

## Press Briefing by USAID Administrator Brady Anderson

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Dhaka, Bangladesh)

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For Immediate Release March 20, 2000

### PRESS BRIEFING BY USAID ADMINISTRATOR BRADY ANDERSON

Pan-Pacific Sonargon Hotel  
Dhaka, Bangladesh

4:55 P.M. (L)

MR. HAMMER: Good afternoon. The first briefing that we're going to have today is by the Administrator for the United States Agency for International Development, Brady Anderson, who will talk about some of AID's programs here in the region.

ADMINISTRATOR ANDERSON: Thank you. Good afternoon. I want to start out by thanking the people of the village of Joypura, who were so gracious to allow us to relocate the village event that the President was going to attend from the village of Joypura to the U.S. Embassy. The President was very disappointed that he was not able to go to the village of Joypura, but the people of Joypura were very kind to come to him. And he had a lot of time with them, and he had time to ask a lot of questions and learn about their lives and the challenges they face.

We've had a very productive day. The President, as you know, announced several United States Agency for International Development initiatives. Highlights would include the \$50-million South Asia regional initiative, which is a power and clean energy initiative for the region, including Bangladesh, India and Nepal. It will encourage cooperation among the three nations in the energy sector.

The President also announced a \$30-million clean energy initiative for the country of Bangladesh alone, to enable this country to privatize, to examine ways in which they can be more efficient at their energy production. He also announced a \$4-million grant to the Grameen-Shakti organization, which is a sister of the Grameen Bank in this country of microenterprise fame. And that grant will enable small borrowers to borrow money and purchase small solar power for their homes and their small businesses, like sewing and that sort of thing.

Also, \$97 million in food assistance for the people of Bangladesh, a large part of which will be through programs operated by the World Vision, an American NGO here. Also, the President announced a debt for nature swap which will be under the new Tropical Rain Forest Conservation Act.

Additionally, the President drew attention to the very important issues in this region of child labor and trafficking of women and children. He announced \$3 million will be spent for education and skills training for women and girls who have been exploited, and \$1 million for NGOs and the government of Bangladesh to prevent trafficking — sort of bringing a network of government and NGOs together in this country who want to prevent the trafficking of women.

Americans are a very generous people, and Bangladesh represents one of USAID's largest assistance programs in the world, totally in this year about \$88 million. All around the world, U.S. assistance emphasizes the dignity and the world of individuals, helping provide an environment in which individuals can find opportunity for social and economic growth.

The government of Bangladesh has made enormous strides in tackling the very difficult issue of population growth by bringing the total fertility rate down from 6.6 25 years ago, to 3.3 today. The government of Bangladesh has strengthened its democracy and worked to raise the status of women, and reduce child labor. And they have been pioneering in their role in development with their inception of the Grameen Bank.

Discussions and agreements today will help rural communities make use of the sun, to provide electricity for their homes and their small businesses. They will help Bangladesh to provide considerably increased clean power for domestic use. And they will help create a setting for South Asia neighbors to mutually consider the increasing need and opportunity for regional cooperation in the energy field.

Increasingly, environment and economic opportunities occur both within a country and across borders, and our assistance specifically recognizes this reality in South Asia.

Thank you.

Q Is all this money the President's to commit? Or does it require any congressional approval?

ADMINISTRATOR ANDERSON: This money's been appropriated by the Congress.

Q Can you help summarize -- we're giving \$88 million this year. How much total was announced? And is that on top of the \$88 million?

ADMINISTRATOR ANDERSON: How much total was that --

Q How much total was announced to date?

ADMINISTRATOR ANDERSON: The \$88 million would have to be added in with all the other -- the \$50 million, the \$30 million, the \$4 million --

Q And all that up to date, how much -- I was writing it down, but I'm not sure I --

ADMINISTRATOR ANDERSON: Yes -- \$200 million. It all went -- the \$88 million will be spent in one year. The \$50 million, which is a regional program, including Nepal, India and Bangladesh, is a four-year program, for example. The \$30 million for clean energy in Bangladesh is also a multiyear program. The \$88 million is distinct from that, includes food aid -- about half of it, or a little bit less than half of that is food aid.

Q I guess what I'm saying, I have -- I counted up over \$80 million announced to date. Is that your figure?

ADMINISTRATOR ANDERSON: Yes. In addition to the \$88 million.

Q In the context of the cross-border cooperation, I think there's an element of encouraging private sector cooperation across the border. Can you explain, develop that for us a little bit?

MR. ANDERSON: Yes. It's both -- it provides -- I mean, we encourage here and a lot of places in the world, in developing countries, privatization of the power system. And that would open it up to companies in Bangladesh or India who would like to invest, or American companies or others -- Europeans or others -- who would like to invest in the power sector. When the power sector is broken down to its various component parts and sold, the government can then realize the greatest benefit from it.

So the regional concept is, bring privatization, bring private capital because the governments are just not going to have the money, and the government of Bangladesh will not have enough money to really develop the natural gas that they need to. It's going to require private capital. So they're going to need the kind of environment with policy and regulation that this initiative will help them formulate both here and in the region to attract private capital. Because the private companies are not going to come in unless they think they can make a profit. And we believe that doing it regionally is the only way that's going to attract the private capital.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END 5:05 P.M. (L)

Briefings

Press Background Briefing by Senior Administration Official

## Remarks by the President and Prime Minister Hasina in Joint Press Statement

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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For Immediate Release March 20, 2000

### REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER HASINA IN JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

Prime Minister's Office  
Dhaka, Bangladesh

1:40 P.M. (L)

**PRIME MINISTER HASINA:** Distinguished members of the press, on behalf of the government and the people of Bangladesh, I would like to extend a very warm and special welcome to the President of the United States of America, his excellency, Mr. Bill Clinton, and distinguished members of his delegation. This is the first ever visit of a U.S. President to Bangladesh, and it reflects the warm and friendly ties between our two countries, as well as the qualitative formation that has been taking place in our relationship.

Let me also thank President Clinton for his decision to begin his tour of South Asia from the soil of Bangladesh. We are truly honored, Mr. President.

At this moment, I recall with gratitude the warm hospitality that was extended to me by the President and the First Lady during my brief visit to the White House in 1997. I'm proud to say that the father of the nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, imbued by deep and abiding values of freedom, democracy and equality, achieved for us this nation. He laid the foundation of Bangladesh-U.S. relationship.

We value the relationship. It is a matter of satisfaction that these ties have grown substantially. It was, therefore, a singular honor for me today to meet President Clinton. He's an outstanding leader and statesman of our times. We discussed our bilateral relations and issues of common concern, and I am happy to say that our meeting was fruitful and productive.

We reiterated to the President that the government of Bangladesh shares the U.S. commitment to democracy, rule of law, human rights, and free market policy. Like the U.S., Bangladesh also believes in peace, security, and in proactive efforts to defuse tension everywhere.

We appreciate the President's efforts and initiative to bring the Middle East closer to a lasting peace, and realize the important role played by the U.S. in achieving peace in Bosnia, Kosovo and other regions.

We also discussed our bilateral trade with the U.S., which is our number one export market. Nearly \$2 billion worth of goods were exported to the U.S. in 1998 and '99. In this context, we explained to President Clinton the liberal economic policies and programs of the government, and also discussed our proposal for increase of Bangladesh's quota of government exports, as well as duty-free and quota-free access of Bangladeshi products to U.S.

Regarding cooperation in energy, both our countries acknowledge the immense potential in this sector and have decided to intensify our cooperation. We have initiated two production-sharing agreements with Unocal and Pangaea. Bangladesh and the U.S. also signed a strategic objective agreement, under which the U.S. would provide an amount of U.S. dollar, \$30 million grant to achieve increased institutional capacity to make decisions in clean energy development; improve -- environment; and increase public support for energy sector reform.

In addition, we thank the President for the agreement signed between our two countries for reduction of debt and use of interest for local development activities under the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998. This is a good beginning, and we requested the President for further action for cancellation of our debt under PL 480. A number of other agreements have also been finalized where U.S. aid would be funding for this in Bangladesh.

On the question of export of gas, our position remains that after fully meeting our domestic requirements, and ensuring gas for 50 years for use of future generations, the remaining surplus gas will be available for export. Similarly, on the question of export of power, we maintain that with new gas fields being discovered and developed, we must find good use for the gas. We will, therefore, welcome proposals that are commercially viable for the export of power based on our natural gas.

We also apprised President Clinton that Bangladesh could emerge as an important center of IT industry in South Asia. Bangladeshi programmers, computer engineers and IT professionals could provide IT product services, taking advantages of the time difference between Bangladesh and the U.S. The U.S. could also provide necessary technical assistance and institutional support to Bangladesh for development of IT industry. This could help create employment opportunities for the educated youth of the country.

We requested the President to expedite the deportation of the killers of the father of the nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. We stressed that the killers have terrorist links and that they should not be given refuge in the greatest democracy of the world, a country that upholds the rule of law. I am touched by President Clinton's sympathetic response.

We requested President Clinton to take steps to regulate the status of Bangladeshi nationals living in the U.S. without proper documents. I'd like to thank President Clinton for the deep personal interest he has taken in the welfare and well-being of the people of Bangladesh. I am sure that the President's visit will be a milestone in our relationship and serve to highlight the many achievements of Bangladesh and enhance its stature and standing in the world community.

President Clinton extended an invitation to me to visit his great country, which I gladly accepted. A date in October this year will be worked out for this visit.

May I now request his excellency, William Jefferson, President of the USA, to say a few words now. Thank you, and the floor is yours.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Thank you very much. Prime Minister, ladies and gentlemen, I am proud today to be the first American President to visit Bangladesh. But I am quite sure I will not be the last. Though far apart geographically, our nations grow closer every day – through expanding trade, through the Internet revolution, and through our shared interest in building a world more peaceful, more tolerant, more prosperous and more free.

Twenty-nine years ago this month, against extraordinary obstacles, Bangladesh began a lonely fight for existence that did not receive the support it deserved from many countries around the world. That struggle was led by the Prime Minister's father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, whose passion and commitment united a people.

Despite many challenges since then, you have come together to build a nation that has won the respect of the world. The United States admires Bangladesh as a nation proud of its Islamic heritage, proud of its unique culture, proud of its commitment to tolerance and democracy, and proud of its participation in the world community. We are grateful for your leadership in the United States, and your courageous example in sending peacekeepers to end the conflict in Bosnia and Kosovo. We particularly honor Bangladesh as the first nation in South Asia to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Finally, we are grateful for the Bangladeshi Americans who are doing so much to enrich and to enliven both our nations.

Today is only the beginning of a stronger partnership. The Prime Minister and I discussed ways to strengthen our economic ties, while ensuring that future prosperity is built upon respect for decent labor practices, the magnificent natural environment of Bangladesh, and a sense of responsibility toward the children who will inherit the future.

Today I am pleased to announce that our Agency for International Development will provide \$50 million to Bangladesh and other nations in South Asia harness clean energy resources, reduce air pollution and fight climate change. Bangladesh also will be the very first nation to receive funding under a United States program that converts old debt to new funding to protect tropical forests.

I'm also happy to announce that our Agency for International Development and Department of Agriculture will provide \$97 million in food assistance here, and today I'm sending to our Congress the renewal of our agreement for peaceful nuclear cooperation with Bangladesh.

Anyone who looks at the map can see that this is a nation of great rivers, from many sources merging together as

they approach the Bay of Bengal. Today, from many sources of our different national traditions, we meet in Dhaka to build our common future.

Thank you very much, Prime Minister. (Applause.)

PRIME MINISTER HASINA: Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Would you like to call on a journalist, and then I will? Should we go to the Americans first or the Bangladeshis first? It's your call.

Q Mr. President, what political and economic factors have convinced you to undertake your first visit to Bangladesh? And would the United States consider favored nation to Bangladesh as a favored nation, when India, Pakistan and South Asia are engaged in nuclear arms threats?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, you ask what political and economic factors encouraged me to come here. I think this is a nation with a very big future. This is a nation that chose to sign and to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; a nation that has used its soldiers to go around the world to help others make peace; a nation that I believe is committed to democracy, with a vigorous level of political debate inside this country, as nearly as I can see, and a real commitment to the long-term welfare of its children, and one in which we feel a great deal of common interest. So to me, this was an easy decision to come here. I wanted to come here. And I look forward to a longer and richer future between the United States and Bangladesh.

Terry.

Q Mr. President, there has been a lot of speculation that you'll conclude this trip by going to Geneva to meet with President Assad of Syria. What is the likelihood of that? And would it be your expectation, if that happens, that your meeting would lead to a resumption of the Syrian-Israeli talks that were suspended in January?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I do intend to do that. When I leave -- when I conclude my visits in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, I do intend to go to Switzerland to meet with President Assad. And we'll just have to see what comes out of the talks.

But we have, now, we've worked very hard with the parties to get the Palestinian and Israeli track back going, and they're doing very, very well indeed. And I think they have a lot of energy and a real plan for the future. And I think this is the next logical step. I don't want to unduly raise expectations, but I think that this is an appropriate thing for me to do, to try to get this back on track, so that our objectives of having a comprehensive peace can go forward.

Q My question is, how do you look at the Bangladesh politics? Thank you.

Q Mr. President, do you think that -- this is your first visit to Bangladesh, where people are hard-working and sincere. Do you want to make your visit memorable by declaring a general amnesty for undocumented citizens of Bangladesh who are living in your country?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you asked about the Bangladeshis living in the United States. And I think one of you asked about what I thought about your local politics. I think that the less I say about it, the better, except it certainly seems to be vigorous. And I hope it will be peaceful, because -- you may know that I have a few opponents back in the United States. We have vigorous political systems; that's what democracies are about. But in the end you have to find constructive ways to resolve your differences and go on.

Now, on the Bangladeshis in America, I have done what I could to make sure that none were unfairly treated. We have laws that govern this. And it is true that we have allowed significant populations from places where there were virulent civil wars, and they were driven into our country because they could not safely remain at home. And then they stayed in our country and began to establish families and earn a living. And there were -- the Congress passed blanket provisions to allow them to stay.

Other people who come to our country in large numbers are basically governed by our more general immigration laws. And there's a limit to what I can do. I have already taken some steps there. But I said in my opening statement, and I will say again, I think our country has been greatly enriched by the presence of Bangladeshis and we have many Bangladeshi-American citizens. One of them is here with me today -- Osman Siddiqui, who's our Ambassador to Fiji. And so I feel very good about the presence of Bangladeshis within the United States. But I have to observe the laws that we have.

Lori.

Q Sir, can you tell us what security concerns prompted you to cancel your trip to the village today? And are you confident it will not happen again on this trip, particularly in Pakistan?

THE PRESIDENT: The answer to the first part of your question is, no I won't, because I don't think I can, I should. But let me that I thought it was very, very important for me to come here. And I think it's important for the United States to see its friends and to work for a future. I regret that I could not go to the village. And I'm delighted that the villagers are coming to see me because it will give me a chance to highlight something the American press has heard me talk about many times, which is that the whole microcredit movement in the world basically began here in Bangladesh with the Grameen bank nearly 20 years ago – maybe more than that now. And the Prime Minister and I talked about this.

I am honored that I will have a chance to see Muhammad Yunus again, to see some of the villagers, and to try to highlight the important role that I believe microcredit should have not only here in Bangladesh, but throughout all developing countries in the world. The United States, through AID, supports about 2 million microcredit loans a year in other places. So I'm delighted I'm going to be able to see the people from the village and to support this very, very important initiative in which Bangladesh is truly the world's leader.

Q Sir, and about the security on the rest of the trip?

PRIME MINISTER HASINA: I think we can – we can stop here. Four questions already have been asked. And thank you very much. Thank you very much. And, President, thank you very much.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thank you.

PRIME MINISTER HASINA: Thank you very much.

## Speeches

Remarks by the President in Greeting to the People of Pakistan

Remarks by the President at the Business Reception

Remarks by the President at the Vaccine Event, Mahavir Trust Hospital

Remarks by the President to the Hyderabad Business Community

Remarks by the President in Discussion with Members of Panchayat

Remarks by the President with Members of Dairy Cooperative

Remarks by the President at Environmental Signing Ceremony

Remarks by the President and Prime Minister Vajpayee of India in Joint Press Statement March 20, 2000

Remarks by President Clinton and President Narayanan of India of India in an Exchange of Toasts

Remarks by the President and Prime Minister Vajpayee of India in Joint Press Statement

Remarks by President Clinton and President Ahmed in Exchange of Toasts

Remarks by the President to the People of Joypura

## Remarks by the President at Environmental Signing Ceremony

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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For Immediate Release March 22, 2000

### REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AT ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNING CEREMONY

Taj Khema  
Agra, India

5:55 P.M. (L)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you so much. Thank you very much, Foreign Minister Singh, Chief Minister Gupta, Mayor Maurya, District Commissioner Chowdhury and, especially, Professor Mishra — we admire you so much for your efforts to save the Ganges; we admire you because for you it is a matter of science and faith.

I want to thank all of you for welcoming me and my daughter and my wife's mother, many members of the United States Congress, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Commerce, distinguished members of our administration and our ambassador here today. I want to thank all the environmental leaders from India who have come here today.

One month from this day we will celebrate across the world the 30th anniversary of Earth Day, a day set aside each year to honor our natural environment and to reaffirm our responsibility to protect it. In a unique way, in India the Earth has been celebrated for more than 30 centuries. This, after all, is a nation named for a river, a place where the Earth and its waters are worshipped as divine.

With good reason, the people of India have spent centuries worrying far less about what we might do to nature and far more about what nature can do to us — through floods, hurricanes, droughts and other calamities. But as the experience of the beautiful Taj Mahal proves, and as the struggle to save the Ganges proves, we can no longer ignore man's impact on the environment.

Pollution has managed to do what 350 years of wars, invasions and natural disasters have failed to do. It has begun to mar the magnificent walls of the Taj Mahal. Since 1982, protection of the monument has been a major priority. And the fight has yielded significant advances. But, still, a constant effort is required to save the Taj Mahal from human environmental degradation — what some scientists call "marble cancer." I can't help wondering that if a stone can get cancer, what kind of damage can this pollution do to children.

It took the United States a long time to face up to these serious environmental questions. Not so many years ago, one of our rivers was so polluted it actually caught on fire. Bad air has made breathing very difficult in many of our cities. Acid rain from our cars and our factories made it unhealthy to eat the fish from many of our lakes and rivers. Over the last generation we have worked very hard to restore our natural treasures and to find a way to grow our economy in a way that is in harmony with the environment.

We know that India's remarkable growth has put that same kind of pressure on your environment. And the cost of growth are rising every year, even along with your prosperity.

We also know that more and more the environmental problems of the United States or India or any other nation are not just national problems. They are global ones. More than any time in history, the environmental challenges we face go beyond national borders. And so must our solutions. We must work together to protect the environment. That is the importance of the agreement Mr. Singh and Secretary Albright have signed today.

There are few areas where that cooperation is needed more than on the issues of climate change and clean energy. Here in Agra, you have taken important strides since the early 1980s to protect the Taj Mahal by using cleaner energy and improving the quality of the air. In particular, I commend the work of M.C. Mehta for working to establish a pollution-free zone around your national treasure. This is local action with

global consequences.

The overwhelming consensus of the world scientific community is that greenhouse gases from human activity are raising the Earth's temperatures in a rapid and unsustainable way. The six warmest years since the 15th century -- 200 years before the Taj Mahal was built -- the six warmest years in all that time were all recorded in the 1990s.

Unless we change course, most scientists believe that the warming of the climate will bring us more storms and more droughts; that diseases like malaria will be borne by mosquitos across more borders and at higher and higher altitudes, threatening more and more lives; that crop patterns will be severely disrupted, affecting food supplies; and the sea level will rise, so high that entire island nations will be threatened and coastal areas around the world will be flooded.

Now, of course if that hit, it is the developing nations that will be hurt the most. And India, because of its geography, is one of the most vulnerable.

Today, your government is taking an historic step to move us further in the right direction toward both clean energy and reducing climate change. I applaud the leadership of Prime Minister Vajpayee for affirming today that India will embrace specific national goals for energy efficiency and renewable energy. In so doing, India is exercising leadership for the entire world. It will clean the air; it will reduce greenhouse gas pollution and global warming; and it will be good for your economy.

As the world's leading producer of greenhouse gases today, the United States and the rest of the developed world have a special responsibility. With this historic agreement, our two nations will work hand in hand to help turn India's environmental goals into a reality that also supports your economic growth. There are a number of ways in which the U.S. will support these efforts.

First, through the U.S. Agency for International Development -- whose administrator is here today -- we are committing \$45 million to promote more efficient energy production and use in India, and \$50 million to promote clean energy throughout South Asia. Our Departments of Energy and Environmental Protection will resume their programs of technical assistance to India to develop cleaner air and cleaner water. We will make available \$200 million for clean energy projects through the Import-Export Bank. And we will take special steps to work with private enterprise to address these challenges.

I thank the United States Energy Association and the Confederation of Indian Industry for agreeing to work as partners to meet these goals.

All told, we believe this historic agreement will help to reduce air pollution, to diminish health risks, to fight global warming, to protect and preserve the natural beauty of India. And while we work to cooperate between our nations, we must also remember our obligations to realize the promise of the landmark Kyoto Protocol on climate change. For if we act wisely, this agreement can help both the developed and the developing nations to harness the power of the market to build a clean energy future. We must complete the work done in Kyoto so that the United States and other nations can ratify the protocol and it can enter into force.

Now, let me say that there are some people who don't believe anything can be done about global warming because they don't believe the economy can grow unless energy is used in the same way it has been used for 100 years in the industrialized countries. They do not believe that India can grow wealthy unless you put more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere by burning more oil and coal, in the same way the United States and Europe and Japan did.

And in the Industrial Age that might have been true, but that is no longer true. Many members of our delegation today rode over here in electric buses that you use here to keep from promoting air pollution. In no time at all we will have electric vehicles or vehicles that use fuel from farm products, or from simple grasses that will not pollute the atmosphere. In no time at all we will be using solar power wherever it is feasible. We will be building buildings with materials that keep heat and cold out and are far more efficient.

We can, in short, do something today that could not be done 50 years ago. We can promote more economic growth in India by using less energy and keeping the environment cleaner. In other words, the economic conditions today are precisely the reverse of what they were 50 years ago.

The United States will never ask India or any other developing nation to give up its economic growth in order to reduce pollution. But we do ask you to give us a chance to work with your scientists to prove that you can achieve

## Remarks by the President at the Vaccine Event, Mahavir Trust Hospital

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Hyderabad, India)

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For Immediate Release March 24, 2000

### REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AT VACCINE EVENT

Mahavir Trust Hospital  
Hyderabad, India

11:30 A.M. (L)

**THE PRESIDENT:** Thank you very much. Good morning, Chief Minister Naidu. Thank you for welcoming me today to your state and to this magnificent city. Dr. Aruna, thank you for your remarks and for your work. Dr. Kolluri, to Ms. Rachel Chatterjee, the Minister of Health and the other ministers of the government that are here. To the staff of the Mahavir Trust Hospital. I thank you all for your dedication and for making me and our American delegation so welcome.

I am honored to be joined today by my daughter, by the American Ambassador to India, Mr. Celeste, and his wife, Jacqueline Lundquist; by the Secretary of Commerce Bill Daley, and the Administrator of our Agency for International Development Brady Anderson; and by six distinguished members of our Congress – Congressman Gary Ackerman and Representative Nita Lowey from New York; Congressman Jim McDermott from Washington; Congressman Ed Royce from California; Congressman Sheila Jackson Lee from Texas; and Representative Jan Schakowsky from Illinois. We are delighted to be here and we are very interested in what you are doing and impressed. And we thank you. (Applause.)

We come today to celebrate a success story and to join with you in meeting a new challenge. As Dr. Aruna said, the success story is the virtual complete eradication of polio from the face of the Earth. In 1987, India reported 27,000 cases of this crippling disease. Today only 1,000 Indians are afflicted, and as you have just heard, there are no reported new cases this year.

India has collaborated in this effort with Rotary International, with the Gates Foundation, with UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and with the U.S. Agency for International Development, or AID.

I would like to say just a special word of appreciation to our Agency for International Development. It has meant a great deal to America's partnership on a very human level with people all across the world and especially here in India. It has guided our efforts to fight diseases that threaten children; to launch the Green Revolution that helped India achieve self-sufficiency in agriculture and even more; to provide education, so that parents in India and throughout the world can determine the size of their families and keep their children in school; and to support great Indian universities, like IIT.

Now, we believe that USAID will be just as critical and just as active as India and the United States embark on a dynamic new partnership, as we face new challenges, like developing the sources of clean energy, bringing the Internet to rural India so all its children can reach out to the world.

So I'd like to say a special word of thanks today to our AID Administrator, Brady Anderson, and B.A. Rudolph and the other members of the AID team who are here. They are devoted to the cause of India and I thank them for their work. (Applause.)

I would also like to acknowledge, though, that on this polio eradication effort, the vast majority of the funding division and the work has come from India. And the whole world admires greatly what you have achieved.

Now, for the challenge. Today is World Tuberculosis Day. It marks the day the bacteria which causes TB was discovered 118 years ago. And, yet, even though this is 118-year-old knowledge, in the year 2000, TB kills more

people around the world than ever before, including one almost every minute here in India.

Malaria is also on the rise here and in Southeast Asia and in Africa. And while the AIDS infection rate here is still relatively low, India already has more people infected than any other nation in the world. These are human tragedies, economic calamities, and far more than crises for you, they are crises for the world.

The spread of disease is the one global problem for which, by definition, no nation is immune. So we must do for AIDS, for malaria, for TB what you have done for polio. We must strengthen prevention, speed research, develop vaccines and ultimately eliminate these modern plagues from the face of the Earth. It can be done -- you have proved it with polio -- if governments, foundations and the private sector work together.

With AIDS in particular, it also takes leadership. I want to commend Prime Minister Vajpayee for his efforts to focus India's attention on the urgency of this challenge. In every country and in any culture it is difficult to talk about the issues involved with AIDS. I know a lot about this because it's been a problem for a long time in America, and now it's a big problem for you. But I would submit to you it is much easier to talk about AIDS than to watch another child die. And we have to face up to our responsibilities for preventing this disease, especially because there is not yet a cure.

I am gratified that India is not waiting to act and I am proud that the United States is supporting your efforts here. I am happy to announce that we will contribute another \$4 million this year to programs to prevent AIDS and care for victims here in India, and another \$1 million for TB research. I also want to thank -- (applause) -- I want to thank the Gates Foundation and, in particular, Patty Stonesifer, because they are also announcing a number of new contributions today. No private foundation in America and, as far as I know, anywhere in the world has made remotely the commitment that the Gates Foundation has in the world struggle against infectious disease, and I thank them for that. (Applause.)

Earlier this year, I asked Congress to support a \$1-billion initiative to encourage the private sector to speed the development of vaccines for diseases that particularly affect the developing world -- malaria, TB and AIDS -- and then to take steps to make those vaccines affordable to the poorest people in the world who need them. I am going to work hard to obtain support for that initiative in Congress. And again, I thank the members of our Congress who are here from both parties for their interest and commitment to India and to the public health.

The fight against infectious disease should be a growing part of our partnership with you. Indians already are trailblazers in vaccine research. India pioneered treatments for TB being used today in America. Many of the problems we have talked about are present here in India, but the solutions can be found here, as well -- in the dedication of men and women like those who work in this clinic, and in the genius of your scientists, and in the elected officials and their commitment -- from Delhi, to Hyderabad, to countless towns and villages across this country.

Many years ago, India and the United States helped to launch the Green Revolution, which freed millions of people from the misery of hunger. If we can join forces on health, determined again to place science and the service of humanity, we can defeat these diseases; we can give our children the healthy and hopeful lives they deserve in this new century.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

## Speeches

Remarks by the President in Greeting to the People of Pakistan

Remarks by the President at the Business Reception

**Remarks by the President at the Vaccine Event, Mahavir Trust Hospital**

Remarks by the President to the Hyderabad Business Community

Remarks by the President in Discussion with Members of Panchayat

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Vice President

For Immediate Release  
Contact (202)456-7035

Sunday, May 3, 1998

VICE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT THE NATURAL GAS  
CONVERSION FACILITY

AL MAZA COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS CONVERSION STATION  
HELIOPOLIS, EGYPT  
May 3, 1998

Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to make just a few comments about this extraordinary program underway here in Cairo. I want to thank Minister Al Bamby of the Ministry of Petroleum and Minister Ebeid of the Ministry of Environmental Affairs, who made a presentation before our commission earlier today, and Governor Shahata the Governor of Cairo, the second event we've had a chance to be at today, and Chairman Al-Reedy of the NGVC and Frank Chapel, who showed us the ropes here. I also want to acknowledge Minister Yousef Boutros Ghali, who's been an important part of our Commission's work, and Ambassador Kurtzer and Brian Atwood of AID and other distinguished guests who are present.

I want to say just a word about how significant this is. You know, the number one air pollution problem in cities around the world is lead. And scientific studies have demonstrated conclusively that a high concentration of lead in the atmosphere is associated and correlates directly with intelligence levels in children. This is true in the United States. It's true in every nation in the world. And so nations with wise leadership, in response to these scientific studies, began to take measures to take lead out of the air, because mothers and fathers naturally want the healthiest future possible for their children. And Egypt has now taken some dramatic steps ahead of many, many countries. First, by switching from leaded gasoline to unleaded gasoline, and second by introducing alternative fuels for cars and taxis and busses such as compressed natural gas.

This subject of removing lead from gasoline and also stimulating the wider use of natural gas came up in our Binational Commission just two years ago. President Mubarak has impressed the world by putting in place with these two Ministers and with other members of his team an effort that has been stunningly successful. In only two years time the amount of lead breathed in by children in Cairo's air has dropped by 80 per cent. I don't know of any place in the world where there has been as much progress in such a short time.

Now, what we've seen here today is part of that success story, but it is also part of another success story. At the same time they're taking lead out of the air, this technology removes carbon monoxide and reduces the emission of greenhouse gases, principally carbon dioxide

and volatile hydrocarbons. That cuts down on the smog. It cuts down on pollution that hurts the lungs at the same time that it cuts down on lead emissions. As we heard from that taxi driver out there it also improves the level of economic efficiency and increases the profits for these taxi drivers, and increases the efficiency for public transportation. It's an economic boon for private automobile owners who make the conversion. It provides jobs, and we've seen here some of the jobs that it has provided, and since they have gone about this in a very careful way they've been able to expand the number of fueling stations in a manner that matches the expansion of their conversion capacity. They're certainly ahead of most cities in the United States, I'm chagrined to add, and I think the United States has a thing or two to learn from the way that Egypt has brought about this program. There are some cities in the United States that are also providing leadership and in Chattanooga Tennessee we've seen a great advance in public transportation using compressed natural gas, and we're about to see in Egypt a dramatic expansion of the bus program for compressed natural gas that will be an illustration again of the Egypt-U.S. partnership.

This is a success story that is good for both of our countries, good for the children and families not only in Cairo, but in several other cities in Egypt where this is now being used. And it's good for the rest of the world because other cities in the United States and in countries around the world that want to see a successful model for how to convert their vehicle fleets to alternative fuels will be able to come to Cairo and witness a successful blueprint they can copy, and, by following Egypt's example, clean up their own air and improve the economic fortunes of their people.

So I want to congratulate the leadership of this program. I want to especially again congratulate President Mubarak for taking the bold initiatives in a very short period of time to bring this all about, and I want to say to my friends and colleagues congratulations to you and thank you for showing us how to solve a difficult problem, and to start solving it in a very short period of time. Thank you very much.