

one of those battles of ideas in which we're engaged. But I believe very strongly that this will create jobs and increase incomes for people on both sides of the border. And I think if that argument is accepted, it's just as likely to be accepted this year as next year.

Henry Leon Ritzenthaler

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—*about the half-brother, is this gentleman your half-brother, do you know?

The President. What did you say, Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International]?

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—*California. Same question, basically.

The President. I placed a call today, but there was nobody home. I don't think I should say anything until after the call takes place.

NAFTA

Q. You do not have the votes in the House right now. Are you planning on launching a campaign in order to push forward for ratification of NAFTA?

The President. I try to win the things that I support. When we can bring it up, we'll bring

it up and try to win it. And I have been discussing this quite a bit, actually, in personal conversations with various Members of the House and Senate and getting advice, beginning to plot strategy. But of course, we'll have a campaign to do it. We can't prevail without a campaign; we have to try to win it.

Thank you very much. One person from the Mexican press, we'll take one question. That's only fair.

Drug Policy

Q. Mr. President, do you have a new policy to fight drugs here, or do you have a new policy towards immigration?

The President. We will, but I believe that the announcement of that should involve the drug czar, Mr. Brown, and others. And we will have something to say about that in the future.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Statement on the Meeting of the United States-Mexico Binational Commission

June 21, 1993

Today the U.S.-Mexico Binational Commission is holding its 10th meeting at the State Department. I want to extend a very warm welcome to the members of the Cabinet of President Salinas and to say a few words about our warm friendship with Mexico.

There is no closer partnership between two nations than that which we have with our neighbor Mexico. We share strong ties of history. Our cultures are richly interwoven. Our people share strong bonds of kinship and fellowship. And the peaceful cooperation of the communities along our 2,000-mile border is important to both of our peoples.

An important sign of our close relations is the Binational Commission itself, which provides a forum for our Cabinets to meet annually to work on issues ranging from the environment to education to telecommunications.

Another sign of our partnership is our increasingly close cooperation in world affairs and our

commitment to the success of democracy in this hemisphere. We worked together to help end the war in El Salvador. Mexico has contributed to the International Civilian Mission of Human Rights Observers in Haiti. Mexico's leadership in the OAS was critical to the successful collective defense of democracy in Guatemala. And President Salinas speaks with a special authority as one of the world's leading economic reformers when he calls for progress in the Uruguay round to expand world trade.

Mexico and we agree that the movement toward open markets and free trade in Latin America is vital and for the long-term success and strengthening of democracy and human rights in this hemisphere. The countries of Latin America have already made great strides. The emergence of democratically elected governments in the region has permitted Latin America to modernize and develop. The Latin countries have made enormous progress restructuring

and opening their economies, controlling inflation, and increasing the competitiveness of their productive sectors. In the last 2 years, for the first time in a decade, Latin America has had real growth in per capita income.

Free trade agreements have contributed to the progress in regional integration. Democratic governments have achieved peace, strengthened freedoms, and accelerated the pace of integration. With the support of the OAS and the U.N., internal conflicts in Nicaragua and El Salvador have ended and hopefully will soon end in Guatemala. The OAS routinely observes the freedom of elections across the region. Subregional free trade agreements have emerged throughout the hemisphere. These are points that were recently well articulated by Foreign Minister Solana at the OAS and that we enthusiastically embrace.

Increasingly today, the line has blurred between domestic and foreign policies. What we seek to do abroad directly affects us at home. No relationship illustrates better the strong linkage between foreign and domestic policies than our relationship with Mexico. The interdependence of our societies and people are stronger than ever and continues to grow. Our domestic policies affect the lives and prosperity of Mexicans in the same way that the domestic policies of Mexico profoundly affect us. You need only to look at the scope and complexity of today's BNC agenda to understand how important Mexico and the U.S. are to each other. We will work to deepen and expand our partnership even further.

One of the most productive areas in which we must work closely together is on the trade

between our nations, which has doubled in the past 5 years. That trade is vital to our economic future, to Mexico's economic future, and to our cooperation in every area. It is making both our economies grow. It is making us both more efficient and more competitive in the world market. And it adds to the resources we can use to address common concerns such as the environment.

That is why I am firmly committed to the NAFTA, and it's why I believe the American people and Congress will support the NAFTA this year. We are the world's number one exporter. Exports are creating more jobs than any other source in our economy today. American workers and companies want to compete fairly in the international market. They seek no special advantage, only a level playing field. Mexico has already made important strides in labor rights and in protecting the environment. When we conclude the side agreements, we will have an even broader basis for cooperation and progress.

By approving the NAFTA, we will cement in place a new source of jobs and economic growth for workers in Canada, Mexico, and the United States. And we will do more than that. We will send a signal that the nations of the Americas are on their way to building a hemisphere of freer trade.

Once again, I wish to reiterate my deep personal commitment to continuing the positive, friendly relations between the U.S. and Mexico. I look forward to celebrating together with you the happy occasion of congressional approval of the NAFTA before the end of this year.

Teleconference Remarks With the U.S. Conference of Mayors June 22, 1993

The President. I'm honored to address all the United States mayors at your conference. I want to thank you first for the strong support that you've given the economic plan I presented to the Congress and to the country. You supported it not only because it's good for the cities but because it's also good for America.

Your president, Mayor Bill Althaus, has certainly earned my respect and support because he's looked beyond party labels to support this

plan because it's good for the people of his community. I look forward to having just that good of a relationship with your incoming president, my longtime friend Mayor Jerry Abramson. And I want to say a special word about your host, Mayor Dinkins, a great Mayor of a very great city.

As mayors, more than any other public officials in this country, you have been on the frontlines of public service. Every day you hear