

to accompany the first Japanese diplomatic delegation to the United States in the spring of 1860. President Buchanan hosted these Japanese envoys with a state banquet. Tens of thousands of Americans turned out to see them in Baltimore and Philadelphia, hundreds of thousands of Americans filled the streets of New York City as their parade went by, and our great poet Walt Whitman immortalized this event in a poem called "A Broadway Pageant."

Today, our contacts are more common so they don't attract so much notice, but they are very important. We see them in the Japanese students who attend our universities, in the American schoolchildren the Emperor and Empress met when they came to the United States who spend half of each day learning Japanese. We see it in your great gift to American baseball, Hideo Nomo, and in Americans like Terry Bross who come to Japan to play baseball. We see it in the Fulbright program that celebrates its 50th anniversary this year and more than four decades here in Japan.

We see it in the business leaders who come from America to Japan to work and in the fine Japanese business leaders who come to the United States and establish plants and put our people to work. We see it in the friendships

which have developed over time. One such friendship was celebrated last night when a delegation of Americans headed by our former United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young and Mrs. Coretta Scott King, the widow of Dr. Martin Luther King, came here and met with Japanese friends to honor the life and the service of the late Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown, and other Americans who perished in that terrible crash in Bosnia just a few days ago. And I thank you on their behalf for that friendship.

As I said to the Diet a few moments ago, because of the power of our economies and the depth of our devotion to freedom and democracy, Japan and the United States must forge a partnership for leadership in the 21st century. But we should all remember that if we are to succeed as partners and as allies, we must first be friends. It is that friendship which I honor today and which I dedicate myself to strengthening.

I ask now that we join in a toast to the Prime Minister and Mrs. Hashimoto and to the people of Japan.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:20 p.m. at the Hotel New Otani.

Remarks on Arrival in St. Petersburg, Russia *April 18, 1996*

Tragedy in Lebanon

Mayor Sobchak, Governor Belyakov, Commander Seleznev, representatives of the Russian Federation, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for this welcome to St. Petersburg. I am very pleased to begin my visit to Russia here, a city so alive with promise and possibility. I have looked forward to this day for a long time, and I very much look forward to my opportunity to see the city tomorrow.

Let me begin, however, by saying I arrive at a somber moment. On behalf of the American people, I want to express my deepest condolences to the Government of Lebanon and to the families of those who were killed and wounded this morning in south Lebanon. I also offer my condolences to the Government of Fiji

over the casualties among its U.N. peacekeeping personnel.

Today's events make painfully clear the importance of bringing an end to the current violence in Lebanon. To achieve that goal I call upon all parties to agree to an immediate ceasefire. An end to the fighting is essential to allow our diplomatic efforts to go forward.

Before leaving Tokyo, I directed Secretary of State Christopher to travel to the Middle East to work out a set of understandings that would lead to an enduring end to this crisis. Special Middle East Coordinator Dennis Ross will travel to the region in advance of Secretary Christopher to begin this process.

Resolving the current situation will not only stop human suffering, it will help us all to make further progress toward our goal of a com-

prehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East. But let me say again, we should begin with an immediate cease-fire.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 p.m. at Pulkova Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anatoliy Aleksandrovich Sobchak of St. Petersburg; Gov. Aleksandr Belyakov of Leningrad Oblast; and Comdr. Sergei Seleznev, Leningrad Military District.

Remarks at a Wreath-Laying Ceremony in St. Petersburg *April 19, 1996*

Mayor Sobchak, Commander Seleznev, Director Shoshmin, ladies and gentlemen. We gather in this place as friends to remember the sacrifice of those who made our shared victory over fascism in World War II possible. In this cemetery lie the victims of the siege of Leningrad. For 900 days and 900 nights, the citizens here wrote with their blood and defiance one of the greatest chapters in all the history of human heroism. This place is testimony to all the Russian people gave and all they lost in the great struggle of World War II. It calls out to all of us, Russians and Americans alike, to work together in peace for the common good for all our people and for the world.

Mr. Mayor, here in this brave and beautiful city of St. Petersburg, we Americans are thousands of miles from home. But on this day, April 19th, 1996, our hearts must be very close to home and to the sadness and sacrifice of our own citizens. For it was exactly one year ago today that a bomb destroyed the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City and struck at the very heart of America.

The people who fell under the rubble of that building were ordinary Americans, men and women going about their jobs, working hard to provide for their families. They were Government workers dedicating their lives to helping people make the most of their own lives. They were daycare providers, looking out for and teaching our young children, and they were our

children, full of promise and wonder, the pride and joy of their parents, the lifeblood of our future.

Today, in the somber spirit of this magnificent memorial to Russia's unforgotten and unforgettable sacrifice, I ask every American to join in a national moment of silence for the victims of Oklahoma City.

The loss we suffered in Oklahoma City reminds us all that when peace is broken, life itself becomes fragile. And so today, as we remember the staggering losses of the Russian people in World War II and the Americans who died in Oklahoma City, we pray, too, for an end to violence and the restoration of peace in the Middle East and everywhere where neighbors still fight over their ethnic and religious differences.

Let us pause to give thanks for the freedoms, old and new, that now bless our lives. And let us pause to pray for those who lost their lives to freedom's enemies, and for those whose tomorrows can still be saved, if we are wise enough and strong enough to find peace.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 a.m. at the Piskaryevskoye Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anatoliy Aleksandrovich Sobchak of St. Petersburg; Comdr. Sergei Seleznev, Leningrad Military District; and Alexander Shoshmin, director, Piskaryevskoye Cemetery.