

Looking Beyond 150 Years of U.S.–Japan Relations: Prospects for the Future

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THANK YOU FOR A WARM WELCOME THIS AFTERNOON. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the University for initiating this Graduate School of International Area Studies. I believe that programs like this are important. Programs like this are important not only for Japanese but for others who are interested in the culture of this great county and the relationship between our two nations. I believe that programs like this play a great role in awakening students to the richness, beauty, and diversity of cultures and peoples on this planet.

I am told that almost a thousand American students have studied Japanese language and culture at this university's Center for Japanese Studies. Likewise, through its library, research, and educational programs, the university's Center for American Studies continues to help many Japanese students to better understand America and its underlying ideals and values.

Educational and cultural exchanges like this are essential. One of my friends, and also distinguished predecessors, Senator Mike Mansfield, received an honorary doctorate from this university in 1986. And Mike was fond of saying, "While trade and defense are the flesh and bones of the U.S.-Japan relationship, cultural and academic exchanges are the heart." This was true when Mike said it, and mind you it is true today. And fortunately it is the bridges that we build on an individual and personal level that shape and determine the course of history. After all, friendship between nations is really nothing more than the sum

The author was born in Huntsville, Tennessee, on November 15, 1925. He had a very successful political career, serving in the U.S. Senate from 1967 through 1985, with two terms as Minority Leader (1977–81) and two terms as Majority Leader (1981–85). In 1973, he served vice chairperson of the Watergate Senate Committee, and was a candidate for president of the United States in 1980. He represented his country in the United Nations in 1976, and also worked as Chief of Staff for then President Ronald Reagan from February 1987 until July 1988. After retiring from political life, he worked for several law firms. President George W. Bush nominated him to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Japan and he was sworn in as the 26th Ambassador to Japan on June 26, 2001. He arrived in Japan on July 3, presenting his credentials on July 5. Since then, he has made every effort to strengthen his nation's relations with Japan. He gave this speech at the Nagoya Kanko Hotel, March 1, 2004, at the initiation of Nanzan University's Graduate School of International Area Studies.

total of individual relationships. And I am impressed by the bridge builders like the star of the Seattle Mariners baseball team, Nagoya's own Ichiro Suzuki. And I have great confidence in you and your ability to be modern bridge builders. You are Japan's future, its future leaders, and the ones who will lead this nation and the world into a brighter future for us all.

A hundred and fifty years ago when U.S. Commodore Matthew Perry and his black ships arrived in Japanese waters, they were not met by great enthusiasm and warmth. Rather Perry's arrival was met with a mixture of fear and apprehension. The history of the years that have followed, and how we have overcome misunderstanding, mistrust, and hatred, is one of the most fascinating stories in the history of nations. We fought as enemies during the great Pacific War. But now we are allies. I have often said and I'll repeat it now, it is little short of a miracle that in such a brief span of time since the end of what we refer to as World War II, that Japan and America have not only become allies but they have become friends as well.

Our lives have brought an era of peace that is virtually unprecedented and that has enabled this region to enjoy democracy and economic growth and prosperity that is virtually unparalleled. We have become friends. We have moved beyond fear to friendship. And we have created one of the world's great friendships between two nations. Once again, my friend the late Mike Mansfield, who preceded me in this office as U.S. Ambassador, described the contemporary U.S.-Japan relationship as "the most important bilateral relationship in the world," as he put it, "bar none." And I believe that. I believe it was true when Mike said it and I believe it is true today. I also believe that because of the work President Bush and Prime Minister Koizumi have put into building our partnership that our relationship today is stronger, more vibrant, and more viable than it has ever been before.

The United States and Japan stand together today as two of the world's great powers. Our nations represent the two most powerful economies in the world. Between us we comprise almost forty percent of the world's total production. Our peoples enjoy unparalleled levels of prosperity and abundance. Blessed as we are, we have taken the lead in sharing this wealth, and today, as we have been for much of the past decade, the United States and Japan are the two largest donors of official development assistance in the entire world. Our nations lead the world in terms of research and development. The dynamic and very different popular cultures of our two nations allow us to project tremendous soft power—whether through Disney and Hollywood or through Pokemon and the animation cultures of our two countries that have indeed spread throughout the world. My friends, I have four grandsons. All of them are acquainted with Pokemon. I have one grandson who attended college in Japan in his junior year and has fallen in love with this country. I believe the friendship between our two countries and our two peoples is best assured by experiences of this sort. I think it augurs well for our future.

But while we enjoy soft power as in Pokemon, our nations also understand “hard” power and its relevance in a world threatened by terrorism and the misuse of weapons of mass destruction. It may be a surprise to many of you, as it was to me, to realize that by many measures the United States and Japan have the largest defense budgets in the world. In these and many other respects, the United States and Japan may be classed as the world’s two most powerful nations, economically and strategically. But we are also among the two great nations of the world by reason of the strength and vitality of our friendship.

As we look to the future and consider what lies ahead for that relationship, I believe it is useful to pause, like this, and take note of where we are and what we have achieved. The fundamental and collective accomplishments of our two nations are remarkable indeed. The relationship that we have built, particularly over the past five decades, is truly phenomenal. And the power, economic and otherwise, that our two nations have accumulated is nothing short of truly remarkable. Now, while great power admittedly comes with a few advantages, it also comes with a considerable price tag. Although I don’t usually quote comic book heroes, I think Spider-Man had it right when he said, and I quote, “With great power comes great responsibility.” And indeed that is true, my friends. And we are two great powers, Japan and the United States. And with that goes great responsibility.

In the decades ahead I believe the important story that will unfold concerning the U.S. and Japan will center on the very question of how our two great nations should exercise that great power. Will we choose to exercise the power responsibly? I believe so. But not without our effort, not without men and women of good conscience and broad vision can we be assured that we will exercise the wealth and power that we’ve been graced with.

Today Japan’s Self Defense Forces are on the ground in Iraq. Like the other coalition forces in Iraq, these brave soldiers are working to bring stability and peace to this troubled region. Coalition forces have helped free the country from a brutal dictator and today these forces for good, responsibly exercising that great power, are diligently striving to help Iraq recover from the harm the Hussein regime caused to be inflicted upon Iraq. The presence of Japanese Self Defense Forces in Iraq is an eloquent testimonial to Japan’s willingness to address the great issues and the hard problems that confront the world today. As great powers, the United States and Japan have a responsibility to confront and address these issues. Among others, these issues include the ongoing war against terrorism, promoting economic development that benefits all mankind, and charting a course for a sustainable use of our resources.

The terrorist barbarity of September 11 demonstrated the dark evil spawned by fanaticism and intolerance. Sadly we have witnessed since then, in Moscow, in Bali, in Baghdad, too many more senseless acts of terrorist violence. And as we mourn the loss of innocent lives in so many countries, we understand the urgent need to embrace anew the values of tolerance, respect for diversity, and

freedom. We realize and hope that the long term answer to terrorism and the other afflictions we face in our globalized age will begin with young leaders like you, who will work to build bridges and not to blow them up.

In the ongoing war against terrorism the United States is immensely grateful for Japan's contributions. Japan has played and continues to play an important role in this fight. The Japanese Self Defense Forces in Iraq put a human and public face on that role. Japan has provided other important assets and assistance. Japan has played an important role in providing fuel to coalition ships in the Indian Ocean. Japan has helped to root out and stop terrorist financing. While this help is important and is much appreciated, we must not mistake what this support is all about. Japan's contributions to the fight against terrorism are not out of friendship to the United States or even the alliance between our two nations but in the self interest of this great sovereign nation. Japan has joined in the fight against terrorism because it is in Japan's best interest to engage in this struggle, a universal struggle against terrorism.

Similarly, although both our nations benefit from our mutual security treaty, this treaty is not simply based on friendship or the fact that we are allies. This security partnership exists because it is in the best interests of Japan and the United States. The security partnership has served as the bedrock of stability in East Asia and as the basis for our joint effort for both peace and prosperity and security around the world.

Another overarching challenge for our times is to achieve and share prosperity among nations. In order to bring prosperity to the world, we must persist in our efforts to open markets, to bring down trade barriers, to promote direct investment by nations with each other around the world. The same trade, free trade, that has been so important to bringing economic prosperity to Japan and the United States, offers the best hope for economic prosperity to the rest of the world because individual freedom and initiative are always the key to unlocking prosperity. We must continue our efforts to open markets, to reduce trade barriers, and eliminate structural impediments to free trade. And these efforts confer benefits, not only at home but around the world.

As we confront the challenges of our times there will certainly be costs. Some of these costs will be financial, but some of these costs will be personal, and in some cases the price may be terribly painful. We will need to remember, however, that our "great responsibility" requires that we be willing to pay the price. Because of the sometimes staggering cost there may be some who think it better to retreat and turn away. But, my friends, it is also the responsibility of a great people, as well as a great nation, that we accept and embrace the challenge of building a better world, one bridge at a time.

When Mike Mansfield was here in 1986, your president at that time praised him for promoting world peace and regional harmony and "expressing an ideal vision of the twenty-first century." And great leaders provide clear vision. They see not only the challenges that lie ahead but also the path and the means of

overcoming those challenges. The tremendous challenges that lie before us today demand vision that is both clear and inspired. Though it is not often articulated, it is my sense that America and Japan share a clear vision that is based on principals of shared strength, shared prosperity, and shared values. We are joined in our belief in the importance of democratic institutions, in our belief in open competitive markets, in our commitment to human rights, and our mutual interest in global peace and prosperity. We are natural allies and we are good friends, precisely because we have a common interest in those shared objectives and shared values.

As the future leaders of Japan, it is important that you understand these values, and understand that there is a connection between our values and our vision. As Japan's future leaders, consider the challenge of creating your own vision for Japan, for its future, and indeed for the entire world. It is not for me or those of my generation to tell you and your generation what your vision should be. It is my purpose to tell you that as my generation faced heavy responsibilities and great sacrifice, it produced great opportunities. And so it must be with your generation and your college as you go about setting a course for the future, as indeed you will.

The need for vision encompasses every field, from business to politics to education to the structure and organization of society. As an example, consider whether Japan will have the vision to open its society and educational system to people from other countries. If you consider the great intellectual and cultural centers of today, such as New York, Paris, Berlin, you will see that they derive much of their energy and dynamic power from the mix of ethnicities and ideas that come from all over the globe. Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, and the other major cities in Japan are wonderful places, but let your mind wander into trying to see how much more great they would be and how much more creative energy might be unleashed if there were a greater tolerance for diversity and a greater openness to change. I'm speaking as a friend, and not as a critic. But think on this subject and decide in your generation whether Japan should reexamine its policies on immigration, nationality, and a welcoming attitude toward others of a different culture and from different lands.

It's not my job to tell Japan what it should do or what role it should play. I'm in Japan from the appointment of our president to speak for America and I will share my vision for America and for Japan but I will never try to tell Japan what it should do. Japan is a great sovereign nation, a great powerful nation, populated by great people, and you will make your own judgments about things. But it is my opportunity, that I have today, to share with you my view as to how you can best utilize the talent and resources that reside in this great nation. Future decisions as to the scope and nature of this role of leadership for Japan will require additional discussions and efforts to develop consensus within your country.

How the thinking of the Japanese people will develop on all of these issues is

an open question. But you, a young generation, have much more to say about how it unfolds and develops than do I, as an American, or does anyone of my generation, Japanese or American. It is up to you to decide that. That may not seem so to you today, but it is so. And it will be increasingly apparent to you as you finish your education here and engage in the public affairs of your nation. Those decisions are up to you and no one really can make them for you. I believe that vigorous public discussions of Japan's role in the future of society are always healthy and to be desired.

Related to the subject of Japan's role in the world, you should know that the United States supports the idea of a permanent seat for Japan in the Security Council of the United Nations and has done so for some time. Once again, not because we are friends, as indeed we are, but because you're a great world power, you're a great nation state, a great powerful society, you deserve a seat on the world's stage. You deserve a voice in the decision of world affairs. The best way to do that is to have a seat, a permanent seat, on the Security Council of the United Nations, so we are supporting it. I know you aspire to it. But whether it happens or not depends on many circumstances, but particularly on how you and your generation decide as you wish to do that, and do you wish to assume the responsibilities that go with world leadership and to speak a voice in the world forum.

While Japan has shown its dedication to the work of the U.N. by participation of the Self Defense Forces in peace keeping operations in Mozambique, and Cambodia, the Golan Heights, and East Timor, it's what the world expects of a great power, and indeed Japan is a great power. And similarly the role Japan has chosen to play in Afghanistan and Iraq reflects not only Japan's own interests in the world but also its standing in the world community. And as we have noted today, this is appropriate because "with great power comes great responsibility."

Although I want to refrain from giving unsolicited advice, I do want to share my experience and convictions. I believe that it is through active engagement, cooperation, and working together that we stand the best chance for building a better world. As Ambassador of the United States to Japan, I have two principal responsibilities. One is to build and improve the alliance and friendship between our two countries. But the second is to make sure that we understand each other. We had two great early presidents in the history of America, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, and they hated each other. But in late life, they came to respect each other. In the very ending time of their life, Adams wrote a letter to Jefferson, his lifetime enemy—they had both reached old age—in which he said, "We must live long enough to explain ourselves to each other." And indeed, in my view, that is the essence of greatness, whether personal or national. The United States and Japan must continue in the effort to explain ourselves to each other because it is that mutual understanding that will provide the dynamic energy that will fit these two countries to provide the leadership that their status as great powers and great peoples requires.

I foresee only greater cooperation between our two nations. The issues and challenges of our time require cooperation and coordination. We must work together for the sake of global prosperity and stability in order to protect our human rights and the environment and to demonstrate our joint resolve against intolerance and terrorism. As Japan secures its place among the great powers of the world, it will employ its wealth and creativity in ways that benefit its citizens and will at the same time benefit all mankind. To the extent that Japan chooses the responsibility to exercise its global leadership, it will find no more steadfast partner in that endeavor than the United States.

In a little over a year, Aichi Expo 2005 will open its doors to the world. Perhaps some of you know that I'm a big fan of world expositions and fairs like this. Indeed I have the experience of seeing my hometown in Tennessee promote, develop, and administer a world's fair in 1982. And I can tell you first hand that it has really great values. It has a unifying effect on the community. It has a focusing effect on the community's efforts. It advertises the assets and values of the region. It displays the wares and the talents of the people of Japan as well as just this area. It can and will be a great thing. And I predict that it will be widely attended and hugely successful. In the case of the Knoxville World's Fair, we had eleven million visitors. I think you will have many more. But you will look back on it in years to come and decide that the great values of an expo were only partially understood at the time it was promoted, developed, and executed. I commend you for the effort and I predict great things.

My friends, I am an optimist by nature and I am optimistic about Japan. I believe that Japan has much to teach the rest of the world. I believe Japan will continue to make important contributions to peace and stability. Japan will lead the way in creating new wealth for the poor and disadvantaged elsewhere. I believe that Japan will continue to join together with other like-minded countries and certainly the United States to see that the scourge of terrorism is abolished. These are major challenges, but you are a major power, and you have major friends, and a major society, and a great imaginative spirit. You will devise the ways to achieve these results.

My friends, as students, as members of the young generation, you deserve every opportunity. You receive that opportunity here, at this great educational institution. You must honor that opportunity by giving it your very best. But your very best is more than simply scholastic attainment. It is also your vision about what Japan should be in the future, what the world should be, what the world that you will populate will be like. You are the future of mankind and are more than just the future of Japan. I believe that the young people of Japan and the United States share the fact that they are the best educated, the most aware, the most participatory young generation in the history of mankind. I believe, then, that you have a greater opportunity to formulate sound policy for the future and to advance the cause of humanity than any generation that precedes you. I also believe that you will not do that unless you consciously strive to do that,

unless you set your mind to that great task and not depend on others to order the future for you. You are leaders. You must act like leaders. You must formulate or help formulate not only policy for Japan and Japan's relationship with the rest of the world but indeed for humanity as well.

My friends, in many ways I envy you in this opportunity. Your future is before you. Your talents and responsibilities are manifest and obvious. Your challenges are great. Your opportunities are vast. But, my friends, it won't matter if you don't redeem that great promise by participating in the formulation of the policies of your country. I urge you to do that. I believe you will, and some day some future American ambassador will stand here, perhaps, and say that you have vindicated the promise of your generation. That should be your achievement. Thank you very much.