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Last one, and this is for the Prime Minister.

Soviet-Japan Relations

Q. I'd like to ask a question regarding the Soviet Union. President Gorbachev of the Soviet Union will be visiting Japan. And I wonder in relation to that, you discussed during your meeting today—well, assistance for the Soviet Union. And together with that, I should also like to know whether you had any discussions on trade in technology with the Soviet Union?

The Prime Minister. With the upcoming summit meeting with President Gorbachev's visit to Japan, I did mention in general terms that we should like to take up as a major item on our bilateral agenda the resolution of the territorial issue between Japan and the Soviet Union, so that we shall be able to sign a peace treaty which will lead us toward a genuine friendship.

However, we did not discuss specifics such as technological assistance or economic assistance. I did explain our, shall I say, diplomatic schedule ahead of us with the Soviet Government and the North Korean Government which we would like to promote for the purpose of attaining peace, stability, and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.

The President. Well, I think we're a little behind schedule for the—no. No, no. [*Laughter*] But thank you.

Never get enough. Here we go. Thank you all very much.

Note: The President's 77th news conference began at 4:10 p.m. in Ballroom A of the Four Seasons Hotel. During the news conference, the following persons were referred to: President Saddam Hussein of Iraq and President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union. The Prime Minister spoke in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on Japan-United States Relations

April 4, 1991

I think back to when I met with Prime Minister Kaifu in Palm Springs last March—1 year and a world of change. Since then, we closed the last chapter on the cold war. We built a coalition that rescued a tiny nation from a terrible fate. We defended an ideal that is good and right and just.

But our work is far from finished. With change comes new challenges—for both our nations—with global implications for growth, stability, and peace.

Our two nations must work to forge a global partnership. And since last year's meeting in Palm Springs, we have made very real progress. In the past year, we have resolved significant trade disputes and we've moved to ease trade tensions.

We've made solid progress, opening new markets to satellites, telecommunications, and wood products. We need to move ahead now in construction services, autos and auto parts, semiconductors, and other areas. We need to prove that our efforts under the Structural Impediments Initiatives produce real results. It remains our best hope of fending off those who advocate managed trade between our nations.

Today, let us reaffirm our commitment to tear down the walls to free and fair trade, and build on the open exchange that helps both our nations.

Our efforts to expand free trade have produced real results. In 1990, the U.S. trade deficit with Japan fell for the third straight year. American exports to Japan continued to rise, up more than 75 percent since 1987. In fact, many Americans would be surprised to learn that Japan buys more goods from the United States per capita than we buy from Japan.

Together, our two nations share a special responsibility to maintain and strengthen the multilateral trading system. Japan and the United States are powerful forces for global prosperity. But we cannot promote continued growth in a world system where

free market forces are in retreat.

That is why the success of the Uruguay round trade talks is critical. Along with other nations, Japan and the United States must assume strong leadership roles in knocking down barriers to free trade in all areas, including agriculture. And once again, I call on the U.S. Congress to take decisive action, send a clear signal that America stands for free trade by extending Fast Track procedures.

Trade is just one dimension of our relationship. Last year, our two nations marked the 30th anniversary of our Mutual Security Treaty. Our commitment to common defense has never been stronger, and yet here, too, our longstanding alliance continues to adjust to new challenges and new realities. Just this January, in keeping with its growing economic might, Japan agreed to increase its share of the costs as host nation to American forces.

Let me be clear: The United States welcomes the broadest possible participation by Japan in world affairs. In the past year, we've seen a significant easing of tensions in Europe. I call on Japan to join with us in seeking solutions to regional conflicts that threaten stability in the Pacific. And I thank Japan as a key member of the coalition that triumphed over the forces of aggression in the Persian Gulf. For the first time, Japan contributed to a multinational peacekeeping effort, and it is providing a substantial level of financial support for Operation Desert Storm.

I welcome the visit of Prime Minister Kaifu. We must do all we can to build public support for our relationship and to promote contacts of every kind between the American and Japanese people. Just this last year, Japan's distinguished former Foreign Minister Abe announced the creation of a new foundation to promote exchanges that bring together academics and artists, that encourage tourism and travel.

For more than 40 years, Japan and the United States have been partners—partners in democracy, partners in prosperity, partners in peace. I am convinced that our meeting today proves that this partnership remains strong, that together we will constitute a source of stability, now and into the next century.

Note: The statement referred to Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu and former Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe of Japan.

Statement on Aid to Iraqi Refugees

April 5, 1991

The human tragedy unfolding in and around Iraq demands immediate action on a massive scale. At stake are not only the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women, and children but the peace and security of the Gulf.

Since the beginning of the Gulf war on August 2, the United States has contributed more than $35 million for refugees and displaced persons in the region. Many other countries have also contributed. It is clear, however, that the current tragedy requires a far greater effort. As a result, I have directed a major new effort be undertaken to assist Iraqi refugees.

Beginning this Sunday, U.S. Air Force transport planes will fly over northern Iraq and drop supplies of food, blankets, clothing, tents, and other relief-related items for refugees and other Iraqi civilians suffering as a result of the situation there.

I want to emphasize that this effort is prompted only by humanitarian concerns. We expect the Government of Iraq to permit this effort to be carried out without any interference.

I want to add that what we are planning to do is intended as a step-up in immediate aid, such as is also being provided by the British, the French, and other coalition partners. We will be consulting with the United Nations on how it can best provide for the many refugees in and around Iraq on a longterm basis as necessary. We will