

June 9, 1943

[Dinner for President of Paraguay]

FDR Speech File

Extemporaneous Remarks of the President on the Occasion of the
Formal Dinner for the President of Paraguay, General Higinio
Morinigo, June 9, 1943, About Nine O'clock P.M., E.W.T.

May I take this opportunity to say what I have had in my heart for a long time. We are very happy to have President Morinigo here, because we have great reasons to be grateful to Paraguay for the magnificent stand they have taken for the solidarity of their armies.

I shall never forget, not so long ago -- it seems many years -- at the conference in Rio de Janeiro, we needed positive action. We had all agreed on the one subject -- on that action for solidarity: breaking off relations with the Axis powers.

At that time at that meeting, the foreign ministers of Paraguay, acting on instructions from their President, stepped forward at just the right moment and the right timing, and pledged Paraguay in this great effort of all the Americas -- the thought of the hemisphere -- that we should break off relations with the brigands of modern civilization.

Paraguay acted in accordance with an old slogan of mine, "Do not only the right thing, but do it at the right time," and thereby gave heart to all of our sister Republics. From that time on we have had closer dealings with Paraguay than ever before in our history.

I do not have to speak, outside of this room perhaps, about the great bravery, the plain -- the sheer -- bravery

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the previously prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

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The General and President -- as I put it -- is one of the most distinguished generals of that magnificent army. We think of him not only as the President of the Republic, but also as the leader of the armies of Paraguay in their latest war. We hope they won't have to go through wars of that kind again. We hope that all of the Republics will work together to see that they don't have to defend their independence any more.

During these years, because of geography, it has been very difficult for us -- for Americans -- to go to Paraguay. We thought of it as an interior Republic, far up one of the greatest rivers of the continent. And yet, with the advent of air, and the advent of better roads, we look forward to the day when more Americans can go there, and go there as a natural and logical part of their visits to the other countries of the hemisphere.

I hope that those relations, not merely communication, but trade and everything else that goes with it, that they are going to increase. We think that we have broken the ice, not

only in our relations -- our Pan American or diplomatic relations, but we have broken the ice in regard to getting to know each other better.

And so I hope that in the years to come Paraguay and the United States will become closer friends -- personal friends, than we have ever been before. Toward that end this Government -- the Government and President -- are going hand in hand; and may this association be carried out more greatly, more usefully -- spiritually, economically, materially, in every way.

We recognize Paraguay very definitely as one of the great Republics of the Americas.

And so it gives me great pleasure to propose a Toast to His Excellency the President of Paraguay.

(the Toast was drunk, and President Morinigo replied briefly in Spanish, accompanied by a Toast to President Roosevelt)

STATEMENTS FILE

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

File

6-9-43

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. EARLY:

Here is a rough copy of the speech tonight, in case you want it for the Press, or the President should ask.

This is rough. I shall probably change the punctuation a little, when I can give it better thought.


J. Romagna

(He did not use
it)

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