

Office of the Governor

PO BOX 004
TRENTON, NJ 08625

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Jayne O'Connor
Wendi Patella
609-777-2600

RELEASE: March 3, 1999

Governor Whitman Addresses Conference of Female Leaders

New Jersey Gov. Christie Whitman today addressed the International Conference of Conservative Women Parliamentarians.

The International Conference of Conservative Women Parliamentarians is a three-day conference of senior-level and elected women from conservative and right-wing parties from around the world. The group discusses political, economic, and trade matters.

A text of the Governor's remarks is attached.

REMARKS OF
GOVERNOR CHRISTINE TODD WHITMAN
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
CONSERVATIVE WOMEN PARLIMENTARIANS
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 1999
WASHINGTON, DC

Thank you, Joy (Mein).

I'm very pleased to be here today and to follow such distinguished panelists as you, Olympia Snowe, and Tillie Fowler. With leaders like you our future looks very bright indeed.

I am also honored to be on a panel with such distinguished presenters as Katherine O'Regan and Miroslava Nemcova. [Meero-slah- vah Nem-ko-vah]

I'd like to begin my remarks by asking everyone here to visualize for a moment that beautiful picture of the earth that was taken from space over a quarter century ago. I'm sure you remember it. For the first time in human history, we saw the earth as never before - a precious blue orb surrounded by a thin layer of life-sustaining vapors.

With that photograph, we had a new image of our home. Where once it seemed so large in our mind's eye, we now saw it as another planet floating in the vast solar system.

That's how we must visualize what is happening in our world economies today: we are a small planet getting even smaller. Today, our world is connected in ways previously unimagined.

Alexander Graham Bell, born on this day 152 years ago, could have never imagined that his invention would usher in an era in which an entire world is now just a cellphone call away. From email and the Internet, to satellite television and the Concorde, we are in constant global communication.

With the rapid pace of change in technology - fueled by communications, air travel, and computers - our world continues to shrink. And as it does, our national economies are increasingly interdependent.

As our earth and its five billion-plus inhabitants spin toward a new millennium, the economies of the world must react to an accelerating globalization.

Economic globalization involves, as one observer put it, "arguably the most fundamental redesign of the planet's political and economic arrangements since the Industrial Revolution."

With globalization, borders can fall away. Barriers to trade and investment can disappear. And capital, goods, and services can flow freely no matter where you live.

Today, the question isn't whether we choose to take part in this global economy. It's here to stay and it's impossible to reverse the technological progress that drives it. Rather, the question becomes how we will manage what we put in place. How will we use the opportunities globalization offers to shape our trade policies? How will we make globalization work for all of us?

In January, I attended the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. I arrived there on two good legs and, as you may have noticed, I returned on a pair of crutches. You might say that I hit the slopes just a bit too hard.

Of course, Davos did give me firsthand experience with global advances in medicine - the Swiss are doing things in medicine that make it the envy of the world.

Before my injury, I had many opportunities to hear and speak with world business, government, and media leaders.

From Vice President Gore, to United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, to South African President Nelson Mandela and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, leaders from around the world discussed how to manage the implications of the globalization process.

As Klaus Schwab, president of the World Economic Forum, said: "we don't have yet the necessary structure and instruments to really deal with this. what we need is globalization with a human face."

That's where we can do our part. We can look at how we can make globalization work to everyone's advantage. We must balance the forces of the market and the needs of people.

It's difficult to doubt the new power of international market forces. Clive Cooke, in an Economist article entitled "The World Economy," writes that the optimists - and I count myself in this camp - see mostly gains in the triumph of international capitalism.

Optimists acknowledge that governments might lose some of the freedom they now have to direct their economies as they wish. But the return is a world that benefits from technological progress, unprecedented opportunities to relieve poverty, and more freedom for millions of people.

As a fiscal conservative who has cut taxes 17 times, reduced crime to its lowest level in a quarter-century, and cut the welfare caseload 45 percent in my state, I know how important it is for government to create opportunities for businesses to prosper - at home or around the world.

The more we can do legislatively to remove barriers to trade and economic prosperity, the more we can reach unprecedented levels of economic progress. And that means we will be able to help those who don't have our level of progress.

As Governor of a state that carries on significant trade worldwide, I have already seen remarkable results from our economic relationships. New Jersey is the 8th largest state economy in the United States. We are the 5th leading state in foreign investment. And we are the 9th leading state in exports, with nearly \$22 billion in goods exported in 1997, a 12 percent increase over 1996.

In the past five years of my administration, we have used trade to expand our role in the global economy.

Take Israel, for example. Israel is our third largest trade partner. We exported almost \$1.4 billion in goods and services last year, almost a 47 percent increase over 1997.

Our New Jersey - Israel Chamber of Commerce has worked closely with our Commerce and Economic Growth Commission to build solid business relationships that benefit both Israel and New Jersey.

But economics has complemented and strengthened the host of human ties that now bind us to Israel. For example, in the towns of Ofakim (OAF-a-keem) and Ra'anana, the Jewish community in New Jersey is lending a hand in building new communities for immigrants from what was once barren desert. And last year, the Ra'anana Symphonette made its American debut in the Performing Arts Center in Newark, New Jersey.

Our economic ties with Israel have produced far greater human ties between our two peoples. Ties of mutual understanding and solidarity.

Mexico is another example.

In 1998, total New Jersey exports to Mexico surpassed \$1.1 billion, more than what we sold to France and the United Kingdom combined, and more than double what the U.S. sold to Germany last year. This was a 6.9 percent increase over 1997, making Mexico our second most important market for exports.

In addition, we've generated local employment in Mexico. For example, we've seen more than 640,000 jobs alone in the Maquiladora plants along the Mexican/U.S. border.

It's my belief that the best hope for peace and understanding is the ability of two great countries - like Mexico and the United States - to promote jobs and a better future for people on both sides of the border. It's a lot easier to live in harmony with another country when your brother or sister works in a factory across the border.

Next week, I will travel to South America, where we will - once again - cement the economic and human ties that bind New Jersey and the people of Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. For example, in Rio we will sign a Memorandum of Understanding that will promote investment and technology transfers related to the environment and sustainable economic development. And in Buenos Aires, our agreement will encourage interchanges in trade, culture, education, and technology.

As we in New Jersey look around the world to fostering greater global economic ties, we do so with a focus on building peace and understanding.

Others are reaching out to us with the same goal. For example, in Davos, I had an informal discussion with Ambassador Zalman Shovol, the Israeli ambassador to the United States, Youssef Boutros-Ghali, the Egyptian Minister of Economy, and Dan Propper, the President of the Israel Chamber of Commerce. In this discussion these leaders asked that New Jersey do the same thing as it has done with Israel - establish a trade office and a presence in Jordan and Egypt.

Obviously, our shrinking planet is creating new opportunities for both peace and prosperity - for states and nations alike.

And just as we've created new alignments for world economic activity, we must put in place the structures and processes that will allow us to manage this new global marketplace in a responsible way.

We must use opportunities for global discourse - like Davos - to keep nations talking among themselves.

We must reassure each other that we each have an important place in the global community.

We must, as the Secretary General Kofi Annan said at Davos, " choose between a global market driven by calculations of short- term profit, and one that has a human face."

And we must view every nation on this precious blue orb we call home as our best hope for a better life that will come with peace and with economic opportunity for all.

Thank you.

