

Note for Corson, Ross

From: Mondale, Walter
Date: Wed, Apr 2, 1997 10:47 AM
Subject: georetown speech
To: Corson, Ross

i am worried about getting this speech ready: some pf teh themes could be: --thanks for the superb service and talents of the career srvice and our military leaderhsip

--need to honor them show respect ; and look at the comdition of their employment. the slashing to public support for state etc is a clear parr of this. pay; professionally rewarding assignments; prsonel policies must take fuller account ot he missions need.

--greater effort must be made to increase the percentage of career ambassadors.

other possible topics: my theory or strategy as an ambassador. basically based on my politicla career: need dignity, good policies; must be tough on our own government; coordiante it; fight back on wrong policies; demand some priorities from our government; disregard silly instructions. try to be supportive whenever your host requests something that should be granted. must seek to understand what their problems are and them try to move in a way that we both can sustain it. e.g. okinawa; trade. remember your job is ti represethe us. and asia. nt our country; must be clear and strong about it.

japan and security; japan and

long term--importance of scholarship and students xand exchanges
 societies of great differemces/ thin veneer of educated and americans who know aobut it
 other. far too thin when one conwsiders the importanc eof ht relationship. have made some
 but not nearly enough progress.

[DRAFT 4/3/97]
Georgetown Speech
April 9, 1997

It is a special honor to be introduced by my long time friend and the chairman of your Institute, Max Kampelman. I have long noticed that wherever you find genius and compassion, there is usually a Minnesotan around. Max's connection with Hubert Humphrey and with Minnesota certainly proves my point.

[Other acknowledgements?]

I would like to briefly discuss three issues and then take your questions:

First, I believe we have slashed support for American diplomatic efforts to a dangerous degree.

Second, I believe we must understand the profound dependence of American diplomacy upon a superbly trained, gifted, experienced, and respected career service — and what I believe to be our sad failure to do so.

Third, I want to talk about the need to strengthen scholarship and educational opportunities that prepare our young people to understand other cultures.

Following my remarks, breakfast will be served.

Support for American Diplomacy

Here at home, it is easy to take America's global leadership for granted. But everyday, in uncountable and mostly invisible ways, each of us is a beneficiary of America's unchallenged position of strength and respect in the world.

Our security . . . our prosperity . . . our peace of mind as a nation — all are testament to America's unique standing in the world.

Across the Pacific Ocean, I had a chance to observe just how important America's leadership continues to be. Unlike Europe, Asia has no regional structure for maintaining and promoting peace. There is no NATO. It is America's diplomatic and military presence that provides the essential foundation of stability in that historically unstable region. Everybody over there knows it — and fears what would happen if we were absent.

Americans, too, want their nation to remain a world leader. Polling data also show that the public is willing to pay for this global engagement.

But the public also has some misperceptions — the biggest being the amount of money we dedicate to international affairs. Polls consistently show that a majority of Americans believe some 15 percent — or more — of the federal budget goes to foreign aid.

In fact, our total spending on international affairs adds up to approximately one percent of the budget.

The American people's understanding of these numbers needs to be brought in line with the commitment to America's international leadership. Somewhere, somehow, too many Americans got the idea that diplomacy is a low-priority luxury offering vast opportunities for budgetary saving.

In fiscal year 1997, we will spend about 19 billion dollars on diplomacy and foreign aid. Since 1984 — a year I just picked at random — our international affairs spending has fallen by 51 percent in real (that is, inflation-adjusted) dollars. All of the various budget-balancing proposals project further deep cuts in our international affairs budget — as much as 30 percent below today's level.

As Secretary of State Albright warned recently, when it comes to diplomacy, "we are steadily and unilaterally disarming ourselves."

Several recent reports have sounded the alarm about the dangers that face us if we continue along this path:

- Last year, your own Institute for the Study of Diplomacy issued a major report on U.S. Foreign Affairs Resources. In reviewing the impact of these budget cuts, it warned that "we are cutting essential features of U.S. national security strength."

- Several months ago, a joint task force of the Brookings Institution and Council on Foreign Relations also weighed in. Co-chaired by former Congressmen Mickey Edwards and Steve Solarz, the bipartisan task force concluded that "the cuts already made in the international affairs discretionary account have adversely affected, to a significant degree, the ability of the United States to protect and promote its economic, diplomatic and strategic agendas abroad. Unless this trend is reversed, American vital interests will be jeopardized."

- And last fall, Secretary of State Christopher took his case directly to West Point — where he explained that diplomacy is, in fact, our nation's first line of defense. Without it, we are more likely to need to use force and put American soldiers in harm's way. To help keep the peace, he said, we need both a strong military and a strong diplomatic corps.

I believe the cuts in our diplomatic infrastructure are now seriously injuring the security and stature of our country. These cuts have made the world's only military superpower a second-world participant in diplomacy and international efforts. The examples are everywhere to be seen.

America is the world's richest and most powerful nation. But we are also the number one debtor to the United Nations and many other international institutions. We are last among industrialized nations in the percentage of our wealth that we use to promote democracy and growth in the developing world. In such crucial areas as Bosnia, eastern Europe, the Korean peninsula, and the rest, our ability to perform has been embarrassingly undermined.

More than 30 of our Embassies and Consulates have been closed in the past three years for lack of operating funds. Many of the remaining posts are shabby, unsafe, and ill-equipped. All are handicapped by obsolete information technology. Yet the demands on our overseas missions continue to grow.

It is certainly important to get our nation's fiscal house in order. But dismantling our diplomatic capabilities to balance the budget is like taking stones from the foundation to repair the roof.

We are not talking about big money. But these cuts are no longer removing fat; they are breaking bones. It is painful to see America act as a beggar. I ache every time we propose bold initiatives requiring money, only to learn that we will make other countries pay most of the money.

That's not the kind of America we should be. We are yet the only nation powerful enough — and concerned enough — to lead on the great challenges facing the world. But leadership by tin cup just doesn't work.

The Crucial Role of the Career Service.

It also takes more than money. That's why I believe, very strongly, that we need a vigorous new policy of honoring and encouraging the career foreign service. They are underpaid, but worse, underappreciated. Yet the success of our international policies depends on them.

My service as our Ambassador to Japan was my first — and last — experience in American diplomacy. It is not only one of the most important assignments in the world. It also involves an enormous range of diplomatic goals: security, trade, finance, science and technology, agriculture, regional and global political cooperation. Practically everything that you can think of is handled by our Embassy and Consulates in Japan.

Our Embassy in Japan is also one of the most challenging of all assignments because of how profoundly different the Japanese culture is. Their history, their language, their unique decisionmaking process, the presence of substantial American forces, and many other matters involve complexities, subtleties, and a need for institutional memory and personal relationships that is truly stunning.

But the benefits of a solid and productive relationship with Japan are incalculable.

When I arrived in Japan, I quickly became aware of how completely dependent I was on the career service. I will always remember, and appreciate, the superb quality of almost every person who served us in Japan — not only the State Department, but also the other many agencies represented there as well as the superb leadership of our military forces.

I could blabber on about this; I only wish I could persuade you how deeply I feel about it.

I wish Americans could have seen five of our employees leave for Kobe on the day of the earthquake — at the risk of their own lives — to try to rescue the Americans there.

Or I wish you could see them “pulling all-nighters,” as they say, during trade negotiations; or the incredible work they put forth for the Presidential summit; or the hundreds of other unnoticed selfless contributions to our country by our career service.

You would be as proud of them as I am.

But it is not just work and diligence that is required. They must also understand Japan in all of its complexity. Let me give just one example that I hope will demonstrate why I feel this way.

When I came to Japan, Bill Breer, the DCM — an old and gifted “Japan hand” — agreed to stay on a few months to get me started. He was then replaced by Rust Deming, who was my DCM for three years and is now our charge there.

He and Kris have lived in Japan at one time or another for at least twenty years. Fluent in the language, Rust lived as a young boy in Okinawa while his father served in our Consulate there. He is an expert on security matters with a flawless institutional memory that was much more helpful than any computer could be. He had valuable friends throughout Japan; the government leaders there knew him and trusted him. He kept the many sections of our big Embassy working together and enjoyed the confidence of everyone there. Day after day, he helped understand what we had to do and how we could do it.

He is a workaholic who worked long days at the Embassy, went to the essential formalities every evening, and spent half the night on the phone with Washington — which was usually in the process, never fully completed, of waking up.

Kris Deming worked right along with him, herself fluent in Japanese and with many friends there. She was invaluable to Joan and me.

If it weren't for the many Rust and Kris Demings working for us, I could not — and should not — have been the Ambassador to Japan.

I won't name others. But there are many throughout the embassy deserving of great praise. I was rarely disappointed. I believe that, far more than is understood, our nation depends upon the talent and devotion of the men and women in our career foreign service.

All of this leads up to my point: I don't think they receive the support, respect, and appreciation that we need them to have. I am not sure I have any good answers. But if we could just keep the centrality of this objective in mind . . . that in itself would make a difference.

I am not talking about pay here, although I could. I believe the vast and impersonal personnel system — what I called "the glob" — pays far too little attention to how these gifted people can best be used.

The system crushes people by making them too career conscious and insecure. Careerism gets raised to a fine art as well as an exact bureaucratic science. Because the organization is shrinking, there is ever-slower upward mobility, requiring ever-higher levels of firing mid-grade and senior officers.

One top officer came to me in sadness to report that he was being forced to retire in his mid-forties. Then, out of the blue a month later, he received a 10,000 dollar award for being the best in his field. They were right the second time.

One summer, every top administrative officer in my embassy was transferred elsewhere. Just before the crucial auto trade talks, virtually every expert we had on the subject was transferred out. This was not a result of malice; it was just bureaucratic procedure operating on automatic. Attempts to intercede in these and countless other similar personnel decisions affecting our operations were dismissed by the "glob," often with curt and insulting responses.

I never recall being asked by the Washington personnel office what I thought should be done — except on the paper reports that we sent to Washington by the ton. It is not that good things don't happen; many of the choices are excellent.

But, somehow, our career officers need to be given a better sense that we understand and appreciate their invaluable contributions to our nation and that their lives and careers are being given proper consideration. It would help if stronger efforts were made to select more career officials as Ambassadors.

Educational Opportunities

Let me make my closing point in a hurry.

I spoke earlier of the profoundly different Japanese culture. To put it mildly, it is not easy to understand. When we consider the crucial nature of our relationship with Japan, surely broader understanding and deeper personal relationships — and the mutual respect that flows from these interactions — must be a central goal of American policy.

While some 45,000 Japanese students — more than from any other nation — study in the United States, and while we have several excellent centers of Japanese scholarship in our nation (including Georgetown), I believe the level of contact and understanding between our two countries is far too thin.

A very large number of our higher education institutions have little to offer in Japanese or other Asian studies. Moreover, there are only about 2,500 American students in Japan. Most of them are there for only short periods of time.

The growing importance of Asia, and the rapid pace of development there, has been hard to grasp. I believe we have few more important tasks than to dramatically increase the chance for Americans to learn and understand Japan and that part of the world.

America's continued leadership in the world requires an educated, respected, and experienced corps of professional diplomats. But we also need a broader population of Americans who are educated and ready to deal with the many international opportunities that are out there.

I'm going to quit now — except to say that I have seldom given a speech under more pressure. Can you imagine a system that confers honors only after the hopeful recipient has finished his speech?



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March 13, 1997

Mr. Ross Corson
Dorsey & Whitney
Pillsbury Center South
220 South 6th Street
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Dear Ross:

Many thanks for all of your help. As mentioned, I have enclosed two copies of our latest annual report and a report entitled "U.S. Foreign Affairs Resources: Budget Cuts and Consequences." Perhaps you will find this information useful. His lecture topic is an excellent choice from our standpoint.

I am not sure what details David Newsom or Max Kampelman provided regarding the lecture itself; so here is a brief outline:

Arrive Georgetown
36th & O Streets, N.W.

Let's talk

Program Participants
McGhee Library, 301 ICC

5:40 p.m.

To Auditorium

6:00 p.m.

Lecture [25-30 minutes]
Q&A follows

Conclude Program

7:00 p.m.

Mr. Ross Corson
March 13, 1997
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Dinner, beginning with cocktails [approx. time]	7:15 p.m.
Conclude Dinner	9:00 p.m.

I assume that Mr. Mondale will go straight to the hotel upon arrival. If that is the case, we will meet him at the University gate, 36th & O Streets, at 5:30 p.m. If he would like to come to the university first, I will make the appropriate arrangements.

As I mentioned in our telephone conversation, we will hold a small dinner in Mr. Mondale's honor following the lecture. While I was unable to secure a room large enough for a public reception, there will be opportunities for him to meet the guests.

Could you provide a copy of his bio? I will need it to prepare the lecture program. You may send it by fax if you like, 202-965-5811.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you need additional information. I will be out of the office Friday, March 14, but will be in all next week.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Charlie

Charles Dolgas

Enclosures: as stated



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