

May 13 / Administration of George Bush, 1992

Remarks at the State Dinner for President Patricio Aylwin of Chile May 13, 1992

Ladies and gentlemen, President Aylwin and Mrs. Aylwin, Barbara and I are just delighted to welcome you both to the White House and to try to return the warm reception that you gave to me, sir, and to our daughter when we had the honor of visiting you in Chile.

Among my memories of my visit to your country was a lunch that we shared at that lovely home of yours in Santiago. And I still recall with pride and delight that you took in your children and your grandchildren. We did a little arithmetic yesterday, and between us, we have 10 children and 23 grandchildren. Perhaps we could arrange for a soccer game out on the South Lawn. *[Laughter]*

It has been said, Mr. President, that the greatest glory of a free-born people is to transmit that freedom to their children. Your country's bright future lies in the hands and hearts of a free-born people, determined to see their children born free, passing liberty from mother to daughter, father to son.

Today I was reminded how your father, an esteemed Supreme Court Justice, passed his love of law and liberty to his son, you, yourself a revered legal scholar. I thought of how more than 60 years ago our Louis Brandeis observed that the final end of the state was to make men free to develop their faculties. And he added that "Those who love freedom know liberty to be the secret of happiness and courage to be the secret of liberty."

Justice Brandeis could find no better example of courage in pursuit of liberty than the Chilean people and their leader. Today, Chileans are "free to develop their faculties" to the fullest, having at last inherited the political and economic rights their parents worked to achieve. They've also assumed liberty's responsibilities, the knowledge that freedom taken for granted can

become freedom taken away. Chile continues the hard work of freedom, defending democracy in Venezuela and Haiti and Peru, promoting peace in Central America and in the Middle East.

Mr. President, I know that Chile will continue to export its material goods. I know also it will export its dreams, the courage, hope, the imagination of free markets and free peoples. Chile teaches others that political differences never excuse indifference to the law and that social needs are better met by the invisible hand of the free market than by the iron fist of regulatory control and bureaucracy.

President Aylwin and I share a vision of free trade for all the hemisphere. The United States is now negotiating a free trade agreement with Mexico and Canada as a first step toward that goal. And as a result of our discussions today and in recognition of Chile's economic accomplishments and achievements, I want to announce that the United States intends to negotiate a comprehensive free trade agreement with Chile upon the conclusion of the North American free trade agreement. And I intend to send notification to the Congress in accord with the fast track procedures at that time.

Thirty years ago, President Eisenhower spoke to your people saying, "We in the Western Hemisphere are still young nations still growing, still experimenting." And I really believe that's still true today because democracy is young as our children, as all the children of the world.

Mr. President, may I propose a toast to you. And may I suggest we rise and lift our glasses: To you, Mr. President, to Mrs. Aylwin, to Chile, and to the bonds of friendship between our two people.

Note: The President spoke at 8:13 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.