

Remarks at the Vila Olimpica da Mangueira School in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

October 15, 1997

Hello! Governor Alencar, Mayor Conde, Mr. Dos Santos, teachers and students of Vila Olimpica, family and friends of Mangueira. It is a special pleasure for me to be once again with Pele—or should I say Minister Pele. After he turned Brazil into a soccer superpower, he attracted millions to soccer in the United States and around the world. But his most important work is now being done as he shows that sport can serve our children for a lifetime. Thank you for your passion and your dedication and especially for your work here. Thank you, Pele.

Thank you, Flavia, for your words of welcome. Didn't she do a good job? *[Applause]* As the first student from Vila Olimpica to attend university, you bring pride to your family, your school, the entire community of Mangueira. You're an inspiration to young people everywhere who are striving to make the most of their God-given potential.

The students may wonder what we are doing here today. We are here because children are the future of the partnership between Brazil and the United States. Children are the future of our world. And I did not come alone; my wife and I brought with us the American Secretary of State, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Commerce, the Ambassador to the United Nations, our envoy to Latin America, the head of our program to keep our children away from drugs, five Members of the United States Congress, the United States Ambassador to Brazil, and the Brazilian Ambassador to the United States. They all came. I'd like to ask our American delegation, the people from the White House, stand up and let the children see that we care about their future. *[Applause]*

On this Brazilian teachers day, I congratulate Director Francisco Carvalho, the teachers, and staff of Vila Olimpica for all you have accomplished. And I thank Xerox of Brazil for the vital support they, along with other companies, give to Camp Mangueira. Xerox is a good citizen of Brazil and of the United States. Today Xerox Business Services back home has been awarded the prestigious U.S. Department of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige Award for good citizenship.

Thank you for what you do here, and thank you for what you do back in America.

I know it is not easy for young people like you to sit in the hot sun and listen to an older person like me give a speech. I will try to be brief. But I want you to know why it's important for me to be here and important for you to be here. We should not stop until every child in Brazil and throughout the Americas has the opportunity you have here at Mangueira. For here, school attendance is nearly perfect. Drop-out and juvenile crime rates have plummeted. The Camp Mangueira work-study program helps young people find apprenticeships, putting them on a fast track to good jobs and good incomes. And you're preparing high school students of the Ciep High School to work in Brazil's high-tech economy. Very simply, you are giving Mangueira's children a future. Every day you prove that if we in positions of responsibility do our job, then all the children of this neighborhood and every other one like it throughout the Americas will be able to build a better life for themselves and for their children.

This morning in Sao Paulo I spoke to business leaders about the remarkable possibilities of the new economy and about the practical and moral obligation we have to give everyone who will work for it a chance to be a part of the future we are building, beginning with excellent education for all our children. Only then can they compete and succeed in the new economy, keep our companies on the cutting edge of the world's marketplace, and build here and elsewhere a great middle class to strengthen democracy and stabilize society.

It is wrong for only a few to reap the benefits of the wonderful changes going on while the many remain mired in poverty. That is a betrayal of our values of individual integrity and equal opportunity, and in the end, it will erode faith in democracy and free markets. Those who have will do better by giving a hand up to those who deserve their chance too. In the information age, after all, the true wealth of nations lies in the minds and the hearts of our people, especially our children.

Brazil and the United States have made education a top priority. And I salute President Cardoso, himself a teacher, the husband of a teacher, the father of a teacher, for his determination to improve primary and secondary schools so all Brazilians can make the most of their lives. President Cardoso has targeted some of the profits from your farsighted privatization program to education. It's the only example of the money not going to reduce Brazil's debt. In so doing, he has made it clear that he believes Brazil's most important debt is to its children. Educating all of them is the best investment Brazil can make.

We are also committed in Brazil and the United States to making technology available to all of our students. A few moments ago, I met with four students from here—Jamilla DeAbril Belasa and three young men, Daniel, Antonio, and Marcos Frederick—and we were on the Internet talking back and forth to students in other schools. Jamilla and I used a Vila Olimpica computer to exchange messages over the Internet with students in Woodbridge, Virginia, including a young exchange student from Brazil.

Proper technology and instruction, new methods of distance learning, place a universe of knowledge at the hands of all of our students. Windows replace walls and open new horizons for children here in Mangueira and everywhere. We can light the fire of the imagination and put the dreams of all children within their reach. We are going to work with Brazil to give all students access to this kind of technology, to set standards to measure progress, to improve teacher training, to increase more exchange of students between our nations, and to help more families in communities and businesses get involved in the education of our children.

I want to especially thank the International Data Group of Brazil for coordinating the formation of the Tech Corps of Brazil, helped by

Gary Beach, who founded the United States Tech Corps. These volunteers will assist schools with planning and support and training as they bring the kind of new technologies into their classrooms that I saw here today.

We must do more. And we must be honest with our children. We know that education and technology alone will not abolish poverty and inequality, but they do give people what they need to lift themselves up, to join the emerging global society, and to make the most of their own lives.

We have to understand what is at stake here. World-class education for all children is necessary for the economic well-being of our nations, vital for maintaining the fairness that holds societies together, and essential for fulfilling the most basic needs of the human spirit. In one sentence, we do not have a single child to waste.

Every child enters this world with a great gift from God, the power to dream. But that gift can be lost through poverty, relentless deprivation, the daily defeat of hope. We have no greater responsibility than to nourish that power to dream with education for the children of Mangueira, Brazil, the United States, all the Americas. For it is the dreams of our children that will shape our lives in a new century, in a new millennium.

Thank you, Mangueira, for making those dreams come alive. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. on the soccer field. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Marcellor Alencar of the state of Rio de Janeiro; Mayor Luiz Conde of Rio de Janeiro; Elmo Jose Dos Santos, president, Mangueira Community Association; former professional soccer player Pele, Minister of Extraordinary Sports of Brazil; Flavia Pecanha, who introduced the President; and Francisco Carvalho, director, Vila Olimpica da Mangueira.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Narcotics Traffickers Centered in Colombia *October 15, 1997*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby report to the Congress on the developments since my last report concerning the

national emergency with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia that