

JAPAN-U.S. FRIENDSHIP COMMISSION RECEPTION
AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS -- JANUARY 18TH, 1995

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, GOOD EVENING. I AM DELIGHTED TO BE HERE TO WELCOME YOU TO THE OPENING OF THE 17TH MEETING OF CULCON AND TO CONGRATULATE THE JAPAN-U.S. FRIENDSHIP COMMISSION ON 20 YEARS OF DOING JUST WHAT ITS NAME IMPLIES -- BUILDING FRIENDSHIP.

AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM THE UNITED STATES WHERE PRESIDENT CLINTON AND PRIME MINISTER MURAYAMA MET AND DISCUSSED THE BROAD RANGE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP. ONE OF THE ISSUES THAT WAS RAISED, AND THAT I BELIEVE IS CRUCIAL, IS THE CONTINUING NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE HUMAN TIES BETWEEN US -- THE VERY TIES THAT HAVE BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL IN BUILDING THE FRIENDSHIP WE ENJOY TODAY OUT OF THE ASHES OF WORLD WAR TWO.

THE PRESIDENT AND THE PRIME MINISTER AGREED AT THE SUMMIT ON THE NEED TO MAXIMIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN STUDENTS, SCHOLARS, AND OTHERS TO COME TO JAPAN AND LEARN ABOUT THIS CULTURE AND SOCIETY. THE PRIME MINISTER OFFERED TO INCREASE BY A THOUSAND THE NUMBER OF FOREIGN STUDENTS IN JAPAN, AND WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT MANY AMERICANS WILL BE AMONG THIS GROUP.

WE STILL DO NOT HAVE AS MANY AMERICANS EXPERIENCING JAPAN FIRST HAND AS I WOULD LIKE TO SEE. FOR EXAMPLE, WHILE THERE ARE ABOUT 47,000 JAPANESE STUDENTS NOW STUDYING IN THE U.S., WE HAVE ONLY ABOUT 1700 AMERICAN STUDENTS IN JAPAN, AND I UNDERSTAND THAT THE NUMBER HAS GONE DOWN IN THE LAST FEW YEARS. I AM PLEASED THAT BOTH OF OUR GOVERNMENTS ARE COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THIS SITUATION.

TWENTY YEARS AGO, OUR CONGRESS CREATED THE FRIENDSHIP COMMISSION WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT OUR NATIONS WERE BECOMING INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT TO EACH OTHER AND THAT AMERICA'S INTERCOURSE ACROSS THE PACIFIC WOULD SOON RIVAL OUR HISTORICAL TIES ACROSS THE ATLANTIC. THE EARLIEST COMMISSION PROGRAMS ATTACKED THE BASICS. AT THAT TIME, OTHER THAN ABOUT 400 OR SO ACADEMICS OR "JAPAN SPECIALISTS," IT WAS HARD TO FIND MANY AMERICANS WHO FOLLOWED JAPAN CLOSELY.

SINCE THEN, OUR RELATIONSHIP HAS GROWN, AND THE FRIENDSHIP COMMISSION HAS COME TO EMPHASIZE SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH ON SOME OF THE MOST CRITICAL POLICY ISSUES WE FACE. THESE INCLUDE, FOR EXAMPLE, A PROJECT TO STUDY JAPANESE INVESTMENT IN ASIA AND ANOTHER THAT ADDRESSES ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL DEREGULATION INSIDE JAPAN. BY ENCOURAGING AND SUPPORTING THIS KIND OF RESEARCH, THE COMMISSION IS HELPING TO PROVIDE A BASE OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE FOR THOSE OF US IN POLICY-MAKING ROLES.

WHILE MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING ALONE CANNOT RESOLVE ALL OF THE PROBLEMS BETWEEN COUNTRIES, I SEE IT AS THE ESSENTIAL BEGINNING TO ARRIVING AT WORKABLE, LONG LASTING SOLUTIONS. I AM GRATIFIED TO SEE A GROWING JAPANESE INTEREST IN THIS AREA.

OUR JAPAN - U.S. FRIENDSHIP COMMISSIONERS COMPRISE THE AMERICAN SIDE OF THE CULCON PANEL. I KNOW MANY OF YOU BY NOW, AND I KNOW THAT YOU BRING ENORMOUS EXPERTISE AND BACKGROUND TO THIS MEETING. YOUR JAPANESE COUNTERPARTS ARE ALSO HIGHLY ESTEEMED, DEDICATED EXPERTS. SUCH A COLLECTION OF TALENT ON BOTH SIDES GIVES ME GREAT HOPE THAT YOU WILL SUCCEED IN THESE NEXT TWO DAYS OF MEETINGS IN MAKING THIS MOST IMPORTANT BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP EVEN BETTER.

THANK YOU, AND GOOD LUCK.



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