

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Resignation of Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa of Japan
April 8, 1994

The President spoke with Prime Minister Hosokawa of Japan today at 9:40 a.m. for approximately 12 minutes. The President conveyed his regret at the Prime Minister's decision to resign and commended him for his commitment to political and economic reform in Japan. The President expressed his hope that the process of reform would continue in Japan. The President stated that he is confident that our strong bilateral relations with Japan will continue.

The President told Prime Minister Hosokawa, "I am confident that you will always be viewed as an historic Prime Minister who made great strides in helping Japan in a period of transition. You gave your people the courage to change."

The President intends to work closely with the new Prime Minister to improve the economic relationship with Japan and to implement fully the framework agreement, which remains a high priority and is very much in the interests of both countries.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks in a Town Meeting in Minneapolis
April 8, 1994

Angela Astore. Welcome to the Twin Cities and our town hall meeting. And thank you for this unique opportunity to answer questions about your health care program.

The President. Well, thank you for giving me the chance to do it. And I want to thank the people who are joining us from Milwaukee and Detroit and Sioux Falls, too.

Ms. Astore. We'd like you to start off the program perhaps with some opening remarks.

The President. I'll do that.

Randy Meier. We turn it over to you.

The President. Thank you.

First, let me say, I came here to Minneapolis late last night, and I started the day off with a rally for health care sponsored by

the Nurses Association of Minnesota. Over 2 million nurses in the American Nurses Association have endorsed our health care plan. And that's especially important to me because I started out my interest in health care because my mother was a nurse. And then many years ago when I started out in public life, I was an attorney general, and one of my jobs was to try to ensure good care within our nursing home system in my State. Then as a Governor, I had to worry about health care for the poor through the Medicaid program, something Minnesota and every other State has wrestled with.

About 4 years ago, a long time before I even thought I'd be running for President, I agreed to take a look at the health care system for the Nation's Governors to see what we could do about it. And at that time, I talked to literally 900 health care providers, doctors, nurses, hospital administrators, paramedical workers of all kinds, and a lot of business people and health care consumers, people in every kind of medical problem you can imagine. I became convinced then that unless we had a national solution to a lot of our health care problems, we wouldn't be able to solve them; that no State, even the most progressive State, could solve all the problems of the health care system without a national solution.

And let me just briefly say what I think the issues are, and a lot of them will be represented by people who are in our four audiences tonight. First of all, 39 million Americans don't have health insurance at all, ever, during the year. And about another 100,000 a month are losing their health insurance permanently. Secondly, at any given time in this Nation of about 260 million people, 58 million people won't have health insurance at some time during the year. Third—and it gets worse as we go along here—about 81 million of us live in families with so-called preexisting conditions, a child with diabetes, a mother with cancer, a father who had a heart attack early but still had to go back to work. Those families either can't get insurance, pay very high rates, or can never change their jobs because if they change jobs, they won't be able to get insurance in their new jobs. Fourth, small business people and self-employed people who have health insur-