

# Severe test of Japanese-U.S. ties, Mansfield says

Since World War II, the world here believes. The emergence of "a new world leader" in Yasuhiro Nakasone and Ambassador Mike

Mansfield yesterday, only unexpectedly good economic news can keep the relationship from being tested this year "as never before."

Mr. Mansfield, 5½ years into his assignment here and one of the few political appointees to survive the Carter-Reagan presidential transition, returned here Saturday from Washington, where he participated in Reagan administration dealings with Mr. Nakasone. The Japanese prime minister was on his first visit to the United States since taking office last month.

Mr. Mansfield is preparing for George P. Shultz's first visit to Japan as secretary of state, which will begin Sunday.

Based partly on his trip to Washington, the ambassador painted a picture that contained both good news and bad.

The good news was that, in the course of presenting a set of policies on defense and trade that Washington had hoped to hear, Mr. Nakasone and Foreign Minister Shintaro Abe formed personal relationships with their American counterparts.

The bad news was that the recession continues to fuel "a very strong possibility of protectionist legislation as Congress feels the pressure" from constituents over unemployment and, consequently, over imports.

Not long ago, Mr. Mansfield remarked, trade problems between Tokyo and Washington could be summarized as "textiles, color televisions, automobiles and steel."

"Now it's the whole spectrum" of trade relations, he said. "There are lots of problems and no answers."

"The Japanese will have to open their markets more, liberalize their imports and recognize that, to paraphrase John Donne, no nation is an island," Mr. Mansfield said.

Nevertheless, he repeatedly re-



MIKE MANSFIELD

turned to American attitudes as a greater problem than Japanese success in exports.

"Instead of pointing the finger at other countries," he said, "we ought to point at some of our own difficulties and do what we can to correct them."

"The Japanese have tried consistently to understand us," and to be as compatible as their circumstances allow, he said, but now that times are hard and Japan is seen to be still

vigorous, "a certain amount of scapegoating is taking place with regard to Japan," in the United States.

The lesson Mr. Mansfield drew for the United States from Japanese success had to do with relations among the government, businesses and labor.

In Japan, he said, "unions get a chance to look at company books, and they gauge their wage demands accordingly." Unions "look upon themselves as a component in an organization" rather than as the companies' adversaries, he added.

The relationship between industry and government, he said, resembles "a semi-partnership." The government encourages industries, and workers "produce well and are reasonable in their demands," he said.

The United States, Mr. Mansfield said, needs to change the adversary relationships among its major economic forces and then "return to the old-time religion" of providing quality products and follow-through service to attract and keep customers—"the things we always used to do."

Returning to a theme that has long been among his favorites, the former Democratic leader of the Senate stressed that the Tokyo-Washington connection, "is the most important bilateral relationship in the world and will become more important as the next hundred years develop into "the century of the Pacific."

The importance of the relationship can only grow under Mr. Nakasone's leadership, he said, because the new leader is determined to see his country step toward the center of the world stage. Mr. Mansfield acknowledged that earlier American predictions of coming Japanese activism have not been matched by events.

He described Mr. Nakasone as "a nationalist with an international outlook" and said the new prime minis-

ter's vigor and directness "hold great promise for the future."

Mr. Nakasone moved Japan directly into the spotlight in Washington, "and you will see him do it again" at future international meetings, Mr. Mansfield said.

Before going to Washington, he said, Mr. Nakasone made a point of going to South Korea as the first Japanese prime minister to do so in his official capacity.

Mr. Nakasone "put his own imprint on a final loan and aid agreement" for Korea and did "the groundwork for really normal relations between Japan and Korea."

The new prime minister has been criticized in Japan for moving so rapidly so soon after taking office. The much-publicized flap over his remark in a newspaper interview that Japan should become "an unsinkable aircraft carrier" is only the surface of that criticism.

"Many of the things that sound sweet to the American ear may not have the same effect here," the influential English-language *Japan Times* said.

"Primary among them is his allusion to the Japan-U.S. relationship as being one in which the two nations share the same destiny. The term evokes in the Japanese mind an image of two nations perishing in, for instance, a nuclear holocaust."

Some Japanese, mindful of other prime ministers whose careers were shortened when they got too far ahead of public opinion here, worry that Mr. Nakasone may be on the same road.

Mr. Mansfield shied away from Japanese domestic politics but betrayed no concern that the prime minister may be making trouble for himself at home with his activist foreign policy.

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