

**AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS
BEFORE THE U.S. DELEGATION
(OFFICER'S CLUB, KADENA AFB, MARCH 13, 1995)**

Thank you, General Fulford, for that kind introduction. I am honored to have been asked to offer some remarks before this audience. General and Mrs. Mundy, Admiral and Mrs. Macke, General and Mrs. Krulak, General Myers and Mrs. Meyers, Admiral Clemens, general Fulford and Mrs. Fulford. This is an impressive gathering that I believe does full justice to the events that we will soon be commemorating.

Tomorrow morning we will head toward the little island of Iwo Jima to commemorate what may have been the fiercest battle in the history of warfare. We will gather together with surviving veterans of that horrible struggle. It is a remarkable irony of the world's greatest war--a struggle that spanned the globe--that for Americans it is the picture of the American flag being raised on Mt. Surabachi, on that minuscule and tragic spit of land, that remains above all in our nation's memory.

We will gather together with surviving American and Japanese veterans of that battle. It will be their day. A day to remember the bloodshed and carnage. A day to remember fallen buddies, and a day to ponder what sense can be made of it all after these fifty long years since the last gun fell silent.

In Lincoln's magnificent Gettysburg Address, unquestionably the best remembered speech in American history, he stood on soil freshly soaked in blood and prayed that those who gave their last full measure of devotion should not have died in vain. Although he spoke of a different war at a different time, thank God that we can meet tomorrow in peace--Japanese and American together-- and say that from that tragedy our two nations have found common ground and we are now joined together to build a prosperous, peaceful and democratic world.

Our alliance is one of the great success stories of this century, or of any century. Together we have converted the Pacific ocean from a vast expanse of blood and carnage into the world's most important avenue of commerce. Thanks to our partnership, the

Asia-Pacific region is the most prosperous and one of the most stable areas on earth.

Our alliance contributed importantly to the successful end of yet another great struggle--the cold war--in which, again, liberty and democracy prevailed. Our alliance, our economic success together, helped bring about the collapse of communism and an end to the threat of global nuclear annihilation.

As we commemorate the events of a half century ago, we must also remember that the success of our alliance over these last years has not made it any less necessary for the future. The peace and prosperity of our two nations and of the Asia-Pacific region continue to depend on our alliance and upon our continued cooperation.

So while we rightly honor the veterans of the battle of Iwo Jima tomorrow, as we remember and honor the dead, I want you to know that we will also be honoring the remarkable Americans in uniform today who serve the great cause of American liberty and decency as much today as did those who struggled so valiantly for the victory of humankind those many years ago.

It is a wonderful thing to be an American!



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