

[Transcript]

THE COUNCIL FOR LATIN AMERICA, INC.

120 EAST 56TH STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022

PHONE: 421-0500

CABLE: COLATAM

March 8, 1967

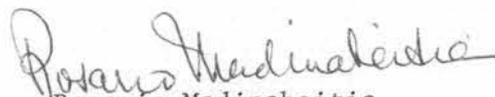
Miss Barbara Ramsey
Appointment Secretary
to the Vice President
Office of the Vice President
Washington, D. C.

Dear Miss Ramsey:

As per your request, I am enclosing the tape and two copies of the transcript of the speech edited for clarity of the Vice-President to the Board of Trustees of the Council for Latin America on March 6, 1967.

We are terribly sorry that we cannot include the remarks of Mr. Rockefeller introducing the Vice President, as it was not tape-recorded.

Sincerely,


Rosario Madinabeitia
Secretary to Mr. E. Hobbing

RM
Enclosures

Remarks by The Vice-President at the Trustees Meeting of the Council For Latin America. 12:30PM, March 6. F Club, Washington, D. C.

Mr. Rockefeller, my friend David and gentlemen:

First thing I would like to observe is that if a man ever had any revolutionary spirit when he arrived, it has been subdued by: first of all the refreshments, secondly by the luncheon and thirdly the company. So I come to you as a man of moderation.

Secondly I should like to observe that I well recall our visit of last year. I recollect it was in the so-called "Indian Treaty" room, I am pleased that you decided to move to more genial surroundings, because the Indian Treaty room to many people, particularly to our Indian people, has memories and recollections that are not always based upon equity and justice. When you come to the Friendship club or the F Street Club you are in the surroundings where you can be more judicious and much more equitable in anything you wish to observe. I also think that you'll enjoy much more being here than in those rather cold surroundings of the Executive Office Building. Besides, I am delighted to get away from the Executive Office Building. My idea of a big day is to be able to cross the street to the White House mess and have a 55¢ lunch. I'd like to observe I doubt they make any money from that but I want to thank the taxpayers for what you do for us.

I know that you've had a very rewarding and helpful morning

in your discussions. I know that you have visited with Secretary Rusk who has reported to you on the foreign ministers conference and preparation for the "Summit" conference. We are very fortunate to have Assistant Secretary Lincoln Gordon here with us today. I recollect a year ago how pleased you all were with his appointment as the Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs and your trust was not misplaced. May I say it was well placed. I must observe also that we are exceedingly fortunate to have a man from the business community and yet a man who is deeply involved by spirit and commitment in civic matters. Sol Linowitz has a very special role to serve in this government today as our Ambassador on Latin American relations with the OAS.

I think there is now a genuine spirit in all of our relationships in this Hemisphere...a spirit of goodwill as well as a spirit of prudence and good sense.

We also have with us today Bill Gaud and representatives of AID. Since I do have the floor I would like to take a moment to lobby you. It is a very prominent profession in this community and it is better paid than I am in most instances and not a bit more effective than I should be. Bill Gaud is to my mind one of the most outstanding administrators in this government. He has a most difficult assignment. I jokingly said to him if you had anything you are unhappy about just pass it on over to Bill Gaud. If you complain about the

government just give it to the AID program and let Bill handle it. When you specialize in misery we like to give a lot of it to that fellow. Whatever goes wrong around Washington you can always find that it is due to foreign aid or it is due to the way the AID program is administered.

I served 16 years in the Congress and I served 12 of those 16 years in the Committee on Foreign Relations. I always supported our foreign aid program because I felt that in the main it was a very desirable and a very much needed activity on the part of our government. During those years I saw many administrators. I listened to their testimonies and I helped handle bills on the floor of the Senate relating to foreign aid. I can tell you quite candidly that we have never had anyone that excels or does a better job than the man who is presently the AID Administrator but I can also tell that he has the most difficult assignment of any man in the government to get his program to that Congress.

This comes back to you. There isn't a single group in America that has a greater stake in a foreign aid program: Not only of our foreign aid program but of other countries than those who are in private enterprise. The business managers, the corporate directors, the financiers of our great American economic enterprise system of our free enterprise throughout the world. The AID program was designed primarily to help create conditions in which there can be stability; in which

there can be productivity, in which these energizing forces for free enterprise could have their day to make their impact. So when you leave here after your deliberations on Latin America and that is your prime purpose here, may I respectfully suggest that you evaluate AID in your own self interest; not only in the public interest. The public interest is quite obvious but in your own interest decide what you would have your government do with its many instrumentalities, both multilateral or multinational, and its own foreign aid program; and when you evaluate what this means to you, take your message to Congress.

The real problem with the foreign aid program is that the people who go there to testify for it are nice people. They are the kind people you love and they are the kind of people with whom many of you associate. They are people who are in charge of social work, who are in charge of the Big Brother program, or they are in charge of the Boy Scout program, or they are in charge of the League of Women Voters, or they are in charge of your favorite charity, or your religious group. They get about three minutes each to testify. The so-called non-governmental organizations are right there when the testimony goes in. We give them at a maximum five minutes to tell what they are doing, what they want to do and what could be done if they had a more effective program and a better program or at least what the Administration recommends. I can tell you quite frankly, in the lodge, that what we

recommend is bare bones. It isn't really what ought to be done. Don't you report that to the President, not a single one of you here. I have enough trouble already, but it is right down to the basic minimum.

But where are my friends of corporate industries, where are the people that represent the establishment which represent the power and strength of this nation? I'll tell you where you are. You are busy running your businesses and once in a while your association comes in and hands in a statement and a man testifies. But you individually have friends in that Congress and I want to warn you, and I want to encourage you rather than warn you, to talk to those friends in Congress because I was a Senator and I didn't care how many associations came down to talk.

But I guarantee you when certain people sat down to talk, I listened and I don't think that I am much different than any man in the Congress. So you look at this from the point of national interest and self interest and give us a helping hand.

Now a year ago I said to you that I didn't believe that our Hemispheric program and particularly the Alliance For Progress could be successful as a government program alone. I said to you then what I believe even so more now: Unless we can put

together this partnership of government and private enterprise we are going to fail in whatever we do. I doubt that you alone can handle the problems that confront you in your respective businesses or in your individual hopes or aspirations for your country and the world in which you live. I doubt that you alone can handle these problems in Latin America, Europe or any other place. But today I want to limit my remarks to Latin America.

I know as one who has been in the government for over 18 years that the government of the U. S. alone cannot do the job that needs to be done either; even if we have leadership beyond our fondest hopes and dreams, because the government of the U. S. does not incorporate all the resources of this country. The government of the U. S. is a part; an important part; but it is only a part of or a segment of the power of this nation and the wealth of this nation and the purpose of this nation. The government should have as its purpose and its immediate objective to set the scene to state the objectives, to outline the goals. Then the government should try to draw from the American economic and social structure, the resources to do the job. Leadership is not going it alone, even though at times that is necessary. Real leadership is when other people respond to your call, it is when you are sufficiently persuasive to get other people to join in a common effort to rally other forces. It is my view that in Latin America today as important as all the objectives are of Punta del

Este, the Charter of Punta del Este and the Alliance For Progress. That too much of this is talked about as a government program. It is understood too much on the American scene, as being a government program.

Now you and I know that at least ninety per cent of this effort must come from our Latin America neighbors themselves. Ten per cent is supposed to come from us governmentally. But the difference between success and failure is in this room or in a few others that might be added to the group. We can literally waste federal resources that you paid into the Treasury. In terms of our Alliance For Progress efforts or any other endeavor in foreign aid; we must buttress it with the injection of the resources, the managerial talent, the skill the technical competence and ability of the private sector or of our private enterprise. (I don't like that word "sector" very much -- just private enterprise...free enterprise...you men that represent it here, however you wish to describe it).

And that's why I believe as I said a year ago that you are not only important, you are essential. We either win or lose with you or without you. And when I say "we" I mean you, I mean myself, I mean our government, I mean really the free world.

Listen, we're playing for big stakes. Now, the fact of the matter is that the philosophy and the mode of economic conduct

that we seem to exemplify is gaining in this world today. There are a few die-hards left, but even behind the so-called Iron Curtain of which I spoke yesterday, which I think is becoming rather torn and tattered and will become a relic of the past some years ahead; even behind that Curtain, your philosophy, the one that you've lived by and grown by and profitted by and exemplified, is making its inroads. We're not becoming Communistic; the free world is not becoming Communistic. As a matter of fact, the movement is to the contrary. We're moving to the East. We're moving in terms of modifying and indeed adjusting and changing so-called socialistic and Communistic systems to where incentive and profit and motivation are becoming evermore evident and evermore important. So, I come back to you to tell you that I haven't changed, and I don't think my Government has changed.

We can tell you now, that in any problem that this country now faces, whether it is in remodelling our cities, dealing with pollution, air or water, transportation, or foreign aid, that we now know that a working, trustworthy partnership between the public and the private forces must become a fact. We can't do it individually; it's too big for any of us; we have to do it together. And this is why I say here that we ought to do this together even in the planning stages; not after the government has announced something; but before the announcement. Not only on the so-called crash landings, but

on the preparations for the take-off and the take-off. That's why I think that this meeting of the Latin American Council is so important for the Summit Conference that will take place now in just a few weeks. Because even now as you deliberate and as you are here with the Secretary of State and his officers and with the Director of AID and with other representatives of this Government, you have a chance for your input.

I know that we've agreed on the topics at the recent Foreign Ministers Conference. But having been in public life a long time I know that topics are just a convenient platform for a much broader discussion. I gather that some of you may have asked somewhere along in the day "Will the whole subject of private enterprise and its role in life in America be brought into these discussions?" Well, it isn't on the agenda, but I venture to say that no one can discuss what's going to happen between the United States of America in North America and what's going to happen in Central and South America without talking about the free force that really counts. That's private enterprise. Otherwise, you're just making the wrong trip for the wrong purpose.

So, you're here at the right time. What you want to do during this time is to outline specific suggestions that are worthy of the most important men in this Hemisphere. Specific sug-

gestions that can be discussed in a frank and open manner because more important than anything else today what we need between governments and people, is frank dialogue... cut down the make believe and get down to the subject matters that need to be talked about. Don't expect miracles. You didn't build your businesses overnight. We didn't build America overnight. We didn't create anything as if it were instant. There is one instant I'm for: instant tea and instant coffee because I am a man in a hurry. I learned a long time ago that there are no instant solutions to century old problems, but there are starts. What's important is to get starts. If you make your inputs right while you are here I think your meeting will be much more than just another Council meeting.

Now one other observation I should like to make; we are not totally preoccupied with Vietnam. I spoke to you about this a year ago. Vietnam, of course is painful -- is troublesome. I spent two hours this morning discussing the aspects of the "other war" in Vietnam which you don't hear about. What's happening economically, politically, in pacification, in development, which don't get a headline. What's happening in terms of the opening of the roads, the pushing back of the Vietcong, the destroying of their bases and the rehabilitation of the area that they have controlled for years -- you don't ever read about that; just as the other day I noticed there was a headline in practically every paper where

a certain college newspaper called for the impeachment of the President of the United States. They had a split vote on the editorial board five to three, the five demanded his impeachment as a war criminal. Of course a little bit later 6,029 students signed a petition supporting the President of the U. S. That appeared in Saturday's papers and it got only one inch, one column in the second section page 8 in a local newspaper here. But that's par for the course. We are somewhat accustomed to this. The things that are important are not the most flashy. They are not necessarily the most headline-grabbing items.

Now in Vietnam we have a commitment and we are going to keep it. Don't you worry about it. I think we know what we are doing. When you are in trouble and you face many difficulties, generally it is pretty important to just stay with it, to have perseverance and patience, determination, courage, and a sense of resolute purpose and not always try to figure out if there is a new way or a new angle. I don't happen to think that a new way or new angles always pay off. I think you always ought to be open minded, but not empty headed. There is a great deal of difference. We have the resources in this country to do what we need to do. And what we need to do at this particular moment is to have our interests not only concentrated in one area of the world, but in a broader perspective.

We have been engaged in this matter in Latin America for a long time. You've been at it, some of you, for many years. And we are now at a turning point. I really think that this meeting of the Foreign Ministers and the upcoming meeting of the Presidents and the Heads of State represents a whole new era -- a whole new period in development in this hemisphere. Why? Well first of all because the Alliance has worked, that's number one. It is not a failure, it has worked. Number 2, the heads of government are no longer just going through the motions of wanting meetings, but they realize their importance. Number 3, governments are beginning to understand and business people within the economies are beginning to understand that markets cannot be developed in little old patchwork gardens or in small little geographic areas. They have to broaden it out. The lessons of regionalism, the lessons of economic integration -- these lessons are beginning to penetrate the thinking minds of this hemisphere. And they need your help.

There are some brave people in Latin America now. And there are some hard headed reactionaries too. Those who do not want to change. Those who want to live behind their walls of protectionism -- those who want to continue their old inefficient business practices, and they are going to do everything they can to thwart economic integration. Now economic integration is no instant solution either. It isn't going to happen instantly. But it isn't going to

happen at all unless you're for it. And it isn't going to happen at all unless this government is for it. And therefore it is imperative that if we want to have a much more viable, stable, productive hemisphere -- if we want a Central and South America that can contribute something to the economic development of this hemisphere rather than just to be a welfare client -- that we promote economic integration. And your foreign ministers have put this high on the agenda for the summit conference.

It is also important that we have multi-national projects to build the infrastructure. You and I know what that means. The communications, telecommunications, roads, ports, railroads, highways -- a host of things. Your government along with others has agreed to put that on the agenda. It is very important that the Inter American Development Bank funds these special projects. The resources to do the job -- to promote hemispheric development -- that's also on the agenda. Now I don't know what the price tags are on all these things, but I'll tell you this, I have a feeling that the price tags for everything we're talking about will be less than one tenth of one year in Vietnam. And I don't put that as an "either - or" because I think what we're doing in Vietnam is essential. It costs us almost 25 billion dollars a year, gentlemen, to stay in Vietnam. It will cost a lot less than even one tenth to do what I am talking about in this hemisphere.

Now we've checked Mr. Castro and his kind. He is sealed off, sort of like an abcess or should I put it scar tissue. I have looked at a few X-rays in my life, and most of us have a bit of scar tissue on the lung or somewhere else, and the main thing to do is to see that the scar tissue doesn't spread. Mr. Castro is off there by himself, sealed off and isolated. One of the sure ways that we can make sure that that scar tissue withers and never spreads is to make sure that the healthy tissue that is still remaining stays healthy and is strengthened. That's where we come in with what the summit conference is about -- what it means. Now your government is committed to the Summit conference. Your President is committed to it. I think I can speak about this quite candidly to you. Between Mr. Gordon, Mr. Linowitz, Mr. Gaud and Dean Rusk, I believe that the President of the U. S. has four advisers that have filled him with enthusiasm for this conference. And I shall let you in on a little trade secret. I think that when the Secretary of State went to the conference of foreign ministers, he had every reason to believe that this was another conference which he hoped would work out. But when he came back, he was like Billy Graham. He was filled with deep evangelical fervor. Not because he thought it was going to produce miracles, but because he found there, men who wanted something to happen. What is important now is that you let the world know that you want something to happen. The Congress needs to know that you want something to happen.

We're going to present a resolution one of these days at the Congress about the commitments that will be made at the summit conference. There are some Presidents who feel it is just fine to go to these meetings and just make a promise and just say I'll do this or I'll do that. But even the best of Presidents under the present system only gets two terms. What is more important is that the people's representatives, duly elected, who represent you in the Congress of the United States get on board too. I don't think there will be much trouble about this if you want it. The fact of the matter is that we get funds and resources for the Alliance For Progress. The fact of the matter is that if we are not careful that is about all we'll get, and my friend Bill Gaud knows about that. We can get funds for the Alliance because there is still a strong feeling in the Congress and in this country that we have a special obligation and a special responsibility in this Hemisphere. But don't rely on that romanticism too much. I've gone through a bit of that myself. I have political friends that love me up to a point, and I've been in a few elections when the point was on the day they walked into the election booth.

So don't depend on it too much. This is one of the reasons that those of us who've been in this work understand that it is imperative that we be on board this great adventure and enterprise of building this Hemisphere -- of improving this economic development of this Hemisphere -- of setting the

framework of economic integration -- of providing some of the materials that will absorb the shock of economic integration and all that is involved in this Summit conference. We happen to believe that it is important that the Congress be aboard. So a resolution will be presented somewhere along the line. It will have a dozen "whereases" -- which is more or less like reciting certain passages of Scriptures, just when you are ready to take the vows. Then it will come to that part where it says: "Be it therefore resolved that --" That's where we need you. I can write all the "whereases", we don't really need you for that. But when it comes to the "be it resolved" part, that's where we are going to need you. That resolve is either going to have a figure in it and I am not at liberty to say what it is because I don't think we fully decided what it is as yet -- but we have a fairly good idea and it isn't very much -- but whether that figure is in it or not there will be a resolve section that outlines what we hope to see done and we want to commit this country to: to the broad purposes of regional development and economic integration -- to special projects over and above what we are presently doing in the Alliance For Progress on a multi-national basis -- to special emphasis on education and agriculture. Without these two elements being much improved in Latin America your money will go down the drain.

It is at that point where we are going to need you. All I

want to tell you gentlemen that there is no better way in the world to get a job done than for you to make it your personal business to get it done. I can look around this room and I can give you the Senators and the Congressman that you need to see. I've been the majority whip at the Senate. I know a little bit about running that place and I'll tell you that to be the majority whip means to be the father-confessor, the psychiatrist, the psychologist, the pusher, the arm twister, the back breaker. That was my job. I had to know the mood of every Senator, every day; whether he had a fight with his wife, or whether his kid was a high school dropout or when something went wrong. You had to know all those things. I don't want to ask you to know that much. I only ask you to do one thing: to let these Congressmen and Senators know this is important to you, not just to your business but to your judgement. They respect you, you have contacts, they need you plus respecting you. More important -- when you go back home in your own circles, you can also build that support. The press needs to hear from you. Not about secret meetings. Let them hear from you. Let's not have all the news come out of the Pentagon and the State Department, and the White House. Let some of it come out of your business houses, and out of you as individual civic leaders. Let's build a body of information and a body of public relations in this country that moves this thing along. Let's not depend on the President of the United

States alone to make the Summit Conference a success. Let's depend on ourselves so the news media, the Congress as a group, ~~you~~ will pay attention to you.

Some of you are members of different types of federations and associations. Talk it up. There is always somebody talking there, you might just as well do a little bit of it yourselves. Enlist their help, enlist their support. I guess this is what it takes to make a democracy work. I think we have really failed on occasion, not because we didn't have the resources, but because we never tapped them. I think at times we have done a halfway job, because we never intended to do a full job. We have never put ourselves to the test. When we get ready to do it, we get it done.

I suppose we always end up by reciting that when we wanted the Marshall Plan to work we did it. I'll tell you why it worked. There is a secret there that we never ought to forget. First of all, you wanted it to work, you and ten thousand like you. The Congress wanted it to work, our dearly beloved friend Christian Herter, now deceased, wanted it to work. He was a Congressman from Massachusetts. He was the Chairman of a Committee that went out and explored the possibilities of a Marshall Plan. Before it was ever passed the voters heard about it. The President wanted it to work. The administration wanted it. And you went out, hundreds of businessmen like you...I heard your speeches when I was Mayor of Minneapolis...

people came out there from the business community and from the government literally whipping us into an emotional fervor over the importance of the Marshall Plan. Well now the Marshall Plan was important -- and it worked. Quite candidly in this time frame, in this the last third of the 20th Century, we don't have to worry any longer about the Marshall Plan. You can put that one up as a success story. Get yourself a special cup and put it on the mantel and say: "I helped win that one."

The next one is whether or not the Hemispheric program works... is whether or not this Hemisphere can have the kind of success that the European Marshall Plan turned out to be.

Well David that's about my message. I had a lot of notes here I was going to look at. I always do that as a kind of a prop. It's a sign of personal insecurity. Imagine what would have happened to this speech if I had looked at those notes. Even without notes I talked this long. If there's anything I can do here to be of any help to any of you in your endeavors, if there are any questions that you may have, that you feel that the Vice President might at least lend some words to, feel free to ask for them. I thank you very much.



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org