

This week we have come together to build a better world and a better future for our children. Students of the Americas will recognize this as an old dream. In the 1820's, at the dawn of freedom for the new Latin American republics, Simon Bolivar dreamed the Americas could be the greatest region on Earth, I quote, "not so much by virtue of her area and wealth, but by her freedom and her glory." Now, some 170 years later, Bolivar's dream for the Americas is becoming a reality. The people represented here are free, we are friends, and we are committed to creating the best century in our history. We can become true partners for prosperity, and we can begin this week.

Our goals for the summit are clear: We want to extend free trade from Alaska to Argentina, we want to strengthen our democracies, and we want to improve the quality of life for all our people. It is clear that these goals are bound

together. If we grow more prosperous through trade, we will strengthen our democracies and our friendship. If we confront our common problems, the common threats to democracy, in a spirit of genuine partnership, we will increase our chances at prosperity. And if together we can confront our common challenges in the environment, in health, and education to provide for long-term sustainable development, both our prosperity and our freedom will be secure.

A partnership for prosperity, stronger democracies, improving our people's quality of life, these are the opportunities that lie before us. So, my fellow citizens of the Americas, let us make the most of them.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. at the Biltmore Hotel Country Club.

Statement on the Resignation of Joycelyn Elders as Surgeon General *December 9, 1994*

Dr. Joycelyn Elders is a physician of outstanding ability, energy, and commitment. As a pediatrician, she dedicated her life to improving the health of children. As Surgeon General, she worked tirelessly to reduce teen pregnancy and AIDS and to improve the health of all Americans, especially our children.

Dr. Elders' public statements reflecting differences with administration policy and my own

convictions have made it necessary for her to tender her resignation.

Those statements in no way diminish her devotion to her work and the enormous positive impact she has had on the problems she tackled and the people she served.

I will always be grateful for her service.

The President's Radio Address *December 10, 1994*

Good morning. Earlier this week, I signed the GATT agreement, the most far-reaching international trade pact in our history. And this weekend in Miami, we in the United States are hosting the Summit of the Americas, where the leaders of 34 countries have gathered to promote trade in our own hemisphere.

This Summit of the Americas and GATT and everything we've done to expand international trade is really about opening up foreign markets

to America's goods and services, so that we can create high-wage jobs and new opportunities for our people here at home.

But despite all the progress we've made—despite the fact that we have over 5 million new jobs in the last 22 months, the biggest expansion of trade in history, we've had more new construction jobs this year than in the last 9 years combined, and we've had a year of manufacturing job growth for the first time in a

decade—in spite of all that, millions of hard-working people are still out there killing themselves, working longer hours for lower pay, paying more for health care or losing their health coverage, than ever before. More and more Americans, even in this recovery, are worried that they could lose their job or their benefits at any time. There's less disposable income for most working Americans than there was just a decade ago. Many people can't even imagine being able to afford a vacation anymore, let alone send their children to college. And I'm talking about hard-working Americans who play by the rules; they're tired of watching their earnings benefit people who don't.

There's no greater gap between mainstream American values and modern Government than we find in the welfare system. The welfare system was set up for all the right reasons: to help people who had fallen on hard times temporarily, to give them a hand up for a little while so they can put their lives back in order and move on. And it still works that way for an awful lot of people. But for millions and millions of people, the system is broken badly, and it undermines the very values, work, family and responsibility, that people need to put themselves back on track.

The people who are stuck on welfare permanently will be the first to tell you that if we're going to fix it, we have to return to those values, and we have to put them front and center. People who have worked their way off of welfare, after being afraid they'd be on it forever, will be the strongest in saying we've got to put work, family, and responsibility back into the system.

We have to change welfare so that it drives people toward the freedom of work, not the confines of dependence. Work is still the best social program ever invented. Work gives hope and structure and meaning to people's lives. And we won't have ended welfare as we know it until its central focus is to move people off welfare and into a job so that they can support themselves and their families.

We have to change welfare so that it strengthens families, and not weaken them. There is no substitute, none, for the loving devotion and equally loving discipline of caring parents. Governments don't raise children, parents do. There's some people out there who argue that we should let some sort of big, new institution take parents' place, that we should even take children away from parents as we cut them off

welfare, even if they're doing a good job as parents, and put the children in orphanages. Well, those people are dead wrong. We need less governmental interference in family life, not more.

We have to change the welfare system so that it demands the same responsibility already shouldered by millions and millions of Americans who already get up every day and go to work and struggle to make ends meet and raise their children. Anyone who can work should do so. Anyone who brings a child into this world ought to take responsibility for that child. And no one—no one—should get pregnant or father a child who isn't prepared to raise the child, love the child, and take financial and personal responsibility for the child's future.

That's why welfare reform must include a national campaign against teen pregnancy and the toughest possible enforcement of our child support laws, along with the requirement that people on welfare will have to get off of it and go to work after a specified period of time. It also means that if you're going to require that, there has to be a job there for them and support for people who are working to raise their children in the proper way.

I've worked on this welfare reform issue for 14 years, since I first became Governor of my State. I've worked with other Governors, with Members of Congress from both parties, but most importantly with people on welfare and people who've worked their way off of it. I know that most people out there on welfare don't like it a bit, would give anything to get off, and really want to be good, hard-working citizens and successful parents.

There are a lot of ideas out there for reforming welfare. Some are really good, and some are just political attention-getters. Since I became President, I've worked hard on this. I've already introduced welfare reform legislation in the last session of Congress. We've also given 20 States relief from cumbersome Federal bureaucracy rules so that they can pursue welfare reform on their own. We've done that for more States than the previous two administrations combined.

There's still some disagreement about what we ought to do, but everybody agrees that the system is badly broken and needs to be fixed. It's a bad deal for the taxpayers who pay the bills, and it's a worse deal for the families who are permanently stuck on it.

Two days ago, after meeting with Governors from both the Democratic and Republican Parties, I announced that we're going to host a national bipartisan working session on welfare reform at the White House in January. I call for this session as a first step in an honest and forthright discussion about America's welfare system and how to fix it. It's not going to be easy, but our responsibility to the American people is to put aside partisan differences and to turn our full attention to the problems at hand.

The American people deserve a Government that honors their values and spends their money wisely and a country that rewards people who work hard and play by the rules. Working together, that's what we can give them.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:19 p.m. on December 8 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 10.

Remarks Following the First Session of the Summit of the Americas in Miami

December 10, 1994

Good morning. We have just completed the first working session of our summit on trade and economic integration. We are off to an excellent start. The 34 democratically elected leaders of our hemisphere have agreed to establish a free trade area of the Americas. This historic step will produce real opportunities for more jobs and solid, lasting prosperity for our peoples.

The agreement is specific and concrete. We have set the year 2005 as our deadline for negotiating a free trade area, and we have agreed that there will be real progress before the end of the century. The agreement will cover a comprehensive list of areas, from tariffs on goods to services to agricultural and intellectual property. We have set a highly detailed timetable that will include regular meetings of our ministers for trade. Talks will begin next month.

In less than a decade, if current trends continue, this hemisphere will be the world's largest market, more than 850 million consumers buying \$13 trillion worth of goods and services. When our work is done, the free trade area of the Americas will stretch from Alaska to Argentina. It is the key building block in our creation of a partnership for prosperity. It will build upon the many bilateral and multilateral agreements already existing between our nations.

We want to replace the many conflicting and different trade and other regulatory agreements with one that is consistent, while making sure to assist smaller economies in transition. We will ask the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank to assist

in this transition and integration. And we have pledged that our free trade area of the Americas will not raise new barriers to nations outside our region and will be fully consistent with the rules of the World Trade Organization. We have reaffirmed our commitment to make our individual trade and environmental policies mutually supportive and to further secure the observance and promotion of workers' rights.

Let me emphasize, none of us—none of us—underestimates the hard work ahead. But from the leaders of our hemisphere's largest economies to the smallest, we believe the rewards will be great and very much worth the effort. We believe the agreement we have made today to launch the free trade area of the Americas will produce more jobs, higher incomes, and greater opportunities for all of our people.

From here we're going to a working lunch, where we'll discuss issues affecting sustainable development. Our final session this afternoon will focus on the steps we will take to strengthen our democracies. I can think of no more appropriate way to end this day, the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. in the Gardens at Vizcaya.