

SUGARLOAF HILL
REMARKS OF AMBASSADOR MONDALE
(SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 1995, 11:00 AM)

I AM GRATEFUL TO BE WITH YOU TODAY TO HONOR THOSE WHO SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES IN THE BATTLE FOR SUGARLOAF HILL, AND TO THANK OUR VETERANS WHO HAVE COME FROM SO FAR TO BE HERE WITH US ON THIS HISTORIC DAY.

THE FIGHT FOR OKINAWA WAS ONE OF THE MOST FEROCIOUS BATTLES OF WORLD WAR TWO, COSTING MORE LIVES THAN ANY OTHER ISLAND BATTLE IN THE PACIFIC. NO FIGHT WAS MORE GRIM OR MORE HARD WON ON OKINAWA THAN THE BATTLE THAT WE ARE HERE COMMEMORATING. 2,662 AMERICANS SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES ON SUGARLOAF HILL. INNOCENT CIVILIAN DEATHS ROSE TO 600 -- OKINAWAN MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN ONCE AGAIN TRAGICALLY CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE.

THE ENORMITY OF THESE LOSSES AND THE AWESOME BRAVERY OF OUR MEN IN UNIFORM IN THE MIDST OF THIS CARNAGE HAVE ASSURED THAT THE BATTLE FOR SUGAR LOAF HILL WILL REMAIN FOREVER HALLOWED AMERICAN HISTORY AND, INDEED, IN WORLD HISTORY.

ALTHOUGH IT WAS FIFTY LONG YEARS AGO WHEN THE FIGHTING ENDED, I AM SURE THAT YOUR MEMORIES OF THOSE DREADFUL DAYS, AND OF YOUR FALLEN COMRADES, FRIENDS, AND LOVED ONES ARE AS PAINFUL TO YOU NOW AS THEN.

BUT THE OTHER STORY THAT WE MUST COMMEMORATE TODAY IS THE PARTNERSHIP AND FRIENDSHIP THAT THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN HAVE BUILT OUT OF THE TRAGEDY OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR. I AM SURE THAT FIFTY YEARS AGO, NONE OF US HERE TODAY COULD HAVE IMAGINED THAT OUR TWO COUNTRIES WOULD BUILD THE KIND OF PARTNERSHIP THAT NOW EXISTS BETWEEN US. IT IS ONE OF THE GREAT SUCCESS STORIES OF THE 20TH CENTURY, OR FOR THAT MATTER, OF ANY CENTURY.

FIFTY YEARS AGO, EAST ASIA WAS IN RUINS. TODAY, THE OCEAN WE SEE AROUND US HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED FROM A VAST OCEAN OF BLOOD AND DESTRUCTION TO THE WORLD'S MOST IMPORTANT AVENUE OF COMMERCE. BY WORKING TOGETHER, OUR TWO NATIONS HAVE MADE THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION THE MOST PROSPEROUS AND ONE OF THE MOST STABLE AREAS ON EARTH. THANK GOD THAT WE CAN MEET TODAY AND SAY

THAT FROM THIS TRAGEDY OUR TWO NATIONS HAVE FOUND COMMON GROUND AND WE ARE NOW JOINED TOGETHER TO BUILD A PROSPEROUS, PEACEFUL AND DEMOCRATIC WORLD.

AS WE COMMEMORATE THE EVENTS OF A HALF CENTURY AGO TODAY, WE MUST ALSO REMEMBER THAT THE SUCCESS OF OUR ALLIANCE OVER THESE 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 COOPERATION BETWEEN US.

WE MUST NOT LET THE OCCASIONAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US OBSCURE THE FACT THAT THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN ARE COMMITTED TO AN ENDURING ALLIANCE. THE LEGACY OF FRIENDSHIP, COMMON INTERESTS, AND MUTUAL BENEFIT WHICH YOU, THE SURVIVORS, HAVE CREATED FORMS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR UNSHAKABLE CROSS-PACIFIC RELATIONSHIP.

AS WE LEAVE THIS SPOT AND THIS ISLAND, LET US RESOLVE ONCE AGAIN TO WORK TOGETHER SO THAT THE WORLD WILL NEVER AGAIN PAY THE PRICE THAT WAS PAID HERE 50 YEARS AGO. I PRAY THAT THE PEACE OUR SOLDIERS FOUGHT AND DIED FOR SO MANY YEARS AGO LIVES ON IN HISTORY FOR YET ANOTHER FIFTY YEARS.



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