

I have referred several times, Mr. President, to our discussions here in Caracas. The importance of these cannot be overemphasized, for we both have the honour and the responsibility of leading the governments of democratic nations. Our views, therefore, must reflect the broad feelings of the people of our two countries. And, though this requirement of responsibility to our electorate requires us to be more cautious in our statements and less dramatic in our acts than others not so fettered, we both recognize that it is the source of the strength of our two great countries.

Our peoples are free -- free to travel, free to express their own cultures, free to design their own institutions, free to shape their own destinies. I believe fully that, in the exercise of those freedoms, the peoples of Canada and Venezuela will benefit increasingly from a more intimate association one with the other.

In that same speech to the Angostura Congress from which I quoted a few moments ago, Bolivar also said:

"We must never forget that the excellence of a government lies not in its theories or in its form or mechanism but in its being suited to the nature and character of the nation for which it is instituted."

And so our two governments, each designed for a different nation, seek to suit the nature and character of our own peoples -- but each seeks, equally, to reflect and serve the needs and interests of the world in which we live. To do so effectively requires perseverance, compassion and co-operation. To those characteristics, Mr. President, and to the good health of yourself and the Venezuelan people, I should like to propose a toast.

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