



Getting Asia Right

By Richard L. Armitage

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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.



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Getting Asia Right
By Richard L. Armitage

It's a great pleasure for me to be back with so many good friends at the 13th annual Japan-U.S. San Francisco Security Seminar and a particular honor to be able to present this "L.W. 'Bill' and Jean Lane Lecture in Diplomacy." We're sorry Bill could not join us for this year's conference but greatly appreciate his support for this event and for his many contributions over the years to strengthening U.S.-Japan relations.

When Joseph Nye and I sat down in 2000 to write our first report along on the U.S.-Japan alliance with colleagues, several of whom are here, we did it in the context of "Japan passing." It was after the Cold War and we felt that there was a drift in the U.S.-Japan relationship, so we came out with what we thought would be a good bipartisan approach that was accepted by Congress as bipartisan. Through hard work by a lot of Japanese and American bureaucrats on both sides of the water, I think almost all of those recommendations have been realized. And if you look at how far we have come since the year 2000, it's monumental. It's unbelievable. Years ago, I was heavily criticized in Japan because I answered a question from the mass media about decision making in Japan and I described it as glacial. I was called rude, crude, and everything else. I looked for an opportunity to redeem myself and at a subsequent press event I was asked about this comment and I said that people had misunderstood it. I said that decision making in Japan was glacial, but I meant that like a glacier, if you look at it all the time it doesn't seem to move. But if you look at it today and turn your attention to something else for a good period of time and then look back, not only has the glacier moved an appreciable distance, but it's carried away all the obstacles in its path. And indeed, most of those obstacles that were in the way in the year 2000 have been carried away.

So, Dr. Nye and I thought it was time to look above the horizon and look to about 2020 and take advantage of the fact that there is so much change going on in Asia and at home. Look at the peaceful development, as they would call it, of China, the peaceful development of India, and the reawakening of Japan – the monumental change in Asia. And as I said at this forum last year, the whole strategic center of gravity of the world is shifting to Asia. So Joe and I and several colleagues who are here tonight – Sak Sakoda, Jim Pryzystup, Kurt Campbell, and some others – started to work through these problems and tried to take a longer view than our normal bureaucratic day-to-day view of how Asia might look in 2020 and how we might best position ourselves.

The origin of our idea for this report came in a question Joe and I used to get all the time when we traveled in Japan and that was: how do we get China right? How do we manage this harmonious or peaceful development of China? Joe and I separately came to the same conclusion that the question was wrong. The question was: how do we get Asia right? That is, we have to get our relationship with Asia correct in order to assure that this harmonious rise of China occurs, and in order to get Asia right we had to get Japan right. So we sat down and analyzed the region. I'm not going to go through it country by country, but suffice to say that China is perhaps the most important development in the first half of this century. Nobody – including the leadership of China – knows how it's going to come out. If it comes out badly, this is bad for us; if it comes out well, it can benefit all of us. And that's what we should dedicate

ourselves to. We do this by recognizing where our – that is Japanese and U.S. – interests converge with China, we can work with China. And when we diverge, we ought to be crystal clear with China on where we diverge and why. This doesn't have to be disagreeably done, but it needs to be done, because there are rules to the game. If we are going to have the type of China we want in the world, it is one that has to abide by the generally understood rules of the game.

We talk about military developments in China and I don't know if they are necessarily threatening: clearly their blue-water activities are directed at the ability to be able to protect the sea-lines of communication. They don't want to sub-contract that to the United States Seventh Fleet or to the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force. They want to have their own ability to protect their access to the sea-lanes. When Dr. Willam Perry was secretary of defense, Randy Schriver, a partner of mine, was the China country director. Randy did a study of studies on China's modernization. He found that every time we did a study of the military modernization of China we were absolutely correct as to the direction that China was heading, but we absolutely misunderstood the pace. We always underestimated the pace at which they move forward. So we knew where they were going, we just didn't know how fast they were going to get there. This is important today because it's not just in the military sphere that we underestimate the pace. Looking at Chinese diplomats these days, we're not facing those characters we saw 15-20 years ago, who were promoted for party purity, ideological purity, and seniority. We are facing a diplomatic community that is agile, supple, mobile, etc. Our ability to manage this peaceful development of China is going to be taxed in the future.

Notwithstanding the enormous achievements of Amb. Chris Hill and others in getting the Six-Party Talks going, at the end of the day, I don't think it's going to lead to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. I don't think the North Koreans are going to give up the only reason we really talk to them. They may have a weak hand but they have played it quite well. There are internal contradictions in North Korea, but I'm not sure if they are sufficient enough to bring a change to the direction that Kim Jong-il and his colleagues are going.

The Republic of Korea is a management challenge of historic proportion for the United States. It's not just episodic anti-Americanism that crops up. It's rooted in history. Last year, I spoke about the difficulties of U.S. relationships. One of our great folk heroes, Daniel Boone, had a lot to do with Korea. He was quite wealthy but he didn't make his money in animal skins, or raccoon skin caps; he made it in ginseng, which he had the Indians mine in Appalachia and he sold it to China, devastating the economy of the kingdom of Korea. So our relationship with Korea goes back a long way, and it's not a pretty story. So I don't want anyone here to misunderstand that relationship.

We mentioned India prominently in our report for several reasons. First, all of us understand that for the United States, and I think for a lesser extent Japan, to not have a relationship with a multi-ethnic, multi-religious democracy like India was absurd. We understand why: the Soviet Union's relationship with Indira Gandhi made it very difficult for us. But that's past and we have embarked on a very good relationship. And Japan has embarked on a very good relationship with India. India is looking east. This is good for Asia. It's good for us to have that democracy playing a role in the region. The prime minister of India H.E. Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to Tokyo was terrific for what he said. Japan has an interesting advantage. We talk a lot about history and about the legacy of World War II but as far as Indians

are concerned there's a positive legacy of World War II. Although Japan occupied a small part of India, no Indian bureaucrat will miss the opportunity to tell you that they believe that Japan began the removal of the fingers of colonialism from the throat of South Asia. So Japan has at least one advantage out of the terrible legacy of World War II.

We noted Southeast Asia in our report and where it's going and the importance beyond the 600 million people who live there, with the \$800 billion of annual GDP that goes to other things such as the development of democracies there. There is some guided democracy, like in Malaysia, and certainly Singapore would qualify. And we've got some missteps in democracy in Thailand. But we also have the largest Muslim nation in the world, one whose success can help all of us in this global war on terror and can help rein in Islamic extremism if President Yudhoyono is successful in bringing Indonesia completely into moderation. We also talk about Australia, which is important to both Japan and United States.

This lead us to a discussion of four sorts of baskets, stealing from the old Helsinki baskets idea, that might usefully guide the U.S. and Japan. This is not a roadmap and we fully expect some people in Japan to sit down and do what we did: come up with their own views about what's good and what's not. And I would be the last one to tell you that everything included in our report is good. They may be good from my point of view, they may not be good from our Japanese friends' point of view. But I'm looking out for my country's interest. We do expect this and hope that it will provoke a response by Japan and that will be something that can very much help us get into a dialogue.

We came up with these four baskets of recommendations. The first basket concerns Japan alone. Some of it was saluting what Japan is already doing, such as the development of a more supple and agile decision-making process that can simultaneously guarantee that bureaucracies have their input but the decisions are made in a timely enough fashion to be applicable to the question at hand. In this regard, the activities toward some sort of National Security Council are very welcome and to be saluted.

We also had to acknowledge the debate that's ongoing in Japan about Article 9 and the right of collective self-defense. This is a Japanese decision. We noted in the year 2000 that the inability to participate in collective self-defense was an impediment to alliance cooperation. This time what we are saying is that we welcome a partner that can take part when it suits them in activities in collective self-defense.

We went on to talk about the special measures laws and our view, a strictly U.S. view, that the ability to be more flexible in the deployment of the Japanese Self-Defense Forces, whether it's for humanitarian relief or something else, is something that we are interested in. Again, it's a Japanese decision but to have to have special legislation each time you deploy is both slow, time consuming, and it may make you too late to have an effect on the situation at hand. We also note in passing that although we don't have a view on what the correct level of defense spending is – and we acknowledge Japan spends the fifth largest amount on defense of any country – it is also true that in defense expenditure as a ratio of GDP, Japan is 134th in the world. From our point of view that is not appropriate. We also noted that it's about time that Japan develop some hostage release capabilities and things of this nature. We don't want to see another embarrassing spectacle like Peru several years ago when Japan was helpless in terms of the kidnapping and hostage taking of its own citizens. This is not in concert or in consonance

with the first duty of any government, which is to protect its citizens. So it's time to think of these capabilities.

We moved on to a second group of recommendations for the U.S. and Japan, the primary alliance. We mentioned the possibility of beginning a free trade agreement discussion. No one has any illusions about how difficult and how time-consuming and neuralgic those discussions would be. But to begin talking about it is probably a pretty good thing.

We had a list of 10 separate items specifically in the security area that we hope people would consider, and they ran the gamut from cooperation on ballistic missile defense and crossed into further loosening of the export control principles in terms of missile defense – and there is already a loosening by the government of Japan. We think that more broad loosening of these export control principles would be very much in order.

We talked about joint development of the next class of Aegis destroyers, the CGX class, where two great sea-faring nations like ours, the two leading technology countries in the world, will be able to cooperate to save money in the first instance, and have the most technologically capable vessel in the second instance, and third to further solidify our alliance.

The third basket has to do with the U.S. and Japan in the region. There's no rocket science involved here to say that much has to do with the continued development of our relationship with India. Many of us are involved both officially and unofficially in trilaterals among Japan, India, and the United States. We should continue our relationship development with Australia – after all we have official trilateral and unofficial trilaterals with Australia, Japan, and the United States. We should work rigorously with China on those areas in which we can cooperate and in which China has already indicated a willingness to be involved; that includes energy security, the provision of technology and the provision of conservation measures. This is something that we can start talking about that is vital to all of us and which we all share a desperate need in having come out right. At the end of the end of the day, we have to come to an understanding among and between the great nations who are so thirsty for petroleum on how they view energy. Is it a zero-sum game? Is it something to be shared for the general public good? These types of activities in the regional area can serve the U.S. and Japan quite well.

Finally, and somewhat controversially, we make a rather sweeping statement that we view Japan as a global nation. There aren't many global nations who have interests in all parts of the globe when you think about it. Does Japan deploy its military to all parts of the world? God knows that's not the case. Japan has diplomatic representation in quite a few countries but the web of its great trading companies and the way the government mines the information from this web make Japan a global nation. That being the case, we very much hope that the Japan and the United States can cooperate on such things as getting a handle and eventually defeating infectious diseases, and that we can cooperate on defeating the tyranny of climate change and global warming that we face today.

Japan's ability to use soft power, and what my colleague Joe Nye would call "smart power" is something that can very much aid in the global war on terrorism.

These four baskets of recommendations provide a pretty rich menu, not to follow but in the initial stages to discuss. Our bottom line is that for better or for worse, for 150 years, Asia's

future and Asia's stability have been a function of the U.S.-Japan relationship. That is a statement I make without fear of contradiction. It is the truth. When we have been in good shape with most of our relationship, the area has been in pretty good shape. When we have been in bad shape, the area has not been in good shape either.

I want to mention several one-off items and they spring out of the discussion that we had today. First, there is the issue of comfort women. This is not an argument that anyone in Japan can win. It's somewhat like the argument on the Nanking massacre. Whether it was 100,000, 500,000, or 5,000, it's not an argument you can win. And so I object to it; I find it objectionable. What I really object to is the fact that if you're looking backward you are going to bump into something as you move forward. And when you look backward at something like comfort women, you're not seeing where you are going. And for heaven's sakes, if you're base is somewhat rightwing or nationalistic you ought to be talking about those issues that appeal in the future, not those behind you. We are wasting time, energy, and we are going to bump into things.

The second issue has to do with diplomacy. Whether American bureaucrats or Japanese bureaucrats, we go to work in the morning and work like dogs. There's no question about it. And what are you doing? You're generally working your inbox and the problems that have cropped up today. It's very unusual to have the luxury to lift your game and lift your vision a bit and think to the future. But I'm going to suppose that we are able for a short time to look to the future. When I look at the Korean Peninsula, I see over time, maybe even by 2020, a defacto if not de jure united peninsula of Korea. What does this bring with it? It brings two of the largest armies in the world. It brings a great economic power, the 10th largest in the world, the Republic of Korea, married up with enormous resources that are under-developed in North Korea. I believe it will create a nuclear armed Korea, at least for a time. How are the U.S. and Japanese diplomats going to deal with this new phenomenon? It's going to take agility and cleverness in the positive sense of the word. To be able to deal with these issues we have to start thinking now how to position ourselves best to have a congenial relationship with a unified peninsula of Korea. It won't be free of all the historic neuralgia that is directed against us and against Japan. They will have problems with China, too. But we have got to be thinking about how we deal with them and we don't. We worry about tomorrow's Six-Party Talks, and we are worrying about an FTA today. We have got to start positioning ourselves much more to the future.

The third thing that I want to mention has to do with democracy. We had what I thought was perhaps the most provocative discussion of the day about democracy, and shared values and are people willing to fight for shared values and things of this nature. I was part of an administration that made democracy the central feature of its foreign policy. Unfortunately, in my view, the administration did this as if this were something that they alone had tumbled to. In fact the founding fathers of our republic believed passionately in the message of our revolution, which was certainly one of support for human rights, human freedoms, and democracy. The master builders of our country – Abraham Lincoln and both Roosevelts – believed passionately in the message of that revolution and I think every postwar president has believed that the world is made safer and more humane by the United States being fully engaged across the board in the defense of human freedoms and human rights, and in that regard this administration is no different. But if you assume that democracy equals a vote, if you assume that democracy is an

end point rather than a journey, you are making a serious, serious error. And I'm afraid we are on the verge of making that error.

I think that our secretary of state and our president have pulled in a little bit and are now talking about reform, which I think is correct because democracy as represented by voting alone cannot stand. If you look at what is going on in the Czech Republic or Poland, or in our southern hemisphere, what you see are democracies that have made decisions, but the democracies do not have sufficient infrastructure – whether it's parties, free press, transparency, or ministries that can give out goods and services to the public. And this public by the way, having recently gotten democracy has heightened expectations. They can't deliver. And what happens? Populism comes up. This is what we have in our hemisphere, whether it's Evo Morales, what we nearly had in Mexico, or Hugo Chavez. Peoples' heightened expectations are dashed, and they turn to populist rhetoric. Populist politicians then have two choices. They can use their populism to develop the institutions to deliver goods and services, etc., but that is hard work and it's really difficult. Or they can become more autocratic which is exactly what we are seeing with Hugo Chavez.

I do endorse this idea of democracy being one of our basic principles. But I think the administration and we would be much better off if we talk about reform first to get into place that infrastructure that would then support that democracy.

About the Author

Richard L. Armitage is President of Armitage International, and a former U.S. Deputy Secretary of State. Prior to assuming that post, he was President of Armitage Associates L.C. from May 1993. He has been engaged in a range of worldwide business and public policy endeavors as well as frequent public speaking and writing. Previously, he held senior troubleshooting and negotiating positions in the Departments of State and Defense, and the Congress, including as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy.