

CORNERSTONE OF PEACE MEMORIAL DEDICATION  
REMARKS OF AMBASSADOR MONDALE  
(FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 10:00 AM)

PRIME MINISTER MURAYAMA, SPEAKER DOI, SPEAKER HARA, CHIEF JUSTICE KUSABA, GOVERNOR OTA, MEMBERS OF THE FEDERATION OF BEREAVED FAMILIES, VETERANS, AND DISTINGUISHED GUESTS. I AM GRATEFUL TO BE WITH YOU TODAY TO HONOR THOSE WHO SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES IN THE FEROCIOUS BATTLE OF OKINAWA. TO MY GENERATION AND TO FUTURE GENERATIONS, THIS BATTLE WILL LONG REMAIN A TESTAMENT TO THE HEAVY PRICE OF WAR. MORE THAN 14,000 AMERICANS DIED IN THE FIGHT FOR OKINAWA. JAPAN LOST FIVE TIMES THAT MANY SOLDIERS. HUNDREDS OF KOREANS AND CHINESE CITIZENS, TRAPPED ON THIS ISLAND, WERE NEVER TO RETURN HOME.

BUT NO SUFFERING CAN MATCH THAT WHICH BEFELL THE PEOPLE OF OKINAWA. FOR YOU, THIS WAR MARKED THE LOSS OF ONE THIRD OF YOUR POPULATION -- SOME 150,000 MEN, WOMEN AND, SADDEST OF ALL, INNOCENT CHILDREN CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE. GOVERNOR OTA HIMSELF KNOWS FULL WELL THE CRUEL TOLL THIS BATTLE TOOK, HAVING FOUGHT THEN AS A STUDENT SOLDIER, PART OF THE BLOOD AND IRON CORPS.

ALTHOUGH IT WAS FIFTY LONG YEARS AGO WHEN THIS TRAGEDY WAS UNLEASHED, I AM SURE THAT THE MEMORIES OF THOSE DREADFUL DAYS, AND OF YOUR FRIENDS, COMRADES, AND LOVED ONES WHO LOST THEIR LIVES, ARE AS FRESH AND AS PAINFUL TO YOU NOW AS THEN.

IN TODAY'S CLIMATE OF PROSPERITY AND PEACE, IT IS FITTING THAT WE RECALL THE TRAGEDY OF THE BATTLE OF OKINAWA. FOR THE PEACE THAT WE ENJOY IN THIS REGION TODAY IS THE SUREST SIGN THAT THOSE WHO DIED HERE DID NOT DIE IN VAIN. THOUGH THEY ARE NOT HERE WITH US TO WITNESS THE TRANSFORMATION, LIBERTY AND FREEDOM HAS PREVAILED IN THIS REGION THANKS TO THEIR BRAVE SACRIFICE. OUT OF THE TRAGEDY OF WAR, OUR TWO NATIONS HAVE FOUND COMMON GROUND AND WE ARE NOW JOINED TOGETHER TO BUILD A PROSPEROUS, PEACEFUL, AND DEMOCRATIC WORLD.

IT WAS ONLY WITH THE GREATEST OF SACRIFICE AND SUFFERING THAT OUR SOLDIERS AND THE PEOPLE OF OKINAWA SUCCEEDED IN GIVING BIRTH TO THE REMARKABLE PEACE THAT WE ENJOY TODAY. THE MONUMENT THAT WE ARE UNVEILING THIS MORNING STANDS AS A REMINDER TO US OF THAT SACRIFICE. LET US PRAY THAT THIS MONUMENT ALSO MAKES FIRM OUR RESOLVE TO CONTINUE WORKING TOGETHER, SO THAT WE MAY HONOR THOSE WHO FELL BY CARRYING THEIR LEGACY OF PEACE WELL INTO THE NEXT CENTURY.

THANK YOU.



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