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Office of the White House Press Secretary
(Seoul, South Korea)

THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF A TOAST BY THE PRESIDENT
TO BE DELIVERED
AFTER DINNER
AT THE BANQUET HALL

Mr. President, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

I am greatly honored by this occasion and appreciate your gracious hospitality this evening.

The warmth shown by the Korean people exceeds even that which I remember from my previous visit to your hospitable land. I am deeply impressed by the dynamism of Korean society, the energy and vitality of Korean men, and the charm and beauty of Korean women.

I wish that I had more time to see not only the impressive landmarks of the Korean miracle of material progress but also the famous historical shrines of your country. On another day, when my wife may accompany me, I would like to return.

It was a pleasure to meet the leaders of many sectors of Korean society present tonight. In particular, I am pleased to see the Speaker and other members of your National Assembly, including representatives of major political parties. Having spent a quarter of a century in the United States Congress, I place great value in the legislative processes of representative government.

I came to your country to demonstrate America's continued determination to preserve peace in Korea, in Asia, and throughout the world.

Koreans and Americans were friends in war. We will remain friends in peace. America seeks world peace for the good of all and at the expense of none.

Today I enjoyed a rewarding and inspiring visit with your people. I also drew new encouragement by meeting with the American armed forces in which we take such pride.

I pledge tonight that the United States will continue to assist and support you. Our relationship --and our dialogue--will continue.

We live in a time of new international realities and new opportunities for peace and progress in Asia and elsewhere. President Park, your statesman-like initiative in opening a dialogue with the North contributed constructively to efforts to find a peaceful and just solution to the Korean problem. With the perseverance and courage so typical of the Korean people, I trust you will prevail in this effort.

(MORE)

Let us recognize together the new world in which we all live. Let us envision the interdependence of all nations -- large and small. When we plan for such new international problems as energy shortages and financial crises, the United States considers the interests of all nations. We will continue to consult with you on common interests and problems.

I am here on a mission of peace. It is my deepest hope that the entire world will lift its gaze and broaden its vision. I would rather walk a thousand miles for peace than take a single step toward war.

America has confidence in the people of Korea, just as we have faith in ourselves.

Mr. President, the relationship between our two peoples was first formalized as long ago as May 22, 1882. The preamble to that treaty spoke of permanent relations based upon amity and friendship. We have proven that by more than diplomatic phrases. Our relationship has endured through war and peace. The welcome you accorded me today is symbolic of our close ties. It demonstrated the great strength of the friendship between our peoples.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to rise and join me in a toast to my distinguished host, President Park, and to the great people of the Republic of Korea.

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