

and supervisors who learned leadership in war, American workers and immigrants from all over the world, Confederates and Yankees joined on the same side.

And eventually, those two sets of tracks met. And with one final blow of a hammer, backed by years of hard work and decades of dreams, the way was laid for a nationwide economy. A telegraph operator sent out a simple message to a waiting nation. It just said, “DONE.” [*Laughter*] A newspaper proclaimed: “We are the youngest of peoples, but we are teaching the world to march forward.”

In retrospect, America’s march forward seems inevitable. But time and again, it’s only made possible by generations that are willing to work and sacrifice and invest in plans to make tomorrow better than today. That’s the vision we can’t afford to lose sight of. That’s the chal-

lenge that’s fallen to this generation. And with this strategy for America’s transportation future and our efforts across all fronts to lay a new foundation for our lasting prosperity, that is the challenge we will meet.

“Make no little plans”—that’s what Daniel Burnham said in Chicago. I believe that about America: Make no little plans. So let’s get to work. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:33 a.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Transportation Raymond H. LaHood; and White House Chief of Staff Rahm I. Emanuel. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Joe Biden.

## Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony in Mexico City, Mexico *April 16, 2009*

Well, thank you very much. This is an extraordinary honor and an extraordinary pleasure to be here in Mexico with all of you today. I want to thank President Calderon and his wonderful First Lady and the delegation for their hospitality and facilitating this trip. And I want to thank the people of Mexico for the warmth with which I’ve been received, especially the young people who are here today. Thank you very much.

There is a reason why the first visit that I had with a foreign leader after my election was with President Calderon. It was a reminder, as John F. Kennedy said, that the bonds between our two countries cannot be broken. We are joined by a border, but our bonds are so much more than that. In my hometown of Chicago, the population is at least one-third made up of people of Mexican heritage. All across America, all across the United States, we have benefited from the culture, the language, the food, the insights, the literature, the energy, the ambitions of people who have migrated from our southern neighbor. And my hope is, is that the United States has had something to offer to Mexico as well. So our relationship, our friendship is

strong, but as President Calderon said, we can make it stronger.

At a time where all of us are dealing with an extraordinary global recession, where unemployment is on the rise, where credit has begun to shrink, where businesses are struggling, it is more important than ever that we work together, not only to restore economic growth in Mexico and the United States, but also to make sure that growth is sustainable and to make sure that growth is from the bottom up, so that each and every person—every young person here in Mexico, as well as every young person in the United States, has an opportunity to live out their dreams.

At a time when the Mexican Government has so courageously taken on the drug cartels that have plagued both sides of the borders, it is absolutely critical that the United States joins as a full partner in dealing with this issue, both through initiatives like the Merida Initiative, but also on our side of the border, in dealing with the flow of guns and cash south.

And at a time when Mexico is not just a regional leader, but now a global leader, as shown by its outstanding participation in the G–20 summit and other multilateral organizations, it’s

critical that we join together around issues that can't be solved by any one nation, issues like climate change, issues like poverty, issues like terrorism. These are issues in which the United States and Mexico will have to stand side by side in order to promote common security and common prosperity.

So it is wonderfully fitting to see the children of Mexico, as well as, I suspect, a few children of the United States here together, waving flags of both countries, because we are reminded—[*applause*—]because we are reminded that, ultimately, the reason that we serve in government, ultimately, the reason that bilateral relationships like this are so important, is because it allows us to promote a better future for our children.

That's what we're fighting for, for their dreams, for their opportunities, for their futures. And I'm very much looking forward to developing the kind of relationship between Mexico and the United States that will allow all the children here, and all the children in both countries, to thrive for years to come.

So thank you very much, Mr. President, Madam First Lady, and to all of you, for welcoming me in such a gracious way. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:30 p.m. at Los Pinos. In his remarks, he referred to President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico and his wife Margarita Esther Zavala Gomez del Campo.

## The President's News Conference With President Felipe de Jesus Calderon Hinojosa of Mexico in Mexico City April 16, 2009

*President Calderon.* Ladies and gentlemen of the press, of the media, I would like to give the warmest welcome to Mexico, to President Barack Obama, and to the delegation accompanying him. This is an historic event that will inaugurate a new era, a new relationship between our two countries.

Today in the meetings that we have held, we have confirmed the determination of both Governments to consolidate the very, very close contacts and links that join and bring together Mexico and the United States. We have new projects in important affairs, such as security, migration, competitiveness, and global affairs. As never before, we have decided that the fight against multinational organized crime must be based on cooperation, shared responsibility, and in trust, a mutual trust.

Both Governments recognize that the Merida Initiative is a very good starting point in order to strengthen cooperation in security. But we want to go beyond; we want to go further in order to liberate, to free our societies from the criminal activities that affect the lives of millions of people.

We have also agreed to expedite the times so that we can have available the resources for

this Merida Initiative. And we have also decided to launch other activities that are in the hands of our Governments. For example, we can adopt new measures for preventing illicit flows at the border, particularly the flow of weapons and of cash. We will also be strengthening our cooperation in information and intelligence in order to more efficiently fight against money laundering.

On the other hand, we have also agreed that both Governments should produce a—propositions—proposals for our cooperation so that we can eventually have reform in the United States with full respect to the sovereign decisions of both Congresses—of both nations, that is. Our Governments will work in this sense to make migration an orderly, respectful process of human rights, a process in which human rights will be respected.

In energy and climate change, we have agreed to work together in order to guarantee a legal framework of certainty, transparency for the future, better use of cross-border resources such as gas and energy. And I have given to President Obama concrete proposals on climate change. One of them has to do with the integration of a bilateral market of carbon