

of gray. So, I would be less than fair if I did not tell you what I said to the Japanese participants at the Japan-U.S. Business Conference last summer:

"Although we appeal to the American people to do away with the mantra of the closed Japanese market, we should also be ready to admit that our market is less open than we tend to believe, that there is still much opaqueness in our economic systems which hampers imports and that our economy is in need of more extensive deregulation and more active promotion of competition policy.

" [C]ultural idiosyncrasies should not be confused with trade barriers. But we should also be aware that in the real world of business, the distinction sometimes becomes blurred. No American would go so far as to argue that the Japanese language is a hidden trade barrier. But what about long-term customer-supplier relationships that occupy such an important place in Japan's business world? Under normal circumstances, the

*unintentionally
are
barriers*

customer's loyalty to

customer's loyalty to the supplier can be considered a legitimate factor in influencing their business relations. Yet, when it goes too far, it becomes hard to distinguish from collusive and exclusionary ties..."

If globalization is the direction in which the world economy is moving, then I believe that the U.S. and Japan, the two largest industrial economies, should move toward convergence and integration. This process cannot always be one way toward the U.S. as many Americans tend to believe. ^{But} Japan must also make its systems and practices more open, transparent and competitive. It must be a process of mutual learning and mutual efforts.

This, in my view, is what we should mean when we talk about managing our economic relations. The problem is that it requires a great deal of sophisticated understanding of each other's culture. What are the cultural idiosyncrasies that cannot be negotiated away as we do with trade barriers? Where do we draw a line between what has to be changed and what has to be respected?

How much difference

How much difference should we accept to compete fairly and cooperate for mutual benefit? Granted that a nation's culture is not static, to what extent do economic changes affect cultural changes? These are the questions we must constantly address to achieve better mutual understanding so that our relations do not degenerate into economic rivalry.

This brings me to another message that I repeated almost like a mantra on the Capitol Hill, on university campuses, to Japan-America Societies, to World Affairs Councils and many other American audiences. It is the urgent need to expand people-to-people exchanges between our countries, particularly to increase substantially the number of young Americans who come to study in Japan. This is something on which both Ambassador Mondale and I have worked hard over the past couple of years. And I'm glad that some progress is being made, though much remains to be done.

The story goes all the way back to the conversation I had with Ambassador Mondale in Washington in the summer of 1993, when he was

preparing for his new

preparing for his new responsibility in Tokyo. As we were discussing the whole range of issues concerning Japan-U.S. relations, Ambassador Mondale happened to ask me how many American students were studying in Japan and how many Japanese students in the U.S. He was truly shocked by the numbers I gave him. The facts were, according to one American survey:

About 1,200 American students in Japan (both graduate and undergraduate), compared with over 43,000 Japanese students in the U.S.; and

A little over 4,000 American students in the whole of Asia, compared with over 50,000 Americans studying in Europe. //

We have come to live in the information age. Yet, information is not the same as knowledge, which leads to understanding. CNN and Internet do not necessarily improve our abilities to understand each other better. No wonder the level of our knowledge and understanding remains far below the level of political and economic interactions between our countries. And the extreme imbalances in student exchanges I have cited reveal a serious gap between America's

knowledge and understanding

knowledge and understanding of Japan and Asia and its strategic and economic interests in the Asia-Pacific region. If this gap is not narrowed, it will soon become a heavy constraint on America's ability to be a true Pacific power. And all of us, on both sides of the Pacific, will suffer from its consequences. As the Fulbright Program has proven, no investment yields higher returns in international relations than investment in promoting student exchanges.

Let me now close with a note of personal reflection on my rewarding American experience in the diplomatic service, from which I am about to retire.

As the day of my departure from Washington approached, an American friend of mine asked me, "What were the most memorable experiences you've had during your tour?" I replied, "Two events come to mind."

First was the Emperor's state visit in the summer of '94. During the visit, the Wall Street Journal carried a heart-warming editorial which said, "[The visit] is a potent symbol of the ties that

bind the two nations

bind the two nations and how far America and Japan have come together in the past 50 years. We wish Their Majesties a happy stay in America. We know that they are heartily welcome."

My wife and I accompanied the Emperor and Empress throughout the visit, which took them to nine cities in two weeks. And we were indeed deeply moved by the warm and generous hospitality with which so many Americans received the imperial couple. I think not only were Americans charmed by the outgoing Emperor and Empress who enjoyed mingling and talking with people, but they found in the couple the symbol of the postwar democratic Japan.

The other thing I will always remember is the outpouring of genuine sympathy from so many in America for the victims of the earthquake in Kobe. It was a most touching experience that I will never forget. Both events reminded me anew of something I had known for a long time--the tremendous generosity of the American people.

Many years of American experience have taught me that America is a unique nation, not

only because of its generosity,

only because of its generosity, but also because of its idealism and openness.

In closing, let me quote the poet Carl Sandburg, who wrote, "Always the path of American destiny has been into the unknown. Always there arose enough reserves of strength, balances of sanity, portions of wisdom to carry the nation through to a fresh start with ever-renewing vitality."

America still has that strength, that wisdom, that vitality. And because of that, I believe we all want to see America succeed in its unique mission to make the world a better place to live. This deeply held wish is the source of good will and respect the Japanese people hold for America. And I believe that, in the final analysis, this is the ultimate meaning of our relationship with America.

and said he would ask Congress for approval to buy 80 more over the next seven years.

The White House estimated that 13,900 California jobs are tied to production of the C-17 and that buying 80 more would create 4,700 more jobs.

Clinton has been a near-permanent fixture in California during the first three years of his administration, coming to the state more than a score of times for events ranging from the 1994 Northridge earthquake to Beverly Hills fund-raisers.

After his meeting with Hashimoto on Friday, Clinton went to Malibu to attend a birthday dinner for recording-industry executive David Geffen, a prominent California Democratic fund-raiser. Among other Hollywood figures at the dinner was director Stephen Spielberg, a contributor to Democratic funds in the state.

With the state's primary coming up next month, Clinton clearly sought to focus on trade and defense issues that matter so much to the California economy.

"It was obvious to me that we needed it (the C-17) for the national defense," Clinton said in Long Beach. "There were people in Washington who said the program was in trouble and couldn't be fixed. Well, you fixed it."

(Preceding FS Material Not for Publication)

PFS109 02/26/96

(FS) CLINTON MEETS JAPAN PREMIER AS TRADE FIRES '96 CAMPAIGN

(New York Times 02/26/96 Alison Mitchell article) (680)

(Following FS Material Not for Publication)

Santa Monica, Calif. -- With the trade debate in the Republican Presidential campaign looming over them, President Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan met Friday night to lay the groundwork for Clinton's state visit to Tokyo later this year.

Hashimoto, who was Japan's trade negotiator before he became prime minister in January, flew 11,000 miles for the session, which lasted only an hour and was sandwiched between West Coast political appearances by Clinton.

U.S. officials said the two leaders exchanged gifts of photographs and left on a first-name basis, opening the way for further work on security and trade declarations to be hammered out in April.

"It was a very lively one-hour meeting in a cordial atmosphere," said Hashimoto, who had asked for the meeting.

The two men discussed a broad array of security and trade concerns, with President Clinton reiterating the United States' interest in opening Japan's markets in semiconductors, aviation, film and insurance. But officials on both sides said in advance that the meeting was not intended as a negotiating session.

Hashimoto, who is known for having a more assertive style than his predecessors, said he had told Clinton that while such issues should be resolved one by one "we should not play up these issues and undermine the Japan-U.S. relationship."

Assistant Secretary of State Winston Lord said Hashimoto had discussed Japan's plans to deregulate its housing construction standards, which could benefit American exporters.

The two leaders also discussed security concerns including the United States troops stationed in Japan, which have become a simmering issue since the rape of a schoolgirl on Okinawa. Three American servicemen have been tried in the case, and the verdicts are to be announced on March 7.

Hashimoto said that the U.S. presence in Asia contributes significantly to peace but that he wants American cooperation in reducing its military presence on Okinawa. While the United States has said it would consider relocating

some of the troops elsewhere in Japan, Clinton reaffirmed that the United States would maintain its force levels in Asia, according to Lord.

The United States and Japan have wrestled over trade issues for two decades. But administration officials note that while the U.S. trade deficit with Japan was \$63 billion last year, the monthly trade deficits have been dropping significantly for the past six months.

"I don't say we've got the problem licked," said the American ambassador to Japan, Walter F. Mondale, who came to California for the meeting. "There's more progress that's needed. But there's been a very impressive, it seems to me, amount of progress."

Trade has emerged as a major issue in the Republican presidential race, with Patrick J. Buchanan, the former television commentator, running on a platform of protectionism that includes a tariff on Japanese imports.

During a Republican debate Thursday night, Buchanan asserted that Japan was worried that he might become president. If elected, he said, he would tell the Japanese prime minister that unless they worked out the balance of trade he would "unilaterally" end Japan's trade surplus. Former Gov. Lamar Alexander of Tennessee also vowed to be tough on trade with Tokyo.

As he began his session with Hashimoto, Clinton defended his administration's approach to Japan and spoke against protectionism.

"There have been problems," Clinton said in reference to trade disputes as he and Hashimoto posed for reporters on the grounds of a Santa Monica hotel. "We have taken these issues seriously, far more seriously than previous American administrations. But we have not attempted to approach them in an atmosphere that was based on fear or anger or rancor."

"We can be firm with each other, strong with each other, we can even disagree with each other," Clinton said. But he said it was crucial to have a strong partnership with Japan.

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PFS110 02/26/96

(FS) U.S. AND JAPAN: AN ALLIANCE FOR THE CENTURIES

(Christian Science Monitor Takashi Oka story) (1870)

(Following FS Material Not for Publication)

("We are gathered here ... not in a spirit of distrust, malice or hatred.... that from this solemn occasion a better world shall emerge out of the blood and carnage of the past a world dedicated to the dignity of man and the fulfillment of his most cherished wish for freedom, tolerance, and justice.")

General MacArthur, surrender ceremony, battleship Missouri, Tokyo Bay, Sept. 2, 1945

Imagine the scene, if you will.

A mighty armada of 2,000 ships filled Tokyo Bay. Generals Wainwright and Percival, who had just come out of three-and-a-half years of captivity, were by General MacArthur's side. Many Americans and some other Allied soldiers witnessing Japan's surrender had participated in some of the bloodiest battles of World War II -- Tarawa, Iwo Jima, Okinawa. But there was no vindictiveness in MacArthur's voice. To him, victors and vanquished alike could share the same ideals -- dignity, freedom, tolerance, justice.

Long-term commitment

That, I submit, is the real and enduring basis of the alliance that the United States and Japan have enjoyed for the past half century. It is a relationship that began nearly a century before the surrender ceremony, and it is one I am convinced is destined to continue for centuries beyond. It was not always a smooth relationship, and its first phase ended, disastrously, at Pearl Harbor. But to me, what's most

important about the first century of the US-Japan relationship, particularly in the early years, is the fact that Japan was eagerly learning not merely the science and military technology of the West, including the US, but also the institutions, laws, and thought underpinning them.

The introduction of these values to Japan predated the surrender ceremony by 92 years. From the beginning of the American occupation, MacArthur was conscious of that history and was determined to build upon it.

What new tasks does the US-Japan alliance face? Joseph S. Nye Jr., until recently assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, is author of the "Nye initiative," which attempts to find relevant post-coldwar tasks for the alliance. He says security is like oxygen. "You tend not to notice it until you begin to lose it, but once that occurs, there is nothing else you will think about."

Throughout the cold war, the Soviet Union and its client states were the obvious security threat. But East Asia was different from Western Europe. In Europe, a group of like-minded democratic states faced a clear and present threat from Moscow. In East Asia, the threat came at first not only from Moscow, but from its Communist ally, China. The Korean War was fought against North Korea and its main ally, China, and when the US got involved in the Vietnam War, it was from the mistaken fear that North Vietnam was in fact a proxy for China.

By the end of the 1950s, China was embroiled in a public dispute with the Soviet Union, while it continued to support Hanoi. But once that war was won, accumulating tensions between Hanoi and Beijing led to a sharp, ugly border fight between the two countries; China invaded North Vietnam, only to be pushed back with heavy casualties.

The US, linked to Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Thailand by a series of bilateral treaties rather than one NATO-like alliance, countered these quarreling Communist powers. There were many threats to the security of the US and its allies, and many responses.

Today, the Soviet threat is gone, and threats from China and Vietnam have been transmuted. Both countries remain Communist but have undertaken far-reaching economic reforms. Only North Korea remains isolated, though it, too, has made tentative moves to loosen its economy.

By far the most important of America's alliance relationships in Asia is with Japan. But with so bewildering a series of changes in the nature of the security threat, is an alliance still the best path for the US and Japan to follow?

Mr. Nye's answer is a resounding "Yes." But Chalmers Johnson, in a Foreign Affairs article co-authored by British scholar E.B. Keehn, disagrees. The Johnson-Keehn thesis says alliances were fine when Japan and other East Asian countries were weak, but today they can take care of themselves. The authors say the battleground in Asia has shifted from military threats to economic conflicts -- an arena in which the US should look to its own defenses.

I don't believe security threats to the US or to Japan have disappeared -- rather, they've become more diverse. Mr. Johnson says Japan faces no known external military threat today. But I doubt he would find many people in Japan who would agree with him. When North Korea appeared to be threatening to develop nuclear weapons, Japan seemed reluctant to go to the brink. But when the US reached a compromise agreement with Pyongyang that stopped short of full disclosure of the latter's nuclear program, Japanese public opinion showed more concern about what were seen as American concessions than relief over a settlement.

China is the largest question mark in Asia, and perhaps the world. China's leaders have opened their country to trade and investment and have embarked on an ambitious program of economic reform. We'd all like to believe these leaders will have the courage to undertake the political reforms that will harness the energies of their people and bring their country into the ranks of the world's democratic nations. We would like to believe that Tiananmen was a gross miscalculation. We'd like to believe that once the senior-most generation of leaders, including Deng Xiaoping, have departed from the scene, China will resume its

interrupted course toward greater individual freedom and plurality of choice.

What next for China?

But for now the Communist Party remains in control, and we do not know whether China will continue to grow in economic and military power and assertiveness without the democratization that has taken place in the former Soviet Union or in the economically successful countries of South Korea and Taiwan.

Furthermore, China's dispute with Taiwan could get out of hand. Both sides have long agreed Taiwan is a province of China. But from Taiwan's view, that doesn't make it subordinate to Beijing. China's refusal to allow Taiwan anything but the most restricted status in international affairs is likely to bring about just what Beijing wants to avoid: growing demands in Taiwan for outright independence.

While both Japan and the US agree that the settlement of Taiwan's status is a matter for Beijing and Taipei to settle, there must be regular monitoring of the situation. Quiet diplomacy is the order of the day, with Washington and Tokyo in constant contact, as allies should be.

The Taiwan question is a good example of the choices facing Japan. Japan needs to deal with China as a friend and neighbor. Of course, businesspeople and manufacturers are attracted to the enormous Chinese market. But as China's muscle grows, Tokyo must do everything in its power to make sure China's political and economic transformation is smooth. To some extent Japan must also strengthen its own defenses. For example, last month, for the first time, Japanese fighter planes scrambled off the disputed Senkaku islands -- Diaoyu to the Chinese -- when it looked as if Chinese aircraft were about to invade Japanese airspace.

The only way Japan can deal effectively with China is in close cooperation with the US. Some Japanese believe that, with the US no longer as super a superpower as it once was, Japan should cut its own politico-strategic deals with China. There is a growing school of "Asia firsters" in the Japanese foreign-policy establishment, a school that, while admitting the continuing importance of a security treaty with the US, advocates a more assertive Asian stance, one that looks to the emergence of an East Asian regional bloc. The natural leader of that bloc would be Japan.

Countering this is another school, one of the intellectual leaders of which is the reformist politician Ichiro Ozawa. Mr. Ozawa says Japan can be successful in Asia only as a close ally of the US. For Japan to attempt to be a disinterested go-between between the US and China, for example, would offhandedly make both sides mistrust it while creating an advantage for Japan. I believe the Ozawa and Nye positions are the wisest for Japan to follow.

This doesn't mean there will be no disagreements between the US and Japan, or that Japan should not forcefully advocate its own position whenever it feels it must.

But Japan should never forget it is speaking from a position within its alliance with the US.

The strands of America's relations with Europe have a longer history and are thicker and more varied than those with Japan. Yet during the decade I spent as a correspondent in Europe I could see how important it was for both sides to tell each other, "I love you." Misunderstandings too easily grow into major disputes.

Constant reassurance

The need for tender loving care in the US-Japan alliance relationship has never been greater. If declining Russian power is replaced by rising Chinese power, there is no great change in the balance of forces in East Asia.

Today, increasing numbers of US legislators seem bored by the alliance and do not see why 100,000 US troops must remain in South Korea and Japan. Many US lawmakers don't seem convinced by the argument that, with the Japanese government bearing almost all the costs of stationing the troops (with the exception of salaries), it is cheaper to station these troops in Japan than to withdraw

them to Hawaii or the continental US. They are too preoccupied with domestic concerns to pay much attention to the alliance with Japan, but when they do, their natural tendency seems to be to focus on the trade dispute and to have it drive the political/strategic relationship, rather than the other way around.

In Japan, too, the primary concern is domestic. A weak coalition government confronts a reform-minded opposition. The main party in the governing coalition, the Liberal Democratic Party, is led by new Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto. Mr. Hashimoto controls the date of the next general election, which does not have to be held until summer 1997.

Only then will a new balance of political forces be achieved in Japan. Meanwhile, the US must get through its own presidential campaign. A back-to-normal US will not be ready to deal seriously with a back-to-normal Japan until early in 1997. But political calendars are facts of life. The world is used to seeing the US furlough itself once every four years. But in the US and Japan we need a public that is aware of the issues at stake and able to separate the chaff from the wheat.

(Takashi Oka is associate director of the International Affairs Bureau of Japan's New Frontier Party. He is a former correspondent for the Monitor and The New York Times.)

(Preceding FS Material Not for Publication)

CHINA IN THE AMERICAN PRESS

PFS111 02/26/96

(FS) TAIWANESE PRESSES U.S. ON CHINA
(Washington Post 02/24/96 Keith B. Richburg story) (760)

(Following FS Material Not for Publication)

Taipei -- Taiwan, Feb. 23 -- Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui urged the Clinton administration today to use its leverage with China and to voice more concern to Beijing about the heightened tension in the Taiwan Strait, as more than 100,000 Chinese troops were poised to begin military exercises just a few miles away.

"The United States is our good friend," Lee told reporters at a 90 minute news conference at the presidential palace here. "Even though we don't have official relations, in many ways we have very good, solid, substantive relations."

"I sincerely hope the United States, for the sake of Asia-Pacific stability, expresses more concern about pertinent matters," Lee said, speaking on the eve of the formal launch of presidential campaigning here.

Lee's remarks seemed aimed at sending two signals to China's Communist leadership: Taiwan wants to improve the current tense relationship with its giant neighbor and has no desire to seek full independence from China, but at the same time it will not be intimidated or cowed by China's bellicose behavior and can defend itself if attacked.

"We would like to have the two sides cooperating for mutual benefit," Lee said. He then noted later that Taiwan's "armed forces are quite well prepared. We can have 100 years without war, but we cannot go a single day without preparation for military action." He said Taiwan's military remained ready to meet any threat "every minute, every second."

As Lee spoke, Taiwan's media were reporting new details of a large-scale Chinese troop buildup across the strait in southeastern Fujian Province, presaging massive military exercises apparently aimed at intimidating Taiwanese in advance of next month's presidential elections.

News reports here, quoting Defense Ministry sources, said China had amassed about 150,000 troops in Fujian from seven divisions, including an airborne division from central Hubei Province. One report said China had moved some 220 fighter jets to Fujian for the exercises.

Taiwanese television reported the exercises would begin March 10, while newspapers said the maneuvers would start either sometime next week or in early March.

Defense Secretary William J. Perry has urged China to refrain from trying to use military might to intimidate Taiwan.

China staged four sets of exercises in the strait over the last year, including some missile firings, in an apparent attempt to weaken support for Lee and to persuade Taiwanese voters last December not to support candidates favoring independence for the island. Most analysts believe China's tactics had little effect, since Taiwan's pro-independence party received close to the share of vote that surveys here had predicted. At the same time, however, the election saw the rise of a small, new party of more hard-line nationalists committed to closer ties with China.

Lee said he believed China's warlike tone in recent weeks arose from a fear of the island's nascent democracy, which he said makes reunification with China more distant, unless the Communist Party regime in Beijing allows more freedom. China's Communists, he said, are "very much afraid of the democratization process that has been going on here in Taiwan."

China also has been afraid Taiwan is moving toward a formal break from Beijing -- a move that Beijing consistently has said would prompt an immediate military response. But Lee tried to assuage those fears, saying he remains committed to reunification as the "ultimate goal" -- but only after China develops "freedom and democracy, equitable distribution of wealth and social justice."

Lee said today, for the first time, that he never anticipated that "the Chinese Communists would react so vehemently" after he made his much publicized trip to the United States last June to attend his college reunion at Cornell University. China's leaders view Taiwan as a renegade province, and they interpreted the U.S. visit as yet another sign that, under Lee, Taiwan is moving toward outright independence.

Lee said, however, that if he is reelected next month, he intends to continue his diplomatic outreach efforts to break his island nation's international isolation and raise Taiwan's global profile, even at the risk of further antagonizing China.

"If I can go out and be of help to the nation, then maybe I'll be going out of the country" on future trips, Lee said. "We should not be thinking too much about what the Chinese Communists would be thinking."

(Preceding FS Material Not for Publication)

PFS112 02/26/96

(FS) ARRESTS BREAK UP CHINESE GANG THAT
PREYED ON ALIENS

(Washington Post 02/24/96 William Branigin article) (650)

(Following FS Material Not for Publication)

In a series of raids in six states, federal agents have broken up what they said was a powerful Chinese gang that terrorized New York's Chinatown and engaged in murder, extortion, kidnapping and alien smuggling.

The raids Thursday and yesterday in New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Delaware, Colorado and Pennsylvania capped a year-long investigation of the Fukienese Flying Dragons gang, which authorities described as a violent criminal enterprise made up mostly of young men from the Chinese province of Fujian, also known as Fukien.

Sixty-four alleged gang leaders and members were charged with a range of violent crimes in eight federal indictments that were unsealed in Manhattan federal court yesterday. At least 35 have been arrested and others are being sought, officials said.

"This violent gang was responsible for hundreds of kidnappings, robberies, acts of extortion, and smuggling hundreds of illegal aliens into the United States," Attorney General Janet Reno said. She said the Justice Department

Securing Japan's defence

Most Asian leaders still do not like to admit it too publicly, but recent events in the Taiwan Strait and tension on the Korean peninsula have been a salutary reminder of the need for a continuing US security presence in the region. At next week's summit, president Bill Clinton and prime minister Ryutaro Hashimoto thus have an extra incentive for reaffirming their commitment to the Japan-US security arrangements on which that presence depends.

The task will not be easy. Trade issues are finally moving away from centre stage in the US/Japan relationship, but the security leg has shown signs of wobbling now the cold war is over. Opposition to US bases on Okinawa was exacerbated by last autumn's rape of a schoolgirl by US soldiers. The public in both countries is too little aware of the importance of the alliance. The US worries that Japan is unwilling to pull its weight in security matters.

There are some encouraging signs. Japan has agreed to supply the US military with spare parts and a larger range of services. But this symbolic move, expected to be enshrined in a fresh defence agreement announced during Mr Clinton's visit, does not remove the need for a broader review of roles in the region.

Japan must again rethink the constitutional constraints on its self-defence forces. But both sides must proceed with care as well as determination. Having promoted Japanese pacifism after the second world war, the US cannot now complain too loudly about its lack of belligerence.

Calming factor

The US desire for Japan to play a more active security role must also be offset by the reluctance of Asian countries to see Japanese forces freely deployed in the region. If North Korea were to invade, South Korea would rely on US support. Given memories of occupation, it is difficult to see Seoul welcoming Japanese troops on to its territory. There is also danger in encouraging extreme elements in Japan which remain committed to nationalism and less so to pacifism. A continuing US presence is a calming factor, as it

eases some of the internal pressures for Japan to re-arm.

The first part of any reassessment of the security ties must involve US recognition that there are limits on what Japan can do. The second part is for Japan to accept that those limits lie somewhere beyond its present contribution. To a sceptical US public the relationship will always seem lopsided if Japan continues to hide behind constitutional constraints in offering only lightly armed and grudging support for UN peace-keeping exercises.

A good deal

This requires a more open debate on defence policy than Japan has yet undertaken. Last November's review which promised a cut of 20 per cent to 145,000 in defence personnel commanded a consensus that for the first time involved the Socialist party. But there is a need to go further. The Japanese government must convince its own people that the deal whereby the US provides security in return for bases is a good one. That will reinforce its argument that, despite local opposition, US forces should remain in Okinawa – a vital staging post if they are to play a wider regional role.

More important, Japan must revisit the interpretation of the constitution which says that its self-defence forces may respond only to a direct attack on Japan itself. If Japan is to be a more equal partner for the US, it must be prepared to embrace the concept of collective defence and show greater willingness to play some part in common actions such as the Gulf war.

The trouble is that debate on this issue remains difficult. There are fears that it might split the governing coalition or the Liberal Democratic party itself. But in avoiding the debate, Japan's ruling elite risks international embarrassment and internal agonising the next time a crisis strikes. Japan's political leaders should seize the initiative, launch the debate now and steer it towards the appropriate conclusion. The Japan-US alliance – and with it the security of the whole Asian region – would end up stronger as a result.

Defense alliance with America 'needs' a firmer anchor

By ROY K. AKAGAWA

Asahi Evening News

The upcoming meeting between Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and U.S. President Bill Clinton could be "one of the most significant" in the postwar history of U.S.-Japanese relations, U.S. Ambassador Walter Mondale told Asahi Shimbun and Asahi Evening News in an exclusive interview Thursday.

Mondale said it would be "crucial for the people of both countries to see the relationship as solid, and crucial for the world to see that the two nations are able to work together and deal with the key concerns that we share."

Unlike past summit meetings when trade and economic issues clouded the bilateral relationship, the meeting next Wednesday will have the secu-

rity alliance as its centerpiece.

Discussion on the relevance of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty in the post-Cold War era took on greater urgency after the rape of a 12-year-old schoolgirl in Okinawa by three American servicemen last September. The incident touched off angry protests in the southernmost prefecture of Japan and raised concerns about the future of the bilateral security relationship.

Mondale said recent actions by the two governments have reaffirmed the importance of the alliance.

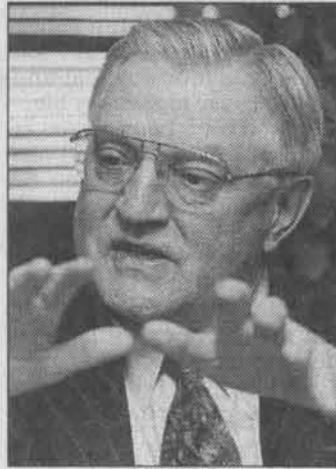
He cited the national defense program outline issued last November by Japan, the East Asia strategy study that was released by the United States in February 1995, a new bilateral agreement on host nation support, and the expected signing of an Acquisition and Cross-Servic-

Japan-U.S.



ing Agreement (ACSA) covering U.S. and Japanese military logistics, as clear evidence that "the leaders of both countries have looked at the new world and decided that this relationship must continue."

Some Japanese political and business leaders have called for Japan's role in the bilateral security relationship to be expanded beyond mere self-defense and abdication of every other responsibility to the United States.



Walter Mondale

ASAHI SHIMBUN

Mondale said the current treaty "serves American interests and we are firmly for the treaty. It is for Japan to decide whether its rules should

change. We think debate is healthy but we don't think it is for us to get involved in that question."

On the prospective ACSA, he added that the United States is "constantly looking" for "peaceful purposes" that would fall "within the Japanese rules" and "be as satisfactory as possible" to both sides as well as other cases that could involve a military emergency in East Asia.

Until now there has been little serious discussion between the two nations on what form of security support and cooperation Japan could provide the United States in an emergency, mainly because Japan's 1947 pacifist Constitution severely limits its ability to engage in collective defense.

Mondale said the two sides had worked vigorously over the past six months to respond to

calls from Okinawa to reduce the U.S. military presence. He said he was hopeful that the efforts by the Americans to prove they are "good neighbors" would be perceived as such by the people of Okinawa.

"We have worked very vigorously since the outrage over the rapes to reduce irritants, to reduce (U.S. military bases') acreage, to do what we can to be less intrusive, and to be responsive to the sensibilities of those with whom we live," he said.

On the economic front, Mondale called for further deregulation of the Japanese market to resolve many of the outstanding trade issues.

Mondale acknowledged the need for sensitivity in dealing

with differences between Japanese and American society. He added, however, that "Japan has to realize that in some cases (those differences) impinge on the rest of the world in an unfair way and threaten the very system (on which) Japan has to depend."

Mondale added that a ma-

jor problem in trade issues is the tendency of Japanese business leaders to consider them as zero-sum games.

"In most cases, when markets are opened, the pie expands and everybody does better," Mondale said. "It's a win-win situation. But that is not widely believed in Japan, and I think that is one of the reasons why these disputes often carry more emotion than they should."

INTERVIEW: WALTER MONDALE, U.S. AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN

Alliance needs securing, Mondale says

Reassurance is required that the Japan-U.S. security tie is "solid," U.S. Ambassador Walter Mondale tells Asahi Evening News in an exclusive interview.

Asahi Evening News

Q: What should be done to ease rising tensions in the region?

A: The most important thing is to reassure this region and our publics that the security relationship is solid. Asia does not have a NATO (or another) multilateral security institution. It is the U.S.-Japan alliance, the ability of the United States to forward-deploy forces, and the South Korean alliance (with the United States) that permits us to perform that role.

I happen to think the presence of our carriers off (the coast of) Taiwan made an important statement (during the recent heightening of tensions in the Taiwan Strait). The trou-

ble in North Korea is more manageable because North Korea must (now) know that we have our forces here.

Q: What are the prospects for a multilateral security arrangement in Asia?

A: What we have is the ASEAN Regional Forum. We attach importance to that, as does Japan. That is an important annual event where not just ASEAN, but Russia and others are involved.

I don't think there's any prospect in the near term of an actual security alliance like NATO. That's one of the key reasons for the U.S.-Japan security relationship. Both Japan and the United States are pressing countries like China to be more transparent.

Japan-U.S.



Asia has gained so much from its non-military posture over the last 20 years. China and everybody has benefited because instead of going down the military route, we've gone down the economic growth route, and it's been phenomenal. We don't want to lose that momentum by going back down the old military route.

Q: Unfortunately, in terms of their military buildup, nations in Asia are going back down the old road. What should be done about this?

A: Our policy is comprehensive engagement with China. China is not an enemy, we are

not trying to contain China. We are trying to engage China and encourage her to be prudent, to avoid (similar situations to those we just experienced with) Taiwan, to refrain from selling weapons of mass destruction and nuclear technology to others, and to maintain its progress in the economic area.

Secretary (of State Warren) Christopher will be meeting Foreign Minister Qian Qichen after the meeting in St. Petersburg. Although we delayed the visit of the defense minister, I am sure that it will be rescheduled at some point.

We have human rights concerns (about China), we are worried about more nuclear tests, we are pressing them to join the comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty. But it has been difficult.

Q: Do you expect any specific breakthroughs in the three areas of trade talks?

A: I think there might be one

more attempt on insurance. Mr. (William) Weber representing the American semiconductor industry has been meeting with Mr. (Norio) Ohga of Sony to see if they can come up with some kind of relationship that they think serves both countries. On film, I don't anticipate any developments by the time of the summit. We did get an agreement on air cargo.

Q: What is your assessment of the deregulation plan recently revised by the Japanese government?

A: There were some areas that offered some hope. One area is housing and housing materials. Japan wants to have a more open housing market and we would like to see more progress. Another is financial deregulation. In the telecommunications area, there are some hopeful areas.

In some areas such as the retail sales law, transportation, trucking, harbor services, and



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Walter Mondale, the U.S. ambassador to Japan, answers questions during an interview Thursday at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo.

administrative reform we didn't see much progress. We think there is still a lot of work that needs to be done.



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