

Apr. 20 / Administration of George W. Bush, 2001

NOTE: The President spoke at 5 p.m. in the Montcalm Room at the Loews le Concorde Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Presidents Francisco Flores Perez of El Salvador, Mireya Moscoso of Panama, Carlos Flores of Honduras, and Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil. Prime Minister Said

Wilbert Musa of Belize and Presidents Miguel Rodriguez of Costa Rica, Arnaldo Aleman of Nicaragua, and Alfonso Antonio Portillo of Guatemala also participated in the discussions. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Summit of the Americas Working Session in Quebec City April 21, 2001

Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. *Amigo y amigos*, it's an honor to be here. First, Mr. Prime Minister, I want to thank you for your warm hospitality, and I want to thank all those folks in your government who have worked hard to make this conference a success. My fellow Presidents and Prime Ministers and leaders of our hemisphere's 34 democracies, it is a great honor to be here.

We have a great vision before us, a fully democratic hemisphere bound together by good will and free trade. That's a tall order. It is a chance of a lifetime. It is a responsibility we all share.

Quebec City is a fitting place for us to begin. Many of the great cultures that have shaped our hemisphere converge in this city. Before Champlain ever sailed the St. Lawrence, he sailed the Caribbean, visiting Mexico and Colombia, Puerto Rico and Panama. As a matter of fact, he was one of the first to propose a canal from the Atlantic to the Pacific so that trade may prosper. During the 400 years since Champlain's travels, our hemisphere, united by geography, has too often—too often—been separated by history of rivalry and resentment.

But we have entered a new era. The interests of my nation, of all our nations are served by strong, healthy, democratic neighbors and are served best by lasting friendships in our own neighborhood. My country, more than ever, feels the ties of

kinship, commerce, and culture that unite us. And I'm proud to have the privilege so early in my administration to meet with all the leaders of this hemisphere's democratic countries.

Our task is to take the vital principles shaped at Miami and Santiago and translate them into actions that directly benefit the people we answer to. I'm here to offer my own ideas. I'm here to learn and to listen from voices—to those inside this hall and to those outside this hall who want to join us in constructive dialog.

The single most important thing we will do here is to reaffirm that this summit is a gathering of, by, and for democracies, and only democracies. Today, freedom embraces the entire hemisphere, except for one country. And we look forward to the day when all this hemisphere's peoples will know the benefits and dignity of freedom. José Martí said it best: *La libertad no es nogociable*.

We also understand that democracy is a journey, not a destination. Each nation here, including the United States, must work to make freedom succeed. Elections are the foundation of democracy, but nations need to build on this foundation with other building blocks such as a strong judiciary, freedom to speak and write as you wish, efficient banking and social services, quality schools, secure ownership of land, the ability to start and own a business. We

must strengthen this architecture of democracy for the benefit of all our people.

This is the spirit behind the American Fellows exchange program that I announce here today. This program will sponsor one-year exchanges of outstanding civil servants among nations throughout the Americas. We'll also provide resources to help reform and modernize judicial institutions, protect basic human rights, root out corruption and other threats to the institutions that sustain freedom.

Our hemisphere's support for democracy and freedom is principled, but it is also pragmatic. Freedom is not only a right; it is also our best weapon against tyranny and poverty. Some complain that despite our democratic gains, there is still too much poverty, inequality. Some even say that things are getting worse, not better. For too many, this may be true. But the solution does not lie in statism or protectionism. The solution lies in more freedom.

And that is why we seek freedom not only for people living within our borders but also for commerce moving across our borders. Free and open trade creates new jobs and new income. It lifts the lives of all our people, applying the power of markets to the needs of the poor. It spurs the process of economic and legal reform. And open trade reinforces the habit of liberty that sustains democracy over the long haul.

The United States will work for open trade at every opportunity. We will seek bilateral free trade agreements with friends and partners, such as the one we aim to complete this year with Chile. We will work for open trade globally through negotiations in the World Trade Organization. And here in the Americas, we will work hard to build an entire hemisphere that trades in freedom.

The history of our times is clear: Progress is found in pluralism; modernization is found in markets. Free enterprise requires liberty and enlarges liberty. Our commitment to open trade must be

matched by a strong commitment to protecting our environment and improving labor standards.

Yet, these concerns must not be an excuse for self-defeating protectionism. We know from NAFTA that open trade works. Since 1994, total trade among Canada and Mexico and the United States has more than doubled. NAFTA has given consumers in all three nations more choices at lower prices. And it has created high quality, high—good wage jobs from the Yukon to the Yucatan.

The time has come to extend the benefits of free trade to all our peoples and to achieve a free trade agreement for the entire hemisphere. Our challenge is to energize our negotiations on a Free Trade Area for the Americas so that they can be completed no later than the year 2005.

In my first speech to our Congress, I made clear that achieving U.S. trade promotion authority was among my top priorities. I reinforced that message just 2 weeks ago, when I met to discuss trade issues with congressional leaders. When I return to Washington, I will put forward a set of principles that will be the framework for more intense consultations with Congress. I'm committed to attaining trade promotion authority before the end of the year. I'm confident that I will get it.

Partnership in trade is fundamental to the hemisphere's well-being. But we know it is not, by itself, sufficient to guarantee the quality of life we seek for ourselves and for our children.

Too many people in our hemisphere grow, sell, and use illegal drugs. I want to make this clear: The United States is responsible to fight demand for drugs within our own borders. We have a serious obligation to do so. And we will expand our efforts, with meaningful resources, to work with producer and transit countries to fortify their democratic institutions, to promote sustainable development, and to fight the supply of drugs at the source. This is a message I carried yesterday to

the leaders of the Andean countries. The United States so appreciates the difficult challenge they face in fighting drugs and stands ready to be a consistent and true partner.

We're also committed to deepening our cooperation throughout the hemisphere in fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS, responding to natural disasters, and making sure the benefits of globalization are felt in even the smallest of economies. These goals are at the heart of the Third Border Initiative that we have launched with the countries of the Caribbean.

We're committed to protecting the hemisphere's natural resources. That's why I'm committed to using the Tropical Forest Conservation Act to help countries redirect debt repayments toward local projects that will protect biodiversity and tropical forests. As the program demonstrates success, I'm prepared to work with Congress to boost the funding.

We're committed to making education a centerpiece of our economic agenda because learning and literacy are the foundations for development and democracy. The United States will sponsor the creation of Hemispheric Centers for Teacher Excellence. These centers will provide teacher training for improving literacy and basic education, both in person and over the Internet.

And finally, we will sponsor the creation of the new Latin E-Business Fellowship Program. This will give young professionals from throughout the Americas the oppor-

tunity to learn about information technology by spending time with United States companies. It will empower them with the skills and background to bring the benefits of these technologies to their own societies.

On the day I became President, I talked of liberty as "a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations." For over two decades, our hemisphere has been fertile ground for freedom. So many men and women have left the shadow of oppression and fear. And for coming so far, this is not the time to grow timid or weary. Freedom is still our best weapon against tyranny and want.

In so many places in this hemisphere, liberty has been won. Now the blessings of liberty must be extended to every life. When we reach this goal by our unified efforts, we will inspire the world by our example.

Together, let us go forward to build an age of prosperity in a hemisphere of liberty. Together, let us use this Summit of the Americas to launch the century of the Americas. *Juntos podemos. Juntos lo haremos.*

God bless the Americas, and God bless her people.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 a.m. in the ballroom at the Hilton Quebec. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada. The President also referred to the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998, Public Law No. 105-214.

The President's Radio Address

April 21, 2001

Good morning. As you hear this, I am in Canada for the Summit of the Americas, joined by leaders of 33 other democratic nations. Only one country in the Western Hemisphere is not represented, because

that country, Cuba, is the only one that is not yet a democracy.

Democracy's progress in our part of the world is not total, but it is remarkable. We live in a hemisphere defined by the ideas