

Remarks in a Discussion With Members of the Governing Council in
Naila Village
March 23, 2000

Q. I have a question to ask. There is a stereotypical image of Indians all over the world as backward people. You have been in India for a few days. How would you respond to this? Do you think we are backward? [*Laughter*]

The President. No. But what I hope my trip will do is to help people all over the world see India in a more complete way. There are many people here who are poor, but you are proving that democracy can be used to lift the poor, can be used to end discrimination against women and keep children, girls and boys, in school, and can be used to bring people of different tribes and castes together. That is very important to me and to my family, my wife, who has been in Indian villages, and to our whole administration.

What I think you should know is that the problems you have here are problems that people have faced all over the world. My own country became independent from the British Empire in the 1780's, and it was almost 150 years before women could even vote. It was almost 100 years before the slaves were freed, and more than another 100 years before they acquired equal rights, African-Americans, under our laws.

And today, all over the world, there are wars where people are being killed—in Africa because they're of different tribes, in Bosnia and Kosovo because they were of different tribes and religions. So if in India you can prove that people can lift themselves from poverty and, at the same time, end discrimination against women and their girl children and learn to work

together across tribal and caste lines because of democracy, you will give the world the greatest gift it could have now.

The only other thing I would like to say is, I believe that the computer will make it happen more quickly if it is used wisely and put in every village in this country. And I think that those of us who would like to be good partners and to help you must also listen to what you have said today.

The biggest public health problems, I think, in India and many other countries throughout the world are based on the fact that there's not enough clean water and too much of the soil is washing away or blowing away in the wind.

And the last thing I would like to say is, I hope you will not lose your enthusiasm and your spirit when things don't change as fast as you would like. I know it is easy to get discouraged. I know there is still injustice and unfairness. But what you are doing is astonishing. And you have a chance to overcome problems that are still crippling other places in the world more quickly because you have these institutions of democracy. You must believe in them and use them and not give up when you're frustrated and cannot succeed in a short time.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in a meeting room in Naila Village, near Jaipur. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Revised International Plant
Protection Convention With Documentation
March 23, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to acceptance, I transmit herewith the revised International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), adopted at the Con-

ference of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations at Rome on November 17, 1997. In accordance with Article XIII of the existing IPPC, the revised text will enter into force for all contracting parties 30