

LT. GENERAL RICHARD MYERS
DINNER
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 1996

MINISTER AND MRS. USUI, MR. TAMAZAWA, MR. ETO, VICE MINISTER MURATA, GENERAL SUGIYAMA, DIRECTOR GENERAL ORITA, GENERAL NISHIMOTO, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, THANK YOU FOR COMING TONIGHT TO HELP US PAY TRIBUTE TO DICK MYERS AND HIS GREAT PARTNER, MARY JO.

DICK CAME TO JAPAN IN 1994 DURING A PERIOD WE KNEW WOULD BE IMPORTANT FOR U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONS. WE WERE GRAPPLING WITH WHAT THE END OF THE COLD WAR MEANT FOR EAST ASIA. WE WERE PREPARING FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF WWII, WE HAD JUST BEGUN THE "NYE INITIATIVE," AND WE HAD TO NEGOTIATE A NEW SPECIAL MEASURES AGREEMENT ON HOST NATION SUPPORT. THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH TO DO FOR OUR NEW COMMANDER OF U.S. FORCES IN JAPAN.

BUT AS EVERYONE HERE KNOWS ONLY TOO WELL, WE WERE SOON TO BE MUCH BUSIER THAN WE COULD HAVE EXPECTED. THE OKINAWA INCIDENT, THE SACO PROCESS, AND THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT GAVE US ALL A LOT MORE TO DO. ON THE WAY TO THE SUMMIT WE SIGNED A FIRST EVER ACQUISITION AND CROSS SERVICING AGREEMENT WITH JAPAN. WE CONCLUDED A STRONG JOINT SECURITY DECLARATION. AND, OF COURSE, WE FUNDAMENTALLY RESHAPED THE POSTURE OF OUR FORCES ON OKINAWA. THROUGH ALL OF THIS, GENERAL MYERS LED THE AMERICAN EFFORT WITH GOOD SENSE AND BRILLIANCE. OF COURSE, HE WAS BLESSED BY THE ENERGETIC AND THOUGHTFUL WAY IN WHICH THE JAPANESE LEADERS WORKED WITH HIM TO SHAPE THE HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENTS CELEBRATED DURING THE STATE VISIT.

ALL OF THESE ACHIEVEMENTS, COMBINED WITH OUR UPCOMING EFFORT TO REVISE THE 1978 DEFENSE COOPERATION GUIDELINES, COMPRISE NO LESS THAN A FUNDAMENTAL REAFFIRMATION OF THE CRUCIAL US-JAPAN ALLIANCE IN THE POST COLD WAR ERA. I BELIEVE HISTORY WILL CONCLUDE THAT THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED SUMMIT WAS NOT JUST IMPRESSIVE BUT HISTORIC.

WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT DICK MYERS' SURE HAND.

AS YOU KNOW, DICK WILL BE RETURNING TO WASHINGTON TO ASSUME THE VERY IMPORTANT POSITION OF ASSISTANT TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF. IN THAT CAPACITY HE WILL ACCOMPANY THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON HIS FOREIGN TRIPS. HE MAY BE THE FIRST FIGHTER PILOT TO TRADE HIS FLIGHT SUIT FOR A PAIR OF STRIPED PANTS. THEY'LL LOOK GOOD ON HIM.

I AM SURE THAT DICK WILL CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE STRENGTHENING OF U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONS AND I'M SURE OUR PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL PATHS WILL CROSS AGAIN.

WHILE WE HONOR DICK TONIGHT, WE ALSO HONOR THE MANY OFFICERS AND ASSISTANTS WHO HAVE WORKED UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP. AND, OF COURSE, WE KNOW THAT NONE OF THIS WAS DOABLE WITHOUT THE FORCEFUL COOPERATION OF OUR JAPANESE LEADERS WHO ARE WITH US TONIGHT.

IN CLOSING, JOAN AND I WANT TO THANK DICK AND MARY JO FOR ALL OF THEIR KINDNESS AND FRIENDSHIP TO US. THE TWO OF YOU HAVE BEEN SO GOOD TO US THAT THERE WERE MANY TIMES WHEN I THOUGHT YOU MUST BE FROM MINNESOTA!

WOULD YOU PLEASE JOIN ME IN A TOAST TO DICK AND MARY JO AND LET US ALSO TOAST THE STRENGTH OF THE US-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONSHIP, SO FUNDAMENTAL TO THE PEACE AND DECENCY OF THIS REGION AND THE WORLD.

KAMPAI!

HERE! HERE!

(INTRODUCE GENERAL MYERS FOR REMARKS.)



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