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Title: "Security Dispute Shouldn't Overshadow US-NZ Friendship."

Remarks of President Bush and new New Zealand ambassador to the US Denis McLean on the occasion of the latter's presentation of his credentials at the White House.

Text: 04/11/91 \* SECURITY DISPUTE SHOULDN'T OVERSHADOW U.S.-N.Z. FRIENDSHIP

(Text: Bush greets New Zealand envoy) (1440)

Washington — The only major difference dividing the United States and New Zealand is a disagreement over security- related matters, President Bush said April 11.

In remarks made while accepting the credentials of Denis McLean, New Zealand's new ambassador to the United States, Bush said he hoped the disagreement soon would be resolved and insisted it should not overshadow other areas which link the two countries.

The president never specifically mentioned U.S. opposition to New Zealand's policy of refusing to allow U.S. ships to use its ports because of the U.S. policy of neither confirming nor denying whether nuclear weapons are carried on any ships, but expressed a desire to resolve the disagreement and return to a full relationship as allies, as well as friends.

The president acknowledged New Zealand's support and contribution to the coalition forces in the recent Persian Gulf conflict.

"The people of the United States know that New Zealanders are among the few who have stood with us in five conflicts in the 20th century," he said. "We recognize the commitment that this shows on the part of your government to the shared values and traditions of which we have spoken, and to the principle of collective security."

The president also noted that the United States will continue to work closely with New Zealand in promoting free trade, supporting Antarctic research, and addressing pressing environmental concerns.

For his own part, Ambassador McLean reiterated New Zealand's wish that its relationship with the United States should endure and develop. "We wish to add new substance to the many ties between our two countries and to restore the lustre to the relationship," he said.

Following are the texts of remarks made by President Bush and Ambassador McLean:

(begin Bush text)

Mr. Ambassador:

Thank you for presenting to me today your Letter of Credence from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II accrediting you as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of New Zealand to the United States of America and the Letter of Recall of your predecessor, Mr. Tim Francis.

I do not have to say "Welcome to Washington," because you have spent so many years here — first as a diplomat and then as an academic. Your background in the New Zealand government and knowledge of our country make you well- qualified to tap the deep reservoir of good will between our two nations. As I said to your Prime Minister, Mr. Bolger, when he called me a few weeks ago, I bear a great affection for the people of New Zealand, a country with which we in the United States have had such a long and fruitful relationship. New Zealand's recent celebration of 150 years of nationhood and the marking of 151 years of relations between our two countries gave us the opportunity to underscore again our long history of shared traditions of freedom and democratic values.

There is one major difference that divides us; we both know what it is. It is my hope that we can resolve soon the security-related disagreement of recent years and return to a full relationship as allies, as well as friends. This issue is central to our relationship, but should not overshadow other areas in which links between our two countries are characterized by friendship and cooperation. The United States will continue to work closely with New Zealand in promoting free trade, supporting Antarctic research, and addressing pressing environmental concerns.

I appreciate your warm words of thanks for the leadership role the United States played in the recent Gulf conflict and I gratefully acknowledge New Zealand's support and contribution to the coalition forces. The people of the United States know that New Zealanders are among the few who have stood with us in five conflicts in the 20th century. We recognize the commitment that this shows on the part of your government to the shared values and traditions of which we have spoken, and to the principle of collective security.

Now our task is to translate those values into lasting peace and stability throughout the entire Middle East region. I understand that New Zealand has already volunteered to participate in a United Nations peacekeeping force in Kuwait, should one be formed, and that New Zealand has joined in the effort to clean up the terrible consequences of the oil spill released by Iraq into the Persian Gulf.

The coming years will bring many other challenges as we strive to build a new world order in which all countries — small and large — can live in peace and security. Strong alliances and a continuing commitment to collective security will be an integral part of this process and to furthering progress in arms control.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to welcome you as Ambassador of New Zealand and I hope that your country will join us in confronting these challenges and furthering our bilateral relationship. I congratulate you on your new assignment and I wish you all the best as you assume your new post. (end Bush text)

(begin McLean text)

Mr. President

I have the honour to present to you the Letter of Credence from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II accrediting me as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of New Zealand to the United States of America. I have also to present to you the Letter of Recall of my predecessor, Mr. Tim Francis.

My first duty, Mr. President, is to bring you a message of goodwill and friendship from the Government and people of New Zealand.

The world, Sir, is changing very fast. But I am especially enjoined by the Government that I have the honour to represent to reiterate to you the New Zealand wish that the relationship with the United States should endure and develop. We wish to add new substance to the many ties between our two countries and to restore the lustre to the relationship. There is, as my Prime Minister and yourself agreed in your recent conversation, great affection between the peoples of New Zealand and the United States.

The links between us are strong. Five times during this troubled century the Armed Forces of our two countries have ranged alongside one another to uphold the democratic values and standards of international behavior which our two countries hold dear. My Government wishes me to assure you that these are things which will not change.

Together our two countries are also working closely to promote a better international trading order through the GATT negotiations. In innumerable fields from the Antarctic to protection of the biosphere, from fisheries questions to South Pacific affairs, our interests closely coincide. In defense and security affairs a difference in perspectives and policies in recent years has set back cooperation.

Yet as I know you are aware, Mr. President, New Zealand has a record of solid constructive commitment to the maintenance of international order and stability of which any country would be proud. In the past weeks in the Gulf the old issues were joined again. The New Zealand Government, elected only five months ago, moved quickly to give active military support to the coalition led by the United States. We welcomed your personal diplomacy at the United Nations and elsewhere in the search for a peaceful solution. But failing that peaceful solution, we shared your determination that aggression should not pay. We have admired your firm and decisive leadership in bringing the coalition's efforts to a successful conclusion.

The relationship between our two countries, Mr. President, goes back a long way. James Reddy Clendon, the first United States Consul, was appointed in 1839. Trade goes back even further, having its beginnings in the epic whaling and sealing voyages of American ships out of New England in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

There is no need for me to dwell on the many ties of shared democratic and social values that now give strong substance to the United States-New Zealand relationship across the board. There is, between our two countries, a natural friendship of great value.

New Zealanders nevertheless are their own people with a strong sense of their own independence. Yet with that we know full well that in today's world mutual support and cooperation, and the promotion of international law, are the keys to survival and prosperity.

On that basis and founded on these principles New Zealand hopes to expand and develop its ties with the United States. For my part, it is a great honour to have the opportunity during my appointment as Ambassador to the United States of America, to further a relationship based on the fundamental values we share.

(end McLean text) NNNN