

set the ground rules, it set some objectives. I think this one will do the same thing. We have a broader number of countries here; cooperation is good. And we've got to talk about how we can do more on the supply and certainly on the demand side, something that we in the United States are very concerned about also.

So, I view this as a very special opportunity to meet with leaders, men who are

doing a good job in their countries and who are determined to whip this narcotics threat just as we are. So I'm looking forward to it.

Note: The exchange began at 3 p.m. at the Marriott Rivercenter Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President César Gaviria of Colombia in San Antonio

February 26, 1992

[A question was asked and answered in Spanish.]

Q. How about you, sir? Do you have anything to—

The President. Yes.

Q. Same thing?

The President. Yes, now that I understand what he is saying.

Q. You're improving your Spanish. [Laughter]

The President. I've got Stephanie over here. [Laughter] No, but I agree that it's positive, it will be positive. I will say this to the journalists from Colombia who are here: The respect that we have for what this President is doing and has already done is very, very high. And this is a multilateral meeting; we're meeting with other countries

as well, building on the Cartagena summit, which was the first one. But I'm confident that we will come out with more determination to do better on the demand side, which is largely a United States problem, and to redouble our efforts for coordination on the supply side, drawing largely on the experience and the success of this President that's sitting next to me.

And so, we can't take any more questions because we only have a few minutes to talk here. We're glad you guys are here.

Note: The exchange began at 3:40 p.m. at the Marriott Rivercenter Hotel. In his remarks, the President referred to Stephanie Van Reigersberg, Director of Language Services.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Jaime Paz Zamora of Bolivia in San Antonio

February 26, 1992

Q. Mr. President, what do you say to Members of Congress who say your drug war has been a failure?

The President. I tell them they don't know what they're talking about. That's what I say. The record is good.

[At this point, one group of journalists left the room, and a second group entered.]

The President. I might say with your

countrymen here that we are very respectful of the job you're doing and cooperation, not only in the antinarcotics field but in so many other areas. I'm just delighted to see you again.

Q. Mr. Bush, is the Government of the United States going to support the private industry helping other programs in Bolivia?

The President. Well, we think we need

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every facet of our society helping, the Government, private, everybody getting involved to help as best we can. And it's a two-way street. I think Bolivia has been very cooperative with the United States. We've got a couple of sticking points here that we'll talk about. But I think generally speaking it's going quite well, and we salute the President for his efforts. He is a dedicated leader who is trying to whip a tough prob-

lem. And we know that, and we respect that. So he's welcome here, and we're glad to have the whole team with us.

Thank you all very much.

Note: The exchange began at 5:05 p.m. at the Marriott Rivercenter Hotel. Part of this exchange could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at the State Dinner for Drug Summit Participants in San Antonio

February 26, 1992

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen: Barbara and I are honored to have you join us here tonight. It is a particular pleasure to welcome to the United States our good friends and our neighbors from Mexico, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela. I am delighted that we've gathered in my home State, Secretary Baker's home State of Texas, with our Governor here, the Mayor of this city here, in this gracious city of San Antonio. For centuries, San Antonio has stood as an important cultural crossroads of the Americas.

We meet at a time of great hope for all the people of the Americas. In almost every nation in the hemisphere, people enjoy self-government and respect for human rights. We're making steady progress to improve our people's quality of life through more open trade and investment, by creating more jobs. That's why I am committed more strongly than ever to completing the North American free trade agreement linking the economies of Mexico, Canada, and the United States. And building upon that, we will realize the vision I call the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative for robust trade and investment from the Arctic Ocean to the Straits of Magellan.

During our meetings this week in San Antonio, we will refine and intensify our common efforts against the menace of drugs. Each of our nations is making progress. Bolivia has successfully intensified its law enforcement efforts against cocaine traffickers.

Peru has taken important steps to control airstrips used by traffickers to move cocaine to Colombia. Ecuador is moving against money launderers and traffickers on its territory. Colombia has jailed some of its most violent drug traffickers and is seizing record quantities of drugs. Venezuela is clamping down on those attempting to use its territory to ship drugs to Europe and America. Mexico has reduced cultivation of both opium poppies and marijuana by unprecedented amounts while seizing record amounts of cocaine through Operation Halcion.

For each of our nations, the battle against drugs is truly a war. The ultimate stakes are the same: the minds, bodies, and the souls of our young people, so many of whom have been hurt or destroyed by the violent world of the drug dealers. In the United States, we're stepping up treatment, prevention, and research programs, and we're toughening our prosecution and punishment of drug kingpins.

We're seeing results on the demand side as well. In the United States over the past 6 years, we've reduced the number of regular users of cocaine by two-thirds. Adolescent use of all types of illegal drugs is down. The number of high school seniors using illegal drugs is the lowest since we began measuring their drug use.

We must do more. Drug abuse and drug violence, particularly in our inner cities, threaten to destroy our children and every-