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Japanese Food Buyers Team

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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SEND-OFF REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR MANSFIELD
FOR JAPANESE FOOD BUYERS TEAM
OCTOBER 2, 1978 3:00 P.M.

Chairman Noda

GENTLEMEN:

IT'S A PLEASURE TO BE HERE TODAY TO BID YOU "BON VOYAGE" AND TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN OUR EFFORT TO EXPAND EXPORTS OF AMERICAN FOOD PRODUCTS TO JAPAN.

AS YOU ARE WELL AWARE, THE UNITED STATES SUPPLIES ABOUT ONE-THIRD OF ALL OF JAPAN'S FOOD AND FIBER IMPORTS. NINETY PERCENT OF THOSE IMPORTS FROM THE UNITED STATES ARE BULK COMMODITIES --- CORN, TO PRODUCE ANIMAL FEED AND CORN STARCH; SOYBEANS - OUT OF WHICH SALAD OIL AND HIGH-PROTEIN MEAL ARE MADE ALONG WITH THE TRADITIONAL TOFU, SHOYU, MISO AND NATTO; WHEAT - WHICH IS MILLED TO PRODUCE FLOUR FOR BREAD AND PASTRY ITEMS AND COTTON - WHICH IS SPUN INTO YARN FOR TEXTILES.

WHILE WE APPRECIATE THE FACT THAT JAPAN IS OUR LARGEST CUSTOMER FOR BULK AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES -- THESE TOTALLED \$3.9 BILLION IN 1977 -- WE KNOW THAT THE POTENTIAL MARKET FOR CONSUMER-READY ITEMS IS MUCH GREATER THAN THE CURRENT TRADE VOLUME INDICATES AND WE PLAN TO PLACE INCREASED EMPHASIS ON THESE ITEMS IN OUR TRADE NEGOTIATIONS AS WELL AS IN OUR MARKET DEVELOPMENT PLANNING. INCREASED U.S. EXPORTS OF CONSUMER-READY ITEMS TO JAPAN WILL HELP IN CORRECTING THE BURDENSOME TRADE IMBALANCE EXISTING BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

THEREFORE, YOUR VISIT AT THIS TIME IS MOST APPROPRIATE AND APPRECIATED. I HAVE BEEN ADVISED THAT YOU WILL SEE A WIDE RANGE OF PRODUCTS DURING YOUR VISIT, MANY OF WHICH WILL BE NEW TO THE JAPANESE MARKET AND TO YOU AS SELLERS. MANY OF THE U.S. FOOD PROCESSORS WHO WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE FOOD SHOWS IN SAN FRANCISCO, PORTLAND, CHICAGO, NEW YORK AND NEW ORLEANS WILL REPRESENT SMALL AND MEDIUM - SIZED FIRMS WHO WANT TO EXPORT AND WHO WANT TO SELL THEIR PRODUCTS TO THE JAPANESE CONSUMER.

I HAVE MONITORED THE PREPARATIONS FOR THIS TEAM CLOSELY AND I HAVE PERSONALLY ASKED THAT EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY BE GIVEN TO YOUR VISIT TO ENSURE MAXIMUM INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION BY THE AMERICAN FOOD INDUSTRY. I FULLY SUPPORT YOUR EFFORTS AND LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING YOUR COMMENTS AND IMPRESSIONS UPON YOUR RETURN.

AGAIN, I THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST AND WISH YOU A SAFE AND PROSPEROUS VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES.