

would have been unthinkable just 15 years ago.

Progress requires a commitment to tearing down the barriers of poverty, disease, and ignorance so that every individual in our hemisphere may realize his or her full potential. The United States wants to work together with our neighbors to find ways to give all our children quality education, because learning and literacy are the foundations for democracy and for development.

Progress requires new efforts against illegal drugs. Our country is committed to bringing down the demand for drugs here at home. And we want to work more closely with countries where drugs are produced and traded so countries can better fight the supply of drugs at their source.

And progress in our hemisphere requires a renewed commitment to creating a Free Trade Area of the Americas. This will make our hemisphere the largest free trade area in the world, encompassing 34 countries and 800 million people.

We already know from the North American Free Trade Agreement that free trade works. Since 1994, total trade among Canada, Mexico, and the United States has more than doubled. NAFTA has created more choices at lower prices for consumers in all three of our nations. And it has created good jobs for our workers. Now is the time to extend these benefits of free trade throughout the entire hemisphere.

Open trade in our hemisphere will open new markets for our farmers and ranchers, workers and service providers, and high-tech entrepreneurs. It will fuel the engines of economic growth that create new jobs and new income, and it will apply the power of the markets to the needs of the poor. It will give new incentives for nations to reform their economies. It will reinforce our hemispheric—democratic gains because people who operate in open economies eventually demand more open societies.

This third Summit of the Americas will take the next steps in creating an entire hemisphere that is both prosperous and free. *Es una tarea importante. Tenemos que aprovechar la oportunidad.* It's a great task and an extraordinary opportunity to make the Americas the land of opportunity. And I look

forward to getting started this weekend in Quebec.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Leaders of Andean Nations in Quebec, Canada

April 20, 2001

I want to thank you all for coming. It is my honor to host what I think is a very important meeting between the members of the Andean coalition and my country. I wanted to visit with the leaders face to face. I met President Pastrana before; it's good see him again. I have talked on the phone to some of the leaders. I want to assure the leaders here that our Nation looks forward to working with you, and particularly when it comes to trade and commerce.

I want to assure the leaders that Plan Colombia means more than just the country of Colombia—I know that's of concern to the President of Ecuador—that we've got plans for all the countries in the region. And it's not just on helping to fight drugs. It's on making sure that the economies remain strong, that the infrastructure for education is in place. It is in our Nation's interest that we cooperate together. And so I appreciate the leaders for being here.

It is my honor to host this discussion. I look forward to a very frank and honest exchange of areas where we can cooperate and, if there are some problems, areas that we can work together to solve the problems.

So thank you all for coming. *El honor es mio.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:51 p.m. at the Loews le Concorde Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to President Andres Pastrana of Colombia and President Gustavo Noboa of Ecuador. President Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil, President Mireya Elisa Moscoso of Panama, President Valentin Paniagua Corazao of Peru, President Hugo Banzer of Bolivia, and President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela also participated in the discussions.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

April 15

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, from Crawford, TX.

April 16

The President announced his intention to nominate Bennett William Raley to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Water and Science.

The President announced the appointment of Attorney General John Ashcroft as a member of the James Madison Commemoration Commission.

The President announced the appointment of Secretary of State Colin L. Powell as a member of the James Madison Commemoration Commission.

The White House announced that the President applauded Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Christine Todd Whitman's decision to move forward with pending regulations to protect America's wetlands.

April 17

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael J. Garcia to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Enforcement.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mary Sheila Gall to be Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Anne O. Krueger to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jack Dyer Crouch II to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Russ Whitehurst to be Assistant

Secretary of Education for Educational Research and Improvement.

The President announced his intention to nominate David Garman to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Neal A. McCaleb to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs.

The President announced his intention to nominate Rosario Marin to be Treasurer of the United States.

The President declared a major disaster in Mississippi and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on April 3–5.

The White House announced that the President will give commencement addresses at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, IN, on May 20, and the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD, on May 25.

April 18

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit of Turkey from the Oval Office.

Later, the President traveled to Waterbury, CT, where he toured the B.W. Tinker School. He then traveled to New Britain, CT.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate George Tracey Mehan III to be Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency for Water Programs.

The President announced his intention to nominate Eduardo Aguirre, Jr., to be First Vice President of the Export-Import Bank of the United States.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald E. Powell to be a member and Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert S. Martin to be Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services.