

DRAFT #2
Tues 5/13

DRAFT

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
COLUMN FOR PUBLICATION MAY 15, 1997
TALKING IT OVER/CREATORS SYNDICATE

Bill and I spent a week in Mexico for our honeymoon. Like most American tourists, we reveled in Mexico's rich history, lively culture, warm people and great food. (And like many Mexicans, we also honeymooned with our parents).

~~Over the years we've been fortunate to return to Mexico several times, most~~
~~recently for~~^{We were particularly excited to}
~~official state visits~~^{last week} that also took us to summits of Central American
leaders in Costa Rica and Caribbean leaders in Barbados. Each stop reminded us
how much this vast region has changed in the last two decades, and how ~~the rest of~~
~~the Western Hemisphere's~~^{This time} future is inextricably tied to our own.

~~Not only do we share a 2,000-mile border with Mexico, the United States~~
~~now claims the fifth largest Hispanic population in the world. But~~^{its}
to our Latin American neighbors by ~~more than~~^{high} geography and history. We are also
bound together by technology, trade, and the forces of global economic integration.
And we ~~confront~~^{share} many of the same ~~challenges~~^{concerns}, from drugs, crime and
environmental decay to strengthening democracy throughout the region.

For decades, Central America was torn apart by civil wars, bloody coups,

repression and poverty. With the historic signing of the peace accords in Guatemala in December 1996, the region is finally free of war and conflict. Democracy ^{now} exists in every country in Central America. Political and economic reforms are leading to new hope for lasting peace and increasing prosperity from the Pacific Ocean to the Caribbean.

And, as I ~~saw~~ ^{from the moment I landed in Merida on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula to the day we left Bridgetown, Barbados eight days later,} ~~there are~~ ^{I could see that} many men and women ^{are} responsible for brightening the prospects for our hemisphere's future.

The people of Merida welcomed me with a program of music and ^{folkloric} dance staged before one of the oldest churches in Mexico. Choruses sang in Spanish and Mayan, the language of the ancient culture that produced great pyramids, like those I ^{the next day} visited at Uxmal.

I met with several hundred women from across the country, many direct descendants of the Mayans, Aztecs and other indigenous people of MesoAmerica. Thanks to small loans they ^{had} received through microcredit projects, they were able to earn a living for themselves and their families ^{selling} ~~making~~ goods as varied as ceramics, honey, coffee, hammocks, and clothing. ~~As I visited the stalls displaying their wares, I was struck by how intricate their embroidery and paintings were.~~

These women, who might otherwise have been left on the outskirts of

opportunity, were discovering their ^{own} potential to take control of their lives and their futures, not through a hand-out but through their own hard work. At the same time they ^{have} ~~were~~ helping to preserve their indigenous heritage, giving people the world over a chance to enjoy the products they create and becoming better integrated into the society and economy of Mexico.

I saw the same tremendous entrepreneurial spirit in Costa Rica at a forum sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Inter^{- American} ~~Development Bank~~ Development Bank. One woman ~~had~~ started a thriving business in rare orchids; another ^{made} ~~made~~ clothing for children; and one man described how he and his father used small loans to become organic farmers.

Most memorable, however, was an Indian woman from Guatemala who proudly told a large crowd that she had started out selling mangoes on the street when she was 12. With microloans, she expanded her line of goods and now employs others. Her profits enabled her to send her children to school, including a son to the University of North Carolina. ~~Each in their own ways, these small business entrepreneurs had lifted themselves out of poverty, enriching both their families and expanding the prosperity of their nations.~~

Economic participation, which microenterprise ensures for countless poor men and women around the world, is a human right essential to the success of any democracy. But so too are all human rights, which have often been violated in Latin

America, sometimes with the encouragement or indifference of my own country.

To highlight the U.S. commitment to human rights, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and I visited the Institute for Human Rights in Costa Rica, which has dedicated itself to ensuring political and legal rights.

Throughout the region, men and women have risked -- and lost -- their lives to fight for freedom and social justice. Fortunately, their work and sacrifice contributed to Central America's movement away from the repressive regimes and human rights abuses of years past. Still, the transition to democracy remains incomplete -- particularly when it comes to the rights of women.

Seated around a simple table, ^{at the table} women from Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador reported about the obstacles they ~~continue~~ ^{ranging from} to face. ~~Too many women, they~~ ^{in and out of their homes to lack of legal} said, live in fear of violence and without access to family planning and the same ~~legal protections as men.~~ ^{protections. There} Secretary Albright repeated her oft-stated belief that ~~oppression and discrimination against women is not just cultural, but criminal.~~

From Central America we traveled to the Caribbean, a region from which many Americans trace their roots -- and to which many Americans return for vacations. ~~In fact, I learned that in 1751, when George Washington was 18, he journeyed to Barbados to visit his half-brother Lawrence, who was there to recuperate from tuberculosis. It was Washington's only trip outside of the continental United States, and he recorded his activities in his diary.~~

My husband and I speculated on what might have happened to our history if, like so many English colonists, Washington had decided to stay in Barbados. After seeing the beauty of the island and enjoying its hospitality, we understand how difficult leaving must have been -- but grateful for our country's sake that he returned!

Many ^{Here} Caribbean nations have been particularly hard hit by changes in the global economy. At a regional microenterprise forum, I announced a grant that, as part of the President's initiative to help the region, will expand ^{Caribbean} microcredit projects, in some of the smallest countries.

^{ster-luckily} The trip was not all business and meetings. ^{luckily} Bill and I ^{were able to spend one} spent a wonderful day ^{which reminded us of our honeymoon.} relaxing on Barbados. We slept, read, sunned, and swam. He graduated from crutches to cane. And we came back refreshed and more convinced of the importance of strengthening our ties with our friends and neighbors in this hemisphere.

It wasn't quite a second honeymoon. But it sure felt like it.

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From the TelePort of: Katherine Searcy

Date: Tuesday, May 13, 1997

Number of Pages: 3

To: Lissa Muscatine, home

Fax Number: 202 3370589

Memo: Lissa--The word count is now at 855, in case you see another cut. I thought you might like to read it through one more time.--Katherine

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bill and I spent a week in Mexico for our honeymoon. Like most American tourists, we reveled in Mexico's rich history, lively culture, warm people and great food. (And like many Mexicans, we also honeymooned with our parents.)

We were particularly excited about returning to Mexico last week, this time for an official state visit that also took us to summits of Central American leaders in Costa Rica and Caribbean leaders in Barbados. Each stop reminded us how much this vast region has changed in the last two decades and how its future is inextricably tied to our own.

We are connected to our Latin American neighbors by more than geography and history. We are also bound together by technology, trade and the forces of global economic integration. And we confront many of the same challenges, from drugs, crime and environmental decay to strengthening democracy throughout the region.

For decades, Central America was torn apart by civil wars, bloody coups, repression and poverty. With the historic signing of the peace accords in Guatemala in December 1996, the region is finally free of war and conflict. Democracy now exists in every country in Central America. Political and economic reforms are leading to new hope for lasting peace and increasing prosperity from the Pacific Ocean to the Caribbean.

From the moment I landed in Merida on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula to the day we left Bridgetown, Barbados, eight days later, I could see that many men and women are responsible for brightening the prospects for our hemisphere's future. The people of Merida welcomed me with a program of music and folkloric dance staged before one of the oldest churches in Mexico. Choruses sang in Spanish and Mayan, the language of the ancient culture that produced great pyramids like those I visited the next day at Uxmal.

In Merida, I met with several hundred women from across the country, many direct descendants of the Mayans, Aztecs and other indigenous people of MesoAmerica. Thanks to small loans they had received through microcredit projects, they were able to earn a living for themselves and their families selling goods as varied as ceramics, honey, coffee, hammocks and clothing.

These women, who might otherwise have been left on the outskirts of opportunity, were discovering their own potential to take control of their lives and their futures, not through a handout but through their own hard work. At the same time, they were helping to preserve their indigenous heritage, giving people the world over a chance to enjoy the products they create and becoming better integrated into the society and economy of Mexico.

I saw the same tremendous entrepreneurial spirit in Costa Rica at a forum sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development and the InterAmerican Development Bank. One woman had started a thriving business in rare orchids; another made clothing for children; and one man described how he and his father used small loans to become organic farmers.

Most memorable, however, was an Indian woman from Guatemala who proudly told a large crowd that she had started out selling mangoes on the street when she was 12. With microloans, she expanded her line of goods and now employs others. Her profits enabled her to send her children to school, including a son to the University of North Carolina.

Economic participation, which microenterprise ensures for countless poor men and women around the world, is a human right essential to the success of any democracy. But so too are all human rights, which have often been violated in Latin America, sometimes with the encouragement or indifference of my own country. To highlight the U.S. commitment to human rights, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and I visited the Institute for Human Rights in Costa Rica, which has dedicated itself to ensuring political and legal rights.

Throughout the region, men and women have risked -- and lost -- their lives to fight for freedom and social justice. Fortunately, their work and sacrifice contributed to Central America's movement away from the repressive regimes and human rights abuses of years past. Still, the transition to democracy remains incomplete -- particularly when it comes to the rights of women. Seated around a simple table, women from Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador reported about the obstacles they face, ranging from violence in and out of their homes to a lack of laws protecting them.

From Central America, we traveled to the Caribbean, a region from which many Americans trace their roots -- and to which many Americans return for vacations. Many nations there have been particularly hard hit by changes in the global economy. At a regional microenterprise forum, I announced a grant that, as part of the President's initiative to help the region, will expand Caribbean microcredit projects.

Luckily, the trip was not all business and meetings. Bill and I were able to spend one wonderful day relaxing on Barbados, which reminded us of our honeymoon. We slept, read, sunned and swam. He graduated from crutches to cane. And we came back refreshed and more convinced of the importance of strengthening our ties with our friends and neighbors in this hemisphere.

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May 13, 1997

DRAFT
Tues 5/13

DRAFT

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
COLUMN FOR PUBLICATION MAY 15, 1997
TALKING IT OVER/CREATORS SYNDICATE**

I first visited Mexico ~~Almost 22 years ago, when~~ Bill and I spent a week [?] ^{in Mexico} there for our honeymoon. Like most American tourists, we reveled in Mexico's rich history, lively culture, warm people and great food. (And like most Mexicans, we also honeymooned with our parents).

Over the years we've been fortunate to return to Mexico several times, most recently for ^{official} ~~a~~ state visit that also took us to summits of Central American leaders in Costa Rica and Caribbean leaders in Barbados. Each stop reminded us how much this vast region has changed in the last two decades, and how the rest of the Western Hemisphere's future is inextricably tied to our own.

Not only do we share a 2,000-mile border with Mexico, the United States now claims the fifth largest Hispanic population in the world. But we are connected to our ^{Latin American} ~~Southern~~ neighbors by more than geography and history. We are also bound together by technology, trade, and the forces of global economic integration. And we confront many of the same challenges, from drugs, crime and environmental decay to strengthening democracy throughout the region.

**PHOTOCOPY
HRC HANDWRITING**

With the historic signing of the peace accords in Guatemala in Dec 1996, the region is finally at peace. For decades, Central America was torn apart by civil wars, bloody coups,

repression and poverty. ~~Today challenges remain, but~~ Central America is a region swelling with opportunity. Democracy exists in every country. Political and economic reforms ^{are leading} have led to a new ^{hope for last few} era of peace ^{and economic} and prosperity from the Pacific Ocean to the Caribbean.

And, as I saw from the moment I landed in Merida on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula to the day we left Bridgetown, Barbados eight days later, there are many men and women responsible for brightening ~~the~~ prospects for the region's future.

^{The people of Merida ~~was~~ welcomed me with a program of music and dance staged before me.}
^{Some still speak Mayan as well as their native or first language.}
In the Yucatan, I met several hundred Mexican women, many direct descendants of the Mayans. Thanks to small loans they had received through ^{Artists and other indigenous people of Meso America;} microcredit projects, they were able to earn a living for themselves and their families making goods as varied as ceramics, honey, coffee, hammocks, and clothing. ^{displaying their wares} At I visited the stalls ^{of the women} I was struck ~~by~~ especially by how accomplished ^{the ancient culture which} ^{left to great pyramids with the} [Any specific example that was moving or memorable as you walked through their embroidery and painting were. the displays? Any additional color?]

^{I left on the outskirts of opportunity}
These women, who might otherwise have been ~~written off~~, were discovering their own potential to take control of their lives and their futures, not through a hand-out but through their own hard work. Not only are they becoming self-sufficient, they are helping to preserve their ^{the indigenous} Mayan heritage, and giving people the world over a chance to enjoy the products they create. ^{and becoming} better integrated into ^{the} society and economy of Mexico.

Central Am. Fin. (title) sponsored by USAID + IDB

I saw the same tremendous entrepreneurial spirit ^{at work} in Costa Rica. One woman had started a thriving business in rare orchids; another made ^{beautyne bridal dresses} clothing for children.

What they did could not have been more different. But what they achieved for themselves and their communities was remarkably similar: They had lifted

themselves out of poverty, enriching both their families and expanding the

prosperity of their nations. ^{It} I will never forget one Indian woman from Guatemala proudly telling a large crowd that she had started out

Economic participation, which microenterprise ensures for countless poor

^{people} women, is a human right essential to the success of any democracy. But so too are

~~all~~ human rights. ^{which have often been violated in Latin America, sometimes with the encouragement or indifference of my own country.}

A few days later, I joined Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at the ^{USID} ^{highlight} ~~the~~ ^{the} US commitment to human rights, Institute for Human Rights in Costa Rica to get an overview of the human rights

situation in Central America. For many years, the ^{which} Institute has dedicated itself to ^{the political and legal rights} ensuring that all citizens are able to participate politically and economically in the life of their countries.

Throughout the region, men and women have risked their lives to fight for ^{social justice} freedom and human rights. Fortunately, their work and sacrifice has ^{contributed to} enabled

Central America to ^{is movement away} come a long way from the repressive regimes and human rights abuses of years past. Still, the transition to democracy remains incomplete particularly when it comes to the rights of women.

Seated around a simple table, women from Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El

that his work not only helped his family's income but contributed to creating a sustainable environment for the land he loved.

other women in the street where he was 12 but, thanks to microcredit loans, learned her products were now in demand in many stores, supplying other people and sent her

in making a loan to him in 1985. A young woman from Costa Rica explained how microcredit benefited her and his father to become organic farmers. He started

PHOTOCOPY
HRC HANDWRITING

Salvador reported about the obstacles they continue to face. Too many women, they said, live in fear of violence and without access to family planning and the same legal protections as men. In Guatemala, for example, adultery is a crime for

women, but not for their husbands. Secretary Albright repeated her oft-stated belief that ^{oppression and} discrimination against women is not just cultural but From Central America we traveled to the Caribbean, a region from which

many Americans trace their roots -- and to which many Americans ^{return} venture for

vacations. In fact, I was interested to learn that George Washington went to

to visit his half-brother Lawrence who suffered from TB (?). That Barbados in 1751. It was his only trip outside of the continental United States, and he recorded all his activities in his diary. My husband and I

Although many Caribbean nations are still struggling to integrate fully into

the global economy, here again I saw innovative methods at work to help widen the circle of prosperity. [any details, vignettes? did you remember a donkey story, about the succession of microcredit and announced as part of the which no one else could hear?] In a meeting of (sponsored by) I heard

several of the poorest countries to human microcredit.

In ways large and small, the people of Mexico, Central America and the

Caribbean remind us that, as the President said, "our histories and our destinies are forever joined."

I, for one, came back prouder than ever that these thriving democratic countries are our next door neighbors.

The trip was not all business and meetings. Ben and I spent a wonderful day relaxing in Barbados. We slept, read, sunned, and swam.

for our sister that we ~~will~~ returned!

After seeing the beauty of the island and enjoying its hospitality, we ~~felt that we could not leave without having~~ understood how

After seeing the beauty of the island and enjoying its hospitality, we ~~felt that we could not leave without having~~

He graduated from Central to a law and...

Not quite a second
honeyman but
it felt
like it.

PHOTOCOPY
HRC HANDWRITING

Came back not very surprised but even
more convinced of the importance of ^{strengthening} ~~our~~ our
ties with our friends and neighbors in this hemisphere.

18TH STORY of Level 1 printed in FULL format.

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THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

April 27, 1997 Sunday, Final Chaser

SECTION: TRAVEL; Pg. T10

LENGTH: 759 words

HEADLINE: BARBADOS CANNOT TELL A LIE: WASHINGTON DID SLEEP THERE;
ISLAND ALSO BOASTS WRONG-WAY HORSE RACES, FLYING FISH

BYLINE: By Jay Clarke, Miami Herald

BODY:

George Washington slept in many places, but only once outside what was to become the United States.

That was in the winter of 1751, when 19-year-old Washington accompanied his half-brother, Lawrence, to Barbados. Lawrence, seriously ill with tuberculosis, had been told to go to a warm climate for his health.

Now, a movement has begun to restore the house where the brothers stayed. Backers see President Clinton's visit to Barbados in early May as possibly boosting interest.

"We hope the house can be acquired from its present owners and restored," said Henry Fraser, immediate past president of the Barbados National Trust.

He hopes Clinton's visit will be a catalyst.

"We think the mere fact that Washington spent two months here creates a very strong bond between our two nations," Fraser said. "We see the Clinton visit as reinforcing that bond."

For years, the Crofton house at the corner of Bay Street and Chelsea Road in Bridgetown was believed to be the one in which Washington slept. However, in the 1980s, it was determined that the Bush Hill House, close to the former headquarters of Britain's West Indies Regiment, was the correct one. Owned by the Barbados Light and Power Corp., the house most recently was used as a data processing center.

During his seven-week stay there, Washington contracted smallpox, an event that left his face scarred for life but may have saved his country.

"The immunity he gained saved him from possible death in (the smallpox epidemic at) Valley Forge," Fraser said. "We speculate on what might have happened to the country had Washington not survived."

Clinton is to visit Barbados next month, but meetings with political leaders will keep him busy, so he'll probably see little of this easternmost of all Caribbean islands, particularly if he's still on crutches.

That's a pity, because Barbados has a personality quite distinct from the rest of the region.

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC, April 27, 1997

The island has always been regarded as the most English in the Caribbean. Afternoon tea and cricket are favored traditions. Barristers wear white wigs, as they do in England, and the governor-general is escorted by horse guards when she visits Parliament. Barbadians (known as Bajans) have the highest literacy rate in the Caribbean and a lively interest in politics.

Classy hotels like Sandy Lane, Royal Pavilion and Glitter Bay occupy beachside enclaves on the trendy Caribbean side of the island, whose waters are much calmer than on the Atlantic side.

Sandy Lane used to have the only 18-hole golf course on the island, but another, the Royal Westmoreland, now has opened. Fine restaurants are found there, too, some serving such Bajan specialties as flying fish.

Horse racing is a passion, although the steeds run clockwise around the track, opposite the direction they run in the United States. A day at the races here is more than a betting opportunity. It's a dressy social occasion.

Serious shoppers hunt for bargains in the newly upgraded duty-free shopping center at the cruise port. Shoppers can also browse in Bridgetown, the capital, taking advantage of the liberal duty-free regulations: Simply show your passport and outgoing air or cruise ticket and the stores will sell you goods at the duty-free price, cash and carry. Crystal, china, linens and the excellent Barbadian rum are among the better buys.

Barbados shows another face in the countryside.

Narrow roads wind through sugar-cane fields and wooded areas. Great boulders dot the beach at Bathsheba on the Atlantic coast, where big rollers create a mist of spray when they crash onto the sands. Pleasing panoramas lay before visitors in the "Scotland District," the undulating terrain in the more rugged northern end of the island.

Here, visitors also can explore Harrison's Cave, a gorgeous underground cavern with streams, waterfalls and stunning rock formations.

Closer to the southern end of Barbados, another great island view is gained from St. Johns Church, built in 1835 atop an 825-foot hill.

Although it all depends on the weather, visitors to Barbados have a good shot at seeing one of the world's more elusive phenomena, the green flash.

This is not a comic-book character but a bright-green, laserlike flash of light emitted at the instant the last bright arc of the sun dips below the horizon. Caused by refraction as the sun's light passes through the earth's atmosphere, the green flash is seen only when the horizon is cloudless.

Flying fish, wrong-way horse racing, green flashes - Barbados is quite a tight little island.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: April 29, 1997

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Mexico City, Mexico)

For Immediate Release

May 6, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN EXCHANGE OF TOASTS

Presidential Palace
Mexico City, Mexico

10:09 P.M. (L)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Mr. President, Mrs. Zedillo, members of the Mexican Cabinet and other distinguished public servants, citizens of Mexico, on behalf of Hillary, on all the members of our delegation, from the administration and the Congress, I, first, thank you for the graciousness and warmth with which you have welcomed us.

We live side by side as neighbors. We work together day in and day out as partners. But the warmth of your reception has reminded us today that we are also close friends.

Just before the dinner began, President and Mrs. Zedillo took Hillary and me to see the magnificent murals of Diego Rivera that adorn this great palace. They are very moving works. Along with the paintings of Orozco and Siqueiros, they represent the peak of artistic achievement in this century and one of the many contributions of Mexico to the culture of the world. Anyone who has seen it knows that the power of Rivera's "Epic of the Mexico People in Their Struggle for Freedom and Independence" comes from more than mere technical skill. In this grand work we see the proud spirit of Mexico's revolution and Mexico's heart.

Instantly, I saw Rivera's extraordinary love of the Mexican people, the same passion which then and now inspires Mexico's journey toward a better and freer society. Rivera never actually finished his "Epic," and perhaps that is fitting because the journey of every nation to increase the freedom of its people, the labor at the very heart of democracy, never ends.

I am delighted to be in Mexico at another time when this struggle is making a dramatic stride forward. Mexico's leaders and political parties are opening the doors of democracy wider

than ever. New citizen groups have sown the seeds of a vibrant civil society that promises to deliver to all Mexicans a better and freer future.

Mr. President, you reminded us that it was in this palace where Benito Juarez corresponded with Abraham Lincoln. Our President, Mr. Lincoln, who many of us consider to be our greatest President, called in the United States in his time for a new birth of freedom. The murals here remind us here that the birth of freedom is more than a matter of improving our political systems. We must also strive to see that our citizens are free from want and hunger, free from the dangers our new age brings, and free to make the most of their own lives.

The partnership we seek with Mexico is one that will advance that kind of freedom -- here and throughout the Americas. We want to work together to lay the foundation of an enduring prosperity. We want to join together to improve the air and water we share. We want to work to turn our border into a region of growth, to defeat disease, to defeat the threat of drugs, organized crime, and corruption.

Mr. President, we can succeed because we have forged a relationship as broad and deep as that which exists between any two nations. And today, we have made important progress. We are answering the demands of our time, advancing the common goals of our people, serving a friendship that is at the heart of what we all want for our future. In so doing, we honor the legacy of Benito Juarez and Abraham Lincoln and the constant quest for a new birth of freedom.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you now to join with me in toasting President and Mrs. Zedillo and their family, to partnership of our nations and the new day of freedom it will bring to the friends and neighbors of our shared continent.

(The toast is offered.) (Applause.)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Mexico City, Mexico)

For Immediate Release

May 6, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT ARRIVAL CEREMONY

Campo Marte
Mexico City, Mexico

9:28 A.M. (L)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: President and Mrs. Zedillo, members of the Mexican government, citizens of Mexico, saludos, amigos. I am delighted to be in Mexico, rich with history, culture and beauty, and most of all, a great and good people who have given so much to the world.

In 1943, the Presidents of our countries exchanged visits in Monterey and Corpus Christi, launching a tradition of presidential meetings we carry forward today. President Roosevelt noted, in that dark night of war, that our people had found they had common aspirations and could work for a common objective. Today, at the dawn of a new century, in a very different time, we still have common aspirations, and we must work for a common objective, for the partnership between our two great nations has never been more important.

Powerful currents of commerce and culture pull us closer together. A growing convergence of values and vision gives our friendship new force. Mexico is opening democracy's doors, embarking on bold economic reform, decentralizing power, and giving new voice to its citizens, communities and regions.

The success of Mexico's endeavors matters to the United States of America. Our nations share far more than a common border; we share common challenges and common opportunities as we move toward a new century. We must meet the future together, respecting each other's uniqueness, but knowing that in today's world cooperation is the surest path to security, prosperity and peace.

We are reaping the benefits of more open trade and working toward wider communities of stable, free-market democracies throughout the Americas.

We want a 21st century where economic growth creates more and better jobs, where a good education and a clean environment are the birthright of every child, where we conquer our common enemies of drugs and crimes, where accountable governments provide the tools for people to make the most of their own lives. Our challenges are great, but so is our resolve.

President Zedillo, I thank you for taking some time last night to show me through the remarkable museum containing the ancient heritage of Mexico. Here in the heart of modern Mexico, the remnants of a remarkable ancient civilization rise up through the city's foundations. Your great writer, Carlos Fuentes, has written, "The greatness of Mexico is that its past is always alive." But, Mr. President, just as alive and just as great is the vitality of Mexico's present and the promise of its future.

I have seen it in the bold leadership you have exerted, in the vibrant debate going on in your country, in the strong efforts made by the ordinary citizens of Mexico. Mexico's promise for the future is seen in the hands of its working people, in the efforts of those working to deepen democracy, in the talent of its writers and artists, and most of all, in the faces of the children here today.

Mr. President, our histories and our destinies are forever joined. Let us reach across our common frontier to embrace our tomorrows together, to enter the 21st century as valued partners and trusted friends.

Again, thank you for making Hillary and me and our party feel so welcome. And thank you for the future we are building together. (Applause.)

END

9:37 A.M. (L)

5/8/97 noon

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS MICROENTERPRISE SUMMIT
SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA
MAY 8, 1997**

Regional Consultative Forum on MicroE - Lessons & Oppities

Acknowledgments: Mrs. Figueres [Fee-Gay-Raise], President Iglesias [Ee-gl原因-see-ahs], Mark Schneider, Costa Rica for the remarkable role you have played in bringing peace to Central America and expanding human rights in the region. This remarkable event is made all the more remarkable by its sponsors -- a partnership between the Inter-American Development Bank and USAID.

We gather today because we believe that seemingly small steps can create lasting, positive change in the lives of all people, and especially women. That is, we believe in the power ^{of} microenterprise.

Few initiatives could be better suited to our time. Or more important.

Think back just a few years. It was not so long ago that this region was torn apart by conflict. The violence extended far beyond any war zone -- it kept children out of school, it forced families from their homes, it took the life out of economies. It seemed the terror would never stop.

But it did. Now Central America is at peace. The accords just signed in Guatemala mark the end of one country's suffering and the beginning of an entire region's stability.

This transformation would never have been possible without the vision of your leaders and your governments. But it also would never have been possible without the simple, courageous acts of individuals -- one day someone decided to put down a gun; another day, two people of opposing views chose to have a conversation in which they actually listened to each other.

Not only have the people of Central America chosen peace over conflict -- they have also chosen democracy over other forms of government. For the first time in 40 years, every country in the region has selected its government in free and fair elections.

It is also appropriate that we gather to discuss microenterprise during the summit of regional leaders -- for these leaders have committed themselves to moving their countries from tightly controlled economies to free and open markets that give full life and scope to human endeavor. Indeed, there is no better expression of their commitment than the ^{"San Jose Declaration"}~~joint declaration~~ they signed this morning, which emphasizes the importance of microenterprise in the region.

Central America is undergoing an economic and democratic renewal. But as important as that renewal is the commitment, represented by those of you here -- by citizens, private organizations and governments alike -- to extend its benefits to those whom it has not yet touched.

For microenterprise allows you to build on your progress at all levels. By empowering people at the grassroots, it deepens the commitment of your citizens to democracy. By providing credit to the poor, it allows ever-more men and women to pull themselves out of poverty and to enter the economic mainstream. By offering new opportunities to women, it moves us all closer to making real the dream of equality.

I want to draw special attention to this last idea. Microcredit is available to both men and women. But I think we would all agree that it is of special benefit to women.

Women are the majority in every country represented here today. Yet in my country, in your countries and in countries around the world, too many women still live on the outskirts of opportunity. Not only is that morally wrong -- it is self-defeating. For we are cutting ourselves off from the huge, untapped reservoir of potential that women represent.

A democracy without the full participation of women is a contradiction in terms. Participation goes far beyond being able to walk into a voting booth or even to run for office. Wherever women are undervalued, underpaid, undereducated, under-represented, fed less, fed worse, not heard -- we cannot sustain the democratic values and the way of life we have come to cherish.

Women must have a real place at the table -- and not just when it is time to clear the dishes. Women and girls must have access to what I call the tools of opportunity: education, decent health care, legal protections, and credit -- so they can participate in the economic lives of their countries.

That, as you know, is where microenterprise comes in.

I have had many experts in economics around the world say to me that women's work is not part of the economies of countries.

And yet I have seen with my own eyes, as I have traveled through urban and rural areas alike, something that will surprise none of you: Women are working! Their contributions may not be counted in the gross domestic product of their societies, but they are definitely working. And that work is of value. I have always believed that if women got up tomorrow and announced that they would not work - - inside or outside the home -- the economies of every country would collapse.

What's wonderful about microcredit is that it completely shatters this mythology. Microcredit is a stroke of genius precisely because it brings out into the open and builds on skills that are already there, but which for too long have gone unrecognized by governments, banks, and international aid organizations. Anyone who has seen a mother, night after night, stretch leftovers into a meal to feed her children...anyone who has seen a woman piece together a quilt from the remnants of old clothes...knows the talent women have had to have for making the very best choices out of very little material.

In my country, there was a tradition of something called “egg money.” Women who lived on farms and were fortunate enough to have chickens would contribute to their families and their economies by selling eggs by the side of the road, or out the back door of their homes. The small amount they brought in every week would accumulate -- and one day that money would pay for a few more chickens, new clothes, maybe even an education.

Whether it is “egg money” or the countless other efforts of women around the world to turn their talents into better lives, there is a wealth of expertise and energy out there -- and microenterprise has the power to liberate it.

Moreover, it is able to do so without huge investments in capital, massive government programs, or expensive technology. In an era of greater competition and scarcer resources, microcredit represents a new understanding of how we can equip people on the margins of society with the tools they need to take control of their lives.

Microenterprise is important for another reason. I think we have all wondered how we can promote development without sacrificing traditional values. Well, microenterprise offers a partial answer, for it is sustained by those very values that have stood us so well for so long: Hard work, ingenuity, sacrifice, a desire for a better life.

Perhaps that is why this idea travels so well. Around the world, we've seen the power of microcredit to transform the lives of individual loan recipients, their families, and their communities. The concept is universal -- even if its applications are different.

For example, my first experience with microcredit came via Mohammed Yunus. In 1986, he came to Little Rock to help my husband and me understand how the lessons of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh could be applied to development in Arkansas. With his guidance, we started the Good Faith Funds, which is still improving the lives of some of the poorest people in one of the poorest states in my country.

It is for this reason that I am so pleased to take part in this gathering. By bringing together so many experts from Central America, we will be able to learn from each other's challenges and achievements and apply those lessons within our own borders. We will be able to build upon the pledge made by the leaders who took part in the Summit of the Americas in Miami in 1994: To strengthen support for microenterprise as "a key component of sustainable and equitable development." And we will be able to extend the progress we made at the microcredit summit many of you attended in Washington earlier this year.

With that in mind, ~~I would like~~ I would like to share with you some of what I have heard and seen as I have visited microcredit ventures around the world. I would like to talk specifically about initiatives here in the Americas. And I would like to underscore with each the wide spectrum of returns microenterprise can yield.

The breadth of that spectrum was never clearer than this morning, when I had the opportunity to talk with Costa Ricans about their experiences with microenterprise. These people -- mostly women -- had started an astonishing range of businesses. One woman grew corn; another orchids. One opened a laundry, another made clothing for children.

What they did could not have been more different -- what they achieved for themselves and their communities was remarkably similar. They spoke of increased self-esteem -- the businesses they started with small loans taught them to believe in themselves. This confidence, in turn, inspired fuller citizenship and greater involvement in public affairs. These people built assets as well as incomes -- one bought a home, another paid for her child's education. They described how their loans helped to expand the circle of prosperity in their communities -- microbusinesses grew into small businesses, which hired new employees and purchased ever-more raw materials from vendors. And they talked of how microenterprise banks are invaluable not just because they make credit available, but because they train recipients on how to make the best use of that credit.

What I saw in Costa Rica underscored what I have been privileged to see throughout the Americas. I have seen how microenterprise can literally change a person's life. For example, in Santiago, Chile, I went to a community bank that relies on peer networks to promote and sustain small businesses. In a local market, women felt so proud to be involved that they put up matching yellow and blue awnings to show they were part of the organization.

Most memorable to me was a woman -- a seamstress -- who, with a small loan, was able to buy a high-speed sewing machine. That loan enabled her to start a small clothing business and make a living. She told me that the new sewing machine meant so much that she couldn't stop kissing it. She felt, and these are her words, "like a caged bird set free."

I have seen how microenterprise makes economic sense for everyone -- including private banks. In La Paz Bolivia, I had the chance to visit BancoSol, the largest bank in Bolivia and the first commercial bank in the world completely dedicated to microlending. Its success in one of the world's poorest countries speaks volumes about the potential of microcredit. The default rate is about 2.2%. That's a rate any bank in any country would be proud to have.

I have seen how microenterprise can help sustain a culture. Earlier this week in Mexico, I met with women in Merida who, through small loans, were able to start businesses to sell the beautiful arts and crafts they made. In drawing on the great Mayan culture of the Yucatan, not only were they supporting their families, they were also keeping alive their heritage and creating art that people the world over can appreciate.

Finally, I have seen how microenterprise has the power to bring us together and transform lives in developing countries and in advanced economies around the world. In Managua, Nicaragua I went to gathering of women who are small borrowers at the FINCA bank. I should add that this meeting took place in November of 1995 -- shortly after the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, where the platform of action included a commitment to microcredit.

About 30 women described how they had received small loans to start neighborhood bakeries and seamstress shops. One woman was selling mosquito netting and another was selling auto parts door-to-door.

At the end of their presentations, I asked them if they had any questions. One woman stood up and asked me to tell her about women I had met at a microcredit organization in India. She wanted to know what her counterparts a world away were spending money on and what businesses they were starting. At that moment, I knew that microcredit was transforming lives around the globe.

Everything I have seen since has underscored that belief. This year alone, I have visited FINCA outposts in both Kampala, Uganda **and** in Washington, D.C. -- just a couple of miles away from the White House. In Cape Town, South Africa, I met with formerly homeless women who were able to build their first houses because of financing techniques they had borrowed from **yet another** initiative in India.

All in all, microcredit is one of the best investments we can make to lift people out of poverty and to give them hope. I am proud that USAID is one of the largest supporters of microenterprise in the region. In fact, it has invested in virtually every project I mentioned today. And I am pleased that we will build on our commitment -- and respond to the urging of the region's leaders in their joint declaration this morning -- by committing \$40 million in USAID funding for microenterprise in the region this year and \$200 million over the next 5 years.

More importantly, USAID is not alone. It works in partnership with many outstanding NGOs. I want to add, too, how pleased I am that increasing numbers of commercial banks are joining this effort -- committing their resources to sparking microenterprise development.

Democracy depends as much on the internalization of values as it does on institutions like courts and congresses. Microcredit can play a crucial role in that process. If people believe they have a stake in their economies, they are more likely to believe they have a role to play in choosing their leaders. If people are able to improve their lives, then we have a good shot at disrupting the tragic cycle of poverty and violence that is an affront to any civil society. If a young girl can grow up with a mother who is rewarded fairly for her hard work -- well, then that girl has every reason in the world to believe that she will have the opportunity to live up to her God-given promise.

Microcredit isn't going to create another Microsoft -- but it can support democracy. And that sounds pretty good to me.

Tomorrow, I will travel with President Clinton to Barbados. And while I am eager to spend a little time walking on the beach, I am also looking forward to meeting with leaders from the region -- representatives from microcredit organizations, the Caribbean Development Bank, USAID and others -- to talk about ways to expand credit in the Caribbean basin. You can be certain that I will draw on what I have learned here.

As I look out at this room, I am struck by the fact that despite our differences -- differences which are as apparent as the countries we come from and the languages we speak; differences which are as subtle as the way we carry a newborn or greet a friend -- we all want pretty much the same thing. We want to feel safe. We want peace. We want to have the opportunity to make the most of our lives. We want justice, equality, and freedom. And we want this -- and more -- for our children. Microenterprise, in its own quiet, modest way, can help us create that future.

Let's get to work.

C:\work\ms\11\HR2

Opening Remarks HRC
Inter-American Institute of Human Rights
San Jose, Costa Rica
May 8, 1966

--With the end of the cold war, the end of civil conflict and the democratic reawakening, the massive human rights violations of the 70s and 80s are thankfully behind us.

--But we must always be vigilant and build institutions that guarantee the rule of law and the protection of individual rights.

--Secretary Albright and I wanted to come here because we know the unique leadership role the Institute played in the defense of human rights when it took enormous courage to do so. We know that many of our your colleagues spoke out against human rights abuse when it was dangerous to do so. They were threatened but they spoke out anyway. In so doing, they saved countless lives and they helped make repression unacceptable.

--You continue to lead today in defending basic rights for all. As I said in Beijing, "Women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights." I believe that deeply and I know that you do as well.

--We look forward to learning the details of the Institute's current work and its plans for the future. We all believe that that the 21st century can and must be a century where respect for

human rights becomes the norm in all countries, north and south, east and west.

--We also look forward to hear some of the specific human rights problems which continue to exist in the region, including those which affect women and children, such as domestic violence, child labor and obstacles to women's political participation and what is being done to address these challenges.

--We know that free elections are fundamental to democracy, but not sufficient. The real challenge lies in deepening democracy, ensuring that democratic roots grow deep into civil society.

--And so we look forward to hearing your thoughts on ways to energize democracy, particularly with regard to the role of education and of women.

These problems are not unique to Central America, but we want to hear how you are confronting them as you work to build more open, free and just societies.

And let me tell you that the presence here today of the Secretary of State should be as strong a statement as you could ask for not only a policy concern of this Administration but a personal concern of the people who are conducting that policy.

Love is
church lit up
choirs, dancers,
flame

Knowing we belong together
we are so connected

How many trace roots to Thee & C. O. O.
5th largest Hisp - pop - of
any country in the world

5/9/97

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS MICROENTERPRISE SUMMIT
BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS
MAY 10, 1997**

St Lucia (batteries - plantains - donkey)
St Vincent & the Grenadines (personal / belief in people)
Grenada (Pip & Tawana) Mrs Arthur / Indust Dev Corp. of Grenada
Dominica

Acknowledgments: Sir Neville Nichols; members of the Caribbean Development Bank; National Development Foundations; USAID; Peace Corps [work on microenterprise with Carib Indians -- last remaining indigenous group in Eastern Caribbean].

This is one happy day. I am in beautiful Barbados. And I get to learn about and discuss microenterprise. It doesn't get much better than that.

I think we would all agree that this discussion could not come at a more important time. For the people of the Caribbean, life is considerably different from the tranquil, care-free, and undeniably lovely environment many of us encounter when we vacation at your resorts.

The entire world is undergoing a profound economic transformation. The information revolution, increased global competition, rapidly opening markets are forever altering the way we work and do business. This change has disrupted lives and economies. And while I firmly believe that it is leading to a freer, more prosperous age, I also know that this transition has not been easy -- particularly for smaller economies and particularly for the economies of the Caribbean. Despite your best efforts, the force of this upheaval has pushed some of your people further away from prosperity's horizon.

PHOTOCOPY
HRC HANDWRITING

The countries of Caribbean and the United States are neighbors. Millions of Americans trace their heritage to these islands. We are united not only by a common body of water, but also by a history of democratic and economic partnership. We will be partners in this transition, too. We will meet its challenges. And we will come through it stronger than ever.

My husband's visit here is an expression of that commitment. So, too, is the Partnership for Prosperity and Security in the Caribbean he announced earlier today. As part of that initiative, the United States will commit \$2 million to help those Eastern Caribbean countries that are having the hardest time weathering this economic transformation -- particularly the Windward Islands of Dominica, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, and Grenada. This American investment will support Caribbean-based initiatives that are already in place and that are already making a difference -- efforts to expand and diversify trade, strengthen social services, promote education -- and, of special importance to those of us gathered here today, to foster microenterprise.

Under the President's plan, the United States Agency for International Development will award a grant of \$500,000 for microenterprise assistance. These funds will go to each country's National Development Foundation. The foundations, in turn, will then make loans to deserving entrepreneurs. We know that loans as small as \$100 can make all the difference in the world for someone who has never been able to get credit. Let me add that I very much hope that the Caribbean Development Bank, with its wealth of expertise in this area, will help us to coordinate the overall effort.

The funding the President announced today builds on the work that USAID has been doing to promote microenterprise in the region for the last 20 years. I am proud that USAID has been one of the earliest, strongest and largest supporters of microenterprise in the hemisphere. By working in partnership with the CDB and the foundations, we are building on a proven strategy. We are not reinventing the wheel here -- we are just trying to make it turn a lot faster.

There is no better investment than microenterprise. For microenterprise, as we heard from the people who just spoke, can literally lift people up and transform their lives.

By empowering people at the grassroots, it deepens the commitment of a country's citizens to democracy. By providing credit to the poor, it allows ever-more men and women to pull themselves out of poverty and to enter the economic mainstream. By offering new opportunities to women, it moves us all closer to making real the dream of equality.

I want to draw special attention to this last idea. Microcredit is available to both men and women. But I think we would all agree that it is of special benefit to women.

Though the countries of the Caribbean have made real strides in seeing to it that women receive the same educational opportunities as men, we know that here, and in my country and around the world, too many women still live on the outskirts of opportunity. Not only is that morally wrong -- it is self-defeating. For we are cutting ourselves off from the huge, untapped reservoir of potential that women represent.

A democracy without the full participation of women is a contradiction in terms. Participation goes far beyond being able to walk into a voting booth or even to run for office. Wherever women are undervalued, underpaid, undereducated, under-represented, fed less, fed worse, not heard -- we cannot sustain the democratic values and the way of life we have come to cherish.

Women must have a real place at the table -- and not just when it is time to clear the dishes. Women and girls must have access to what I call the tools of opportunity: education, decent health care, legal protections, and credit -- so they can participate in the economic lives of their countries.

That, as you know, is where microenterprise comes in.

I have had many experts in economics around the world say to me that women's work is not part of the economies of countries.

And yet I have seen with my own eyes, as I have traveled through urban and rural areas alike, something that will surprise none of you: Women are working! Their contributions may not be counted in the gross domestic product of their societies, but they are definitely working. And that work is of value. I have always believed that if women got up tomorrow and announced that they would not work -- inside or outside the home -- the economies of every country would collapse.

What's wonderful about microcredit is that it completely shatters this mythology. Microcredit is a stroke of genius precisely because it brings out into the open and builds on skills that are already there, but which for too long have gone unrecognized by governments, banks, and international aid organizations. Anyone who has seen a mother, night after night, stretch leftovers into a meal to feed her children...anyone who has seen a woman piece together a quilt from the remnants of old clothes...knows the talent women have had to have for making the very best choices out of very little material.

There is a wealth of expertise and energy out there -- and microenterprise has the power to liberate it. Moreover, it is able to do so without huge investments in capital, massive government programs, or expensive technology. In an era of greater competition and scarcer resources, microcredit represents a new understanding of how we can equip people on the margins of society with the tools they need to take control of their lives.

Perhaps that is why this idea travels so well. Around the world, we've seen the power of microcredit to transform the lives of individual loan recipients, their families, and their communities. The concept is universal -- even if its applications are different.

For example, my first experience with microcredit came via Mohammed Yunus. In 1986, he came to Little Rock to help my husband and me understand how the lessons of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh could be applied to development in Arkansas. With his guidance, we started the Good Faith Fund, which is still improving the lives of some of the poorest people in one of the poorest states in my country.

And that was only the beginning. Since then -- in India, in Uganda, in Bangladesh, in Bolivia, in Washington, D.C., and place in-between -- I have been privileged to see over and over again how a modest investment in microcredit can yield enormous returns.

That was certainly my experience in Costa Rica just the other day. At a roundtable and later at a conference, I met with people -- mostly women -- who had started an astonishing range of businesses. One woman opened a laundry; another grew orchids. One made wedding dresses; another, clothing for children.

What they did could not have been more different -- but what they achieved for themselves and their communities was remarkably similar. They spoke of increased self-esteem -- the businesses they started with small loans taught them to believe in themselves. This confidence, in turn, inspired fuller citizenship and greater involvement in public affairs. These people built assets as well as incomes -- one bought a home, another paid for her child's education. They also described how their loans helped to expand the circle of prosperity in their communities -- microbusinesses grew into small businesses, which hired new employees and purchased ever-more raw materials from vendors. And they talked of how microenterprise banks are invaluable not just because they make credit available, but because they train recipients on how to make the best use of that credit.

They also did something that seems to be a habit among microenterprise people the world over: They wanted to know about other microenterprise efforts.

I will always remember a group of women I met at a FINCA bank in Managua. After these women described the businesses they had started, I asked them if they had any questions. One woman stood up and asked me to tell her about women I had met at a microcredit organization in India. She wanted to know what her counterparts a world away were spending money on and what businesses they were starting. At that moment, I knew that microcredit was transforming lives around the globe.

Everything I have seen since has underscored that belief. In Cape Town, South Africa, for example, I met with formerly homeless women who were able to build their first houses because of financing techniques they had learned from **yet another** initiative in India.

In closing, I'd like to make one last point. Until recently, the efforts we are talking about today have been sustained almost entirely by institutions outside the formal banking system. As one woman in Denver told me, "Some of the best ideas in the world die in bank parking lots." But fortunately, the success of microenterprise is slowly getting the attention of the traditional banks. It's easy to understand why. Microentrepreneurs repay their loans. The default rate in the region is well under 10%. That's a rate any bank in any country would be proud to have.

I hope increasing numbers of commercial banks commit their resources to sparking microenterprise development. And I applaud the cutting-edge efforts of the Bank of Nova Scotia in Guyana and the Workers Bank of Jamaica, which is now using its post-office banking network -- a network that reaches 96,000 people in hundreds of rural communities -- to provide microcredit loans.

Democracy depends as much on the internalization of values as it does on institutions like courts and congresses. Microcredit can play a crucial role in that process. If people believe they have a stake in their economies, they are more likely to believe they have a role to play in choosing their leaders. If people are able to improve their lives, then we have a good shot at disrupting the tragic cycle of poverty and violence that is an affront to any civil society. If a young girl can grow up with a mother who is rewarded fairly for her hard work -- well, then that girl has every reason in the world to believe that she will have the opportunity to live up to her God-given promise.

Microcredit probably isn't going to create another Microsoft -- but it will strengthen democracy and expand economic opportunity. And that sounds pretty good to me.

As I look out at this room, I am struck by the fact that despite the differences that separate us, we all want pretty much the same thing. We want to feel safe. We want peace. We want to have the opportunity to make the most of our lives. We want justice, equality, and freedom. And we want this -- and more -- for our children. Microenterprise, in its own quiet, modest way, can help us create that future. If we work together.

~~Let's get going.~~

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(San Jose, Costa Rica)

For Immediate Release

May 8, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT WELCOMING CEREMONY OF
CENTRAL AMERICAN LEADERS SUMMIT

National Theater Plaza
San Jose, Costa Rica

10:27 A.M. (L)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thank you very much. President Figueres, thank you for bringing us all together. And to my fellow leaders from Central America and the Dominican Republic, thank you for coming. To all of you, to our distinguished guests, to all Ticos and all the people of Central America, let me say, es realmente un nuevo dia. (Applause.)

Less than a decade ago, much of the Americas was still dominated by civil war, repression and hopeless poverty. Today, we celebrate the advance of peace, growing prosperity and freedom across our hemisphere. And we honor the remarkable men and women of Central America who helped to lead the way.

When the history of our region and our time is written, it will record your courage and your strength in ending four decades of conflict, braving the threat of bombs and bullets to cast ballots, embracing the challenge of economic reform, and opening the door to a new era of partnership among all our nations.

President Figueres, in that epic struggle, Costa Rica, this nation of brothers, has been a wise leader and set a powerful example. Waging peace as tenaciously as others have waged war, Costa Rica has shown that a country does not need an army to be strong. (Applause.) We thank Costa Rica and its leaders for building a vibrant democracy that takes care of its citizens and shoulders its responsibilities in the world.

Three years ago, our hemisphere's 34 democracies met in Miami at the historic Summit of the Americas to secure the hard-won gains our nations have made, and to make them work for

all our people. Today in San Jose, in the first summit between the leaders of the United States, Central America and the Dominican Republic in almost three decades, we stand before you united in our course determined to advance together to help the daily lives of our people in better jobs, safer streets, cleaner air, brighter hopes for our children and their future.

We are here to help our economies grow, and to grow closer by opening our markets, protecting our workers and sharing more fairly the benefits of prosperity. We are here to give all our people the tools to succeed in the global economy by making good education the birthright of every citizen of every country here. (Applause.)

We are here to strengthen our democracies by standing against the criminals, the drug traffickers, the smugglers who exploit open borders to threaten open societies and we are here to protect our future by launching new efforts to prevent pollution and protect our precious natural environment.

When President Kennedy came to Costa Rica more than three decades ago, he said, "Every generation of the Americas has shaped new goals for democracy to suit the demands of a new age. Our generation must meet that challenge, and we must do it together. We know that we must not be just neighbors, but real partners, working together in a spirit of friendship, equality and mutual respect."

My fellow citizens of the Americas, that is the partnership we have come here to build. Here in the heart of our hemisphere let us go forward into a bright new century full of unlimited possibilities for our young, knowing that to realize those possibilities we must go forward together.

Thank you. (Applause.)

END

10:35 A.M. (L)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Mexico City, Mexico)

For Immediate Release

May 7, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF MEXICO

National Auditorium
Mexico City, Mexico

11:21 A.M. (L)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mr. President, for the wisdom of your words, for the warmth of your personal expression, and for the great generosity with which the people of Mexico have received my wife and our delegation, the members of the administration and the members of Congress. We thank all those who have been a part of that in the Mexican government, throughout the political system and citizens at large.

I am honored to speak today in the heart of this magnificent capital, where Teotihuacan and Aztec civilizations flourished, where one of the world's greatest cities grew up centuries before the first English tents were pitched in Jamestown, Virginia, or Plymouth, Massachusetts. I'm, frankly, a little envious that Hillary got to spend an extra day here, and I want to thank those who are responsible for the wonderful welcome she received in the Yucatan.

Almost 22 years ago now, Hillary and I came to Mexico for our honeymoon. Mexico won our hearts then, but now as then, me encanta Mexico. (Applause.)

I come here today to celebrate the ties that bind the United States and Mexico and to help set a course to strengthen them for the age of possibility before us as we enter the 21st century. Our nations and our hemisphere stand at a crossroads as hopeful as the time when Hidalgo and Morelos lit the torch of liberty for Mexico almost two centuries ago.

Democracy has swept every country but one in the Americas, giving people a vote and a voice in their future. Decades of coups and civil wars have given way to stability, to peace, to free markets and to the search for social justice and a cleaner environment. The electricity of change is surging throughout our hemisphere and nowhere more hopefully than Mexico.

I congratulate the Mexican people for carrying forward bold political reforms that will lead in July to the most intensely contested elections in your history. We know from our own 220-year experiment that democracy is hard work. It must be defended every day. But it is worth the effort, for it has produced more opportunity for people to make the most of their own lives than all its rivals.

Four years ago, in this very place, we began a grand common effort to secure democracies gains in our hemisphere for all our people. On behalf of my administration, Vice President Gore here invited the nations of our hemisphere to the Summit of the Americas in Miami. There we set an ambitious agenda to create free trade throughout the hemisphere and to cooperate on a host of other issues with the goal of fulfilling the age old dream of building a truly democratic and prosperous family of the Americas in the 21st century.

Revolutionary forces of integration, and technology and trade, and travel and communications are shaping our times and bringing us all closer together. The stroke of a computer key sends ideas, information and money across the planet at lightening speed. Every day we use products that are dreamed up in one country, financed in another, manufactured in a third, with parts made in still other countries, and then sold all over the world. Like it or not, we are becoming more interdependent. And we see that, too, on the negative side, as when a stock market crash, an environmental disaster, or a dread disease in one country sends shock waves deeply felt far beyond its borders.

While economic integration is inevitable, its shape and its reach depend upon our response to it. In both our countries, there are some who throw up walls of protection to ward off the challenge of change. But more and more, people here and the United States and throughout the Americas understand that openness, competition, and the flow of ideas and culture can improve the lives of all our people, if we ensure that these forces work for, and not against, all our people.

With our long border, rich history, and complex challenges, Mexico and the United States have a special responsibility to work together to seize the opportunities and defeat the dangers of this time. Our partnership for freedom and democracy and for prosperity, and our partnership against drugs, organized crime, environmental decay, and social injustice is fundamental to the future of the American people and to the future of the Mexican people.

To succeed, this partnership must be rooted in a spirit of mutual respect. Your great leader, Benito Juarez, whose statue stands not far from the White House in Washington, said, "Respect for the rights of others is peace." Today, I reaffirm to the people of Mexico: We embrace the wisdom of Juarez. We seek a peaceful, prosperous partnership filled with respect and dignity. (Applause.)

Four years ago, together, we led the fight for NAFTA. Many people in both our countries painted a dark picture of lost jobs and boarded-up factories should NAFTA prevail.

Well, they were wrong. NAFTA is working -- working for you and working for the American people.

In three short years and despite Mexico's worst recession in this century, trade between our nations has grown nearly 60 percent, as President Zedillo said. Mexico is our third largest trading partner, just behind Japan, which has an economy 15 times larger. Our exports to Mexico are 37 percent higher than before NAFTA -- an all-time high in spite of the economic difficulties here.

But for Mexico, NAFTA's benefits are just as great. Two and a half years ago, the financial crisis that struck Mexico wrought real and profound hardship to your people as jobs vanished and inflation skyrocketed. The storm hit only days after President Zedillo took office. He might have simply complained that he got a big dose of bad luck. But instead, he responded with vision and courage. By keeping to the path of reform and the blueprint of NAFTA, he lessened the impact of the recession.

The real hardships remain. Mexico has made a remarkable turnaround. Since the crisis, you have created one million new jobs, cut inflation by more than half, and regained the confidence of international investors.

Now, compare this with the economic crisis of 1981 and '82, when Mexico sharply raised its tariffs and followed a different course. Then, it took seven long years for Mexico to return to the financial markets; this time, only seven months. Then, it took four years for your economy to recover the lost ground; this time, only a year after the crisis, Mexico grew by more than five percent and is expected to grow strongly this year, too.

You have endured punishing setbacks, but America is proud to have worked with you from the very beginning, enlisting international support for a loan package that safeguarded hundreds of thousands of jobs in both our countries, calmed emerging markets throughout Latin America and the world, and when Mexico paid the loan back, earned the respect and admiration of the entire world. I congratulate you on this course. (Applause.)

Of course, the ultimate test of our economic partnership is not in big numbers, but in human impact: the electronic workers of Mexico's Baja Peninsula whose new jobs mean better health care and pensions and more education for their children; the hundreds of thousands of Mexican women who now have mammograms because American-made diagnostic equipment has become more affordable to you; and all the American workers with good high-wage jobs based on our trade with you.

NAFTA has also become an important tool for improving the environment and the well-being of workers. Its institutions are working to clean up pollution in the border region, with four treatment plants already under construction and more to come. Its labor agreements have created a new awareness of workers' rights and labor conditions in both our countries.

We must accelerate the pace of these efforts to reach more people and more communities. And we must include more nations in our partnership so that we can achieve the goal we set out at the Summit of the Americas of a free trade area of the Americas. That is why I'm working with Congress to gain support for fast track authority and why I'm coming back to Latin America twice in the next few months.

As we celebrate these accomplishments, we must also do everything in our power to assure that the benefits and the burdens of change are fairly shared. The most powerful tool for doing that, plainly, is education -- giving our people the skills they need to compete and succeed.

At the Miami Summit, Mexico took the responsibility of leading a hemispheric education initiative. Working with Brazil, Chile, and the United States, you have set our sights on lifting standards and bringing new methods and technologies to classroom throughout the hemisphere. We can rekindle the passion for education that swept this country after your revolution. Your great poet, Alfonso Reyes, described that moment as, "a grand crusade for learning that electrified the people. Nothing equal to it has ever been seen in the Americas."

Let us see something equal to it and greater. Let us renew this crusade. And let us remember, as my wife has said, the citizens on every continent, in distant villages and large cities, this crusade for education must include young women as well as young men on equal terms. And let us resolve to make this crusade a shining light of our next Summit of the Americas next year in Santiago.

In Miami at the first summit, we also reaffirmed that we cannot be responsible stewards of freedom unless we are also responsible stewards of our natural resources -- our hemisphere's land and air and water, as well as the rich texture of plant and animal life they support.

Over the long run, the development of democracy and a prosperous economy requires the sustainable development of our natural resources. That is why we have put the protection of the environment right where it belongs, at the heart of our hemispheric agenda. That is the course we charted together in Rio, in Miami, in Santa Cruz, and one we must pursue further in Santiago.

Trade, education and the environment are critical pieces of the greater mosaic of our relationship, designed to turn our 2,000-mile border into a vibrant source of growth and jobs and open exchange. We're also building a bridge between Brownsville and Matamoros, and roads to connect our people, streamlining cargo transit with high-tech scanners, improving water supplies for the areas inhabitants, and through our Border 21 Initiative, giving local communities a strong voice in the future of the dynamic living space they share.

As our cooperation grows closer, so do our people. For America, that means pride in the fact that we are one of the most diverse democracies in the world. That diversity will be one of our great strengths in the global society of the 21st century. And Mexican Americans are a

crucial part of our diversity and our national pride. Now, more than 12 million strong, they have helped to make the United States the fifth largest Hispanic nation in the world.

Mexican Americans are contributing to every dimension of American life. In Congress, they have written the laws of our land. Just yesterday, Ambassador Bill Richardson, whose mother came from this city, was working to bring peace in Central Africa, and every day he is America's voice at the United Nations.

Our administration draws strength from many other remarkable Mexican Americans, including several who are here with me -- our Energy Secretary, Federico Pena; my Director of Public Liaison, Maria Echaveste; my Congressional Liaison, Janet Murguia. I am also pleased to have in our party two distinguished members of Congress who are Mexican Americans -- Javier Becerra of California, and Silvestre Reyes of Texas; and four other distinguished elected officials who represent large numbers of Mexican Americans and who care deeply about our partnership -- Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas, Senator Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico, Representative Jim Kolbe of Arizona and Governor Robert Miller of Nevada.

Last year, nearly 160,000 Mexicans immigrated legally to America, bringing their talents, their energies, their aspirations. They've played by the rules. And we, for our part, must make sure that the system treats them fairly and gives them the chance to live up to their hopes and dreams.

But to maintain an immigration policy that is generous, fair, safe, and orderly, we must also take effective action to stop illegal immigration. We are a nation of immigrants and of laws. Just as those who obey are laws are welcome, those who break them must face the consequences. Our new immigration law will help us to achieve these goals. In applying it and in our overall approach to immigration, we will balance control with common sense and compassion.

I am very pleased that the balanced budget agreement I reached with our Congress last week includes a significant restoration of welfare benefits to legal immigrants. (Applause.) I will continue to work with Congress to correct some aspects of our immigration law. We will ensure respect for human rights and seek to apply the law humanely, with special concern for children and families. There will be no mass deportations or no discrimination. And we will continue to support Mexico's efforts to create new opportunities here, so that no one feels compelled to leave home just to earn a living for his or her family.

In the end, that is the answer. But I ask you to remember and work with us on the central premise. We have a generous immigration policy, perhaps the most generous in the world; but to make it work we must be a nation of laws.

This moment of great promise for us is, frankly, also one of peril. The great irony of this time is that the forces of global integration have also unleashed powerful sources of disintegration that use open borders and technology and modern communications to strike at the

very heart of civilized societies -- our families, our institutions, our very lives.

For us, the greatest of these scourges is that of illegal drug-trafficking. The cost to both of us of illegal drugs are staggering. In America, every year drugs kill 14,000 people and cost our country almost \$70 billion for crime, prisons, lost work, wounded bodies and ruined lives. Every year, our law enforcement officials arrest one million people on drug charges.

In Mexico, President Zedillo has called narcotics trafficking "the greatest threat to national security, the biggest hazard to social health and the bloodiest source of violence."

Throughout our hemisphere we see how drug cartels threaten the fabric of entire societies. They corrupt or murder law enforcement officials and the judiciary, take over legitimate businesses and banks, spread violence to offices and homes, to streets and to playgrounds.

Drugs are not simply a Mexican problem or an American problem -- they are our common problem. The enormous demand for drugs in America must be stemmed. We have just a little less than five percent of the world's population -- yet, we consume one-third of the world's cocaine, most of which comes from Mexico. The money we spend on illegal drugs fuels narco traffickers who, in turn, attack your police and prosecutors and prey on your institutions. We must face this curse together, because we cannot defeat it alone. My friends, the battle against drugs must unite our people, not divide them. (Applause.)

We must fight back together, and we must prevail. In the United States we have begun the largest antidrug effort in our history. More than two-thirds of its \$16 billion budget will go to attacking our domestic drug problem. We've cut casual drug use by 50 percent in America, but, tragically, among young people under 18 has doubled. We're reaching out to young people with an unprecedented effort -- a public education campaign to teach that drugs are wrong, illegal, and deadly. We're supporting successful neighborhood strategies like community policing that are making our streets and schools safer and more drug-free. We're punishing drug pushers with tougher sentences and working with our partners abroad to destroy drugs at the source or stop them in transit.

Here in Mexico, you must continue your brave fight against illegal drugs. Already you have shown real advances in drug eradication. You've enacted strong new measures to combat money laundering and organized crime. You've destroyed more drug labs and landing strips and seized more drugs, including more than 10 tons of cocaine just days ago. And last week, you resolved to rebuild your drug enforcement agency on a firmer foundation.

I know the hardship and sacrifice this has caused. More than 200 Mexican police officers died last year because of drug violence. As terrible as this toll is, the price of giving up and giving in would be higher. Let us resolve to redouble our efforts, not by pointing fingers, but by joining hands.

Yesterday, President Zedillo and I took an important step forward when we declared the U.S.-Mexican Alliance Against Drugs, based on mutual respect and common sense. Will strengthen our attack on drug production, trafficking and consumption. We will crack down harder on the key problems of money laundering and arms trafficking. The future of our children depends upon these efforts and depends more on our determination to continue the fight. We must not let our children down. (Applause.)

Our alliance against drugs is but one of many elements in our cooperation for the coming century. Yesterday, the President and I received a report of our binational commission. From wiping out tuberculosis in our border states to protecting endangered species in the Pacific, to increasing educational opportunity with more Fulbright Scholarships, the scope of our joint efforts has become as large as the continent we share.

Fifty years ago, President Harry Truman came to Mexico. His visit was a turning point between our people. He spoke of the difficulties in our past and of the need for us to work more closely. He said, I refuse to be discouraged by apparent difficulties; difficulties are a challenge to men of determination. In the face of our difficulties, we must be men and women of determination. We can bridge the divides of culture, history and geography to achieve Juarez' noble vision of respect and peace.

Rooted in the rule of law, rooted in prosperity for all who will work for it, rooted in good health and a clean environment, rooted in modern education and timeless values, the bright promise of a new century lies before us. Let us embrace it together. Thank you. (Applause.)

END

11:45 A.M. (L)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(San Jose, Costa Rica)

For Immediate Release

May 9, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Braulio Carrillo National Park
Costa Rica

11:07 A.M. (L)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. President, for delivering on the rainforest. (Laughter.) You know, in my part of the United States, the children are raised with an old proverb that has come true today. The proverb is, you must be careful what you ask for in life, because you might get it.

Well, Dr. Macaya, to Joaquin Viquez -- didn't that young man do a great job. You should be very proud of him; he was terrific. (Applause.) Thank you.

To all of those who have spoken before and who have come here, and let me thank the members of my Cabinet and administration who are here, and also the members of the National Park Service. Hillary and I have tried to make sure we're at at least one of our national parks every year, and I think it's fair to say that they are the most popular public servants in the United States, so it's nice to see them -- in the case of Mr. Findley -- someplace besides Yellowstone. I'm glad you're all here. Thank you all very much for what you do. (Applause.)

Most of what needs to be said has been said. I come here to emphasize the importance of the forest that surrounds us, the chain of life not only in Costa Rica and Central America but to all the world. We know that the rainforests of the world provide us with a good deal of our oxygen and enormous resources coming out of the plant and animal life they contain. We know that the forest helps us keep our climate stable to preserve our soils, to protect our river. It nurtures plants that provide food and clothing and furniture and medicine. And from the stunning quetzal bird to the stealthy jaguar, we know that the marvelous animals must be preserved for all to see.

There is a new understanding today in the world between the bonds that connect human beings and their natural environment. We know we have to preserve them, and we know that in the end economic development itself cannot occur unless the environment is preserved. That is the lesson of the Rio Earth Summit five years ago, the driving force behind the CONCAUSA Alliance between the United States and Central America that President Figueres discussed, and also the driving notion behind the way we want to integrate this hemisphere -- not just in trade and economics but also in education and health -- and finally in common cause to sustaining the treasures we see around us here today.

Costa Rica is showing the way -- you heard President Figueres say that now more than one-quarter of its land is being protected. The unique natural resources are generating jobs and income. Just before I came up here, Secretary Babbitt gave me the figures on Costa Rica's tourism income because of the commitment the people of this country have made to preserving and protecting the natural environment. We now know we have to do this not only in our hemisphere but around the world.

You know, the examples that the President cited I thought were quite important. We are pursuing ways to reduce greenhouse gases. There is some doubt about exactly what increased greenhouse gas emissions are doing to the climate, but no one doubts that they're changing the climate, and no one doubts that the potential consequences can be very profound and severe.

Almost three years ago, the Vice President of the United States, Al Gore, and President Figueres signed an agreement that will help United States companies greenhouse gas emissions by investing in environmental projects in Costa Rica.

Today, there are more than a dozen of these joint projects all across Central America -- promoting solar energy in Honduras, geothermal energy in Nicaragua, forest management in Belize. Now the carbon certificates created by the government of Costa Rica and the United States companies will provide a new way to finance these investments. Proceeds will go to clean power plants, protecting or planting forests, launching other programs that pay environmental dividends. This is a long way from the philosophy which prevailed in this country, in our country, and indeed throughout the developed and the developing world just a few years ago.

From electric buses, which the President pointed out, to wind-driven power plants, Costa Rica's ambitious plans prove that we can have clean air and renewable energy in ways that create jobs here and in our country. That bus, I believe, was made in the Vice President's home state of Tennessee. And he asked me to say he appreciates it. (Laughter.)

Third, let me say a special word of appreciation for something the President mentioned, and that is the work that is being done with the rain forest and with the space program by Dr. Franklin Cheng Diaz, to deal with Chagas disease, which kills 20,000 people in Latin America every year. The idea of combining what we know about space and what we find in the rain forest to make people have better and healthier lives is another stunning reminder that we destroy these

resources at our peril.

Last, let me say, we're finding new ways to preserve our natural heritage. Once, our National Park Service worked with Costa Rica to help to set up your incredible network of parks. Now the Costa Rican Park Service is returning the favor by helping us to use your computer software in ways that will enable our park rangers at Yellowstone -- which is the shining diamond of our park system -- to catalog and preserve its natural wonders.

Soon after we complete this moment, Secretary Babbitt and Minister Castro will sign an agreement strengthening our cooperation for the next century. We're also working together to help other countries take better care of their wildlife, train professionals to manage fisheries in Argentina, run national parks in Paraguay, teach conservation in Guatemala. Now we have to work across national lines to protect the habitat of the songbirds, the sea turtles, the other creatures that migrate between our shores, and to stop the illegal and deadly trade in endangered species.

Yesterday in San Jose, President Figueres, our fellow leaders, and I pledged to make sustainable development a cornerstone of our relations. It will be part of the 1998 Summit of the Americas in Santiago and eventually the foundation of a larger global effort.

We must ban leaded gasoline everywhere, not just in Costa Rica, and control pesticides in our hemisphere, and reach a global agreement to phase out the most dangerous toxic chemicals. We have to protect our own forests and work with the United Nations to develop a strategy for the sustainable management of others around the world. And we must meet the challenge of climate change -- regionally and beyond our hemisphere.

Together, we can make this a very historic year, Mr. President. As you know, the United Nations is having a special session next month on the environment. I am pleased to be leading America's delegation to the U.N. I hope many other world leaders will be there. Together, we need to reaffirm the spirit of Rio and lay out the concrete steps we're going to take to move ahead to make the preservation of the global environment and sustainable development the policy of every nation on earth. (Applause.)

We are seeking to build a world where people live in the 21st century in harmony, not at war with each other; when they recognize that they have more in common than what divides them; when they no longer seek to elevate themselves by demeaning other people. That kind of world will only occur if we are also generous, wise and good to our natural environment, and where we do not expect today's growth to threaten tomorrow's survival. That is my commitment; that is Costa Rica's commitment -- let us make sure we realize it. Thank you and God bless you all.

Before the paper is too wet, we have to ask Secretary Pena, Secretary Babbitt, and Minister Castro to come sign our agreements on electric transport and parks on behalf of

our two nations. And we hope that the pens still work. (Laughter and applause.)

END

11:16 A.M. (L)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(San Jose, Costa Rica)

For Immediate Release

May 8, 1997

PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE PRESIDENT
AND CENTRAL AMERICAN LEADERS

National Theater
San Jose, Costa Rica

1:20 P.M. (L)

PRESIDENT FIGUERES: Good afternoon, friends. I wish to express on behalf of the heads of states and government of Central America and the Dominican Republic how pleased we are with the results of the extraordinary work session we have had this morning with President Clinton. It has been a very sincere dialogue, a very realistic dialogue, a very human dialogue, and especially, a very friendly dialogue.

I would like to share with you four main conclusions which are the outcome of our discussions and which are reflected in the joint declaration which we have just signed. First of all, we've inaugurated a new phase, a new stage in the relations among our countries. We attach a very special importance to this alliance. It reflects a new visional mood, a more optimistic one, a more mature one, and a more propositional one. And it also demonstrates the existence of a shared agenda, the fundamental objective of which is the well-being of our peoples through the consolidation of economies which are more and more open and integrated. And we have ratified this will.

Secondly, we wish to emphasize the brotherly spirit, the friendship and the understanding which have prevailed in our discussion of topics which we knew were sensitive and complex. We have made a special effort to reach agreements, to compromise and to understand the realities which our governments face. Beyond those realities, we found a will to work together and we have opened areas for this dialogue to continue and for our collective action.

Third, we underlined the importance of having maintained as a constant concern of this meeting the social issues, the importance of which for Latin America and for our region is more vital today than ever before. We share a special concern with the more needy, a concern which

reflects solidarity, not charity, as a means to generate opportunities for productive employment and to ensure the dignified life which our peoples demand.

I especially wish to recognize the contribution of women to the developing of economic democracy and how urgent it is to guarantee non-discriminatory treatment for them in the workplaces, in political life and in social relations generally. All this should have a significant impact in the improvement of the quality of life of the coming generations.

Finally, we wish to stress the significant role which environmental issues continue to have on our agenda. We have deepened and expanded the scope of the joint declaration of Central America and the United States, CONCAUSA, and in doing so, we have helped our region move even further forward as one of those regions which are noted throughout the world for their commitment to the rational use and intelligent use of our national resources. In this regard, we can state that the decisions we've adopted in this field in this declaration can be characterized as revolutionary at a hemispherical level.

An essential element to attain institutional strengthening and to ensure good governance of our countries has to do with the possibility of expanding our markets and stimulating investments, which generate employment and improve the quality of life. I believe that with respect to both topics -- free trade and investment -- we have moved forward in an impressive manner in attaining a better understanding and in acceptance that reciprocity should be the new byword in the establishment of all our discussions.

MODERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, the President and the Prime Minister of Belize and the Dominican Republic would like to make a special mention to the democratic circumstance that prevails in all the region: We are committed to strengthen and perfecting it.

We are aware that, at the threshold of the 21st century, it is not enough to guarantee access to free, fair and transparent elections for our citizens. Threatened by formidable enemies such as narco trafficking and organized crime, it is indispensable to fortify democratic institutions and to ensure ways in which civil society can participate more effectively in the decision-making process.

Nonetheless, it is through the development of dynamic economies and more equitable social structures that we will be able to fully grasp the benefits of democratic governance. To this regard, we are convinced that one indispensable element to ensure such democratic governance has to do with the possibility to expand our markets and, with it, stimulate investments that generate employment and improve the quality of life of our populations.

Both issues -- trade and investment -- were positively reinforced during our meeting with President Clinton, and we would like to emphasize our satisfaction as the new criteria that will guide our next steps towards the construction of free trade zones in the Americas.

In closing, let me emphasize the warmth of this meeting. You, President Clinton, with your insight and your thoughtfulness, have come to Central America, and with our friends from the Dominican Republic, have given a new dimension to our relations. We all came here with high expectations. We had the opportunity to share out thoughts, but express the feelings of our hearts. And we all part full of optimism, ready to continue our work -- work that is circumscribed by the need we all have to continue bettering the conditions of living of our people. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: President Figueres has given an excellent statement. I will just make a few brief comments. First of all, I know I speak for all of us who are guests here in thanking the President and the people of Costa Rica for their warmth and hospitality.

This is truly a new day for Central America. The transition from conflict to cooperation has changed the relationship among the Central American countries and between the United States and Central America. A decade ago, we focused on civil wars; now, together, we are fighting against poverty and fighting for prosperity, stronger democracy and the sustainable development of our precious resources.

It is this new reality, this new agenda that we share which brings us here to San Jose for the first summit meeting between the leaders of the United States, Central America and the Dominican Republic in 30 years. The people of Central America have chosen peace and democracy. We must help them to prove that they made the right choice, that democracy delivers.

Today, we agreed to an intensified ongoing dialogue between the United States, Central America and the Dominican Republic to work together on issues that will make a real difference to the lives of all of our people with a high level follow-on structure to make sure that our commitments are realized.

Together we looked at ways to strengthen our democracies and to combat the drugs, crime and corruption that threaten to undermine them. I'm encouraged by the growing cooperation among Central American law enforcement authorities, including the creation of a joint center for police studies in El Salvador. To advance it further, the United States plans to establish an international law enforcement academy in Latin America by the end of this year, modeled on our successful academy in Budapest. We also agreed to modernize extradition treaties and to apply them vigorously. Those who commit a crime in one nation in our region should know that they will have no place to run and hide elsewhere in the region.

We took important steps to broaden the benefits of open and competitive trade. Our trade with Central America exceeded \$20 billion last year. That is a 120-percent increase since 1990. This dramatic increase is the direct result of the progress the nations of this region have made toward improving their economies and opening their markets.

To identify concrete actions we can take to expand commerce even more, and to explore ways to move toward our common goal of a free trade area of the Americas by 2005, we created a ministerial level trade and investment council.

The open skies agreement we signed today -- the first in our hemisphere -- are a powerful example of how we can move forward together. They will allow our air carriers greater freedom to increase passenger and cargo services, to lower prices for travellers and shippers, and literally to bring the Americas closer together.

Today, we also agreed that our labor ministers will meet later this year to exchange ideas on promoting respect for worker rights and improving working conditions. And we discussed the issue of immigration. I'm proud that the United States has a tradition of generous legal immigration. Last year, over 900,000 people legally immigrated to the United States. I will do what I can to preserve it because I believe America's diversity is one of our greatest strengths as we move into a new century in an increasingly global society.

But to maintain that tradition and to do what is right by people who immigrate to the United States legally, it is also necessary that we be more effective in stopping illegal immigration. Our new immigration law is designed to accomplish that objective. I appreciate the decision by several Central American nations to criminalize the terrible practice of alien smuggling, which is also a scourge to all of us.

I do want you to know that enforcing our laws, I am determined to balance the need for firm controls against illegal immigration with common sense and compassion. Our country has greatly benefitted from the talents and the energies of Central Americans who came to our shores because they were fleeing civil war. Today, the remarkable progress in that region means that many can return home. But we want that to occur in a manner which avoids destabilizing the nations and the economies of Central America, or creating enormous hardships for children and families.

There will be no mass deportations and no targeting of Central Americans under this law. I am working with Congress to implement the new law so that it does not produce these unintended results.

Finally, we explored ideas to make a good education the birthright of every child in this region. We agreed that education should be a centerpiece of next year's Summit of the Americas in Santiago, for which today's summit is an important building block.

This has been a full and a productive session. Again, let me thank my colleagues for the passion and the depth of commitment they bring to this enterprise, and to our shared vision for a new partnership between the United States and Central America on the brink of a new century. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

Q Good afternoon. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I have two questions. For you, Mr. President Figueres, I'd like to know, within the declaration, in the chapter on strengthening democracy and good governance, I'd like to know what should be understood in the paragraph that says that we take on the commitment to update our extradition treaty and apply it vigorously to make sure that criminals are taken to justice, where the effects of their crime are felt more severely.

If we are dealing here with a paragraph that is somehow suggesting for the future any possibility of extraditing our citizens -- that the Central American contingency meet in order to be considered by your country to be part of the free trade agreement and if so, if we are, after Chile, the next one --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I was listening -- you started talking in Spanish.

Q Okay, so here again. My question is, (laughter) --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: It's been a long day. (Laughter.)

Q Thank you. What do you think the conditions that Central American countries should meet in order to be considered by your country to be part of the Free Trade Agreement, and if we do meet those requirements, are we the next after Chile? Thank you.

PRESIDENT FIGUERES: The biggest -- is that respecting our constitutions and the independence of the branches of government in our countries, the judiciary and the legislative. We will continue cooperating in these areas which have to do with ensuring citizen security. And in accordance with our responsibility as Presidents with respect to our population, I think we should work out together combatting drug trafficking, money laundering and these modern scourges which have been developing in our societies and which can only cause harm to our societies.

This is a reaffirmation of our will to continue working in that direction, with respect to our constitutions and to our legal provisions. We are all states under the rule of law, fortunately.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I would like to make one comment about that from the point of view of the United States. We do not believe that our sovereignty is undermined by extraditing people through other countries as long as they follow the same rules with us, so that we both respect each other's criminal justice system.

Now, let me answer your question. First of all, I believe that nations of Central America have already gone a long way toward becoming part of a free trade area by embracing democracy, open markets and committing themselves to expanded trade, and committing themselves to increasing international cooperation. After all, we have the President of the Inter-American Development Bank here; we have the Secretary General of the OAS here. We are all working together more. We are committed already, the United States is, to working with

all the nations that are here present to establish a free trade area of the Americas by 2005, which is not so very far away.

Now, in between now and then can we do more to have more reciprocal open trade with the Central American countries? I believe we can and I have agreed to two steps. The first is that we have set up a ministerial trade and investment council here, as a result of this communique, to identify what the next concrete steps are. But, before that, I have proposed in my budget an expansion of the Caribbean Basin Initiative and I have funded it over the next five years, which would permit us to reduce or eliminate tariffs on a large number of other items coming from Central America that would further deepen our trade relations.

So, I'm strongly supportive of it. I think the big steps have already been taken. The next steps are subject to agreement by our trade negotiators and people who are concerned about investment. And they can be worked out if we stay on the path we're on.

Terry.

Q Mr. President, some of the leaders here today and some other prominent Central American figures have complained in recent days that the United States pays attention to this region only in times of war and in times of natural disaster. Do you think that that has been a valid criticism?

And to President Figueres, what, if anything, has President Clinton said today that makes you think that that attitude would change?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, I think there is some validity to that criticism -- that is, I think there are some sectors of our society that may have been more interested in Central America when it was a battleground in the Cold War or when it could at least be interpreted to have been a battleground in the Cold War. But I don't think it's a fair characterization of America as a whole or of the attitude of this administration.

After all, we convened a summit of the Americas including all the democratically-elected leaders of Central America and the Caribbean and the rest of Latin America in 1994. We have worked diligently since then in meeting with and working with various leaders in this area. We have worked for the cause of peace in Central America and applauded it when it prevailed.

And this meeting here, which as I said, is the first time since 1968 when President Johnson met with the leaders of the Central America, the Dominican Republic that such a meeting has occurred -- and this one has a different agenda. This is designed to send the message that we believe it is in the interest of the United States and the people of the United States as well as the right thing to do to have an economic and a political partnership with Central America as we move into the new century.

PRESIDENT FIGUERES: I come to this meeting with a completely different perspective of what our relationship should be. The old relationship that we have had in the past is no longer the one that can most benefit us in the world of a globalized economy. And today, we have all come as true partners to share the responsibilities of our development and to look for common paths through which we can develop. Central America today, fully democratic and in peace, is willing to pull its own weight and we are perfectly well aware of the responsibilities in that respect that we have as leaders of our nations. This is truly the beginning of a great new partnership.

Q Good afternoon, Presidents. For President Clinton. The countries of Central America have been complaining -- complaining that the United States has abandoned Central America lately. Aside from progressively, steadily liberalizing trade, in what other way could the United States help the people of Central America -- for meetings such as this not be considered as social events with rather rhetorical results that have nothing to do with reality?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well, I think there are lot of specific ways we can work with Central America apart from trade, and I mentioned one in my remarks. We intend to establish a law enforcement academy in Latin America that will serve the people of Central America in helping them to develop professional police forces that are effective and respects human rights and effective judicial systems.

We did this in Central Europe, with one in Budapest, and we have worked with a lot of former communist countries in the area of law enforcement cooperation in a way that has been extraordinarily well received there and I believe will be here.

Last night when President Figueres and I had a chance to meet, and again today in our larger meeting, I reaffirmed our willingness to work with countries of Central America to help to expand educational opportunities and to bring the benefits of educational technology to all students. And I think there are great opportunities there. I think there are enormous opportunities for us to cooperate in the environmental areas in ways that will be helpful to the long-term stability of the nations that are represented here.

So those are just three areas in which I expect there to be significantly increased cooperation in the years ahead. In addition to that, as you know, we still have some modest aid programs. The Peace Corps is active in many of these nations, doing very constructive things. So I expect that there will be other things which will be done in the years ahead.

Keep in mind, the United States has finally voted for the first time since 1969 -- at least we have an agreement with the leaders of the Congress -- to balance our budget. And that will permit us the freedom and the economic stability, I think, to be a better partner with our neighbors in a whole range of other areas. But the most important thing is for you to prove that your economy will work. And I think the plan we're following will enable you to do that.

Paul.

Q Mr. President, Central American leaders before this meeting were saying the new U.S. immigration laws are causing major economic and political headaches. A State Department official was quoted today as saying that, given the situation in Congress, all you have been able to offer them today was "words and promises and hot air." Did that turn out to be true, and what do you realistically expect to get from Congress on immigration between now and the date of September 30th, set out in the statement today?

And, for President Figueres, if you could, are the Central American leaders overreacting to the situation?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well, first of all, let's describe what the situation is. There are a lot of immigrants living in the United States from the countries that are represented here today who came to the United States primarily because of upheaval caused in their countries during wars. Some of those immigrants are there legally, but not as legal immigrants. That is, there is a separate category of our immigration law which says if you're, in effect, fleeing political disruption in your own country you can stay in our country, but you don't become a legal immigrant with the right to apply for citizenship after five years. But many of them have been there quite a long while. Some of them are not legal under that status, but they've been there quite a long while and they did come because of the political upheaval.

There are two real problems with just shipping all of them up and sending them home, aside from the practical problems of whether it can be done or not. One is that a lot of them have been in the United States so long that they have families there, they have children in school, they have lives that are intertwined with their communities. And it would be significantly disruptive and unfair to the families and the children.

The other is that a lot of -- such a dislocation would rob a lot of these countries of cash remittances that a lot of these folks are sending back home to their families which take the place of a lot of foreign aid or domestic economic activity in keeping the country going. And also, that level of influx would destabilize them.

So I think it's fair to say that everyone who studied this understands that the Central America countries -- a number of them are in a very special category when it comes to dealing with the immigration laws.

The immigration law that we passed was designed to help us stop illegal immigration at the border, in the workplace, and in the court system. And it will achieve that. But we have to implement it in a way that is humane and recognizes the special problems created here.

So what I have said is that, number one, for the immigrants that are there legally, but not as legal immigrants -- that is, they're in the category of people fleeing political problems at home -- the law says that I can only exempt 4,000 people from being sent back to their countries. I will not trigger that law until September, the end of September, during which time I will work with Congress to try to figure out how to implement it.

As to people who are generally not in America legally, there will be no mass deportations and no targeting of any citizens from any country. They will have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

And again, I will say, I'm not so sure, as whoever our anonymous source was, that the

Congress will be unwilling to recognize the fact that these Central American countries are in a rather special category. After all, the United States government was heavily involved with a lot of these countries during the time of all this upheaval. And just as we were quite generous -- and we should have been -- in welcoming Vietnamese people to our shores after the termination of our involvement in Vietnam, where our country did not prevail, in these nations where democracy has prevailed and we want to work with them to succeed, it seems to me we ought to be sensitive to the disruptions that were caused during those tough years that we were involved in as a nation. So I'm not so sure we can't get some treatments.

But the law itself, I want to say, as I said in Mexico, it's a good thing that we try to stop illegal immigration because if we don't, we won't be able to keep the American people in support of legal immigration. So we have to stop it, as much as we can. But we have to understand, these Central American countries are in a different category because of what they went through in the 1980s.

PRESIDENT FIGUERES: I feel that we have advanced a lot on this subject, which is certainly important to the Central American nations for many of the reasons that President Clinton has just mentioned. But on this issue of immigration, your question was, has there been an overreaction in Central America. I don't believe that there has been an overreaction and I believe that we have achieved substantial progress.

If I may, on that, I would like to call perhaps on President Armando Calderon Sol, because he is really the one that, in terms of Central America, with President Arnaldo Aleman led the conversation.

PRESIDENT CALDERON SOL: I would just like to add that, for us, this new relationship that we have begun between Central America and the United States, at the time of President Clinton's visit is profoundly significant. It represents a recognition by the United States, a recognition of the contribution that our people make to their economy, a recognition of the human drama that our people are experiencing in the United States because of what happens here, because this was the theater of operations of the Cold War.

Here in Central America, to hear this from the President of the United States and to hear the profoundly humane position that he adopts when he looks at the people which have had so much pain, for us is very encouraging. And he has stated very clearly that there will not be mass deportations, that they will seek to work more flexibly with the new immigration law. But there is time from now until September for a joint initiative with the Congress and to awaken more awareness within the Congress concerning this issue which is so important for Central America.

Today is a very important day, a day of great hope for all Central Americans who, because of some of the tragic conditions of violence, had to leave to seek new shores, to find refuge in the United States.

PRESIDENT FIGUERES: One last question.

Q Thank you, Mr. President. The question first for President Figueres, don't you think there's very little scope in having the support of the U.S. government for a draft that would provide to expand the benefits of the Caribbean Basin Initiative when the countries of the region would like to have something more specific than that before the year 2005?

And, President Clinton, don't you think that mere support of goodwill for a draft is actually a very small guarantee for the Central American countries when there is a Congress which is actually against anything that has to do with free trade or unions or even the democrats, themselves?

PRESIDENT FIGUERES: With respect to trade I feel that we have made major progress. These countries have benefitted from the Caribbean Basin Initiative for a number of years now. And this program is the basis on which we have been able to expand our exports from the entire region into traditional markets and also into new markets.

The program that the executive branch of the United States is submitting to the Congress differs from the situation of the past. It contains funds to be able to counteract the loss of tariff income, which would mean expanding the list of products and the exemptions for many of the products coming from this region.

Moreover, I think it is vitally important that we have agreed here to ask our ministers, the ministers who are involved in foreign trade, to task them with finding new ways, new creative ways to continue working together as a region with an eye to the year 2005, the date for which our continent plans to integrate. So the idea would be that we could advance even more in the field of trade before that date comes.

With respect to trade, we need to stress investment. I think this meeting, this summit meeting, in many ways, is a stamp of approval for the profound reforms that have been led by the Presidents of the area in the different countries. Today, the economies are much more open and much more competitive. They are true democracies, and, of course, this opens up our doors to greater flows of investment. And ultimately, this is the way for us to integrate better.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I'd like to try to respond to your question with two points. First of all, this is not a -- from our point of view -- a vague commitment. I think you should see this in three steps -- the question of how we might expand our trade between the United States and Central American countries.

Number one, I have presented a budget to the Congress which, if the Congress will go along, provides for the reduction of tariffs over the next five years on a lot of other goods which would increase trade with both Central America and the Caribbean. It is fully paid for in my budget. And therefore, I think we will have -- we have some chance of passing it, perhaps a

good chance. And I certainly intend to fight hard for it. So there's that step.

Then the second step is that we have agreed to bring our trade and investment ministers together to identify what we do after that, what more can we do. Then the third step is adopting the free trade area of the Americas by 2005.

I know 2005 sounds like a long time away -- especially if you're very young, but it's not so very long. And if you think about what will then be a trading area of over a billion people, it is a stunning achievement if we can pull it off. So I am not excluding the possibility that we can do more than expand the Caribbean Basin Initiative, nor am I taking for granted that it will be done, but that is the three step process I see.

Now, the larger point you made is that the Congress of the United States is opposed to free trade. That may not be true. There are strong opponents of expanded trade in the Congress, but there are also very strong supporters. Some people are just against trade because they think it gives the United States a bad deal. I think the evidence is squarely against them. The more we open our markets, the better our economy does. And we have wages going up for the first time in 20 years, and last year, more than half the new jobs, for the first time in many years, coming into our economy were above average wage. So trade is good for us, not bad.

Secondly, we can get a lot of people in my party --you mentioned my party specifically -- we can get a lot of people in my party to vote for a fast track authority if our trading partners will give serious attention to the question of making sure that all people in our country get to participate in the benefits of expanded trade and wealth. That's why I have advocated that we set up a labor forum to go with the business forum that will meet as we work toward a free trade area of the Americas. The more Americans believe that all ordinary working people in other countries will benefit from expanded trade, the more likely we are to find support for it in the Congress.

Yes, ma'am.

Q Thank you, Mr. President. I have a question for you and one question for the Presidents of Central America. Regionally, Central America was looking for NAFTA parity, and then later they changed things, that they preferred to have a free trade agreement. Given the sentiments in Congress, what do you personally believe is the best venue, the most effective to get that free trade agreement? And also, when do you expect to have a fast track authority with Congress?

And also, for the Presidents of Central America -- President Figueres or any of the other Presidents that you are going to seek an amnesty with regard to immigration. I don't know if you asked for that amnesty of President Clinton, and if so, what was his response?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Let me answer your question quite succinctly. I think the best

course is for me first to try to pass my budget which contains an expansion of the Caribbean Basin Initiative; and second, to try to pass fast track authority in the Congress this year, which I fully intend to do my best to do. We're going to work very hard on that. And at the same time, then, to consult with leaders of the Congress in both parties who favor this approach about what they believe the best way to proceed is, because we're all going to have to work together on this.

While we're consulting with Congress, there will be this meeting of our ministers, all of our ministers, identifying what they think the next step should be to continue to expand trade. So I think that our road map is quite clear, and that is the one I intend to pursue.

PRESIDENT FIGUERES: With respect to the question of immigration, it has already been covered by Armando Calderon Sol, but I would like to go back to your question with respect -- that, first, Central America wanted parity and then later on began to look for other ways to acquire more investment and how do we think is the best. Don Alvaro Arzu discussed this issue extensively this morning in the forum, and I would like to invite him to answer your question.

PRESIDENT ARZU: Thank you. What we have stressed and tried to demonstrate is that the region of Central America is prepared, is ready. It's no longer time for us to be reaching out our hands to ask for support, although we are grateful for the support we have received. But instead, we have a desire for a more longstanding, a more permanent relationship of partnership, and more than that, we want a free trade agreement. This is our aspiration.

We need to follow certain parameters, which are requirements, with Congress for example; also with public opinion, the press, -- in communication. But what we mostly want to tell the American union is that we are ready. In Central America we are ready to compete. We are ready to receive investment. We are ready to generate production. And we are ready to diversify the results and the profits that we attract among the large mass of impoverished people in our region in order to begin shrinking the very profound socioeconomic gap that we still have. So we want to go beyond that and I think we can do it.

Thank you.

PRESIDENT FIGUERES: Thank you. This concludes the press conference.

END

2:03 P.M. (L)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Mexico City, Mexico)

For Immediate Release

May 7, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE CITIZENS OF TLAXCALA

Town Square
Tlaxcala, Mexico

1:41 P.M. (L)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Buenos dias, Tlaxcala. (Applause.) President and Mrs. Zedillo, Governor and Mrs. Alvarez-Lima, to all of our friends from Mexico and the United States. Mayor Teroba, thank you for welcoming us to this wonderful city. It is great to be here. I thank you for coming out to say hello.

President Zedillo and I have been working hard, as he said, and now we have come just to celebrate Mexico's people and culture with you. This is an especially important day for my wife and for me because we were married about 22 years ago, and we came to Mexico on our honeymoon. And so we always love to come back. And this is a very romantic setting to be in today, and we thank you for that. (Applause.)

The partnership between Mexico and the United States, the friendship between Mexico and the United States is important to the future of the American people and the Mexican people. It must be pursued in a genuine spirit of respect, equality, and dignity.

We are moving into a world with great changes in the way we work and live, and the world grows smaller because of technology and rapid communications. But some things do not change. This beautiful city, founded nearly 500 years ago, reminds us that even in times of great change some things are meant to last -- our heritage, our love of family, community, our devotion to work, our respect for the land we are blessed to inhabit.

It is my purpose to work with you to preserve the things that we want to preserve, to change as we must so that the people of Mexico and the people of the United States will have more and better jobs, good health care, all our children, boys and girls alike, will have good

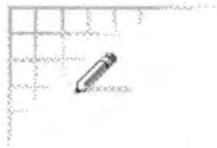
education, and we will be able together to beat back our common enemies of drugs and crime, so that as we move into the new century we will know we have preserved our community, our values, our integrity, and we have prepared the way for our children's future.

In closing, I would like to say a special thank you to the Mexican people for the many contributions that Mexican Americans have made to our life in the United States. (Applause.) Two members of my presidential Cabinet, many people in my administration, many members of our Congress, people successful in all walks of life have their roots here in Mexico. They are proud of it, and so am I. And we are going to work hard to make sure that in the years ahead, we draw closer together, we work together, we maintain a spirit of pride in our own heritage, but a genuine partnership for a better future.

Thank you. Thank you, Mexico. Thank you for a wonderful visit. (Applause.)

END

1:46 P.M. (L)



Record Type: Record

To:

cc:

Subject:

1. Micro credit event in Costa Rica has no official title other than 'Visit with Microentrepreneurs at the Escuela Omar Dengo' (Omar Dengo School)

Event was a roundtable and tour of products that Costa Rican microentrepreneurs had made.

The microentrepreneurs included representatives from ADAPTE (Association of Support for Small Workers and Businesses), Fundacion Mujer (Women's Foundation), and Asociacion CREDIMUJER (Association of Credit for Women). These institutions are supported by USAID and IDB.

2. Microcredit event in Barbados is officially titled 'Caribbean Regional Microenterprise Forum' and was hosted by the Caribbean Development Bank and USAID.