

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:49 p.m. on January 19 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 20.

Remarks at the Funeral Service for Barbara Jordan in Houston, Texas

January 20, 1996

Thank you. Pastor Cofield; Bennie and Rosemary and John; and Aunt and Uncle, Mamie and Wilmer Lee; Mr. Mayor, my good friend Governor Richards; all the distinguished Texans who are here; and friends of Barbara Jordan around the country; Members of Congress; members of the Texas State government; the former Members of Congress who served with Barbara who came down with me today; to members of the Cabinet; my fellow Americans.

The last time I saw Barbara Jordan was late last fall when Liz Carpenter talked me into going to the University of Texas to give a speech on race relations on the day of the Million Man March. I was nervous enough as it was. [*Laughter*] And I walked out into that vast arena, and there were 17,000 people there. But I could only see one, Barbara Jordan, smiling at me. And there I was about to give a speech to her about race and the Constitution. [*Laughter*] I think it was the nearest experience on this Earth to the pastor's giving a sermon with God in the audience. [*Laughter*]

Through the sheer force of the truth she spoke, the poetry of her words, and the power of her voice, Barbara always stirred our national conscience. She did it as a legislator, a Member of Congress, a teacher, a citizen.

Perhaps more than anything else in the last few years, for those of us who had the privilege of being around her, she did it in the incredible grace and good humor and dignity with which she bore her physical misfortunes. No matter what, there was always the dignity. When Barbara Jordan talked, we listened.

We listened in 1974 when she said of the preamble to our Constitution, "We the people. It is a very eloquent beginning, but when the document was completed on the 17th of

September in 1787, I was not included in that 'we the people'."

We listened in 1976 when President Carter asked her to be the first black woman to deliver a keynote address at the Democratic Convention. When she asked and answered one of those great questions with which we still struggle, she said, "Are we to be one people bound together by common spirit, sharing in a common endeavor, or will we become a divided nation?" "A spirit of harmony will survive in America," she said, "only if each of us remember that we share a common destiny."

We listened in 1992 when she honored me by again giving a keynote address at the convention. "The American dream is slipping away from too many people," she said. She said it would only be changed if we developed an environment characterized by a devotion to the public interest, to public servants, to tolerance, and to love.

After I became President, I asked her to chair the United States Commission on Immigration Reform. And she made us listen again when she reminded all sides on that delicate and difficult issue that we must remain both a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws.

Barbara Jordan's life was a monument to the three great threads that run constantly throughout the fabric of American history: our love of liberty, our belief in progress, our search for common ground. Wherever she could and whenever she stood to speak, she jolted the Nation's attention with her artful and articulate defense of the Constitution, the American dream, and the common heritage and destiny we share, whether we like it or not.

Barbara Jordan loved her family, her loved ones, her friends, her allies, her teachers. She loved Texas and how she loved our beloved country. She reveled in its never-ending struggle to live up to our highest ideals.

She once said this: "All we are trying to do is to make this Government of the United States honest. We only ask that when we stand up and talk about one Nation under God with liberty and justice for all, we want to be able to look up at the flag, put our right hands over our hearts, repeat those words, and know that they are true." Well,

if Barbara wasn't in the Constitution when it was first written, she made sure that once she got in, she stayed in it all the way.

She also did all she could as a lawmaker and as a teacher to give future generations of Americans for all time to come equal standing under that Constitution. That's what she was doing when God called her home, working with the students at the University of Texas Lyndon Johnson School of Public Affairs.

In 1994, in one of the most enjoyable moments of my Presidency, I was proud to give to Barbara Jordan the Nation's highest award to a civilian, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. I noticed her wearing it today. And it touched me so to know that she is now going to a place where her rewards will be greater.

As Ann Richards said, if we're all going to tell the truth today, Barbara Jordan made every one of us stand a little straighter, speak a little clearer, and be a little stronger. She took to heart what her Grandpa Patten told her when she was a little girl. "You just trot your own horse, and don't get into the same rut as everyone else." [*Laughter*] Well, she sure trotted her own horse, and she made her own path wide and deep.

Let me close with these lines from a poem I love by Stephen Spender. I understand Barbara loved it, too, and liked to read it aloud. I can't read it as well as she would have, but you'll see it could have been written about her. "I think continually of those who are truly great, who from the womb remembered the soul's history, who wore at their hearts the fire's center. Borne of the sun, they traveled a short while toward the sun, and left the vivid air signed in their honor."

Barbara's magnificent voice is silenced. But she left the vivid air signed in her honor. Barbara, we the people will miss you. We thank you, and Godspeed.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. in the Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. D.Z. Cofield, pastor, Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church; Barbara Jordan's sisters Bennie Crisswell and Rosemary McGowan, and her brother-in-law, John McGowan; Mayor Bob Lanier of Houston, TX; former Gov. Ann Richards of Texas; and Liz Car-

penter, distinguished alumna of the University of Texas.

Remarks on the Arrival of the Space Shuttle *Endeavour* Astronauts at Ellington Field in Houston

January 20, 1996

Ladies and gentlemen, I am so glad that I happened to be in Houston and at the airport at the right time. I just want to take a minute—I know you came to see this fine crew and their families and to celebrate with them—but I just want to say on behalf of the people of the United States, we are very proud of this mission, proud of this crew. We were thrilled by its success, and we're glad to have them home.

And let me just make one plug to—I know that I'm preaching to the saved here—but I want to make one plug for the space program. You see all of our friends and allies from Japan here celebrating their participation in the person—where is he—of Mr. Wakata. We thank him.

Our space program is an important part of our partnership for world peace. It is an important part of how we relate to and work with the Japanese, the Russians, and others in building a more cooperative, safer world for the 21st century. Our space program is also an important part of research we do in trying to solve medical mysteries and environmental mysteries. NASA has been a major, major force in helping us to figure out ways to save our planet Earth as we accommodate more population growth and more economic growth. So I ask all of you, remain steadfast in your support for America's investment in space and in our future together with our friends and allies throughout the world.

Thank you. God bless you.

Welcome home, gentlemen. Job well done.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Japanese astronaut Koichi Wakata. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.