

Edwin O. Reischauer Oral History Interview – JFK#1, 4/25/1969
Administrative Information

Creator: Edwin O. Reischauer

Interviewer: Dennis O'Brien

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Biographical Note

Edwin O' Reischauer (1910-1990) served as the United States' Ambassador to Japan from 1961 to 1966. This interview focuses on the political situation in East Asia, relations between the United States and Japan, and the Kennedy administration's approach to foreign policy in Japan, among other topics.

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Edwin O. Reischauer

Feb. 15, 1977

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Edwin O. Reischauer– JFK #1
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Oral History Interview

with

EDWIN O. REISCHAUER

April 25, 1969
Cambridge, Massachusetts

By Dennis O'Brien

For the John F. Kennedy Library

O'BRIEN: Today I'm in the office of Ambassador Edwin Reischauer, Ambassador to Japan during the Kennedy years. Well, I guess the logical place to begin in this is to begin with your relations with President Kennedy. When was the first time that you met him?

REISCHAUER: Well, I didn't meet President Kennedy until after I'd actually been appointed Ambassador. People have often assumed that I was a friend or member of the organization and that Harvard was a bond there. Actually, I'm sure it had nothing to do with it. I'm sure when my name came to his attention he said in horror, "Oh, not another man from Harvard." It was others who, I think, suggested my name, quite unknown to myself, and the President accepted it, and then only subsequently did I meet him for the first time.

O'BRIEN: Did you ever have any contact with his senatorial aides or people who were involved in his campaign staff?

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REISCHAUER: No, I had absolutely no contact of any sort of that type. Actually, I

think the pressures for my appointment came out of Chester Bowles' office and out of Bill Fulbright's [J. William Fulbright] office primarily, but maybe from some other places, too, but not from the Kennedy group at all.

O'BRIEN: Well, did you have any contact with the academic groups here in Cambridge and also over at MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] that...

REISCHAUER: That had supported him?

O'BRIEN: ...that had supported him or....

REISCHAUER: Actually, I was abroad during the whole campaign period. I left the country on the first of July in 1960 and didn't get back until after he had been elected, late in December. And I'd never taken part in any campaigning because as a person who was particularly interested in foreign policy and with a feeling that foreign policy should be made as nonpartisan as possible, I've never really done anything in domestic politics. The only time I've ever gotten involved was to campaign, and that was only for one day, for Bobby Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] out in California.

O'BRIEN: Did you prepare any position papers or anything?

REISCHAUER: No, no nothing of that sort. I had no contact whatsoever. Their attention was drawn to me simply because I'd written an article about the troubles we were in in our relationship with Japan and had spoken out on these things. And people had decided that since we'd not done very well in the spring of 1960, it'd be good to have a person more deeply knowledgeable about Japan and particularly a person with a knowledge of the Japanese language as Ambassador. And that's how, I think, attention came around to me.

O'BRIEN: Right. When did you first sense that you were under consideration, Mr. Ambassador?

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REISCHAUER: Well, in the month of January I began to be a little bit nervous about this. Out in Japan in that autumn people had come to me and said that they thought I ought to be ambassador, but it was purely Japanese wishful thinking on the part of a few people who happened to know me, and I took this as a very amusing joke. But some time in January, people began to call me up from Washington about it -- newspapermen -- and that made me nervous because I had no thought of doing anything remotely like this.

O'BRIEN: Well, when were you...

REISCHAUER: And I was approached about on the 26th of January, I believe. I had an appointment with Chet Bowles to talk to him about Korea because I'd visited there and I had things on my mind that I'd promised the Koreans I would try to tell the new Administration. So I had this appointment, but he just utilized the appointment in order to try to sell me on taking the job.

O'BRIEN: Well, as long as you mentioned the Koreans, what were you suggesting to the Administration at that time in regard to matters involving Korea?

REISCHAUER: Well, this is pretty far back in history now, and my own memory on this is beginning to get a little bit hazy, but there were various points. I thought that we needed to show a great deal more sensitivity. They were in an in-between stage at that time, as you may remember, with a civilian administration between the Syngman Rhee one and what became the military one, and it was having its troubles. It needed a lot more attention and support from us than it was getting.

O'BRIEN: Did you talk to anyone else in regard to the appointment other than Chester Bowles?

REISCHAUER: Well, yes, I did: Bill Fulbright. He'd gotten wind that I was going to be down in Washington that day and asked me to come over and have lunch with

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him, apparently with the intention of trying to persuade me to take the job, if it were offered. And he was delighted to find that it was being offered.

O'BRIEN: Did you have any personal reservations about taking it?

REISCHAUER: Oh, grave reservations. I had no idea whether or not I could handle it. I mean, it was nothing I'd ever done -- I'd worked in the State Department and all that sort of thing before and in government, but I'd never tried to be an ambassador. My wife was absolutely dead set against it. She said she hadn't married me to have a diplomatic career. Being a Japanese, and having only just received her American citizenship about twelve months earlier, she was very nervous about how she would be received both by the Japanese, on the one hand, and then by the Americans, particularly the very large American military community in Japan. And she just didn't think it was the life she wanted at all and was strongly opposed. So, I had grave misgivings, but I was in the kind of position where I'd talked a lot about foreign policy and what we should be doing in our relations, and then somebody asked me to go ahead and do it. And, you know, it was put up or shut up, as I said at the time, and I just felt I had to take it.

O'BRIEN: Did you sense any opposition to it in Congress or in the State Department?

REISCHAUER: Well, I had plenty of time to sense opposition, because after I'd once agreed -- and it took me several days after being asked before I could make up my mind -- they started going through the routine FBI checks and all that. And with the great number of people being cleared at that time, it took several weeks, well over a month -- they claimed it was a record speed, but it seemed awfully slow to me.

During that time the rumors got out in Japan, and there was a great hubbub in Japan over it with a certain amount of opposition from, let's say, conservative politicians and top businessmen who didn't feel that any professor, particularly one from Harvard, would be representative of the real United States. They

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were a little nervous about it because their own intellectuals tend to be somewhat unrealistic men sometimes and so they don't have a good picture of a university intellectual. The Japanese press was mostly very enthusiastic about the idea but kept waiting for the official announcement, and when it didn't come, they built this up into a tremendous story of a great fight in Washington. Of course, most people in Washington were completely unaware that there was any fight going on -- it was not that important in anybody's mind.

There were certain elements in the State Department, I think, that were rather reluctant to see a plum for the Foreign Service being given to an outsider. That was maybe one of the top jobs of that sort. And so I think there was definite opposition there. I didn't sense any particular opposition from Congress.

O'BRIEN: Do you remember anything about the meetings you had with President Kennedy before you departed?

REISCHAUER: Yes, I do. I remember all the meetings I had with him. We had a very good talk before I went about some of the problems in general. And every time I was back in Washington I was tremendously impressed with the fact that within a day or two of my arrival back there, he would have noticed that I was back through official communications of some sort and would ask to see me and would want to talk about things. And he talked about it with real information, and it gave one a real sense of contact with the President. And this was very helpful. I mean, he was a very well-informed and a very thoughtful man.

I mention this because Lyndon Johnson's style was so different. Unless I was to prepare him for a meeting with the, let's say, the prime minister from Japan or members of the Japanese cabinet, why, he had no interest in talking with me when I was back in Washington at all. He just didn't operate that way.

O'BRIEN: Well, do you remember the meeting that you had with Ambassador John Galbraith and Baldwin [Charles F. Baldwin]

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REISCHAUER: Yes, vaguely.

O'BRIEN: Can you remember any of the substance of that?

REISCHAUER: Oh no, I don't remember. That was a pretty pro forma thing, as I remember. I mean, it was just sort of an official laying on of hands, as it were. It was more of that kind of an affair than the President talking with each of us. No, that wasn't really substantive at all.

O'BRIEN: Did you suggest any other names to the Administration or the President as far as appointees as ambassadors or in any other capacity in the Foreign Service?

REISCHAUER: No, I didn't suggest other ambassadors. I did bring out some special people to the embassy later on. Chet Bowles told me how important it was to have my own personal staff aid, my own man. Well, I don't have people like that. But it occurred to me that what we really needed was a young officer with good contact with youth. And so I got myself a person of that sort. Before I left lined up somebody who I know had a real rapport with young Japanese, being not too different in age. He was at the time a graduate student at Harvard.

O'BRIEN: Who was that?

REISCHAUER: Ernie Young, Ernest Young. And this post was taken next by George Packard III when Young left, who was another awfully good person at that sort of thing. This turned out to be an extremely helpful addition to the embassy staff. I pressed for a top job for a person in the cultural field, and for several years we had Burton Fahs [Charles Burton Fahs], a former head of the humanities sections of the Rockefeller Foundation, as the only cultural minister the world has ever seen, I believe, because they've not continued that position. And so, in the American embassy in Tokyo, we had three ministers there for a while: the DCM [Deputy Chief of Mission], who was *the* minister; and an economic minister who they'd had for several

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years; and then also a cultural minister. There was an upgrading of the cultural side of things, which in terms of the relationship with Japan, th indeed for intellectual dialogue and something besides the rather crass economic on the one side and the unpopular military on the other side, was, I think, a very valuable thing. So I did have special people that way. And

then I knew many of the good officers in the Japanese field, specialists and Foreign Service officers. Several of them had been partly trained here at Harvard, having been sent here shortly after the war for training under me and so on. We brought these fellows back to Japan. So we had a very strong embassy.

O'BRIEN: Did you participate in any of these rather important meetings that took place here in Washington before you left regarding economic-political matters with Japan?

REISCHAUER: No, I didn't. I spent most of my time getting briefed. I mean, I had a lot to learn. And I went about it trying to be a model Foreign Service officer, in a way, because I knew I came in from the outside and there'd be obvious suspicions if not resentments against me. And I wasn't going to cut loose and innovate and flaunt my outsideness to these people. I wanted to be sure that we're all one team first. So I leaned over backwards to get myself trained in and approach it in their way. And when I landed in Japan, I must say, I went through all the formalities to a tee -- calling on all the ambassadors and all this sort of thing -- just to do it right in their way. And I think it paid off very well because I had a very, very loyal embassy.

O'BRIEN: What were your impressions of the briefings that you got? Did you find any differences or anything that you disagreed with in the briefings between the various agencies that you called on before you left?

REISCHAUER: No, I wouldn't think so. I mean, obviously there's a great difference in emphasis between the Treasury and Commerce and State Department on the

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economic side, and the difference in emphasis in the military people, but I was in the learning process there, and part of the thing I was learning was that things look different from different points of view. My view had always been, let's say, more like a State Department view. I saw things primarily from the political point of view, so these other things were interesting additions to my knowledge.

O'BRIEN: Now you departed for Japan when?

REISCHAUER: Oh, I think it was about the middle of April -- I think I got there either the 19th or the 23rd; I'm not sure of which date it was.

O'BRIEN: And then you came back with Prime Minister Ikeda [Hayato Ikeda].

REISCHAUER: And then I came back for the June meetings with Ikeda, yes.

O'BRIEN: Well, what about these meetings? What were your impressions of them -- the meetings with Ikeda?

REISCHAUER: The June meetings?

O'BRIEN: The June meetings, right, when you came back.

REISCHAUER: Well, this had all been set up before I got in and thought had already been given to the concept of trying to broaden the relationship with Japan by establishing a new cabinet-level economic conference on an annual basis between the two sides to stress the economic tie, so that the tie wouldn't seem so overwhelmingly military, as it always did to the Japanese public without great popularity for that side. We at the embassy also devised a concept of maybe broadening the focus a little bit more by adding a scientific committee, which has actually done a lot of very good things and has been quite useful, and a cultural committee, which has had less funds to work on and less of a clear focus and so it's been a little bit more pro forma, perhaps, in what it's achieved. But I think they've been useful strands in our

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relationship. And so these were ideas that would be an expansion of the American-Japanese relationship.

Well, Ikeda, turned out to be a really extraordinarily fine man -- I think a very sensible person who was following what he called the low posture, a process of educating his public and not pushing them. It was a concept of communications between leadership and public that was a little bit new in Japan. The older leadership was just too much inherited from the prewar days where there was more of a gap, and while he was a man of that generation, he had more sensitivity. And he was also a man of great integrity, and he and President Kennedy hit it off very well -- I mean, they were very much impressed by each other. And in subsequent meetings when we had the Cabinets going back and forth, why, there was obviously a tremendous respect both ways, and many American Cabinet members spoke of what an extraordinarily strong and fine group of leaders the Japanese were, because under Ikeda and Foreign Minister Ohira [Masayoshi Ohira] when he succeeded Mr. Kosaka [Zentaro Kosaka] -- who had been very fine himself but Ohira was an even stronger man -- why, you had a very, very good Japanese team. And I think we did establish a kind of relationship, certainly at the government level, such as had not existed before.

O'BRIEN: What did the three of you talk about when you met in that June series of meetings -- it must have been about June 20th or something like that.

REISCHAUER: It was something like that. Well, I went through many such meetings subsequently, you know, I mean between the President and the Prime

Minister, endless meetings of this sort. They tend to be, actually, at such a generalized level that for the specialist -- and an ambassador is always more of a specialist in his particular thing than a foreign minister or secretary of state let alone a president or prime minister -- for him it's a pretty dull, repetitious exchange of views. And one could maybe, as a scholar, say this is just all form and no content because it doesn't plow new ground. That's not correct at all. What's important there is the measuring of the two men of each other and the sense of confidence and respect that may be established. While both have been briefed on points of view that the governments at lower levels have

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exchanged so often -- there's no great unfamiliarity with what the other might say -- still, something very valuable is achieved.

O'BRIEN: Then they both emerged with a....

REISCHAUER: They emerged with a great respect for each other, yes. And this was true at the foreign minister levels when these meetings were held and so on.

O'BRIEN: What were you....

REISCHAUER: I was just going to contrast the first meeting between Johnson and Sato [Eisaku Sato], a later pair, with the Ikeda-Kennedy one. Here, again, they emerged -- much of their talk they did absolutely alone -- but they emerged clapping each other on the back. You could see in all their relations that they had great respect and admiration and, I think, almost affection for each other, but they were both very much professional politicians, in a way somewhat different from President Kennedy, who was a much more scholarly man, and Ikeda, who also had that kind of depth. And the kind of respect was for different things in the two cases.

O'BRIEN: What were your impressions at this point of the new Administration? How did you react to the way things were going?

REISCHAUER: Our Administration?

O'BRIEN: Right.

REISCHAUER: Well, if I hadn't been very enthusiastic for everything I'd heard about President Kennedy and the way he'd spoken about foreign policy problems and so on, why, I wouldn't have dreamed of taking the job. And I think if he hadn't put that phrase in his Inaugural address about, you know, what can you do for your country not what can your country do for you, I don't think my wife would have ever been won over -- that really pulled at her heart strings. And so we had a

tremendous sympathy and enthusiasm for him. And I was familiar enough with our general attitudes, and while I thought in the

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previous Administration maybe we had handled things poorly, I thought fundamentally we were on the right track, and with President Kennedy at the helm, I thought we were going to be even more on the right track or I wouldn't have gone into it. And I had no reason to change my views on this.

I learned details, perhaps, around the edges of the things, but I mean, it was somewhat I could embrace with enthusiasm, and insofar as I felt the emphases had not been quite right, I was, in a sense, given carte blanche to try to change the emphases. That's exactly what they'd chosen me for, to try to set up a different feel and a different kind of dialogue. And I had their encouragement, I thought, to do what I wanted there.

And I never consulted Washington on what seemed to me important, and that was mood building -- a mood and a feel in the relationship between Japan and America. As I remember it, I started the use of the word "partner" as opposed to the kinds of words we'd been using before to move from a relationship with a purely military kind of implication to something that had a broader implication. I began plugging that word until it finally became *the* word that everybody used. Things of this sort -- mood and feel -- seem to me to be the essence of diplomacy between two democracies, and I thought I had the right to do what I wanted on that as long as they kept approving, and they kept approving.

O'BRIEN: What did you see as the major problem areas in that transition period between Eisenhower [Dwight D. Eisenhower] and the Eisenhower Administration and the Kennedy Administration.

REISCHAUER: Well, we had an awful blow up, you know, over the ratification of the new security pact in the spring of '60. And this was over the fundamental problem which remains today and is at present at a real crisis state, and that is the tendency of the Japanese public as a whole to resent the relationship as one imposed by us on them and benefiting us and our evil foreign policies but not necessarily them and a feeling that it's a very unbalanced relationship with a huge America and a small powerless Japan that is forced to bend at America's will because of the need for trade with us and so on. I thought the main thing to do was to try to correct that feel, that understanding, because it's a very false understanding,

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and to try to make the relationship be more equal and seem more equal to them. And I worked hard, in that sense, to make America look smaller to them. It seemed too large to them, and so I took what would be called a low posture.

You know, in many parts of the world an ambassador feels it's his special task to beat the tom-tom for the United States and fly the flag high and make it visible. We're so overly

visible in most parts of the world, particularly Japan, it seemed better to try to seem less so and seem a little more humble and so on. And I think on the whole, with the great aid of the Kennedy image because there was such respect and affection and enthusiasm for President Kennedy on the part of the overwhelming majority of the Japanese, that the task was a fairly easy task. Things went definitely in that direction during those years.

O'BRIEN: What particular reservations did you have on the mutual security treat, or did you have any particular reservations, I should say, in regard to the arrangements?

REISCHAUER: I don't think I had any particular ones. I've always felt that we have to move fairly rapidly towards getting rid of any special privileges. In the long run, I think the bases should all be Japanese bases that they are letting us use. In the long run, they have to be responsible for any actions we take, responsible in advance. We cannot be utilizing their bases for things that seem good to us but which they have not committed themselves on. This puts the Japanese government and the Japanese people in a very strange relationship with each other, the government seeming to bow to America, which it doesn't do. I mean, we're doing what they want us to do, but they don't take the responsibility for it. And this is the position we're in now; this is unsound. We have to move in that direction. They weren't ready to do this in '61 when I went to Tokyo, but we needed to move in that direction.

I very quickly spotted Okinawa as being the great rock lying in the path ahead of us which we were going to crash on it if we didn't get it out of the way before we'd gotten to that point. The point is when the Japanese public as a whole becomes nationalistically aroused over close to a million Japanese still living

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under American military rule. And it was perfectly predictable at that time that there was going to be a problem some day, and fairly soon.

And so I spent a good bit of my time trying to, first of all, improve the situation in Okinawa, which was very bad. It was really a military dictatorship of a rather unenlightened type there under General Caraway [Paul W. Caraway], who, while a very humorous and clever man, was politically as unschooled and unsophisticated as they come and was doing everything to infuriate the local population and therefore exacerbate the situation without realizing the terrible mistakes he was making.

Well, I first tried to do things to improve the immediate pressures, because at that time the pressure was only in Okinawa, it had not really started in Japan itself, and to also educate the American government and particularly the American military, on the need to get ready to move on this so that we could avoid it before the crisis period now that it's here. But this is still to be seen at the present moment, and we still might flub on this one.

In this connection let me just point out something that might be interesting, and that is my special connection with Bobby Kennedy, and through Bobby Kennedy with the President. This turned out to be the most important connection I had.

O'BRIEN: Did this come out of the '62 visit of Bobby?

REISCHAUER: He came in January '62.

O'BRIEN: Right.

REISCHAUER: And the visit itself was a fascinating, amusing one, all in its own way. It was a hectically busy one, but as it was drawing near the close, I said to the Attorney General -- which he was then -- could I have fifteen minutes of his time all alone to talk about a few important matters not to do with his visit but of other things. So we reserved fifteen minutes just before we drove him to the airport and he took off; it was that kind of scheduling that this whole visit had. And during those fifteen minutes, I outlined the Okinawa problem, what we would have to begin doing about it, and one or two other problems which I don't really remember now.

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And he had hardly gotten back to Washington before action began on all of these. He wrote it down in his little black book. The important thing, really, was that he'd developed confidence in me by that time. And then we'd contact...

O'BRIEN: Well, what did you suggest to him at that point?

REISCHAEUR: Well, there were certain specific things we had to begin to do about changing the situation in Okinawa. And I think if you look back at the record of what happened in the next few months, you begin to see some of the things that came out. I can't really outline them all to you now. And he drew his brother's attention to it and pushed on the thing, and we began to move on these specific things there. From then on I always had a very close relationship to the Attorney General, and I always saw him when I was back in Washington. And if I really had something that I just had to get to the President, you know, and that we had to get to work on, I could always do it that way, which was extremely useful.

O'BRIEN: Was this your most important channel directly to the President?

REISCHAUER: I think it was the most important channel, yes.

O'BRIEN: Did you have any other channels?

REISCHAUER: I did not try to utilize other ones. otherwise I had my visits with him when I was back there, and I had a chance to talk that way. I certainly did not try to bypass the State Department, and I was fairly chary and sparing in sending personal messages because, you know, if you cry wolf too often, why,

then they don't pay much attention to it. And so I found that by only every once in a while getting something I thought was important and slugging it with some term like "eyes only" -- I'd just say "eyes only" and then everybody would want to read it, you know -- why in this way I could get very, very good attention for important points when I thought there was really something important that had to be communicated rapidly. But that would be just through the regular

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channels. You know, the White House gets all this stuff, and when they see these particular slugs on it, why, they pay attention to it.

O'BRIEN: Well, back to the mutual security treaty. Did the elections of '60 resolve any of the differences, the political differences, in Japan?

REISCHAUER: No, no, not essentially. I mean, people misunderstand these things badly. Japan seemed terribly unstable during those riots in the spring of '60, and then everybody's surprised to see that the election that took place a couple of months later turned out to be almost like the last election; nothing had changed. Well, the point is the most of the Japanese weren't in on the riots. It's the rest of Japan that does the election for the most part. They were wondering what all these crazy kids were doing in the city. And they were voting, in the ways they had in the past, for the people they knew locally and had confidence in, who had delivered economically, you know, and not on the basis of foreign policy.

The same misreading of elections occurred in the latest election when Prime Minister Sato again came through with a majority in January 1967. Everybody said, "Ah, a great victory for the policy of friendship with America." It wasn't that at all. The conservatives had, for grass-roots economic reasons, the majority of the vote. These people are voting for that on foreign policy and the relationship with America," it would come up very differently, you see.

I'm afraid without the secretary here, I'm going to have to take the phone.

O'BRIEN: That's quite all right.

[INTERRUPTION]

O'BRIEN: What's the State Department interested in at this point in the way of -- well, at the time that you'd become the Ambassador -- in the way of internal and domestic Japanese politics? Are they concerned or why the....

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REISCHAUER: Of course one's concerned here; the State Department's concerned. We

all are concerned because you have in the majority, the Liberal Democratic Party, a party that in its upper political reaches -- I'm not saying its grass-roots voting support necessarily, but its upper reaches -- is strongly committed to the relationship with America, which takes the heavy burdens of rearmament off of them, and is wise for them not only economically but also politically, and as long as this party is in power, this commitment, this relationship, will remain; whereas most of the opposition parties -- and there are a number of them -- are in one way or another committed to trying to reduce that relationship or ending it immediately, and to end it immediately would, of course, be, I think, a disaster for Japan, and, in a sense, a disaster for us, too, because we would obviously have to give up most of the efforts to have any influence in that part of the world if the Japanese were not cooperative with us. So we are interested in Japanese domestic results.

I took it as my particular mission to try to help communicate with those who were against the American-Japanese relationship and educate them to see the problem in a better way so they would not be so much against it. And this is what I was working on primarily, and I think we had a certain amount of success in that. I think that there was a definite toning down of their views on these things during those years. But whatever ground we made during the period 1961-65 has subsequently been lost with the heating up of the Vietnam war. I mean, when we got really involved there, then this gave such a picture of an America that might be just inevitably militaristic and aggressive, as in the Marxist interpretation, that it was really hazardous to be associated with us, as the leftists maintained.

O'BRIEN: Well, during '61, during those first months of '61, there was, of course, the Laotian crisis was coming to a head, and it was also the Bay of Pigs incident. How did the Japanese read these?

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REISCHAUER: Well, the Laotian crisis I can't remember as having been that much of a problem in their minds, in the public mind, I mean. The government, obviously, worried about all these things. The Bay of Pigs, of course, was pretty upsetting to Japanese who worry about foreign policy, and the more unfriendly elements obviously had other reasons for being critical of the United States, and it was a very embarrassing time. It was somewhere along that time that we went back to nuclear testing again, and something like that actually caused a bigger explosion because they're very sensitive to nuclear matters of that sort. And so there were many incidents. Then as Vietnam began to build up, why, that began to be a very major element.

All along another very major element was the supposed American hostility towards China. And containment in Japan is usually translated with a term that I feel really means something more like "bottling up," as though it were an aggressive act rather than the prevention of their being aggressive, which is what I would understand containment to mean. So I had a lot of talk about how containment was really being misunderstood, that it was just simply a term for a worldwide policy against aggression which most people would share.

And I think maybe China policy, that and the nuclear one, would probably loom larger in the Japanese mind than even Cuba.

O'BRIEN: Well, how about the Berlin crisis, too? Of course, it's occurring here and sort of heating up U.S.-Soviet relations.

REISCHAUER: Yes. Well, of course, this has a less clear-cut impact. It makes them all nervous and worried, but they react in different ways, blaming different people. It isn't, you know, something that you can just unequivocally blame America for, as you can for, let's say, an unsuccessful China policy. And oddly enough, nuclear problems almost always were completely blamed on America; they just simply overlooked the Soviet side of it.

O'BRIEN: What was the response of the visit of -- Soviet Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan came, as I recall, shortly after that, didn't he?

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REISCHAUER: Yes, that's right.

O'BRIEN: The Berlin crisis was going on?

REISCHAUER: Yes. Well, of course, you know that the Japanese government itself, particularly at that time, was still very strained in its attitude towards the Soviet Union. Since then the Sino-Soviet split has become so great that the Russians have been very friendly towards Japan. The relationship is much relaxed between them as a result, but at that time it was pretty hostile to Russia -- I use the word Russia rather than the Soviet Union since it's an old historic hostility. And I remember there was great nervousness about somebody perhaps trying to do something terrible to Mikoyan. I think when he went down to Kyoto they had to have a policeman something like every thirty paces along the railroad track facing out to make sure that the track was safe, you know. Precautions of this sort were taken, showing that they felt pretty tense about it. Actually, nothing really happened.

O'BRIEN: He really didn't have much of an impact then on the Japanese Left at all, the attitudes?

REISCHAUER: Not much, no. One of the greatest weakness of the Left is that the image of being part of an international movement makes it seem less authentically Japanese. I think the Japanese Communists have finally gotten over that and they're doing rather well now, but that's by making it quite clear that they're almost hostile to both China and the Soviet Union.

O'BRIEN: Was there any real development of a fear as a result of this, the Berlin

crisis and the part of the pacifists, neural zones in Japanese political thought, political parties, in regard to possible, well, the possibility of a war?

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REISCHAUER: Oh, well, the Japanese have been pacifists, or let's say just the intellectuals in general have been terrible alarmists all along. If you read back over what they're writing, then the world is about to come to an end at almost any moment over some catastrophe, and so obviously a Berlin crisis or anything like that produces a lot more of this kind of apocalyptic writing and encourages their nervousness.

O'BRIEN: In regard to some of the meetings that took place here on economic matters, was there anything in there, in any of these meetings, that you feel was unusual and more than just perhaps the normal economic matters that are negotiated and vague relations?

REISCHAUER: Well, you don't really negotiate at meetings like this. Even though there's a group of people talking, it's an exchange of views that are well known to the staffs. I think it was of value that they had a lot of counterpart luncheons and counterpart activities, that is, the Secretary of the Treasury and the Minister of Finance would have their talks and Commerce men would get together and they would establish these relations of respect and familiarity that would be useful. And occasionally there might be an exchange that had some real content and value to it.

I looked upon these meetings as very good exercise for a different reason. I mean, I think they're primarily set up for the visible effects on it, the images created. Now America and Japan share a tremendous trade and economic interest, and the meetings symbolize this and draw public attention to it in this way, and this is extremely useful. But beyond that, they had the value of getting a large part of the American Cabinet every year to think for three days about Japan, which, not being a crisis area, they'd usually not think about in 365 days of the year. And they'd all, especially when they came to Japan, would be terribly impressed and really interested. And it was very important educationally, because one of the weakness in American-Japanese relations is that Americans, instead of seeing Japan as too big, see it as too little. You know, the famous figure of

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looking across the Pacific through a telescope, they looking through the small end and seeing us very big and we looking through the big end and seeing them very small. And so it had a very good value in this way. And many of them developed a real enthusiasm for Japan in various ways, which was all to the good in American-Japanese relations.

Over the years, I saw several of these meetings -- how many, altogether about five, I guess -- and it was very interesting to see the shift in content and mood. The first one was

attended with great nervousness and stiffness. There's always tremendous Japanese newspaper interest, public media interest, and of course, the public media are just huge and tremendously important -- I think proportionately more so than in any other country -- and they're awfully good. And there was, with all this public glare, a lot of nervousness about this kind of meeting, and they were very insistent that they shouldn't get out of the safe area of economics.

Well, with each year, the mood became more relaxed, and the dialogue more meaningful, the discussions broader, and both sides began to be bored with just economics. They wanted to talk about the real problems, strategy and so on. And by the last year I was there, it was, you know, quite free and easy in that they would get out of the narrowly economic sphere and talk about bigger things, which showed a very real advance from the extreme nervousness of the relationship as of '61.

O'BRIEN: In regard to Robert Kennedy's visit in '62 when he came through, was this more than just a kind of good will mission? Did he have any substantial talks?

REISCHAUER: Well, I think a lot of it was just educational for him, and again, since he was a very important man, a sort of deputy President in the sense that he was so close to the President, it was important to get the personal relationships established there. He did all of that, but he was really more interested in meeting with the public. The thing that I really made my major objective was public speaking and contact and writing and influencing the public image of the

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United States, of the U.S.-Japanese relationship, and he was interested in that too and threw himself into it with great enthusiasm and the elan of youth and this type of thing was very much there. And so he had an absolutely whirlwind program, jammed from morning to night.

I remember we had been warned that he was a man that was very vigorous and wanted that kind of a program and to be sure to give him a really big one. So we drew him up a tremendous program, every minute occupied till 10 o'clock at night, and he wired back, "Program looks fine. What do I do from 6 to 8 a.m.?" So we put on that, too. He skated with workers, 6 to 8 a.m., and met youth groups and participated in judo matches and so on. So he was going from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. and he had to take three days rest in Hong Kong when he got through.

Well, he established these relations that were very valuable and educated himself in a way the President himself on Japan (but this was almost as good) and also had a tremendous impact on the Japanese image of the United States, partly through the spectacular incident at Waseda University. There was a big opposition to his visit there, and we ran into a huge crowd and were told we shouldn't go, but we decided at the last minute that that would look bad to back out of it. And our two wives went along with us because we thought it was safer for all of us for them to be with us than for him and me to go alone. And we went and

shouldered our way through this vast throng. I kept wondering what would happen if somebody fell down and got trampled to death.

Then we got into the auditorium, and it was just pandemonium. I'd never seen anything like it. The speaking systems were pulled out, and in order to try to do something, he invited one of the hecklers to come and talk with him. And the guy turned out to be a real hard-core communist type and ranted and shouted, you know, and Bobby, by contrast, was reasonable and calm and did very well. And it went so well in the building that it sort of all ended up with everybody singing the school song for him. And then I nudged him and said, "Let's get out of here while we're ahead." And we fortunately had a rear entrance that we could get out. We had that to fall back on and did slip out.

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So it had gone pretty well in the building, but what had happened was that it was live and came through perfectly on television. The Japanese nation saw this whole unrehearsed play, as it were, with the ranting young radical student and the calm and reasonable young political leader from America, and it made a tremendous impression. And after that, you know, it was just a smashing success. So the thing worked out very well, and that's the way, too....

O'BRIEN: Well, he had a way of handling large crowds, didn't he?

REISCHAUER: Yes, and this was, I think, maybe the most spectacularly successful, because the television appearance was just a smash hit and hit the whole nation, you see.

O'BRIEN: Well, passing over to some military matters...

REISCHAUER: Ah, there's the real problem area.

O'BRIEN: I expected it would be. Well, there are a number of things. What about the sale of the Nike-Ajax missiles, the installation of these things, as I understand, around Tokyo? How did you approach...

REISCHAUER: Well, you have the BADGE, that is the "basic air defense ground environment," a big electronics system of vast cost and things of this sort. Well, these get into very, very technical matters. The Left views all this with great alarm and always criticizes it. There's pressure from the American side because there's a certain amount of gold flow problem involved, you know. This is a good way to help that. In fact, we always were getting pressures from the Treasury and the Pentagon to try to sell hardware to Japan -- and annual groups would come out to do this. But that's the last thing to do in Japan because you just get the Japanese backs up against this. They don't want to be forced into buying hardware, and this is the worst way to try to get

them to cooperate in our gold flow problem. And so you'd have to beat down this group each year, and I usually managed to get them to be fairly silent

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and give up even before they started once they got to Japan even though I couldn't keep them from coming out to Japan. So there was a lot of problems of this sort. But the Japanese self-defense forces knew that they wanted certain things. The Japanese government made its own decisions. These things were worked out quite amicably with a certain amount of static from the Left criticizing the whole thing, but it didn't turn out to be major problems in that way.

The much more fundamental problem I ran into on the military side was the fact that you had United States Forces, Japan, with forty-five thousand men in uniform and a total American population of around a hundred thousand which was, in a sense, the direct inheritors of the American occupation and, therefore, loomed in the Japanese mind as being very important and probably vastly more important than the American embassy in representing the real America in a way. And many people maybe were all the more prejudiced in this view because when I came out as an ambassador, a professor, this made the American Embassy, perhaps, seem even less the real spokesman for the United States.

Well, the Kennedy Administration was very strong on trying to get all the foreign establishments abroad under the control of the embassies and unified, so we all had strong mandates written out for this. And I looked upon this as being one of the most important things to do -- to be sure that we were all talking with one voice and were coordinating properly. There's a long tradition, I think, of rivalry between the State Department and military -- at least -- there are elements on both sides that like to tweak each others' tails, as it were, and catch each other off base and this kind of thing, which isn't a useful attitude at all.

I was very fortunate in having extremely fine people as Commander in Chiefs, United States Forces, Japan -- Jake Smart [Jacob E. Smart] during most of my first two years and Moe Preston [Maurice A. Preston] the next two years. You couldn't have found finer people. And we established complete confidence and respect for each other, and I think I in both cases managed to convince them that our more sophisticated political view of the situation was correct and was in their interests, and we got absolutely magnificent cooperation. And we established.... And they did their best to back us up in any stand we took, and we always were very sure that we were coordinated with the same view of

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things. And it was very impressive back in Washington that both U.S. Forces, Japan, and the American embassy were coming in on the same wave length.

O'BRIEN: Were there any particular instances, particularly early, that you didn't come in on the same wave lengths?

REISCHAUER: Didn't come in on the same wave lengths?

O'BRIEN: Right.

REISCHAUER: Well, no, I can't remember any real problems there. There had been a history of this sort of thing, but I can't remember any real crisis in the early time before we'd established this relationship. Now, where there was real trouble was over Okinawa, which politically was a tremendous headache for us in Japan but was in no way anything we had any direct influence over. In fact, the people down in Okinawa often looked upon us as being an ally of the enemy, the enemy being the Japanese government, and the American embassy up there having sort of sold out to the enemy from their point of view. This would be the Caraway point of view, and practically, you had to, first of all, convince them that you were loyal Americans and not fools. But even then, it was a very difficult thing, and the real trouble in relationships was back in Washington across the Potomac River, and that's sometimes a very wide body of water, you know. So it was very hard to get good coordination there.

For instance, in those early years the policy was to try to minimize Japanese economic aid to Okinawa because if the Japanese had as much as one-third or one-half -- I forget which; it was probably a sliding scale as much economic aid as we had, we would lose face in Okinawa. So we would try to beat down their offers of aid and keep them low, and there was a ceiling put on how much aid they could give the Okinawans. This is absolute folly, you know. In the long run, we fortunately got away from that until we were trying to persuade them to give more money rather than keep it down, and their aid was many times as large as ours by the time I left.

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Well, there were many serious problems, and Bobby Kennedy's connection with the President was very useful in solving some of these, and bit by bit, we moved to a more sensible position. In particular, we got very good commanders down there.

O'BRIEN: But the Pentagon has never really given up the idea that Okinawa is necessary, have they, for America defensively.

REISCHAUER: Well, I think that they have given up -- we will see this in the next few months -- the idea that it has to be American territory. Their argument -- and this is the one that I always tried to educate them on -- was that we might someday lose our bases in Japan, so we just tried to have complete control over the bases in Okinawa. I tried to convince them they had it backwards, that if we lost our right to bases in Japan, it would probably be because we had not given up Okinawa. And if we got in this situation with the Japanese in which we no longer had bases in Japan, why then our base in Okinawa wouldn't be worth a damn anyway because 960,000 Japanese there would make that an absolutely useless base because of hostile feelings and so on. And so it was either bases in both Japan and Okinawa or neither. And I think they've come to accept this one now, that you just have to return it. But I think that they feel that it's militarily necessary to

have bases there, and I'd agree with them that it is still a desirable place to have a base. And I think that's what we'll have.

O'BRIEN: Well, you had a couple problems, though, that came up in those years in regard to -- well, nuclear weapons and nuclear submarines is one. General O'Donnell [Emmett O'Donnell, Jr.], I think, made some kind of premature announcement, or an announcement. Airplanes on some of the bases, as I recall, were armed with nuclear weapons. Was that in '62, or was there ever any reaction to that?

REISCHAUER: You've been looking at the materials more recently than I have. I don't remember that particular one. There were various flaps of various sorts. Our airplanes were not armed with nuclear weapons.

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O'BRIEN: There were no nuclear weapons in Japan on our part.

REISCHAUER: No. We were very careful to live up to our agreement in the 1960 treaty that we would not introduce nuclear weapons into Japan without consultation with the Japanese government, and we did not introduce them.

The problems came up largely then -- and there were flaps of various kinds and misunderstandings often -- the problem came up largely over nuclear-powered submarines, which is a different story because these are not nuclear weapons. [And this.... Gee, I don't know when -- at this point I'm a little bit dubious about when this is to be released or something like that, but maybe in 1975 is adequate for it.]

We had all along asked them from time to time to let us bring in our nuclear-powered submarines because these were part of the Seventh Fleet, and it's only reasonable that the special restrictions shouldn't apply to them. It wasn't a problem of introducing nuclear weapons into Japan. We also realized the Japanese would have to have nuclear powered ships sometime. And at the same time we'd always realized the great sensitivity in Japan to nuclear problems in general, and so we never pushed at all. We never insisted, but we asked them from time to time.

And after a visit back to Washington, talking with the Navy and so on, I said, why, I'd give it another try and maybe it was time to ask them again to see how they felt about it. And I went back and did ask the foreign minister as to what he felt about it. Instead of giving the routine reply we had always had: "Oh, we understand your point of view, but, you know, it's so delicate and difficult here, I hope you will not really ask us to do this," instead of giving that normal reply he said, "Very interesting. Let me think about it."

And then about two weeks later in the press I read an announcement that I had asked him that we be allowed to bring in nuclear submarines. What had happened was that he and Ikeda had decided that really Japan would have to move into the nuclear age in terms of power, not weapons. They couldn't go on being silly about things in this way because they wanted to build a nuclear ship, and they ought to make progress in that direction, maybe

ought to try, you know, bringing in nuclear submarines and nuclear-powered ships as a step in that direction. It was their decision, not ours, in that way.

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And it took over a year of the most delicate negotiations, you know, to assure that the things were safe and so on. We can't give out all our secrets about our nuclear submarines, and yet their scientists had to somehow, you know, be able to assure the Japanese public and government that it was safe. And so you had a lot of technical problems, and there were endless negotiations of this sort till we finally got an agreement that it'd be all right, and even then we brought them in with the greatest caution.

O'BRIEN: That announcement was a sort of trial balloon, then.

REISCHAUER: It was a trial balloon, except that once the trial balloon went up then you had to really eventually engage in flight. You couldn't really back away from it any more. No, it means that the die had been cast in their minds to go in this direction. But we didn't push them on it at all. We waited, you know, because they had a real problem that we were perfectly aware of.

And when finally the time came, we were awfully cautious to be sure that any submarine would come in at a time of no particular political sensitivity. We'd avoid any difficult times, and I always reserved the right to cancel it up to within twenty-four hours of actual entry. We gave them twenty-four hour notice -- that's all they wanted so it wouldn't get out in the public too soon. But once we'd given the official notice it was coming in, well, then the die was cast. But that was only twenty-four hours before the thing came in.

O'BRIEN: And a lot depended on the domestic...

REISCHAUER: And if there was any reason -- elections or anything else that was sensitive -- we most certainly weren't bringing in nuclear submarines.

O'BRIEN: How about the.... As I understand it, there were some troops sent directly from Japan to Thailand in 1962, you know, when the Laotian crisis there was.... How did the Japanese react to that?

REISCHAUER: Well, I guess my memory is not so good on this anymore. I don't remember. I don't remember that. I

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don't remember that as being a particular incident. We always were very cautious to try to be sure that there wasn't any direct use of their bases for combat purposes, so even when planes would move from Japan down to the Vietnam or Laos area or anything like that, they had the routine procedure of touching down somewhere else so they

weren't making a direct flight from Japan into what was a combat zone, let alone a bombing mission or anything like that. Of course, this nervousness is now applied, you know, to Okinawa, where theoretically we have the right to do anything, but when they bomb directly from Okinawa, then there's a great deal of static and difficulty.

O'BRIEN: Yes, well, apparently this reconnaissance plane came from a Japanese base, didn't it, as I recall?

REISCHAUER: Yes. You could hardly say that it was going consciously into combat. No, I mean reconnaissance planes have obviously flown out of Japan for a long, long time.

O'BRIEN: But that is an issue with the Japanese...

REISCHAUER: Right now it is. Right now it is because it was shot down and, therefore, it did seem like it was in combat, And it's this kind of thing that I think the Japanese have to realize that they should take responsibility for. Either intelligence in the Sea of Japan is of value to Japan or else it isn't. If it isn't of value to Japan, I don't know why it's of value to us, frankly, but.... So they'd better make up their minds on it.

O'BRIEN: Well, passing over to Japanese-Chinese relations, or relations with the two Chinas during your tenure as Ambassador, what were you advising Washington in regard to China policy at this point?

REISCHAUER: Well, I've always been for, you know, a change of stance and making it quite clear that we recognize their existence and would like to have better relationships. During these years I doubt if I sent in many strong statements about this.

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When Chet Bowles at first asked me to take the job he made it sound all the more glamorous by saying that they wanted me as sort of a super ambassador for the region to advise on the whole area and all this kind of thing. But as I described earlier, I had this go slow policy, and I wanted to be sure that I had my feet on the ground in the Foreign Service and the embassy before I began to do too much, so I didn't begin giving gratuitous advice about all parts of the world right away. And I very quickly sensed what the situation is: there's nothing more resented by other ambassadors than somebody else telling them what should be done in their country. This would have been the best way to cut my throat in the whole Foreign Service establishment of the State Department as just being another fool outsider that didn't know how things should operate.

And so I backed away from that quite consciously, and particularly with areas like Korea about which I knew a great deal and did have strong views. I held back because I

could see the dangers of really bad relationship between Embassy Tokyo and Embassy Seoul if I tried to get in on these things, and so I didn't. I don't think except in terms of how it affected Japanese policy that I really did weigh in on it in those years. Before I left the embassy -- and this is '66 -- I did send in a series of statements about the general situation and all that in order to make it quite clear -- to sort of clear my conscience, as it were -- that once I was a free man again, I'd be talking about all subjects quite freely.

O'BRIEN: Well, how did the conservatives feel about the U.S. positions on China? Of course, they followed the U.S. stance. Were they convinced that this was a good policy, in your contact with them?

REISCHAUER: I think fundamentally, they're with us, and particularly today, they're caught on exactly the same thing. They have this problem of how can you be friends with both Taiwan and China. And Taiwan is very important to them. They do almost as much trade with Taiwan as they do with China, and back at this time they were trading with Taiwan and weren't trading with the mainland to any appreciable extent. So they were rather hung up on that one. And so I think there was a great deal of sympathy on the part of the conservatives, at

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least the more conservative element of the government party, with our position. But they always found it useful to make it seem that really they disapproved but were more or less forced to go along. This is the posture they've always taken.

The public as a whole quite honestly and freely blamed us for having somehow ruined the relationship with China for them as well as ourselves. They felt it was our hostility that lay at the bottom of the problem. I did my best to try to give them a different view of that, perhaps partly reading in my own point of view.

My real problem was in public debate on a question like this because I was asked questions on all sorts of things, and obviously on China policy, and I prided myself on never falling back on the diplomat's "no comment" routine because I'd been accepted by them as being something special, being a scholar as well as a diplomat, and this image was valuable in my job and valuable to me personally. I mean, a guy can't keep that one up by going around saying "no comment" all the time.

So on this China one I handled it in the following way: I'd say, "Well, there are different views on China as to how to best handle this problem of the hostility that exists between the Chinese and others. Now, I know you in Japan often feel that the more contacts there are the more the trade, the more of this and all that sort of thing, the more chance we have of establishing better relations. And I certainly can understand this point of view; this is certainly one approach. The American government has taken the view that perhaps the west way is not to trade with China because this would perhaps keep it from moving ahead economically as fast as it might otherwise do and this would then mean that it would not have as much of a potential for aggression and therefore might, in that way, be brought back into world society." Well, I didn't go on to say, "And of the two points of view, I think yours

is by far the better." I didn't say that, but I could clear it with my own conscience by just pointing out the two different views in trying to face the same problem.

O'BRIEN: Well, during those years, Chinese-Japanese well, mainland Chinese and Japanese relations, they prepared a trade agreement, quite a bit better than barter trade and...

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REISCHAUER: What did we do about that?

O'BRIEN: How did we view those things? How did we react to those things?

REISCHAUER: It is generally assumed in Japan -- and, I think, often in this country -- that we've done everything that we could to discourage trade between Japan and China. This is not true at all. We did, and now probably still do, urge them not to have terms of credit that would amount to aid because insofar as they can extend aid, they'd probably be better off extending it to Korea, South Korea, and India and other more friendly countries. Well, it seems sensible to us to do it that way, but we never want beyond that statement and the assumption that they would live by the restrictions on sensitive, on strategic goods, which they've lived by very, very closely. We did not urge them not to trade.

This came up in a rather spectacular way in connection with Mr. Ohara [Soichiro Ohara], the very fine president of Kurashiki Rayon Company and also a great patron of the arts, who felt that he had been approached by our consul general in the Kobe-Osaka area and severely reprimanded for having agreed to build a rayon plant or some sort of plant...

O'BRIEN: Vinylon, I think.

REISCHAUER: What?

O'BRIEN: Was it vinylon?

REISCHAUER: Vinylon. *Biniiru*, the Japanese call it. This bothered Hara so much that he asked to see me. And I said I'd be very happy to see him. And I told him that I didn't think that our consul general could have meant that because this is not our policy to try to discourage them from what is a perfectly normal commercial deal of this sort, quite the contrary, and I personally understood perfectly well -- and we were personal friends, in -- and I think I set his worries at rest on that point. This illustrates that we did not do the sort of thing that is assumed that we did.

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Now, many of the Japanese conservatives are so sensitive to how American businessmen, who are important to them, might view their relationship with China that they build this up in their own minds as something very important, but it isn't because of official stands we've taken.

O'BRIEN: Did you take any official or unofficial stands in regard to the Liao [Ch'eng-Chih-Tatsunosuke] agreements in '62?

REISCHAUER: No, no, never. And what we said in private to the government was exactly what I said in public. I said in public many times, you know, that we could see that terms that amounted to aid wouldn't seem to us in Japan's advantage in terms of the limited amount of credit they could give. Nothing more, and that's all we ever said in private either.

O'BRIEN: What's the overall impact of this on Taiwan?

REISCHAUER: Well, actually, the impact mostly was from Taiwan on Japan. I'm not sure if Taiwan ever complained that we didn't take a stronger stand on this in Japan. My relations with the Taiwanese ambassadors were always very good, and I never had any contact or, you know, any complaint or anything of that sort, and they knew perfectly well what I was saying. But they themselves, of course, kept intimating to the Japanese that if the Japanese didn't watch their step that Taiwan would cut off trade with them and things of that sort. And this forced, at one time, the Japanese to resort to old ex-Prime Minister Yoshida [Shigeru Yoshida] to send another Yoshida letter -- there'd been an earlier one in history, and this one, as I remember, was '64 or something like that -- it was a promise that they would not extend certain kinds of aid, I mean, certain types of credit. But this was done purely because of Taiwanese pressure and had nothing to do with us.

O'BRIEN: Well, during the time that you were Ambassador there, both during the Kennedy and Johnson years, things got considerably better in the way of relations between Korea and Japan. How did this come about?

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REISCHAUER: This was done primarily by them. I mean, it was known to them that both our embassy in Korea and our embassy in Tokyo and the government in Washington were all for an improvement of Japanese-Korean relations, and we honestly advised that they should -- in their mutual interests -- do this all the time. But we were very careful to try to stay out of it and not get involved in the negotiation or direct pressure. This is the major reason I never went to Korea during all the years I was ambassador there, though I would have loved to go and everybody from Korea kept coming over and staying with us -- you know, they naturally go through Japan in any case -- there wasn't any problem there. But I had so many friends and contacts

there that I just felt I couldn't get over there without it seeming as though I was somehow getting in Japanese-Korean negotiations.

So I stayed strictly away from it, but the Korean ambassador always was coming to me and taking with me about it, partly to get encouragement and reassurance that the Japanese were sincere in wanting to do it. And I advised both sides just personally, but I always made the point in public and still more in private that any deal was to their mutual advantage. The Koreans I urged not to be too sticky on their demands on fish, because I said the difference in the wage levels is such that eventually the Koreans will catch all the fish anyhow. I mean, that's one area in which they are going to undercut the Japanese, even in the mutual zones, you see, once they'd gotten themselves technologically abreast of them (which they'll do) and that the major thing was to get this agreement so that there was an easy flow of funds and economic relationships. So I urged them as a friend, but refused completely to have anything to do with negotiations in any way.

O'BRIEN: Did you ever get involved with refugee problems or anything of this sort?

REISCHAUER: No. You mean Korean?

O'BRIEN: Right. And, you know...

REISCHAUER: The return of the Koreans to their...

O'BRIEN: Right.

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REISCHAUER: No, no. This was something purely between them, and it was not proper for us to get involved and.... No, we leaned over backwards not to get involved in these ways.

O'BRIEN: I did notice you looking at your watch. Do you have an appointment?

REISCHAUER: Well, I've got somebody here that's representing the Japanese Embassy that has a special reason to see me for fifteen minutes, and I've got a 4 o'clock something, and I thought we might have time, so I told him to come and wait for me here.

O'BRIEN: Ah, well, that's pretty important.

REISCHAUER: What are we going to do?

O'BRIEN: Well, I have about a half an hour.

REISCHAUER: More?

O'BRIEN: More. Is there some time that...

REISCHAUER: I'm afraid I miscalculated on this.

O'BRIEN: Oh, that's quite all right. I...

REISCHAUER: Because I've got to go to this meeting by 4 o'clock anyhow.

O'BRIEN: Right.

REISCHAUER: A trustees' meeting.

O'BRIEN: That's pretty important.

REISCHAUER: Yes, that's important. Could I see you later this evening? Are you in here?

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O'BRIEN: Yes, if it isn't going to be inconvenient for you...

REISCHAUER: That meeting is.... Look, could you look me up in the Faculty Club?

O'BRIEN: Sure.

REISCHAUER: I'm going to be eating dinner there at the end of the meeting, and it may be over at that time, at about 8 o'clock or earlier maybe.

O'BRIEN: Right. Well, if it's not inconvenient for you...

REISCHAUER: Could we get a date to meet down in the lobby at some specific time, and I'll come down to see how we're doing -- if you're still planning to, if that wouldn't be too inconvenient for you -- and maybe shut ourselves up somewhere, and then we could get the full half hour.

O'BRIEN: Okay.

REISCHAUER: Because I wouldn't have an half an hour now.

O'BRIEN: What would be a convenient time to you?

REISCHAUER: Why don't I say that at 7:30 I'll tell you what it is, what the situation

is.

O'BRIEN: 7:30, fine. And I can meet you in the Faculty Club there.

REISCHAUER: There's a library there. I'll go down at 7:30 and look for you then.

O'BRIEN: Oh, good. Well, thanks.

[INTERRUPTION]

O'BRIEN: When we left off about 3:30 or 4:00, we were talking in terms of U.S.-Korean relations, U.S.-Japanese-Korean relations.

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REISCHAUER: Well, I'm not sure if I had much to add on that because the main point I was making was that we were terribly sympathetic to it all but were being very careful not to get in their way and get involved in the negotiation in any substantive way whatsoever, or even to seem to put too much pressure on them. I always put it in terms -- in public even -- I always said that, I felt strongly that it's in Japan's interest and Korea's interest, everybody's interest for this to happen, but this is obviously something the Japanese and Koreans have to work out between them. Nobody else can do anything about it for them.

There's just one little side thing that might be of interest. The Koreans were terribly anxious and ambitious to get an international body -- the thing that later on came to be known as ASPAC [Asian and Pacific Council] -- and they wanted to invite the various countries to come. And I think somebody -- it was maybe the foreign minister; I can't remember whether it was he or the Korean ambassador in Japan -- came to talk to me one day (had lunch, too, with me) about it. And I said, "If you should call such a meeting and the Japanese wouldn't come this would be quite meaningless as a gathering of states. And yet, obviously, the Japanese won't come until you've finally completed the negotiation. I think, my general feel of the situation is that once you've gotten that worked out and your relations normalized, the Japanese will answer such an invitation. If I were you, I'd wait until that time before I issue it."

And that's what they did, finally. They waited, and they invited the Japanese, and the Japanese came, and it was a big success. In that sense, you know, I gave gratuitous advice, but we certainly didn't get in on anything otherwise.

O'BRIEN: In regard to Southeast Asia, Japan, of course, during, well, actually before the Kennedy years, began to move into Southeast Asia with regard to the settling of some of the peace treaties and reparations problems and things of that sort. How did the U.S. view this?

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REISCHAUER: Well, most of the reparations thing was done between '54 and the time when I went there. I presume we were all for this because it was a good thing for both sides to have them get back into relations, but it wasn't an active issue ever. As time went on, of course, we began talking more and more about aid and their taking a larger role of that sort. And I constantly was urging them to do more, as all our people were. I mean, this is like all advanced countries urging each other to do more, perhaps.

I sort of innovated on my own a little bit on that in connection with the matter of how much money the Japanese spent on military matters. And I might just deviate into that for a moment, because the general assumption is that America puts great pressure on Japan to rearm further than she has. And when I arrived there in '60, we were generally urging them and encouraging them to do more in a military way. I'd say probably even now our military men, in conjunction with theirs, talk about areas in which the Japanese could perhaps do more, like antisubmarine warfare or something of that sort, the defenses of the approaches to Japan, urge the Japanese to do more. But we've long since dropped any general suggestion that they need more military than they have. I used to sometimes point out to them that they were only spending 1 per cent or a trifle over 1 per cent of their gross national product for defense, which was much lower than anybody else. Then I realized that such sort of needling was, at best, counterproductive -- you know, they paid no attention to it -- and that probably there wasn't any real need for Japan to be doing more militarily. The defense relationship with us was better than to have them try to expend much upon the military.

What got me into this is that I then innovated with this concept. I used to mention to them, and often spoke about it in public, too, that since Japan only spent 1 per cent on gross national product for military matters as opposed to the average in the world of 4 to 5 per cent of most advanced nations, why, they perhaps could go much higher in their aid component, higher than the one per cent of gross national product that the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] nations have set as a target: why don't they think in terms of 2 per cent of gross national product. So I'd give them a general push in that direction, not that it was ever effective at all.

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O'BRIEN: Well, in terms of development aid and the people who are talking in terms of development aid in Washington, is there any concerted effort on the Japanese, though, coming from Washington in addition to, you know, the suggestions you're making?

REISCHAUER: No, just at the Cabinet level, when people met, they would talk about these things in general terms. I felt that we ought to do much more in trying to coordinate our aid. The trouble was that in an area like Korea, for instance, where the Japanese did become very active after the settlement, we found that the two sides often were in somewhat of a competitor position each with its own scheme of

what would be the most valuable thing to do, you see, and its own pet projects. And there wasn't nearly as much coordination as there should have been.

O'BRIEN: Passing into some of the administrative things in regard to your tenure as Ambassador, did the Far East Division ever have regional meetings of the ambassadors?

REISCHAUER: Yes, surely. I think we had two or three during the time that I was there, all of them held in Baguio.

O'BRIEN: Do you happen to remember the....

REISCHAUER: Specific dates?

O'BRIEN: Well, what went on in these particular meetings.

REISCHAUER: Yes, well, the first one was a very big affair in the spring of '62, I believe it was. Chet Bowles was still the Under Secretary at that time, and he came around, went to various regional meetings of this sort, and had a fairly large team with him of representatives. And we sat down in the room -- the wives of the ambassadors came and four or five members of each staff and so on, to talk about different things, so you had a roomful of seventy, eighty people or more. Then we had the more selective meetings of just the ambassadorial group. The later ones were just the ambassadors,

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no one else, so you'd have ten to fifteen people around the table -- maybe fifteen would be more like it -- and the assistant secretary for the East Asian area came out and lead it.

O'BRIEN: At that time it was McConaughy [Walter P. McConaughy].

REISCHAUER: Most of that time it was Bundy [William P. Bundy]. No, McConaughy didn't last very long. Averell Harriman was the Assistant Secretary at the time of the spring of '62 meeting. Then it was Roger Hilsman -- I can't remember that he was out for one of those -- and then I can remember Bill Bundy at those meetings.

O'BRIEN: Was there anyone else of prominence besides people like Bundy and Harriman and Bowles that came out?

REISCHAUER: Well, they were certainly the outstanding people, yes. Nobody more prominent than that at the meetings.

O'BRIEN: Were there any particular issues that you focused on in those meetings, or were they general?

REISCHAUER: Well, at one of the meetings I can remember we had a series of reports. I mean, the different ambassadors were assigned to study different subjects. I was asked to talk about regionalism -- I think probably on the assumption that Japan would play a large role in the regionalism -- and I just didn't see that it would and I didn't really think regionalism had much future, in any case at that time. So I'm afraid I gave a rather negative report, not what they wanted. Sometimes we did it in terms of reporting on your own country and the specific problems, but most of the times it was done in terms of generalized problems.

O'BRIEN: You never really had a crisis, then, to take up at any of these meetings.

REISCHAUER: No. No, it wouldn't have been an appropriate occasion because, after all if there's a crisis in Laos at that moment, why, it'd be handled back in Washington and between there and Vientiane, not at a regional

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meeting.

O'BRIEN: Harriman paid a visit in 1962, didn't he, to Japan?

REISCHAUER: On his way back from this meeting, I believe it was. I took him around, and he talked with various people and so on.

O'BRIEN: Well, were there any particular issues that he was pursuing at that point with the Japanese?

REISCHAUER: I don't think so. Most of the visits of that type, people of his level, tended to be across the board on all the things that were of momentary interest. Now, most of the things that were of momentary interest always were of interest; they remained of interest, you know: the defense relationship, economic relations and so on, what did one think of China, things of that type.

O'BRIEN: Gilpatric [Roswell L. Gilpatric] came out in '63. What was he there for at that time? That was a special mission, as I recall, wasn't it?

REISCHAUER: Yes, I'm trying to remember. I got to know him at that time, and I suspect it was in one of these matters of balance of payments and military supplies and that type of thing, primarily. I can't remember for sure.

O'BRIEN: The Japanese Left kicked up a little bit of a fuss over that, didn't they?

REISCHAUER: Yes. You never could tell, though, from the newspapers as to what the thing was really about necessarily because sometimes the Left would kick it up about a supposed issue and that wasn't what the thing was about at all.

O'BRIEN: Pursuing some of these administrative things, in regard to the changes that take place in the management of foreign policy during the Kennedy years

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which sometimes have been called the Bundy-Rostow [Walt W. Rostow] reforms centering the actual decision-making on foreign policy problems in the White House and away from the National Security Council, would you care to comment on how this worked and how you viewed this?

REISCHAUER: No, I don't think I would have anything to offer on that because I was far enough removed from it all so I was dealing with "Washington," as it were. Now there are different parts of Washington you try to deal with. Obviously, the normal channels through the State Department were the normal things, and otherwise it would be to... Well, I knew Bundy personally, and so I could always talk to him, and then through Bobby Kennedy, and so on. But what the relationship between them was not a matter that really involved me.

O'BRIEN: Was there ever a time in your tenure as Ambassador that relations reached a point or problems occurred in which an ad hoc White House group was formed and you assumed direct contact with them?

REISCHAUER: No. Japan never was in a crisis of that sort, and that's why it tended not to get nearly as much high level attention as it deserved -- that's why I liked these Cabinet-level meetings and things of that sort. But on the other hand, I was very glad that it was not ever in a crisis of that sort because it left the thing much freer for me to play a role.

O'BRIEN: Did you ever have any problems with other agencies operating in Japan? The most obvious one, of course, is the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency].

REISCHAUER: Yes, now as I pointed out, the military was *the* great problem. And we did work out a relationship there fairly satisfactorily, or very satisfactorily. The CIA was one that one had to be very conscious about, and Japan is the kind of country that if they were to engage in hanky-panky, you'd

have vastly greater risks than anything you could possibly achieve thereby. It would be absurd for them to do anything of that sort. And so I was very much concerned that such

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things weren't going on. I mean, they're there primarily for China watching -- that was their really chief area of interest -- and this really in conjunction with the Japanese, so there's no great problem. But still, I felt that I should properly know what they were doing, and I think I did have a real control of it. One of the things that helped was that the chief of station usually was my former student.

O'BRIEN: Was there ever a time in which they got involved with the youth groups or domestic Japanese politics in any way?

REISCHAUER: No. They had in the past had connections of this sort that were being terminated, and they're very peripheral operations and were not wise things to be conducting. I mean, after all, the whole thing had started as an American occupation, you see, and so they could get a kind of involvement there, but this was being terminated and was terminated.

O'BRIEN: Were there ever any specific incidents that happened in regard to the military or the CIA or USIA [United States Information Agency], any of these agencies, that were particularly embarrassing to you as an ambassador?

REISCHAUER: Well, there was a case where a very, very touchy document -- and this had to do with Okinawa, not with Japan -- was incredibly kept at home overnight by a chief of mission in his purse, and he was burglarized that night and the purse taken. He reported it to me, and we, held our breath in absolute horror for a long time, but it was just a straight case of robbery, obviously, and the thing never developed into anything. That would have been terribly embarrassing if something had gone further on it.

There were any number of military incidents in which airplanes crashed and killed people and raised grave problems of that sort because the Japanese are tremendously sensitive to that sort of thing, but here the cooperation of the military was marvelous. They did their best to handle it in a wise and tactful political way. One time Moe Preston, the Commander in Chief of Japan, went out personally to a village to try to apologize

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to the people, and he had a very rough time of it. It was a very magnanimous, I thought, and very brave thing for him to do.

O'BRIEN: Did you put the country team program into effect?

REISCHAUER: Well, actually, you know, the country team was never a reality with us. AID [Agency for International Development] was just the remains of a pipeline primarily going elsewhere and didn't really exist.

USIS-USIA, if you want to call it that -- was part of my embassy, and I could not see any difference between it and any other part of the embassy. I mean, you know, I felt that that aspect was just as important as the economic aspects, and I treated them that way, and that was part of the inside team. There weren't other agencies of any importance except, let's say, CIA, which was close in there anyhow and was, in a sense, made part of the team, and then there was the military.

So it was primarily a relationship between myself and the Commander in Chief of the United States Forces, as it were. And this often then degenerated into the two of us sitting down for long bull sessions together. But then, others would say, "Well, we're not quite sure what's going on," and so we'd make it a larger group again. But to call it a "country team" in the formality in which it was supposed to be operating in other countries, would be a misnomer, though we used the name for a meeting that occurred every second week or something of that sort when it was operating properly.

O'BRIEN: Did you feel your memos and your reports were getting a fair hearing in Washington?

REISCHAUER: Yes, sure. I thought that very much so.

O'BRIEN: Your desk officer was Sneider [Richard L. Sneider].

REISCHAUER: Sneider was the desk officer when I went out, then he went away for a while, then he came back again.

O'BRIEN: Did you find him....

REISCHAUER: Oh, Sneider, yes. I'd known him before, and he's a very efficient operator in Washington. And the desk, the rest of the Japan staff there, in time,

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were all, except for Sneider, ex-members of my embassy, and had served with me there. I mean, the rapport was complete. They were working in Washington and we were working in Tokyo, but there was a complete understanding and no difficulties there whatsoever.

O'BRIEN: How did you get on with the Far East section within the State Department?

REISCHAUER: FE as a whole?

O'BRIEN: And as individuals, people like McConaughy.

REISCHAUER: Well, McConaughy was there a very brief time, actually, I mean, it wasn't many months before he was replaced, and we got along very well. Averell Harriman is, you know, a rather fearsome person, but he, at the same time, was an extremely nice person and was more than nice to me, I thought, although I never got over a certain nervousness in his presence, let's say, or fear of him. And then Roger Hilsman was sort of a -- I hadn't known him before, but we became good friends. And with Bill Bundy, it was an easy relationship. And usually the men who were in the deputy positions were, many of them, old, old, friends and so on.

O'BRIEN: You didn't have any particular complaints against them....

REISCHAUER: I had no complaints, no. I think the relationship was fine and worked perfectly well. I've nothing to complain of, and when I sent back messages with an indication that I thought this was important, I always felt that they got very good responses from them.

O'BRIEN: Are there any philosophical differences that you detected in people in the State Department and at the ambassadorial level on policy towards not only Japan, but, well, let's take the area: China mainland, Taiwan, Korea.

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REISCHAUER: Well, I'm not sure if you're talking about philosophical or specific policy differences.

O'BRIEN: Well, both.

REISCHAUER: I may first talk on the philosophical level. One thing that disturbed me about many of the people in the Foreign Service is that they do prize the generalist very much, and this means the fellow who is competent in all sorts of situations but maybe doesn't have too much depth on any one. I think they're mistaken in doing this, and you require more depth, and they have to give more honor and position to the man with depth.

And the generalist attitude, I'm afraid, also falls in with the fact that they rotate rather rapidly, especially those who are generalists and not the geographic specialists. And so the tendency is to have a good superficial record during the period while they're there, you know. If it falls apart five years hence, well, that's another matter. It's better to avoid a flap now than to worry about a deep problem of that sort. And this leads to another kind of superficiality: that is, don't stir things up; ride along with it; and everything seems smooth, and you don't worry about problems of this sort.

This falls in with another philosophical trait that comes out of this. This is what you might call the lawyers' approach: We answer problems as they arise. Well, I object to this very strongly because you answer the problems as they arise on the basis of your deep assumptions that come from much deeper consideration and study. You're reacting at the moment, but back of that is a long series of assumptions and deeper concepts. So you don't really just face the problems as they arise. And you're going to be much better off, I think, if you keep thinking about all the problems in great depth before they arise. So I thought there was a kind of a philosophical weakness built into the nature of the Foreign Service in many cases.

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I insisted that every morning that it was possible to do this -- often I had another schedule so I couldn't do it, but every morning I was free -- the top members of the embassy (and this included the USIA chief and people like that) we sat around and everybody reported on anything of interest or news that had come up. But I always encouraged them to get off into much more abstract, deeper things, because that was the only time we really did any thinking, certainly thinking in a way where we exchanged ideas. I thought that kind of approach gave us a much sounder, safer, and more unified approach to the problems we faced. And so we had a kind of seminar every morning for half an hour or so, which I thought was not lost time at all. And yet it was not, as I understood it, the procedure in most places where you might have a much more formalistic thing, about specific, immediate matters to be reported and then kept very strictly within those bounds.

Now, about policies and how to approach them, well, here, of course, you get all the variations of people according to their knowledge and wisdom and so on. I didn't find any very deep cleavage between myself and the better officers in the staff. Some of them are really quite deep scholarly people, and through the kind of a process of exchange of ideas and discussion, I think we all came out often with much the same general point of view and managed to communicate a lot of this to the military there, too.

O'BRIEN: Well, in the transition of administrations between the Kennedy and Johnson Administration, did you see any, oh, either abrupt fundamental changes or fundamental changes that occurred over a longer period of time between the administration?

REISCHAUER: In the way you'd normally mean this, no, nothing at all. For one thing, you know, there was no change in most of these people at the top positions, certainly not in the State Department. And towards Japan, in which there had been a slow, evolving shift in attitudes rather than any sharply focused policy debates, there really wasn't room for any visible change. I could detect no change whatsoever in the short run or even in the long run.

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But in another sense, there was a very, very great change indeed, and that is that the image of the new president was different from the image of President Kennedy. And this much affected the climate of the whole situation, you know. You just didn't have the same responsiveness on the Japanese part, the same enthusiasm, the same willingness to accept our explanations and things, because the image was different and probably the presentation of it in terms of wording wasn't as good. And you know, after all, President Johnson was not oriented towards the outside world, let alone Asia. While Kennedy wasn't particularly oriented towards Asia, still he had the real awareness of it, and the ability to communicate even there and, through Bobby Kennedy, had done extremely well that way. And this had a very profound effect in the long run.

O'BRIEN: He didn't visit Japan in '61, did he?

REISCHAUER: No. No, he did not.

O'BRIEN: He skipped Japan on that trip, didn't he?

REISCHAUER: Yes, but he was much interested in going, and I never was back in Washington but what he and I discussed when he would go. And he could have gone, and it would have been a great triumph; it would have been a marvelous thing. It always was getting postponed, but I think the last time we discussed it, we talked in terms of the summer of '64 or something like that.

And by the time Johnson was President, and with his very different kind of image and with things beginning to turn sour over in Vietnam shortly thereafter, I made up my mind that I would put my head on the chopping block to keep him from coming because it would have been just too great a risk, and a risk for no great gains.

O'BRIEN: Well, did you see any policy changes in regard to other areas in Asia, Southeast Asia?

REISCHAUER: Well, of course, you had the great decision in the winter of '64-'65 to go in. Now, you can't say that was necessarily a change in a sense, because

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I'm afraid the road President Kennedy was following was leading in that direction, and he might have made the same decision, too. It was just the matter that the time had come for a decision; it couldn't be avoided any longer.

O'BRIEN: Were you consulted about this at all?

REISCHAUER: No. No. I was consulted on these things only in terms of what would the Japanese reaction be if we were to bomb, you know, that kind of

thing, and I tried to give honest responses to that.

O'BRIEN: I've got a list of some of the meetings you had with President Kennedy. We haven't talked about any of them in particular. I just thought that if...

REISCHAUER: This was the original one when we got sent off on March 25th. March 25th? Ken Young [Kenneth T. Young] was just in the room here with me.

O'BRIEN: Oh, he was?

REISCHAUER: He's a member of our trustees. But that one, you know, the four of us were there and sort of went around, and we each had a little bit of talk about our area and all that, but you couldn't get into any great depth on it. Then we had the briefing with Dean Rusk in preparation -- this is for Ikeda's visit, yes.

O'BRIEN: I was thinking particularly of some of the later meetings there in '62-'63.

REISCHAUER: Actual meetings there: '62, November 28th. I can't remember that I was back there November 28th, or was this just in preparation for the economic meetings?

O'BRIEN: These came out of the White House appointments. They could be wrong.

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REISCHAUER: Yes, looking at these, they look as they were twenty minutes, twenty-five minutes. Then with Ohira, August 22nd -- I was back for the summer there, and that was when? In '63, and, of course, that was the end, you know, wasn't it?

O'BRIEN: Do you remember anything particular out of those meetings?

REISCHAUER: No. All I can remember is that I was very much impressed at the depth of his questions and his real interest. They were very satisfactory discussions, I found. But they weren't any of them over any crisis, you know, any specific thing to discuss, it was either the visit of the prime minister or else it was just because I was back in Washington.

O'BRIEN: Well, in retrospect, did your long range views change from, let's say, about the late 1950's until the time that you resigned as Ambassador to

Japan in regard to policies towards Japan and towards the Far East?
Was there any fundamental change that you can see in yourself?

REISCHAUER: No, I just don't see any at all. I mean, I'm sure that things change and times change and so you have different attitudes, but I have a feeling that each one sort of grew gradually into the other and the basic themes remain much the same. As time goes on, I get stronger and stronger pushing for the equal partnership with Japan and things of this sort, you know, as they become more capable of having a real role of equality with us.

O'BRIEN: Well, in the long view of things, how do you view the Kennedy Administration: as basically just another step along the way, or do you see any fundamental characteristics emerging from...

REISCHAUER: In regard to this foreign policy, you mean?

O'BRIEN: Right.

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REISCHAUER: No, I'm so convinced of the importance of the importance of communication and understanding that, let's say, if he had been President for eight years and we had avoided the Vietnam war, we could have moved to an extraordinarily good relationship with Japan during those eight years. I mean, it was moving very well, and his sensitivity and understanding was a kind of thing that they appreciated very much, that everyone in Japan felt that there was somebody in Washington in a place of great importance who did appreciate them and understand them and so on. And this can be vastly important. It was on that side, I think, that you had a period of real progress there between '61 and his death, and this progress didn't continue after that, or certainly not after '65.

O'BRIEN: Well, how do you see the directions of Japanese foreign policy? In what way are they going to go?

REISCHAUER: Well, we've come to a moment of great crisis -- this, of course, is a different subject, you know. For various reasons it's a moment of great crisis because 1970 has always been in their minds as a time for the effort of the Left to break the relationship, and it comes up at a time when the whole sense of nationalism has come back so much that there's a great restiveness, both on the part of the Right as well as the Left, over what seems to be a subservient foreign policy to the United States. This is a failure of the Japanese government to make clear to the Japanese public that they do have a clear idea of what they want in foreign policy, but they tend to hide behind us on it. This is not any longer tolerable there.

So there is a great malaise in the relationship. And there are all the problems over foreign bases that all are restive about. On top of that, we've let Okinawa get to the point where it's an explosive, terribly dangerous issue. And then you have everything heated up by the fact of Vietnam. The anxieties of the opposition about the relationship with America are vastly worse just because the Vietnamese war gives them a great deal more reality in people's minds.

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And so here we're moving practically into 1970 with the Japanese public not really at all aware of what a disaster it would be for them if they did break the defense relationship with us because this is the one thing that would, I think, force them into a real rearmament, which they're psychologically not prepared for. It would be a terribly dangerous thing for them. And I think it would force us into a real withdrawal out of East Asia completely.

O'BRIEN: Well, how about this age factor of the conservative leadership? They all tend to be older men.

REISCHAUER: Yes, and you've got the unfortunate thing there that actually the government is in the hands of the most conservative factions of the conservative party, and this makes it even further away from, let's say, public sentiment as a whole. If it were, let's say the left-wing faction of the party, why, that would be much nearer the center of the road, or even a moderate faction like Ikeda would really be a much better one. So it's an unfortunate leadership just at this time of crisis.

O'BRIEN: Well, I'm actually through with the questions. If you have anything else to add....

REISCHAUER: Well, this time of night, after such a long day yesterday, I can't really think of what might be of value or interest in this connection.

O'BRIEN: Well, I've really kept you long enough. Thank you, Ambassador Reischauer. Very good interview.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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