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for our reemployment bill, and we have to find money for welfare reform. And under the budgeting rules of the Federal Government, we have to follow very strict procedures. We can't, for example, assume what I think is a reasonable reduction in welfare caseloads by the success of this reform. We can't assume what I think is a reasonable growth in the economy as a result of GATT. So we have very tough rules in terms of dedicating funds to this program.

And I had, myself, I had at least three long meetings on welfare reform, which major portions of the meeting were going over funding options as a result of the work Mr. Panetta did. So if you can find something better, I'll be glad to talk to you about it. But I can't say that I agree that there's a better way, because if I thought there was, I would have it there. I have, myself, been unsuccessful. But there are a lot of you who have proved over time that you're as creative and innovative as anybody in this country. So have at it, and see what you can come up with.

[*Mayor Abramson discussed the Department of Commerce's involvement in defense conversion and thanked the President for making the process easier in many cities.*]

The President. Thank you very much, Mayor. You know, we had tried very hard to do a couple of things with this base closing, based on the experiences I had as a Governor and what mayors and Governors all over the country talked to me about.

First is to bring Commerce in and to bring this whole notion of business development in. And the second is to change the rules by which the facilities are turned over to local communities to try to accelerate the process, to not let the environmental cleanup obligations delay it too long, to make the best financial deal we could to the mayors, and to make sure that we focused on creating jobs and opportunities to replace those that were lost.

I think the dramatic change in priorities that we've made is really going to make a difference. I was out in the Inland Empire area of California not very long ago, celebrating the successes that the communities are having there with one of their bases that they're now redeveloping.

We can do this all over America. These resources can be put to use to develop the economy of the 21st century. But the Federal Government is going to have to be much more aggressive and flexible and responsive in working with you. I think we're on the way, and I think the Commerce Department has a lot to do with that. But I also have to say that in the last year and a half, I have seen a dramatic change in the attitude of the Defense Department as well. So we're going to work hard and do our best to be there for you.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The teleconference began at 12:05 p.m. The President spoke from Room 459 in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Vera Katz of Portland, OR.

Remarks at the State Dinner for Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko of Japan

June 13, 1994

Ladies and gentlemen, Your Majesties, our other distinguished guests from Japan, ladies and gentlemen. We are honored and privileged to welcome this evening the Emperor and Empress of Japan.

You are no strangers to the United States, but it gives me particular pleasure to host you here at the White House on this, the occasion of your first visit to America since you ascended to the Chrysanthemum Throne.

As citizens of a relatively young nation, we Americans are honored by your presence, and we deeply value the rich culture and history you represent. You embody a tradition that stretches back century after century and a people who have brought the world a civilization of great elegance.

At a time when the call of tradition so often clashes with the demands of the modern world, Your Majesties revere your ancestors and your

past and, yet, revel in your own people's extraordinary ability to innovate for tomorrow.

Your personal interest in your nation's cultural heritage is matched by your vital curiosity about the world around you. And your travels have surely taken you far and wide. You have fully pursued professional knowledge, and yet, in your devotion to your family, you have set an example for us all. Through your words and deeds, Your Majesties have earned the respect and the admiration of the Japanese people. But those are sentiments we Americans also share.

Today, the ties that bind our two nations have never been stronger. The miracles of technology and the common search for democracy, prosperity, and peace have brought us together. Exchange between our two peoples has opened windows and shed great light. Yet, there is always more to learn. And as we gather here tonight in 1994, our relationship is still unfolding.

The Japanese poet Basho put it well in a haiku that sums up the distance ahead:

Nearing autumn's close,
My neighbor—how does he live?
I wonder.

May Your Majesties' visit provide new answers to that question and bring our peoples closer still. May your journey across our land be enjoyable and leave you wanting to visit us again. And may the sea that separates us be also a shining path between us.

Your Majesties, Hillary and I thank you for gracing our Nation's home tonight. It is with deep admiration and respect for you and the great nation you represent that I now ask all of us to raise our glasses to join in a toast to you and to the people of Japan.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:58 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks on Welfare Reform in Kansas City, Missouri
June 14, 1994

Thank you very much. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for that warm introduction and welcome. And thank you, Yolanda Magee, for presenting me today and, far more importantly, for presenting such a good example of a young American determined to be a good parent and a good worker and a successful citizen. Thank you, Mr. Kemper, for giving her a chance to be all that. Thank you, Congressman Wheat, for your leadership on welfare reform. And thank you, Mayor Cleaver, for your leadership on this issue. Thank you, Governor Carnahan, for proving once again that the States, just as James Madison and Thomas Jefferson intended, are still the laboratories of democracy, still capable of leading the way to change things that don't work in this country and to unleash the potential of our citizens. This is a remarkable welfare reform plan that you have put together. I'd like to thank also Secretary Shalala for her work here. Many people in the White House and in the Department of Health and Human Services worked with people all over America in putting this welfare reform plan together today. I thank them all.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is an important day for me because I have worked on this issue for about 14 years, and I care a great deal about it. I came out here to the heart of America, to a bank where Harry Truman had his first job, to talk about the values that sustain us all as citizens and as Americans, faith and family, work and responsibility, community and opportunity.

Last week, on behalf of all Americans, I took a journey of remembrance—many of you, at least, took it too through the television—to honor the sacrifices of the people who led our invasions at D-Day and on the Italian Peninsula. I came home from Normandy with a renewed sense, which I hope all of you share, of the work that we have to do in this time to be worthy of the sacrifices of that generation and to preserve this country for generations still to come.

The people who won World War II and rebuilt our country afterward were driven by certain bedrock values that have made our country the strongest in history. Facing the dawn of