

FOURTH OF JULY 1996
TOKYO AMERICAN CLUB

I AM GLAD TO BE WITH YOU AGAIN TODAY AS WE CELEBRATE OUR NATION'S 220TH BIRTHDAY. I KNOW THAT ALL OF US WANT TO ESPECIALLY THANK THEIR IMPERIAL HIGHNESSES FOR BEING WITH US YET AGAIN TODAY. YOU ARE OUR MOST LOYAL ATTENDEES AND WE TRULY APPRECIATE YOUR PRESENCE. YOU REMIND US AGAIN OF THE IMPORTANCE AND THE STRENGTH OF THE US-JAPAN RELATIONSHIP.

AT GETTYSBERG, LINCOLN WONDERED WHETHER OUR NATION, OR ANY NATION, SO CONCEIVED, COULD LONG ENDURE. I BELIEVE THAT BY NOW THE ANSWER TO HIS QUESTION IS LOUD AND CLEAR: THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT HAS SUCCEEDED. WE ARE THE WORLD'S ONLY REMAINING SUPERPOWER, WE ARE THE WORLD'S LARGEST AND MOST PRODUCTIVE ECONOMY, WE ARE THE WORLD'S STRONGEST EXAMPLE OF A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC NATION, AND AMERICA MAY BE THE WORLD'S MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE OF LEADERSHIP TO ASSURE PEACE, PROSPERITY, HUMAN JUSTICE AND THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE HUMAN CONDITION.

MY POINT IS NOT TO BRAG FOR WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE PLENTY OF PROBLEMS, NOR IS IT TO GLOAT, FOR WE KNOW THAT OUR LEADERSHIP IN THE WORLD DEPENDS UPON WHAT WE ONCE CALLED "A DECENT RESPECT FOR THE OPINIONS OF MANKIND." WE WISH TO LEAD NOT BY COMMAND BUT BY OUR EXAMPLE AND THE STRENGTH OF OUR IDEALS AND PURPOSES.

RATHER MY BASIC POINT IS THAT AMERICA'S MOST IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD HAS BEEN ITS PROFOUND COMMITMENT TO INDIVIDUAL JUSTICE AND LIBERTY. WHEN WE ENDED THE TRAGIC CIVIL WAR WITH ALL OF ITS BLOOD AND HEARTACHE, LINCOLN SOUGHT TO HEAL OUR NATION AND TO REUNITE OUR UNION. BUT THAT WAS NOT ALL. LINCOLN PROCLAIMED THAT OUR PURPOSE WAS A NATION "CONCEIVED IN LIBERTY AND DEDICATED TO THE PROPOSITION THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL."

WHEN HE DECLARED OUR PROFOUND NATIONAL PURPOSE, AMERICA STOOD ALMOST ALONE AMONG THE GREAT POWERS IN ITS COMMITMENT TO PERSONAL LIBERTY AND JUSTICE. ENGLAND WAS JUST BEGINNING ITS MARCH TOWARD DEMOCRACY, RUSSIA WAS RULED BY A CZAR, GERMANY BY A HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE, JAPAN BY A

SHOGUN AND CHINA BY AN EMPEROR. IT WAS AMERICA THAT BEGAN THE GREAT WORLD MARCH TOWARD HUMAN FREEDOM. AND WHILE FAR TOO MANY PEOPLE STILL SUFFER FROM TYRANNY, THE MOMENTUM TOWARD FREEDOM ACROSS THIS TROUBLED GLOBE IS UNMISTAKABLE. I BELIEVE IT IS AMERICA'S MOST SACRED GIFT TO THE WORLD. AS THE TANKS RUMBLED DOWN TIANANMEN SQUARE, HER CHILDREN RAISED THE AMERICAN STATUE OF LIBERTY AS THEIR SYMBOL OF HOPE.

SO, AS WE CELEBRATE OUR NATION'S BIRTHDAY, LET US ALSO REAFFIRM THE SPECIAL AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO HUMAN LIBERTY AND DECENCY SO BASIC TO THE AMERICA IDEA.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY AND GOD BLESS AMERICA!

TOAST - "MAY I ASK YOU TO JOIN ME IN A TOAST TO HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF JAPAN"



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