

Remarks on Signing the Message Transmitting Proposed NAFTA Legislation to the Congress and an Exchange With Reporters November 3, 1993

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, today I am sending to Congress the implementing legislation for NAFTA. This will create the world's largest tariff-free zone, from the Canadian arc to the Mexican tropics, with more than 370 million consumers and over \$6.5 trillion of production. It will clearly benefit America's workers. Mexican tariffs today are 2½ times United States tariffs. As the walls come down, we estimate that another 200,000 American jobs will be created by 1995.

NAFTA will also enable us to operate in an unprecedented manner in other areas. It will improve environmental conditions on the U.S.-Mexican border, something that all Americans know we need to do and something that all Mexicans know we need to do. It will be the stimulus for economic growth beyond Mexico, enabling us to go into the rest of Latin America with similar agreements. And perhaps most important in the short run, it will give the United States access to the Mexican markets on terms more favorable than those available to many of our competitors who have also rapidly been expanding their sales into Mexico, whether from Europe or Japan or the rest of Asia.

If we turn away from NAFTA, we risk losing the natural trade advantage that should come to the United States as Mexico and the rest of Latin America build market economies and stronger democracies. If we embrace NAFTA, it is one strong step to take this country into the 21st century with a revitalized economy. That is clearly in the forefront of the minds of all Americans, and that is why we are all pursuing it here in this bipartisan fashion.

I want to thank the Democratic and the Republican leaders of the Congress who are here with me today, thank them for their tireless efforts, along with our administration, Ambassador Kantor, Mr. Daley, Mr. Frenzel, and others. We are working hard. We are making progress, and I hope when we send this bill up to the Congress today that it will reaffirm the clear interest of the United States in adopting this agreement.

I'd like to sign it now, and then we'll take a couple of questions.

[At this point, the President signed the message transmitting the proposed legislation to implement the North American Free Trade Agreement.]

Q. Mr. President?

The President. I have to sign two, there being two Houses. [Laughter]

Election Results

Q. Mr. President, it's a year after your election and the Democrats have now lost two Senate seats, two Governors, the mayors of—[inaudible]—the largest cities in the country. Do you view it in any way as a judgment on your policies in the Democratic Party?

The President. No. When Governor Robb was elected Governor of Virginia in 1981, I didn't think it was a repudiation of President Reagan. We also won a lot of mayors' races last night, including a lot of people who were early supporters of mine and very instrumental in the campaign. And we won the special elections for the House of Representatives that had come up that we had before. I don't think you can draw too much conclusion from this. I think what you can say is, the American people want change, and they want results. The point I want to make is that I believe every Member of Congress, without regard for party, who votes for this agreement will be rewarded for it, because it represents change and the creation of more economic opportunity. I think it represents change and results. That's the way incumbents are going to survive, by providing the kind of changes that the voters want.

Q. So you don't think it's any reflection on you, or any referendum on you or your programs?

The President. Let me say this: I was elected Governor of my State five times. Once I was elected in 1984 when Ronald Reagan got 59 percent of the vote in my State, and I got 63 percent. Voters are extremely discriminating. They make their own judgments for their own reasons. I think it is a manifestation that the voters are not yet happy with the pace of economic renewal, social reunification in this country. They're worried about crime. They're wor-

ried about all of these other social problems we've got. And I think it's also a sense they have that Government's not yet working for them.

And all that is right. There's nothing wrong about that. And I think that all people who are in, if they want to stay in, are going to have to work together until we produce economic results, a country that's coming together instead of coming apart, and political reform. But that's why I will say again, it's certainly not a message to run and hide from the tough issues; that is not what it is. And that's why I think, again, I think NAFTA is symbolic of the kinds of things that people ought to be doing across party lines, because it will create economic opportunity. And that will lower voter anxiety. When people won't have to worry about whether the economy is growing or not, they'll be much more secure, and we'll be able to deal with a whole lot of these other issues that we've got. That's why I think this is a very important, symbolic issue.

NAFTA

Q. Do you have the votes?

The President. Do we have the votes? We don't have them today, but we're getting there. Really, I think all of these people would admit, thanks to all of them, we're making rapid progress. And we had a real movement in the last 10 days or so, and I think you'll see more and more progress in the next few days.

Q. Are you going to win?

The President. Yes. We're going to win it.

Q. Are you cutting too many deals? The big sugar deal, is this just—

The President. No.

Q. Isn't that protectionist, the sugar concessions for the Louisiana Members?

The President. I think the Ambassador is going to have a—you're going to have a press conference this afternoon to talk about that, aren't you?

Ambassador Kantor. Yes.

The President. We haven't done anything that's not consistent with what we said we'd try to do from the beginning on this agreement. And Mickey's going to talk about it today.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks to the Community in Ambridge, Pennsylvania

November 3, 1993

Thank you very much. It is wonderful to be back in Pennsylvania, wonderful to be here in western Pennsylvania with so many of my friends and so many of the people who helped to make one year ago today, the day that I was elected President, a wonderful day for me. I thank you for that.

I thank Congressman Klink for coming here today and hosting us here today in his district. He's done a terrific job being your advocate. He has, on occasion, chewed my ear off about the interests of the people in this area, and I know you can be proud of him for what he has done. I thank Senator Specter for coming here today and for being willing to work across party lines to solve this problem that has affected him and every other American and every other American family. I thank my good friend, Senator Wofford—I want to say a little more about him in a moment—for coming here and

for nourishing this issue long before it was popular. I want to thank you, Mayor Panek, for having us here today. And I thank Congressman Murphy for coming up with us. And I thank my friends from Allegheny County: Commissioner Tom Forrester and the outgoing Mayor of Pittsburgh who's serving the end of her term, Mayor Sophie Masloff. We're glad to see you, Sophie. [Applause] Thank you.

I want to thank your superintendent, Dr. DePaul, and your principal, David Perry, for having us here. And let me say, as an old band boy, I congratulate the band on your achievement, and I wish you well.

I wanted to come here to Pennsylvania today to put this book in the library here in your wonderful hometown, in that beautiful library, to symbolize the placement of the health care plan in 1,600 Federal depository libraries all across America today and in hundreds of others