

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
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THE WHITE HOUSE

A TOAST BY THE PRESIDENT
AT A RECEPTION IN THE HEIAN ROOM

OKURA HOTEL

5:08 P.M. (Japan Time)

Mr. Tashiro, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

It is a very high honor and a very rare privilege for me to have the opportunity of joining with all of you on this occasion.

The trip by me as the first American President in office coming to Japan has been a memorable one -- one that I shall never forget -- the opportunity to meet with Their Majesties; the opportunity to meet with your high government officials; the opportunity to share some thoughts with the members of the Diet; the opportunity to have a governmental exchange at the highest level is, of course, of great significance.

It has been my experience in 25 years of political life, when I served in the House of Representatives, to work hand-in-glove with other Members of the Legislative Branch, and, of course, in later years as a member of the leadership to work with the Legislative and Executive Branch.

And, of course, in the last 13 or so months, I have had the opportunity of serving in two offices in the Executive Branch.

I have learned, over a period of 26 years serving in the Federal Government, that all wisdom, all support for policies, doesn't necessarily come from Government, but primarily from people in non-Governmental organizations and individuals who are not directly connected with Government, itself.

And as I understand it, this group here on this occasion is a non-governmental group of Japanese and Americans who have spent a great deal of your time working together in a non-governmental capacity to support a greater unity between our country, the United States, and your country, Japan.

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I compliment you and I thank you. Your contribution is of tremendous significance. Governments, themselves, can't do it.

Decisions can be made at the government level, and in our society that is essential, but if those decisions are not supported, if those decisions are not explained by people in positions of responsibility in non-governmental areas, it is impossible for those decisions to be successful.

I learned that early in my career in politics. I always could be more successful in working to find a solution if I had the support, not only among politicians, but by those people, whether they were in management, in labor, in education, in local government, so I am deeply grateful for what you have done in the past and I strongly urge that you continue these efforts in the future because the Japanese Government and the United States Government, after the two days of talks we have had, yesterday and today, are embarking on a stronger unity, a stronger program of helping both in the maintenance of peace and the stimulation of prosperity. And this is what we want in Japan and in America and what we want for the rest of the world.

And so, what you do is of tremendous significance. What you do in explaining to the thousands of Americans who are here in Japan, what the Japanese who are here can do to explain to the millions of Japanese will not only be better for Japan and the United States, but will be better for the world.

And I congratulate you, I thank you, and I wish you well and may I offer a toast at this point to the Government of Japan and the millions and millions of Japanese.

END

(AT 5:15 P.M. Japan Time)