

Speech before the 28th annual Nisei VFW reunion (not delivered)

Senator Spark M. Matsunaga Papers

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THE PANAMA TREATIES: TO RATIFY OR NOT TO RATIFY
SPEECH BY THE HONORABLE SPARK M. MATSUNAGA
BEFORE THE 28TH ANNUAL NISEI V.F.W. REUNION
SAN JOSE NISEI MEMORIAL POST 9970
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1978

JUDGE KANEMOTO, COMMANDER OKAMURA, FELLOW VETERANS, LADIES
AND GENTLEMEN, ALOHA!

I FEEL VERY PRIVILEGED TO BE WITH YOU TONIGHT. THIS POST IS
NOTED, BACK IN V.F.W. HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON, FOR ITS
PARTICIPATION IN THE VOICE OF DEMOCRACY PROGRAM, FOR ITS MOST ACTIVE
INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC ACTIVITIES AND OF COURSE FOR ITS
CONCERN FOR VETERANS. I AM PROUD TO BE INVITED TO SPEAK TO AN
ORGANIZATION SUCH AS THIS FOR I HAVE ALWAYS MAINTAINED A HIGH RESPECT
FOR THE MAN WHO HAS SERVED IN THE UNITED STATES MILITARY UNIFORM. HE,
MORE THAN ANY OTHER, SYMBOLIZES OUR WILLINGNESS TO DEFEND OUR PRICELESS
HERITAGE.

THERE ARE MANY ASPECTS TO OUR HERITAGE, AND THE DEFENSE OF
THIS HERITAGE IS A CONTINUING OBLIGATION FOR ALL OF US WHO ENJOY THE
LIFE OF FREEDOM AND OPPORTUNITY THAT IS A PART OF OUR GREAT HERITAGE.

AFTER FOURTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, I COME BEFORE YOU TONIGHT AS ONE WHO HAS HAD THE GREAT PRIVILEGE OF SERVING HIS FIRST YEAR IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE.

THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO LEGISLATIVE BODIES. IN THE AREA OF FOREIGN POLICY, FOR EXAMPLE, THE NAMES OF THE TWO COMMITTEES ARE DIFFERENT. UNTIL THE RECENT REORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE, ITS COMMITTEE WAS ALWAYS CALLED THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WHILE IN THE SENATE, ITS COMMITTEE HAS ALWAYS BEEN CALLED THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS. SOMEBODY ONCE ASKED ALBEN BARKLEY, WHO WAS VICE PRESIDENT UNDER HARRY TRUMAN, WHY THIS WAS SO. BARKLEY'S RESPONSE WAS THAT MOST HOUSE MEMBERS ARE YOUNGER, SO THEY CAN HAVE AFFAIRS; BUT BY THE TIME THEY GET TO THE SENATE, THEY'RE ONLY CAPABLE OF HAVING RELATIONS.

TONIGHT I WANT TO TALK ABOUT AN IMPORTANT FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEM -- THE PANAMA CANAL TREATIES: TO RATIFY OR NOT TO RATIFY.

AS YOU KNOW, THE TREATIES HAVE ALREADY BEEN SIGNED BY THE HEADS OF STATE OF BOTH PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES. THEY HAVE BEEN

RATIFIED BY A 67 PERCENT MAJORITY VOTE OF THE PEOPLE OF PANAMA, BUT THEY MUST BE RATIFIED BY A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY VOTE OF THE U.S. SENATE BEFORE BECOMING LAW.

I SUPPORT THE TREATIES AND INTEND TO VOTE FOR THEIR RATIFICATION. I THINK IT WOULD BE DISASTROUS FOR BOTH PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES IF THE SENATE DID NOT RATIFY, AND I'LL TELL YOU WHY.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, WE MUST BEAR IN MIND THAT THE CANAL IS WORTHLESS UNLESS IT CAN BE KEPT IN OPERATION AND WE ARE ABLE TO USE IT. THE QUESTION THEN ARISES: IN THE EVENT THAT THE U.S. SENATE REJECTS THE TREATIES AND HOSTILITIES BETWEEN PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES SHOULD ENSUE, COULD WE ADEQUATELY DEFEND THE CANAL AND KEEP IT IN USE?

IN SEARCH OF AN ANSWER, I WENT TO PANAMA THREE MONTHS AGO WITH THE SENATE MAJORITY LEADER, ROBERT BYRD, AND FIVE OTHER SENATORS. WHILE I WAS THERE, I INSPECTED THE CANAL...I TOOK A HELICOPTER TOUR OF THE CANAL ZONE...AND I VISITED A REMOTE ISLAND PROVINCE OF PANAMA. I TALKED WITH AMERICANS WHO LIVE IN THE CANAL ZONE AND WHO LIVE IN PANAMA PROPER...WITH AMERICAN MILITARY AND BUSINESS LEADERS...AND WITH

PANAMANIAN LEADERS, INCLUDING GENERAL TORRIJOS AND PRESIDENT LAKAS, AND WITH PANAMANIAN WHO VOTED FOR AND AGAINST THE TREATIES IN THEIR RECENT PLEBISCITE.

MY FIRST-HAND OBSERVATION OF THE SITUATION IN PANAMA CONVINCED ME THAT GENERAL GEORGE BROWN, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT OF CHIEFS OF STAFF, WAS RIGHT WHEN HE SAID THAT IN THE EVENT OF HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA, HE COULDN'T ADEQUATELY DEFEND THE CANAL TO KEEP IT IN USE, EVEN IF HE WERE GIVEN A HUNDRED THOUSAND TROOPS TO DO IT. GENERAL BROWN, OF COURSE, WAS SPEAKING IN THE REALISTIC EXPECTATION OF GUERRILLA TYPE HOSTILITIES.

AS A FORMER INFANTRY OFFICER, WHILE HELICOPTING OVER THE CANAL AND VIEWING THE DENSE TROPICAL JUNGLE EXTENDING FOR MILES, RIGHT UP TO THE CANAL ON BOTH SIDES, I CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT ANY DETERMINED BAND OF GUERRILLAS COULD KEEP THE CANAL COMPLETELY SHUT DOWN OVER EXTENDED PERIODS OF TIME AND RENDER IT USELESS IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY.

EVERY SENATOR ON THE SAME TRIP AGREED WITH ME THAT THE OPERATION OF THE CANAL WOULD BE INDEFENSIBLE IN THE EVENT OF

HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE U.S. AND PANAMA. THE MAN-MADE FRESHWATER LAKES THAT SUPPLY THE CANAL'S WATER, THE COMPLEX LOCK SYSTEM, AND ITS ELECTRIC POWER ARE JUST TOO VULNERABLE.

A SINGLE BREACH IN THE LAKE GATUN DAM, THE CANAL'S MAJOR WATER SOURCE, WOULD CLOSE DOWN THE CANAL FOR AS LONG AS TWO YEARS, WHILE RAINFALL COLLECTS TO REFILL THE LAKE. THE SINKING OF A SHIP IN THE LOCK SYSTEM -- WHICH WOULD BE TECHNICALLY EASY TO ACCOMPLISH -- WOULD BRING CANAL OPERATIONS TO A HALT FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME.

WE ARE LIVING IN A WORLD WHERE TERRORISM RUNS RAMPANT. AND IT WON'T TAKE MUCH TERRORISM TO CLOSE THE PANAMA CANAL. SHIPOWNERS THEMSELVES WOULD REFUSE TO SAIL THEIR SHIPS THROUGH THE CANAL SO LONG AS A REAL THREAT TO THEIR SAFETY PERSISTS.

THE NEW TREATIES ARE THE BEST GUARANTEE -- IN FACT, THE ONLY GUARANTEE -- WE HAVE TO AVOID HOSTILITIES AND TO KEEP THE CANAL OPEN FOR OUR UNOBSTRUCTED USE.

EVERY BUSINESSMAN IN HAWAII SHOULD BE AWARE OF HOW THE CLOSING OF THE PANAMA CANAL COULD CRIPPLE U.S. TRADE.

BECAUSE BIGGER NEW SHIPS CAN'T FIT INTO THE CANAL, THE CANAL IS BECOMING LESS CRUCIAL TO OUR TRADE AS TIME GOES ON. BUT 16% OF AMERICAN TRADE STILL GOES THROUGH THE CANAL. IN 1976, MORE THAN 123,212,000 LONG TONS OF U.S. CARGO WAS SHIPPED THROUGH THE CANAL.

THE CANAL IS ALSO VERY IMPORTANT FOR BUSINESS IN THE STATE OF HAWAII, ALTHOUGH IT IS BECOMING LESS SO EVERY YEAR. SIXTEEN YEARS AGO, 10% OF OUR TRADE WENT THROUGH THE CANAL. IN 1976, THIS FIGURE HAD DROPPED DOWN TO 4.3%, OR 729,000 LONG TONS OF CARGO GOING THROUGH THE CANAL. SOME OF YOU MAY BE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT A TOTAL OF 16.7 MILLION LONG TONS WENT THROUGH HAWAII'S HARBORS LAST YEAR.

AMERICA NEEDS TO USE THE CANAL. AND THERE'S EVERY REASON TO EXPECT THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE USING IT -- IF WE RATIFY THE TREATIES.

THERE IS A FURTHER NEED FOR RATIFICATION OF THE TREATIES. IT WOULD SET RIGHT AN UGLY CHAPTER IN AMERICAN HISTORY. LET ME EXPLAIN.

UP UNTIL 1903, PANAMA WAS A PROVINCE OF COLOMBIA. THE UNITED STATES HAD SOUGHT A TREATY TO CONSTRUCT THE CANAL WITH COLOMBIA, THE COUNTRY THAT OWNED THE LAND. THE TREATY WAS NEGOTIATED. BUT THE

COLOMBIAN SENATE REFUSED TO APPROVE IT.

A FRENCHMAN, PHILIPPE BUNAU-VARILLA (FEE-LEAP BŌO-NO VAR-ÉE-YA) WAS THE CHIEF ENGINEER FOR THE FRENCH COMPANY THAT HAD GONE BANKRUPT TRYING TO BUILD THE CANAL.

BUNAU-VARILLA, WHO WAS A GREAT ENTREPRENEUR, TALKED THE UNITED STATES INTO SPONSORING A PANAMANIAN REVOLUTION AGAINST COLOMBIA... IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RIGHT TO BUILD AND OPERATE THE CANAL.

BUNAU-VARILLA, THE FRENCHMAN, PLANNED THE REVOLUTION. HE WROTE THE ORIGINAL PANAMA CANAL TREATY OF 1903. AND HE SIGNED THE TREATY FOR PANAMA ON NOVEMBER 3, 1903, EVEN BEFORE THE OFFICIAL PANAMANIAN DELEGATION ARRIVED IN WASHINGTON TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS. WHAT IS EVEN MORE INCREDIBLE IS THAT NO PANAMANIAN HAD EVEN SEEN THE TREATY BEFORE IT WAS SIGNED BY THE FRENCHMAN AND PRESENTED TO THE UNITED STATES.

THEN-PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT TOOK CREDIT FOR THE REVOLUTION AND EXTENDED OFFICIAL AMERICAN RECOGNITION OF THE NEW STATE OF PANAMA WITHIN THREE DAYS AFTER THE REVOLUTION. THE HASTILY DRAWN TREATY WAS RATIFIED BY THE U.S. SENATE ON NOVEMBER 18, 1903, ONLY 15 DAYS AFTER THE REVOLUTION.

HERE'S WHAT BUNAU-VARILLA TOLD SECRETARY OF STATE HAY JUST

BEFORE THE TREATY WAS SIGNED: "FOR TWO YEARS YOU HAVE HAD DIFFICULTIES IN NEGOTIATING THE CANAL TREATY WITH THE COLOMBIANS. REMEMBER THAT (AT THAT TIME) THE PANAMANIANIANS WERE STILL COLOMBIANS. YOU HAVE NOW BEFORE YOU A FRENCHMAN . . DO IT NOW!"

SECRETARY OF STATE HAY SAID THE TREATY WAS "VASTLY ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE UNITED STATES, AND WE MUST CONFESS, NOT SO ADVANTAGEOUS TO PANAMA." BUNAU-VARILLA MADE ONE THING CERTAIN -- THAT INCLUDED IN THE NEW TREATY, JUST AS IT WAS IN THE PROPOSED TREATY REJECTED BY COLOMBIA, WAS A PROVISION FOR THE PAYMENT OF \$40,000,000 BY THE UNITED STATES TO THE FRENCH FOR EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS USED IN THE DIGGING OF THE CANAL BY THE FRENCH.

YOU CAN EASILY APPRECIATE WHY THE PANAMANIANIANS DIDN'T LIKE THE TREATY FROM THE VERY BEGINNING. IN 1936 AND 1955, THE PANAMANIANIANS PERSUADED THE UNITED STATES TO MAKE MINOR CHANGES IN THE TREATY. AND IN 1958, RIOTS BROKE OUT IN PANAMA WHEN NATIONALISTS ATTEMPTED TO RAISE THE PANAMANIAN FLAG OVER THE CANAL. SEVERAL PANAMANIANIANS WERE KILLED IN THAT INCIDENT.

IN 1963, IN AN EFFORT TO CALM THE SITUATION, WE BEGAN FLYING BOTH OUR FLAG AND THE PANAMANIAN FLAG OVER THE CANAL ZONE. BUT THERE

WERE MORE RIOTS. FINALLY, IN 1964, AFTER 23 PANAMANIAN AND 2 AMERICANS WERE KILLED, WE CONSENTED TO RENEGOTIATE THE TREATY. RENEGOTIATION TOOK THIRTEEN YEARS.

IN TRYING TO DECIDE WHETHER TO SUPPORT THE NEW TREATIES OR NOT, WE NEED TO TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE PANAMANIAN'S POINT OF VIEW. IN OUR DIALOGUE WITH THE PANAMANIAN LAST NOVEMBER, WE VISITING AMERICANS WERE TOLD THAT WHAT THEY WANT MOST IS TO REGAIN THEIR "NATIONAL DIGNITY". THEY ARE HURT BY THE FACT THAT A FOREIGN NATION HAS COMPLETE CONTROL OVER THEIR GREATEST NATIONAL RESOURCE AND PRIMARY MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION THROUGH THEIR COUNTRY.

THE UNITED STATES OPERATES THE CANAL AND CONTROLS A STRIP OF LAND TEN MILES WIDE THAT RUNS RIGHT ACROSS THE MIDDLE OF PANAMA. THE PANAMANIAN FEEL THAT ONLY WITH THE RETURN OF THE CANAL ZONE TO THEIR CONTROL WILL THEY BE ABLE TO FEEL PROUD OF THEIR COUNTRY.

THAT'S WHY THEY RIOTED IN 1959 AND 1964. THAT'S WHY THEY PUSHED SO HARD FOR RENEGOTIATION OF THE TREATY OF 1903. THAT'S WHY THEY SUPPORT THE NEW TREATIES OVERWHELMINGLY.

IN FACT, ALL OF LATIN AMERICA RESENTS THE OLD 1903 TREATY. RATIFYING THE NEW TREATIES WOULD BE A MAJOR STEP INDEED IN IMPROVING

OUR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN OUR OWN HEMISPHERE.

LET US NOW TAKE A BRIEF BUT CLOSE LOOK AT THE OBJECTIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN RAISED AGAINST THE TREATIES. I HAVE RESEARCHED THOSE OBJECTIONS -- PARTICULARLY AS VOICED BY THE TREATIES' LEADING OPPONENT, RONALD REAGAN AND HIS FOLLOWERS. HERE'S WHAT I'VE FOUND.

MR. REAGAN SAYS, "WE BOUGHT (THE CANAL) AND PAID FOR IT ... IT'S OURS ... JUST AS MUCH AS THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE AND ALASKA ARE OURS ...". HE CALLS THE CANAL "OUR SOVEREIGN TERRITORY".

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT WE DON'T OWN THE CANAL. WE NEVER DID. WE ARE ONLY LEASEHOLDERS, HIGHLY-PRIVILEGED AS WE MAY BE.

THE 1903 TREATY, UNDER WHICH WE CURRENTLY OPERATE, SAYS WE ARE GIVEN THE "USE" OF THE CANAL ZONE. IT DOESN'T SAY WE OWN IT. IT, IN FACT, STATES THAT "THE SOVEREIGNTY OF SUCH TERRITORY (IS) VESTED IN THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA". THE UNITED STATES IS ONLY GIVEN AUTHORITY AS "IF IT WERE THE SOVEREIGN". THE LANGUAGE OF THE 1903 TREATY MAKES IT UNMISTAKABLY CLEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES IS NOT THE SOVEREIGN; PANAMA IS.

FOR THE USE OF THE CANAL AND CANAL ZONE WE HAVE BEEN PAYING

AN ANNUAL RENTAL FEE TO PANAMA. UNTIL 1935, THE FEE WAS \$225,000 A YEAR. FOR SIXTEEN YEARS THEREAFTER WE PAID \$1.9 MILLION ANNUALLY. WE NOW PAY \$2.3 MILLION A YEAR.

EVIDENCE IN OTHER AREAS POINT TO OUR OWN RECOGNITION THAT WE DON'T OWN THE CANAL. FOR ONE THING, UNDER OUR FEDERAL CONSTITUTION, ANY PERSON BORN ON AMERICAN SOIL IS AUTOMATICALLY AN AMERICAN CITIZEN, REGARDLESS OF PARENTAGE. HOWEVER, A PERSON BORN OF NON-AMERICAN PARENTS WITHIN THE CANAL ZONE IS NOT A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES. AS I'M SURE YOU REMEMBER, WHEN HAWAII WAS A TERRITORY OF THE UNITED STATES, A PERSON BORN OF ALIEN PARENTS IN HAWAII AUTOMATICALLY BECAME A UNITED STATES CITIZEN.

FOR ANOTHER THING, THE CANAL ZONE'S PORTS ARE CONSIDERED FOREIGN PORTS FOR POSTAL MAIL PURPOSES. AND GOODS SHIPPED FROM THE UNITED STATES TO THE ZONE ARE CONSIDERED A PART OF FOREIGN TRADE.

MR. REAGAN AND HIS BELIEVERS ARE SAYING THE TREATIES PROPOSE A "GIVE AWAY" OF THE CANAL. WE CERTAINLY CAN'T GIVE AWAY WHAT'S NOT OURS!

MR. REAGAN AND HIS BELIEVERS CALL GENERAL TORRIJOS A

"TINHORN DICTATOR".

GENERAL TORRIJOS MAY BE A DICTATOR -- BUT HE IS NOT A STEREOTYPICAL DICTATOR. HE HAS THE FULL SUPPORT OF HIS PEOPLE. AND HE DOESN'T USE TERROR AND TORTURE TO GOVERN.

PANAMANIANIANS MAY NOT HAVE THE SAME CIVIL RIGHTS WE AMERICANS DO. BUT THEIR GOVERNMENT DOESN'T SYSTEMATICALLY DENY THEM THEIR RIGHTS.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO LOOK, NOT ONLY AT TORRIJOS' FAILINGS, BUT AT HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS ... NOT ONLY WHAT HE HASN'T DONE, BUT WHAT HE HAS DONE.

AS A "TINHORN DICTATOR", TORRIJOS HAS DONE EXCEEDINGLY WELL BY HIS PEOPLE. SINCE HE CAME TO POWER IN 1968, HE HAS DOUBLED THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS. HE HAS IMPROVED MARKETING FACILITIES FOR SMALL FARMERS, AND BUILT HYDROELECTRIC PLANTS. AND HE HAS INSTITUTIONALIZED A LOW-COST HOUSING PROGRAM FOR THE POOR IN BOTH URBAN AND RURAL AREAS.

AND HE PLANS TO DO MORE. AS PART OF THE TREATY AGREEMENTS, WE HAVE PROMISED \$50 MILLION IN FOREIGN MILITARY SALES CREDITS TO

PANAMA OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS. GENERAL TORRIJOS TOLD OUR DELEGATION OF SENATORS THAT HE DOESN'T PLAN TO SPEND THIS MONEY FOR WEAPONS. HE'LL USE IT TO SEND PROMISING YOUNG PANAMANIAN TO COLLEGE AND TO MAKE THEM BILINGUAL AND TRILINGUAL SO THEY CAN TAKE OVER THE COMPLEX OPERATIONS OF THE CANAL IN THE YEAR 2000. AND HE PLANS TO BUY HELICOPTERS AND TRAIN PILOTS IN EACH PROVINCE OF PANAMA TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY MEDICAL AID.

CRITICS OF THE TREATIES HAVE FLOATED THE RUMOR THAT GENERAL TORRIJOS IS A COMMUNIST AND THAT HE PLANS TO LEAD HIS COUNTRY TO COMMUNISM. THIS IS ANOTHER FEAR TACTIC. NO INTELLIGENT PERSON SHOULD BE TAKEN BY IT.

FIRST, IT IS IRRELEVANT. WE HAVE THE USE OF THE CANAL NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF GOVERNMENT PANAMA HAS.

SECOND, I SEE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ANY TRUTH TO THE RUMOR. WHEN I WAS IN PANAMA, I SPOKE TO A CROSS-SECTION OF AMERICANS AND PANAMANIAN. NONE OF THEM SERIOUSLY BELIEVED TORRIJOS IS A COMMUNIST.

DURING ONE OF OUR CONFERENCES, GENERAL TORRIJOS WAS ASKED

WHETHER HE MIGHT TURN THE CANAL OVER TO CUBA OR RUSSIA ONCE THE TREATIES WERE RATIFIED. HIS RESPONSE WAS THAT HE DIDN'T WANT TO SEE "PANAMANIAN WATERS INFESTED BY COMMUNIST SHARKS".

AT ANOTHER TIME, HE TOLD US HE HAD STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT THE ISSUE. "IF I TRIED TO LEAD MY PEOPLE INTO COMMUNISM", HE SAID, "THEY WOULD THROW ME OUT, AND IF, DESPITE MY POSITION ON THIS ISSUE, THE PEOPLE WOULD TAKE UP COMMUNISM, I WOULD LEAVE THIS COUNTRY!"

THE PRESIDENT OF PANAMA, TEXAS-EDUCATED DEMETRIO LAKAS, WHO TALKS AND ACTS LIKE A TEXAN, IS WELL-KNOWN FOR HIS ANTI-COMMUNIST POSITION. WHEN ASKED ABOUT TORRIJOS, HE SAID HE WAS SURE TORRIJOS WAS NOT A COMMUNIST AND HE'D BE WILLING TO STAKE HIS LIFE ON IT.

CONSIDER THIS FACT, TOO, THAT UNDER TORRIJOS' LEADERSHIP PANAMA HAS NOT EVEN RECOGNIZED THE SOVIET UNION OR RED CHINA. NO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS EXIST BETWEEN PANAMA AND THE TWO FOREMOST COMMUNIST NATIONS. IN THIS RESPECT, WE AMERICANS MAINTAIN A FRIENDLIER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNISTS THAN TORRIJOS DOES.

DESPITE THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE TREATIES, IT'S CLEAR TO ME

THAT THE PEOPLE OF PANAMA ARE FOND OF AMERICANS. AND THEY TEND TO FOLLOW OUR LEADERSHIP. IN FACT, MANY OF THEIR PRESENT LEADERS, INCLUDING PRESIDENT LAKAS AND GENERAL TORRIJOS HIMSELF, ARE AMERICAN EDUCATED.

HAVING SAID THIS ABOUT COMMUNISM AND THE PEOPLE'S LEANINGS IN PANAMA, I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO DANGER OF A COMMUNIST TAKEOVER. THERE IS.

I BELIEVE THAT A NEGATIVE VOTE BY THE SENATE ON THE TREATIES WOULD BE THE GREATEST POSSIBLE BOOST FOR COMMUNISM IN PANAMA. THE ENORMOUS FRUSTRATION THAT THE PANAMANIAN WOULD FEEL WOULD HELP THE COMMUNISTS CONVINCING THEM THAT THE UNITED STATES IS AN IMPERIALIST NATION, BENT ON EXPLOITING WEAKER NATIONS.

RIGHT NOW THE COMMUNISTS ARE THE ONLY ONES IN PANAMA WORKING AGAINST THE TREATIES. THEIR ONE ISSUE WILL DISAPPEAR WHEN THE TREATIES ARE RATIFIED. OUR VOTING DOWN THE TREATIES WOULD GIVE THE PANAMANIAN COMMUNISTS NEW LIFE.

ANOTHER ARGUMENT FREQUENTLY RAISED AGAINST THE TREATIES IS THE LACK OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN PANAMA. LET ME AGAIN POINT OUT THAT THIS IS

NOT REALLY RELEVANT TO THE TREATIES ... EXCEPT IN THE USE OF THE TREATIES TO WIN CONCESSIONS FROM TORRIJOS -- AND WE HAVE.

DURING OUR FINAL MEETING WITH TORRIJOS IN PANAMA, LAST NOVEMBER, HE COMMITTED HIMSELF TO REPEALING THE LAW THAT PERMITS DETENTION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS WITHOUT DUE PROCESS OF LAW. ONLY A FEW WEEKS LATER HE ANNOUNCED ITS REPEAL. HE ALSO PROMISED TO ALLOW MORE FREEDOM FOR THE PANAMANIAN PRESS. AND HE SAID HE WOULD ALLOW POLITICAL EXILES TO RETURN HOME AFTER THE TREATIES HAVE BEEN RATIFIED. I AM CONFIDENT HE WILL KEEP HIS PROMISES.

THESE ARE MAJOR CONCESSIONS. HE MADE THEM BECAUSE HE WANTS US TO APPROVE THE TREATIES. IN FACT, HE EVEN SAID HE WOULD BE WILLING TO RESIGN FROM HIS PRESENT LEADERSHIP POSITION IF SUCH ACTION WOULD HELP IN GETTING THE UNITED STATES SENATE TO RATIFY THE TREATIES.

DID YOU KNOW THAT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, THE ORGANIZATION THAT RECENTLY WON THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE FOR ITS HUMAN RIGHTS WORK, WAS NOT SUFFICIENTLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN PANAMA TO MOUNT AN EFFORT THERE? THERE WERE MORE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS IN OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. AND AMNESTY

INTERNATIONAL FOUND FEW PRISONER VIOLATIONS IN THEIR INVESTIGATION OF PANAMA.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DID FIND POLITICAL EXILE VIOLATIONS. BUT, AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, GENERAL TORRIJOS PROMISED SENATOR BYRD AND THE OTHER VISITING SENATORS THAT HE WOULD ALLOW THOSE EXILES TO RETURN TO PANAMA AFTER THE TREATIES HAVE BEEN RATIFIED.

ANOTHER CRITICISM LODGED AGAINST THE TREATIES IS THAT WE'LL BE PAYING THE PANAMANIAN MILLIONS OF AMERICAN TAXPAYERS' DOLLARS TO TAKE THE CANAL OFF OUR HANDS. IT'S JUST NOT SO.

THE CANAL TOLL RATES WILL BE INCREASED TO MAKE UP FOR THE ADDED PAYMENTS. OTHERWISE, WE WILL BE PAYING THE PANAMANIAN FOR THE MILITARY BASES WE MAINTAIN IN PANAMA -- JUST AS WE DO IN GREECE, SPAIN, TURKEY, AND THE PHILIPPINES. IN FACT, WE HAVEN'T PAID PANAMA A CENT FOR USE OF OUR MILITARY BASES THERE IN 74 YEARS.

WE WILL BE SETTING UP A PACKAGE OF LOANS, LOAN GUARANTEES, AND CREDITS FOR PANAMA. BUT MOST OF THESE WILL PROMOTE TRADE AND INVESTMENT BY AMERICAN COMPANIES THERE, AND THE LOANS WILL BE PAID BACK TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

THE ONE LEGITIMATE QUESTION THAT HAS COME UP SINCE THE CANAL TREATIES WERE SIGNED IS A MILITARY ONE: DOES THE UNITED STATES HAVE A RIGHT TO INTERVENE MILITARILY IF THE NEUTRALITY OF THE CANAL IS THREATENED? TO CLARIFY THE LANGUAGE OF ARTICLE IV OF THE NEUTRALITY TREATY, PRESIDENT CARTER AND GENERAL TORRIJOS AGREED TO A "STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING" THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL HAVE THAT RIGHT. ALSO, THE STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING ASSURES US THAT OUR SHIPS WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO "GO TO THE HEAD OF THE LINE" IN AN EMERGENCY.

TO SUM UP: THERE'S SOMETHING IN US AS A NATION THAT WANTS TO STAND UP AND SAY, "WE'VE HAD ENOUGH. LET'S SHOW THOSE PANAMANIAN WHO'S BOSS!"

WE WANT TO TAKE PRIDE IN OUR COUNTRY.

WE DON'T WANT TO FEEL THAT WE'RE BEING PUSHED AROUND AS WE WERE IN VIETNAM.

WE MAY NOT BE ECSTATIC OVER THESE TREATIES. BUT WE HAVE TWO CHOICES.

WE CAN EITHER RATIFY THE TREATIES, AND GUARANTEE OUR RIGHT TO USE THE CANAL, OR WE CAN VOTE THEM DOWN AND THEREBY VIRTUALLY GUARANTEE OPEN WARFARE IN THE CANAL ZONE AND THE SHUTTING DOWN OF THE

CANAL.

WE MAY NOT LIKE THE CHOICE BETWEEN THESE ALTERNATIVES. BUT THEY ARE THE ONLY ALTERNATIVES.

I DON'T SAY THE EXISTING TREATY OF 1903 ISN'T VALID. IT IS. BUT WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT COLONIALISM IS DEAD.

SINCE WE SIGNED THAT TREATY, MANY CHANGES HAVE OCCURED IN THE WORLD. WE MUST CHANGE WITH THE TIMES OR PAY THE CONSEQUENCES.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, WE NEED TO KEEP THE CANAL OPEN.

SECOND, WE NEED TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT HOW OTHER NATIONS SEE US. WE NEED TO BE ON GOOD TERMS WITH THE PEOPLE OF PANAMA. AND WE NEED TO GET GOING ON A NEW GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY IN LATIN AMERICA.

BUT IT'S ALSO IMPORTANT TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT HOW WE SEE OUR OWN SELVES.

THIS GREAT COUNTRY OF OURS WAS BORN OF A REVOLUTION FOR THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION. WE HAVE FOUGHT FOR OTHER PEOPLES' RIGHTS TO SELF-DETERMINATION. LET'S NOT DENY THAT RIGHT TO THE PANAMANIANIANS.

WE MUST TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE PANAMANIANIANS' YEARNING FOR SELF-DETERMINATION AND NATIONAL DIGNITY.

THAT KIND OF UNDERSTANDING IS THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY THAT WAS
ONCE DESCRIBED BY JUDGE LEARNED HAND AS FOLLOWS:

"THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY IS THE SPIRIT WHICH IS NOT TOO SURE
THAT IT IS RIGHT; THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY IS THE SPIRIT WHICH SEEKS TO
UNDERSTAND THE MIND OF OTHER MEN AND WOMEN; THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY
IS THE SPIRIT WHICH WEIGHS THEIR INTERESTS ALONGSIDE ITS OWN..."

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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AFTER FOURTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, I COME BEFORE YOU TONIGHT AS ONE WHO HAS HAD THE GREAT PRIVILEGE OF SERVING HIS FIRST YEAR IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE.

THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO LEGISLATIVE BODIES. IN THE AREA OF FOREIGN POLICY, FOR EXAMPLE, THE NAMES OF THE TWO COMMITTEES ARE DIFFERENT. UNTIL THE RECENT REORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE, ITS COMMITTEE WAS ALWAYS CALLED THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WHILE IN THE SENATE, ITS COMMITTEE HAS ALWAYS BEEN CALLED THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS. SOMEBODY ONCE ASKED ALBEN BARKLEY, WHO WAS VICE PRESIDENT UNDER HARRY TRUMAN, WHY THIS WAS SO. BARKLEY'S RESPONSE WAS THAT MOST HOUSE MEMBERS ARE YOUNGER, SO THEY CAN HAVE AFFAIRS; BUT BY THE TIME THEY GET TO THE SENATE, THEY'RE ONLY CAPABLE OF HAVING RELATIONS.

TONIGHT I WANT TO TALK ABOUT AN IMPORTANT FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEM -- THE PANAMA CANAL TREATIES: TO RATIFY OR NOT TO RATIFY.

AS YOU KNOW, THE TREATIES HAVE ALREADY BEEN SIGNED BY THE HEADS OF STATE OF BOTH PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES. THEY HAVE BEEN

RATIFIED BY A 67 PERCENT MAJORITY VOTE OF THE PEOPLE OF PANAMA, BUT THEY MUST BE RATIFIED BY A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY VOTE OF THE U.S. SENATE BEFORE BECOMING LAW.

I SUPPORT THE TREATIES AND INTEND TO VOTE FOR THEIR RATIFICATION. I THINK IT WOULD BE DISASTROUS FOR BOTH PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES IF THE SENATE DID NOT RATIFY, AND I'LL TELL YOU WHY.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, WE MUST BEAR IN MIND THAT THE CANAL IS WORTHLESS UNLESS IT CAN BE KEPT IN OPERATION AND WE ARE ABLE TO USE IT. THE QUESTION THEN ARISES: IN THE EVENT THAT THE U.S. SENATE REJECTS THE TREATIES AND HOSTILITIES BETWEEN PANAMA AND THE UNITED STATES SHOULD ENSUE, COULD WE ADEQUATELY DEFEND THE CANAL AND KEEP IT IN USE?

IN SEARCH OF AN ANSWER, I WENT TO PANAMA THREE MONTHS AGO WITH THE SENATE MAJORITY LEADER, ROBERT BYRD, AND FIVE OTHER SENATORS. WHILE I WAS THERE, I INSPECTED THE CANAL...I TOOK A HELICOPTER TOUR OF THE CANAL ZONE...AND I VISITED A REMOTE ISLAND PROVINCE OF PANAMA. I TALKED WITH AMERICANS WHO LIVE IN THE CANAL ZONE AND WHO LIVE IN PANAMA PROPER...WITH AMERICAN MILITARY AND BUSINESS LEADERS...AND WITH

PANAMANIAN LEADERS, INCLUDING GENERAL TORRIJOS AND PRESIDENT LAKAS, AND WITH PANAMANIAN WHO VOTED FOR AND AGAINST THE TREATIES IN THEIR RECENT PLEBISCITE.

MY FIRST-HAND OBSERVATION OF THE SITUATION IN PANAMA CONVINCED ME THAT GENERAL GEORGE BROWN, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT OF CHIEFS OF STAFF, WAS RIGHT WHEN HE SAID THAT IN THE EVENT OF HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA, HE COULDN'T ADEQUATELY DEFEND THE CANAL TO KEEP IT IN USE, EVEN IF HE WERE GIVEN A HUNDRED THOUSAND TROOPS TO DO IT. GENERAL BROWN, OF COURSE, WAS SPEAKING IN THE REALISTIC EXPECTATION OF GUERRILLA TYPE HOSTILITIES.

AS A FORMER INFANTRY OFFICER, WHILE HELICOPTING OVER THE CANAL AND VIEWING THE DENSE TROPICAL JUNGLE EXTENDING FOR MILES, RIGHT UP TO THE CANAL ON BOTH SIDES, I CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT ANY DETERMINED BAND OF GUERRILLAS COULD KEEP THE CANAL COMPLETELY SHUT DOWN OVER EXTENDED PERIODS OF TIME AND RENDER IT USELESS IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY.

EVERY SENATOR ON THE SAME TRIP AGREED WITH ME THAT THE OPERATION OF THE CANAL WOULD BE INDEFENSIBLE IN THE EVENT OF

HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE U.S. AND PANAMA. THE MAN-MADE FRESHWATER LAKES THAT SUPPLY THE CANAL'S WATER, THE COMPLEX LOCK SYSTEM, AND ITS ELECTRIC POWER ARE JUST TOO VULNERABLE.

A SINGLE BREACH IN THE LAKE GATUN DAM, THE CANAL'S MAJOR WATER SOURCE, WOULD CLOSE DOWN THE CANAL FOR AS LONG AS TWO YEARS, WHILE RAINFALL COLLECTS TO REFILL THE LAKE. THE SINKING OF A SHIP IN THE LOCK SYSTEM -- WHICH WOULD BE TECHNICALLY EASY TO ACCOMPLISH -- WOULD BRING CANAL OPERATIONS TO A HALT FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME.

WE ARE LIVING IN A WORLD WHERE TERRORISM RUNS RAMPANT. AND IT WON'T TAKE MUCH TERRORISM TO CLOSE THE PANAMA CANAL. SHIPOWNERS THEMSELVES WOULD REFUSE TO SAIL THEIR SHIPS THROUGH THE CANAL SO LONG AS A REAL THREAT TO THEIR SAFETY PERSISTS.

THE NEW TREATIES ARE THE BEST GUARANTEE -- IN FACT, THE ONLY GUARANTEE -- WE HAVE TO AVOID HOSTILITIES AND TO KEEP THE CANAL OPEN FOR OUR UNOBSTRUCTED USE.

EVERY BUSINESSMAN IN HAWAII SHOULD BE AWARE OF HOW THE CLOSING OF THE PANAMA CANAL COULD CRIPPLE U.S. TRADE.

BECAUSE BIGGER NEW SHIPS CAN'T FIT INTO THE CANAL, THE CANAL IS BECOMING LESS CRUCIAL TO OUR TRADE AS TIME GOES ON. BUT 16% OF AMERICAN TRADE STILL GOES THROUGH THE CANAL. IN 1976, MORE THAN 123,212,000 LONG TONS OF U.S. CARGO WAS SHIPPED THROUGH THE CANAL.

THE CANAL IS ALSO VERY IMPORTANT FOR BUSINESS IN THE STATE OF HAWAII, ALTHOUGH IT IS BECOMING LESS SO EVERY YEAR. SIXTEEN YEARS AGO, 10% OF OUR TRADE WENT THROUGH THE CANAL. IN 1976, THIS FIGURE HAD DROPPED DOWN TO 4.3%, OR 729,000 LONG TONS OF CARGO GOING THROUGH THE CANAL. SOME OF YOU MAY BE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT A TOTAL OF 16.7 MILLION LONG TONS WENT THROUGH HAWAII'S HARBORS LAST YEAR.

AMERICA NEEDS TO USE THE CANAL. AND THERE'S EVERY REASON TO EXPECT THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE USING IT -- IF WE RATIFY THE TREATIES.

THERE IS A FURTHER NEED FOR RATIFICATION OF THE TREATIES. IT WOULD SET RIGHT AN UGLY CHAPTER IN AMERICAN HISTORY. LET ME EXPLAIN.

UP UNTIL 1903, PANAMA WAS A PROVINCE OF COLOMBIA. THE UNITED STATES HAD SOUGHT A TREATY TO CONSTRUCT THE CANAL WITH COLOMBIA, THE COUNTRY THAT OWNED THE LAND. THE TREATY WAS NEGOTIATED. BUT THE

COLOMBIAN SENATE REFUSED TO APPROVE IT.

A FRENCHMAN, PHILIPPE BUNAU-VARILLA (FEE-LEAP BOO-NO VAR-EE-YA) WAS THE CHIEF ENGINEER FOR THE FRENCH COMPANY THAT HAD GONE BANKRUPT TRYING TO BUILD THE CANAL.

BUNAU-VARILLA, WHO WAS A GREAT ENTREPRENEUR, TALKED THE UNITED STATES INTO SPONSORING A PANAMANIAN REVOLUTION AGAINST COLOMBIA... IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RIGHT TO BUILD AND OPERATE THE CANAL.

BUNAU-VARILLA, THE FRENCHMAN, PLANNED THE REVOLUTION. HE WROTE THE ORIGINAL PANAMA CANAL TREATY OF 1903. AND HE SIGNED THE TREATY FOR PANAMA ON NOVEMBER 3, 1903, EVEN BEFORE THE OFFICIAL PANAMANIAN DELEGATION ARRIVED IN WASHINGTON TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS. WHAT IS EVEN MORE INCREDIBLE IS THAT NO PANAMANIAN HAD EVEN SEEN THE TREATY BEFORE IT WAS SIGNED BY THE FRENCHMAN AND PRESENTED TO THE UNITED STATES.

THEN-PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT TOOK CREDIT FOR THE REVOLUTION AND EXTENDED OFFICIAL AMERICAN RECOGNITION OF THE NEW STATE OF PANAMA WITHIN THREE DAYS AFTER THE REVOLUTION. THE HASTILY DRAWN TREATY WAS RATIFIED BY THE U.S. SENATE ON NOVEMBER 18, 1903, ONLY 15 DAYS AFTER THE REVOLUTION.

HERE'S WHAT BUNAU-VARILLA TOLD SECRETARY OF STATE HAY JUST

BEFORE THE TREATY WAS SIGNED: "FOR TWO YEARS YOU HAVE HAD DIFFICULTIES IN NEGOTIATING THE CANAL TREATY WITH THE COLOMBIANS. REMEMBER THAT (AT THAT TIME) THE PANAMANIANIANS WERE STILL COLOMBIANS. YOU HAVE NOW BEFORE YOU A FRENCHMAN .. DO IT NOW!"

SECRETARY OF STATE HAY SAID THE TREATY WAS "VASTLY ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE UNITED STATES, AND WE MUST CONFESS, NOT SO ADVANTAGEOUS TO PANAMA." BUNAU-VARILLA MADE ONE THING CERTAIN -- THAT INCLUDED IN THE NEW TREATY, JUST AS IT WAS IN THE PROPOSED TREATY REJECTED BY COLOMBIA, WAS A PROVISION FOR THE PAYMENT OF \$40,000,000 BY THE UNITED STATES TO THE FRENCH FOR EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS USED IN THE DIGGING OF THE CANAL BY THE FRENCH.

YOU CAN EASILY APPRECIATE WHY THE PANAMANIANIANS DIDN'T LIKE THE TREATY FROM THE VERY BEGINNING. IN 1936 AND 1955, THE PANAMANIANIANS PERSUADED THE UNITED STATES TO MAKE MINOR CHANGES IN THE TREATY. AND IN 1958, RIOTS BROKE OUT IN PANAMA WHEN NATIONALISTS ATTEMPTED TO RAISE THE PANAMANIAN FLAG OVER THE CANAL. SEVERAL PANAMANIANIANS WERE KILLED IN THAT INCIDENT.

IN 1963, IN AN EFFORT TO CALM THE SITUATION, WE BEGAN FLYING BOTH OUR FLAG AND THE PANAMANIAN FLAG OVER THE CANAL ZONE. BUT THERE

WERE MORE RIOTS. FINALLY, IN 1964, AFTER 23 PANAMANIAN AND 2 AMERICANS WERE KILLED, WE CONSENTED TO RENEGOTIATE THE TREATY. RENEGOTIATION TOOK THIRTEEN YEARS.

IN TRYING TO DECIDE WHETHER TO SUPPORT THE NEW TREATIES OR NOT, WE NEED TO TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE PANAMANIAN'S POINT OF VIEW. IN OUR DIALOGUE WITH THE PANAMANIAN LAST NOVEMBER, WE VISITING AMERICANS WERE TOLD THAT WHAT THEY WANT MOST IS TO REGAIN THEIR "NATIONAL DIGNITY". THEY ARE HURT BY THE FACT THAT A FOREIGN NATION HAS COMPLETE CONTROL OVER THEIR GREATEST NATIONAL RESOURCE AND PRIMARY MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION THROUGH THEIR COUNTRY.

THE UNITED STATES OPERATES THE CANAL AND CONTROLS A STRIP OF LAND TEN MILES WIDE THAT RUNS RIGHT ACROSS THE MIDDLE OF PANAMA. THE PANAMANIAN FEEL THAT ONLY WITH THE RETURN OF THE CANAL ZONE TO THEIR CONTROL WILL THEY BE ABLE TO FEEL PROUD OF THEIR COUNTRY.

THAT'S WHY THEY RIOTED IN 1959 AND 1964. THAT'S WHY THEY PUSHED SO HARD FOR RENEGOTIATION OF THE TREATY OF 1903. THAT'S WHY THEY SUPPORT THE NEW TREATIES OVERWHELMINGLY.

IN FACT, ALL OF LATIN AMERICA RESENTS THE OLD 1903 TREATY. RATIFYING THE NEW TREATIES WOULD BE A MAJOR STEP INDEED IN IMPROVING

OUR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN OUR OWN HEMISPHERE.

LET US NOW TAKE A BRIEF BUT CLOSE LOOK AT THE OBJECTIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN RAISED AGAINST THE TREATIES. I HAVE RESEARCHED THOSE OBJECTIONS -- PARTICULARLY AS VOICED BY THE TREATIES' LEADING OPPONENT, RONALD REAGAN AND HIS FOLLOWERS. HERE'S WHAT I'VE FOUND.

MR. REAGAN SAYS, "WE BOUGHT (THE CANAL) AND PAID FOR IT ... IT'S OURS ... JUST AS MUCH AS THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE AND ALASKA ARE OURS ...". HE CALLS THE CANAL "OUR SOVEREIGN TERRITORY".

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS THAT WE DON'T OWN THE CANAL. WE NEVER DID. WE ARE ONLY LEASEHOLDERS, HIGHLY-PRIVILEGED AS WE MAY BE.

THE 1903 TREATY, UNDER WHICH WE CURRENTLY OPERATE, SAYS WE ARE GIVEN THE "USE" OF THE CANAL ZONE. IT DOESN'T SAY WE OWN IT. IT, IN FACT, STATES THAT "THE SOVEREIGNTY OF SUCH TERRITORY (IS) VESTED IN THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA". THE UNITED STATES IS ONLY GIVEN AUTHORITY AS "IF IT WERE THE SOVEREIGN". THE LANGUAGE OF THE 1903 TREATY MAKES IT UNMISTAKABLY CLEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES IS NOT THE SOVEREIGN; PANAMA IS.

FOR THE USE OF THE CANAL AND CANAL ZONE WE HAVE BEEN PAYING

AN ANNUAL RENTAL FEE TO PANAMA. UNTIL 1935, THE FEE WAS \$225,000 A YEAR. FOR SIXTEEN YEARS THEREAFTER WE PAID \$1.9 MILLION ANNUALLY. WE NOW PAY \$2.3 MILLION A YEAR.

EVIDENCE IN OTHER AREAS POINT TO OUR OWN RECOGNITION THAT WE DON'T OWN THE CANAL. FOR ONE THING, UNDER OUR FEDERAL CONSTITUTION, ANY PERSON BORN ON AMERICAN SOIL IS AUTOMATICALLY AN AMERICAN CITIZEN, REGARDLESS OF PARENTAGE. HOWEVER, A PERSON BORN OF NON-AMERICAN PARENTS WITHIN THE CANAL ZONE IS NOT A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES. AS I'M SURE YOU REMEMBER, WHEN HAWAII WAS A TERRITORY OF THE UNITED STATES, A PERSON BORN OF ALIEN PARENTS IN HAWAII AUTOMATICALLY BECAME A UNITED STATES CITIZEN.

FOR ANOTHER THING, THE CANAL ZONE'S PORTS ARE CONSIDERED FOREIGN PORTS FOR POSTAL MAIL PURPOSES. AND GOODS SHIPPED FROM THE UNITED STATES TO THE ZONE ARE CONSIDERED A PART OF FOREIGN TRADE.

MR. REAGAN AND HIS BELIEVERS ARE SAYING THE TREATIES PROPOSE A "GIVE AWAY" OF THE CANAL. WE CERTAINLY CAN'T GIVE AWAY WHAT'S NOT OURS!

MR. REAGAN AND HIS BELIEVERS CALL GENERAL TORRIJOS A

"TINHORN DICTATOR".

GENERAL TORRIJOS MAY BE A DICTATOR -- BUT HE IS NOT A STEREOTYPICAL DICTATOR. HE HAS THE FULL SUPPORT OF HIS PEOPLE. AND HE DOESN'T USE TERROR AND TORTURE TO GOVERN.

PANAMANIANIANS MAY NOT HAVE THE SAME CIVIL RIGHTS WE AMERICANS DO. BUT THEIR GOVERNMENT DOESN'T SYSTEMATICALLY DENY THEM THEIR RIGHTS.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO LOOK, NOT ONLY AT TORRIJOS' FAILINGS, BUT AT HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS ... NOT ONLY WHAT HE HASN'T DONE, BUT WHAT HE HAS DONE.

AS A "TINHORN DICTATOR", TORRIJOS HAS DONE EXCEEDINGLY WELL BY HIS PEOPLE. SINCE HE CAME TO POWER IN 1968, HE HAS DOUBLED THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS. HE HAS IMPROVED MARKETING FACILITIES FOR SMALL FARMERS, AND BUILT HYDROELECTRIC PLANTS. AND HE HAS INSTITUTIONALIZED A LOW-COST HOUSING PROGRAM FOR THE POOR IN BOTH URBAN AND RURAL AREAS.

AND HE PLANS TO DO MORE. AS PART OF THE TREATY AGREEMENTS, WE HAVE PROMISED \$50 MILLION IN FOREIGN MILITARY SALES CREDITS TO

PANAMA OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS. GENERAL TORRIJOS TOLD OUR DELEGATION OF SENATORS THAT HE DOESN'T PLAN TO SPEND THIS MONEY FOR WEAPONS. HE'LL USE IT TO SEND PROMISING YOUNG PANAMANIAN TO COLLEGE AND TO MAKE THEM BILINGUAL AND TRILINGUAL SO THEY CAN TAKE OVER THE COMPLEX OPERATIONS OF THE CANAL IN THE YEAR 2000. AND HE PLANS TO BUY HELICOPTERS AND TRAIN PILOTS IN EACH PROVINCE OF PANAMA TO PROVIDE EMERGENCY MEDICAL AID.

CRITICS OF THE TREATIES HAVE FLOATED THE RUMOR THAT GENERAL TORRIJOS IS A COMMUNIST AND THAT HE PLANS TO LEAD HIS COUNTRY TO COMMUNISM. THIS IS ANOTHER FEAR TACTIC. NO INTELLIGENT PERSON SHOULD BE TAKEN BY IT.

FIRST, IT IS IRRELEVANT. WE HAVE THE USE OF THE CANAL NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF GOVERNMENT PANAMA HAS.

SECOND, I SEE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ANY TRUTH TO THE RUMOR. WHEN I WAS IN PANAMA, I SPOKE TO A CROSS-SECTION OF AMERICANS AND PANAMANIAN. NONE OF THEM SERIOUSLY BELIEVED TORRIJOS IS A COMMUNIST.

DURING ONE OF OUR CONFERENCES, GENERAL TORRIJOS WAS ASKED

WHETHER HE MIGHT TURN THE CANAL OVER TO CUBA OR RUSSIA ONCE THE TREATIES WERE RATIFIED. HIS RESPONSE WAS THAT HE DIDN'T WANT TO SEE "PANAMANIAN WATERS INFESTED BY COMMUNIST SHARKS".

AT ANOTHER TIME, HE TOLD US HE HAD STRONG FEELINGS ABOUT THE ISSUE. "IF I TRIED TO LEAD MY PEOPLE INTO COMMUNISM", HE SAID, "THEY WOULD THROW ME OUT, AND IF, DESPITE MY POSITION ON THIS ISSUE, THE PEOPLE WOULD TAKE UP COMMUNISM, I WOULD LEAVE THIS COUNTRY!"

THE PRESIDENT OF PANAMA, TEXAS-EDUCATED DEMETRIO LAKAS, WHO TALKS AND ACTS LIKE A TEXAN, IS WELL-KNOWN FOR HIS ANTI-COMMUNIST POSITION. WHEN ASKED ABOUT TORRIJOS, HE SAID HE WAS SURE TORRIJOS WAS NOT A COMMUNIST AND HE'D BE WILLING TO STAKE HIS LIFE ON IT.

CONSIDER THIS FACT, TOO, THAT UNDER TORRIJOS' LEADERSHIP PANAMA HAS NOT EVEN RECOGNIZED THE SOVIET UNION OR RED CHINA. NO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS EXIST BETWEEN PANAMA AND THE TWO FOREMOST COMMUNIST NATIONS. IN THIS RESPECT, WE AMERICANS MAINTAIN A FRIENDLIER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNISTS THAN TORRIJOS DOES.

DESPITE THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE TREATIES, IT'S CLEAR TO ME

THAT THE PEOPLE OF PANAMA ARE FOND OF AMERICANS. AND THEY TEND TO FOLLOW OUR LEADERSHIP. IN FACT, MANY OF THEIR PRESENT LEADERS, INCLUDING PRESIDENT LAKAS AND GENERAL TORRIJOS HIMSELF, ARE AMERICAN EDUCATED.

HAVING SAID THIS ABOUT COMMUNISM AND THE PEOPLE'S LEANINGS IN PANAMA, I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO DANGER OF A COMMUNIST TAKEOVER. THERE IS.

I BELIEVE THAT A NEGATIVE VOTE BY THE SENATE ON THE TREATIES WOULD BE THE GREATEST POSSIBLE BOOST FOR COMMUNISM IN PANAMA. THE ENORMOUS FRUSTRATION THAT THE PANAMANIAN WOULD FEEL WOULD HELP THE COMMUNISTS CONVINCING THEM THAT THE UNITED STATES IS AN IMPERIALIST NATION, BENT ON EXPLOITING WEAKER NATIONS.

RIGHT NOW THE COMMUNISTS ARE THE ONLY ONES IN PANAMA WORKING AGAINST THE TREATIES. THEIR ONE ISSUE WILL DISAPPEAR WHEN THE TREATIES ARE RATIFIED. OUR VOTING DOWN THE TREATIES WOULD GIVE THE PANAMANIAN COMMUNISTS NEW LIFE.

ANOTHER ARGUMENT FREQUENTLY RAISED AGAINST THE TREATIES IS THE LACK OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN PANAMA. LET ME AGAIN POINT OUT THAT THIS IS

NOT REALLY RELEVANT TO THE TREATIES ... EXCEPT IN THE USE OF THE TREATIES TO WIN CONCESSIONS FROM TORRIJOS -- AND WE HAVE.

DURING OUR FINAL MEETING WITH TORRIJOS IN PANAMA, LAST NOVEMBER, HE COMMITTED HIMSELF TO REPEALING THE LAW THAT PERMITS DETENTION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS WITHOUT DUE PROCESS OF LAW. ONLY A FEW WEEKS LATER HE ANNOUNCED ITS REPEAL. HE ALSO PROMISED TO ALLOW MORE FREEDOM FOR THE PANAMANIAN PRESS. AND HE SAID HE WOULD ALLOW POLITICAL EXILES TO RETURN HOME AFTER THE TREATIES HAVE BEEN RATIFIED. I AM CONFIDENT HE WILL KEEP HIS PROMISES.

THESE ARE MAJOR CONCESSIONS. HE MADE THEM BECAUSE HE WANTS US TO APPROVE THE TREATIES. IN FACT, HE EVEN SAID HE WOULD BE WILLING TO RESIGN FROM HIS PRESENT LEADERSHIP POSITION IF SUCH ACTION WOULD HELP IN GETTING THE UNITED STATES SENATE TO RATIFY THE TREATIES.

DID YOU KNOW THAT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, THE ORGANIZATION THAT RECENTLY WON THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE FOR ITS HUMAN RIGHTS WORK, WAS NOT SUFFICIENTLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN PANAMA TO MOUNT AN EFFORT THERE? THERE WERE MORE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS IN OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. AND AMNESTY

INTERNATIONAL FOUND FEW PRISONER VIOLATIONS IN THEIR INVESTIGATION OF PANAMA.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DID FIND POLITICAL EXILE VIOLATIONS. BUT, AS I MENTIONED EARLIER, GENERAL TORRIJOS PROMISED SENATOR BYRD AND THE OTHER VISITING SENATORS THAT HE WOULD ALLOW THOSE EXILES TO RETURN TO PANAMA AFTER THE TREATIES HAVE BEEN RATIFIED.

ANOTHER CRITICISM LODGED AGAINST THE TREATIES IS THAT WE'LL BE PAYING THE PANAMANIAN MILLIONS OF AMERICAN TAXPAYERS' DOLLARS TO TAKE THE CANAL OFF OUR HANDS. IT'S JUST NOT SO.

THE CANAL TOLL RATES WILL BE INCREASED TO MAKE UP FOR THE ADDED PAYMENTS. OTHERWISE, WE WILL BE PAYING THE PANAMANIAN FOR THE MILITARY BASES WE MAINTAIN IN PANAMA -- JUST AS WE DO IN GREECE, SPAIN, TURKEY, AND THE PHILIPPINES. IN FACT, WE HAVEN'T PAID PANAMA A CENT FOR USE OF OUR MILITARY BASES THERE IN 74 YEARS.

WE WILL BE SETTING UP A PACKAGE OF LOANS, LOAN GUARANTEES, AND CREDITS FOR PANAMA. BUT MOST OF THESE WILL PROMOTE TRADE AND INVESTMENT BY AMERICAN COMPANIES THERE, AND THE LOANS WILL BE PAID BACK TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

THE ONE LEGITIMATE QUESTION THAT HAS COME UP SINCE THE CANAL TREATIES WERE SIGNED IS A MILITARY ONE: DOES THE UNITED STATES HAVE A RIGHT TO INTERVENE MILITARILY IF THE NEUTRALITY OF THE CANAL IS THREATENED? TO CLARIFY THE LANGUAGE OF ARTICLE IV OF THE NEUTRALITY TREATY, PRESIDENT CARTER AND GENERAL TORRIJOS AGREED TO A "STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING" THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL HAVE THAT RIGHT. ALSO, THE STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING ASSURES US THAT OUR SHIPS WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO "GO TO THE HEAD OF THE LINE" IN AN EMERGENCY.

TO SUM UP: THERE'S SOMETHING IN US AS A NATION THAT WANTS TO STAND UP AND SAY, "WE'VE HAD ENOUGH. LET'S SHOW THOSE PANAMANIAN WHO'S BOSS!"

WE WANT TO TAKE PRIDE IN OUR COUNTRY.

WE DON'T WANT TO FEEL THAT WE'RE BEING PUSHED AROUND AS WE WERE IN VIETNAM.

WE MAY NOT BE ECSTATIC OVER THESE TREATIES. BUT WE HAVE TWO CHOICES.

WE CAN EITHER RATIFY THE TREATIES, AND GUARANTEE OUR RIGHT TO USE THE CANAL, OR WE CAN VOTE THEM DOWN AND THEREBY VIRTUALLY GUARANTEE OPEN WARFARE IN THE CANAL ZONE AND THE SHUTTING DOWN OF THE

CANAL.

WE MAY NOT LIKE THE CHOICE BETWEEN THESE ALTERNATIVES. BUT THEY ARE THE ONLY ALTERNATIVES.

I DON'T SAY THE EXISTING TREATY OF 1903 ISN'T VALID. IT IS. BUT WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT COLONIALISM IS DEAD.

SINCE WE SIGNED THAT TREATY, MANY CHANGES HAVE OCCURED IN THE WORLD. WE MUST CHANGE WITH THE TIMES OR PAY THE CONSEQUENCES.

FIRST AND FOREMOST, WE NEED TO KEEP THE CANAL OPEN.

SECOND, WE NEED TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT HOW OTHER NATIONS SEE US. WE NEED TO BE ON GOOD TERMS WITH THE PEOPLE OF PANAMA. AND WE NEED TO GET GOING ON A NEW GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY IN LATIN AMERICA.

BUT IT'S ALSO IMPORTANT TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT HOW WE SEE OUR OWN SELVES.

THIS GREAT COUNTRY OF OURS WAS BORN OF A REVOLUTION FOR THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION. WE HAVE FOUGHT FOR OTHER PEOPLES' RIGHTS TO SELF-DETERMINATION. LET'S NOT DENY THAT RIGHT TO THE PANAMANIANIS.

WE MUST TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE PANAMANIANIS' YEARING FOR SELF-DETERMINATION AND NATIONAL DIGNITY.

THAT KIND OF UNDERSTANDING IS THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY THAT WAS
ONCE DESCRIBED BY JUDGE LEARNED HAND AS FOLLOWS:

"THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY IS THE SPIRIT WHICH IS NOT TOO SURE
THAT IT IS RIGHT; THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY IS THE SPIRIT WHICH SEEKS TO
UNDERSTAND THE MIND OF OTHER MEN AND WOMEN; THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY
IS THE SPIRIT WHICH WEIGHS THEIR INTERESTS ALONGSIDE ITS OWN..."

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.