

Independence Day greetings to the ACCJ Membership:

America is a nation of individuals. We come from diverse backgrounds, pursue our goals in individual ways, and share our values through various means of expression. But, however rich in our diversity, we are individuals with a collective purpose centering around our Constitution's guarantee of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Our commitment to that common purpose makes us strong.

I have been privileged throughout my career to share the responsibilities of public office in many state and federal capacities. However, no position has been more meaningful to me than that of citizen. We are a democracy in which citizens, making decisions and taking actions one by one, shape the fate of a great nation.

Many Americans pursue their personal, professional, and civic goals outside the boundaries of our great nation, as is the case with the large American community here in Japan. You have seen that in an inter-connected community of nations the strength of America is protected and enhanced by our success around the world. Working with this community, my respect for the strength of America has grown during my tenure in Tokyo, as I have seen individuals make great strides to further the interests of our partnership with Japan. The individual efforts are tremendous, the collective result truly phenomenal.

You, the members of the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan, are indeed at the forefront of America's world-class strength. They call you expatriates, which I often feel should be expanded to mean "exceptional patriots." So it is with great pride that I send my greetings to you on the 220th commemoration of our nation's birth. Happy Independence Day.

signed Walter F. Mondale



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