

Maureen and Mike

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This transcript represents the nearly verbatim record of an unrehearsed interview. Please bear in mind that you are reading the spoken word rather than the written word.

Oral History Number: 391-015

Interviewee: Mike Mansfield

Interviewer: Don Oberdorfer

Date of Interview: February 18, 2000

Project: Don Oberdorfer Interviews with Mike Mansfield Oral History Project

Don Oberdorfer's notes prior to recorded interview:

- For the first time, I felt his memory was beginning to fail, and he felt so too. In fact, told me at the end of the conversation, "My memory isn't getting any better." He couldn't recall why he recently had been in Walter Reed for a couple days while Maureen was there over the holidays. He was disturbed that couldn't recall and immediately asked his secretary, Barbara Hickey, who said it was because he felt dizzy. Doctors then adjusted the medicine he has been taking and he was fine.
- He looked well enough, made me coffee, and sat as usual in front of the big map of Asia. Seemed delighted, but also at times puzzled, to get the material on Maureen's and his academic record at UCLA.
- When I left, he didn't say Tap 'er light or anything special this time.

The following is the recorded interview with Mike Mansfield

Mike Mansfield: Get in touch with him and he was coming down. We were to meet, but he never made it, he died. [Kazuo Kawai was the professor who was so good on Asia. Mansfield first met him when Kawai was a professor of history at UCLA. Mansfield credits him with strengthening his interest in the Far East. Mansfield invited him to come to Washington after the war.] *

Don Oberdorfer: Thought he was Kawai.

MM: Kawai, yes. Kazuo Kawai.

DO: They are trying to find out something about him, too. Saying here, this second. This is a letter from me from UCLA.

MM: I'm not sure we met. I have recollection. (?) ** Faculty member?

DO: They can't find it. I'm sure they did.

MM: You might check with the Japanese Embassy, too.

DO: Yes. And you say he was at Ohio State as well? [He was.]

MM: I think so, after the war, but I wanted to get in touch with him. I made some inquiries. I made contact with him and he was going to come, but he died. I think it was Ohio State. I'm sure they keep records. Where are Maureen's records?

DO: They are right here. This is her record from the summer of 1929, but the interesting thing is it also—this is some kind of admissions document from 1929—it says, "Last attended University of California at L.A.—UCLA—in 1925." So that was before. You are in the '30s.

MM: Yes, I went in the '30s, yes.

DO: Right. This is probably before she got her degree at St. Mary's. She took one summer at UCLA.

MM: Yes, and later I think she went to St. Mary's at Notre Dame. It was her last year.

DO: Right. And then she went back—this is an admission paper—then this is the summer of 1929. By this point you had already met Maureen.

MM: Yes, but she went to Berkeley.

DO: Well, but this is UCLA. Now it does say somewhere here that she plans to go to Berkeley.

MM: She did go to Berkeley with her sister. Anne, her younger sister, but I didn't know she had gone to UCLA twice, but we have a Berkeley one?

DO: No, but I think one of these papers says that she intends to go to Berkeley.

MM: She did go to Berkeley.

DO: Yes, right.

MM: She did go.

DO: She did pretty well. English—taking English—and taking education.

MM: What does this say down here?

DO: This says, Dean of UC Berkeley Graduate Division. Yes, that is where she is going to Berkeley, 1930.

MM: 1929. Yes. This is the Berkeley one and this is the UCLA.

DO: No, actually both of these documents are from UCLA. This is summer session UCLA in Los Angeles. But this is. I think, where she is going next.

MM: Oh, I see.

DO: They are sending that information to the Dean of the Graduate School of UC Berkeley. They sent it to them on March 19, 1930.

MM: That's about right.

DO: Right. Anyway, I didn't know that Maureen had earlier gone to UCLA in 1925 and I wasn't too sure when she went to UCLA, but she went also in 1929. Here's the record. [No doubt Maureen's going to UCLA was the spur to Mike's going there later, DO.]

MM: I don't recall that, but I recall her telling me that she went to UCLA and then instead of going back to what was then now St. Joseph's in Dubuque. She might have changed her mind. She went to St. Mary's Notre Dame and when she graduated there she started teaching in Butte. And in '29 she went to Berkeley and she may have gone, or I may have misunderstood her, but I knew she went to both.

DO: Anyway, there is her record. This is an extra copy if you'd like to have it, just for fun to look at it sometime.

MM: Okay. That's fine.

DO: This is for you and here's a paperclip if you wanted to put it all together. What was the course that Kawai would have taught? Was it History of the Far East or Diplomatic History of the Far East?

MM: I just don't recall.

DO: But one of these Far Eastern histories, clearly. One of these Far Eastern courses.

MM: Was that with Kazuo Kawai?

DO: That's what I wondered, I don't know which one it was.

MM: He could have had both—History of the Far East and Diplomatic History of the Far East. What's this here?

DO: Hispanic American.

MM: No. Those were the two areas I was covering at Missoula.

DO: Right. Anyway.

MM: Very interesting.

DO: I thought you might be interested in seeing your record and especially in Maureen's records. Now, I've told you—I think, the last time I was here—that I had agreed to write this article about you as ambassador for *Bungei Shunju*. They have something called their millennium issue that is going to come out, I think, in May. But the deadline is a few weeks from now, magazines being what they are. They asked me to ask you for something I could put in this article about looking forward about Japan—where you expect Japan to go now and in the future. In addition, the burden of the article will be on the past, because it will describe you as ambassador. But, I wondered if you could just think a minute or two about where Japan is going. What are the questions and thoughts about Japan's future in the 21st century that you might have?

[JAPAN, PRESENT AND FUTURE]

MM: Well, Japan is in the unusual position of being, in a sense, isolated from other parts of the world, and because of that isolation being more dependent on other parts of the world. It has

practically nothing in the way of natural resources. There is a population in excess of 125 million living in an area roughly 4,000 square miles smaller than Montana with 900,000 [people]. Much of its land is arable, the high plains, there's the scenic, the Rocky Mountain West and Southwest; getting more deficient in minerals; depending more and more upon outsiders, tourism, for its durability. Japan can't live on the basis of just supplying what its own people need. Therefore, it has to export, and in exporting it has become one of the predominant nations of the world, I think probably second to us. But in doing so, it has created problems. For example, we complain about Japan's surplus with us, year after year, ignoring the fact that we encouraged protectionism in Japan after the end of the war. When they became increasingly prosperous through exports, we became critical. So I would say that Japan is dependent as a major nation more on the rest of the world than we, for example. Because of that it has achieved, to repeat, huge surpluses to enable it to prosper. But, to repeat, we supported their protectionism but when they became very competitive and surplus-oriented, we began to find fault with their system. My feeling is that Kim Dae Jung has come up with a suggestion, which I think is worth serious consideration, and that is a tripartite alliance of sorts, composed of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea and Japan. Say, starting out with an economic alliance. See how it works out. It will be difficult because of the mutual dislikes existing among the three countries toward each other, if you can decipher that. And not including the United States and Russia, two Pacific nations. Russia is a part of Asia, but it only has two areas of significance, one on the coast—of real significance—based on Vladivostok and another further inland—Khabarovsk, which is the defensive center of the Russians in Siberia. See if they can work out a triple, tripartite coalition based on economics, and if they can work that out, then develop it, sometime in the future maybe to include the U.S. and Russia. There's a lot to overcome. Kim Dae Jung has come up with what I think is a reasonable proposal. Korea is central to the two because it has served as a bridge over the centuries, expanding Buddhism. Culturally they're, in a sense, not too much apart. Economically, Kim Dae Jung has performed an economic miracle in getting Korea out of the depths in which it was when he came in. Zhu Rongji has been a very steadying influence in the development of the economy of the PRC and was able to reduce the rate of inflation from close to 25 percent down to single digits at the present time. But China remembers Nanjing. Korea remembers Nanjing and the '30s and '40s. Korea remembers its colonization from 1910 to 1945. Both are suspicious of Japan, and not without reason. But Japan has made efforts to try and bring about a reconciliation of sorts. They're all technologically high-minded, especially Korea and Japan. China in time will catch them.

DO: What would be the benefit of such an alliance to the Japanese?

MM: It would give them a chance to develop, economically speaking, in that particular part of the world, in concert with the other two nations. It would bring about a reconciliation over differences of the past. I would bring about a degree of cooperation which would be beneficial for all concerned. While I think of Japan at the present time as the most important partner we have, bar none, if you look down the lines in this century and what each country has done in the past two decades, you'll find that they have accomplished a great deal in high technology.

DO: Would it bother you that the United States was not part of this alliance at the start?

MM: No. I think it would give them a chance to act together as an independent unit. They're all three Asian nations. We are not an Asian nation; we are a Pacific power. Instead of getting our hands in on everything that is happening in every part of the world, let them develop like ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] has in Southeast Asia. But it would be much bigger, much more important, and maybe out of it eventually could come an Asian setup like the EU in Europe. Could be a combination of the Southeast and Northeast, or the Northwest, whichever way you look at it.

DO: Under those circumstances when you look ahead to the next decades, do you think it is desirable to have American forces remaining in Japan? Military force?

MM: For the time being, yes. In the foreseeable future, it depends upon developments as they occur. I note, for example, that over the past several weeks, that there has been talk about the Japanese reconsidering their Constitution. I think that in Korea, that Kim Dae Jung is not seeking a joining of the two Koreas at the present time, but is following a policy of reconciliation. He realizes, as the West Germans didn't, how costly it would be to bring them together. There is a bitter feeling between the two, more so than, I think, between the two Germanies. China is adopting, at the least, a semi-capitalistic system—albeit not strong enough, but they are moving in that direction—under the leadership of Zhu Rongji, who is a person we have to watch, who has had a successful career, who placed that career at stake when he worked out a WTO compromise and brought it to Clinton and Clinton turned it down and then the next day tried to backtrack. He's brought down inflation; he's given stability to China. There's that commonality of culture and the bridge between the two is the Republic of Korea, which in the person of Kim Dae Jung has made the suggestion.

DO: When you said we should keep American forces there for the time being; that suggests to me that in the longer run you might want to revise that.

MM: I can't foretell the future, but I find it kind of hard to see the U.S. there permanently. I found it hard when I brought up those NATO bills to foresee what was happening today. I'm not much of a prophet. But we're neither an Asian power nor a European power. I think we have invested too heavily for too long in Europe. I was not for the withdrawal of U.S. troops during the time that the Soviet Union was operating, but I was for a drawdown, because we had so many—in excess, I think of 400,000, plus dependants—and a problem was created between family and country which would make them less effective in a showdown. Leaner but more pointedly oriented and more effective, say, with 100,000. We went too far, spent too lavishly, and we only began a drawdown with the collapse of the Soviet Union. From what I read in the papers we have something approximating 100,000 in Germany at the present time. Out of that 100,000, plus some from here, we've got units scattered in places like Macedonia, 5- or 6,000 in Bosnia, 1- or 2,000 in Kosovo, probably others. In Turkey we have a sizable element—how large

I don't know. And in the process, NATO has not diminished its objective, which was the Soviet Union defensively, but rather has expanded, added three countries to it: Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary, I think. And has become involved on the issue of Kosovo, which I think was a mistake, and now we're in there. The question is how do you get out? The Balkans especially concern me because as a youngster I was aware of what was happening during the First World War, and what started from a small fire turned into a huge one that engulfed a large part of the world. I don't think we ought to interfere in the affairs of almost every country. I think that we ought to recognize the fact that other countries are sovereign; we're dominant; we shouldn't be dominating. We ought to be concerned in other matters, and we ought to do more diplomatically and less militarily.

DO: You mention leadership in Korea—Kim Dae Jung. In China, Zhu Rongji. You didn't say anything about the Japanese political leadership, quite apart from any particular personality—they have a record of changing them fairly rapidly. What do you think of Japanese political leadership?

MM: First let me say that I have been reading lately that Nakasone is behind this re-look at the Constitution, but you have to check that. You might recall that in MacArthur's days he was raising questions even then. Then of course he turned back towards the normal position, the LDP and served with distinction for five years, the longest of any of them. Under the Japanese constitution, as I interpret it, tremendous power lies in the hands of who is Prime Minister. The Emperor is a symbol of state. He's recognized it. He has no power. He is under the supervision, in effect, of the imperial household. And the prime minister's office is the one that pays the salaries. He is the head of the legislative branch. He's the head of the administration of the government. I don't know whether he appoints or has the power to appoint members of the Supreme Court, but that doesn't seem to play too important a part. The Emperor is without power. If you read the constitution, all the powers seem to rest in the hands of the prime minister. But when you change prime ministers every year or every two years, the one exception being Nakasone, when you distribute cabinet positions pretty freely so that a good portion of the Diet of the dominating party or parties are able to serve, you haven't got much in the way of coherent script. Actually, but potentially you have all the power resting in the hands of the Prime Minister, but the Prime Ministers usually become the victims of the Diet, though victims isn't the word—subjects would have been better. They're the ones who guide him to a considerable extent. But China is going to become more important in the decades ahead. It is going to have difficulties. It has taken over the Paracels Islands completely; it is moving into the Spratleys. It has an island argument with Japan and Taiwan over some little island off the—between those three countries in the East China Sea. Japan and Korea have an argument over an island in the southern tip of both countries. Those matters could be settled through diplomacy, through mutuality, through joint ownership, relationship, whatever you want to call it.

DO: Would you recognize China has a still Communist Party system, which may run into more trouble and probably will, but as of today is a strong political structure. Korea has a presidential

system, modeled in part on the American presidential system. The legislature's there, but it doesn't have a whole lot of power. The President really has the power almost completely in South Korea. Japan, however, has this much more diffused political setup.

MM: That's a good way to put it.

DO: Can the Japanese with their current political structure, really hold their own if you were to get down the road an alliance with the Chinese and with the Koreans?

MM: Well, the only way you can find out is to try it. Kim Dae Jung has taken the initiative. I think the Japanese have indicated support. I don't know what the reaction of the PRC is yet.

DO: Well they had one meeting, if you know, in Manila, of Zhu Rongji, [Keizo] Obuchi, and Kim Dae Jung. I spoke to Kim Dae Jung about this when I saw him in January—about the meeting. He was. I think, at pains to reassure me that this was not an alliance that was going to shut out the United States. I think he felt I was worried about that possibility.

MM: Oh, no.

DO: He said, well this was started as a strictly economic thing. It's the only way that the Chinese would agree to it, is that it would be purely on the subject of economic. This is Zhu Rongji's charter. Anyway, I don't think he was any real authority over the security or the military side yet, anyway.

MM: No. No.

DO: But, Kim actually told me, if I'm not mistaken, that it was originally Obuchi's idea.

MM: Who?

DO: Obuchi's—to have the meeting. Kim has been talking about a relationship.

MM: Was Obuchi down there?

DO: Yes.

MM: This was the last ASEAN meeting.

DO: That was the ASEAN summit meeting.

MM: That is where Kim Dae Jung came up with the proposal.

DO: And that is where they had the meeting. It lasted not a long time, but they had a meeting, the three of them—Obuchi for Japan, Zhu Rongji for China, and Kim Dae Jung for Korea.

MM: And did they get any reaction from China on it?

DO: Well, they met.

MM: They met.

DO: And I don't know what the Chinese said about it, but they agreed to meet and they did meet.

MM: Well, there has to be a first step. I don't think we ought to become involved in everything. There's very little that we avoid. Give those independent, sovereign nations a chance to initiate proposals, agree among themselves, as they desire. If they want us in, fine; if they want to go alone, fine. But do something which would be less dependent upon us and more dependent upon themselves.

DO: As you know, the per capita income in Japan is very close to that of the United States, depending on whatever the yen/dollar ratio. Sometimes it's above the United States. But it is way, way above China, which is still very low. Considerably above South Korea, which is improving, but still very much short of what Japan has achieved. Would such a relationship be something that could work out because of the very different economic development status of these three countries, with Japan so far ahead of the other two?

MM: I think it could be helpful to all three. While China lags far behind—as you have indicated—China has been coming up, up, up. And until the breakdown several years ago, in South Korea they were coming up, up, up. But since that time, we find that Japan has been in a state of recession. Unemployment has increased—a 4.9 figure, which probably means 8 or 9 percent, according to the way we calculate it. Its sustenance has been exports, and its chief customer has been the United States. So in a sense, we have been supporting Japan economically to a certain extent, but we have been complaining—not much in the past two or three years because of the prosperity here—steel, a few other things—but they haven't become major issues, and the trade office is not playing the important part it has over the past several decades, say, since Mickey Kantor left. But even there, during that time, there was a change in attitude, and Japan was able to finesse some of our demands, like autos and auto parts, and point out there was no agreement when Kantor tried to say there was an agreement. As far as the government was concerned, there was none. But, the promise had been made by the private sector that it would do its best to reach certain designated goals, four, five, six or seven years hence. You've got the Japanese in a position where we're still not certain that they're going to go uphill. But, we know that, up to now, at least, the road ahead is still rocky. Kim Dae Jung has succeeded. We know that China has been able to maintain a reasonably good economy consistently down through the years, the last decade and a half or so, and when all

the rest of mainland Asia, and Indonesia, the Philippines to a certain extent, had recessions, the Chinese were going along. But in the course of it, problems were being created—shifts in population. It's a combination of a capitalist economy and a communist government. It's kind of hard to recognize it and realize how that kind of a relationship could last. My feeling is that given time, capitalism will bring about a change in the government. The government will become less and less communist-inclined and more and more capitalist-oriented.

DO: I agree with you completely. I think what is very interesting to me is what is happening just exactly today in Iran. The people are taking over. They are going to elect, probably, a legislature, which doesn't agree with the strong Mullahs and so forth. The legislature will lack real authority at first, but more and more it's going to evolve into the strongest power because the people are behind it.

MM: Well, let's hope it turns out that way. Its indications are more that it might.

DO: And I think China was doing something like. It's hard to compare China and Iran, but the attitude of the people that I've met in China—in my recent trips—care absolutely nothing for the Communist Party. They are totally uninterested in the Communist Party. They want to do what most people want to do. They want to get ahead; they want have a better life; they want to have their children do better than they do. All the other things.

MM: Yes, that's the strong point and given time it will prevail.

DO: But now, Japan leaves me in more of a quandary, because Japan already has so much materially. They are now facing this aging crisis, getting older—the population. They have a modern economy, but the economy seems to be stuck in a certain mold that they aren't able to quite get out of. This has been going on now a decade.

MM: They can't shake the money loose from the (?) And they are piling up a tremendous debt.

DO: Oh yes.

MM: The only real leader who has emerged over a sustained period of time has been Nakasone.

DO: Do you see a bright future, a dark future or what kind of future for the Japanese, given their systemic problems?

MM: Well, I would like to see a future based on Kim Dae Jung's proposals as starters. I think Obuchi has done better than a lot of people thought. He's formed a coalition with the Komeito and the Liberal Democrats. He's been criticized, but he's been able to get through the legislation he wants. He's pretty good in the art of compromise. I notice in this morning's paper that the yen, which has been hanging around 105, is now up to around 110, which makes it a

little easier. I think that's been the case. The shift upward, from 105, or downward, depending on how you look at it, is a significant one. The banks—where the real danger lies—has been getting rid of a good portion of its debts, now maybe 50 percent. Now they're facing the very strong possibility that they'll be taxed additionally by the city government or the prefectural government of Tokyo. It seems to have the support of the government and it seems like it may spread among other prefectures. What the effect will be, I don't know, except that these debt-ridden areas will be given some sustenance. But, I don't know what the future will be.

DO: The idea of having a three-way, whatever you call it, tripartite grouping in Asia. When you think back over the history there hasn't been anything quite like that—that I can recall anyway.

MM: Neither was there anything like ASEAN.

DO: Would other Asian countries take it as a threat to them, do you think?

MM: No. I should think they would be delighted. Because out of it eventually might become the Asian counterpart of the European Union, or something like that. The trouble is, you have so many different cultures compared to the Europeans, who are different in so many ways but together in so many others. The linchpin here would be the similarity in their cultures, despite the differences. There are many similarities and the bridge, which carried out some of these cultural aspects, has been Korea. This proposal comes from a Korean. And Korea is a country which was a former Japanese colony.

DO: But you would retain an alliance between Japan and the United States?

[End of Side A]

[Side B]

DO: If this three-way thing got going—the three-way tripartite combination, or whatever it is, how would it relate to the United States do you think?

MM: In the same way that ASEAN is linked to the United States. I think we have some security rights in Singapore, with their full approval. We're trying to get some rights restored in the Philippines. Maybe we have something in Thailand, I'm not certain. We're doing it mostly with the full approval of the nations concerned. A tripartite agreement in the North would bring many difficulties. China's suspicion of the U.S., the broadening out of the Security Treaty, they call it a (?) defense. I still don't know what it really means or acquired (?) extents. I don't think the Koreans or the Japanese would like our forces to stay in their countries permanently. But, for the time being, there is no choice on either side. And that security gave both Japan and Korea the opportunity to advance themselves, to become strong powers and to become nations to be reckoned with.

DO: Very interesting. I expect to be going to China in April. I'll go to Beijing for some conversations about U.S.-China relations. Then I am going to go over to Tianjin, the former Tianjin, and see some of the places where you were when you were a marine in 1922, including the offices or the headquarters of the U.S. Army division that was quartered there in the—I think their barracks are still there.

MM: I think so. The 15th Infantry. I think I told you, based on an agreement after the Boxer Uprising.

DO: Right. The guy who is in charge of personnel records for the military out in St. Louis is sending me your service record from the Marines, the Army and the Navy, but I also asked him—the guy who was the leader—as best I can figure it out from the papers I have—of your little detachment that went to China from Subic Bay, from Olongapo, is a captain named [P.W.] Guilfoyle. He took command on the ship, the flagship of the Asiatic fleet, the Huron. This little detachment that they named Battery A, or something like that, of the Asiatic fleet. That so the guy is going to look and see if he can tell me anything about Captain Guilfoyle and whatever happened to him or did he go on to become a general or whatever did he do later in the Marines and so forth.

MM: I didn't know, but there was a warrant officer at Olongapo who called out our names, his name was Cox. And there was a major in command, Oliver something, not North.

DO: In Olongapo?

MM: In Olongapo. I think during that time, a 1st or 2nd lieutenant by the name of Smith came out. That would be in 1922.

DO: So you're standing in some formation and they say, Brown, Jones and Mansfield, fall out you are going to go China. Is that the way it happened?

MM: Yes.

DO: They didn't take everybody; they just took certain people?

MM: No, they took about half the garrison. A hundred roughly.

DO: Were you pleased to be going?

MM: Oh, delighted, delighted. For the first time, I was going to get one of my dreams realized, to get to China, to see what it was like. Very happy.

DO: We talked about this before, but you landed at Taku Bar, went to shore on some lighters, and then there is a road that goes up from the coast to Tianjin, which you all must have gone up the road either on foot or in truck or something like that.

MM: We landed at Taku, went up the Peiho. I remember some islands, one, maybe two, on the river, which where, I was told, occupied by white Russians who had fled from European Russia. [At the time of the revolution.]

DO: You went up the Peiho in a ship or a little boat or what?

MM: A little British boat. That's all I recall. I don't how we got off the river and went up to the barracks in Tianjin.

DO: But the China that you saw, I guess, must have been quite different—people very typical, people planting rice, growing vegetables, hawking things in the street.

MM: The first [agriculture] I didn't see much of; the second [hawking] a lot of it. They seemed to be busy, shuffling around. It was the era of the warlords. Everybody knows about Chang Tso-Lin, the Manchurian, but very few recall Wu Pei-Fu, who was his antagonist and later, I was told, entered a Buddhist monastery and spent the rest of his life there. But there were warlords galore all over.

DO: Right. Exactly. This was the warlord era.

MM: We weren't exactly apart from the European colonists because we had a, I think I may have told you, federal judge in Shanghai dispensing justice to the Americans there. You might look into it and see. We had no concessions like the British or the French, but we did have a court there.

DO: So if something happened in Tianjin?

MM: No. Nothing in Tianjin.

DO: No, but this is you talking about Shanghai itself, right? When you were in Shanghai.

MM: Yes, that's what I found out about; then I read about it later.

DO: I want to ask you just a couple of key details that came out of the things that you told to *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* weekly. [Now known as The Nikkei, the world's largest financial newspaper.] In connection with joining the Navy in 1920, after the army camp, after you met the Oregon National Guard and went to the camp (?) and then an army camp on Long Island. "I went back to New York to live with my father." I didn't realize you actually lived with him. I thought you just sort of looked him up.

MM: Yes, I don't know. It wasn't very long. Frankly, I don't know all the details of how long I was there, or how I was able to get the Navy to enlist me.

DO: This says, "I forged a certificate, which I got out of a church."

MM: I'm not certain of that.

DO: Okay. Then another one. This picture—the Kennedy softball picture. Did you guys play there frequently or was this just a one occasion?

MM: No. Twice, maybe three times. Just happened to meet.

DO: I see. Not a regular thing.

MM: But not a regular thing. It was a happenstance. We didn't always play together. There were others who showed up, but they were neighbors from around (?) place.

DO: Another one that surprised me in discussing the discussions that you had with President Nixon after he became President—where you met him for breakfast periodically in the first year or two. This says, "President Nixon never mentioned Vietnam issues during our regular breakfast at the White House." Is that right?

MM: That's right. It was always China.

DO: It would seem odd that you would be there and you wouldn't talk about Vietnam, because Vietnam was such a controversial big issue at the time.

MM: Well, we just didn't. He was very determined to try and find out a solution to the question of normalizing or getting together with the PRC. Only in the meetings with the leadership and the cabinet at the White House did I express my feelings there [on Vietnam] because that was the subject at hand, and there were not too many of those meetings.

DO: You may remember that in October, at my suggestion, you applied, under the Freedom of Information Act, to the FBI for access to copies of their file that they were keeping on you. I gather that you haven't heard anything from this yet, right?

MM: No, I thought you were the one. [Mansfield is correct; Oberdorfer said in an earlier interview that he was going to ask for the file, but have it sent to Mansfield and he'd then look at it.]

DO: No, it is going to go to you first. But, I have a friend who is familiar with such things and he suggested that now that four months have passed it would be a good idea to jog the Freedom of Information staff at the FBI. He suggested that you either telephone or write directly to the head of the FBI Freedom of Information section and inquire whether they are working on your file and ask that they expedite it. I have the name here of the guy.

MM: Why don't you do it?

DO: Well, it would be better coming from you. But if I wrote a letter and sent it to you or gave it to Barbara she could type it up for you and you could sign it.

MM: Fine, but I would much prefer that it came from you.

DO: But you have standing. I don't have any standing, because it is your file that is being asked for. So if they'll give it to you, if I ask for it they won't give it to me because there is a privacy aspect involved here. They can't give out a file about somebody else without going through a huge rigmarole. But if you ask for your file or I ask for my file that is okay. I'll write a letter and send it over to Barbara and she will show it to you and if you approve of it you can sign it and send it in to them and we'll proceed on that stuff.

MM: Okay. I thought you had it by now.

DO: No, these guys, this is a bureaucracy. They take a while to do anything.

MM: I would be glad to.

DO: Next week I'm going to be in Atlanta, my hometown. I'm on a panel to talk about the Vietnam War at the Atlanta History Center and I'm going to spend two days working in the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library. President Carter personally did a very nice thing in instructing his library staff to put my requests regarding anything that came from you or concerns Japan in

the national security files at the top of the heap to be processed and sent to Washington for declassification. And I am told by the people in Atlanta at the Carter Library that there is quite a big stack of material waiting for me to look at when I go down there.

MM: I'm delighted.

DO: So we will see what it says and afterwards there may be some things in there like this that you've forgotten about or don't know about and I'll show them to you.

MM: I've forgotten a lot. My memory isn't getting any better as I get older.

DO: You tell me whose is.

MM: Huh?

DO: Tell me whose memory is getting better. Nobody's is. Anyway, thanks for your help. I'll send off this article to *Bungei Shunju*. Most of it has to do with your ambassadorship. Roy Mlyarchnik sent me a fax and said he would be glad to look at the article and look at the translation that is put in the Japanese because he said that sometimes these translators screw up what is said.

MM: Well, there's a few mix-ups in that little book too you know.

DO: But anyway. So, thanks very much.

MM: How was the (?) coming down?

DO: It wasn't bad. No, not bad. It is a little slushy outside. But I think it was raining when I came in here and I think the rain is going to wash some of this stuff off and I think I told you that I'm planning to spend the second half of May and all of June out in Montana and Phil West tells me that one of his staffers may have found an apartment that I can use while I'm in Missoula, which has a very reasonable price and is within easy bicycle distance of the campus and even has a stove and refrigerator so I can cook such as I feel like cooking. So I'm looking forward to that. It will be a lot of fun.

MM: That's great.

DO: It's a great time to be in Montana.

MM: Let's see. May. May—April to May?

DO: The second half of May and all of June.

MM: Oh, well the school year will be ended. Summer sessions—I suppose they are still holding them—will be on.

DO: Yes, they have some. But they don't have too many people there for summer sessions. It's much less, I think, than during the normal year.

MM: Oh yes. It's been so long ago that I've attended one. But, usually teachers gave them that time—kids who wanted to make up grades or kids who wanted to get ahead faster.

DO: They also seem to have—from last summer—a lot of high school athletic teams come there to have some sort of week of practice or something—intensive practice with coaches and so forth and so on—sponsored by the University or using their facilities anyway.

MM: Yes. They used to have track meets—statewide track meets. Maybe that's what it is.

DO: Could be. But, a lot of young high school kids. They are all big and vigorous and tough-looking and so forth. So, how is Maureen getting along? Is there any change in her situation?

MM: Well I told you last time that she developed pneumonia.

DO: Yes, you did. You told me and then they saved her.

MM: She spent about four weeks in Walter Reed. They saved her life, I think they surprised themselves. After about two weeks she began to show improvements. They took her back in the Home. She's been there three or four weeks now. Her memory still plays her tricks. She thinks I'm daddy at times, her father. I never knew she thought that highly of him. Eating better, a little quieter, but sometimes up and down, up and down. It's a shame. But she's there, that's what counts.

DO: Right. Someone said you were in Walter Reed briefly during that period. Is that—?

MM: Yes, I forget what it was for.

DO: Yes. Maybe the flu.

MM: Yes, I spent two nights there. I'll have to ask Barbara. For some reason.

DO: Maybe the flu. There was a lot of flu going around there for sure.

[Why? Ask Barbara. He asks his secretary, Barbara Hickey, who said it was due to need to readjust his medicine.]

[End of Interview]

* Information in brackets is the observations and/or comments of Oberdorfer.

** Question mark in parentheses reflects inaudible section of dialogue.

Oberdorfer's notes following the meeting

Mansfield's 97th birthday lunch, at 701 Restaurant, 3/17/2000

- It was St. Patrick's Day, the day after his birthday. Charlie Ferris hosted the lunch in the same private room as last year. Attendees: Ferris, Mike Mansfield, Dave Broder, Mark Shields, Don Oberdorfer and John and Annie Glenn. Glenn had been a special favorite of Mansfield, who took the Glenns with him in the 1976 China trip, a three-week jaunt across the People's Republic of China.
- Mansfield didn't have much color, but he was in good spirits and sharp as ever. Early on, we were discussing China and Taiwan, and Broder asked me why the Chinese care so much. I deferred to Mansfield, saying he was dealing with these issues when I was in knee pants. Thereupon he gave an impromptu, detailed and very well informed 10-minute mini-lecture on Taiwan, ranging from the Sino-Japanese war to this week's threats from Ju Rongji, who Mike Mansfield takes very seriously. As Broder said to me, you would not have had to edit it at all; it could have just gone into the paper as stated.
- When he ended, Mike Mansfield said, "I talked too long." Reminiscent of last year's erudite discussion of China's policies toward its neighbors – I erroneously recalled it as on Japan —which he ended by saying, "lot of wind."
- Walter Mears, who is the least effusive of men, sent a letter full of praise for Mansfield. Mears had to be out of town, as was Al Hunt, also invited.
- Mike Mansfield discussed politics in Montana and the prospects of various candidates in the coming election. Knew all the candidates but wasn't sure of the name of the GOP candidate for governor, a Republican from Butte [Judy Martz.]. A minor lapse.
- Typically, when given praise for his leadership in the Senate, he said the real credit goes to Ferris and aides.