

REMARKS AT  
CEREMONY IN HONOR OF HENRY HEUSKEN

3/22/94

*D. Hesselink*

THANK YOU, AMBASSADOR VAN DEN BERG, FOR  
INVITING ME TO JOIN YOU FOR THIS SPECIAL  
CEREMONY. IT IS A FITTING TRIBUTE TO HONOR A  
REMARKABLE YOUNG MAN WHO MADE SUCH AN  
IMPRESSIVE IMPACT DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF  
DIPLOMACY IN JAPAN.

*SATO  
San*

*Dutch  
Hon*

HENRY HEUSKEN'S LIFE AND DEATH MAKE A  
FASCINATING STORY. I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO  
PROFESSOR HESSELINK'S PRESENTATION THIS  
EVENING.

ALL I WISH TO SAY THIS AFTERNOON, ~~ON THIS~~  
~~OCCASION~~, IS THAT — ACROSS THE DISTANCE OF TIME  
— HENRY HEUSKEN AND HIS LIFE'S WORK HAVE A  
GREAT DEAL TO TEACH US ABOUT WHAT  
INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY IS ALL ABOUT.

Letter

Rich  
Country;

Strong  
Army;

Lower  
Modern Paper  
under Meiji  
Restoration;  
~~the~~  
~~Good~~ ~~lost~~ ~~the~~ ~~man~~

Did you  
see the  
sign of his  
speech?

1 hr

This could  
be a long  
night

The head was  
half covered for  
the first time. After  
the head washed  
to Sapporo

6<sup>th</sup> PM

Dr Keelink 3-

Henry Henderson

Did 1-15-1861

at the Shinto  
Temple

SHISHI (Samurai)

"Reverse the  
Empire; yep  
the foreigners"

All foreigners  
targets for  
vengeance

Harris was  
deeply worried by  
dangers

BAKUFU may

have been afraid  
to arrest Assassins  
from Satsuma

OBVIOUSLY, TOKYO — AND JAPAN — HAVE  
CHANGED A GREAT DEAL IN THE MANY YEARS SINCE  
~~HEUSKEN'S~~ TRAGIC DEATH.

TODAY, OF COURSE, TOKYO IS ONE OF THE MOST  
INTERNATIONAL AND COSMOPOLITAN CITIES IN THE  
WORLD — AND ONE OF THE SAFEST. MILLIONS OF  
JAPANESE NOW TRAVEL OVERSEAS EVERY YEAR.  
MORE THAN A MILLION FOREIGNERS RESIDE IN THIS  
COUNTRY — ALMOST A QUARTER OF A MILLION IN  
TOKYO ALONE.

BUT WHEN HENRY HEUSKEN AND TOWNSEND  
HARRIS ARRIVED IN SHIMODA IN 1856, THEY WERE  
AMONG ONLY A HANDFUL OF FOREIGNERS WHO LIVED  
IN JAPAN — AND WHO WERE OCCASIONALLY  
SUBJECTED TO ANTI-FOREIGN HARASSMENT AND  
VIOLENCE. EXCEPT FOR THE TINY ISLAND OF DESHIMA  
~~NEAR NAGASAKI~~, JAPAN HAS SECLUDED ITSELF FROM

THE OUTSIDE WORLD FOR MORE THAN TWO CENTURIES  
— UNTIL COMMODORE PERRY'S ARRIVAL IN 1853.

IN THE 1850'S, JAPAN MUST HAVE BEEN THE VERY  
DEFINITION OF AN "EXOTIC" COUNTRY. AND HENRY  
HEUSKEN WAS CLEARLY SOMEONE WHO LOVED THE  
ADVENTURE OF BEING IN <sup>Here</sup> ~~SUCH EXOTIC~~ TERRITORY. A  
YOUNG IMMIGRANT TO THE UNITED STATES, HE WAS  
ASKED BY TOWNSEND HARRIS TO SERVE AS HIS  
SECRETARY AND INTERPRETER WHEN HE BECAME  
AMERICA'S FIRST CONSUL GENERAL TO JAPAN.

AS OLIVER STATLER SAYS IN HIS WONDERFUL  
BOOK, SHIMODA STORY: "THEY DID NOT SEEM A WELL-  
MATCHED PAIR. ... HARRIS WAS FIFTY-ONE AND  
SEEMED OLDER. HENRY HEUSKEN WAS TWENTY-THREE  
AND SEEMED EXACTLY THAT: SLENDER AND LITHE,  
SPIRITED AND ROMANTIC — TWENTY-THREE IS AN AGE  
AT WHICH EVERYTHING SEEMS POSSIBLE."

BY ALL ACCOUNTS, HEUSKEN WAS FRIENDS WITH EVERYONE — FOREIGNERS AND JAPANESE ALIKE. AND HE QUICKLY BECAME INDISPENSABLE TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN TOKYO. (AT THE TIME, DUTCH WAS THE ONLY POSSIBLE LANGUAGE OF DIPLOMACY IN JAPAN.)

*He*  
HEUSKEN WAS FREQUENTLY LOANED OUT TO OTHER FOREIGN MISSIONS IN JAPAN — AND, *on the* AT THE *that* TIME OF HIS MURDER, HE WAS ON HIS WAY HOME FROM ASSISTING THE PRUSSIAN MISSION IN ITS ~~TREATY~~ NEGOTIATIONS WITH JAPAN.

AS ONE OBSERVER COMMENTED ~~SHORTLY AFTER~~ ~~HEUSKEN'S DEATH~~: "NO ONE MAN HAS HAD SO MUCH TO DO WITH THE MAKING OF THE FOREIGN TREATIES. EACH AND ALL OF THE TREATY POWERS ARE INDEBTED TO HIM FOR VALUABLE SERVICES — ENGLISH, FRENCH, RUSSIANS, DUTCH AND THE PRUSSIANS."

~~LIKEWISE,~~ IN HIS DIPLOMATIC MESSAGE TO  
WASHINGTON FOLLOWING HEUSKEN'S ASSASSINATION,  
TOWNSEND HARRIS WROTE:

"I AM AT A LOSS TO ASSIGN ANY SPECIAL MOTIVE  
THAT COULD HAVE INFLUENCED THE ASSASSINS OF  
MR. HEUSKEN. HE WAS KIND AND AMIABLE IN HIS  
TEMPER; HE NEVER USED ANY VIOLENCE TOWARDS THE  
JAPANESE, AND FROM SPEAKING THEIR LANGUAGE, HE  
APPEARED TO BE A UNIVERSAL FAVORITE." . . . .

"I AM SUFFERING DEEPLY FROM THIS SUDDEN AND  
AWFUL CATASTROPHE. MR. HEUSKEN WAS  
ASSOCIATED WITH ME OVER FIVE YEARS, AND HE WAS  
THE COMPANION OF MY LONG SOLITUDE AT SHIMODA.  
OUR RELATIONS WERE RATHER THOSE OF FATHER AND  
SON, THAN *CHIEF AND EMPLOYEE.*"

THE STORY OF HENRY HEUSKEN REMINDS US OF THE ADVENTURES — AND THE RISKS — OF DIPLOMACY DURING A VERY DIFFERENT TIME IN JAPAN. IT WAS ALSO A TIME WHEN THERE WAS A SPECIAL CLOSENESS AND COLLEGIALITY AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. THEY WERE ON THE FRONTIERS OF DIPLOMACY — WITH BOTH THE ENORMOUS CULTURAL BARRIERS AND VERY REAL PHYSICAL DANGERS THAT ARE TO BE FOUND ON ANY FRONTIER.

WHILE SO MUCH HAS OBVIOUSLY CHANGED SINCE THEN, WE CONTINUE TO BE THE BENEFICIARIES OF HENRY HEUSKEN'S EFFORTS. WE INHERIT HIS LEGACY OF SEEKING POSITIVE DIPLOMATIC AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS — AND, EVEN MORE, <sup>TRUE</sup> REAL FRIENDSHIP — BETWEEN THE JAPANESE PEOPLE AND PEOPLE FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD.

**DURING HIS SHORT LIFE AND BRIEF TIME IN JAPAN, HENRY HEUSKEN ACCOMPLISHED SO MUCH. WE CAN ONLY IMAGINE HOW MUCH MORE HE COULD HAVE ACHIEVED, HAD HE LIVED LONGER.**

**IN MANY WAYS, WE CAN LOOK TO HEUSKEN FOR THE VERY BEST OF WHAT DIPLOMACY SHOULD BE ABOUT:**

**- HE WAS EXCEPTIONALLY OPEN TO LEARNING ABOUT JAPAN AND THE JAPANESE PEOPLE, WITH THEIR DISTINGUISHED HISTORY AND CULTURE.**

**- HE WAS EAGER TO PROMOTE GENUINE CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE REST OF THE WORLD.**



- HE WOULD GENEROUSLY OFFER HIS ASSISTANCE  
AND ADVICE TO <sup>His</sup> FELLOW DIPLOMATS <sup>IN</sup> THE FULL  
SPIRIT OF COLLEGIALLY.

- ABOVE ALL, HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE  
BORDERS BETWEEN NATIONS ~~SHOULD NOT~~ AND MUST  
NOT — BE ALLOWED TO DIVIDE US FROM OUR COMMON  
HUMANITY.

WE DO WELL TO REMEMBER HENRY HEUSKENS AND  
ALL THAT HE ACCOMPLISHED FOR JAPAN AND THE  
WORLD. AND I HOPE THAT EACH OF US CAN HELP TO  
CARRY ON HIS SPECIAL LEGACY — TO PRACTICE THE  
SAME SPIRIT OF INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP AND  
UNDERSTANDING BY WHICH THIS REMARKABLE YOUNG  
MAN LIVED HIS OWN LIFE.

1) — 6 minutes from  
Dinner  
134 later — on behalf of the  
I thank you for your  
all this your  
8 did for  
unknown



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