



The Future of the U.S.-Japan Alliance

By James B. Steinberg

A Pacific Forum CSIS

L.W. "Bill" and Jean Lane Lecture in Diplomacy

Washington, DC

January 15, 2010

Issues and Insights

Vol. 10-No. 6

Washington, DC

March 2010

Pacific Forum CSIS

Based in Honolulu, the Pacific Forum CSIS (www.pacforum.org) operates as the autonomous Asia-Pacific arm of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC. The Forum's programs encompass current and emerging political, security, economic, business, and oceans policy issues through analysis and dialogue undertaken with the region's leaders in the academic, government, and corporate areas. Founded in 1975, it collaborates with a broad network of research institutes from around the Pacific Rim, drawing on Asian perspectives and disseminating project findings and recommendations to opinion leaders, governments, and members of the public throughout the region.

Lane Lecture in Diplomacy

The Ambassador L.W. 'Bill' and Jean Lane Lecture in Diplomacy honors the contributions and accomplishments of long-time Pacific Forum CSIS supporter and Board of Governors member Ambassador Bill Lane and his lovely wife, Jean. Bill Lane is former U.S. Ambassador to Australia and Nauru (1985-1989) and former Ambassador at Large and Commissioner General, Japan (1975-1976). A member of the *TIME Magazine* Board of Directors, he served for many years as publisher and chairman of *SUNSET Magazine*. His association with Asia dates back to World War II, when he served in and around the Philippines as a U.S. Navy gunnery officer aboard a troop ship. His interest in East Asia continues to this day. He founded the Pacific Area Travel Association and is a Pacific Basin Economic Council Trustee.



Table of Contents

Page

The Future of the U.S.-Japan Alliance

By James B. Steinberg 1

About the Author 7

The Future of the U.S.-Japan Alliance
16th Annual Japan-U.S. Security Seminar
Keynote Speech by James B. Steinberg
January 15, 2010

It is a great pleasure to be here. I am appreciative of the thoughtful note about the situation in Haiti. It is a real terrible human tragedy, and we feel it very profoundly in the State Department, as I know many of you do. We've lost one of our Foreign Service officers and the UN has lost a number of personnel. This is a tragedy of enormous proportion. Many here and around the world have been incredibly open and generous in their hearts in helping to support this effort. We have an incredibly daunting task ahead of us, but the people of Haiti have had to suffer a lot in recent years and we are confident that we can work with them to try to recover from this.

I'm really pleased to be here. I want to thank the Pacific Forum CSIS, the Japanese Embassy, Chairman Kato and his Tokyo Foundation, and Yoshiji Nogami and the Japan Institute of International Affairs for organizing this important and timely event. As many of you know, Yoshiji was a fellow sherpa with me back in the Clinton administration, and we did a lot of good work together, including preparing for the Okinawa G8 summit. So, it is kind of ironic as the issues around Okinawa have preoccupied us to remember how important that time was.

There are so many people in this room who've contributed so much to the U.S.-Japan relationship. I'm looking now at Danny Russel, who warned me not to single anybody out, because he said, if you single some people out, others will be offended. And so I'm going to be careful about that. But I do want to pay tribute to all the current and former officials who've played a role. I am particularly honored as I look at this rogues gallery of current and former ambassadors, both U.S. and Japanese, in front of me, and the critical role that you all have played, and so many senior officials, including people like Bill Perry, from whom we've all learned so much over the years, and so many other people – Jim Kelly and others – and my colleagues in the current Obama administration who are here. There are many people to thank.

Also there are our serving and former military officers, who have been at the heart of this relationship. Ed Rice and I go back to an earlier life, when Ed was preoccupied with the day-to-day of the NSC. There are so many others here who have served in such an important role that I'm grateful, and I know all of you are grateful, for everyone's service. So thank you all.

It's fitting that we gather here at the Willard for this event commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security since, in 1860, this hotel welcomed the first group of Japanese ambassadors to visit the United States. As we dine here and share food and wine, it's a way to recall the extraordinary history of our relationship. It's an important sense of reminder that we have traveled a long way together and we are going to travel much further together in the future.

I hope that as we reflect on both achievements of the past and the challenges of the future that we are successful in making clear to all of you the incredible importance that we in the Obama administration, beginning with the president and the secretary of state, attach to this

critical relationship between the United States and Japan as part of our deeper engagement in Asia.

As all of you know, Secretary Clinton's first trip as secretary of state, just almost exactly a year ago, was to Asia. She's now traveled to the region three times since she took office a year ago. Just looking back over the events of the last year, you can see that this was not just a travel log but a period filled with very important achievements, ranging from our early and effective work together to fashion a strong and common regional response to North Korea's provocative missile and nuclear tests, the efforts that we've made to deepen and broaden our engagement with China through the enhanced Strategic and Economic Dialogue, the effort that has deepened our relationship with ASEAN through our decision to accede to the Treaty on Amity and Cooperation, our on-the-ground engagement in Southeast Asia through the Lower Mekong Initiative, our efforts to try to find a new way forward with the government in Burma, and the development of new relationships and stronger relationships throughout the region with critical partners like Indonesia and Vietnam.

And in her most recent visit, which unfortunately was cut short by the events in Haiti, the secretary unveiled her comprehensive vision for an inclusive and solution-oriented approach to multilateral cooperation in the Asia-Pacific.

President Obama, too, has placed central importance on our role. He is, after all, our first true "Pacific" president and he underscored his own personal commitment to the region by his trip to Asia last November. I don't need to remind this audience he began his visit in Tokyo, returning the visit of Prime Minister Aso, who was the first foreign leader to come to Washington following President Obama's inauguration. He deliberately chose Tokyo as the venue for his important speech outlining the United States stake in East Asia and the importance of deepening our role and our engagement.

During that trip, he traveled to Singapore, where he participated in the APEC Summit and attended the first ever U.S.-ASEAN Leaders Meeting. During that time, he highlighted our commitment to free and open trade and investment by announcing our intention to pursue the discussions on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. He then traveled to China where, in Shanghai and Beijing, he reinforced our commitment to a positive, cooperative relationship with China in meetings with President Hu and other senior Chinese leaders while reiterating our belief that an open, rule-of-law society is crucial to China's own future.

And he concluded his trip with a visit to our treaty ally in Seoul, reaffirming that alliance with the Republic of Korea and paying tribute to Korea's growing role in the global economy and security, symbolized by the upcoming hosting of the G-20 in Seoul this coming year.

Now, it is no accident of geography that the trip began in Tokyo, because our alliance with Japan has been, and will continue to be, the cornerstone of U.S. engagement in the region and a foundation of U.S. foreign policy.

Now, I see you all slightly wincing when I utter the word "cornerstone." The idea that Japan is the cornerstone of our engagement in East Asia is a phrase oft-repeated by U.S.

officials, but I think it's important and perhaps timely to step back and consider what that means. This fulcrum role began and grew out of the farsighted vision of American leaders at the end of World War II, a vision that recognized the importance of building strong partnerships with democratic market economies to meet the challenges of the second half of the 20th century, not just with our wartime allies, but equally with those who had been our adversaries. This vision was predicated on an idea, validated by the time that has passed, that U.S. interests are best served by the emergence of strong, prosperous and independent democracies across the Pacific, as well as the Atlantic. Those leaders built an alliance with Japan based both on interests and values, an alliance formally consecrated 50 years ago, and an alliance that we celebrate today.

That alliance not only helped secure peace and prosperity for the people of Japan and the United States, but it also helped create the conditions that have led to the remarkable emergence of Asia as the cockpit of the global economy that has helped lift billions out of poverty and gradually spread the blessings of democratic governance to more and more countries of that region.

Now that alliance, of course, had its roots in the Cold War. And with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the movement toward a more market-oriented government in China, some began to question the relevance of what President Eisenhower had called our "indestructible partnership." Against the backdrop of serious trade disputes and the threat of punitive tariffs on automobiles, newspapers at the time warned us of a "crisis in the bilateral relationship." Yet under the leadership of President Clinton and Prime Minister Hashimoto, the United States and Japan set out to demonstrate that our partnership should and could adapt to the evolving dynamics of the post-Cold War Asia.

In the 14 years since the Clinton-Hashimoto declaration, the relationship has grown stronger even as it has evolved, thanks in no small measure to the people who are here tonight. We've worked together to update our alliance, through efforts ranging from the force posture realignment to the review of roles, missions, and capabilities.

The alliance has grown in scope, with cooperation on everything from developing a joint missile defense system to reducing the impact of our military footprint in Japan. And we have expanded the scope of our work together from Iraq to Afghanistan, to economic development and combating climate change. We've demonstrated an understanding that our alliance, like all good partnerships, cannot thrive if it remains static – or in the words of the Roman poet Claudian, we need to "change or die."

That change can be seen in the evolution of Japan's foreign and security policy toward increased impact and effectiveness on the world stage. The Japan Defense Agency has formally become the Ministry of Defense. Japan is working closely with us to build the capacity to address North Korea's evolving ballistic missile threat while Japan's Self-Defense Forces have donned blue helmets to promote peace in Africa and the Middle East. And Japanese development programs have helped millions of people from Sub-Saharan Africa to Southeast Asia become active and invested contributors in their own nations' development.

Indeed, Japan today is playing an increasingly active role on the world stage, aiding in reconstruction efforts in Iraq and anti-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa. In Afghanistan, its \$5 billion in assistance will help train police officers, rehabilitate demobilized fighters, and build schools and roads – major contributions toward our shared interest in a stable and peaceful Afghanistan as well as our partnership to support progress and hope in Pakistan. While Japanese refueling support has just ended, we share the hope on the part of the international community that there will be other Japanese nonmonetary contributions to stability in this crucial region.

Japan has also been a strong supporter of the global nonproliferation regime, reflected recently in the installation of a respected Japanese public servant as the new director of the IAEA.

And last month in Copenhagen, Japanese leadership played a vital role in helping the international community take a meaningful step towards addressing the global challenge of climate change.

Thus you can see that on a range of global issues facing our time, Japan today plays a central leadership role.

Now under the banner of change, both the United States and Japan last year elected new leadership, an expression in both societies of the desire for fresh, forward-looking approaches to the challenges of the 21st century. I don't need to tell this audience that the impact of that change has been particularly profound for Japan, bringing with it a new generation of leaders who have challenged their government and their people to think afresh about Japan's approach to its own governance and to its relations with the broader international community.

We in the United States welcome this expression of Japan's vibrant democracy. But more importantly, we welcome the opportunity to conduct an open dialogue on shaping the future of the alliance. As President Obama said in his Tokyo speech, the U.S.-Japan alliance is not a historic relic from a bygone era, but an abiding commitment to each other that is fundamental to our shared security. That means it's essential that we work together to make sure that the alliance retains the support and understanding of both the Japanese and the American people, support that is crucial for the alliance to thrive.

So this is a particularly important time for us to reflect on the need both for continuity and for change in our relationship, to reflect again on why the relationship remains the cornerstone of our engagement despite the remarkable changes that have taken place in the region.

This junction of continuity and change can be seen clearly in the continued centrality of our security partnership. It's reflected in the United States formal commitment to Japan's security, embedded in Article V of our security treaty, which reflects our shared belief that Japan can be more secure, and the region more stable if Japan does not have to face potential threats on its own. At the same time, change is reflected in the new security environment that our partnership must address, with the existential threat of the Soviet Union gone but a North Korea pursuing an ongoing missile and nuclear weapons program, and the need to make sure that the

major powers of the region, none of whom today see each other as an adversary, can develop and grow in ways that sustain the peace and prosperity of this crucial region.

The proposals developed by the United States and Japan for realigning our military presence in Japan similarly reflect this junction of continuity and change – continuity, because military cooperation between the United States and Japan remains critical to sustaining a peaceful, stable environment and our military presence remains essential to the dual mission of helping to preserve Japan’s security while providing stability throughout the region. Change because we recognize the need to be sensitive to the impact of our operations on the people of Japan, and because the role of our forces – both U.S. and Japanese – is constantly adjusting to the evolving security environment. We appreciate the importance of the new Japanese government assuring itself that the proposed realignment serves these twin goals of continuity and change and look forward to being able to move forward in a timely way with crucial adjustments to anchor our presence in the Asia-Pacific region.

A strong U.S.-Japan alliance is also fully compatible with Japan’s own efforts to strengthen its bilateral relationships with its neighbors, and we welcome and encourage steps in that direction. Similarly, the U.S.-Japan alliance is enhanced by our deepening bilateral ties in the region, not only with our traditional allies – South Korea, Australia, Thailand, and the Philippines – but also with India, China, and the countries of ASEAN. These relationships are not zero-sum but additive. And they are increasingly buttressed by both of our countries’ engagement in the evolving multilateral arrangements in the Asia-Pacific region, in which our Administration intends to play an increasingly active role. For this reason, Secretary Clinton this week laid out our approach to multilateral cooperation in the region, with the goal of strengthening our common capacity to meet the security and economic challenges of our time, as well as emerging issues such as climate change and public health. Our goal, as the secretary made clear, is institutions that, in her words, “produce results, rather than simply produce new organizations.”

Of course, our partnership goes far beyond our security cooperation, from the continued importance of our trade and investment relationship, a bond which will be further strengthened by the recent U.S.-Japan Open Skies agreement, which will make it easier for both business people and tourists to travel between the United States and Japan. And as both Japan and the United States prepare to host APEC summits in the next two years, we have a unique window of opportunity to strengthen regional economic cooperation and to increase regional prosperity through an ambitious program of economic integration, energy efficiency, and stimulating growth.

Nor is this relationship simply based on shared interests. Our common values underpin both our bilateral relationship and our common commitment to support the spread of those values in Asia and around the world, an indisputable proof that when it comes to democracy and human rights, there are not Asian or American values, but universal values.

And the relationship is rooted in the strong ties between our two peoples, reflected in recent polls showing that over 85 percent of the Japanese public strongly values Japan’s relationship with the United States.

When Secretary Clinton and Foreign Minister Okada met in Honolulu this past Tuesday, they reaffirmed both the health of our alliance and our commitment to advancing it together. They reaffirmed their determination to cooperate to bring the Japanese government's review of the Futenma relocation plan to a conclusion soon and move forward on our twin goals of strengthening alliance operations and reducing base impact on Okinawan communities.

We recognize like all good relationships, we will have our differences. After all, I, like some of you here, are veterans of the Clinton administration, and my memory has not completely faded from some of the more contentious disputes of the not-too-distant past. But our 50 years of continuity and change convince me that working through these differences in a constructive and candid and respectful way will only strengthen our ties in the long run.

Over the years, as many of you know, I've had the privilege of spending a lot of time in Japan. And it's a special place in my heart, and not just for the early-morning visits to the Tsukiji fish market and the chance to catch a prized Iwana in the Japan mountain streams.

As deputy secretary of state, I've been privileged to work closely with my Japanese counterparts for consultations on any number of important strategic issues, from North Korea to Afghanistan to Iran to climate change and Asia-Pacific multilateralism. So it's an honor to spend this evening with so many who have done so much to build a strong foundation for our relationship. We are here to celebrate these accomplishments. But as President Obama said in Tokyo last year, this anniversary, in his words, "represents an important opportunity to step back and reflect on what we've achieved, celebrate our friendship, but also find ways to renew this alliance to refresh it for the 21st century." So let us together look forward to the next 50 years of an alliance that will continue to be indispensable to the peace and prosperity of the United States, of Japan, and of the Asia-Pacific region.

Thank you all for listening, and thanks again to the Pacific Forum and our Japanese co-hosts for arranging such an important and timely commemoration.

About the Author

James B. Steinberg is the Deputy Secretary of State, serving as the principal Deputy to Secretary Clinton. Appointed by President Obama, he was confirmed by the Senate on January 28, 2009 and sworn in by the Secretary the next day. Prior to his appointment in the Obama Administration, Mr. Steinberg served as dean of the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, a position he assumed on January 1, 2006. He is currently on leave from the LBJ School. He had previously served as the vice president and director of Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. (2001-2005), where he supervised a wide-ranging research program on U.S. foreign policy.

From December 1996 to August 2000, Mr. Steinberg served as deputy national security advisor to President Bill Clinton. During that period he also served as the president's personal representative ("Sherpa") to the 1998 and 1999 G-8 summits. Prior to becoming deputy national security advisor, he served as chief of staff of the U.S. State Department and director of the State Department's policy planning staff (1994-1996), and as deputy assistant secretary for analysis in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (1993-1994).

Mr. Steinberg has also been a senior analyst at RAND in Santa Monica, California (1989-1993), and a senior fellow for U.S. Strategic Policy at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London (1985-1987). He served as Senator Edward Kennedy's principal aide for the Senate Armed Services Committee (1983-1985); minority counsel, U.S. Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee (1981-1983); special assistant to the U.S. Assistant Attorney General (Civil Division) (1979-1980); law clerk to Judge David L. Bazelon, U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit (1978-1979); and special assistant to the assistant secretary for planning and evaluation, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (1977).

Mr. Steinberg is the author of and contributor to numerous books and articles on foreign policy and national security topics, including *Difficult Transitions: Foreign Policy Troubles at the Outset of Presidential Power*, *Protecting the Homeland 2006/2007* and *An Ever Closer Union: European Integration and Its Implications for the Future of U.S.-European Relations*.

Mr. Steinberg received his B.A. from Harvard in 1973 and J.D. from Yale Law School in 1978.