



U.S. Department of
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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE
APRIL 9, 1987
WASHINGTON, D.C.

What an honor it is to be here. Your twelfth national conference theme, "Implementing Idealism" reflects our uniquely American optimism. We've always believed that with enough faith and determination we can overcome any obstacle and work any miracle.

And you do it again and again making such a difference in so many lives.

America's rich black heritage has been rooted in religious faith and a hope that not even centuries of persecution could erase. Without these two spiritual elements, faith and hope, a great people could not have made such a massive contribution to our society.

As leaders of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) you are the keepers of the values. You are responsible for instilling those values in future generations. And you teach young men and women the skills and the talent they need for service to our professions, to our communities and to our nation. My home state of North Carolina has the largest number of black colleges in the country so I know how important they are. Together black colleges of our land have produced well over half the black business executives, engineers, military officers, federal judges and physicians. It is an article of faith in America that the ticket to opportunity is education, and these institutions must be preserved and protected.

At the Department of Transportation we celebrated Black History Month in February featuring "Historically Black Colleges and Universities as our theme. Dr. Bill Harvey of Hampton University was our featured speaker and I took very seriously many things that Bill said about the issues facing black colleges. He talked about the brain drain from black to white colleges, about the financial problems encountered by many black students and about the mindset of corporate donors who often give one tenth to a black college that they give to a white college.

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Dr. Harvey has taken positive action to try to change that mindset. He went out and made his case to corporate America that his college had something very valuable to offer -- something worth investing in for the future: human capital. His effort paid off. Hampton's endowment jumped from \$39 million to \$80 million since 1978.

Hampton's example is especially encouraging because, in an era of limited federal resources and large budget deficits, support for black colleges must extend well beyond what the federal government can provide. Rather, support for black colleges must come from those of us who believe in the importance of their role in this country.

It requires the personal commitment of each and every student, professor and alumnus, and from each of us who benefit from the human capital you produce. That level of commitment was exemplified for me by Washington newscaster Jim Vance, who was a featured speaker during our Black History Month celebration.

It seems Jim ran into an old friend from Cheyney State College who had taken a poor young man into his home to help prepare the boy for college. Stung by the realization that his friend was supporting that boy on a fraction of Jim's salary, Jim vowed he would, from that point on, do more to help those less fortunate than himself. In his words, if each of us took in just one child, we could make a remarkable difference.

I share that belief in the crucial difference that personal commitment can make.

When I was at the White House as Assistant to the President for Public Liaison very early in this Administration, I had the pleasure of working with many representatives of the minority community to help formulate the President's policies on Historically Black Colleges and Universities. I'm sure Dr. Myers remembers those days in the Roosevelt Room hashing out the policy issues. I'm sure on September 15, 1981, when we met in the White House for the official signing of the Executive Order, all of you must have felt as good as I did about the fruits of our labor.

It's been a pleasure, as Secretary of Transportation, to give life and relevance to such statements of official policy.

Last year DOT awarded nearly \$7 million in grants to black colleges and universities, an increase of 58 percent over the \$4 million awarded in 1985. These funds go to research, education and training on subjects of concern in the field of transportation. Obviously, we've started with the Airway Science Program at Hampton, but there must be others. And there will be.

And I'm happy to announce that we are in the process of contracting with Florida A & M for a business management skills training project. The \$50,000 contract will be for a twelve-month research program on topics of interest to persons engaged in small business operations. This project can

serve as a model for other agencies seeking to combine the efforts of government, black colleges and the private sector for the common good.

Thirty-seven percent of all the Federal Aviation Administration's airway science funds going to colleges and universities went to black colleges in fiscal year 1986 and the dollars are expected to increase this year. The FAA will make available over \$5 million dollars to four black colleges for Airway Science Curriculum projects. These awards will be used to purchase, lease, or construct buildings and related facilities, instructional materials, or other equipment to be used in the Airway Science program.

The Federal Highway Administration at the Department of Transportation established a Technology Transfer Center at South Carolina State University and the Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration provides scholarships to certain employees for work toward bachelor degrees at the University of the District of Columbia. In addition, our Coast Guard since 1982 has had a program for enlisting juniors at black colleges for pre-selection candidates at our Coast Guard Officers Candidate School.

Presently, the Urban Mass Transportation Administration is designing a consortium of minority higher educational institutions and the private sector.

The consortium will create a transit curriculum and facilitate research into the transit industry. This will be complemented by the private sector whose expertise will provide hands-on experience in actual transit operations.

Most recently we've provided a unique opportunity for minorities in the securities industry to participate to a significant degree in the public offering for the sale of Conrail, our government-owned freight railroad. The Conrail sale was the largest initial public stock offering in U.S. history. The plan not only included underwriting and sales but went a step further, to create a "special bracket" for minorities to participate in the management of the offering. The inclusion of minority firms in all aspects of financing of this magnitude not only increase the experience of the firms involved, it sent an important signal to the investment banking community that minority involvement in large corporate financing transactions in addition to municipal financing by state and local governmental bodies, is an idea whose time has come. You'll be pleased to know that two of the four black investment firms have Presidents who graduated from black colleges.

We've broken many barriers and made history at the Department of Transportation. Yes, we've made progress, but let there be no mistake. Much remains to be done. There's a famous story about Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. It seems that the famous Justice was on a train but couldn't locate his ticket.

While the conductor watched, smiling, the 88 year old Justice Holmes searched through all of his pockets without success. Of course, the conductor recognized the distinguished jurist, so he said, "Mr. Holmes, don't worry. You don't need your ticket. You will probably find it when you get off the train and I'm sure the Pennsylvania Railroad will trust you to mail it back later."

The Justice looked up at the conductor with some irritation and said, "My dear man, that is not the problem at all. The problem is not, where is my ticket. The problem is, where am I going?"

Knowing where we're going will be the key as we face the challenges of the future. I ask you, Dr. Myers, to work with JoAnn Collins, our Coordinator for Minority Affairs, and the Department to help us identify other ways we can strengthen our black colleges and in the process strengthen our national transportation system.

And I need your help on another issue that transcends all racial barriers and vitally affects us all. Drug abuse knows no race, creed or sex.

Drug abuse is pervasive in our society today, a potential threat to transportation safety. I urge you to enlist in this battle. Here's what I'm doing. I have proposed a series of anti-drug initiatives, including a comprehensive program for almost 27,000 Department of Transportation employees. The Department's program includes drug awareness and education, rehabilitation assistance, and random testing of employees in critical safety and security-related positions such as railroad, truck, aviation and highway inspectors and air traffic controllers. I am proposing a regulation requiring pre-employment testing, post-accident testing and random drug testing for commercial airline pilots and crews, and for other employees directly responsible for the safety of flight operations. Railroad employees are also included. And truck and bus drivers. I am determined that the American people receive what they are entitled to, a drug free transportation system. And I ask you to join in helping make this a drug free society. I can think of no more worthy endeavor to make a positive difference for people.

My husband, Bob, said on the floor of the Senate, in support of the Martin Luther King Holiday bill, "A nation defines itself in many ways: in the promises it makes, and the programs it enacts, the dreams it enshrines or the doors it slams shut."

We must never allow the doors of our black colleges and universities to slam shut. We must work together to ensure stability and growth. Our task now is to open wide the door of educational opportunity to all Americans.

As I look out over this audience I can't help but believe that each one of you represents a part of Dr. King's dream. Your challenge is to help

realize that dream by developing a new vision of excellence for our black colleges. I look forward to making the journey with you.

A while ago I had the privilege of delivering the commencement address at Livingstone College in my home town in Salisbury, North Carolina. And I was very proud that day to be awarded an honorary degree. I reminded the graduates that the founder of the college, Joseph Charles Price, was a black leader of great intellectual stature who always looked beyond the trials of the present to the triumphs of the future.

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

Sometimes we all feel weary as we strive toward goals that will make a real difference -- a positive difference for people. President Reagan, when he was Governor of California, recalls how he first learned to deal with enormous challenge and stress as a newly-elected governor. "Each morning began," he says, "with someone standing before my desk describing yet another disaster. The feeling of stress became unbearable. I had the urge to look over my shoulder for someone I could pass the problem to. One day it came to me that I was looking in the wrong direction. I looked up instead of back. I'm still looking up. I couldn't face another day in this office if I didn't know I could ask God's help and it would be given." Let us never forget the source of our strength and courage.

God bless each one of you in your most important work, as you lead our young people, our greatest resource -- into the 21st Century.