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THE WHITE HOUSE

JOINT COMMUNIQUE BETWEEN
PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON AND
HIS EXCELLENCY PRIME MINISTER
SATO OF JAPAN

1. President Nixon and Prime Minister Sato met in Washington on November 19, 20 and 21, 1969, to exchange views on the present international situation and on other matters of mutual interest to the United States and Japan.

2. The President and the Prime Minister recognized that both the United States and Japan have greatly benefited from their close association in a variety of fields, and they declared that guided by their common principles of democracy and liberty, the two countries would maintain and strengthen their fruitful cooperation in the continuing search for world peace and prosperity and in particular for the relaxation of international tensions. The President expressed his and his government's deep interest in Asia and stated his belief that the United States and Japan should cooperate in contributing to the peace and prosperity of the region. The Prime Minister stated that Japan would make further active contributions to the peace and prosperity of Asia.

3. The President and the Prime Minister exchanged frank views on the current international situation, with particular attention to developments in the Far East. The President, while emphasizing that the countries in the area were expected to make their own efforts for the stability of the area, gave assurance that the United States would continue to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East by honoring its defense treaty obligations in the area. The Prime Minister, appreciating the determination of the United States, stressed that it was important for the peace and security of the Far East that the United States should be in a position to carry out fully its obligations referred to by the President. He further expressed his recognition that, in the light of the present situation, the presence of United States forces in the Far East constituted a mainstay for the stability of the area.

4. The President and the Prime Minister specifically noted the continuing tension over the Korean peninsula. The Prime Minister deeply appreciated the peace-keeping efforts of the United Nations in the area and stated that the security of the Republic of Korea was essential to Japan's own security. The President and the Prime Minister shared the hope that Communist China would adopt a more cooperative and constructive attitude in its external relations. The President referred to the treaty obligations of his country to the Republic of China which the United States would uphold. The Prime Minister said that the maintenance of peace and security in the Taiwan area was also a most important factor for the security of Japan. The President described the earnest efforts made by the United States for a peaceful and just settlement of the Viet-Nam problem. The President and the Prime Minister expressed the strong hope that the war in Viet-Nam would be concluded before return of the administrative rights over Okinawa to Japan. In this connection, they agreed that, should peace in Viet-Nam not have been realized by the time reversion of Okinawa is scheduled to take place, the two governments would fully consult with each other in the light of the situation at that time so that reversion would be accomplished without affecting the United States efforts to assure the South Vietnamese people the opportunity to determine their own political future without outside interference. The Prime Minister stated that Japan was exploring what role she could play in bringing about stability in the Indochina area.

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5. In light of the current situation and the prospects in the Far East, the President and the Prime Minister agreed that they highly valued the role played by the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security in maintaining the peace and security of the Far East including Japan, and they affirmed the intention of the two governments firmly to maintain the Treaty on the basis of mutual trust and common evaluation of the international situation. They further agreed that the two governments should maintain close contact with each other on matters affecting the peace and security of the Far East including Japan, and on the implementation of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security.

6. The Prime Minister emphasized his view that the time had come to respond to the strong desire of the people of Japan, of both the mainland and Okinawa, to have the administrative rights over Okinawa returned to Japan on the basis of the friendly relations between the United States and Japan and thereby to restore Okinawa to its normal status. The President expressed appreciation of the Prime Minister's view. The President and the Prime Minister also recognized the vital role played by United States forces in Okinawa in the present situation in the Far East. As a result of their discussion it was agreed that the mutual security interests of the United States and Japan could be accommodated within arrangements for the return of the administrative rights over Okinawa to Japan. They therefore agreed that the two governments would immediately enter into consultations regarding specific arrangements for accomplishing the early reversion of Okinawa without detriment to the security of the Far East including Japan. They further agreed to expedite the consultations with a view to accomplishing the reversion during 1972 subject to the conclusion of these specific arrangements with the necessary legislative support. In this connection, the Prime Minister made clear the intention of his government, following reversion, to assume gradually the responsibility for the immediate defense of Okinawa as part of Japan's defense efforts for her own territories. The President and the Prime Minister agreed also that the United States would retain under the terms of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security such military facilities and areas in Okinawa as required in the mutual security of both countries.

7. The President and the Prime Minister agreed that, upon return of the administrative rights, the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security and its related arrangements would apply to Okinawa without modification thereof. In this connection, the Prime Minister affirmed the recognition of his government that the security of Japan could not be adequately maintained without international peace and security in the Far East and, therefore, the security of countries in the Far East was a matter of serious concern for Japan. The Prime Minister was of the view that, in the light of such recognition on the part of the Japanese Government, the return of the administrative rights over Okinawa in the manner agreed above should not hinder the effective discharge of the international obligations assumed by the United States for the defense of countries in the Far East including Japan. The President replied that he shared the Prime Minister's view.

8. The Prime Minister described in detail the particular sentiment of the Japanese people against nuclear weapons and the policy of the Japanese Government reflecting such sentiment. The President expressed his deep understanding and assured the Prime Minister that, without prejudice to the position of the United States Government with respect to the prior consultation system under the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, the reversion of Okinawa would be carried out in a manner consistent with the policy of the Japanese Government as described by the Prime Minister.

9. The President and the Prime Minister took note of the fact that there would be a number of financial and economic problems, including those concerning United States business interests in Okinawa, to be solved between the two countries in connection with the transfer of the administrative rights over Okinawa to Japan and agreed that detailed discussions relative to their solution would be initiated promptly.

10. The President and the Prime Minister, recognizing the complexity of the problems involved in the reversion of Okinawa, agreed that the two governments should consult closely and cooperate on the measures necessary to assure a smooth transfer of administrative rights to the Japanese Government in accordance with reversion arrangements to be agreed to by both governments. They agreed that the United States-Japan Consultative Committee in Tokyo should undertake overall responsibility for this preparatory work. The President and the Prime Minister decided to establish in Okinawa a Preparatory Commission in place of the existing Advisory Committee to the High Commissioner of the Ryukyu Islands for the purpose of consulting and coordinating locally on measures relating to preparation for the transfer of administrative rights, including necessary assistance to the Government of the Ryukyu Islands. The Preparatory Commission will be composed of a representative of the Japanese Government with ambassadorial rank and the High Commissioner of the Ryukyu Islands with the Chief Executive of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands acting as adviser to the Commission. The Commission will report and make recommendations to the two governments through the United States-Japan Consultative Committee.

11. The President and the Prime Minister expressed their conviction that a mutually satisfactory solution of the question of the return of the administrative rights over Okinawa to Japan, which is the last of the major issues between the two countries arising from the Second World War, would further strengthen United States-Japan relations which are based on friendship and mutual trust and would make a major contribution to the peace and security of the Far East.

12. In their discussion of economic matters, the President and the Prime Minister noted the marked growth in economic relations between the two countries. They also acknowledged that the leading positions which their countries occupy in the world economy impose important responsibilities on each for the maintenance and strengthening of the international trade and monetary system, especially in the light of the current large imbalances in trade and payments. In this regard, the President stressed his determination to bring inflation in the United States under control. He also reaffirmed the commitment of the United States to the principle of promoting freer trade. The Prime Minister indicated the intention of the Japanese Government to accelerate rapidly the reduction of Japan's trade and capital restrictions. Specifically, he stated the intention of the Japanese Government to remove Japan's residual import quota restrictions over a broad range of products by the end of 1971 and to make maximum efforts to accelerate the liberalization of the remaining items. He added that the Japanese Government intends to make periodic reviews of its liberalization program with a view to implementing trade liberalization at a more accelerated pace than hitherto. The President and the Prime Minister agreed that their respective actions would further solidify the foundation of overall U.S.-Japan relations.

13. The President and the Prime Minister agreed that attention to the economic needs of the developing countries was essential to the development of international peace and stability. The Prime Minister stated the intention of the Japanese Government to expand and improve its aid programs in Asia commensurate with the economic growth of Japan. The President welcomed this statement and confirmed that the United States would continue to contribute to the economic development of Asia. The President and Prime Minister recognized that there would be major requirements for the post-war rehabilitation of Viet-Nam and elsewhere in Southeast Asia. The Prime Minister stated the intention of the Japanese Government to make a substantial contribution to this end.

14. The Prime Minister congratulated the President on the successful moon landing of Apollo XII, and expressed the hope for a safe journey back to earth for the astronauts. The President and the Prime Minister agreed that the exploration of space offers great opportunities for expanding cooperation in peaceful scientific projects among all nations. In this connection, the Prime Minister noted with pleasure that the United States and Japan last summer had concluded an agreement on space cooperation. The President and the Prime Minister agreed that implementation of this unique program is of importance to both countries.

15. The President and the Prime Minister discussed prospects for the promotion of arms control and the slowing down of the arms race. The President outlined his Government's efforts to initiate the strategic arms limitations talks with the Soviet Union that have recently started in Helsinki. The Prime Minister expressed his Government's strong hopes for the success of these talks. The Prime Minister pointed out his country's strong and traditional interest in effective disarmament measures with a view to achievement of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

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