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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT
AND
ENRIQUE OLIVARES SANTANA
AT THE
SIXTEENTH MEXICAN-U.S.
INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE

THE STATE DINING ROOM

3:10 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Olivares, Senator Mansfield, distinguished members of the Mexican-U.S. Parliamentary group:

It is a great privilege and pleasure for me to welcome the delegation, the delegates and their spouses to the White House.

It is my understanding that last year President Echeverria hosted the delegation when they were in Mexico. It is my understanding that this is the 16th gathering or getting together of the Mexican-U.S. Parliamentary group.

I was never privileged, when I was a Member of Congress, to be a member of the Parliamentary group, and I regretted that failure very much. My inability to make the U.S. delegation when I was in Congress doesn't mean I don't have a great interest in interparliamentary or parliamentary gatherings of nations around the world.

I was on the U.S. Interparliamentary group on four occasions, and I was privileged to serve on two occasions in the Canadian-U.S. Parliamentary group.

I am a very strong believer in the annual gathering of parliamentarians on a bilateral, as well as a multi-lateral, basis. This method of getting together by parliamentarians is, I think, a great help and assistance to those in the Executive Branch of the Government.

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The first trip outside of the United States that I took on becoming President was to the country of Mexico, in October of 1974. In my opportunity to meet with President Echeverria, we had extensive talks, both on the United States side as well as the Mexican side, and it is my strong feeling that parliamentarians getting together add to the substance of the talks between the executives of two great countries.

When I met with the President of Mexico, we talked about trade, tourism, investment, the narcotics problem, border difficulties, and I am sure that in your consultations here in the United States you will likewise involve yourselves in those very important issues.

I am sure that President Echeverria and myself will welcome any recommendations that come from this group as you consult on those very important issues. It is my understanding that you are going to do a little traveling around the United States. I know that you will be very warmly received.

The American people, and those from your country, Mexico, have a great feeling on behalf of one another, and the American people will reflect our warmth of feeling toward the people of Mexico as they welcome you in their respective communities.

I am led to believe you are going to end your trip in one of my favorite places in the United States. (Laughter) I wish I could qualify as a Parliamentarian and join you, but I know that before you get to Vail, Colorado you will have had a wonderful time in the United States, and I can assure you whether you ski or don't ski, you can really enjoy the benefits and blessings of the American Rockies, and particularly Vail, Colorado.

If you don't know it already, a great many people from Mexico go to Vail. As a matter of fact, they bought or built, I am not sure which, a very fine building with many condominiums, right at the base of the mountain and right next to the golf course.

I just urge you not to fall while you are out there, (Laughter) and particularly don't do it if there are any cameras around. (Laughter)

I welcome you again, and will you express to President Echeverria my very, very best, and I am looking forward to your newly-elected President sometime in 1976.

Good luck, and God bless you all.

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SENATOR OLIVARES: President Ford, Senator Mansfield, Ambassadors of Mexico and the United States:

I had the privilege of accompanying President Echeverria in the meeting he held with President Ford in Magdalena Sonora, and I can see right now that the bonds of fraternal friendship and mutual respect between the leaders of our two respective countries continue to persist.

We Mexican Congressmen and Senators have come here to gather together for the 16th time to discuss with the Members of Congress, our friends from the United States, matters of common concern without any obstacles in our path, without any bad weeds that block our path, because this is a clear path of friendship that we have been following for the last 16 years.

So, President Ford, we come here once more to the home of the Presidents of the American people. That emphasizes the great significance that we attribute to the mutual respect and friendship that exists between our two peoples.

Sixteen years have passed since, for the first time, legislators of this great country and of our own gathered to discuss the problems that are common to us and also to consider the aspirations that each one of our peoples has and tries to win, and we will continue this fruitful dialogue.

Throughout these years we have been able to bind together with special dedication and effort the friendly relations based on respect and understanding that today permits both Mexicans and Americans to offer an example of cordial and civilized relationships.

Members of Parliament of both of our countries are dedicated to prove that politics is a peaceful confrontation between our ideological principles and the programs with which each people wishes to open a path towards a brighter future of welfare and of justice.

We have come to Washington to present our respects to the President of the American people and to tell him that with renewed trust we begin our 16th meeting, convinced that in the path towards international understanding nothing can replace a direct relationship between leaders, between legislators, between social leaders.

Our very extensive geographic border brings with it complications and phenomena that we cannot ignore and also that cannot be resolved by magic and all of a sudden.

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Never before in the world have we seen such a rapid development in every possible field. Never before have the captive forces of nature, converted into military power, placed in certain danger and grave risk mankind itself. But within the context of this reality we believe that the positive prospective for the developments of humankind are greater and have more energetic possibilities than the threats for its destruction.

In the past few years every society has had to change and adapt its own structures of society in order to try to satisfy the aspirations of its people, to change its structures according to the demands of the people to meet their needs and to build an international society that is based on equity, welfare and peace. As never before, the destiny of mankind is indivisible as was stated by President Echeverria as he proposed the charter of the economic rights and duties of States.

The vibrant reality of every day life shows that in effect no society can think about its total development on the basis of isolation and in the search of a self-sufficiency, whichever increasingly becomes more sterile because of its impossible nature and because of its utopian nature.

Throughout these conversations among friends, President Ford, we are going to bear in mind this fundamental fact of the increasing interdependence of contemporary world and we will discuss the ways how, within the framework of this situation, we can reach a better understanding and help each other better.

We will take up bilateral problems that once more will bring us to insist on our own points of view. We shall speak about the United Nations and the inpostponeable necessity of guaranteeing and enriching its existence.

We will make reference to the Organization of American States and to its adaptation to the new times. We will review our joint effort to control, combat and banish this calamity for the contemporary world represented by the traffic in drugs.

We shall analyze the basic concepts on the Law of the Sea and, very particularly, the one pertaining to the economic exclusive zone.

We will, once again, take up the protection of human rights under all types of circumstances and we will speak of democracy and of its destiny within this Western Hemisphere, and we will also take up our economic problems both on a bilateral and international level.

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President Ford, you, who have been a Member of Congress and know the real work of politics, understood in its deepest and most noble sense, know at the same time our efforts are not sterile and are aware, as you have said, that our conversations will not lead to executive agreements but will lead to the formation of opinions and points of view and concepts that one way or another will contribute to a better direction for the public affairs of both this great country and of Mexico.

The United States are celebrating this year the Bicentennial of its independence. This independence was for many peoples of the Americas and of the entire world a guide and a model for their own struggles for freedom.

Mexico, like the United States, believes that there is nothing of more importance than national independence and, therefore, as you do, we recall with veneration always the forefathers and the founders of the Mexican nation, those who were capable of overcoming and winning over colonialism at the beginning of the 19th Century in order to establish the basis of our own national sovereign life.

On behalf of the Members of the Lower House, the Congress and the House of Representatives and the Senate, President Ford, who are members of this Mexican delegation and especially the co-chairman, Deputy Luis Danton Rodriguez, and myself, please permit me to express to you the best wishes for the welfare of the American people and for the health and good fortune of you, Mr. President, and in shaking hands, President Ford, I feel we are shaking hands symbolically with Franklin, Washington and Jefferson, the builders of this great Nation.

Finally, President Ford, I have the honor to carry out a mission entrusted to me by President Echeverria to give you these three volumes -- one is called "Mexico is Like This" and the other two represent the purest expression of our Mexican artisanship, and I hope through these three volumes you will receive the reiteration of the testimony of friendship by the President of our country for the President of this great country, and also for the Members of Congress.

To you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me thank you, Senator Olivares and all of you from the Mexican delegation, for this thoughtfulness in bringing this wonderful gift from President Echeverria. I have had several wonderful experiences in Mexico and I am sure in the volumes here there will be an opportunity for me to refresh my great memories of those delightful times in your great country.

I reiterate my warm welcome to all of you in the White House. I welcome you again on behalf of all of the American people and wish you well in your travels.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 3:38 P.M. EST)