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Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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8:00 P.M. September 15 - Shimoda (Tokyo), Japan
7:00 A.M. (EDT) September 15 - Washington, D. C., USA
ADDRESS OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONTANA)

before the
Japanese-American Assembly
Shimoda, Japan
Friday, September 15, 1967

U. S.-JAPANESE RELATIONS:
Properties, Problems, and Prospects

It is a long way from Washington to Shimoda but Mrs. Mansfield and I were delighted with the opportunity to make the journey. As we anticipated on the basis of past visits, a brief exposure to Japanese hospitality has served to dissolve the great distances. We are happy to be with you and I am deeply moved by the privilege of addressing this distinguished gathering.

Each of us who is in attendance has come to Shimoda for a different complex of reasons. Yet I believe we are also drawn here by a common consideration. It is that we attach a high significance to the preservation of good relations between Japan and the United States. Most of us are old enough to remember a time and pain when these relations had deteriorated to such a degree that they were, in the end, consumed by war. We can remember the gulf of devastation over which it was necessary to try to build a bridge of conciliation.
After the conflict, we did try and we managed—Japanese and Americans—to construct that bridge. For two decades, effective ties have been maintained between our countries. They are ties which have enriched our lives and contributed to the prosperity and progress of both nations. They are ties which have been a mighty factor in the preservation of the peace of the Pacific.

I think the question which should engage us most profoundly at this time is whether we can continue in the pattern of the past two decades. Can the effectiveness of the U.S.-Japanese relationship persist, in the decade ahead, even as the ties themselves are woven into new forms for new times?

If the source of U.S.-Japanese relations were solely contacts among those attending this Japanese-American Assembly, the question would pose no dilemmas. Without any hesitation, the properties of U.S.-Japanese relations could then be described as excellent, the problems as negligible and the prospects as unlimited.

The same would be true if it were simply a matter of commerce between Japan and the United States. The two nations buy and sell from one another with great liberality. Current trade is at a new high level and on a very profitable mutual basis. Japan is second in the world after Canada, as a purchaser of U.S. exports. The United States, in turn, takes something like 30 per cent of all of Japan's exports. Japanese industrial techniques, moreover, are highly respected and the products of Japan's brilliant design are currently very much in demand in the United States.

If I may digress, I can personally attest to the great acceptability of these products. My ears have become attuned
to the subtle difference between the "putt-putt" of a Honda and that of a Suzuki and the "purr-purr" of a Datsun and that of a Toyota. These and other Japanese vehicles are to be found in considerable numbers and are in great favor in most of the neighborhoods of the United States--except late at night.

Insofar as trade is concerned, then, any difficulties between Japan and the United States would seem to be more in the nature of removable irritants rather than major headaches. The sum of Japanese-U.S. relations, however, is not calculated solely on the computers of commerce. Nor is the tone of the relationship established only by the warm dialogues of groups such as this Japanese-American Assembly. The relationship, rather, reflects the continuous flow of change within each nation and takes form in the complex international politics of the Western Pacific and the world.

Let me emphasize that the thoughts which I am about to voice are those of one Senator of the United States. I do not speak for the Senate of the United States or any segment of its Membership. Nor do I speak for the President of the United States even though we are of the same political party. I speak for myself and only myself. But I speak freely and frankly, as a student, a teacher and a Member of the Senate who has been deeply concerned for many years with the problems of foreign relations.

In asserting this independence, I would not wish to create the impression that the Senate is in constant conflict with the Executive Branch of the United States government. Seen from this distance and through the prisms of the press that may sometimes
appear to be the case. The reality, however, is to the contrary. The President of the United States and the Senate are in frequent consultation and far more often than not, in agreement. The United States government, in short, proceeds most of the time, with its component bodies moving in separate orbits but in substantial harmony. That is true in matters of foreign policy no less than domestic policy.

I stress these systemic details, because I wish to emphasize that I am not here to transmit the official views of the United States government. Only the President and his emissaries are able to speak in that fashion. I am here as all of us are here—as an interested person. I am here to express to you my understanding, my concern and my hope for U. S.-Japanese relations. I am here in the expectation of returning to the United States with new and enriched insights into these relations.

With that as background, let me say first, that the official U.S.-Japanese relationship appears to me to be satisfactory at this time. If the bell does not ring perfectly in every instance, nevertheless, it continues to ring with a certain mellowness of tone. I have already alluded to the value and mutuality of our commercial contacts. It can be noted, too, that our governments do not denounce each other in communiques. On the contrary, our diplomats work together with civility and understanding.

Over the years these public servants who are at the very tip of contact between the two nations have met their responsibilities with great energy, high skill and exceptional dedication. We have been particularly fortunate in the caliber of the Ambassadors who have served both countries. Professor Reischauer, for
example, is widely regarded in the United States and by both the Administration and the Senate as one of the most effective representatives our country has ever sent abroad. Ambassador Takeuchi, who recently returned to Japan after a four year assignment was greatly admired in the United States for, as was said in a Washington newspaper, "his good sense, good manners, and good diplomacy." The present Ambassadors, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Shimada, are the inheritors of an exemplary tradition to which they are in the process of adding contributions.

An able diplomacy, then, has been a critical element in fashioning the effective ties which exist between Japan and the United States. Over the years, it has been a diplomacy which has faced difficulties in a temperate fashion. It has been a diplomacy which has devised timely adjustments of policies to meet these difficulties.

That kind of diplomacy is an imperative if the quality of the U. S.-Japanese relationship is to endure in the new situation which is emerging in the Western Pacific. Perhaps "new situation" is not precisely the term. What is transpiring in this region, as I see it, is a reassertion of an historic situation in up-to-date form.

The decisive element in the new situation is the re-emergence of Japan. Great material strength is, of course, a part of this development. The Japanese economy has displayed an extraordinary dynamism which has already restored this nation to the first rank of the industrialized nations of the world.
Yet there is more involved than economic virtuosity. An emergent Japanese leadership, I believe, derives a world-wide acceptability from new and perceptive approaches to the rest of the world and its needs. These approaches may well have been forged in the tragedy of World War II and tempered by the profound postwar experiences of this nation.

In this context, Japan's enormous achievements in every field of modern human endeavor have special relevance to the old-new nations of Asia and to the entire world in the search for human progress and a stable peace. Japan is already making significant contributions in the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations and in other regional and world-wide organizations. The Japanese nation can play, if it so chooses, a part of even greater importance, particularly in the process of integrating an economic modernization with a responsible nationalism, within a framework of multilateral cooperation.

The unfolding of the international capabilities of Japan has coincided with a degree of redirection in the American effort with respect to the underdeveloped nations. There has been a kind of dovetailing of adjustments as between Japanese and U. S. policies in connection with economic development, with the one rising towards its potential and the other falling from what has long been, in my judgment, an abnormal level, particularly in this part of the world.

There has also been a dovetailing of policies with regard to the defense of the Western Pacific. Over the years, significant adjustments have been made in the largely unilateral
American military base upon which this defense has rested. It is not so long ago, for example, that there were tens of thousands of American soldiers quartered in every part of Japan. It is not so long ago, that these forces constituted the only military defense of Japan. It is not so long ago, too, that this nation served as a point of departure for massive American forces bound for the war in Korea.

As you know, all this has changed. May I say that it is a relief to the people of the United States that it is no longer necessary to keep massive forces in Japan and I expect that that is also a relief to the people of Japan.

Other changes of this kind will be made by an alert diplomacy, I am sure, as the desirability is indicated. With respect to Okinawa, obviously, the need for an adjustment seems to be coming to the surface at this time.

Before considering this question, let me stress the urgency of keeping open minds on all aspects of the U.S.-Japanese relationship if the open doors of essential cooperation are not to close. We must face change if changes are indicated in any and every aspect of the relationship. We must be prepared to face changes before change is forced upon us by events.

The Okinawan problem, you will recall, arises from the fact that certain clauses were left dangling, so to speak, in the Peace Treaty of 1951. Those clauses involve not only the status of the Ryukyus but also of the Bonins and Volcanos. As I understand the problem, there is no question that these territories are Japanese within the meaning of the Peace Treaty. A question arises, however, as to the date—the timing—of the transfer of full authority from the United States to Japan. A question also arises
as to the possibility of interim adjustments in administration before the final return of the islands.

With regard to the Bonins and the Volcanos, let me say that I am not aware of any circumstances so compelling as to require an indefinite postponement of the liquidation of the Treaty commitment. There are no major U. S. military installations there and strategic considerations do not appear to be involved in any significant way. In sum, there would appear to be no major blocks—at least I know of none—to the restoration of the Bonins and the Volcanos to Japan as required by the Peace Treaty. It would appear, moreover, that this piece of unfinished business of the Treaty could be closed out not only without difficulties but also without delay.

I wish that the same might be said for Okinawa and the Ryukyus. Since there is a problem in this connection, it seems to me that a full consideration of the situation is in order. The absence of frank exchange of views, in the open, on Okinawa has given rise to rumors and innuendos. These hints seem to me to distort the motives of the United States and certainly do not contribute to the cordiality of U. S.-Japanese relations.

It has been said, for example, that the United States clings to the Ryukyus because of the war in Viet Nam. Of course, Okinawa is of importance to the United States in this connection. We have over half-a-million men involved in Southeast Asia. Our military installations on Okinawa serve as one source of supply for these forces, and we are determined that these men shall not lack supplies. That is not to say that there are no alternative ways by which their needs may be met. In my judgment, therefore, it is quite inaccurate to ascribe the problem of Okinawa to Viet Nam.
It has also been suggested that the United States desires to use the Ryukyus as some sort of bargaining chit in the extension of the Japanese-U. S. Defense Treaty. I do not know whether the Defense Treaty will be modified a few years hence and, if so, in what way.

It should be obvious, however, that the American government would not be so crass as to use the well-being of the people of the Ryukyus for some vague bargaining purposes in connection with the review of the Treaty. What could be sought and obtained by that course which would be of significant value to the United States? The assertion that the U. S. will seek to bend the Japanese viewpoint in treaty revision with the lever of Okinawa is as uninformed as it is unfounded. Even the thought that such could be the case is out of harmony with the entire character of Japanese-U. S. relations during the past few years.

To be sure, there are difficulties with regard to the return of the Ryukyus. They involve, however, not transitory considerations or base motives but very fundamental questions. These questions have to do with the uncertainty of the general security needs in the Western Pacific in the years ahead. They have to do with Japan's safety no less than that of the United States and other Asian-Pacific nations. They have to do with the relevance, today, of the defense concepts which prevailed at the time of the signing of the Japanese-U. S. Defense Treaty a decade and a half ago. They have to do with the nature of the American role in the Western Pacific in the decade or decades ahead--with what is expected of us by Japan and others as a defense contribution in this region.
Let me say bluntly in this connection that it would be only in an inertia of intellect, that we would fail to grasp the significant differences in the Western Pacific today as compared with 15 years ago or even ten or five. Consider for a moment the change in the very positioning of American military power. Fifteen years ago, as I have already noted, U. S. strength was concentrated largely in Japan and it had converged with a great force of men and equipment on the peninsula of Korea. Where is it now? To be sure, there are still points of power north of Okinawa. But the focus of the U. S. military role in the Western Pacific has shifted south to Viet Nam at the other end of the Asian littoral.

Consider, too, the extraordinary change in the character of relations between China and the Soviet Union. You will recall that these two nations signed a Defense Treaty in 1950 on the basis of unbreakable Communist solidarity and an implacable hostility towards the United States and Japan. Today, the fury of Peking comes down—as the rain—impartially upon the Soviet Union and the United States. Today, the monolith of Sino-Soviet relations which stood until Stalin's death lies shattered by border quarrels and by ideological and other clashes between the two great mainland powers. Yet only a few years ago, it was commonly believed that, through communism, Russia had fastened a permanent yoke on the Chinese people. The fact is that there is not even a common ideology within China, much less one which binds the Chinese forever in subservience to the Russians.

I cite the disintegrative characteristics of the Chinese situation and the Sino-Soviet relationship not with any pleasure. I am not at all sure what consequences will flow from them in the end. Rather I make reference to them because they are
profound elements in the changing situation in the Western Pacific. In a similar vein, I would note certain constructive adjustments which are taking place in this region. There is, for example, the more balanced view of Japan which has developed in Moscow and appeared to be developing in Peking at least until the outbreak of the current inner difficulties in China. There is the complementary effort of Japan to build bridges to its mainland neighbors. Together the two adjustments have produced an impressive increase in contact between China and Japan and between the Soviet Union and Japan, particularly in the realm of commerce.

If I am not mistaken, China now ranks fourth in the world in Japan's foreign trade with a current total volume of about $600 million. With respect to the Soviet Union, it is my understanding that not only is there a very substantial and growing Japanese trade but the general tone of the relationship has so improved that it has become feasible even to contemplate a joint Soviet-Japanese development of the natural resources of Sakhalin and Siberia.

These new trends have emerged from what was, just a few years ago, a sea of fear between Japan and the Northeast Asian mainland. They would appear to herald the return of more normal relationships in this region. Normal, in the sense in which it is used would involve the return of Japan, China and the Soviet Union to the center of the stage, so to speak, in the affairs of the Western Pacific. In view of the history of this region, it should not be surprising if this inner triangular relationship should be reasserted.

Indeed, it would be my hope that the changes which are appearing in this connection will permit the role of the United
States in this region also to be scaled to more normal dimensions. The United States did not seek the massive role in which we have found ourselves in the Western Pacific for so many years. Rather it was the exigencies of World War II and its aftermath which thrust us deeply into this region. A restoration of a more stable situation as between China and Japan and Japan and the Soviet Union would appear to me to be helpful to the United States in the adjustment of its own position.

At this point, however, we still do not know whether the developments which I have been discussing foreshadow a more stable situation in the Western Pacific. We still do not know whether they foreshadow a situation in which the demands on U. S. military power in this region can be reduced.

There are, in any event, no certain responses to such questions. There can only be sound judgments. It seems to me that Japan and the United States should come together to try to make joint calculations respecting these developments. It seems to me that the two nations should do so without undue delay, on behalf of their common security and the peace of the Western Pacific.

Such calculations would also have relevance to the problem of the Ryukyus. That is not to say that security calculations are especially pertinent to the non-military aspects of this question. I cannot see, for example, that it is necessary to clarify the ambiguities of the Sino-Soviet dispute, in order to give consideration to the possibilities of a restoration of Japanese jurisdiction over islands in the Ryukyus, other than Okinawa. Nor do I see that we have to be assured that the fragile new bridges which stretch
between Japan and the Soviet Union and between Japan and China will stand for all times in order to give consideration to Japanese participation in the administration of the civilian affairs of Okinawa, provided we bear in mind the great necessity for safeguarding the effectiveness of the military installations which are located there.

As I have suggested, however, the ultimate disposition of the Okinawa question does involve a sober and joint estimate of the significance of major developments and changes in the Western Pacific. An estimate of that kind, in turn, requires a better understanding of Soviet intentions in the Northeast Pacific. It requires a better understanding of the upheavals within China and their relevance not only for the Sino-Soviet Defense Treaty of 1950 but also for the Japanese-U.S. Defense Treaty. It requires, finally, a better understanding of nuclear development in China and the prospects for curbing by agreement the grave risks which are posed by nuclear weapons to the Western Pacific and the world.

One would expect that our joint understanding of these matters would be improved in connection with review of the Japanese-U. S. Defense Treaty a few years hence. However, it is not necessary to sit on our hands until that time. It occurs to me that the problem of Okinawa itself provides a sufficient basis for beginning now a joint consideration of the security questions of the Western Pacific. It occurs to me, too, that consideration might also be given to inviting the Soviet Union to join with the United States and Japan in joint examination of these questions. Would not tripartite discussions of this kind be of value in clarifying them? Indeed, I should think even that quadripartite meetings, to
include China, would be useful, except for the turmoil which exists at this time on the Chinese mainland.

The illumination which would be provided by tripartite discussions of Japan, the Soviet Union, and the United States might help to provide a more rapid conclusion of the Ryukyus question. One would hope that it might also hasten a final resolution of the question of Etorofu and Kunashiri and of Shikotan and the Habomais. In sum, a tripartite meeting might speed the liquidation of all vestiges of the unfinished business of World War II and give more durable form to the peace of the Pacific. And may I add, two decades after, that it is about time.

I make the suggestion to an American-Japanese discussion group that there might well be three-way discussions of problems of the Western Pacific which would include the Soviet Union because I am confident that the Japanese and the Americans here share a hope for the peace of the Pacific. I am confident, too, that we share a realization of our obligation, as human beings, to work together through our respective nations and with all other nations for that peace and for world peace, to the end that there shall be no end to the civilized experience on this planet.