

evening and the day, I received a call from General McCaffrey, who heads our efforts against illegal narcotics. He was full of excitement because he had been meeting with all of his counterparts from the countries here represented. He said, "Mr. President, this is the best meeting I ever had. These people really care about their children getting involved with drugs. They really want to defeat this. They're going to help us. We're going to work together. I feel better about this than I did the first day I took office." That is the spirit we intend to bring to every one of our endeavors.

Perhaps most important, we leave here with deeper ties as friends and partners. President Franklin Roosevelt said this 60 years ago in a speech to the Pan American Union; it's still true today: "Your Americanism and mine must be a structure built of confidence, cemented by

a sympathy which recognizes only equality and fraternity." My fellow citizens of the Americas, we stand on the edge of a bright new century. Let us bring that spirit to its work, and let us live with a dream that is worthy of our children.

I ask you now to join me in a toast of salute and gratitude to President and Mrs. Figueres for bringing us together here in Costa Rica.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 p.m. in the Hotel Herradura. In his remarks, he referred to President Carlos Roberto Reina of Honduras; President Jose Maria Figueres of Costa Rica and his wife, Josette Altmann de Figueres; and President Alvaro Arzu of Guatemala. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at Braulio Carrillo National Park, Costa Rica

May 9, 1997

Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. President, for delivering on the rainforest. [*Laughter*] You know, in my part of the United States, the children are raised with an old proverb that has come true today. The proverb is, you must be very careful what you ask for in life because you might get it. [*Laughter*]

Well, Dr. Macaya, to Joaquin Viquez—didn't that young man do a great job? You should be very proud of him. He was terrific. [*Applause*] Thank you.

To all of those who have spoken before and who have come here, and let me thank the members of my Cabinet and administration who are here, and also the members of the National Park Service. Hillary and I try to make sure we're at at least one of our national parks every year. And I think it's fair to say that they are the most popular public servants in the United States, so it's nice to see them—in the case of Mr. Findley, someplace besides Yellowstone. I'm glad you're all here. Thank you all very much for what you do.

Most of what needs to be said has been said. I come here to emphasize the importance of the forest that surrounds us to the chain of life, not only in Costa Rica and Central America

but to all the world. We know that the rainforests of the world provide us with a good deal of our oxygen and enormous resources coming out of the plant and animal life they contain. We know that the forest helps us to keep our climate stable, to preserve our soils, to protect our rivers. It nurtures plants that provide food and clothing and furniture and medicine. And from the stunning quetzal bird to the stealthy jaguar, we know that the marvelous animals must be preserved for all to see.

There is a new understanding today in the world between the bonds that connect human beings and their natural environment. We know we have to preserve them, and we know that in the end economic development itself cannot occur unless the environment is preserved. That is the lesson of the Rio Earth Summit 5 years ago, the driving force behind the CONCAUSA Alliance between the United States and Central America that President Figueres discussed, and also the driving notion behind the way we want to integrate this hemisphere—not just in trade and economics but also in education and health and, finally, in common cause to sustaining the treasures we see around us here today.

Costa Rica is showing the way. You heard, President Figueres says that now more than one-quarter of its land is being protected. The unique natural resources are generating jobs and income. Just before I came up here, Secretary Babbitt gave me the figures on Costa Rica's tourism income because of the commitment the people of this country have made to preserving and protecting the natural environment. We now know we have to do this not only in our hemisphere but around the world.

You know, the examples that the President cited I thought were quite important. We are pursuing ways to reduce greenhouse gases. There is some doubt about exactly what increased greenhouse gas emissions are doing to the climate, but no one doubts that they're changing the climate, and no one doubts that the potential consequences can be very profound and severe.

Almost 3 years ago, the Vice President of the United States, Al Gore, and President Figueres signed an agreement that will help United States companies to cut greenhouse gas emissions by investing in environmental projects in Costa Rica. Today, there are more than a dozen of these joint projects all across Central America, promoting solar energy in Honduras, geothermal energy in Nicaragua, forest management in Belize. Now the carbon certificates created by the Government of Costa Rica and the United States companies will provide a new way to finance these investments. Proceeds will go to clean powerplants, protecting or planting forests, launching other programs that pay environmental dividends. This is a long way from the philosophy which prevailed in this country, in our country, and indeed throughout the developed and the developing world just a few years ago.

From electric buses, which the President pointed out, to wind-driven power plants, Costa Rica's ambitious plans prove that we can have clean air and renewable energy in ways that create jobs here and in our country. That bus, I believe, was made in the Vice President's home State of Tennessee. And he asked me to say he appreciates it. *[Laughter]*

Third, let me say a special word of appreciation for something the President mentioned, and that is the work that is being done with the rainforest and with the space program by Dr. Franklin Cheng Diaz to deal with Chagas disease, which kills 20,000 people in Latin America

every year. The idea of combining what we know about space and what we find in the rainforest to make people have better and healthier lives is another stunning reminder that we destroy these resources at our peril.

Last, let me say, we're finding new ways to preserve our natural heritage. Once, our National Park Service worked with Costa Rica to help to set up your incredible network of parks. Now the Costa Rican Park Service is returning the favor by helping us to use your computer software in ways that will enable our park rangers at Yellowstone, which is the shining diamond of our park system, to catalog and preserve its natural wonders.

Soon after we complete this moment, Secretary Babbitt and Minister Castro will sign an agreement strengthening our cooperation for the next century. We're also working together to help other countries take better care of their wildlife, train professionals to manage fisheries in Argentina, run national parks in Paraguay, teach conservation in Guatemala. Now we have to work across national lines to protect the habitat of the songbirds, the sea turtles, the other creatures that migrate between our shores, and to stop the illegal and deadly trade in endangered species.

Yesterday in San Jose, President Figueres, our fellow leaders, and I pledged to make sustainable development a cornerstone of our relations. It will be part of the 1998 Summit of the Americas in Santiago and, eventually, the foundation of a larger global effort.

We must ban leaded gasoline everywhere, not just in Costa Rica, and control pesticides in our hemisphere, and reach a global agreement to phase out the most dangerous toxic chemicals. We have to protect our own forests and work with the United Nations to develop a strategy for the sustainable management of others around the world. And we must meet the challenge of climate change, regionally and beyond our hemisphere.

Together, we can make this a very historic year, Mr. President. As you know, the United Nations is having a special session next month on the environment. I am pleased to be leading America's delegation to the U.N. I hope many other world leaders will be there. Together, we need to reaffirm the spirit of Rio and lay out the concrete steps we're going to take to move ahead to make the preservation of the global

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environment and sustainable development the policy of every nation on Earth.

We are seeking to build a world where people live in the 21st century in harmony, not at war with each other; when they recognize that they have more in common than what divides them; when they no longer seek to elevate themselves by demeaning other people. That kind of world will only occur if we are also generous, wise, and good to our natural environment, and where we do not expect today's growth to threaten tomorrow's survival. That is my commitment. That is Costa Rica's commitment. Let us make sure we realize it.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

Before the paper is too wet, we have to ask Secretary Peña, Secretary Babbitt, and Minister Castro to come sign our agreements on electric transport and parks on behalf of our two nations. And we hope that the pens still work. *[Laughter]*

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:07 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Gabriel Macaya, rector, University of Costa Rica; Mike Findley, superintendent, Yellowstone National Park; student Joaquin Viquez, who introduced the President; Dr. Franklin Cheng Diaz, director, Laboratorio de Propulsion Avanzada Especial de la NASA; and Costa Rican Minister of Natural Resources, Energy, and Mines Rene Castro.

Remarks at a Reception for Caribbean Leaders in Bridgetown, Barbados *May 9, 1997*

Governor General, Madam, Prime Minister and Mrs. Arthur, leaders of the Caribbean, distinguished guests. First I'd like to thank our hosts for their hospitality and the weather. *[Laughter]* And I'd like to thank all of you for agreeing to join in this meeting here in beautiful Barbados.

I'm deeply honored to be the first American President to hold a summit with Caribbean heads of government here in the Caribbean. But it is high time; America, after all, is a Caribbean nation. Puerto Rico and the American Virgin Islands lie in the heart of this region. The bonds of commerce among us and the bonds binding our people are strong.

Today, millions of my fellow Americans trace proud roots to the Caribbean. These people have enriched and strengthened the United States. We can all be proud that our leadership as a Caribbean community, supported by nations around the world, along with the determination of the Haitian people, have given Haiti another chance to build a democratic future. And we are delighted to have President Preval with us here tonight.

The last time we met as a group was in the White House 3½ years ago on the eve of Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti. This hopeful moment gives us another chance to meet together and work together. It demands that we work together because there are great forces

of change sweeping our world and our region. We must harness them to our benefit. We must meet the host of new challenges before us. And frankly, none of us can make the most of the opportunities or deal with the dangers alone.

That's what our meeting tomorrow is all about. We need to ensure that the galloping global economy does not trample small economies or leave them behind. We must ensure that economic growth and environmental protection go forward hand in hand. We must band together to defeat the criminal syndicates and drug traffickers that prey on open societies and put our children and our very social fabric at risk.

No nation is so strong that it needs no help from its friends, and none is too small to make a real difference. Together we must build a new partnership for prosperity and security in the Caribbean, based on our common values, aimed at our common dreams. I look forward to the work we will do tomorrow and even more to the days of closer and more productive partnership ahead.

Thank you. And thank you for welcoming Hillary and me tonight. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. at the Government House. In his remarks, he referred