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Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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Foreign Minister Easily Succumbs to Ambassador MANSFIELD's Fervent Speech; Becomes Weak-Kneed, with Efforts to Seek Early Reply Taken Advantage Of

ITO's style of "naniwa-bushi" was completely defeated (?), with its being taken advantage of. It seems that the Foreign Minister ITO-US Ambassador MANSFIELD talks, which were held on the 18th, in connection with the US nuclear-powered submarine's "hit-and-run" accident, started with and ended in the Ambassador's remarkably fervent speech, covering a range of problems from his view on life and political philosophy to an argument concerning the US as a law-governed country. The Ambassador's stand may be briefly summed up as follows: "Investigations into the accident will be conducted strictly on the basis of the laws concerned; therefore, it is impossible to give an interim report before the US-Japan Summit Talks." The Foreign Minister, who had been emotionally calling upon the US "to admit its fault (in the accident) and apologize quickly," up until the preceding day, said, "Due to your (Ambassador's) explanations which left a deep impression on my mind, I understand what the United States' intention is." Thus, he seemed to have been so deeply moved by the Ambassador's explanations as to forget to make efforts to seek an early reply. In regard to investigations into this kind of accident, a calm response itself should become connected with a fair settlement. An "emotional settlement" would be undesirable ...

Ambassador MANSFIELD has had a political career of several decades. To be sure, the Ambassador's remarks based on his rich experience seem to have been very eloquent.

"Oh, never before have I been more deeply moved than today, as a diplomat. When [the Ambassador's explanations] came to an end, I impulsively told him that 'they were very instructive' ..." At any rate, even a Foreign Ministry leader, who boasts of his not being upset by anything, and who was present at the talks, showed such an attitude. Mr. ITO was probably impressed very deeply (by the Ambassador's explanations).

To begin with, the Foreign Minister's emotional statements have been conspicuous since the accident this time occurred. Such a tendency was brought even into his diplomatic responses. One good example was his talks with Commander-in-Chief, US Forces, Pacific LONG, which talks were held on the 16th.

The other party is a naval officer and not a politician. However, the Foreign Minister pointed out that the accident may lead to distrust in the US, while having effects on the US-Japan Security Treaty structure, that due to the accident, doubts are arising as to the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, and that generally speaking, in Japan, one will frankly apologize if one recognizes that one is to blame.

From right after the accident, a Foreign Ministry leader has been explaining as follows: (1) The accident is unfortunate, but it will have no effects on the real substance of the US-Japan Security Treaty structure, and (2) the accident occurred on the high seas, and not in Japanese territorial waters, and it will not conflict with the Three Non-Nuclear Principles. However, the contents of the Foreign Minister's statement were such that it can be regarded as upsetting even this explanation.

In connection with the gap, a Foreign Ministry source stated as follows: "In the Diet, the Minister is confronted with questions every day, and is suffering very great hardships. The Minister probably appealed on his agony. In regard to the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, the Prime Minister gave a reply in the Diet the preceding day; therefore, I think he touched upon them politically. The Minister also understands well that the US-Japan Security Treaty structure, the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, and the accident are not connected directly with one another, in real substance." According to this commentary, the Foreign Minister's statement, for example, to Commander-in-Chief LONG was an "emotional argument" of the Minister who was fatigued from giving Diet replies.
On the 18th, Ambassador MANSFIELD softly attacked [the Foreign Minister], saying as follows: "Your Excellency the Foreign Minister, both you and I entered the diplomatic world at a rather old age. For a long period until then, both of us were politicians." "It is said that you have had a military career, as a Private, and I was also formerly a Private 1st Class ..." He also pressed, saying as follows: "I want you to grasp my state of mind and my real intention."

This response is very Japanese. However, the Ambassador coolly and definitely stated as follows: "With regard to the investigations into the accident, the US is a law-governed country. The individual rights of the Commander and crew members (of the submarine which caused the accident) are protected by the Constitution and the Navy code and regulations. I think it inappropriate to judge the faults and responsibility of private individuals through descriptions of the situation."

It is clear that the Foreign Minister's "emotional request to the US" collapsed due to Ambassador MANSFIELD's skillful rebuttal. In the end, investigations into the accident will be entrusted to the hands of the US side. It will probably be necessary for Japan to hasten to conduct investigations, which it can conduct by itself, such as the questioning of the Nissho Maru crew members, and to continue to present a "reasonable, calm request" as to the US side's investigations on this basis, instead of remaining idle at this time. Q

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"Balance Sheet" for Big-Figure Ambassador MANSFIELD

(Full Translation)

(World Review, Vol. 31, April, 1981, Yomiuri Shimbun Sha)

By Akira TAKAHAMA, Political News Section, Yomiuri Shimbun

TO: His Excellency Ambassador MANSFIELD

Four months have already passed since the start of the REAGAN Administration. There have been visits to the US by former Prime Minister FUKUDA and by Foreign Minister ITO. Following up these visits, Prime Minister SUZUKI will soon visit the US, for the first time. It seems that contacts between the REAGAN Administration and the Japanese Government are now being placed on the right track. Standing in the midst of this, it may be a "road which I have already once taken" for you, but it seems that Japan-US relations are becoming more tense than before, over defense and economic friction. The Governments have changed in both Japan and the US, and the ways of doing things may have come to change, in various ways. On top of this, there are these difficult problems. Big expectations are being placed on you, in this situation, by both sides. I sympathize with you that, quite the opposite of the coming of spring, each day must be a heavy burden for you.

Completely disregarding such hardships for you and the Japanese side's appreciation for them, I wish to set forth my frank private views in regard to the merits and demerits of the "big-figure Ambassador," today. I recall how good the coffee which you yourself made for me, when I met you in your Office, immediately after your arrival at your post, four years ago. Also, I remember your telling me about your first encounter with Japan, while taking a walk in the gardens of a hotel in Shimoda, on the occasion of your attending the Japan-US private-level conference. Also, it was only just the other day that, when I ran into you quite accidentally in the corridor of the Diet Building, when you were visiting the Diet to introduce CIA Director CASEY to Prime Minister SUZUKI, you introduced me to Director CASEY as "my good friend."

This was my first and only experience of shaking hands with a high-ranking official of the CIA. Though of course, when you mentioned my profession, Director CASEY, who was talking amicably up to then, suddenly shut his mouth, like a clam. With the Japanese people gradually coming to know your remarkable personality, of which I have had a glimpse, through newspaper reports, etc., they have probably come to deepen their feeling of closeness with you and their feeling of respect. However, if you will permit me to make a somewhat brash comment, I think that we have now come to a point where we, on our side, should give a calmer thought to how that fact is related to Japan-US relations today, and what relations it will come to have in the future way of Japan-US relations.

There are scholars who point out that the Japanese people, who adored MACARTHUR, and deeply loved REISCHAUER in the past, came to drown in such sentiments, and losing sight of something, became a kind of spoilt child. For the very reason that you are a "big-figure Ambassador," there are heard voices of anxiety that you may rather be an obstacle to the creation of new and sound Japan-US relations, in the direction of a new stage. It is said that the Japanese people are extremely weak in thinking out things in a logical way. However, despite this fact, I am making a bold attempt to try it. I hope you will listen to my views, without being annoyed.

Recently, a certain influential Cabinet member said to me, as follows, about you:
"The other day, I talked with MANSFIELD for about four hours. I told him everything, candidly. I talked about automobiles, defense-sharing and various other matters. He said that, at any rate, the Congress is troublesome. The Congress alone is emotional. Well, when all is said, there is no need to make a big fuss."

This person also believed in the "MANSFIELD myth." In other words, this person was firmly convinced, through your explanations of the situation, that in these relations, it is only the Congress which is making a big fuss over the problems pending between Japan and the US, whether they are automobiles or the problem of defense-sharing, and that the REAGAN Administration itself is calmness itself, and there are no problems. However, is this really true? In the first place, why did President REAGAN ask you to remain in your post? How has your position changed, after you stayed on in your post? Were there no problems in your negotiations with Japan, since last year? What do the "rumors that MANSFIELD's life [as Ambassador] will be short," which rumors we recently hear from Washington, mean?

Once, the Washington Post wrote that "MANSFIELD is the US Ambassador in Japan, but at the same time, he is also the Japanese Ambassador to the US," stationed in Tokyo." This can be taken as a rather sarcastic comment. At a time when the two nations have all these pending problems, it is not possible to serve as the Ambassador of two conflicting nations, and it is for this very reason that we also have our Ambassador in Washington. Today, the REAGAN Administration is in contact with Ambassador to the US OKAWARA, in a positive way, and is exploring the clues to settling important pending issues through the channel of Ambassador OKAWARA. Even from this one fact alone, it seems that there has been a delicate change in your position.

I once wrote a short treatise for a certain magazine (in November, 1978), titled "The Real Power and the Merits and Demerits of MANSFIELD, the Big-Figure Ambassador." I severely criticized what you did, in connection with the "incident of the dismissal of PILSBURY," which occurred in July, 1978, in this short treatise.

Do you remember? The incident was as follows: Dr. Michael PILSBURY, who was a Republican Party-affiliated staff member of the Senate Budget Committee, visited China, Japan, and the ROK on a fact-finding mission, for about one month, from May to June of that year, and while in Japan, he brought up the problem of "raising the level" of Japan's defense budget, in his talks with the Japanese Government officials concerned. This was an act, which "overstepped his authority," when viewed from your position, and angered, you requested his dismissal, and in the end, Dr. PILSBURY was dismissed, as of July 31.

I viewed that, in the background of this incident, there was a conflict of views between the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, over Japan's defense power. In other words, the confrontation between the two Parties over Japan's defense and security policies were not only due to the sense of distrust in the Soviet Union, which was mounting in the US, and I felt that it also came from the difference in views, in a more straight-forward field for Japan, that is, the request to Japan for defense efforts. The Republican Party thinks that it is better to have Japan become a "strong country," to the extent of its becoming able to defend its own country by its own power. The Democratic Party views that it will be ultimately more desirable for the US to keep Japan's war potential to about the present level. It was an incident which embroiled you yourself, who are a senior member of the Democratic Party, in this controversy.

Why did you become so angry at that time? I made various studies, at the time. At first, I thought you were angered by the fact that you, who had been asserting from before that America should not seek the strengthening of Japan's defense power, from the standpoint that "heavy armaments on the part of Japan has the danger of becoming a factor for instability in Asia," was challenged by an inconsequential staff member of the Budget Committee, especially in your own territory. However,
when I checked into the matter more carefully, I found out that your anger came from more deeply-lying essential arguments. I found out that you had frontally refuted the statements made by Dr. PILSBURY during his stay in Japan, themselves.

During his stay in Japan, Dr. PILSBURY met with JDA Counselor OKAZAKI, Finance Bureau System Analysis Office Director FUJI, Major General MATSUNAGA, the 8th Office Director of the Joint Staff Council, and others. He asked the following questions of the Japanese side: (1) What role is the JDA playing in the formulation of US defense policies toward Japan and Asia?; (2) Can Japan's defense expenditures be increased further?; are there any prospects for breaking through the wall of one percent of the GNP?; (3) to what extent do the Japanese Government officials concerned understand the role of the US Congress in regard to the US defense plan?; (4) what do the Japanese Government officials concerned think about their receiving explanations on US policies from the US Embassy in Japan, and seeing them reversed or revised in the US Congress?; (5) is there a possibility of the roles of the Diet members, who are well-versed in the defense problem, becoming strengthened in the Japanese Diet?; and (6) MANSFIELD's ties with the US Congress have already been severed, and from now on, it will be wiser to establish contacts with MUSKIE and BELLMON (both members of the Senate Budget Committee), who have more influence.

You were angered by every one of these statements. As a result, you sent a top secret telegram, "requesting the dismissal of PILSBURY," to Budget Committee Chairman MUSKIE.

However, as I pointed out, at that time, the PILSBURY statements posed questions, which the Japanese people would want to know about more, that is, the confrontation between the Democratic and Republican Parties, or between the doves and the hawk factions, so to speak, over Japan's defense. Even in those days, there were rising voices in the US Congress, the General Accounting Office and the Budget Bureau, urging Japan to strengthen its defense power and to increase its defense-share. Speeches were given in the Chambers of the Congress, severely criticizing Japan's "taking a free ride on defense." Now, three years later, the questions which Dr. PILSBURY raised toward the Japanese side, at the time, are now appearing, as an actual problem, with the advent of the REAGAN Administration (although there were starting to appear such indications in the last one year of the former CARTER Administration).

We are certainly grateful for your "sympathy" toward Japan (which is in accord with your wishes as to how you want Japan to be), but at that time, I saw the minus side of the "big-figure Ambassador" in your action of blotting out all other voices of America and trying to block their coming to the ears of the Japanese people. This kind of attitude on your part continued, even after that. Why did you not try to transmit to Prime Minister SUZUKI and Foreign Minister ITO the live voices of the American Government, in regard to defense, trade problems, etc.?

You are no longer an elder of the US Senate. You are an Ambassador appointed by the President. Therefore, you must convey the views of the US Government, as they are, and straightly, to the Japanese Government. It is said that, last year, Prime Minister SUZUKI shouted at a high-ranking Foreign Ministry official, who explained that the US Government is strongly pressing for an increase in defense expenditures, that "Mr. MANSFIELD is not saying such a thing, and he says that what we will do should be decided by Japan itself."

Later on, I heard that you were disappointed with the Japanese Government's decision which failed to achieve an increase of "9.7 percent," in defense expenditures, compared with the preceding year, and that you even reproached the Finance Minister, saying that "It was promised even by Finance Minister WATAHABE." Toward this, the Finance Minister rebutted that "I do not recall ever saying such a thing, and MANSFIELD just thought so, arbitrarily." Sympathy and self-complacency. This is a very impolite comment, but I cannot but think that your way as a big-figure Ambassador is rather giving rise to misunderstandings between Japan and the US, at times.
I will now list some points of self-reflection on our side.

What did we say, when it was decided that you will continue in your present post?

Prime Minister SUZUKI himself expressed welcome, in an even over-exaggerated way, to the effect that "it is very welcome, as it had been hoped for by all the people in Japan, including Government and private circles." Following the example of the Prime Minister, Chief Cabinet Secretary MIYAZAWA said as follows: "At this time when a new Administration has appeared in America, and when Japan-US relations are entering a new age, we are very pleased, not only for Japan-US relations but also from the standpoint of Japan and the US to fulfill their global responsibilities in the future, in cooperation with each other, that Ambassador MANSFIELD who understands Japan well and who is respected not only in the US political world but also by many people, will continue to carry out his duties in Tokyo."

The newspapers reported that President REAGAN decided to have Ambassador MANSFIELD stay on in his present post for the following reasons:
(1) At this time when there are delicate pending problems between Japan and the US, such as the defense and automobile export problems, it is difficult to replace the said Ambassador, who has a thoroughgoing knowledge of these problems;
(2) Japan highly appreciates Ambassador MANSFIELD's personality, his understanding of Japan, and his power to speak out toward the US Government and Congress, and there is also high appreciation for the said Ambassador in the US, too; in the light of these circumstances, the retaining of the said Ambassador will show, in a concrete way, the REAGAN Administration's policy of regarding Japan with importance; and
(3) the REAGAN Administration is emphasizing supra-partisan diplomacy, and in retaining Ambassador MANSFIELD, who is an elder of the Democratic Party, it had in mind the point that it will make it easier to secure the cooperation of the Democratic Party in Congress, especially in regard to diplomatic problems.

There were even some newspapers, which coined the expression "under Ambassador MANSFIELD's umbrella," and carried editorials of self-admonishment, saying that Japan, out of too great an expectation on the "big-figure Ambassador," may have become too dependent on you.

Being a wise person, I do not think that you are accepting, at face value, these formally expressed comments of the Japanese side. In the first place, the biggest reason, in the background of President REAGAN's decision to have you stay on, was the measure toward the Democratic Party, although there was probably some consideration toward Japan, too. At first, REAGAN, who was aiming at supra-partisan policies, had in mind the appointing of such Democratic Party Senators of the hawk faction as Senators JACKSON and NUNN to the posts of Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense.

However, it is the same in any country, in regard to Cabinet posts. Cabinet posts must be used effectively in order to return one's election debts. If Cabinet posts are filled by persons close to the President, such as HAIG as Secretary of State and WEINBERGER as Secretary of Defense, there will remain no room for the appointment of Democratic Party members. At this point, it was you who came to his attention. He probably decided to have Ambassador MANSFIELD stay on a little longer ... Of course, there were some Republican Party-affiliated persons, who were considered as possible candidates for the post of Ambassador to Japan, but none of them met the requirements completely. At a time when the approval of the appointment of HAIG as Secretary of State was being delayed, due to the "resistance" of the Democratic Party, you were re-appointed, and it was also rumored that it was HAIG, who recommended your retention. With this, the appointment of HAIG was smoothly approved.
I heard the following story from a Republican Party Senator, who is extremely close to President REAGAN, and who happened to visit Japan: "REAGAN was also worried, noting that Japan was somehow partial to CARTER and that the Japanese people may stiffen their attitude if he were to dismiss MANSFIELD suddenly, right now. It is true that there is a big difference in the ways of thinking between the persons close to REAGAN and MANSFIELD. However, the President decided to shut his eyes for a while, and have MANSFIELD stay on for some time. He also considered that this would be a wise policy in relation to the Democratic Party, too."

After you were retained, you met with Prime Minister on February 10. It was said to be a courtesy call, at first. However, it turned out to be substantial talks, which continued for about 40 minutes. At that meeting, you touched upon the request to Japan for the strengthening of defense power over which you had great trouble since last year, and said: "We wish to avoid unfruitful arguments, bound by such figures as the rate of increase in the budget. From now on, we wish to hold talks, strictly on the contents, such as what roles we can expect of Japan in what specific fields." You also emphasized, in your explanations, that "the new Administration thinks that it should avoid putting pressure on Japan openly, and it wishes to hold consultations with Japan, in the future, frankly and informally, in a way which does not attract attention."

Japanese mass media took this as the transmission of an official message from President REAGAN, and meditating fully on the expression "specific roles in specific fields," reported that our country is now coming to be pressed severely to show responses.

However, according to your close aides in the American Embassy, this statement apparently was not based on instructions from either President REAGAN or Secretary of State HAIG. It seems that it was nothing more than your saying that "the REAGAN Administration's requests to Japan will probably be this way," based on your own understanding and interpretation of the testimonies given by Secretary of State HAIG and Secretary of Defense WEINBERGER in Congress, since January.

After your retention, you went as far as Hawaii. However, you have not yet met even Secretary of State HAIG, let alone President REAGAN. The present situation is that communication of views between Washington and the Embassy are not going smoothly in regard to concrete US policies toward Japan, partly because the line-up of experts on Japan in the State Department and the National Security Council have not yet been consolidated, due to the delay in Congressional approval for Assistant Secretary of State (for East Asia and the Far East region) HOLDRIDGE, and that even the Japanese Foreign Ministry is becoming nervous. We are also paying attention to the fact that the REAGAN Administration is now holding "direct talks" with Ambassador OKAWARA, instead of using you, in regard to important matters concerning relations with Japan.

I have the full text here, with me, of the speech you gave in Hawaii, seven days after the SUZUKI-MANSFIELD talks (February 13 [TN: sic]). What are you trying to say in this speech? You showed high appreciation, saying that "Japan made a very big sacrifice to attain an increase of 6.7 percent," despite the fact that both the US State and Defense Departments had been so angry over Japan's failure to achieve a 9.7-percent increase in its defense expenditures for fiscal 1981, saying that Japan "broke its promise."

A certain Foreign Ministry official looked glum, as he said: "That was a speech given toward the American people, so it may be alright, but if that kind of statement were to appear in Japanese newspapers, it will only result in causing further confusion among the people. What is the Ambassador really trying to do, standing between Washington and Tokyo?"
Is not the mission of an Ambassador to grasp the situation in the country where he is assigned accurately and to report it to his home Government, and also to transmit the situation in his home country correctly to the Government of the host country? I am meditating, once again, on the statement to the effect that "an Ambassador must be a reporter, and there is no need for an Ambassador, who is like a commentator, who adds his comments, to be in the field" (B. NOSHITER [TN: phonetic]).

I hope you will have talks thoroughly, at the earliest possible time, with the top leaders of the REAGAN Administration, concerning Japan and East Asia. I want you, the Ambassador, to grasp the ways of thinking of President REAGAN, first of all. After that, I hope you will let us hear his real voice. As regards a "big-figure Ambassador," can it not be said that he is a real "big-figure Ambassador" only when he conveys the intentions of the President to Japan's Prime Minister, and when he transmits the Prime Minister's views directly to the President? The bigger your achievements are, the more I wish to point out this point, even for the re-building of Japan-US relations, which are on the verge of undergoing a big change. I sincerely pray for your continued good health.

Yours sincerely