

REMARKS BY THE GOVERNOR
OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO
HONORABLE RAFAEL HERNANDEZ COLON
UPON BIDDING FAREWELL TO COLONEL ALEXIS MAAS

JUNE 9, 1989

LA FORTALEZA

I am truly honored in having shared with you this very special moment, in which I want to thank and bid farewell to a good friend of Puerto Rico, Colonel Alexis Mass, after 3 years of outstanding service as Commander of the U.S. Army in Fort Buchanan.

We will remember Colonel Maas for many reasons that go beyond his high sense of duty, and the interesting fact, that he has been the first Spanish-speaking Commander we have had in Fort Buchanan since 1966. We will not forget the warm relationship and the closer ties that he has fostered between the U.S. Army and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

But, above all, Colonel Maas has gained a permanent place in the hearts and in the minds of our people because it was during his command at Fort Buchanan that the Puerto Rican flag was raised there, for the first time, to fly alongside the American Banner. I recall with vivid detail the image of the two flags rippling together in the

wind. It was indeed, a moment of deep emotion for us all; it was the symbolic encounter of two countries that for many years have shared, in a cherished and unique relationship, the highest ideals of freedom, democracy and justice.

Colonel Maas leaves Puerto Rico at a historic moment in which the people of Puerto Rico is preparing itself to express once again their political will through a plebiscite. Deep in my heart, I know that this process will serve to strengthen and enhance the precious relationship we have with the United States, of which Colonel Maas has been a worthy representant.

I know that wherever the call of duty takes Colonel Maas, the United States Army will be well served.

At this moment, I wish to make a toast to honor Colonel Alexis Maas, to express our profound respect and affection and to wish him the best of luck in his new assignment at Fort McPherson in Atlanta.

Colonel Alexis Maas, may the years to come be filled with continued success!