when this command was designated as the Outstanding Military Training Organization of 1984.

Here the transfer of skills and knowledge is completed, using modern laboratory equipment, visual aids, and a highly professional staff. And the quality of the final product, the graduate, is outstanding. The graduates

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take their new abilities to every corner of this country and many other countries as well. RTC Yorktown's pursuit of excellence is exemplified in the young woman whose memory we honor today.

Just over a decade ago, a young Colleen Cain was graduated from Santa Clara University and, typical of her nature, sought challenge and opportunity. As was true for many talented women of her day, these opportunities were often few and far between. Instead of accepting a job that did not match her desires, she chose to travel and find her destiny.

In 1975, she found a challenge and opportunity with the Coast Guard. She applied to Officer Candidate School. While she was attending OCS, the Coast Guard expanded assignments for women. Colleen wanted to make her contribution from the front row, flying helicopters. Working nights and weekends, she earned her private pilot's license, put in for Flight Training, and was accepted. She received her wings in June 1979 and was assigned to Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point, Hawaii. She brought with her the same endearing traits that characterized her life -- enthusiasm and dedication. She diligently worked up the aviation ladder, qualifying as Copilot, First Pilot, and Aircraft Commander. Her contribution as the U.S. Coast Guard's first woman helicopter pilot was limited by her untimely death, but not so her potential or her impact on those who knew her.

Lt. Cain lost her life in an attempt to rescue a sinking fishing boat off the coast of Molokai, Hawaii.

Colleen wore her uniform with great pride. It represented the country she was so delighted to serve. The Gold Shield represented her membership in one of the most admired Armed Forces in the world. The Gold Wings represented her individual skill at flying an HH-52A helicopter -- a skill no woman before her and few since have pursued.

Today we honor the memory of this courageous woman who represents the best of America's youth; who symbolizes the broad spectrum of opportunities available to today's women. This building represents the Coast Guard's ongoing efforts to provide the best possible training to meet tomorrow's needs. I am therefore proud to dedicate the Colleen Cain building.

It is most fitting that this dedication occur in historic Yorktown where other heroes helped secure independence for a then young United States -- a country then and now dedicated to the principles that all men... and women... are created equal.

Thank you very much and may God bless you all.

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