

Provisional Translation

Statement by Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi

00:50 am

1 January 2000

A very happy New Year to you all!

As the curtain goes up on this twelfth year of the Heisei Era, the year 2000, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a fulfilling New Year.

I would now like to report to you on where we stand as far as the so-called Y2K computer issue.

First of all, I am indeed very happy to be able to inform you that it appears that so far that have been no serious problems posing any major threat to the people of Japan. We know for sure that as the clock passed midnight operations at the following basic infrastructure facilities were basically running smoothly: all power companies, the major city gas companies, NTT, NHK and other major broadcasting stations based in Tokyo, all drinking water facilities in Tokyo and other designated large cities across the country, the thirty-seven major railway companies, all air traffic control facilities in operation, all primary signaling devices throughout Japan, as well as all nuclear fuel facilities currently in operation, including all nuclear power plants.

Furthermore there have been no reports of any large-scale inconveniences in other sectors. In fact I understand that the emergency telephone numbers in Tokyo and other designated large cities around our nation have received no more reports than they do on an average year.

It seems that in certain areas there are cases where it is proving difficult to use mobile telephones and that people are having trouble placing international telephone calls to the Republic of the Philippines. However, I can tell you that this was not caused by Y2K, but rather was due to a sudden increase of congratulatory phone calls, which were placed precisely at midnight. Given our experience with this tendency in other years I am quite sure that the situation will be resolved in due course.

As many of you know, New Zealand started the New Year four hours before us. Earlier this evening just after 20:30 Tokyo time, I personally received reports

from the Japanese Ambassador to New Zealand about the situation there and since then we have received steady reports from our Embassy. There do not seem to be any major problems.

The rollover into the New Year is taking place well without any major disturbances. I know that this is the result of united efforts by corporate workers and government officials, with the fine cooperation of the citizens throughout our nation who have worked night and day to ensure that all necessary preparations were in place.

I can assure you that the Government will be vigilant in monitoring the situation to ensure that there are no Y2K related problems. I would also like to ask all of those who are involved to maintain every precaution and continue to ensure that no problems occur.

Finally, may I wish you all once again a happy and prosperous New Year.