

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori of Japan May 5, 2000

The President. Good morning.

Visit of Prime Minister Mori

Q. What are you going to talk about?

The President. Well, we're going to talk about our relationship, which is very, very important to both of us. I'm delighted to have Prime Minister Mori here and anxious to have this chance to visit, and I'm also very much looking forward to going to Okinawa to the G-8 meeting this year. So we have a lot to visit about.

Q. Is this your first meeting?

The President. Yes. It's our first official meeting, yes. We met briefly once before.

Q. Mr. President, do you intend to talk about trade and especially the telecommunication dispute?

The President. We're going to talk about everything, I hope—everything we have time to talk about.

Q. What's your view of the Japanese economy?

The President. I think it's getting better, and we're going to talk about what the future is. We support a strong Japanese economy. I think there are a lot of inherent strengths in the economy, most of all in the people and the level of skill and education and capacity to grow. I believe that they will return to big growth, I hope sooner rather than later.

Q. Mr. President, what's your message to the people of Okinawa?

National Economy

Q. Mr. President, the American economy, is it overheating?

The President. Well, the inflation report yesterday was quite good. And as you know, this morning the unemployment report is wonderful news for the American people, the lowest in over 30 years now. So I'm hopeful, because combined with yesterday's inflation report, the news is good, and we just have to keep on a steady course, keep working.

Okinawa

Q. Mr. President, what's your message to the people of Okinawa when you go there in July? Are you willing to talk with them and explain to them why we need to maintain all those U.S. bases in Okinawa?

The President. I hope I'll have a chance to speak with them, and I want to talk to the Prime Minister about how we should do that. But we tried to be sensitive to the concerns of the people and to be highly respectful. And where mistakes have been made, we've tried to correct them, and we will continue to do that.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:57 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on the Employment Report and an Exchange With Reporters May 5, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. In a few moments I will depart for a meeting with the Senate Democrats in Pennsylvania, where we will discuss ways to keep our economy strong and our Nation moving in the right direction.

Before I leave, I'd like to share the latest good news about our economy. This morning, we received the news that we have achieved 3.9 percent unemployment. That is the lowest

peacetime unemployment since 1957. That was the year the Dodgers last played ball in Brooklyn.

Most Americans have never lived in a peacetime economy with unemployment as low as it is today—indeed, its lowest rate overall in over 30 years. Over the last 7 years, our Nation has created 21 million new jobs, cut the unemployment rate almost in half.