REMARKS FOR FILMED MESSAGE TO JAPANESE
AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE CONVENTION
JUNE 11, 1976
I Am delighted to greet the delegates and guests of the Japanese American Citizens League as you meet for your 24th National Convention.

This year we mark the beginning of our third century as an independent nation -- as well as the 200th anniversary of the American Revolution. For two centuries our nation has grown, changed and flourished.

A diverse people, drawn from all corners of the world, have joined together to fulfill the promise of democracy.

This nation has been built by the labor and dedication of Americans whose forebears came from many lands.
NO GROUP HAS WORKED WITH GREATER DEVOTION AND COMMITMENT TO ITS ADOPTED HOME THAN THE MEMBERS OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY.

DESPITE THE FACT THAT MANY JAPANESE AMERICANS WERE UNJUSTLY TREATED DURING THE WAR YEARS, YOUR COMMUNITY DID NOT TURN ITS BACK ON AMERICA BUT VOLUNTEERED TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM IN EUROPE -- AN EFFORT WHICH LED TO THE FORMATION OF THE FAMED 100th INFANTRY BATTALION AND THE 442nd REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM.
TOGETHER THESE TWO DISTINGUISHED FIGHTING UNITS RECEIVED
SEVEN SEPARATE PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATIONS FOR OUTSTANDING
PERFORMANCE WHILE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS OF THESE TWO UNITS
WERE AWARDED A TOTAL OF ALMOST SIX THOUSAND AWARDS AND
MEDALS FROM A GRATEFUL UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

IN THE WORDS OF PRESIDENT TRUMAN, WHO MET
WITH THE PROUD MEMBERS OF THE 442nd REGIMENTAL AFTER THE WAR,
"YOU FOUGHT NOT ONLY THE ENEMY, BUT YOU FOUGHT PREJUDICE --
AND YOU HAVE WON."
TODAY THE JAPANESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CAN
POINT WITH PRIDE TO OUTSTANDING ARCHITECTS, SCULPTORS,
MUSICAL CONDUCTORS, UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS AND, MORE
RECENTLY, MAYORS, STATE REPRESENTATIVES AND MEMBERS OF
THE CONGRESS. "A PROUD LEGACY," THE THEME OF YOUR
J-A-C-L CONVENTION IS INDEED A MOST APPROPRIATE DESCRIPTION
OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION AS WELL AS YOUR
COMMUNITY.

AS I SPEAK TO YOU THIS EVENING, I AM REMINDED OF
THE LAST TIME I MET WITH A NUMBER OF YOUR LEADERS.

IT WAS ON FEBRUARY 19, 1976 WHEN I SIGNED A PRESIDENTIAL
PROCLAMATION ENTITLED "AN AMERICAN PROMISE."
THE PROCLAMATION DECLARED THAT IN COMMEMORATING OUR
BICENTENNIAL, "AN HONEST RECKONING MUST INCLUDE A
RECOGNITION OF OUR NATIONAL MISTAKES AS WELL AS OUR
NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS."

TONIGHT, I REAFFIRM MY PLEDGE TO CONTINUE THE
FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND PREJUDICE IN AMERICA UNTIL
ALL AMERICANS, REGARDLESS OF RACE, RELIGION, SEX OR
NATIONAL ORIGIN ARE TREATED EQUALLY, EQUITABLY AND WITH THE
RESPECT THAT IS OWED ALL OF OUR CITIZENS.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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