

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE WHITE HOUSE

A TOAST BY THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE AKASAKA PALACE

BANQUET HALL

9:40 P.M. (JAPAN TIME)

Your Majesties, I am honored to have the privilege of welcoming Your Imperial Majesties to this dinner this evening. It permits me to, in a small way, in a symbolic gesture, to reciprocate the wonderful hospitality so graciously extended to me this week.

It has been a period of enlightenment for me and I will take home an inspiring impression of the possibilities available for an even greater friendship, greater cooperation and interdependence of our two nations.

America is now approaching its national Bicentennial. Tonight I would like to recall another meaningful event 114 years ago on May 14, 1860. That was the day when the first diplomatic mission ever sent by Japan to another nation arrived in Washington, D.C., our national capital.

I am very pleased, Your Majesties, to present on this evening to all of our distinguished guests a token of the durability of American-Japanese friendship. It is a medal bearing the likeness of President Buchanan who has the honor of welcoming the Japanese delegation to the historic East Room of the White House. Since that occasion, the American Government has never ceased to look to the East as well as to the West.

Our visitors then regarded us as Americans, as strange creatures and observed us in every detail. It was with equal fascination that we viewed our Japanese visitors. We learned from each other then, and I and we are continuing to learn today.

The most important lesson that I have learned during this visit corresponds with a brilliant insight of one of the Japanese envoys on the first mission to the United States. The occasion was a visit to the New York home of the widow of Commodore Perry. The Japanese envoy expressed a very deep emotion at the realization that he was in the home of Commodore Perry and said -- and I quote:

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"The time has come when no nation may remain isolated and refuse to take part in the affairs of the rest of the world."

That concept is even more compelling today. The links between our two nations can serve as a model for a world increasingly aware of the need for greater international cooperation.

Accordingly, in recalling that first Japanese delegation to Washington, I pledge that my Government will not isolate itself from the world or from Japan.

On behalf of the nation that I am privileged to represent, to lead, I reaffirm the spirit of friendship that endures between us. I reaffirm my determination to see that warm relationship continues and grows.

Your Majesties, in that spirit and with a heart filled with faith in the future and appreciation for our guests, I offer a toast to the health and to the well-being of Your Imperial Majesties.

END

(9:45 P.M. JAPAN TIME)