

In the meantime, I will continue to stress that this should be a time for restraint, for respect for the Line of Control, for renewed lines of communication.

Addressing this challenge and all the others I mentioned will require us to be closer partners and better friends and to remember that good friends, out of respect, are honest with one another. And even when they do not agree, they always try to find common ground.

I have read that one of the unique qualities of Indian classical music is its elasticity. The composer lays down a foundation, a structure of melodic and rhythmic arrangements, but the player has to improvise within that structure to bring the *raga* to life.

Our relationship is like that. The composers of our past have given us a foundation of shared democratic ideals. It is up to us to give life to those ideals in this time. The melodies do not have to be the same to be beautiful to both of us. But if we listen to each other and we strive to realize our vision together, we will write a symphony far greater than the sum of our individual notes.

The key is to genuinely and respectfully listen to each other. If we do, Americans will better understand the scope of India's achievements and the dangers India still faces in this troubled part of the world. We will understand that India will not choose a particular course simply because others wish it to do so. It will choose only what it believes its interests clearly demand and what its people democratically embrace.

If we listen to each other, I also believe Indians will understand better that America very much wants you to succeed. Time and again in my time as President, America has found that it is the weakness of great nations, not their strength, that threatens our vision for tomorrow. So we want India to be strong, to be secure, to be united, to be a force for a safer, more prosperous, more democratic world. Whatever we ask of you, we ask in that spirit alone.

After too long a period of estrangement, India and the United States have learned that being natural allies is a wonderful thing, but it is not enough. Our task is to turn a common vision into common achievements, so that partners in spirit can be partners in fact. We have already come a long way to this day of new beginnings, but we still have promises to keep, challenges to meet, and hopes to redeem.

So let us seize this moment with humility in the fragile and fleeting nature of this life, but absolute confidence in the power of the human spirit. Let us seize it for India, for America, for all those with whom we share this small planet, and for all the children that together we can give such bright tomorrows.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:10 a.m. at the Parliament Building. In his remarks, he referred to Vice President Krishnan Kant, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, and Speaker of the Lok Sabha G.M.C. Balayogi of India; and Gen. Pervez Musharraf, army chief of staff, who led a coup d'état in Pakistan on October 12, 1999.

Exchange With Reporters at the Taj Mahal in Agra, India

March 22, 2000

Visit to the Gandhi Memorial

Q. Mr. President, what were your thoughts when you were at the Gandhi Memorial?

The President. I was thinking about Gandhi's life. I was thinking about his going to South Africa, how he decided to come back here, how he completely gave his life over to what he believed, and how if all of us just had one fraction of that commitment, we could make peace in the world. That's what I was thinking.

Visit to Agra

Q. Mr. President, are you sort of sad that Agra is sort of a ghost town? Would you have liked to pump hands?

The President. Absolutely. I did see some people—

Q. Yes, but back there. They were peering—

The President. I know. I would have liked it if they were up front. I'd like that. I wanted to see them.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 5 p.m. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks in Agra at the Signing Ceremony for the Indo-United States Joint Statement on Energy and the Environment *March 22, 2000*

Thank you very much, Foreign Minister Singh, Chief Minister Gupta, Mayor Maurya, District Commissioner Chowdhury, and, especially, Professor Mishra. We admire you so much for your efforts to save the Ganges. We admire you because for you it is a matter of science and faith.

I want to thank all of you for welcoming me and my daughter and my wife's mother, many Members of the United States Congress, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Commerce, distinguished members of our administration, and our Ambassador here today. I want to thank all the environmental leaders from India who have come here today.

One month from this day, we will celebrate across the world the 30th anniversary of Earth Day, a day set aside each year to honor our natural environment and to reaffirm our responsibility to protect it. In a unique way, in India the Earth has been celebrated for more than 30 centuries. This, after all, is a nation named for a river, a place where the Earth and its waters are worshipped as divine.

With good reason, the people of India have spent centuries worrying far less about what we might do to nature and far more about what nature can do to us through floods, hurricanes, droughts, and other calamities. But as the experience of the beautiful Taj Mahal proves and as the struggle to save the Ganges proves, we can no longer ignore man's impact on the environment.

Pollution has managed to do what 350 years of wars, invasions, and natural disasters have failed to do. It has begun to mar the magnificent walls of the Taj Mahal. Since 1982, protection of the monument has been a major priority, and the fight has yielded significant advances. But still, a constant effort is required to save the Taj Mahal from human environmental degradation, what some scientists call marble can-

cer. I can't help wondering that if a stone can get cancer, what kind of damage can this pollution do to children?

It took the United States a long time to face up to these serious environmental questions. Not so many years ago, one of our rivers was so polluted, it actually caught on fire. Bad air has made breathing very difficult in many of our cities. Acid rain from our cars and our factories made it unhealthy to eat the fish from many of our lakes and rivers. Over the last generation we have worked very hard to restore our natural treasures and to find a way to grow our economy in a way that is in harmony with the environment.

We know that India's remarkable growth has put that same kind of pressure on your environment. And the costs of growth are rising every year, even along with your prosperity.

We also know that more and more, the environmental problems of the United States or India or any other nation are not just national problems. They are global ones. More than any time in history, the environmental challenges we face go beyond national borders, and so must our solutions. We must work together to protect the environment. That is the importance of the agreement Mr. Singh and Secretary Albright have signed today.

There are few areas where that cooperation is needed more than on the issues of climate change and clean energy. Here in Agra, you have taken important strides since the early 1980's to protect the Taj Mahal by using cleaner energy and improving the quality of the air. In particular, I commend the work of M.C. Mehta for working to establish a pollution-free zone around your national treasure. This is local action with global consequences.

The overwhelming consensus of the world's scientific community is that greenhouse gases