

NATO's mission must be well-defined, with a clear and realistic strategy to allow us to bring our forces home when their work is done. Anytime we send troops we must be mindful of the risks, but if these conditions are met, if there is an effective agreement and a clear plan, I believe America should contribute to securing peace for Kosovo. And I look forward to working with Congress in making this final decision.

America cannot be everywhere or do everything overseas. But we must act where important interests are at stake and we can make a difference. Peace in Kosovo clearly is important to the United States, and with bipartisan support in Congress and the backing of the American people, we can make a difference.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Ernesto Zedillo in Merida, Mexico

February 15, 1999

Senate Vote on Impeachment

Q. Mr. President, do you feel vindicated by the Senate vote? And how do you think you will be able to overcome any damage that was caused in your relations with Republican leaders in Congress?

The President. Well, I have, really, nothing to add to what I said on Friday about that. I think this is a time for reconciliation and renewal. I think what we have to do is to serve the American people. And if we keep that in mind, I think everything will be fine.

We can't resolve the challenges of Social Security and Medicare, education, these other things; we can't keep the international economy going unless we have a level of cooperation. I'm encouraged that we have a number of Republican Members of Congress on this trip, and I intend to do exactly what I said I'd do last Friday. And I think if everybody just keeps our eye on the ball—which is that we are here to serve the public, and not the other way around—I think we'll be fine.

Mexico-U.S. Antidrug Efforts

Q. Mr. President, do you have any problems with the system the United States has for certifying drug cooperation?

The President. Well, first of all, it is the law of the land, and the Secretary of State sometime in the next few weeks will have to make a recommendation. I think the question is, how can we do better to deal with the drug problem? President Zedillo said it's his number one national security problem. Neither country has won the drug war. And the fundamental question is, are we better off fighting it together or separately, and perhaps sometimes at odds with one another?

Under General McCaffrey, who's here, we put in place a very aggressive antidrug strategy. Finally, we've got a lot of the indicators going in the right direction in the United States. And cooperation with Mexico has clearly improved under President Zedillo's leadership. The issue is what is most likely to free our children of this scourge in the new century, and that's what will guide my decisions.

Thank you all.

Hillary Clinton's Possible Senate Candidacy

Q. Have you encouraged Mrs. Clinton to run for the Senate, sir? What have you said to her?

The President. People in New York started calling her. I don't think it had ever occurred to her before a lot of people started calling and asking her to do it. I think she would be terrific in the Senate. But that's a decision that she'll have to make. And for reasons I'm sure you'll understand, she hasn't had anything like adequate time to talk to the people who think she should do this, much less people who think perhaps she shouldn't. I mean, she just hasn't had time to deal with this.

But it's her decision to make. I will support whatever decision she makes enthusiastically. She has a lot of other opportunities for public service that will be out there, and she and I both would like to continue to be useful in public affairs when we leave office. But it's a decision she'll have to make. She'd be great if she did it, but she hasn't had anything like the requisite amount of time to talk to people and to assess it, and I'm sure that

everyone will understand and appreciate that.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 11:30 a.m. in Hacienda Temozon. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to Business Leaders in Merida

February 15, 1999

Mr. President, Mrs. Zedillo, distinguished Mexican officials, members of the Mexican Congress, the Governor and First Lady of the Yucatan, the mayor and the people of Merida: Let me begin by thanking all of you for the wonderful reception you have given to me and to Hillary, to the members of our Cabinet, the Members of Congress, our entire American delegation.

Hillary and I came to Mexico 24 years ago for what I believe you call our *luna de miel*—our honeymoon. And your country has been close to our hearts ever since. I want to especially thank President Zedillo for joining me in building the closest, most candid, most comprehensive relationship in the long history of our two nations.

Merida faces the Caribbean and the interior. It looks north and south. It combines Old World architecture with a thriving indigenous culture. In many ways, therefore, this city symbolizes the new, inclusive community of the Americas, a community of shared values and genuine cooperation. I thank the Members of the American Congress of both parties whose presence here with me today is evidence of America's commitment for the common future we will make together.

Nothing better symbolizes the sea change in our sense of hemispheric community than the partnership between the United States and Mexico. Not so long ago the great Mexican writer, Octavio Paz, said, "The North Americans are outstanding in the art of the monolog." I'm glad to say we have turned the monolog into a dialog—a dialog of mutual respect and interdependence. Today, we speak with each other, not at each other. From different starting points, our courses are converging in our common commitment

to democracy and in the absolute certainty that we will share the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

We honor President Zedillo and all the people of Mexico for the steps you have taken and are taking to deepen your democracy. Now, as your people deliver their votes for democracy, we must all do what we can to make sure democracy delivers for them, for democracy will only endure if we can build the quality of life it promises.

That is the challenge we are addressing here today. I start with the good news: As President Zedillo has said, our economic relationship is strong, and we are making it even stronger. Our decision to let Mexican and U.S. airlines engage in joint sales and marketing will generate many millions of dollars in new revenues, not only for the airlines but for the travel and investment potential of our countries. It will benefit especially tourism regions like the Yucatan. We also agreed today to enable the Ex-Im Bank to provide up to \$4 billion to keep U.S. exports such as aircraft and construction equipment flowing into Mexico and to maintain Mexico's position as Ex-Im's top market.

This year we celebrate 5 years since NAFTA entered into force. There were many doubters then. But look at the facts now: Since 1993, our exports to each other have roughly doubled. In the United States alone, a million jobs depend on this trade; that is up 43 percent since 1993. Of course, we still have work to do on labor, environmental, and other issues. But NAFTA has taught us that we have far more to gain by working together.

We learned that lesson again 4 years ago when the United States was proud to assist Mexico in restoring confidence in the peso. President Zedillo acted decisively and courageously. The Mexican people made tough sacrifices to speed recovery. The United States was right to support you, and you have followed the right course.

More recently, we all agree that our trade relationship has helped to insulate both countries from the global financial crisis that has caused such hardship elsewhere. In 1998, while U.S. exports to the Pacific Rim dropped 19 percent, our exports to each other went up about 10 percent. We must