

TOWARDS
A NEW HEMISPHERIC
TREATMENT

SPEECHES
OF THE PRESIDENT OF VENEZUELA,
RAFAEL CALDERA,
ON THE OCCASION
OF HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON, D. C.,
FROM JUNE 2 TO JUNE 4, 1970:
AT THE RECEPTION BY PRESIDENT NIXON
ON THE WHITE HOUSE LAWN;
TO THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB;
THANK YOU SPEECH AT THE DINNER
IN HIS HONOR IN THE WHITE HOUSE
RECEPTION HALL;
AND AT THE JOINT SESSION
OF THE U.S. CONGRESS



SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
OF THE UNITED STATES,
RICHARD M. NIXON,
UPON WELCOMING
THE PRESIDENT OF VENEZUELA,
RAFAEL CALDERA
ON THE LAWN
OF THE WHITE HOUSE



Mr. President,

Mrs. Caldera,

All of our distinguished guests:

Mr. President, It is a very great honor and personal privilege for me to welcome you and the members of your party to our country on this State visit.

In welcoming you, we think of many things, we remember the fact that we have one of the longest relationships of peace and friendship with your country as with any country in the world. Just two days ago marked the commemoration of the 134th year of the coming into force of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship and Commerce and Navigation between your country and ours.

We think also in commercial terms, because we in America, particularly our business people, recall the fact that Venezuela is our major trading partner in all of the Americas. But we think in terms that are more important than these rather official and commercial terms. We think in terms of your inaugural, when you said that the great objectives of your administration would be peace, human understanding, liberty and justice.

That is what we believe in. It is what we want for our country. It is what we want for the Americas, it is what both of us want for the world.

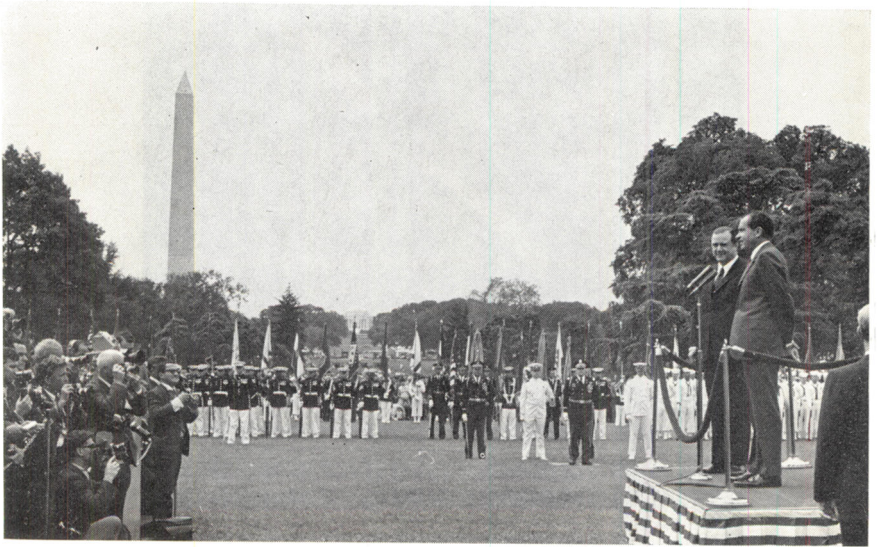
Finally, Mr. President, I am very pleased to welcome you here as a personal friend as well as an official friend. I recall our visit and our talks in 1958 in your country and in 1959 in Washington, and I know that personal relationship will contribute to better understanding and to solve the problems, to the extent they do exist, and they are very few, between our countries.

We welcome you very warmly and we wish

you a happy stay in the United States of
America.

Washington, June 2, 1970.





SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
OF VENEZUELA,
RAFAEL CALDERA,
ON THE LAWN
OF THE WHITE HOUSE
AT HIS RECEPTION
BY THE UNITED STATES PRESIDENT,
RICHARD M. NIXON



Mr. President,

Mrs. Caldera and I are very honored to be the guests of you and your very distinguished wife. We should be very glad to represent the real image of a friendly Venezuela, a country which loves frankness and that at the same time wishes to foster a genuine friendship.

For citizens of Bolivar's fatherland, it is easy to understand and be properly understood by follow citizens of Washington and Lincoln. The only condition is to talk a common language inspired on ideas of freedom, justice, and welfare for this Hemisphere as a whole. We consider that fruitful collaboration between my country and the great Republic of the United States may help to build a better continent and that this will have no small importance for the future of a peaceful world.

We are ready to do our part. We hope that our voice and the voice of all Latin America will be heard and that we all will behave accordingly.

Mr. President and Mrs. Nixon: thank you for your kind hospitality.

Washington, June 2, 1970.



PRESS CONFERENCE
GIVEN BY THE PRESIDENT
OF VENEZUELA,
RAFAEL CALDERA,
AT THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB
IN WASHINGTON, D. C.



Gentleman of the Press:

Immediately following my acceptance of your President's invitation to come to the United States, many questions arose in Venezuela and perhaps in other countries of Latin America concerning the nature and purpose of my visit. It is possible that public opinion in this country, or at least some sectors of it, may also be beset by the same curiosity.

**Your invitation reflects
the laudable desire
for better mutual
understanding**

Your cordial invitation reflects something of that nature, I sincerely hope that this

curiosity goes side by side with the laudable desire for better mutual understanding that will give impetus to a new trend in hemispheric relations. As you might suppose, my visit is not merely a courtesy visit. I have come to discuss matters that are of interest to my people and which I consider to be of interest to this great nation also. President Nixon is aware of this as he has shown by repeatedly expressing a wish that we meet personally.

I come to deal with topics of vital importance to Venezuelans, amongst which is petroleum. Venezuela produces petroleum, (ninety per cent) 90% of it is for the foreign market and nearly (fifty per cent) 50% of this amount comes to the United States. In the last ten years, the relative position of Venezuelan oil on the U.S. market has suffered a continuous decline. On the other hand, our prices have remained stationary or reflect a marked tendency to fall, while the manufactured products which we import (and by the way, I would like to tell you that we are your third best customer in the Hemisphere and ninth in the world) have risen conside-

rably. For the most part, this has happened because each day industrial workers are receiving better salaries and enjoying a fuller participation in the benefits of production in the developed countries. As a matter of fact, the unitary value of our global exports to the U.S. from 1959 to 1968 went down 15.6% while the unitary value of our global imports in the same period rose 45.5%.

**I have come
to speak of trade
that can displace
the need for aid**

My coming to speak of petroleum does not mean that I have come to speak of aid. It has been stated with authority in this country that it would be desirable to reduce aid and increase trade. I have come to speak of trade and I insist that the manner in which trade can displace the need for aid, resides not only in the stability and growth expansion of trade but also, and this is very important, in that trade be conducted in a just manner that produces remunerative benefits, applicable to the achievement of development programs.

However, Venezuela is not only a petroleum country nor do I intend to speak exclusively of my country's interests. Venezuela is an emerging nation with a growing population in which the young constitute the



majority. It is our purpose to achieve a higher level of development as quickly as possible, for instilling new life into the whole extent of our territory and for placing at the service of the needs and progress of the people, all the possibilities of our human resources, both natural and financial. On the other hand, Venezuela is not isolated nor does it wish to express itself along selfish lines. Concerning our position on petroleum we have stated it in the most ample terms. We have manifested our desire to discuss it at the hemispheric level, in clear discussions at which all the interested countries of America are present, and we have maintained the necessity of a global round table, given that we are dealing with a non-renewable source of wealth placed by Providence deep inside the earth the benefit of mankind. Furthermore, we are conscious of belonging to a family of nations that cherishes the same values, which recognizes the special pre-eminence of human dignity; a family that loves peace and feels joyful in offering a home to all races and to people from every corner of the earth. As is fitting for a man of my time, I am convinced of the

substantial unity of Latin America and, for that reason, my voice must not be heard simply as the voice of a Venezuelan who needs to secure an important market for petroleum, but rather as the voice of a Latin American who seeks to convey his feeling to the very heart of the American people, mainly because of the urgency for constructing a unique and lasting friendship between those who live in the Hemisphere. I take pride in saying I am Latin American. I say it here with the deepest sincerity and with the greatest respect for the pride you feel in being citizens of the U.S.

**The communications media
are the most
effective instruments
for building friendships**

The communications media are the most effective instruments for use in the building of a new friendship. Their most important task should be that of overcoming antagonisms, contradictions in thought, conflicts of interest, and above all, prejudice.

As the populations grow, personal contact becomes more and more difficult. The United States has more than 200 million inhabitants, while Latin America, with more than 270 million, will reach 600 million by the year 2000. Each man judges his fellow-man by what he reads in the press, hears on the radio and watches on television and on the screen. Furthermore, the habit of making generalizations causes each one to consider as common to all what he observes in the particular conduct of an individual. So the improper behavior of an executive or businessman, a distasteful remark by a politician or community leader, instinctively provokes the indignation that associates this type of conduct with everyone else of that same nationality. This is the way in which Latin Americans often judge the United States. Moreover, by virtue of your might and technical expertise you are able to utilize an overwhelming percentage of the communication media's time in other countries, especially in this Hemisphere. Our radio stations transmit your music and your outlook on life. Our television is full of an imagery which reflects your way of think-

ing and your mode of acting, while your motion-picture industry propagates all the mannerisms and polemics that the Latin American accepts as being the genuine representation of the United States.

I do not know whether you, in this country, are fully aware of the fact that what is said and discussed in the fields of criticism and domestic issues is observed by the whole world. And that furthermore, in the rest of the world there are groups who specialize in getting the greatest possible mileage out of each and every utterance. This produces unfavorable repercussions that are automatically blamed upon the powerful, the rich, or those whom we consider to be more fortunate than we.

**The man in the street
while getting
(little) information
about Latin America
generally receives
the most unfavorable impressions**

There is another side of the coin. **The man in the street** in the United States, while get-

ting much less information about his Latin American neighbors, generally receives the most unfavorable impression of them. Perhaps the phrase "no news is good news" has been transformed into "good news is no news". Only deplorable incidents, be they the work of nature or a result of human action, receive wide publicity, and in proportion to their magnitude, gain prominent coverage in the news media. **Little is said about literary and scientific accomplishments;** little is said about **man's effort to bring nature under control** and put it at his service; little is said of **the achievements in social organization** and the defense against the dangers which threaten our peace and development. It is much easier to represent the Latin American as an unruly person, as a difficult neighbor, as one who is incapable of achieving what others have achieved in the economic and technological fields. Sometimes incidents which disrupt the normal activity of a country are not only reported: they are forecast, commented upon and, perhaps without wanting to, they are incited.

I have a great respect for the press and for all other means of public expression. I have gone out of my way and continue to do so, in order **to maintain in my country and absolutely respectful climate for freedom of opinion and information.** Our stance towards the press is considered to be a model, able to withstand comparison with any other country in this Hemisphere and even throughout the world. I believe in the power of mass communication as it has a daily influence upon the judgement of each citizen who molds in his heart the feelings that ultimately act upon his will.

**The dialogue within the Americas
has a ready servant
in the press and
other communications media**

For this reason I believe that **the dialogue within the Americas**, that dialogue so neces-

sary for frank exchange, **has a ready servant in the press and in the other communications media**, all the more effective in countries where the principle of government by the people is respected. Let us clear the way and rid ourselves of deep-rooted impediments; then we can speak honestly of friendship. The people, informed by the communications media, receive, their guide-lines and opinions and are the ultimate arbiters on the conduct of a nation.

I was invited to this country during world War II. I must say that I was impressed by the effort that the people in all sectors and at all levels made during the war in order that they be understood and that they might understand others. I have never seen anywhere a greater forbearance for listening to the starkest analysis with such good disposition. This was undoubtedly a great psychological weapon, not only for winning the war but also for assuring, after victory, a



plentiful harvest of good will. When you started to speak of being good neighbors, aid programs either did not exist or were only beginning, but the magic of those words and the image which they suggested carried with it a message that left a profound impression. The present moment is no less serious and there could be no better time than the present for making an effort on both sides towards a mutual understanding. One cannot ignore the fact that there are difficulties. But much has been achieved by the very act of recognizing their existence. The President of the United States, in important official documents, has recognized the need for profound changes and has announced substantial modifications. When these statements are made on behalf of the strongest nation, hopes begin to rise in the soul of other people: It is essential then that tangible deeds give greater force to the words. For this reason I have stated that the impending decision on the just claim of Venezuela concerning its petroleum, constitutes one of those facts that defines an attitude and consequently determines the direction of future hemispheric relations.

In the name of my country I come to insist on the importance of a new attitude and I am ready to acknowledge it.

I am prepared to answer, as a Venezuelan and as a Latin American, any questions you may wish to ask. My country is faced with particular circumstances, but deep down its characteristics are the same as those of other Latin American countries. We are developing, with an explosive population growth, interested in obtaining the best possible advantage for our raw materials and prepared to make great sacrifices, as we are currently doing, for our industrialization. There are groups of people co-existing, with social levels that are very disparate, because some have had the good fortune of prospering, having taken advantage of favorable factors, while others suffer the burden of great difficulties in incorporating themselves into the social process. Foreign Investment flows in, sometimes in a fickle manner. In some instances it has served to develop our sources of livelihood, but in others it has contributed towards our impoverishment through fomenting artificial needs and

through the use of our domestic savings for generating benefits that flow out to other parts of the world. The degree of awareness of the workers is noteworthy; laws are transformed, collective bargaining offers the possibility for better working conditions; but at the same time, the bondage of economic subjugation becomes uncomfortable and the possibility for changing the economic activity that is still maintained in a state of backwardness stumbles upon the increasing dearth of machinery and instruments which must be imported; products encounter barriers, at the same time that in some developed nations at community and executive levels some still think in terms of the simplistic and dangerous maxim that one should buy at the cheapest and sell at the highest prices.

Our aspiration is to have our problems understood. Not too many years ago, in conversations with distinguished intellectuals and politicians in the United States, I was questioned on the prevalence of unrest in Latin American universities. I was asked about this theme in press interviews and

on television programs. They were surprised to hear me forecast that similar problems would arise in this country, a forecast that was easy to arrive at, through a simple analysis. Both here and in Europe the reality of a disquieting situation had to occur in order that the people could understand the events that had been transpiring in the Latin American nations. The example is enlightening not unique. Here as in any other democratic nation, there are strikes, sometimes lengthy ones, with grave repercussions on the national economy. However, we are not lacking foreign businessmen who become scandalized when similar events take place in Latin America, although on a lesser scale. I make this observation with the authority incumbent on one who governs a country where—even though it cannot be said that painful incidents have not occurred—we make sincere efforts for peace that result in a climate of harmony and co-existence. Peace is in Venezuela so well established that those who have done their utmost to achieve its breakdown (for motives which exist there

as they do everywhere) have been unable to achieve it.

**We are developing
raw material
and making great sacrifices
for our industrialization**

We are a friendly and open nation. Investors from anywhere are welcome, in activities that contribute to our development, especially if they are disposed, in a normal fashion, towards reinvestment and towards seeking an association with the domestic elements who maintain a progressive attitude and who represent an optimistic conception compatible with social change. We know the importance of the stability of our currency and for that reason we give it our consistent and responsible backing. Its free convertibility is an encouragement for foreign investment. Our workers are friendly and intelligent. Our laws respect freedom and our government respects the laws. Young men, —and women— in their thirties occupy high positions achieved by virtue of their technical education and their will to serve. We

are conscious of the need for change and simultaneously we have shown that change does not signify chaos and that the transformation of the social structure is the only sure way of strengthening the institutions.

**Our laws respect freedom
and our government
respects the laws**

Change for us is not a simple question of ideology; it is technology itself which has brought the ferment of change to the people; and from that point of view we must acknowledge and stress that it is you, the pioneers of the technological revolution who have been, perhaps without being aware of it, but through your own instruments and through your use of social communications one of the chief promoters of change.

I would like to add that, even if it is true that from down there, as from other continents both far and near, you receive acrimonious manifestations which by the mere fact of happening automatically receive

notorious publicity, it is also certain that in the depths of the Latin American soul there is a kind of yearning to receive the image of the United States as the champion of freedom, the believer in justice and the pioneer in dynamic renewal.



**The younger generations
hope to see this country
(the U.S.) as a leader
in the dynamic
transformation of society**

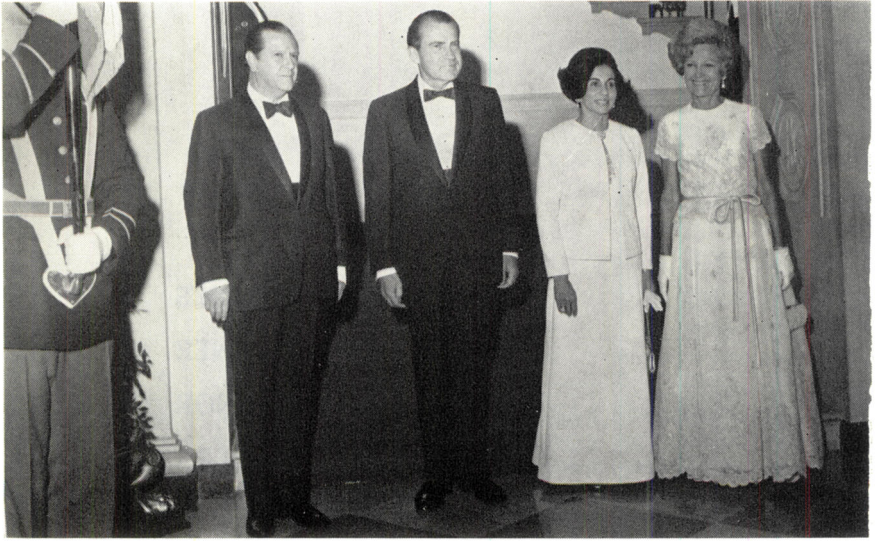
The first announcement that our ancestors received of the birth of the United States was that of a country created for the purpose of offering its citizens a life of peace and of freedom. The figure of a backwoodsman, Abraham Lincoln, is the symbol of that sacrifice essential to establishing the equality of men. When the United States Army crossed the Atlantic it carried abroad the flag of liberty and universal understanding. The younger generations of Latin America which have not been poisoned by strategic hatred for the United States hope to see this country as a leader in the dynamic transformation of society. This would open new horizons for the world's masses and would help to place both the social and the juridical institutions on a level similar to that achieved by physics, chemistry, biology; a level that science and technology in all their aspects have signalled for a new humanity.

An examination of the future is what is expected of us at this crossroad in history. If we are able to envision a clear idea of this responsibility and if we are able to achieve a basic consensus of this projection of our times amongst the leaders in politics, the leaders in the press, in the economy, the cultural life and in science, we shall not have wasted our time. Each day there will be a higher percentage of our youth who feel inspired to maintain their faith in freedom and their faith in the superior destiny of man. Discussions for finding concrete solutions will be easier and the new outlook will help us fulfill our duties; our generation expects this of us.

I am most grateful for your kind reception and for offering me the opportunity of address myself to this very qualified representation of this country's news media. I am ready to answer with utmost sincerity the questions which you may wish to ask.

Washington, June 2, 1970

PRESIDENT NIXON'S
SPEECH AT DINNER
IN HONOR
OF PRESIDENT CALDERA
GIVEN IN THE WHITE HOUSE



Mr. President,

Mrs. Caldera,

Friends from Venezuela and the United States

This house and this very famous room is honored to have you, Mr. President, and the members of your party here as our guests tonight. I speak first from a personal standpoint because we are old friends from years before we reached the offices we presently have. We have much in common, I should point out to our guests. We both are lawyers. We both like baseball. The President is going

to the game tomorrow night, incidentally, to see the great Venezuelan star play for the White Sox against Washington. I don't know what side I am on, tomorrow maybe for the White Sox. Also, we both have the distinction of having run for President and having lost, which proves that having run and having lost does not mean you may not win sometime in the future.

The President told me that he thought that my election in 1968 was somewhat encouraging to him because our election took place in November, as you may recall, and his took place in December. One of the arguments that his opponents were using against him was that he was a professional politician who had lost before. They said after what happened to Nixon, anybody can win.

We also honor tonight the country the President represents. We honor it as a Nation with whom this Nation has had friendly relations for 134 years, one of the few nations in the world, Secretary Stans tells me, with which this nation has a favorable balance of trade, which the President is

trying to change, and we wish him well, we also honor his nation for another reason, that in this room seems appropriate to refer to.

I found that when the President arrived upstairs before coming down to the reception that he particularly wanted to see the Lincoln Room. Like so many of our friends from the Americas and from the world, he was interested in the Lincoln background. As we were sitting here tonight, looking at this great portrait of Lincoln which hangs in this State Dinning Room, I was thinking of those principles which unite two countries and two peoples in this Hemisphere, which Lincoln represented and also which are represented by our friends from Venezuela and their history.

The President presented to me before dinner one of the finest and, to me, most appreciated state gifts that I have ever received. It is a replica made by a very famous jeweler in Caracas, a replica of a Washington emblem, a picture of George Washington, which was in 1825 delivered to Simón Bolívar by

General Lafayette and was presented to Bolívar by Lafayette on behalf of Washington's grandson. The letters that accompanied the transfer, the fact that Bolívar later wore this tiny medallion with the splendid picture of Washington on it, reminded us that our heritage goes back to the same very sound and great transcendent principles. We speak different languages in this Hemisphere. We represent different cultures. We have different types of music, as we heard a few moments ago. But men like Bolívar and Lincoln and Washington are men who are bigger than Venezuela or the United States, they are as big as all the Americas and as big as the whole world and they belong to the whole world.

Tonight as we receive the man, the President of the Republic of Venezuela, the birthplace of the Liberator, the man who liberated not only Venezuela but Colombia, Perú and Panamá and other countries in that area, as we think of what he stood for 134 years ago, what Lincoln stood for and what we believe in today, we realize that despite the difference in distance and geography and

music and culture and language, that we are as one when it comes to our dedication to the right of people to be independent, to be free, to have progress, to have a better life and to live at peace in this Hemisphere without interference from other parts of the world.

Mr. President, your visit reminds us of this common heritage that we share so proudly together. Your visit reminds us also that we must never take it for granted, that we in the Americas must always remember that we are an American family and that we must find ways to live together and work together and prosper together as a family. I know that your visit will help us in developing those ways better in the future. I know that all of our guests would agree with me when I say that as we think of you, we think of you representing, as did Bolívar, not just Venezuela, but all of our neighbors to the south, and we know that your visit will help us to develop a more effective policy which will meet the great objectives that Bolívar stood for, and that Lincoln stood for, and that George Washington stood for; the

policies of peace and friendship and progress for all people.

Finally, I would say this: that all of us come from and were born to this world, our nations, through violent revolution. Now our charge and our task is to provide the means and the methods through which those great changes that need to be made in the world, in our own countries and in the world, can be made through peaceful change. This is what you stand for, Mr. President, in your country and we are proud to work with you towards that great goal.

So, I know all of you would like to rise and raise your glasses to his Excellency, the President of Venezuela and to the friendship of our two peoples.

To President Caldera.

Washington, June 2, 1970.

PRESIDENT CALDERA'S REPLY
TO PRESIDENT NIXON'S
WORDS AT THE RECEPTION
IN THE WHITE HOUSE



Mr. President,

Mrs. Nixon,

I should speak in Spanish, it is my language, more or less I have tried to manage it. But I think that we are in a democracy and I see that here the majority speaks English and I am going to try to do the same.

In my country there is a popular word. Probably it comes from the French language: Monsieur. We call it down there "musiu", that one who speaks Spanish with a foreign accent and in not a very correct way. So I dare to say a few words in English "musiu". I try to give this as an evidence of courage, because after having heard so famous an orator, and master of the English language as President Nixon, you must realize how

much courage is necessary to try to talk in English.

I want to say that we are very happy, my wife and I and all the members of my party here, because we have been so kindly received as we were so kindly invited. For us, this is really a very important item.

**I come as messenger
of good-will**

I am the Chief Executive of a small country. We know how modest it is. But we know, too, that in the world great nations and small nations have a role. I know, too, that we belong to a family of nations, that if considered as a whole, represents something for mankind and specially for this Hemisphere.

I am coming as a messenger or goodwill. My country is a peace-loving country. We have had troubles, as everybody in the present world. But a large majority of the people —Governor Rockefeller knows them—

are fine people, they want to work, to live in peace and to prosper. They love their country and they are anxious to do the best possible to achieve a development program and to be fully incorporated in the process of civilization.

Today, here, we have been received as friends and we are not going to forget this, Mr. President. Your kind words have been very, very meaningful. Yop have remembered the name of Bolívar and, really, when General Lafayette, by commitment of George Washington Custis, in the name of the Washington family, sent in 1825 to Bolívar a miniature, a medallion of Washington, which copy I had the privilege to present to you as a souvenir of my visit, wrote to him; among the existing men and maybe among the men of history, I cannot find anyone else to whom General Washington would like better to deliver it. I think that means a lot and it is a sign of perpetual friendship between your great nation and my dear country.

**Abraham Lincoln means
a great deal to the people of our country**

Mr. President, you have also evoked Lincoln's memory. I have told you before coming to this beautiful dinner that you have two treasures that maybe you have not used enough, especially in regard to Venezuela and to other Latin American countries, at least to some Caribbean countries. One of them is Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln means a lot to our people, maybe because down there in Latin America people coming from every angle of the earth, people of many different races have joined to live in harmony, a representation of the common will of humanity. And Lincoln represents to our people a man who fought for his country and for equality among men, a man who put his idea forward and who was able to put aside every interest in favor of a belief. So, Lincoln is very and deeply popular in the feeling of our citizens. Allow me to pass to a less serious item: that you have, another treasure that maybe you have not used enough. It is baseball. It is

the most popular game with our people. The most humble of our youngsters in the outskirts of Caracas or maybe in the country knows the names and averages of the players of the big leagues, the names of all the teams and is proud because Luis Aparicio, the famous shortstop whom I hope to see tomorrow playing —and I am sorry it is against the Washington Senators— is among the most outstanding figures, so are Cesar Tovar and Victor Davalillo and some others participating in the big leagues and maybe in the Worlds Series. That is an instrument of understanding that sometimes is not sufficiently used. And there are many, many more things in common.

**We are living through one of the most
exciting moments
in the history of the world**

Naturally, in Venezuela, as in any other part of the world, there are groups, committed groups, that cultivate strategic hatred against the United States. But there is a

large feeling of sympathy and there is a long desire of always seeing the United States as the champion of freedom, of peace, of justice.

During the 18th Century, young men from different parts of the world looking for liberty here. Lafayette was one. I think he was a little more than 30 years old when he came to become a General during the famous war; so was Kosciuszko, the famous Pole, and so was Miranda, a Venezuelan army officer who, after participating in Florida in the Spanish campaign during your Independence War, went to France and became a General in the Revolutionary Armies during the French Revolution and finally tried to liberate Venezuela and failed and died in Spain in prison. All those youngsters came looking for liberty and the United States was known in our countries by our ancestors and by all the world as the leader of a free life, of the rights of citizens, of the first serious experience of the republican system of government, of the democratic system of government, in the modern world.

I am sure that we are living one of the most exciting moments in the history of the world. Naturally, exciting and important moments are dangerous ones, are not easy and of course, we have to face them. But the matters is how to carry to our people and to all the people of the world the faith in the future. It is not possible that the man, who has achieved the wonderful adventures that you have dawned with the Apollos and the moon-shots may not be able to organize societies and to try to make all people live in peace and friendship.

**A toast to the future
of this great country**

My wife and I would be happy if our visit—an incident in the very complicated and sometimes difficult life in Washington—contributes in any way to raise that faith and the moral values in the spirit of men and the dignity of men and the possibility, may I say more, in the obligation of people to obtain a system of life in which permanent values will be observed.

I am very happy to be here, Mr. President. I apologize for my English and my words. Ladies and gentlemen, I want to make a toast and invite you to raise again. To the United States, to your wonderful people, to the future of this great Nation, to President Nixon, to his gentle wife and to all of you and to the perpetual and fruitful friendship between the United States and Venezuela and all Latin American countries.

Washington, June 2, 1970.

ADDRESS OF
THE PRESIDENT OF VENEZUELA,
RAFAEL CALDERA,
TO THE JOINT SESSION
OF THE UNITED STATES
CONGRESS

The honor which the Congress of the United States confers upon me by inviting me to this special joint session, is above all, out of deference to Venezuela, and to the Latin American family of nations. This gesture deserves my deepest appreciation.

We are living a decisive moment in people's confidence in a free society, not only in Latin America, but perhaps all over the world the outcome will depend on the possibility of proving that democracy better than any other system, is capable of attaining justice and of achieving development.

Perhaps the fact that I come from the fatherland of Bolivar, a country filled with glorious

achievements in the search for independence; a country with darker moments in the arduous process of organizing itself politically; a country where peace is maintained through irrevocable conviction and inexhaustible faith in the democratic system. Perhaps these facts explain why friendly eyes are observing us today, sympathetic to our words.

**The democratic system
has proved its capacity
of surviving amidst
vicissitudes**

Speaking from this forum, I am aware that the people of the United States are listening to me; since every citizen of this country whatever his political persuasion, his ideology, or his economic interests, knows that the vital issues which concern the Nation are debated within these walls.

The Congress of this country will soon be 200 years old. It met for the first time in Philadelphia in 1774. In 1776 its Declaration

of Independence marked a new chapter in the political history of the world. For two centuries, in spite of profound modifications in the geography, in commerce, and especially in the attitudes of the people, the Congress has functioned with incredible consistency.



It is important to stress this long and continuous vitality because many times the justification for other political systems has been their continuity. There are those who permit themselves to be impressed by the survival of systems which have arisen out of violence and that are maintained by force, the net result of which is ephemeral, and is soon destroyed by the pendular movement of history's contradictions. On the other hand, the democratic system has proven its capacity to stay alive in the midst of the vicissitudes of time and its capacity to adapt itself to new needs and to new ideas.

During this long political experience, the United States has undergone profound transformations, having suffered the agonizing rigors of a civil war, and the immense sacrifices of international wars. It has lived periods of intense anguish; it has felt justifiable pride in its extraordinary achievements, and it has suffered frustrations yet unresolved which worry its finest minds. While the United States was living these two hundred years of democratic continuity and political freedom, some other parts of

the world, were witnessing different experiences.

Some time after the meeting in Philadelphia of America's First Congress, Napoleon Bonaparte overran Europe, ever imposing his all embracing will. His brilliant ascent lasted fifteen years, a rather short time in the life span of nations.

In recent times, another empire was built; imposed by legions of brown shirts, which propagated myths through blitzkrieg movements, and proclaimed the bankruptcy of representative democracy. The Nazis failed as will every system which denies human dignity and freedom. Meanwhile, democracy survives and will continue to survive.

**Humanity feels deeply
the urgency for
fundamental changes**

But it is also true, honorable Senators and Congressmen, that at the present moment, humanity feels the urgent need for fundamental changes in its institutional life. The

incredible advances in technology have accelerated the need for these changes and those who do not fully share in the economic benefits, urgently demand it. This is an undisputable fact and there is no exception in any part of the world. There are countries where these anomalies are buried under grave-like silence but this does not mean that growing unrest cannot be detected by close observation. The time is gone when demonstrations and riots were the shameful patrimony of those countries which have not acquired membership in the exclusive club of civilized nations. Today, ferment is evident everywhere. Great advances in communications, deadly skills acquired in war, the crisis of some moral patterns, contribute to favor those who try to push nations towards a whirlwind of violence; be they motivated by ambition or by erroneous thinking.

We know that great majorities in the United States, in our Latin America, as in Europe, Asia or Africa long for peace. A fertile peace which permits families to raise their children without anxiety, to further

their endeavors with the assurance that the fruit of their labor will be permanently enjoyed. However, in order that we may fortify and channel the will of these great majorities, that we may renew their wavering faith in the future so that we may render useless the dissent caused by adventurers and warmongers, it is necessary that we convert a new message into reality.

**We have to exert
ourselves to close
the breach existing
between wealth and misery**

A free society, in order to survive and justify its survival, must ever strive to prevent any of its sectors, even though a minority, from wallowing in poverty and cultural underdevelopment. In like manner, the community of nations, and concretely, that of our Hemisphere, in order to guarantee freedom and peace, must strive to close the ever-widening gap between opulence and misery, between fantastic technological advances and underdevelopment.

Large segments of our youth are convinced of this truth, although their behavior may vary. Many dedicate themselves to analysis of social and political systems, to the study of the cycles in economic life, and to the technical possibilities for transforming the world. Others, allow themselves to be seduced by an overwhelming desire to destroy, being imbued with the naive idea that the destruction of that which exists will automatically bring about a new order for making man happier. It is perhaps the latter whose commotion is most clearly heard, amplified as it is through the sound tracks of industrial civilization. The former are expecting us to produce a clear and convincing program, a behavior which is compatible with popular aspirations and an optimistic outlook for confronting the future with confidence.

A well recognized fact in our era is the existence of the international community. There is no longer a place for isolationism. In a world in which physical distances become shorter as each day passes, it's absolutely anachronistic to widen ideological gaps between human beings. If within each

country, it has become unacceptable for a group of privileged people to look down upon the sub-human living conditions in which others may find themselves, in like manner the idea that some powerful and wealthy nation can be oblivious to the plight of other nations is obsolete.

**Our people
cannot understand
that we should be victims
of discriminatory treatment**

Venezuela, for example, exports petroleum. Our economy is largely based upon our petroleum exports. Any decision related to the access of Venezuelan petroleum to the North American market has grave repercussions on our possibilities for livelihood and development. In the last decade the relative position of our petroleum in the United States market has deteriorated. Our people cannot understand being made the object of discriminatory treatment. At those times when the world saw the anguish of liberty in the face of the totalitarian threat, in the dan-

gerous situations that the World, and this Hemisphere in particular, experienced, the assurance of a supply of fuel from Venezuela constituted the best guarantee of the availability of energy for the decisive confrontations. On the other hand, the foreign exchange generated by our petroleum exports has been the basis of our monetary stability and it has allowed us to make an important contribution to international commerce. Despite our modest population, we are the third biggest client of United States goods and services in the Western Hemisphere and the ninth biggest in the world.

A just and non-discriminatory treatment, that can guarantee a secure place for Venezuelan petroleum in the North American market and a reasonable participation in its expansion, goes beyond the terms of a simple commercial arrangement. It is a condition for the fulfillment of the development programs of a neighboring and friendly country and a key to the direction that future relations between the United States and Latin American will take.

The aspects I mentioned are fact. I note, however, with pleasure that the issue of Venezuelan petroleum is on its way to being duly acknowledged in the United States. Venezuela's thesis is to air in the clearest possible manner those matters related to petroleum; a product, the use of which is in the common interest of all mankind. We seek no special privileges. Our national interests can withstand the closest scrutiny and is available for verification in the depth.

The other countries of Latin America face similar problems. Producers of raw materials, see their prices stagnating or declining, while the prices of manufactured goods rise. How many schools and hospitals will close, how many workers will be dismissed, how much pain will be inflicted, how many rebellions engendered in peace-loving nations entitled to fulfill their own destiny, by the reduction of a single cent per pound of coffee, bananas, lead or copper?

Powerful arguments for a new Hemispheric treatment are found in the comparisons

between the quantity of primary products that needed to be delivered to a developed country ten years ago—for the acquisition of a tractor or for the tuition of a young man at a technological institute—and the quantity which is demanded of us now for the same purpose. The prices of manufactured goods keep rising, partly because it is necessary and just to improve the standard of living and working conditions of the laborers who participate in their production. Meanwhile, great pressure is brought to bear to lower the price of the products from which the developing countries derive their means of subsistence.

**“The international community”
demands of the various nations
a participation consonant
with their capabilities**

The formula for achieving cordial relations which in turn will direct the influence of the Hemisphere on the rest of the world towards friendship and international cooperation, cannot be the merciless attempts

at forever lowering the prices of our goods while increasing the price of the commodities we have to import. The thesis that more trade diminishes the need for aid is correct as long as the trade is a just one, and is converted into a greater possibility for attaining the urgently needed changes in developing nations.

I believe in International Social Justice. Recalling Aristotle's old aphorism that justice demands that we render "to each his own", may I remind you that in the transformation of this thought into Christian philosophy "his own" does not evoke exclusively that which belongs to each individual but also the idea of that which belongs to "society" for the "common good".

No difficulty lies in transferring this concept onto the international community.

Just as "society" in the international ambit has the right to impose distinct types of relationships on its members, so the "international Community" demands that the various nations participate in proportion to

their capacity in order that "all" may lead, what could be termed, a human existence. The rights and obligations of the different countries should be measured therefore in terms of the potential and the needs of each one, making peace, progress and harmony viable, and making it possible for all to advance within a true friendship.

You represent a country which has achieved an enormous amount of might and wealth. Within the confines of your own country you are preoccupied by those sectors which have not attained a satisfactory standard of living. And you are striving to give them the chance of emerging from this state of social marginality so as to become fully incorporated in the benefits achieved on a national scale. In the International sphere, it is difficult to believe that the people who reached the moon are not able to make a decisive contribution towards the development of other countries.

I remarked at the beginning that I felt I was speaking to all the people of the United States. I am convinced that the future of

the Hemisphere depends on the extent to which this great nation reaches a decision to become a pioneer in International Social Justice. The measure to which your people, so deserving of our admiration and our friendships become conscious of the fact that with the cost of one of its Apollo moon-shots it could contribute to the prosperity and happiness of nations like ours on whose security its own security depends; in that measure, the way would be open to new endeavors and your two hundred years of political experiment would be barely the threshold of many centuries of a democratic way of life in the Western Hemisphere.

We hope that the Apollos will continue exploring space. But the result of these explorations make the need for a better life for men on earth more urgent.

With this objective we can inspire youth to an attitude in which all that is negative will depart from the scene and the positive will prevail. We can inflame the spirit of the new generations towards the rescue of the idea of freedom. Two hundred years

ago, young men like the Frenchman, Lafayette the Pole, Kosciusko and the Venezuelan, Miranda came to North America seeking liberty. Bolivar, the Liberator said of this nation in his memorable address to the Congress of Angostura in 1819 that it "was cradled in liberty, reared on freedom and maintained by liberty alone'. Freedom could suffer its most severe crisis if it is not nourished with the accomplishments of social justice. The skepticism of youth towards liberty during the decade of the thirties produced the intrusion of fascism and nazism, which threatened to raze the very foundations of our present civilizations. We cannot allow our youth today to succumb to the call of violence and to the denial of the fundamental values which gave democracy its forcefulness.

I have sustained and still sustain, Honorable Senators and Congressmen, that a robust friendship with a new outlook between the United States and Latin America is a necessity not only for the Hemisphere but for the whole planet which we inhabit.

**To be different
does not imply
to be better or worse**

We must commence with an effort to reach mutual understanding. We must repeat a thousand and one times that being different implies neither being better nor worse. We Latin Americans have our own way of life and we have no wish to adopt in a servile manner a way of life which is current elsewhere. We have a fierce love of independence, we place full recognition of our dignity above that of our needs. For us as for you—as you have proved in decisive moments of your history—spiritual values take precedence over material interests. We know that we can count on your understanding; because as a great contemporary philosopher, Jacques Maritain, has said: “The American people are the least materialistic of the modern peoples that have reached the industrial stage”.

I am proud of being a Latin American. This does not prevent my understanding and

admiring other cultures amongst which yours occupies a prominent place. As a Latin American, I can affirm before this representative assembly of the people of the United



States, that there is still time to seek out solid ground upon which to construct genuine foundations for the understanding that we so desire.

There are people in our countries, as there are in every country, whose only current aim is a "strategic hatred" for the United States. They consist of minorities who are ideologically committed to a struggle which they aspire to turn into a veritable international civil war. But their success would be very small, despite their noisy activity, if it were not for large sectors whose feelings could easily be converted into antagonism, because they are not pleased with certain attitudes which, rightly or wrongly, they attribute to the United States.

When the statements of certain political leaders reach the columns of our press, when the actions of certain businessmen are not what they should be, and uncomfortable feeling engulfs our people, because, for better or for worse, we are very emotional.

In the same fashion, the North American man in the street receives an unfavorable

image of the ordinary Latin American citizen. The "Ugly Latin American" has come to be, unaided by a best seller to promote him, the incarnation of those difficult neighbors to the South. This should not be.

The fact that at a time of intense internal political activity, the House of Representatives and the Senate of the United States have joined in order to listen kindly to the sincere remarks of the Chief Executive of a Latin American Republic, will be received, down there, as a token of goodwill and a sign that foretells great possibilities for a renewed friendship.

**We have demonstrated
that democracy continues
to be the best system
of government**

The gallant attempts which are made on both sides for the purpose of reaching an authentic understanding must be submitted to the opinion of our respective peoples whose decision, in the democratic system of

government, is the final one. This makes it necessary for us, political, cultural and economic leaders, to make a sustained effort to convey the concept of a new Hemispheric policy into the very hearts of our fellow citizens.

It is not enough that Presidents exchange ideas: it is necessary that their agreements receive full backing from the Congress, and that it in turn may rely on the support of the citizens as voters and taxpayers.

We are convinced that if the United States and Latin America are unable to achieve a true and lasting friendship based on justice and the honest examination of events, mankind in general could not aspire towards an organization founded on universal comprehension.

On the other hand, we are absolutely certain that a new, vigorous and fruitful hemispheric relationship, inspired by the brave repudiation of everything that in the past obstructed the just norms for good

relations, will have a great influence on world peace.

As democracy reaches its two hundredth anniversary, let us prove that it continues to be the best system of government.

Washington, June 3, 1970.

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