

response to this flood. Director Witt is in California making sure disaster funds begin to flow quickly to help the people affected by the flood damage. These funds will help to begin the process of recovery.

Californians have a resilient spirit and great sense of community. You have shown over the past year during the earthquake, the fires, and now the current floods that you are a people that come together in times of crisis. The American people support you as you would them in a similar time of need. Our hearts are with the thousands of victims affected by the floods and the family members of those who have died.

NOTE: This statement was included in a White House statement announcing disaster assistance for California.

Radio Address to California Flood Victims

January 11, 1995

Last night I declared a major disaster in the State of California. The necessary assistance will be made available to thousands of victims of the flooding in both northern and southern California.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, is working closely with State and local officials to ensure a quick response to the flood. FEMA Director James Lee Witt is in California to ensure that disaster funds begin to flow quickly to the State. These funds will help to begin the process of recovery, and we'll be with you for the long haul.

I want to say a special word of thanks to all the young volunteers from AmeriCorps, our national service program, for the quick and good work they have done. Californians have proven over the last few years that they have a resilient spirit and a great sense of community. You have shown in the earthquake and the fires and now in these floods that you are a people who come together in times of crisis. The American people are with you.

Hillary and I send our thoughts and prayers to the thousands of victims, and we wish you well.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 9:20 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama of Japan

January 11, 1995

California Floods

Q. Mr. President, we know you're having this meeting, but can you help us with any comments on the situation in California?

The President. We're going to have a press conference after our lunch. I'd be happy to talk about it then. I talked with Mr. Witt last night at 1 a.m. in the morning our time, so I'm up to date. But I'd rather defer questions until our lunch, until our press conference after the lunch.

Japan

Q. Can you tell us if you do expect to make some progress here today given the political situation in Japan?

The President. When the Japanese press come through here, they may say, "Do you expect to make some progress here given the political situation in the United States?" [*Laughter*] Of course I do.

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Do you want to—what did you say? Sure. Should we have a handshake? It's a big table, but—[*laughter*].

[*At this point, the President and the Prime Minister shook hands. Then one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

California Floods

Prime Minister Murayama. I wish to extend my sincere condolence to the victims of the torrential rain and the flood in California.

The President. The people of California have suffered a lot in the last 2 years. They've had earthquakes, fires, and now floods. It's a very—it's a wonderful place to live, but they bear a great burden.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:28 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. Prime Minister Murayama spoke in Japanese, and his re-