

TALKING POINTS
GARIOA-FULBRIGHT ASSOCIATION LUNCHEON
APRIL 12, 1994

MEMBERS OF THE GARIOA-FULBRIGHT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I AM HONORED TO BE WITH YOU TODAY.

AS AMBASSADOR, I AM TRYING TO GET OUT OF TOKYO ON A REGULAR BASIS IN ORDER TO EXPERIENCE THIS NATION IN ITS FULL DIVERSITY. THAT IS WHY I AM HERE.

I AM ESPECIALLY HONORED TO MEET WITH SO MANY PEOPLE WHO WERE STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES. I WAS IMPRESSED TO LEARN THAT, BY 1972, MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND OKINAWANS HAD SPENT TIME IN MY COUNTRY UNDER THE GARIOA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

AND UNDER THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM, MORE THAN SIX THOUSAND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM ALL PARTS OF JAPAN HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY IN THE UNITED STATES. YOUR EXAMPLE SHOWS THE SUCCESS OF THESE PROGRAMS.

DURING OUR VISIT, JOAN AND I HAVE BEEN DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY THE UNIQUE CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC TRADITIONS OF OKINAWA. JOAN HAS EVEN SAT AT A POTTER'S WHEEL IN YOMITAN VILLAGE AND TRIED HER HAND AT OKINAWAN-STYLE POTTERY.

THIS MORNING, I EXPERIENCED THE QUIET MAJESTY OF SHURI CASTLE AND CAME AWAY WITH A DEEP APPRECIATION FOR OKINAWA'S PAST.

I HAVE ALSO LEARNED ABOUT THE HORRIBLE SACRIFICE OF OKINAWAN LIVES AND THE APPALLING DESTRUCTION OF YOUR HERITAGE DURING THE BATTLE HERE IN 1945. YESTERDAY, I VISITED THE WAR MEMORIAL SITES IN SOUTHERN OKINAWA. IT IS A MEMORY WHICH WE MUST NEVER FORGET.

LOOKING AT THE IMPRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR ISLAND SINCE THEN, I THINK ALL OKINAWANS CAN BE PROUD OF THE GREAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS YOU HAVE MADE.

IN THE COURSE OF MY VISIT, I HAVE ALSO HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH GOVERNOR OTA AND OUR MILITARY LEADERS. I AM KEENLY AWARE TO YOUR CONCERNS ABOUT THE AMERICAN BASES IN OKINAWA.

AS YOU KNOW, THERE WERE TWO ACCIDENTS LAST WEEK. I HOPE YOU WILL PLEASE ACCEPT MY DEEPEST REGRETS FOR WHAT HAPPENED. FORTUNATELY, NO ONE WAS INJURED. OUR MILITARY HAS THE HIGHEST SAFETY STANDARDS, DOING EVERYTHING THEY CAN TO MINIMIZE ANY RISKS.

WE KNOW OUR PRESENCE HERE IS AN IMPOSITION ON YOU. WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR GENEROUS WARMTH AND HOSPITALITY, AND I WANT TO REAFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT TO BE GOOD NEIGHBORS. OUR CONSUL GENERAL, DICK CHRISTENSON, HAS BEEN WORKING HARD ON THESE ISSUES — BOTH WITH YOU AND WITH OUR MILITARY LEADERSHIP. WE WISH TO SATISFY YOUR CONCERNS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, WHILE MAINTAINING THE MILITARY READINESS THAT IS NEEDED TO PROTECT AND DEFEND JAPAN AND THE REGION.

FROM YOUR OWN TRAGIC HISTORY, THE PEOPLE OF THIS ISLAND KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE THE HORRIBLE COSTS OF WAR IN THIS HISTORICALLY-TROUBLED PART OF THE WORLD. WHILE WE CAN BE THANKFUL THAT THE COLD WAR IS OVER, COMPELLING SECURITY NEEDS STILL REQUIRE OUR PRESENCE. THE CURRENT CRISIS WITH NORTH KOREA IS JUST THE LATEST REMINDER.

THE U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY TREATY CONTINUES TO BE THE FOUNDATION OF STABILITY IN THIS REGION — AND THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN OUR TWO NATIONS IS AS STRONG AS EVER. OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS ALSO COOPERATE ON A FULL RANGE OF REGIONAL AND GLOBAL ISSUES TO HELP BRING ABOUT GREATER PEACE AND PROSPERITY.

INEVITABLY, OUR TWO NATIONS ARE GOING TO HAVE SOME DIFFERENCES — AS WE DO NOW ON TRADE AND ECONOMICS. WE ARE SOVEREIGN NATIONS; EACH OF US HAS OUR OWN NATIONAL INTERESTS. THAT MEANS WE WILL SOMETIMES HAVE DISAGREEMENTS. BUT WE MUST ALWAYS BE RESPECTFUL, DIGNIFIED AND WILLING TO WORK TOGETHER IN THE SPIRIT OF STATESMANSHIP TO RESOLVE THEM.

AND THIS IS WHY I THINK EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS CAN MAKE SUCH A BIG DIFFERENCE.

I KNOW I MAY BE PREACHING TO THE CONVERTED ON THIS ISSUE. BUT I WANT YOU TO KNOW HOW MUCH WE VALUE YOUR EXPERIENCES AND LEADERSHIP.

AS AMBASSADOR, I AM TRYING TO ENCOURAGE MORE STUDENT EXCHANGES BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. DIPLOMACY BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS CAN ACCOMPLISH ONLY SO MUCH. THE DEEPER STRENGTH OF OUR RELATIONSHIP DEPENDS ON THE HUMAN CONNECTIONS BETWEEN US.

I AGREE WITH SENATOR FULBRIGHT, WHO HAS SAID: "EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE CAN TURN NATIONS INTO PEOPLE, CONTRIBUTING AS NO OTHER FORM OF COMMUNICATION CAN TO THE HUMANIZING OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS."

THIS IS ALSO THE SPIRIT IN WHICH I COME HERE AS AMBASSADOR.

I BELIEVE THAT ALL AMERICANS AND OKINAWANS CAN BE PROUD OF OUR HALF-CENTURY OF INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE. AND I HOPE WE CAN CONTINUE WORKING TOGETHER TO BUILD ON THIS SUCCESS.

LONG AGO, A TRAVELER FROM EUROPE REPORTED ON HIS VISIT TO THE RYUKYU ISLANDS. HE SAID THAT HE FOUND ON THESE ISLANDS A PEOPLE DISTINGUISHED NOT SO MUCH BY THEIR PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS BUT BY THEIR MORAL QUALITIES — BY (AND I QUOTE) "THEIR GENTLENESS OF SPIRIT AND MANNER, ... THEIR HOSPITALITY AND KINDNESS, THEIR AVERSION TO VIOLENCE AND CRIME."

I AGREE. WE ALL HAVE MUCH TO LEARN FROM YOU.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR THE WONDERFUL KINDNESS YOU HAVE SHOWN TO JOAN AND ME. WE LOOK FORWARD TO RETURNING TO OKINAWA.



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