

for Thanksgiving to offer our gratitude to God for life's blessings. For all our difficulties, we live in a moment of peace and promise that would have gladdened the hearts of generations that came before us and justified their faith in the future. The challenges we face today, providing our people with the skills and security they need to prevail in peaceful competition with citizens all over the world, is one our predecessors would have longed to embrace. After

this week, I'm even more confident that we will embrace that challenge, not evade it.

Thanks for listening, and a happy Thanksgiving to you and your families.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:10 a.m. on November 18 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 20.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Following Discussions With APEC Leaders in Seattle

November 20, 1993

The President. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. As we approach the end of a week of APEC activities, we've just completed 3 hours of meetings among 14 APEC economic leaders. It's been a pleasure for me and an honor for the United States to host this week's events and to convene this historic meeting on this beautiful island.

The Asian-Pacific region will provide an increasingly vital role for our Nation and the world. The region is home to 40 percent of the world's people, includes the world's fastest growing economies, and the leaders standing here represent half the world's economic output.

This week's events have been a success for all the region's peoples. We've laid a foundation for regional efforts to create jobs, raise incomes, expand business opportunities, and foster regional harmony. This week we took several tangible steps toward these goals.

On Monday and Tuesday over 1,500 business people engaged in trade came together to focus on the region's potential to benefit their bottom lines. Later in the week, our ministers agreed to a package of market-opening measures designed to help bring the Uruguay round to the GATT to a successful conclusion by December 15th. And the ministerial meeting agreed to develop an action plan in the near future to reduce barriers to business throughout our region, such as differing product standards.

The capstone of this week's activities has been this first-ever leaders meeting. Our discussions this morning, which will continue in the afternoon, give us a chance to become better ac-

quainted and to compare our visions for our own nations and for our diverse and dynamic region. By meeting and talking we've been able to forge a stronger regional identity and a stronger purpose. That purpose is captured in the vision statement we just released.

The statement sets forth our shared view of a regional economy characterized by openness, cooperation, dynamic growth, expanded trade, improved transportation and communications, and high-skilled, high-paying jobs. We've welcomed the challenge of the eminent persons group to achieve free trade in the Asian-Pacific region, advance global trade liberalization, and launch concrete specific programs to move us toward these long-term goals.

In our discussions last evening and today, I've been struck by how many priorities we share: strong, sustainable economic growth; more open markets; better jobs, working conditions, and living standards for our own people; better education for our children and our adults; and protection of the region's unique environment. Of course, we will not always agree on how to achieve those goals. But at least now, for the first time, our region has a means to hold serious policy discussions on such questions as how to remove trade barriers or how to sustain robust growth.

If you ask me to summarize in a sentence what we've agreed, it is this: We've agreed that the Asian-Pacific region should be a united one, not divided. We've agreed that our economic policies should be opened, not closed. We've agreed to begin to express that conviction by

doing everything we possibly can to get a good GATT agreement by December 15th.

With today's meeting, we're helping the Asian-Pacific to become a genuine community, not a formal, legal structure but rather a community of shared interests, shared goals, and shared commitment to mutually beneficial cooperation.

The development of that community is certainly in the interest of the American people and all the people of this region. We should be pleased with the progress we've made. And let me say again how honored I am on behalf of the United States to have had the opportunity to host all these leaders.

Thank you very much.

Economic Cooperation

Q. Mr. President, there was no sign of any flexibility from China in the area of—or with Japan on the trade imbalances. Can you say, were any minds or attitudes changed during the course of this meeting?

The President. You're referring to meetings that I had yesterday and discussions we had. Today I'm the host of the meeting where we discussed economic issues, and I frankly believe by—I'll make you a prediction on the economic issues: By next June or July, certainly by a year from now, I believe that the responsibilities of the United States and Japan to do more to promote global economic growth will have been, in large measure, advanced. And I think you will see that we've done some of the things that we should, both of us. So today we focused on what we could do together economically, and I think that's what I ought to respond to today.

China-Taiwan Relations

Q. Mr. President, the fact that—representatives from Taiwan and China to join you to discuss about the issues—I wonder, how do you find your respective vision for these areas? And in your opinion, how does this meeting affect the relationship between Taiwan and China?

The President. Well, that's something for them to determine. I invited, as the host, all the members of this organization, which was the appropriate thing to do. Actually, I'm struck by how much common investment and common activity there is now, and by the common strategies of high savings and investment, hard work and entrepreneurship that are sweeping that part of the world. It is immensely impressive, I think, to anyone who has observed it.

Malaysia

Q. Mr. President, what do you think about Malaysia's absence from this meeting? And what do you think about the EAEP, the East Asia economic party?

The President. Well, first of all, I'm in favor of anything which increases regional economic cooperation and advances the economic interests of people as long as it doesn't close off economic opportunities for others. And I wish Mr. Mahathir were here, and I look forward to meeting him someday.

North Korea

Q. Mr. President, how serious is the situation in North Korea as a threat to this whole region? And is that something that you discussed today at the meeting?

The President. We didn't discuss it today, but it was discussed yesterday. And I look forward to meeting with President Kim in Washington. He's going back to Washington, and we'll be meeting there and talking about it. It is a source of concern to us, but one that we believe we can find solutions to. And we're going to be taking some initiatives in that area in the not-too-distant future.

New Zealand

Q. Mr. President, is New Zealand now figuratively out of the cold, if not literally? Have you now restored the political relationship with New Zealand?

The President. Actually, we're out in the cold today. [Laughter]

The Prime Minister and I had a good talk about that, and we agreed that we would at least take a good look at our relationship and see what else might be done. We have an awful lot in common and a lot of natural instincts toward friendship and cooperation. And I think both of us are uncomfortable with what has become of our relationship over the last several years. So we'll take another look at it; we may have something to say about it, but not today and not tomorrow.

Economic Cooperation

Q. Mr. President, when you were talking about NAFTA you mentioned several times Taiwan, Japan, and China are the three major obstacles when you're dealing with U.S. trade defi-

cit. A lot of people think that was not very helpful when you're trying to cooperate with Asian countries. I was wondering, after this meeting—

The President. Wait, wait, wait. You can ask the question, but let me restate what I said.

What I said to the American people was simply the fact that the people who were against NAFTA acted as if Mexico essentially was going to displace the entire industrial production of the United States or significant portions of it. And I pointed out the fact that we have a trade surplus with Mexico and that our largest operating trade deficits are with Japan, China, and Taiwan. That's simply a fact. That's not an act of hostility, it's just a stated fact. So, go ahead, ask the question.

Q. The question is, after this meeting, will you think that in the future that United States is willing to use cooperation instead of Article 301 type of trade retaliation threat to deal with these problems?

The President. Well, I think, first of all, we've used Article 301 rather sparingly. And secondly, we do seek cooperation. That's the whole purpose of this meeting. That's one of the reasons that I wanted all the leaders to come here, because I think that we have so much in common in terms of our shared views about what the economy of the 21st century ought to look like and what our roles ought to be in it, that I think we can do a lot through cooperation. And we're working very hard to do that.

In the end, if we're going to develop the right kind of free market system, it is going to have to be a cooperative one. But it's going to have to be one that is plainly in the interest

of all the people involved in the system. That is, everyone has to be going forward together.

Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Q. Mr. President, how hard and fast is the December 15th deadline for successful completion of the GATT round? It's slipped a couple of times previously. Would you be prepared to extend it if you don't have agreement by then?

The President. Well, it's not entirely up to me, and of course, we have certain legislative authority in America, as you know, that controls that.

All I can tell you is that I think we want to take this moment of opportunity that, frankly, the House of Representatives, and I hope today that the Senate, will give impetus to through NAFTA, and that we are trying to give energy to through our meeting here and through our clear statement again that we want the Asian-Pacific region to be united, not divided, economically; open, not closed; and committed to GATT. We want to seize this moment to try to get it done now. And I've always found that when you're working on an objective, you shouldn't discuss what you'll do if you don't get there until after you don't get there. We still think we can be there, and we're going to try.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. on Blake Island. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad of Malaysia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Luncheon With APEC Leaders in Seattle

November 20, 1993

Deficit Reduction Proposal

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, as you know I'm supposed to be hosting a lunch in there, so I can't stay long. But there's one thing going on back in Washington I wanted to comment on today, and that is the debate over further budget reduction measures and specifically

the Penny-Kasich amendment. I want to make a couple of points.

First of all, we have not only passed the biggest deficit reduction program in history, which has produced very low interest rates and stable growth, we have presented the Congress with another package of cuts that includes a procurement reform bill that could save us up to \$20 billion. I have started the process of appointing