

**Remarks at a Dinner Hosted by  
Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of  
Japan in Tokyo**  
*November 19, 1998*

Prime Minister, Mrs. Obuchi, members of the Japanese delegation, and honored guests. First, let me say on behalf of the American delegation, I thank you for your warm hospitality.

It is a pleasure to look around this room tonight and see so many friendly faces from my previous trips to Japan: your distinguished predecessors, your Ambassador and former Ambassadors, distinguished business leaders. The relationship between our two countries has always been important but never more important than now.

I, too, enjoyed our meeting in New York 2 months ago. Tonight I am delighted to be back in the Akasaka Palace. I also—Prime Minister, I feel terrible about the schedule which we are on together, but since you mentioned it, perhaps we can make sure that we both stay awake at the dinner tonight. *[Laughter]*

Let me say, in all seriousness, too, I was deeply honored to be received by the Emperor and the Empress today, and very much appreciated the visit that we had and the good wishes they sent to my family.

Since my last visit here in the spring of 1996, strong winds have blown across the world, disrupting economies in every region. There have also been threats to peace and stability, from acts of terrorism to weapons of mass destruction. Yet, the world has made progress in the face of adversity. It is more peaceful today than it was 2 years ago when I was here. Hope has come to Northern Ireland. Peru and Ecuador have resolved their longstanding dispute. Bosnia is building a self-sustaining peace. A humanitarian disaster has been averted in Kosovo, and the people there have, now, hope for regaining their autonomy. The Middle East is back on the long road to peace.

All of these areas of progress have one thing in common: They represent the triumph of a wide circle of nations working together, not only the nations directly affected but a community of nations that brings adversaries to the table to settle their differences.

Year-in and year-out, Japan's generous contributions to peacekeeping efforts and your eloquent defense of the idea of global harmony have gone far to make this a safer world. In Central America, you have provided disaster relief in the wake of Hurricane Mitch. I should say, Mr. Prime Minister, that I wish my wife were with me tonight, but she is there, where they had the worst hurricane disaster in 200 years. And I thank you for helping people so far from your home.

In the Middle East, you have contributed substantial funds to aid the peace process. In recent months you have further advanced the cause of peace by taking your relations with Asian neighbors to a new and significantly higher level of cooperation. And despite economic difficulties at home, you have contributed to recovery efforts throughout Asia. That is true leadership.

Now, Mr. Prime Minister, you have made difficult decisions to overcome your own economic challenges. The path back to growth and stability will require your continued leadership, but we hope to work with you every step of the way.

In dealing with these difficulties, Japan can lead Asia into a remarkable new century, a century of global cooperation for greater peace and freedom, greater democracy and prosperity, greater protection of our environment, greater scientific discovery and space exploration.

At the center of all our efforts is the strong bond between the people of the United States and the people of Japan. Our security alliance is the cornerstone of Asia's stability. Our friendship demonstrates to Asia and to the world that very different societies can work together in a harmony that benefits everyone.

Two fine examples of our recent cooperation are the new Asia Growth and Recovery Initiative that you and I recently announced, Prime Minister, and, as you mentioned, the space shuttle *Discovery*, which included your remarkable astronaut Chiaki Mukai. I understand that when Dr. Mukai spoke with you from space, Prime Minister, she offered the first three lines of a five-line poem, a tanka poem, and she invited the people of Japan to provide the final two lines. I want to try my hand at this.

As I understand it, her lines were:

*Spinning somersaults;  
Without gravity's limits  
In space flight with Glenn.*

I would add:

*All is possible on Earth and in the heavens  
When our countries join hands.*

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join me in a toast to the Prime Minister and Mrs. Obuchi and to the people of Japan.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:50 p.m. in the Kacho No Ma Banquet Hall at Akasaka Palace. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Obuchi's wife, Chizuko; and Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko of Japan. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Obuchi.

### **Proclamation 7149—National Great American Smokeout Day, 1998**

*November 19, 1998*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

One of the greatest public health threats facing Americans today is tobacco addiction and all the related health disorders that come with it. More Americans die every year from tobacco-related diseases than from AIDS, illegal drugs, alcohol, fires, car accidents, murders, and suicides combined. Although we have heard for decades the Surgeon General's warning that smoking kills, each day more than 3,000 young Americans become regular smokers—and more than 1,000 of them will die prematurely as a result.

This past April, the Surgeon General issued a new report on tobacco that underscores the urgent need for comprehensive legislation to reduce youth smoking. Over the past 6 years, youth smoking has grown by one-third, increasing by an alarming 80 percent among African American youth. Currently, more than 36 percent of high school students smoke, and recent statistics released by the Centers for Disease Control also reaffirm what we already know: nicotine creates an addiction that is extremely difficult to

overcome. Unfortunately, 86 percent of our young people who smoke daily and try to quit are unsuccessful, and casual teenage smokers—even those who smoke as few as three cigarettes a month—often go on to become regular smokers.

My administration has worked hard for comprehensive and effective tobacco legislation that will cut teen smoking. We will continue our efforts until the Congress has acted to pass such legislation. Our 1999 budget also includes an unprecedented increase in funding for research at the National Institutes of Health, and the National Cancer Institute plans to allocate millions of those dollars for research into prevention and cessation programs to reduce tobacco use.

Each year, the Great American Smokeout gives us the opportunity to do what we should do every day: raise awareness among all Americans—but especially among children and teens—of the dangers of smoking. Through such youth-related promotions as the Great American SmokeScream and the Great American Smokeout Pledge, we can encourage young people who smoke to stop, and we can convince those who don't smoke that they should never start. Adult smokers should also remember the power of personal example and make a sincere effort to stop smoking on this special day, taking an important step toward a better, healthier future.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton**, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 19, 1998, as National Great American Smokeout Day. I call upon all Americans to join together in an effort to educate our children about the dangers of tobacco use, and I urge both smokers and nonsmokers to take this opportunity to begin healthier lifestyles that set a positive example for young people.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence