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# News:

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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY  
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE  
KAYS GARY HUMANITARIAN AWARD  
MISSION AIR  
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA  
JANUARY 30, 1987

I'm delighted to be home in North Carolina this evening to offer my congratulations to you, Donnie and Sandy Simpson, on an outstanding year, and my personal tribute to each of you in this room for your tireless contributions toward the success of a truly remarkable humanitarian effort. And I'm especially glad to pay tribute to my good friend Kays Gary for whom this award is so appropriately named and to participate in honoring Loonis McGlohon whose music has warmed the hearts of millions and whose good works have saved lives around the world.

Since Mission Air was founded in 1981 this group of volunteer pilots, medical experts and citizens have worked another kind of miracle for those in the Carolinas in need of medical transportation. Because of Mission Air, many organ transplant recipients are alive and well...a little girl dying of cancer achieved her last wish -- to see Disney World...many accident victims with severed limbs made it to Duke Hospital in time for successful reattachment...a 33-year-old North Carolina man, a cancer victim taken by Mission Air to Houston, Texas, for last hope treatment arrived back home in North Carolina in time to see

- more -

his newborn child. He died a half hour later. Your missions of mercy and compassion are brilliant examples of service to people. Let me add my thanks for your "special mission" of assisting those working in child abuse, alcoholism and drug rehabilitation. Dealing with alcohol and drug abuse is a priority of mine.

I think everyone in this room tonight would agree that one cannot live a truly fulfilled life if one lacks a sense of mission. A missionary need not always be a charitable volunteer or a priest, rabbi or minister. He or she could be a dedicated craftsman, an artist, an engineer, a lawyer, doctor or secretary. They are missionaries as long as they are committed to personal excellence, and that excellence is committed to touching other people in a positive and meaningful way.

My mission has been through public service. I try to ask myself everyday whether my programs and policies are helping create a better life for all Americans. Can I ease the suffering of a mother whose child might otherwise fall victim to a drunk driver? Can I enhance the safety of travelers on land and in the air by trying to ensure a drug free transportation system? Can we help struggling countries in Africa and Haiti with assistance in road building and dredging of ports?

Many sincere words have been spoken or written on the subject of helping others, of the spirit of self-sacrifice, of one's altruistic and philanthropic duties. Sometimes people misinterpret these words, and seem to think that helping others and enjoying oneself are mutually exclusive. I don't see it that way. In fact -- I must confess that in a way, my motives are partially selfish.

I say this because, to me, no form of career advancement, no amount of personal wealth, and no public accolade can quite measure up to the sense of accomplishment and glow of happiness that I have experienced at those moments of my life when I have truly helped another human being -- when I have touched another life in a special caring way.

I can't speak for him, of course, but I wonder if Loonis McGlohon -- the man we honor here tonight -- feels the same way. I can imagine few more moving or proud public tributes than to receive the Kays Gary Award, and to be here with all of you. Yet, even that must be surpassed by the way this man -- this man who founded North Carolina's first chapter of Big Brothers -- must have felt at the sight of a fatherless boy who now has a friend and ally because of Loonis McGlohon. What a sense of accomplishment and happiness he must feel at the knowledge that, as a result of his effort to raise money for well-drilling equipment for drought-stricken Africa, hungry children will be fed. And even if

he had never accomplished any of these things, what joy it must have brought him all these years to bring music -- one of the greatest sources of inspiration and happiness in human history -- into the lives and hearts of others. I don't just admire this man, I positively envy his musical ability.

Kays Gary is another man intimately familiar with this sense of human achievement. He reminds me a lot of something another Gary said -- Gary Cooper in "Mr. Deeds Comes to Town."

"From what I can see," he said, "no matter what system of government we have, there will always be leaders and always be followers. It's like the road out in the front of my house. It's on a steep hill. And every day I watch the cars climbing up. Some go lickety-split up that hill on high -- some have to shift into second -- and some sputter and shake and slip back to the bottom again. Same cars -- same gasoline -- yet some make it and some don't. And I say the fellow who can make the hill on high should stop once in a while and help those who can't."

Kays is a lot like Mr. Deeds, always helping others up the hill. He spent many years as a columnist for the Charlotte Observer, occupied not with the doings of the rich and great, but with the everyday heroism of ordinary people. He uses his gift as a writer to be a voice for people in trouble, people in need, people who had been forgotten by others. And he gave us one of the few forums in which the everyday little things that bring light and happiness into our workaday lives could be recognized and encouraged.

How many of you, for example, have felt frustrated as to how you could repay your mother and father not just for all the major things they've done, but for all those special little things they did for you? Who recognizes such things and offers a well-deserved tribute? Kays Gary is one of the few who does -- and I know because he paid such a tribute to my own mother for her now-famous persimmon pudding.

It seems a Salisbury reader told him my mother makes the best persimmon pudding in the Piedmont. He called her and got the recipe, and then one day mother and I drove over to his house to take him his own persimmon pudding. Evidently, it was a success. He wrote a column on it, and gave my mother the ultimate accolade. He said that you just could not know how delicious something could be until you actually taste her pudding. The only thing that even comes close -- maybe -- is date nut bread. I only wish I'd said it.

Sometimes people say, yes, I'd like to help, I'd like to have that sense of mission, but I'm not a talented writer, or a famous musician. What should I do? The only answer to that question is for each person to look into his own heart -- because that's where he'll find it every time.

There's a woman in Washington -- an immigrant from Barbados -- who works as a housekeeper and practical nurse. This year, she gave up her Christmas and New Year's Eve to nurse a sick man because the man's elderly wife was unable to care for him all by herself. No other nurse could be found. This woman did not pause, she did not complain, even though she had planned to be with her family. "Children and old people," she said "always-- always I just knew that I wanted to help them."

Everyone has that kind of innate knowledge, if we are willing to open our hearts and minds to it.

All of you here tonight have that knowledge, and you must have a great sense of accomplishment that has come because you listened to your hearts and you acted. Because of that, I can say that, not only do I address a room full of some of the most distinguished humanitarians in this country, I also address a roomful of some of the luckiest people in the world.

Thank you for the inspiration you have provided me tonight. Thank you and God bless you.

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