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Tipper Gore. You voted for us twice. You've given us a chance to serve. But we need leaders in this battle who understand what local conditions are and what local concerns are and who stand up for the big national issues.

Patty Murray can come before the people of Washington and say, ''Compared to where we were, we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 23 years, the lowest crime rate in 23 years, the biggest drop in welfare rolls in history, a cleaner environment, and I support the direction that this country has taken. That is working.'' And, furthermore, let's look to the future. Who do you really trust to give every child in this State world-class education? Who do you really trust to make sure that we do everything we can to provide health insurance to the children in poor working families who don't have it? Who do you really trust to continue to fight these environmental battles and to deal with all these other things? Patty Murray.

I say this now, and every group of Americans I speak to, this is a democracy. There is a direct line of causation from your presence here tonight, the contribution you have made, the work you will do to what happens in Washington, DC, the decisions that are made, and how it echoes back all across America into every little hamlet in this State. This is a better country because the ideas and the values that Patty Murray espouses have dominated the American political landscape, and we are further toward the future, toward building that bridge to the 21st century because of it—more opportunity, more citizen responsibility, and a much, much stronger sense of community than if those who opposed her ideas and her votes had prevailed. So you stick with her, and we'll go there together.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 p.m. in the Pavilion at the Seattle Center. In his remarks, he referred to Ken Alhadeff, chairman, Elttaes Enterprises; Mayor-elect Paul Schell of Seattle; Brian Baird, candidate for Washington State's Third Congressional District; and Greta Cammermyer, candidate for Washington State's Second Congressional District. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada in Vancouver, British Columbia

November 23, 1997

President Clinton. I want to thank the Prime Minister for hosting this and for giving us the chance to come back to Vancouver. My family and I had a wonderful vacation here back in 1990, before I was President—back when I had a family life that was normal—and we loved it. This is a great place for the APEC summit.

I also want to thank Canada again for what I think is very probably the most cooperative relationship in the world in trade and investment and in the work we do in the environment and law enforcement. And I hope that as we look ahead to the new century, that the partnership that we've had, the cooperation we've had will be a genuine model that other countries will try to follow.

I think it's worth mentioning, Mr. Prime Minister, that we committed ourselves again to work to find a meaningful solution to the problem of climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. We talked about our continuing commitment to secure democracy—democracy's roots and sustainability in Haiti. We discussed a number of other issues, and I wanted to say to you that I very much welcome these initiatives that were launched last April in Washington on how we can meet the environmental challenges of the future and how we can work to fight criminals who use cross-border telemarketing schemes to prey upon both Canadians and Americans.

And I wanted to reiterate, also, here in Canada that we discussed this issue of Pacific salmon, and our special representatives have been working hard to get these stakeholders talks restarted. I am committed to them. I think this issue has gone on too long; it's caused too much friction between our people. And I want to reaffirm to you publicly that I believe this process can produce an agreement in good faith and that I will do my part to implement it in good faith.

And finally, let me just thank you for your leadership in APEC. I am very, very pleased with the agreement which has been reached

by our ministers to try to tear down tariffs and open trade in nine different areas that covers $1.5 trillion worth of trade. This is a very important achievement for this, and I think it will go quite nicely with our efforts to discuss what we can do about the current financial issues in Asia.

Our ministers in Manila have offered a proposal for the IMF to take a lead, for us to back them up, and for the countries themselves to take appropriate steps. I think that's the right approach.

But I would say to all of you, I think this is a time for confidence in the future of Asia and confidence in the future of our relationship with them. We have a few little glitches in the road here; we're working through them. And I think in no small measure because of your leadership, Mr. Prime Minister, and the position Canada has enjoyed of trust and respect among all nations, this is likely to be one of the best meetings that we've ever had, and it's coming at exactly the right time because of all the developments in Asia. And I thank you for that.

Prime Minister Chretien. Thank you very much.

Situation in Iraq

Q. Mr. President, do you see anything confrontational or ominous in the latest statements by Iraq's Ambassador to the United Nations suggesting that this crisis may not be over, and Iraq is standing firm, et cetera, et cetera?

President Clinton. I can't blame him for saying that because I've said that. I've also told you that the crisis may not be over. All I can tell you is that the international community, through the United Nations, has resolutions that relate to Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program. We have an inspection team that I think has done a very good job, often under very trying circumstances. The leader of that team, Mr. Butler, made a very forthright and clear report yesterday to the Security Council, and they have taken what I believe so far is appropriate action.

It is clear that there is a massive amount of work that has to be done there, especially in the chemical and biological inspection areas, in order for UNSCOM to fulfill the mandate it has been given by the United Nations. And I am determined that it should do so, and I believe all of us are.

Asia-Pacific Economic Conference

Q. Prime Minister, your Foreign Minister this morning seemed to suggest that people, in his words, will question the value of APEC if it doesn't help some of these countries move toward democratic rights. I didn't think that's what APEC was all about. Do you agree with what Mr. Axworthy said? And I wonder if Mr. Clinton sees that also as one of the aims that APEC should have.

Prime Minister Chretien. The aim of APEC is an economic discussion for liberalization of trade among the countries. Of course, when—but the reality is this: APEC is a good meeting to discuss these things, but we have a lot of bilateral meetings at the same time. So we promote the changes that we believe should happen in some of the countries on a bilateral basis. These subjects are not discussed officially at APEC because APEC has not been structured for that.

But it's great for us that it gave us the occasion to have bilateral meetings with these leaders. And for example, I would have bilateral meetings with all of them, and in fact, the President of China is coming to Ottawa, the occasion of APEC, for meetings in Ottawa and Toronto. So APEC is the cause of a dialog of that nature that is very useful for all of us. But APEC is not a meeting that is organized for that type of discussion.

Fast-Track Trading Authority

Q. Prime Minister, did you discuss fast track, especially in relationship to liberalization of trade in the Americas? And also, President Clinton, on this, too?

Prime Minister Chretien. Well, there was not a direct discussion on that. We will have a meeting in Chile later on. And I understand that the vote was not taken in the United States, but it was a postponement. But it's up to the President to assess what is happening there.

We are very much interested that we carry on on the goal that we have set to us, to all of the countries of the Americas, when the President, at his meeting in December '94, I guess, where we decided that by year 2010 we should have an agreement with all

the Central and Latin American and Caribbean countries to be part of a kind of an expanded NAFTA.

President Clinton. Let me say, if I were you, I would not read too much significance into the fact that the vote was not held at the end of the last session of Congress. I think Congress will act on fast-track legislation early next year. And we're going to do our best to prevail.

I think it's important to note that in the difficulties in the House of Representatives there were a number of issues not directly related to trade, which played a role in our inability to take the vote at that time.

I also would say, though, specifically that a lot of the legitimate concerns over the nature of our trading relations with the rest of the world were brought to bear in the debate on the procedural vote, and they reflected the limit that is going on in every advanced society in the world, in Canada, in all of Europe, everywhere, which is, how do you achieve the benefits of the global economy—how do you achieve the benefits of the global economy and still preserve the social contracts? How do you make sure that when you expand trade—you mentioned human rights—how do you make sure, when you expand trade, you're actually elevating the human condition of your trading partners? How do you make sure that we have a strategy for expanding trade and growing economies which allow—not only allow but encourage all of us to be more environmentally responsible?

So a lot of these things just need to be worked through in governing bodies throughout the world. And I think that in that sense it's a healthy thing. But I expect we'll take some positive action on fast track early in the next year, and I would urge that all kind of wait and see what we do, but I'm hopeful.

Landmines

Q. Mr. President, did the Prime Minister convince you to sign on to the landmine treaty?

President Clinton. No, we haven't discussed that. But let me just tell you we haven't discussed that yet here; we had a conversation about it on the telephone the other day. The Prime Minister has worked very hard to create the biggest possible tent for everyone to be in to this treaty. I want to first say that I think Canada has done a remarkable and an important thing in trying to get the countries of the world to agree not to produce, deploy, or sell landmines. And I applaud that.

The United States, I believe, has destroyed more landmines since I've been President than any other country in the world, 1.5 million in our own stocks; we're about to destroy another 1.5 million. We also have spent about half the money spent in the world on demining activities. We lost a plane off the coast of Africa just a few weeks ago and all of its crew having deposited a demining team in Africa. And we're increasing by 25 percent our demining budget.

Now, because of the unique circumstances of our program, we may not be able to sign on. We don't think we can sign on to the agreement as it's presently written because of our responsibilities in Korea and because our antitank defenses are not covered by the words, the plain words of the treaty as other countries' antitank defenses are. Everybody recognizes they're legitimate. And I hope we can work that out, but if we can't, it should not diminish the fact that Canada has done an enormously important thing.

Simultaneously with that, what I am trying to do is to encourage all the major producers and sellers of landmines in the world who are not yet part of—out of the Ottawa regime, or any other commitment, to make appropriate commitments not to produce, deploy or sell these mines. And I will continue to do that.

So I'm going to work together with the Prime Minister on this as best I can. And if we are not able to sign it because of those two issues, that should not diminish the achievement that Canada has made to get other countries in this. And meanwhile, we will continue to be the world's number one destroyer of landmines, and we will continue to spend more money and exert more efforts to bring these mines out of the ground that are killing people around the world.

Prime Minister Chretien. And yesterday we add Thailand to agree to sign the treaty,

and we had a discussion with the Prime Minister of Singapore this morning—was looking at that. We are frustrated—some of the countries who are not signing the treaty we are frustrated to make a statement that they will not engage into selling landmines and so on.

So we made a lot of progress, and we'll keep the pressure, gentle pressure, on the President—[*laughter*]—every time that we have an occasion to get them to move. I do think that there is a way to take care of the problem of Korea and so on, but it's complicated—I understand that—for the President of the United States, more than for me.

President Clinton. Let me just say, though, there's not that much difference in our position. This is a question of how that treaty was worded and the unwillingness of some people to entertain any change in the wording of it.

I believe I was the first world leader at the United Nations to call for a total ban on landmine production and deployment. And I strongly support what the Prime Minister is doing. And when they were meeting in Oslo, we implored the people there to give us the exceptions we needed, recognizing that in the Korean Peninsula we've never had indiscriminate use of landmines that have had—put civilians, children at risk, and that we have the unusual situation of having a huge North Korean army there just a few miles from Seoul and no way to stop the movement there without leaving the minefields there, and that we have a situation with our antitank weapons which we have tested over and over again to prove that they don't amount to antipersonnel weapons that can be left in the field and cause danger to innocent civilians.

But the people who were at Oslo decided they would not try to accommodate us for whatever reason. That was their legitimate reason. A number of world leaders said they thought I was right, but that they couldn't get it done. Now, I'm not going to fight over that. I think that's silly. We should look at the evidence. What is your record on landmines? Which nation has destroyed the most landmines? Which nation is doing the most to promoted demining? The answer to that is the United States.

And I support what Canada has done. And I think it is a great mistake to make this whole story about whether we will sign on to this, or not. That was a decision made by people who decided that our antitank weapons were not entitled to be protected. My first responsibility, since I may have to send our troops into conflict situations on behalf of a lot of the nations that have signed on to this treaty, is to make sure that if I do that I can protect them. Now, that is my position.

So I regret the fact that our antitank systems are the only ones in the world that weren't covered by this. They have their position on that. They have their reasons that because of where they were in the Oslo process they couldn't change. That's fine. It's a great mistake to make that the story.

Canada has done a magnificent thing getting all these countries involved in this, continuing to raise the issue. We have done a great thing by destroying the weapons and by leading the world's demining effort. And we should work together as closely as we can and not let the differences over the wording of this treaty and whether we sign on the bottom line at some time or another obscure the fact that we are moving to rid the world of these antipersonnel weapons. It is a big deal, and it should be seen as a positive deal that should not be obscured by how this whole business about our participation in the treaty developed.

International Agreement on Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Q. With Kyoto a week away, have you come to any agreement on reducing emissions, any target dates? Did you decide anything today?

Prime Minister Chretien. We have not decided what will be the result of Kyoto, but we have agreed that it is very important to have an agreement in Kyoto. And there are some discussions at this time between the different participants to find a compromise. We have been engaged in that. I discussed that with the President this morning. We want to involve the developing nations, too, because this is not a problem only with the industrialized nations; this is a global issue. And even if we do what is right among the

industrialized nations, the problem can be increasing over years because of the developing nations. It's not affecting only the countries where the pollution is caused; it's going into the atmosphere; it's moving around.

So we want to have some statement made by the developing nations, and we will use this meeting at APEC to talk to some of the big countries, like China, to engage them. I talked yesterday with Mexico, who are part of what we call the B categories, to get engaged and to make some commitments that will be useful to solve the problems in the long run.

It's not only a problem of industrialized nations, it's a global problem. And the President and I, I guess, would agree on that, that it has to be done in a global fashion. So we will be negotiating in Kyoto to involve them and try to get some credit for when we're helping them to develop their economy in such a way that they will pollute less. And it is a great occasion for these countries to do the development of their energy production and to do it the right way because they're starting, and it's better to do it right at the beginning than to wait for 10 or 15 years and have to start again.

So these are the types of discussions that I had with the President this morning, where we want to work together with both the industrialized nations and the developing nations, too.

Asian Economies

Q. [*Inaudible*]—you said the U.S. should back up the IMF in its efforts to find some sort of stability in Asian economies. What is the U.S. prepared to do by way of backing up the IMF? How would you explain to the American public what their stake is in this issue?

President Clinton. First of all, let me describe what we agreed to do in Manila, our ministers, and what Secretary Rubin and Deputy Secretary Summers have worked very hard to develop.

We basically, in response to the Asian financial markets crisis, said there ought to be a three-step plan here. Number one, the International Monetary Fund ought to take the lead. Number two, they can't take the lead unless countries themselves have responsible policies that inspire investor confidence, and we listed those. Number three, the other developed countries ought to be in a position to together have a sort of a backup stabilizing reassurance support. And it doesn't involve an enormous amount of money on the part of any country—nowhere near, for example, the commitment we made in Mexico.

And we had a bill in the last session of the Congress that was in with our U.N. arrears that, as you will remember, was held up because of another domestic political dispute, but again, I expect that will be worked out early in the next year. So that's kind of where we are.

We're just banding together with the other countries to give a little backup to the IMF because we know how much these huge flows of capital—they're very massive around the world, and they move based on a perception of what is going to happen in the future, where confidence is of the essence. So confidence requires good practices within the countries, strong IMF, and the backup for the other countries. Our commitment is limited but significant enough to send that signal when in tandem with all of our other allies.

Prime Minister Chretien. And we're working on this problem since a long time. You will remember the summit in Halifax——

President Clinton. Yes, Halifax.

Prime Minister Chretien.——where that was the team of the summit. We had a feeling that it was to be a problem. So we have strengthened the mechanism used by IMF and trying to prevent the crisis and so on. But as the President said, there is a lot of speculative interpretation of what is going on—that we have to say. And we believe that in the Asia-Pacific, the countries are not facing a massive recession; it's not true at all. These countries will still be growing. And a lot of the mistakes that were made were not necessarily made by action of government. It was a lot of people borrowing short-term money to build hotels and office buildings and so on. And suddenly, with the speculation, they're trapped. And the government has come to the rescue of who?—of the private sector. And we have to keep that in mind.

So we need to try to—and I guess there is a lot of consensus here that we have to back up the IMF, ask the countries to have the proper programs to meet the requirements of IMF. And what is important—in the communique it looks like we have made more agreements than predicted because we believe that we have to carry on on the course of freer trade and more movement of capital around the world. That's the way that growth will come, and it is through growth that you can attend to the social problems that exist in all these countries.

President Clinton. I'd like to say one other thing. Just a minute. If you look at—I just want to hammer home this—maybe the best thing we're doing to help the situation is the agreement we've made to push for lower tariffs and open trade in nine new areas, including environmental technology, which will help what we're trying to do on climate change, because that will show that we understand that we're leading the way to growth through increasing trade and investment in the areas that are critical to the 21st century economy.

The Prime Minister has made this point over and over again, but I predict to you that our making that common commitment and going forward and building on what we've done with the information technology agreement will have a significant positive impact in the confidence people have about whether they should be investing in all the countries participating here, including our two.

[*The following question was asked in French. Prime Minister Chretien answered in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.*]

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, concerning the IMF, given the fact that Korea and Thailand are already involved, do you think the agreement is sufficiently solid?

Prime Minister Chretien. I think the answer is positive, and we will be helping, if necessary. The IMF is a first line of defense; then perhaps we might need a second line of defense. And I think that the IMF has managed very well the Mexican crisis 3 years ago. This is a very important example. And it will also be able to manage the Pacific crisis. And if there are additional resources that are needed, we will be communicating with members of the IMF, if necessary. And I trust that it will work.

Thank you very much.

Q. Are you prepared for the United States to participate in a backup to any IMF package to aid South Korea?

President Clinton. First of all, I think that the South Korean situation is covered by the statement we put out in Manila. And I think the important thing that we should do now is to focus on how South Korea fits within that framework. South Korea—we should look at that, we should—the IMF is going to look at it; the IMF is going to make a judgment. There are certain things the South Koreans may have to do. And then, under certain circumstances, any country involved—if you look at what we agreed to do in Manila, whether the backup comes into pay or not, depends on what happens in the first two instances—what the country does, what the IMF does, what the judgment is now.

So it's completely premature to make a decision about that. The South Koreans have a very powerful economy with a great amount of potential. And a lot of this is going to be—involves making adjustments now in it and then restoring the natural productive capacity and growth to the economy. I'm—certainly I don't see how anyone could be less than hopeful about the long-term prospects for the South Korean economy given their remarkable achievements over the last few decades.

Prime Minister Chretien. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 153d news conference began at 10 a.m. in the East Room at the Pan Pacific Hotel.

Statement on the Death of Jorge Mas Canosa

November 23, 1997

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Jorge Mas Canosa, Chairman of the Advisory Board for Cuban Broadcasting and long-time champion of a free Cuba.