

President Jimmy Carter. Well, all of us former Presidents have endorsed not only NAFTA earlier but also fast track now. In January, my wife and I and others were down in Latin America and saw the tremendous progress being made there. As a matter of fact, the MERCOSUR countries, which President Clinton visited recently, have already signed separate trade agreements with Mexico, with Canada, and with Europe. And I think, first of all, we're going to get left out if we don't sign fast track and get the negotiations done. And secondly, it's going to be a slap in the face to our natural friends and allies in Latin America.

The last 3 or 4 days I've been calling as many Democratic Congress Members as I could, trying to get the Democrats to come and support fast track. I think we have a much better chance among Republicans than we do Democrats. So I think we've got a lot of work to do, but it couldn't be a more important issue at this moment than to get fast track approved.

Q. How does it look, President Clinton?

President Clinton. It looks like we'd be better off if they were in Congress—[laughter]—and if I was. We're working hard. And let me say, the strong position that President Bush, President Carter, and President Ford has taken is immeasurably helpful. You know we have a lot of opposition, and I think you all know where it's coming from. I wish we could have a secret vote in the Congress; we'd pass it three or four to one.

But we're going to do the very best we can, and we're very hopeful. And we've been gaining ground in the last day—we had a great announcement yesterday by a group of Texas

Members of the House, supporting it, and we're working on another group today. We're just going to keep working until tomorrow morning and see where we are. But I think we've got a good chance to win.

President Ford. Let us know if we can help make any calls.

Presidential Libraries

Q. What kind of ideas does this give you for your library?

President Clinton. Well, I'd like to have one that's as graphically representational as this one is and both personal—it's beautifully personal. I was over there—I was a little late getting in the line here because I was reading all of your biographical background and looking at your kids when they were young—no, it's wonderful. But I think it has a wonderful balance between the personal and the public service of President Bush.

President Carter. Each library has gotten larger and larger, so I can't wait to see President Clinton's that he's going to build in—[laughter].

President Clinton. I don't have as much land. I'll have to build a high-rise. [Laughter]

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:40 a.m. in the George Bush Presidential Library at Texas A&M University. In his remarks, President Clinton referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A reporter referred to Richard Butler, Executive Chairman, United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) charged with dismantling Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at the Dedication of the George Bush Presidential Library in College Station

November 6, 1997

Thank you very much, President and Mrs. Bush, President and Mrs. Ford, President and Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Reagan, Mrs. Johnson, David and Julie Eisenhower, Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg, Reverend Graham, Governor and Mrs. Bush, Vice President and Mrs. Quayle, and to all the foreign dignitaries and American officials who are here.

The sun is shining on Texas A&M today. And the sun is shining on America today. You know, we have an interesting country, with a lot of religious, racial, and political diversity. Once in a while, we all get together. This morning, I think it's fair to say that all Americans are united in tribute to President George Bush for his lifetime of service to America.

I enjoyed immensely listening to the previous speakers. When Mrs. Reagan spoke—I hope someday Al Gore will be glad that we had lunch once a week. [Laughter] When President Ford spoke, I said, I hope I will look that good when I am 25 years younger than he is. [Laughter] When President Carter spoke, I thought, thank goodness he just reminded the whole world that Presidents have to raise all the money for their libraries. [Laughter]

In 1942, young George Bush heard Secretary of War Henry Stimson challenge his generation to be, and I quote, “be brave without being brutal; self-confident without boasting; part of an irresistible might, but without losing faith in individual liberty.” President Bush not only heard those words, he has lived them. And he has rallied his fellow citizens to serve as well in their communities, for their country, and for the cause of democracy around the world.

There are many things that I, not only as President but as a citizen, am grateful to George and Barbara Bush for. I’d like to just mention a few today. As President and afterward, he has worked to ensure that “A Thousand Points of Light” is not merely a striking image but a lasting legacy. I thank him for that initiative and for cochairing the Presidents’ Summit on Service.

As President, he summoned all the Governors, including me, to the University of Virginia for a summit on education, where we stayed up more than half the night in a totally bipartisan fashion to write national education goals for our country. And when he was President, Mrs. Bush espoused the importance of literacy and the importance of citizens volunteering to make sure all our children can read. I thought of that when we launched our America Reads initiative, which now has tens of thousands of college students at hundreds of universities all across America, trying to do what Barbara Bush always said we should do, to make sure every one of our fellow citizens could read and read well. And I thank them both for that.

As President and afterward, President Bush stood for American leadership for peace and prosperity, for freedom and democracy. He was the last President of the cold war, but he knew that American responsibility could not end with the cold war. And he showed us that in Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The vigilance President Bush displayed in dealing with Iraq, as we all know, is required again today. And I

believe the American people support that vigilance, thanks in no small measure to your example not so long ago. And I thank you for that, Mr. President.

As President and afterward, President Bush pushed America to embrace new alliances of trade as instruments of both economic growth and growing democracy. He launched NAFTA and the talks that led to the World Trade Organization. I was proud to complete those efforts, and I am very grateful for the support he continues to give, along with our other former Presidents, to the imperative of American leadership in expanding alliances of trade, not only for our economic welfare but to support our political ideals.

Tomorrow the House of Representatives will vote on whether to extend fast-track authority to negotiate trade agreements. I hope Congress will follow the lead that President Bush and the other former Presidents have set to expand trade and our vital horizons in the 21st century. I thank you, Mr. President, for that.

For more than 4½ years now, even though our relationship began under somewhat unusual circumstances, I have been very grateful that whenever I called on President Bush, he was always there with wise counsel and, when he agreed, with public support. It’s hard to express to someone who hasn’t experienced it what it means in a moment of difficulty to be able to call someone who, first of all, knows exactly what you’re up against and, secondly, will tell you the truth. And he has done that time and time again. I am persuaded that the country is better off because of it. And I thank you, Mr. President, for your counsel and your assistance.

This magnificent library will be a place for scholars who try to understand what has happened in some of America’s most important years. It’s a place for citizens who want to know right now what went on in the life and career of George Bush. It’s also a place from which any person would draw enormous inspiration, a place for the reaffirmation of our faith in America.

Benjamin Franklin told our Constitutional Convention, “The first man put at the helm will be a good one, but no one knows what sort will come afterward.” Mr. President, I think if Benjamin Franklin were here today, he would say that in George Bush, America has had a good man whose decency and devotion have

served our country well. And that is the story this library will tell to generations to come.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in front of the library building at Texas A&M University. In his remarks, he referred to former First Ladies Barbara Bush, Betty Ford, Rosalynn Carter, Nancy Reagan, and Lady Bird Johnson; Dwight

David Eisenhower II, grandson of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower, and his wife, Julie, daughter of former President Richard M. Nixon; Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg, daughter of former President John F. Kennedy; Rev. Billy Graham, who gave the invocation; Gov. George W. Bush of Texas, son of former President Bush, and his wife, Laura; and former Vice President Dan Quayle and his wife, Marilyn.

Remarks on Fast-Track Trade Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters November 6, 1997

The President. Good evening. Today I was proud to represent all Americans in honoring the service of President George Bush at the dedication of his Presidential Library. It was an extraordinary moment for many reasons, but one of the most impressive things to me was that there were four men, two Democrats, two Republicans, who have held this office, all agreeing strongly that for America to continue to lead in the world economy, Congress must extend the President's power to negotiate new trade agreements.

A large bipartisan majority in the Senate supports extending this authority. Speaker Gingrich and I are convinced that the authority will strengthen our leadership, and we want the House to follow suit. A vote against fast track will not create a single job, clean up a single toxic waste site, advance workers rights, or improve the environment anywhere in the world, but it will limit America's ability to advance our economic interests, our democratic ideals, our political leadership.

So, once again, before Congress votes tomorrow, I call upon the House of Representatives to vote for American leadership, for America's economic future, and pass the fast-track trade negotiating authority.

Q. Mr. President, how close are you at this point? How close do you think you are in the House?

The President. I think it's a close call. Obviously, I'm here because I'm trying to pull out all the stops, and I want to emphasize the extraordinary moment we had today when the four Presidents were all strongly endorsing fast track. President Ford, President Bush have spoken out

on this; President Carter has actually made a number of phone calls. It is close, but the policy is not close, and I am convinced that a substantial majority of the Congress knows the policy is not close, that it is clearly in America's interest to do this.

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, the Iraqis in a letter today threatened again to shoot down the next U.S. spy flight. There is apparently no give on their side at all. Are you becoming more concerned?

The President. Well, it would be a mistake for them to shoot down a plane. But we have a team there working for the United Nations, and our policy is clear—and I don't mean American policy—world policy. What they need to do is to resume the inspections. And the team is coming home this weekend, and we'll see where we are then and where we go from there.

Yes.

Fast-Track Trade Legislation

Q. What deals have you cut and are you planning to cut in order to get fast-track trade through, and does that include Congressman Smith's language on abortion?

The President. What we've tried to do is to resolve—if there are any issues, economic issues, that affect congressional districts or States that we can resolve honorably, we've worked hard to resolve those in ways that I think are consistent with what we're trying to do on fast track. If there are other issues that we can resolve that permit the business of the Congress to go forward, we're trying to resolve them. But there has been no agreement of the kind you just mentioned.