President Reagan’s Diary Entries, January 29, January 31, and February 1, 1986

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Wednesday, January 29, 1986: A memorial service has been set up for Fri. in Houston for the 7 heros who lost their lives yesterday.

Incidentally phone calls & wires poured in with nice words about my 5 min. speech yesterday on T.V. Now this afternoon I had a tougher job—phone calls to the families of the 7. All of them asked that we continue the space program—that’s what their loved ones would have wanted.

Friday January 31, 1986: At 8:45 on way to Andrews. A.F.1 taking us to Houston for memorial service to Astronauts. Met with families at N.A.S.A. Center—an emotional time. Then out to join some 14,000 people which included all the employees, familys etc. of the entire space center. Nancy & I sat between Mrs. Scobee—wife of leader of the Challenger crew & Mrs. Smith widow of one of the crew. It was a hard time for all the families & all we could do was hug them & try to hold back our tears. When it was over we flew to Andrews & then helicoptered to Camp D. It was really winter there—in the 20°s & covered with snow.

Saturday, February 1, 1986: Still cold & wintry—we took a brisk walk & then spent the day with books & papers by the fire.