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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE
AT THE UNITED NEGRO COLLEGE FUND LEADERSHIP DINNER
OCTOBER 3, 1983

I want to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for this high honor. This is truly the most treasured moment of my career. For I determined very early in life to fight for equality for every person in our land in every way I can. I grew up in the shadows of one of the finest Black colleges in the nation -- Livingstone College of Salisbury, North Carolina -- and I learned at a tender age that education opens the golden door of opportunity for Blacks, as it can for all others in this land of ours. Living so near that fine school instilled in me the intrinsic value of education in the struggle for equality. The Black colleges of America have given our young people the tools to compete, the moral support to carry on even in the face of adversity and the will and spirit and emotional strength to succeed.

Black colleges and universities are an invaluable national resource and the thousands who contribute to the United Negro College Fund each year have helped to preserve and strengthen them.

I feel very humble at this hour. For it is I who should be honoring all of you. When Dr. Frederick Patterson of Tuskegee Institute founded the United Negro College Fund in 1944, I doubt he could have envisioned the success you have achieved today. Nor could he have foreseen the lives you have changed, the spirit you have awakened in so many people.

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You in the United Negro College Fund have seen America's youth through some dark hours. You have inspired them with your own zeal and your values. You have rekindled in thousands a hope that must be allowed to flourish, a flame that must never be allowed to die.

In accepting this high honor, I pledge to you my lasting partnership in your devotion to the education of our children. I will continue to work to strengthen the Department of Transportation's grants program for black colleges and universities. I will see more blacks hired and promoted in the Department. I will never hesitate to speak out in favor of better education and equal opportunity for all Americans.

I will close by reminding you that Joseph Charles Price, founder of Livingstone College, was a Black leader of great intellectual stature who always looked beyond the trials of the present and the triumphs of the future.

"I don't care how dark the night," Price once wrote, "I believe in the coming of the morning."

The United Negro College Fund has been dedicated to the coming of the morning for Black Americans.

Again, I thank you for this honor and give you my promise to join with you to ensure that while the night has been dark, now -- at last -- morning has come.

Thank you very much and may God bless you all.

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