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AMBASSADOR'S ADDRESS
TO TOHOKU JAPAN-AMERICA SOCIETY
JULY 18, 1979

This is my first visit to this part of Japan and I am enjoying every minute of it. Yesterday, we drove down from Misawa through some beautiful countryside and impressive scenic spots. Some places reminded me of my home state of Montana, which is roughly the same size as Japan but sparsely populated in comparison. I noticed a great many rice fields as we traveled through Miyagi Prefecture, and I was told that the locally grown rice is famous for its high quality and excellent taste.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Tohoku Japan-America Society for having celebrated their 20th anniversary this past March. I know that you have contributed a great deal to increasing understanding between our two countries.

Our two countries over the past two decades have forged a special bond of partnership and interdependence. I have been deeply impressed by how closely our two nations are able to work together despite wide gulfs in language, culture and history. It is a tribute to the maturity of our relationship that we can accommodate each other in spite of the occasional clash of sectoral interests. I think it is important to bear in mind the complete range and depth of our relations, even when our pre-occupations may be in one particular area.

United States-Japan relations are robust enough to ^{be} tested ₁ by problems. We have recently faced such circumstances in the

economic field, just as in the not too distant past our defense ties were a source of strain in the relationship. We have made the necessary extra commitment to find solutions to those economic problems and to move beyond them. It is unlikely that we will ever be without problems in the economic field, but I am confident we will be able to handle them -- it has yet to be proven that any problem is beyond our capacity to resolve if we work together. We must continue to be true friends, at all times understanding of each other's difficulties and differences.

Miyagi Prefecture has a particularly long history of interest in international commerce. In 1613, Date Masamune had the foresight to send a personal envoy to Mexico, Rome and Madrid in an effort to initiate trade across the Pacific Ocean. Although Masamune's dream did not come true during his lifetime, trade between Sendai and the rest of the world has grown steadily. I am sure that with the opening of the Sendai New Port in 1971 there ^{will} ~~will~~ ^{be} ~~be~~ ^{an} ~~an~~ increased pace of economic development and trade. I know of your interest in attracting new investments, and that you are telling Americans about the opportunities here in Sendai for American investment. I will encourage American companies to study carefully the advantages of investing here. I believe there exist great opportunities for American business here in northern Japan, and I hope that as the economic and commercial center of the Tohoku region, Sendai can play a special role in expanding our trade.

Sendai will be visited this October by the Shin Sakura Maru, a floating department store stocked with American apparel, housewares and sporting goods. The purpose of its visit here will be

to introduce to you the full range and quality of American products offered at reasonable prices. The products on sale aboard the ship will be available at very competitive prices because many of these goods are being supplied directly by the American manufacturer. We hope that this unique marketing method will show the consumers of Japan how inexpensively American products can be brought to them. We also hope that the Japanese people will increase their demand for more access to American consumer goods.

The Shin Sakura Maru project is an important initiative being taken as part of a high priority of the United State -- to increase exports to Japan. As such, it is a follow-up to last fall's Export Development Missions. As you know, our trade deficit with Japan has recently greatly improved. However, it behooves us all to continue our efforts to reduce the imbalance in trade. The problem is not one that will disappear through benign neglect. I urge all of you in this room to help us make it a success which will benefit the Japanese consumer and will strengthen U.S.-Japan commercial ties.

Let me conclude by reemphasizing the fact that our friendship is strong, and the web of mutual interests and common objectives between us is broad. Together, the United States and Japan will contribute even more significantly in the future than we have in the past to peace and progress in the Pacific and East Asia.

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