

Toast at a Luncheon Hosted by President Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado of Mexico in La Paz

August 14, 1983

President de la Madrid, Secretaries Sepulveda and Shultz, Your Excellencies, our Ambassadors Espinosa de los Reyes and Gavin, members of the delegations, and friends:

There have been many words said today. Agreements have been reached, understandings have been reached, but perhaps the most significant aspect of our talks was our spirit of cooperation. And through meetings like this, where we treat each other as partners with respect and courtesy and, yes, with honest good will, we define the mature relationship of our two countries.

President de la Madrid, this spirit of cooperation and businesslike approach to the issues of concern to us both have been deeply appreciated on our side. We all have an important responsibility, and that is to represent the interest of our peoples as best we can.

As President, I understand the economic challenges that you face. As a matter of fact, they sound very familiar. We've had a little economic trouble ourselves, and I have every confidence that you will succeed.

Last year when I visited South and Central America -- I always have believed, and even more so after that trip, that while we are citizens of our individual countries, and no one would suggest that we in any way forsake the culture, the tradition, the differences that make us different countries, we should also remember that in this most unique double continent, hemisphere that we're in -- no one else in the world could say anything like this -- even when we cross the borders into one another's country, we're still among Americans, from the North Pole to the South Pole.

And this morning, earlier, I told the President of a dream that I have long cherished. And that is -- that in this North and South America and Central America -- that all of us as Americans might one day find a way as equal partners, neighbors, to set out to develop these two great continents, to erase the injustices that exist here and there, to bring about economic reform to the point that one day we can stand there as a shining example to all the world, from South Pole to North Pole, that we are united in our determination to be free, to respect each individual in our two countries because individual freedom, I think, is the thing that sets us apart from so many parts of the world in so many areas today. And that if this dream -- I won't say "if," when this dream comes true -- 'cause we're going to work to make it come true -- when it does, more than 600 million Americans here in the Western Hemisphere will be such a force for good throughout the world that the world will never have seen anything like it.

And I'm more encouraged than I've been in a long time about the fulfillment of that dream in the meetings that we've had, particularly this one, and we're going to have more of them. I also told the President that the only time people get in trouble is when they're talking about each other, not when they're talking to each other. And we're going to on a regular basis continue to talk to each other.

And I'm not going to say any more because I know that I've confused the interpreter very much by not sticking to the script. But, to the President of Mexico, Miguel de la Madrid, to the people of Mexico, and to the friendship between our two peoples.

Note: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. at the Governor's Residence in response to a toast by President de la Madrid.

Following the luncheon, the President participated in a departure ceremony at the Governor's Residence. He then traveled to the Hilton Hotel in New Orleans, La., where he remained overnight.