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REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ABOUT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE RON BROWN

The Commerce Department

April 3, 1996

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I've known Ron Brown a long time. I was always amazed at the way he was continually reaching out trying to bridge the differences between people, always trying to get the best out of people, always believing that we could do more than we have done. In a way, this job was sort of ready-made for him at this moment in history, and he loved it very much.

Most of the time, Ron Brown spent using the power of the Commerce Department to find ways to give opportunity to ordinary Americans, to generate jobs for the American economy and build better futures for American citizens. But when we met earlier this week, right before he left for the Balkans, he was so excited because he thought that, along with these business leaders and the other very able people from the Commerce Department on this mission, that they would be able to use the power of the American economy to help the peace take hold in the Balkans, to help people in that troubled place have the kind of decent, honorable and wonderfully ordinary lives that

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To all of the wonderful people in the Commerce Department that were on that plane, some of them very young -- one of them who came to our campaign in 1992 thinking the most important thing he could do was to ride a bicycle across the country, asking people to vote for the Vice President and me, wound up a trusted employee at the Commerce Department.

To all of their loved ones and their families, their friends, I want to say I am very grateful for their lives and their service.

I also want to say just one last thing about Ron Brown. He was one of the best advisors and ablest people I ever knew. And he was very, very good at everything he ever did. Whether he was the Commerce Secretary or a civil rights leader or something else, he was always out there just giving it his all. And he always believed that his mission in life was to put people's dreams within their reach if they were willing to work for it and believe in themselves.

When we were over at his home a few moments ago, Alexis Herman, who, as many of you know, used to work with Ron at the Democratic Committee and they've been friends a long time, told me that his favorite Scripture verse was that wonderful verse from Isaiah: "They who wait upon the Lord shall have their strength renewed. They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and faint not."

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But every American should be grateful that at a very difficult moment in our nation's history, he made this Commerce Department what it was meant to be -- an instrument for realizing the potential of every American. For all of you who played a role in that, I ask for your prayers for Secretary Brown and his family, for your colleagues and their families, for the business leaders and their families, and for our beloved military

officers and their families. And I ask you always, always, to be fiercely proud for what you have done and very grateful for the opportunity to have done it.

I'd like to ask now that we bow our heads for a moment of silence.

Amen. Thank you.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ABOUT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE RON BROWN

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