The original documents are located in Box 17, “10/2/75 - Toast for the White House Dinner for the Emperor and Empress of Japan” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SPOKEN . . .

TOAST FOR THE WHITE HOUSE DINNER

THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF JAPAN

OCTOBER 2, 1975

- I -

YOUR MAJESTIES, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS FROM JAPAN,

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:
THIS FIRST STATE VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES BY AN

EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF JAPAN IS AN OCCASION OF GREAT

IMPORTANCE TO US ALL. IT SYMBOLIZES THE UNIQUE AND VERY

CLOSE TIES OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES.

MY NATION HAS LONG LOOKED FORWARD TO THIS HAPPY

OCCASION. FOUR YEARS AGO, IT WAS A GREAT HONOR FOR

AMERICANS THAT YOUR MAJESTIES STOPPED IN ALASKA AT THE

BEGINNING OF YOUR FIRST FOREIGN TRAVEL AS EMPEROR AND EMPRESS.

BUT YOUR STAY WAS TOO BRIEF.
LAST YEAR, I HAD THE HONOR OF BEING THE FIRST
INCUMBENT AMERICAN PRESIDENT TO VISIT JAPAN.

I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE WARM AND IMPRESSIVE RECEPTION
I RECEIVED.

THE FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES BY A
JAPANESE EMPEROR, OCCURING AS IT DOES DURING MY ADMINISTRATION,
IS ANOTHER SOURCE OF GREAT PERSONAL SATISFACTION. IT WAS
MY PROFOUND PLEASURE EARLIER TODAY TO WELCOME YOU OFFICIALLY TO
THE UNITED STATES ON BEHALF OF ALL AMERICANS.
WHILE THE CULTURAL HERITAGES OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES DIFFER, OUR PEOPLES TODAY SHARE COMMON ASPIRATIONS AND A SIMILAR COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS AND INSTITUTIONS.

YOUR MAJESTIES, WE CONFRONT TOGETHER, THE CHALLENGES OF ADVANCED INDUSTRIALIZED SOCIETIES AND SEEK A PEACEFUL WORLD IN WHICH ALL NATIONS MAY PROSPER AND ALL PEOPLE PURSUE FULFILLING LIVES.
BECAUSE AMERICANS AND JAPANESE HAVE PATIENTLY NURTURED THESE FUNDAMENTAL BONDS, OUR CULTURAL DIFFERENCES HAVE BEEN A SOURCE OF MUTUAL ENRICHMENT RATHER THAN A BARRIER TO FRIENDSHIP AND UNDERSTANDING.

THROUGH THE INTERACTION OF OUR PEOPLES, JAPAN HAS PROFOUNDLY INFLUENCED AMERICA. JAPANESE CHERRY TREES ARE WELL KNOWN TO AMERICANS BECAUSE OF THEIR PROMINENT PLACE IN THE HEART OF OUR NATIONAL CAPITAL.
Because Japan's influence upon America has been subtle, it is not always easily recognized. Therefore, Your Majesties' visit provides Americans an opportunity to pause and acknowledge your country's contributions to our national culture.

The beautiful cherry blossoms symbolize the profound cultural influence of Japan on modern America. Japan's art and architecture, its pottery, and its prints, its gardens and its graciousness -- all have enriched American life and thought. The Japanese emphasis on consensus and harmony in human relations also influences the life and work of American people.
YOUR MAJESTIES, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT AMERICA PLACES THE HIGHEST VALUE UPON OUR DISTINCTIVE AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONS WITH YOUR NATION. AMERICANS ARE DETERMINED TO PRESERVE AND STRENGTHEN OUR TIES OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WITH JAPAN.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IN THAT SPIRIT I ASK ALL TO JOIN IN A TOAST TO THEIR MAJESTIES' CONTINUED GOOD HEALTH AND TO THE PERPETUATION OF THE SINCERE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE AMERICAN AND JAPANESE PEOPLES WHICH THIS HISTORIC VISIT SYMBOLIZES.

END OF TEXT