

SGT 94

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**AMERICA AND JAPAN — BUILDING AN ASIA-PACIFIC  
COMMUNITY**

**(September Speech In U.S.)**

**A YEAR AGO (ALMOST TO THE DAY), I ARRIVED IN  
TOKYO TO BEGIN MY DUTIES AS THE UNITED STATES  
AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN.**

**I WAS HEARTENED TO HEAR OF THE MANY WHO  
SUPPORTED MY NOMINATION TO THIS OFFICE. A  
REPUBLICAN FRIEND OF MINE WROTE ME TO SAY THAT HAD  
HE KNOWN THAT PRESIDENT CLINTON WAS GOING TO SEND  
ME OUT OF THE COUNTRY, HE WOULD HAVE VOTED FOR HIM.**

**I ALSO QUICKLY LEARNED THAT MY NEW JOB HAD  
ANOTHER ADVANTAGE. HAVING SOUGHT A DIFFERENT JOB  
IN WASHINGTON, I THOUGHT IT WAS TIME TO FIND PUBLIC  
SERVICE SOMEWHERE ELSE, FAR REMOVED FROM THE  
NATION'S CAPITAL. NOT ONLY DID I DO SO BUT I  
DISCOVERED UPON MY ARRIVAL IN TOKYO THAT WHEN  
WASHINGTON IS AWAKE, I AM ASLEEP. EVEN BETTER, I  
DISCOVERED THAT WHEN I AM AWAKE, WASHINGTON IS  
ASLEEP! IN A NEW TWIST, IT IS MY HOPE THAT TODAY,  
WHILE I AM AWAKE, YOU MIGHT REMAIN SO AS WELL. I  
REALIZE THAT THIS ASKS A LOT FROM YOU, BUT AT LEAST  
GIVE IT A TRY.**

TO BE SERIOUS ABOUT IT, IT IS REFRESHING TO START A NEW PUBLIC CAREER AT MY YOUNG AGE AND I WAS HONORED TO ACCEPT WHEN PRESIDENT CLINTON ASKED ME TO SERVE AS OUR AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN.

I AM A GRANDFATHER NOW AND, IN A VERY REAL SENSE, I TOOK THIS JOB FOR THE SAKE OF MY GRANDCHILDREN AND FOR A SIMPLE REASON: HOW THE UNITED STATES GETS ALONG WITH JAPAN — AND, MORE BROADLY, WITH ALL THE NATIONS OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC — WILL SAY A LOT ABOUT WHETHER MY GRANDCHILDREN (AND YOURS) WILL LIVE IN A HOPEFUL WORLD.

FORTUNATELY, THE UNITED STATES IS NOW GIVING UNPRECEDENTED ATTENTION TO THIS REGION. AS A MATTER OF HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY, OF COURSE, WE HAVE BEEN A PACIFIC NATION FROM OUR EARLIEST DAYS. AND TODAY, NO REGION IN THE WORLD IS MORE IMPORTANT TO THE UNITED STATES THAN ASIA.

WE MUST FULLY APPRECIATE THE DYNAMISM OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION AND OUR CRITICAL STAKE IN IT. OUR RELATIONS WITH THE OTHER COUNTRIES IN THIS HEMISPHERE AND WITH EUROPE, INCLUDING RUSSIA, ARE IMPORTANT TO OUR FUTURE AND MUST NOT BE NEGLECTED. BUT I AM CONVINCED THAT THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION WILL BE THE DOMINANT ECONOMIC FORCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY. AND, WITH THIS ECONOMIC STRENGTH WILL COME POLITICAL AND STRATEGIC INFLUENCE THAT IS SURE TO BE FELT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

ALREADY, 40 PERCENT OF OUR TRADE IS WITH THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION. ALMOST TWO AND A HALF MILLION AMERICAN JOBS ARE DIRECTLY RELATED TO OUR EXPORTS IN ASIA. BY THE YEAR 2000, IT IS ESTIMATED THAT TRADE AND INVESTMENT FLOWS ACROSS THE PACIFIC WILL BE DOUBLE THE TRANS-ATLANTIC VOLUME. IN THE YEARS AHEAD, THE REGION WILL BE THE WORLD'S CENTER OF ECONOMIC GROWTH, TRADE, JOBS AND PROSPERITY.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE UNITED STATES IS TRYING TO APPROACH THE COUNTRIES OF ASIA NOT AS A SERIES OF BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS ALONE, BUT AS A REGIONAL COMMUNITY.

NEW PROSPERITY, ECONOMIC INTEGRATION, THE INFORMATION REVOLUTION, THE SPREAD OF DEMOCRACY AND A GROWING AWARENESS OF THE NEED FOR REGIONAL ACTION — ALL OF THESE PROVIDE A BASIS FOR BUILDING COMMON INTERESTS AMONG THE ASIA-PACIFIC NATIONS.

LAST JULY, IN A SPEECH AT TOKYO'S WASEDA UNIVERSITY, PRESIDENT CLINTON LAID OUT HIS VISION OF A NEW PACIFIC COMMUNITY — BASED ON "SHARED STRENGTH, SHARED PROSPERITY AND A SHARED COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC VALUES." THESE THREE PILLARS ARE MUTUALLY REINFORCING: SECURITY IS ESSENTIAL FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. ECONOMIC PROGRESS PROMOTES DEMOCRATIC CHANGE. AND PROSPEROUS DEMOCRACIES MAKE FOR PEACEFUL NEIGHBORS.

THE U.S. - JAPAN PARTNERSHIP IS THE BEDROCK OF THE NEW PACIFIC COMMUNITY. BECAUSE OF THIS, WE MUST WORK TO ENSURE THAT THE U.S. - JAPAN PARTNERSHIP IS SOUND AND PRODUCTIVE: SOUND ENOUGH TO ENSURE STABILITY IN THE PACIFIC REGION AND PRODUCTIVE ENOUGH TO ENSURE CONTINUED ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOTH REGIONALLY AND GLOBALLY.

THE FIRST CHALLENGE FOR BUILDING A NEW PACIFIC COMMUNITY IS TO ENSURE REGIONAL STABILITY.

ASIA OCCUPIES A UNIQUE PLACE IN THE POST-COLD WAR WORLD. THE REGION HAS HAD A TURBULENT HISTORY. ALL THREE MAJOR WARS IN MY LIFETIME WERE FOUGHT IN ASIA. TODAY, THANK GOD, THERE ARE NO SIGNIFICANT MILITARY CONFLICTS, AND MOST OF THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION ARE EXPERIENCING ECONOMIC GROWTH AT AN UNPRECEDENTED PACE.

THE U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONSHIP HAS BEEN ESSENTIAL TO MAINTAIN PEACE AND PROMOTE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN THE REGION. THE ECONOMIC STRENGTH OF THE REGION TODAY IS A TESTAMENT TO THE SUCCESS OF THE U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY PARTNERSHIP.

THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN STOOD TOGETHER DURING THE COLD WAR TO THE BENEFIT OF BOTH OUR NATIONS AND THE REGION. TODAY, THE COLD WAR IS OVER. YET THE WORLD REMAINS A DANGEROUS AND COMPLICATED PLACE. CERTAINLY MORE COMPLICATED THAN BEFORE — AND, IN SOME RESPECTS, POSSIBLY MORE DANGEROUS AS WELL.

WE MUST BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION. IN SOME RESPECTS, THE NORTH KOREAN SITUATION IS A LEGACY OF THE COLD WAR. IN OTHER WAYS, HOWEVER, IT IS AN OMEN OF THE KINDS OF PROBLEMS THE WORLD MAY FACE IF WE ALLOW THE DEVELOPMENT OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION TO GO UNCHECKED. WE MUST ENSURE THAT THE NORTH KOREAN NUCLEAR ISSUE IS SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED FOR THE SAKE OF REGIONAL AND GLOBAL SECURITY.

THE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO NORTH KOREA SHOWS THAT THE UNITED STATES CONTINUES TO BE THE PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF STABILITY IN THIS REGION — A ROLE WE HAVE HAD SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR II. FREE OF HISTORICAL ANIMOSITIES AND RIVALRIES, THE UNITED STATES CAN SIMULTANEOUSLY MAINTAIN EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH JAPAN, SOUTH KOREA, CHINA, RUSSIA AND THE OTHER NATIONS OF ASIA. NO OTHER COUNTRY CAN ASSUME THIS ROLE.

OUR SECURITY PRESENCE IN ASIA RESTS ON A NETWORK OF BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES. REGIONAL COOPERATION IN ASIA REMAINS MUCH LESS STRUCTURED THAN IN EUROPE. THERE IS NO EUROPEAN UNION, NO NATO, NO CSCE.

WE ARE BEGINNING TO BUILD REGIONAL SECURITY INSTITUTIONS THROUGH THE ASEAN POST-MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE AND THE NORTHEAST ASIA SECURITY DIALOGUE. BUT THIS PROCESS IS COMPLEX AND IT WILL TAKE TIME. FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, THE AMERICAN PRESENCE — BASED ON THE U.S.-JAPAN SECURITY TREATY -- WILL REMAIN THE FOUNDATION FOR PEACE AND STABILITY THROUGHOUT THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION.

THE SECOND CHALLENGE FOR BUILDING A NEW PACIFIC COMMUNITY IS TO EXPAND THE BOUNDARIES OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY.

THESE ARE NOT ONLY IMPORTANT VALUES IN THEIR OWN RIGHT. THEY ARE ALSO IMPORTANT TO THE POSSIBILITIES OF BOTH PEACE AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS — BECAUSE DEMOCRATIC NATIONS TEND TO SETTLE THEIR DISAGREEMENTS WITHOUT RESORT TO WAR AND BECAUSE FREE PEOPLE ARE BETTER ABLE TO DEVELOP THEIR TALENTS AND, THUS, CONTRIBUTE MORE TO THE PRODUCTIVITY AND CREATIVITY OF THEIR SOCIETIES AND OF THE WORLD AS A WHOLE.



JAPAN AND THE U.S. ARE AGREED: HUMAN RIGHTS ARE A MATTER OF UNIVERSAL CONCERN. WHILE SOME WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE THAT THERE IS AN "ASIAN" VERSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, THIS IS CLEARLY NOT THE CASE. NOR IS IT A THESIS SUBSCRIBED TO BY EITHER THE U.S. OR JAPAN -- THE LEADERS OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC COMMUNITY. WE BOTH ARE SIGNATORIES TO THE VIENNA DECLARATION OF 1993, WHICH REJECTS THE NOTION THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ARE RELATIVE AND WHICH REAFFIRMS THE UNIVERSAL NATURE OF THESE RIGHTS.

NO ONE EXPECTS DEMOCRACY IN ASIAN COUNTRIES TO LOOK EXACTLY LIKE DEMOCRACY IN THE UNITED STATES, OR BRITAIN, OR FRANCE. WE NEED TO BE RESPECTFUL OF THE DIFFERENT HISTORIES, POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND CULTURES IN ASIA. OUR MESSAGE CANNOT BE THAT EVERYONE MUST COPY THE AMERICAN SYSTEM. BUT WE ARE RIGHT TO SPEAK OUT WHEN BASIC HUMAN VALUES ARE INVOLVED.

FOR THIS REASON, I BELIEVE THAT AMERICA MUST NOT MUTE ITS ADVOCACY OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY. TYING OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES TO MOST FAVORED NATION TRADE STATUS PROVED TO BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WITH CHINA. BUT I HOPE WE DO NOT "OVERLEARN" THE LESSON FROM THAT EXPERIENCE.



IN ALMOST NO OTHER WAY DOES AMERICA REFLECT ITS ESSENCE MORE THAN IN THE PURSUIT OF HUMAN RIGHTS. NO ONE CAN SAY WE DO IT FOR MONEY OR POWER. WE DO IT BECAUSE WE WANT HUMAN BEINGS TO BE FAIRLY TREATED — WHEREVER THEY MAY LIVE. THE ESPOUSAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS A NOBLE PURPOSE REFLECTING THE DEEPEST INSTINCTS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

I BELIEVE HISTORY HAS ALREADY VINDICATED OUR SUPPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS WORLDWIDE. ASK NELSON MANDELA AND THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA . . . ASK THE CITIZENS OF THE PHILIPPINES . . . ASK THE PEOPLE OF RUSSIA AND EASTERN EUROPE . . . ASK THE ARGENTINIANS AND THE CHILEANS AND ASK AUNG SAN SUU KYI ("ANG SAN SU CHEE"), THE NOBEL PRIZE-WINNING WOMAN STILL UNDER HOUSE ARREST FOR PROMOTING DEMOCRACY IN BURMA. ASK THEM — AND MILLIONS OF OTHERS YEARNING FOR FREEDOM — IF THEY WANT AMERICA TO BE HEARD ON BEHALF OF HUMAN LIBERTY. THEY HAVE ALL MADE THEIR SUPPORT CLEAR. WE MUST NOT MUFFLE THIS POWERFUL AMERICAN MESSAGE IN ASIA OR ANYWHERE ELSE.

THE THIRD CHALLENGE FOR THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY IS TO ADVANCE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROSPERITY.

THE FREE FLOW OF TRADE AND COMMERCE AMONG NATIONS IS A CRITICAL ELEMENT IN IMPROVING REGIONAL AND GLOBAL PROSPERITY. MOVING TOWARD MORE OPEN MARKETS IS WHAT GATT IS ALL ABOUT. THAT'S WHAT NAFTA IS ALL ABOUT. AND THAT'S WHAT APEC-- THE ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION FORUM-- IS ALL ABOUT.

APEC IS AN IMPORTANT INSTITUTIONAL STEP TOWARD GREATER ECONOMIC OPENNESS AND GROWTH AROUND THE PACIFIC RIM. AS YOU KNOW, LAST NOVEMBER IN SEATTLE PRESIDENT CLINTON HOSTED THE HISTORIC, FIRST MEETING OF LEADERS FROM APEC-MEMBER COUNTRIES. WE ARE COMMITTED TO MOVING FORWARD TO MAKE APEC A CENTRAL PART OF REGIONAL COOPERATION.

AS THE CHIEF ECONOMIC PARTNERS FOR THE OTHER NATIONS OF THE REGION, HOW THE ECONOMIES OF THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN DEVELOP WILL HAVE A MAJOR IMPACT ON THE PRODUCTIVITY OF THE NEW PACIFIC COMMUNITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY.

THE MOST IMPORTANT LEADERSHIP OUR TWO NATIONS CAN DEMONSTRATE IS TO MAKE OUR OWN ECONOMIES AS STRONG AND AS OPEN AS POSSIBLE -- BOTH TO PROVIDE THE MARKETS THAT OTHERS NEED FOR THEIR EXPORTS AND TO PERSUADE THEM TO OPEN THEIR OWN MARKETS IN RETURN.

THIS RESPONSIBILITY POSES A SPECIAL CHALLENGE TO JAPAN. IN THE POST- WORLD WAR II PERIOD, JAPAN HAS BEEN AMONG THE GREATEST BENEFICIARIES OF THE OPEN WORLD TRADING AND FINANCIAL SYSTEMS. OVER THE PAST DECADE, JAPAN HAS EXPERIENCED CHRONIC CURRENT ACCOUNT SURPLUSES, WHICH REACHED A RECORD HIGH OF OVER \$130 BILLION IN 1993. THESE SURPLUSES ARE A GLOBAL PROBLEM BECAUSE THEY REPRESENT A NET DRAG ON THE REST OF THE WORLD'S GROWTH AND INVITE PRESSURES FOR PROTECTION.

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW FROM JAPAN IS A SUSTAINED PERIOD OF DOMESTIC-DEMAND-LED GROWTH, A PERIOD WHEN THE DEMAND FOR GOODS IN JAPAN EXCEEDS THE DOMESTIC SUPPLY, SO THAT JAPAN IS A NET PROVIDER OF JOBS RATHER THAN A NET DRAIN ON JOBS IN THE REST OF THE WORLD.

THIS, IN TURN, REQUIRES THAT JAPAN ADOPT THE FISCAL AND MONETARY POLICIES NECESSARY TO SPUR DOMESTIC DEMAND, SOMETHING THEY ARE VERY RELUCTANT TO DO.

JAPAN FACES ANOTHER CHALLENGE: FOR MANY YEARS, AMERICANS AND MANY OTHERS THROUGHOUT THE REGION AND BEYOND HAVE FOUND THAT JAPAN'S MARKETS ARE NOT AS OPEN AS THEY OUGHT TO BE. JAPAN, FOR EXAMPLE, ABSORBS FAR FEWER MANUFACTURED IMPORTS RELATIVE TO THE SIZE OF ITS ECONOMY THAN ANY OTHER INDUSTRIAL NATION.

JAPAN ALSO TAKES IN VERY LITTLE OF THE WORLD'S FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT. IN 1991, FOR EXAMPLE, THE STOCK OF FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT IN JAPAN WAS ONLY TWELVE BILLION DOLLARS, AS COMPARED TO 414 BILLION DOLLARS IN OUR COUNTRY AND 714 BILLION DOLLARS IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. JAPAN'S RECEPTIVITY TO FOREIGN INVESTMENT IS EVEN LOWER THAN THAT OF MANY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

WE KNOW THAT TRADE AND INVESTMENT ARE CLOSELY CONNECTED; AS A RESULT, THE LOW LEVEL OF INVESTMENT CONTRIBUTES TO THE LOW LEVEL OF IMPORTS.

IF THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION AS A WHOLE IS TO MOVE FORWARD ECONOMICALLY, JAPAN'S MARKETS FOR GOODS AND INVESTMENT MUST BE MORE ACCESSIBLE TO FOREIGN FIRMS. I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT MARKET ACCESS TO JAPAN IS NOT JUST A U.S.-JAPAN ISSUE. VIRTUALLY EVERYONE OF JAPAN'S TRADING PARTNERS ENCOUNTERS SERIOUS PROBLEMS AS WELL.

THE GROWING ECONOMIES OF ASIA--COUNTRIES LIKE MALAYSIA, TAIWAN, INDONESIA, AND, OF COURSE, CHINA--NEED OPEN MARKETS IN WHICH TO SELL THEIR GOODS. THE UNITED STATES HAS ABSORBED A LARGE SHARE OF THEIR RISING EXPORTS, WHILE JAPAN HAS NOT. THIS IS UNSUSTAINABLE. EVEN WITH OPEN MARKETS -- AND WE MUST KEEP THEM OPEN -- IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT THE U.S. COULD ACCOMMODATE THE EVER-RISING IMPORTS FROM INCREASINGLY PRODUCTIVE ASIAN ECONOMIES EVEN IF WE WANTED TO. THEREFORE, THESE NATIONS MUST HAVE BETTER ACCESS TO CONSUMERS IN THE WORLD'S SECOND LARGEST ECONOMY--JAPAN.

UNFORTUNATELY, JAPAN'S TRADE SURPLUS WITH THESE COUNTRIES HAS CONTINUED TO RISE, AND LAST YEAR EVEN EXCEEDED THE TRADE IMBALANCE WITH THE UNITED STATES.

MAKING MARKETS MORE OPEN AND REDUCING TRADE IMBALANCES IS A BASIC GOAL OF THE "FRAMEWORK FOR A NEW ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP" THAT WAS AGREED UPON FIFTEEN MONTHS AGO BY THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN. OUR GOVERNMENT PROMISED TO REDUCE ITS FISCAL DEFICIT AND IMPROVE ITS INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS--AND WE HAVE ALREADY MADE PROGRESS ON BOTH. FOR ITS PART, THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT PROMISED TO IMPROVE MARKET ACCESS FOR GOODS AND INVESTMENT AND TO REDUCE ITS CHRONIC CURRENT-ACCOUNT SURPLUSES THROUGH DOMESTIC DEMAND-LED ECONOMIC GROWTH.

AS YOU KNOW, WE HAVE HAD DIFFICULTY REACHING AGREEMENTS ON SPECIFIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT ISSUES UNDER THE FRAMEWORK. BUT, DURING THIS SAME PERIOD, WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN ACHIEVING EXPANDED ACCESS TO THE JAPANESE MARKETS FOR RICE, CONSTRUCTION, ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES, AND CELLULAR PHONE SERVICE.

WE HOPE THAT WE WILL MAKE PROGRESS ON PROBLEM AREAS COVERED BY THE FRAMEWORK. OUR GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE FIRMS NEED BETTER AND MORE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO JAPAN, AS DO THE FIRMS OF OTHER NATIONS. AND, AS MANY JAPANESE THEMSELVES ARE POINTING OUT, IT IS IN JAPAN'S OWN NATIONAL INTEREST TO EMBRACE MARKET-OPENING REFORMS. THEY WOULD STRENGTHEN ITS DOMESTIC ECONOMY AND IMPROVE LIVING STANDARDS BY EXPANDING CONSUMER CHOICE AND LOWERING THE HIGH PRICES THAT CURRENTLY PREVAIL IN JAPAN.

THE WORLD IS LOOKING TO JAPAN TO SHOW GREATER LEADERSHIP IN STIMULATING THE GLOBAL ECONOMY. IT IS TIME FOR JAPAN TO ASSUME AN INTERNATIONAL ROLE FULLY COMMENSURATE WITH ITS ECONOMIC POWER.

HERE IS WHY THE U.S.-JAPAN PARTNERSHIP IS SO IMPORTANT: WITHOUT A SOLID U.S.-JAPAN PARTNERSHIP, WE CANNOT HOPE TO BUILD A STABLE, SECURE AND WEALTHY PACIFIC COMMUNITY.

AS WE WORK WITH JAPAN TO BUILD A NEW PACIFIC COMMUNITY, THE UNITED STATES HAS THREE UNIQUE AND FUNDAMENTAL ADVANTAGES:



FIRST, VIRTUALLY EVERY COUNTRY WANTS US TO REMAIN ENGAGED IN THE REGION IN ORDER TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL BALANCE. DESPITE INEVITABLE TENSIONS AND DISAGREEMENTS, THESE NATIONS STILL TRUST US — AND ARE WILLING TO RELY ON US — IN A WAY THEY WILL WITH NO OTHER COUNTRY.

SECOND, THE UNITED STATES CONTINUES TO BE THE LARGEST ECONOMY IN THE WORLD. PRACTICALLY EVERY COUNTRY DEPENDS ON US AS AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF INVESTMENT CAPITAL; AS A PRODUCER OF INNOVATIVE, HIGH-QUALITY, COMPETITIVELY-PRICED GOODS AND SERVICES; AND, OF COURSE, AS A MARKET FOR THEIR OWN PRODUCTS.

FINALLY, THE STRENGTH OF AMERICAN IDEALS AND VALUES CONTINUES TO INSPIRE PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. OUR MORAL AUTHORITY IS A PRICELESS ASSET THAT WE MUST PROTECT AND USE WITH CARE.

THAT IS WHY I WAS DEEPLY SADDENED LAST SPRING WHEN TWO JAPANESE EXCHANGE STUDENTS WERE MURDERED IN CALIFORNIA. LIKE THE SHOOTING DEATH OF ANOTHER JAPANESE STUDENT IN 1992 IN LOUISIANA, THIS INCIDENT RECEIVED MUCH ATTENTION IN JAPAN.

CRIMINAL VIOLENCE IS A TERRIBLE AND URGENT DOMESTIC ISSUE FOR AMERICANS. BUT, AFTER LIVING ABROAD FOR A YEAR, I CAN SEE THAT IT IS ALSO BECOMING AN IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL ISSUE FOR US.

OUR CREDIBILITY WITH THE JAPANESE AND OTHERS IN ASIA IS BEING BADLY DAMAGED BY PERCEPTIONS ABOUT CRIME, VIOLENCE AND THE WANTON AVAILABILITY OF GUNS IN AMERICA. IN MY TALKS WITH YOUNG JAPANESE WHO OTHERWISE FIND THE AMERICAN EXAMPLE APPEALING, I HEAR THEM OFTEN EXPRESS FEAR ABOUT COMING HERE AND DOUBTS ABOUT A NATION THAT PERMITS VIOLENCE ON A SCALE UNKNOWN IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY.

I AM OLD ENOUGH TO REMEMBER WHEN OUR NATION'S MORAL AUTHORITY WAS UNDERMINED BY THE FAILURE TO ACCORD EQUAL TREATMENT TO ALL OF OUR CITIZENS BASED ON RACE. THE ADOPTION OF CIVIL RIGHTS LEGISLATION VASTLY ENHANCED OUR POTENTIAL FOR LEADERSHIP NOT ONLY IN AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA, BUT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. TODAY, OUR ABILITY TO LEAD IS SERIOUSLY HAMPERED BY THE WIDELY-HELD PERCEPTION THAT AMERICA IS UNSAFE AND SOMEHOW FALLING APART AS A SOCIETY.

PERHAPS THIS FEAR IS EXAGGERATED. BUT IT IS NEVERTHELESS A MAJOR CONCERN IN JAPAN AND ELSEWHERE. JUST AS WITH CIVIL RIGHTS A GENERATION AGO, THIS IS NOT AN ISSUE FOR US ALONE. IT IS A GROWING IMPEDIMENT TO OUR LEADERSHIP IN THE WORLD. WE MUST CONTINUE TO WORK ON THIS PROBLEM.

MANY YOUNG JAPANESE, I SHOULD ADD, ARE STILL ATTRACTED TO AMERICA. TENS OF THOUSANDS CONTINUE TO COME HERE EACH YEAR AS STUDENTS. THOUSANDS OF JAPANESE OF ALL AGES EMIGRATE PERMANENTLY TO THE U.S. EACH YEAR. IN A THREE-MONTH PERIOD ALONE, OUR EMBASSY IN TOKYO RECEIVED OVER TEN THOUSAND INQUIRIES REGARDING THIS YEAR'S IMMIGRANT VISA LOTTERY PROCEDURE. MILLIONS OF JAPANESE TRAVEL HERE AS TOURISTS EACH YEAR.

JAPANESE, LIKE SO MANY OTHERS AROUND THE WORLD, COME TO OUR COUNTRY BECAUSE AMERICA REMAINS A LAND OF OPPORTUNITY -- A LAND PROUD OF ITS IDEALS -- WHERE DISCRIMINATION WILL NOT BE TOLERATED, WHERE INDIVIDUAL TALENTS ARE VALUED, AND WHERE THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT CAN FLOURISH.

IT IS GOOD TO HAVE THIS REMINDER FROM FOREIGN FRIENDS THAT WE ARE STILL A LAND OF OPPORTUNITY. BUT THIS ALSO REMINDS US THAT, ULTIMATELY, THE UNITED STATES MUST BE STRONG AT HOME IN ORDER TO BE SECURE ABROAD. OUR FOREIGN POLICY IN ASIA BEGINS RIGHT HERE IN OUR OWN COMMUNITIES — BY STRENGTHENING OUR FAMILIES, EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN, REDUCING OUR BUDGET DEFICIT AND IMPROVING THE PRODUCTIVITY OF OUR WORKERS AND INDUSTRIES.

IN MY TIME AS AMBASSADOR, I HAVE FOUND THAT MANY OF THE FAMILIAR PARTISAN DIVISIONS BETWEEN LEFT AND RIGHT . . . LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE . . . DEMOCRAT AND REPUBLICAN, ARE NO LONGER AS RELEVANT AS THEY ONCE WERE. WHO IS IN FAVOR OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS FOR NORTH KOREA? WHO WANTS THE UNITED STATES TO IGNORE HUMAN RIGHTS? WHO IS AGAINST AN OPEN WORLD ECONOMY?

MY HOPE IS THAT, IN A SIMILAR NON-PARTISAN SPIRIT, ALL AMERICANS CAN UNITE BEHIND THE VISION OF A NEW PACIFIC COMMUNITY. WORKING WITH JAPAN AND OUR OTHER NEIGHBORS IN THE REGION, I BELIEVE THAT WE CAN BUILD NEW LEVELS OF SECURITY, PROSPERITY AND FREEDOM TO THE WORLD. WHAT BETTER GIFT IS THERE FOR OUR GRANDCHILDREN?



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