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PRESS RELEASE

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REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR MIKE MANSFIELD TO THE
FUKUOKA JAPAN-AMERICA SOCIETY
November 14, 1977

Governor Kamei, Mayor Shindo, President of the Japan-America Society Yoshimoto, President of the Fukuoka Chamber of Commerce Arikawa, honored guests and ladies and gentlemen:

It is indeed a pleasure for me to address you here this evening. I wish to thank Mr. Yoshimoto for his kind remarks.

This morning as my plane began descending and I looked out on the industry, the farmland, the mountains and the sea of Kyushu, my thoughts went back to 1922, when I first set foot in Japan at the city of Nagasaki. Then, as now, I was impressed by the scenic beauty of this part of Japan. Then, as now, I was even more impressed by the vitality and dynamism of the people of Kyushu. It is no wonder that its land and people are considered as the cradle of Japanese civilization. From here came the people who would unite Japan. From here Japanese culture would spread northward and eastward to form the basis of the Japanese nation. And from here would ply the ships which made Kyushu a gateway for commerce with the rest of Asian civilization and, ultimately, with the nations of the West. I am happy to be

back, to view again the beauty of the region, to see the changes that have taken place, and to talk with you here this evening. I understand there are now 14 million people on Kyushu and its surrounding islands, and that your annual gross regional product is equivalent to the combined GNP's of Taiwan, South Korea, the Philippines and Thailand. I also understand your farms produce two crops a year at one of the highest yields per acre in the world, and your industry is among the most efficient in the world. These are remarkable achievements. They underscore the importance of the region both to Japan and to the world and they also attest to the imagination and hard work of the people of Kyushu.

It is particularly gratifying that I begin my visit to this historic area by coming to Fukuoka - one of the most historic cities in all Japan. A great and long-standing center of culture and commerce, for a millennium a gateway to China and Korea, Fukuoka today stands as living testimony to the mutual benefits deriving from economic and cultural exchanges. It is in recognition of your achievements that the International Conference of Mayors, during a recent meeting in Seattle, chose Fukuoka as the site of their 1979 convention. It is a site well chosen. I am also very impressed by all that I have heard about your sister-city relationship with Oakland, California, particularly

the exchange activities you have had over the years.

I understand that the Japan-America Society, as well as many of the other organizations represented here, are engaged in cultural exchange programs, and that student exchanges are an important part of your efforts. I wish these programs every success. They benefit the individuals participating as well as their hosts. Furthermore, a Japanese or American youth with the opportunity of spending a period of time in the other's country will benefit for a lifetime - a lifetime during which he or she may influence countless friends and associates. In this connection I am happy to note the continuing close association of our American Center, under its new director, Mr. Karl Olsen, with the community on cultural exchange programs. I might add that cultural exchanges also improve Japanese-American relations, a topic I will briefly address.

Japanese-American relations are now very good, and we are making every effort to keep them that way, and to improve them. As Prime Minister Fukuda said when he visited the United States last March, "Never have the relations between Japan and the United States been more friendly and cordial, but we cannot take them for granted; we must work to perfect them." I fully agree with the Prime Minister's remarks. The American Embassy in

Japan and the Consulate here in Fukuoka, under the able direction of Mr. David Pabst, is working hard to maintain and improve Japanese-American relations. We recognize, as does the Carter Administration, that of all our allies and old friends, none is more important than Japan.

I wish to express my deep appreciation for the opportunity to address you on this important occasion. My wife and I thank you for your many courtesies and warm hospitality. We are enjoying our stay in Fukuoka and wish you continued success in all your endeavors.

Thank you and the best of luck.