

MARINE BALL

NOVEMBER 13, 1993

[INTRODUCED BY GUNNERY SERGEANT ANTHONY "GUNNY" ABBOTT, COMMANDER OF THE EMBASSY MARINE DETACHMENT.]

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THAT VERY KIND INTRODUCTION.

JOAN AND I ARE DELIGHTED TO JOIN ALL OF YOU HERE THIS EVENING FOR THIS ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF THE FOUNDING OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS. THIS DATES BACK TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO -- TO 1775 -- WHEN THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS VOTED TO ESTABLISH TWO BATTALIONS OF CONTINENTAL MARINES. (CONTRARY TO WHAT SOME MIGHT IMAGINE, I WAS NOT PRESENT FOR THAT VOTE.)

I ESPECIALLY WANT TO RECOGNIZE THE PRESENCE THIS EVENING OF MAJOR GENERAL ARTHUR BLADES, THE DEPUTY COMMANDER AND CHIEF OF STAFF FOR U.S. FORCES JAPAN.

I ALSO WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE J. DANIEL HOWARD, WHO RECENTLY SERVED OUR COUNTRY AS UNDER SECRETARY OF THE NAVY. WE ARE HONORED THAT YOU COULD BE WITH US.

AS YOU KNOW, THIS PAST THURSDAY WAS VETERAN'S DAY. THIS SOLEMN HOLIDAY REMINDS US OF THE HONOR AND COURAGE OF THE MANY AMERICAN MEN (AND WOMEN) WHO HAVE SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES IN SERVICE TO THEIR COUNTRY.

THE MARINES, OF COURSE, HAVE ALWAYS PERFORMED A VERY SPECIAL AND NOBLE ROLE IN OUR MILITARY SERVICE. YOU HAVE HAD TO BE PREPARED TO DEFEND AMERICAN INTERESTS AND ENTER INTO CONFLICT AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE. AND, OF COURSE, MOST VISIBLE TO ME RIGHT NOW, THE MARINE CORPS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SECURITY OF OUR EMBASSIES AROUND THE WORLD.

I BELIEVE THE MARINES HAVE ALWAYS REPRESENTED THE BEST VALUES IN AMERICAN LIFE: THE STRONG SENSE OF DUTY AND DEDICATION; THE COURAGE AND FIGHTING SPIRIT; AND THE ENERGY AND STAMINA.

AS YOU KNOW, WE HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL MARINE CORPS PRESENCE IN JAPAN. FOR THE PAST FORTY YEARS, THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN HAVE HAD A VERY SUCCESSFUL MILITARY AND SECURITY RELATIONSHIP. OUR SECURITY ALLIANCE HERE IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT -- NOT JUST FOR JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES, BUT FOR THE SECURITY AND STABILITY OF THIS ENTIRE REGION.

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND DEFENSE SECRETARY ASPIN HAVE REAFFIRMED OUR NATION'S SECURITY COMMITMENT TO JAPAN AND THIS REGION. ALTHOUGH WE ARE STREAMLINING OUR MILITARY AND DRAWING DOWN OUR PRESENCE IN EUROPE, WE HAVE NO PLANS FOR ANY REDUCTIONS IN THIS REGION. I BELIEVE THIS HAS BEEN VERY REASSURING TO JAPAN AND KOREA, AS WELL AS OTHERS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION.

I WANT TO ESPECIALLY RECOGNIZE OUR OWN MARINE DETACHMENT AT THE EMBASSY HERE IN TOKYO. WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPERB LEADERSHIP OF NICK PROCTOR, OUR EMBASSY'S SECURITY OFFICER, AND GUNNERY SERGEANT ABBOTT, THE COMMANDER OF OUR EMBASSY MARINE DETACHMENT. I KNOW THAT "GUNNY" ABBOTT ARRIVED HERE EARLY THIS SUMMER -- JUST IN TIME FOR THE G-7 SUMMIT AND THE VISIT OF PRESIDENT CLINTON. IT WAS NOT A QUIET TIME FOR THE EMBASSY. THE RIGHT WAY TO DESCRIBE IT, I THINK, IS "TRIAL BY FIRE" -- WHICH IS WHAT MARINES ARE USED TO.

BY EVERY MEASURE, THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT IN JULY WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL -- AND, I THINK, IT WILL BE REMEMBERED AS A SPECIAL EVENT IN U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONS. WHEN I SAW PRESIDENT CLINTON IN WASHINGTON SHORTLY AFTER HE RETURNED, HE WAS VERY IMPRESSED BY EVERY FEATURE OF HIS VISIT TO TOKYO.

ALTHOUGH I UNDERSTAND THAT EACH OF YOU SPENDS ONLY 15 MONTHS IN YOUR TOUR OF DUTY WITH US AT THE EMBASSY, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT YOU ARE FULL MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM. AND I WILL TELL YOU THIS: IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOUR YOUNG FACES -- BRIGHT, HARD-WORKING, SPIRITED, AND UNFAILINGLY POLITE. YOU KEEP US ON OUR TOES.

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR ALL OF YOUR EFFORTS IN PROTECTING OUR EMBASSY AND THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES. YOU BRING HONOR TO OUR COUNTRY AND YOU BRING HONOR TO OUR EMBASSY. WE ARE PROUD OF YOU.

THANK YOU.

DESPITE ALL THE COSTS . . . DESPITE ALL THE FORMAL AND INFORMAL BARRIERS . . . DESPITE ALL THE HASSLES AND REGULATIONS . . . , AMERICAN COMPANIES ARE MAKING THE INVESTMENTS, ALLOCATING THE PEOPLE AND DEVOTING THE ENERGY THAT IS NEEDED TO DO THE JOB RIGHT.

THE OLD EXCUSE THAT AMERICAN FIRMS ARE UNWILLING, OR UNABLE, TO COMPETE IN THE JAPANESE MARKET JUST DOESN'T STAND UP.

IN SECTOR AFTER SECTOR, AMERICAN BUSINESSES CLEARLY ARE COMPETITIVE -- OFFERING HIGH-QUALITY, WELL-DESIGNED, AFFORDABLE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES. WE ARE COMPETING JUST FINE EVERYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD -- AND WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO COMPETE IN JAPAN, TOO.

I PLEDGE TO YOU THAT OUR EMBASSY WILL BE OPEN AND RESPONSIVE TO YOUR NEEDS. NONETHELESS, THE FACT IS THAT REAL CHANGE AND PROGRESS IS GOING TO HAPPEN BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU DO. THESE ARE YOUR BUSINESSES; YOU KNOW THEM A LOT BETTER THAN WE EVER WILL.

THE VOICE OF THIS ORGANIZATION AND ITS MEMBERS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TOOLS WE HAVE FOR OPENING THE JAPANESE MARKET AND ENCOURAGING POSITIVE CHANGES IN JAPAN'S ECONOMIC SYSTEM.

I, PERSONALLY, AND EVERYONE AT OUR EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO ASSIST YOU IN WHATEVER WAY WE CAN.

AGAIN, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THIS MAGNIFICENT RECEPTION. AND THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING TO WELCOME US TO JAPAN.



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