

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN EULOGY AT THE FUNERAL OF
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE RON BROWN

The National Cathedral
Washington, D.C.

April 10, 1996

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow Americans, citizens of the world who have come here; to Alma and Tracey and Michael and Tammy; to Chip and to Ron's mother and to the other members of the family who are here:

This has been a long week for all of us who loved Ron Brown, cared for his work, cherished the brilliant young people who worked with him, honored the business executives who took the mission of peace to Bosnia, and the members of our United States military who were taking them on that mission.

But this has been the longest week for the Brown family. You have grieved and wept. You have comforted others whose loved ones were lost. You have remembered and smiled, and last evening you got to celebrate and laugh at the life that you shared, each in your own way, with Ron.

I begin by saying to all of you, on behalf of all of us, we thank you for the strength you have given to others even as you have borne your own grief, for we can see Ron in your eyes and hear him in your voices and feel his strength in yours. Indeed, I was confident as I heard Michael speak that from heaven Ron had written the words. So today and in all of our tomorrows, as we remember and love him, we will remember and love you.

We hope on this day amidst all the grief you will also feel gratitude for his magnificent life, determination to carry on his legacy and keep it alive, and the peace of God which takes us to a place beyond all our understanding.

The Bible tells us, "though we weep through the night, joy will come in the morning." Ron Brown's incredible life force brought us all joy in the morning. No dark night could ever defeat him. And as we remember him, may we always be able to recover his joy. For this man loved life and all the things in it. He loved the big things -- his family, his friends, his country, his work, his African American heritage. He loved the difference he was making in the world, this new and exciting world after the Cold War.

And he loved life's little things -- the Redskins and basketball and golf, even when it was bad, and McDonald's and clothes. And I'm telling you, folks, he would have loved this deal today. I mean, here we are for Ron Brown in the National Cathedral with full military honors, filled with the distinguished citizenry of this country and leaders from around the world in a tribute to him. And as I look around I see that all of us are dressed almost as well as he would be today.

But let us remember also that he loved success, but not so much he wanted to succeed at the wrong things or in the wrong way. And he always remembered that worldly success doesn't take us too very far from all the rest of our fellow human beings who don't enjoy as much of it. That accounts for why he was always so kind to people without regard to their station in life.

Ron Brown enjoyed a lot of success. He proved you could do well and do good. He also proved you could do good and have a good time. And he also proved that you could do all that and, at the same time, still take time to help other people.

With his passion and determination, his loves and his joys, his going beyond the stereotypes of his time, he lived a truly American life. He lived his life for America, and when the time came, he was found laying down his life for America.

What a life it was. With his remarkable enthusiasm that infected everything he did. As long as I live I will remember the time Ron Brown and I were walking the streets of the neighborhood in Los Angeles, and we went to this sporting goods store that had been owned by some people who were trying to help young folks stay out of gangs. And in the back of the sporting goods store, there was a basketball court.

And all these little kids had gathered around and they asked Ron and they asked me if we would like to play basketball. So we divided up sides; he took a few kids, I took a few kids. All of a sudden he forgot who was President and how he got his day job. He was totally caught up in the drama of the game. This was an important trip we took, but afterward, whenever anyone asked him about that trip, all he could remember to say was, "The President was in my face from 20 feet out, but when I shot, nothing but net.

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That was Ron. He wanted to give other people a chance to live a good life and live the American Dream. He wanted to do it in a way that helped people around the world to lift their

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He also never forgot that there are always some people who are left behind. I want to tell you this story because to me it captures so much the essence of what made him very special. When we first came into office we only had about a month to put our first budget together. And we knew we had to do some pretty tough things to get the deficit way down. Day after day, the Cabinet would gather in the Roosevelt Room; Ron was always there.

And on one of those days, we talked about the need not only to cut the budget, but to do some really symbolic things that would show the American people we were different and we stood for the right things. And we were all, frankly, being just a little sanctimonious in looking for symbolic gestures.

And so we were talking about the need to cut the perks that had previously been provided to top officials -- things like chefs in the Secretary's dining room and chauffeurs for a lot of higher-ranking officials. And we talked about them, frankly, all of us, nonchalantly and fairly sanctimoniously -- until Ron turned to me and said, "You know, these cuts are the right thing to do, Mr. President. It is the right thing to do. But I'd just like to remind people that there are real human beings in those jobs as chefs and chauffeurs. A lot of those folks are my age. Many are black men. Most of them never had the opportunities you and I did. So let's go on and do the right things and make the cuts. But let's not forget about those people, and let's try to help them go on with their lives in dignity."

No one else said that, but Ron Brown. He could see where we had to go. He knew it was the right thing to do. But he had enough peripheral vision to know how other people were being affected.

The last thing I'd like to say about his remarkable public life is that while he was often determined to be first, he was equally determined that he would never be the last. And so he exerted more extraordinary effort than virtually anybody I've ever known to develop the talents of other people, to reach out to the young, to give them a chance to serve. How much of the weeping we have done this last week because there were so many brilliant, young people on that plane with him from different

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"While the demands of business, the pressures of the Commerce Department, and the politics of Washington can often mask the spirit and character of the dedicated people who try so hard to make a difference for America, the business at hand, the pressures on the Department, and the politics of the moment never dimmed the smile, the energy, the commitment, and the leadership of the man who made such a big difference in the direction and destiny of our country. He led his party to the presidency. He led the Commerce Department with imagination and distinction. He led American business to new global opportunity. He led his race as an unassuming, but forceful role model. He led us all in being what he believed in. He was truly a leader."

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In his last sermon from the pulpit, Martin Luther King asked God to grant us all a "chance to be participants in the newness and magnificent development of America." That is the cause for which Ron Brown gave his life, and the cause for which he gave up his life.

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Now he's in a place where he doesn't even have to worry about how good he looks -- he always will look good. He's in a place where there's always joy in the morning. He's in a place where every good quality he ever had has been rendered perfect. He's in a place he deserves to be because of the way he lived and what he left to those of us who loved him.

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4/18/96

Jan -

The President made
one change -- at the
paperclip. Please have
corrected. Thank you.

| Carol
—

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Now he's in a place where he doesn't even have to worry about how good he looks -- he always will look good. He's in a place where there's always joy in the morning. He's in a place where every good quality he ever had has been rendered perfect. He's in a place he deserves to be because of the way he lived and what he left to those of us who loved him.

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The Bible tells us, "though we weep through the night, joy will come in the morning." Ron Brown's incredible life force brought us all joy in the morning. No dark night could ever defeat him. And as we remember him, may we always be able to recover his joy. For this man loved life and all the things in it. He loved the big things -- his family, his friends, his country, his work, his African American heritage. He loved the difference he was making in the world, this new and exciting world after the Cold War.

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The Bible tells us, "though we weep through the night, joy will come in the morning." Ron Brown's incredible life force brought us all joy in the morning. No dark night could ever defeat him. And as we remember him, may we always be able to recover his joy. For this man loved life and all the things in it. He loved the big things -- his family, his friends, his country, his work, his African American heritage. He loved the difference he was making in the world, this new and exciting world after the Cold War.

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"While the demands of business, the pressures of the Commerce Department, and the politics of Washington can often mask the spirit and character of the dedicated people who try so hard to make a difference for America, the business at hand, the pressures on the Department, and the politics of the moment never dimmed the smile, the energy, the commitment, and the leadership of the man who made such a big difference in the direction and destiny of our country. He led his party to the presidency. He led the Commerce Department with imagination and distinction. He led American business to new global opportunity. He led his race as an unassuming, but forceful role model. He led us all in being what he believed in. He was truly a leader."

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In his last sermon from the pulpit, Martin Luther King asked God to grant us all a "chance to be participants in the newness and magnificent development of America." That is the cause for which Ron Brown gave his life, and the cause for which he gave up his life.

In his letter to the Galatians, St. Paul said, "Let us not grow weary in doing good. For in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." Our friend never grew weary, he never lost heart. He did so much good, and he is now reaping his reward. He left us sooner than we wanted him to leave, but what a legacy of love and life he left behind.

Now he's in a place where he doesn't even have to worry about how good he looks -- he always will look good. He's in a place where there's always joy in the morning. He's in a place where every good quality he ever had has been rendered perfect. He's in a place he deserves to be because of the way he lived and what he left to those of us who loved him.

Let there always be joy in the morning for Ron Brown. Amen.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN EULOGY AT THE FUNERAL OF
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE RON BROWN

The National Cathedral
Washington, D.C.

April 10, 1996

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow Americans, citizens of the world who have come here; to Alma and Tracey and Michael and Tammy; to Chip and to Ron's mother and to the other members of the family who are here:

This has been a long week for all of us who loved Ron Brown, cared for his work, cherished the brilliant young people who worked with him, honored the business executives who took the mission of peace to Bosnia, and the members of our United States military who were taking them on that mission.

But this has been the longest week for the Brown family. You have grieved and wept. You have comforted others whose loved ones were lost. You have remembered and smiled, and last evening you got to celebrate and laugh at the life that you shared, each in your own way, with Ron.

I begin by saying to all of you, on behalf of all of us, we thank you for the strength you have given to others even as you have borne your own grief, for we can see Ron in your eyes and hear him in your voices and feel his strength in yours. Indeed, I was confident as I heard Michael speak that from heaven Ron had written the words. So today and in all of our tomorrows, as we remember and love him, we will remember and love you.

We hope on this day amidst all the grief you will also feel gratitude for his magnificent life, determination to carry on his legacy and keep it alive, and the peace of God which takes us to a place beyond all our understanding.

The Bible tells us, "though we weep through the night, joy will come in the morning." Ron Brown's incredible life force brought us all joy in the morning. No dark night could ever defeat him. And as we remember him, may we always be able to recover his joy. For this man loved life and all the things in it. He loved the big things -- his family, his friends, his country, his work, his African American heritage. He loved the difference he was making in the world, this new and exciting world after the Cold War.

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