

The President. Yes, I think I do. At least my preliminary—I haven't talked to Mr. Daley about this or to the congressional leadership. But if you mean by that there's a far greater likelihood that today that NAFTA would pass in the Senate than the House, that's clearly correct.

Q. What's going to be your strategy for winning over the House Democrats? David Bonior says that 75 percent of them right now are against NAFTA.

The President. Well, not all of them have reached a position on it. And I want to do two or three things. First of all, as I told the Governors when I met with them in Tulsa, I'd like for all the Governors who support this to ask their Members of Congress to take no position until they actually read the agreement and see the implementing legislation itself.

Remember, my position, going back to 1992, was that I was not for the NAFTA agreement as originally concluded but that I would support it if certain conditions were met. Those conditions have been met as far as our agreements with the Mexicans. We still have to have a training program, but we're going to have the first trade agreement in history that's got strong environmental requirements and that has Mexico committing to raise its minimum wage as its economy grows.

So these are very encouraging and very different things. So my strategy for Democrats and Republicans who have not declared for but have not adamantly planted their feet in cement against, would be to ask them to read the agreement and wait until they see the implementing legislation, because that will tell them where we're going with the job training, and then make a judgment. And I think if that happens, we can prevail because, again I will say, Latin America is the second fastest growing part of the world. Mexico is just the beginning of this process. And I think it means more jobs for Americans. And I think I'll be able to persuade——

Q. Should Bonior remove his hat as your whip, and——

The President. No. I think that's a decision that the leadership in the House has to make. You know, Presidents and their Members of Congress are going to differ on some

things. I heard the other day—I don't know that this is true—but I heard that so far, the Democrats in the Congress have voted for me more consistently than the last two or three Democratic Presidents. I have not checked that. That's just what I heard.

Q. You don't believe that, do you?

The President. I think yes, I think they have with remarkable consistency and very high percentages. But I think that we have an honest disagreement here. He has worked his heart out for me. This is the first issue on which we have disagreed. I think he's wrong; he thinks I'm wrong. I think in the end that my position will prevail.

Hurricane Emily

Q. I want to get this question—the people in the Carolinas are remembering still in their mind not only the devastation, of course, but the response of the Federal Government after—that they consider that largely a nightmare as well. What do you say to them to let them know that you're prepared, well prepared, in case it does, of course, hit them?

The President. I would say two things. First of all, we're here looking at this map today trying to get ready. That's what we're doing here. And secondly, if you look at the way FEMA and the Agriculture Department and the other Departments handled the flooding in the Middle West, it's obvious that while we don't control what Mother Nature does, we're going to be on top of it with all the resources and effort that we can possibly marshal as quickly as possible.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:13 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to William M. Daley, Chairman, NAFTA Task Force. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Following Discussions With Caribbean Leaders

August 30, 1993

President Clinton. Good afternoon. Today I had the great honor of welcoming five outstanding leaders from the English-

speaking Caribbean to the White House: President Cheddi Jagan of Guyana, Prime Minister Erskine Sandiford of Barbados, Prime Minister Patrick Manning of Trinidad and Tobago—Tobago, excuse me; I'm still hoarse from our luncheon—Prime Minister P.J. Patterson of Jamaica, and Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham of the Bahamas. I'm impressed by the intelligence, the dynamism, and the dedication of the Caribbean leadership.

The end of the cold war has altered the nature but not the depth of our interest in the Caribbean. Our concern for the region is firmly rooted in geographic proximity, the resultant flows of people, of commodities and culture, and in our shared interest in fighting drug trafficking and projecting our economic interests and in protecting fragile ecosystems.

As with U.S.-Mexican relations, U.S.-Caribbean relations dramatically demonstrate the absolute inseparability of foreign and domestic issues. More than ever before, our Nation is a Caribbean nation. In our discussions, we recognize the concerns that NAFTA may adversely affect the Caribbean and Central American nations by diverting trade and investment flows to Mexico. Therefore, I want to announce today that I have asked Ambassador Mickey Kantor to study the impact of NAFTA on these small economies and to consult with them on new measures to increase regional trade.

American workers have a direct interest in the prosperity of the English-speaking Caribbean. The \$2 billion in United States exports to those countries creates at least 40,000 American jobs. Our warm and productive luncheon meeting covered many other areas as well. These nations are all vibrant democracies striving to adapt their economies to new global realities while maintaining a full respect for individual freedoms and human rights.

In the Organization of American States and in the United Nations, they consistently take strong stands in favor of the collective defense of democracy. They have all been firm supporters of multilateral efforts to restore President Aristide in Haiti. And we discussed cooperative security and economic measures to assist Haitian democracies. I thank them for their support of the restoration of President Aristide and, of course, we

all enjoyed a recounting of President Aristide's swearing-in of his new Prime Minister today.

The Caribbean community will be an important building block of a hemispheric community of democracies linked by growing economic ties and common political beliefs. That will happen, I believe, in no small measure because of the leadership of the five people who are here with us today. And I'd like now to ask them each in turn to come to the microphone and say a few remarks. And I think President Jagan is going first. He was here first in 1961. Is that right?

The microphone is yours, sir.

[At this point, President Jagan, Prime Minister Sandiford, Prime Minister Patterson, and Prime Minister Ingraham made brief remarks.]

President Clinton. Thank you. Let me also say, before you ask the question, if there are people here representing your nations, I want to make sure that I give them a chance to ask their questions also, but we'll start with Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

NAFTA

Q. Mr. President, since you have a better chance of passing NAFTA in the Senate, will you push for the Senate consideration first? And did it come as a surprise to you that the Caribbean would feel adversely affected by NAFTA? I mean, was it news?

President Clinton. No. Well, let me answer the first question first. I haven't made a decision on that yet, and I don't think I should until I consult with the supporters of the agreement. It can't pass in either House until the legislation is developed, which is now going on to embody the agreement. But I'm certainly open to that. I just simply haven't had the opportunity to sit down and visit with the supporters and see what they want to do. I have no objection to going that way.

With regard to the Caribbean, it didn't come as a surprise to me. I think in general what these leaders said was that they thought it was a good idea but that it shouldn't adversely affect existing relationships. Our administration has worked hard to have a posi-

tive mutually beneficial relationship with the CARICOM nations to faithfully carry out the laws of Congress, including one that was passed late last year designed to stop a previous problem with our efforts there. And I said, as I said today, I asked the Ambassador for Trade, Mickey Kantor, to look into this and see whether we can provide some assurances that there will not be a disadvantage to the Caribbean nations.

Cuba

Q. Mr. President, can you be more specific about what the dialog was on Cuba and bringing it into a more democratic society?

President Clinton. Actually, we had a general conversation about it. As you know, the position of CARICOM and the position of the United States with regard to trade with Cuba is different. I just simply reiterated that the Cuban democracy act does not sanction any trade with Cuba unless it is somehow subsidized by governments. That is not contemplated, so the difficulty issue we just got off the table, and then we talked a little bit about what the prospects were for economic and political reform in Cuba, something that is devoutly to be hoped for by the peoples of all the nations here represented. But there was nothing more specific than that.

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, if the Bosnian peace agreement is reached in Geneva, how many American forces would you be willing to offer to help enforce that agreement? How long would they be required to serve? And what would be the risk to those forces?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, whether I would be prepared to do that or not depends on whether I'm convinced that the agreement is both—is fair, fully embraced by the Bosnian government, and is enforceable. That has been a source of concern for our military planners all along—about, you know, whether we could have something that would be enforceable.

But I made clear last February, and I will reiterate again, the United States is prepared to participate in a multinational effort to keep the peace in Bosnia. But I want to see what the details are. I want to get the briefing on it. I want to know that it will be enforceable.

But I'm certainly open to that, but I also want to know whose responsibility it is to stay, for how long.

It's a little bit different than the situation in Somalia, for example, where you really have two problems that relate to one another. There needs to be a lot of nation-building in Somalia from the ground up, a lot of institution-building. We did go there to stop the starvation and the violence and the bloodshed. But it's also true that the absence of order gave rise to all those problems.

And so we're still trying to fulfill our original mission in Somalia. This is a very different sort of thing, but I certainly think it can work. A multinational effort to keep the peace, if it is enforceable and the understandings are there, can clearly work. You can see that in the longstanding success we've had in our participation in the aftermath of the Camp David agreement.

Cuba

Q. Mr. President, my question is for Prime Minister Patterson, if you could step to the microphone. Going back to Cuba, what is the position of CARICOM in regards to Cuba? And do you think you can do anything to bring Cuba back into the democratic fold?

Prime Minister Patterson. First of all, what we are seeking to establish with Cuba is a joint commission that discusses the range of matters no different from those presently covered by a joint commission with Mexico, with Venezuela, with Colombia. It is not an agreement that provides for subsidized trade with Cuba and therefore does not offend any existing legislation in the United States or elsewhere.

We feel that the time has come for all countries in the hemisphere to work towards a normalization of relationships among them. There are differences between the political systems in Cuba and those in the CARICOM countries. We remain firmly committed to the democratic tradition. But Cuba unquestionably is a Caribbean country. That is a reality which we must face, and we believe that the joint commission should assist in the process of inducing Cuba towards the sorts of policies and programs that are compatible with those of other independent nations in the hemisphere.

Q. Would you like to see the U.S. do the same thing?

Prime Minister Patterson. What the U.S. does is a matter for the U.S. to determine. If we can assist anywhere in the process of contact or mediation, we are always prepared to do so.

Somalia

Q. Mr. President, in Mogadishu some of the humanitarian relief workers say that the U.S. raid early this morning was a blunder, and in fact, the U.S. military is making their job more difficult. What do you say to those who are there to help? And will the U.S. forces remain there long enough to capture Aideed? Is that a target for you?

President Clinton. Well, the United Nations operation set that as their objective, and they asked us for our help in that regard.

I would remind you that I understand the problems with this, but the United Nations believes, and has ample evidence to support the fact, that the supporters of Aideed murdered a substantial number of Pakistani peacekeepers and are behind the deaths of four Americans. So we have to deal with that. And I am open to other suggestions. I think the United Nations should be open to other suggestions.

To date, we have tried to be cooperative with the policies that have been jointly developed. We have not been just simply driving this. We have really tried to work within the framework of the U.N. to prove that this thing could work over the long run. We've also tried to make sure that everyone understood that this is not all of Somalia we're talking about. We're talking about one part of Mogadishu. In much of the rest of the country, the U.N. mission has continued unimpeded and successfully. I don't think anyone wants to change the fundamental character of it.

And so, would I be willing to discuss that with our people and with anyone else? Of course, I would. But I think it is very important to point out that what provoked this was people involved with Aideed killing the Pakistanis first and then the four Americans.

Q. Mr. President—[*inaudible*—talked about the need for—[*inaudible*]. Is there a need to ensure the dialog continues through

the establishment perhaps of U.S.-CARICOM policy machinery? What are you prepared to do?

President Clinton. Well, I think there is a need for a continuing dialog. One of the things that I pledged today to these leaders is that next year when the conference on the sustainable development in smaller nations is held in the Caribbean, that the United States would send a high level delegation there. And we didn't discuss any specific mechanism. But I think it is very important. You know, all these nations, and others not here present, in the Caribbean, are at different points in their history with different challenges. And I think that what we need to do is to make it clear that the United States is committed to democracy, to market economics, and to economic growth of this region over the long run. Here even at home we find great difficulty in predicting with precision what's going to happen economically, because we're in a period of real profound economic change. And I think it's important that we make these commitments over the long run and that we keep the doors of communication open, and that's exactly what we intend to do.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:09 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Exchange With Reporters Following Discussions With Caribbean Leaders

August 30, 1993

Cuba

Q. Mr. President, are there any conditions that would be met that you would be able to end the U.S. embargo on Cuba?

The President. We've had the press conference. [*Laughter*]

I support the Torricelli bill, as you know. I did when it was passed, and I still do. But I said before, I could just reiterate what I said again: We all hope that there will come a time when democracy and an open-economy will come to Cuba. And it will be a cause