

**Summary of 1/11/11 Meeting –
“U. S. /Japan Relationship: Stability?” Topic Leader – Charlie Kimball
by Fred Piker**

10:15: KICKOFF

Welcome and Introduction of Guests

Welcome to guests Reed Hinrichs, Kathy Biddle, Jean Goldsmith, Dale Schlein, and Ebie Wood. Also, Harry Stanton, who was a guest at the 12/7 meeting, has decided to join our Chapter.

Distribution of FPA 2011 Briefing Books

The 2011 Briefing Books were distributed. Subsequent to the meeting, books for those who were unable to collect them on 1/11 were left at the KVL main desk.

Chappaqua Library January 27th Program

Participants were reminded about the forthcoming January 27th program open to the public – 7:30 P. M. – Eric Pooley, author of “The Climate War” and Deputy Editor of “Bloomberg Businessweek”, will talk about his book.

Forthcoming Winter/Spring 2011 Day Time Meeting Dates and Topics

NOTE: REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE - TOPIC LEADERS/CO-LEADERS ARE NEEDED FOR THE 1/25, 2/8, AND 5/10 PROGRAMS. PROGRAMS. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE LET ME KNOW.

1/25 – Sanctions and Nonproliferation: What’s the Track Record?

2/8 - American National Security Since 9/11

3/1 – The Horn of Africa – Topic Leader: Joe Adams

3/15 – Banks, Governments and Debt Crises – Topic Leader: Charlie Kimball

3/29 – Germany’s Ascendancy – Topic Leader: Tyler Beebe

4/12 – Rebuilding Haiti – Topic Leader: George Roy

4/26 - The Caucasus – Topic Leader: Dick TenDyke

5/10 – Making Sense of Multilateralism

Foreign Policy Evening Forums

Charlie Kimball highlighted a number of programs currently under consideration. By early Spring we hope to resume the forums.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CHAPTER MOTTO - “DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED WITHOUT FONDNESS FOR DISPUTE OR DESIRE FOR VICTORY” – BEN FRANKLIN

Pre-Meeting Preparation

Readings and References

Priority

CIA The World Factbook – Japan

www.fpa.org – go to “Resource Library” – then to “Japan” – “The Water’s Edge: Alliance Adjustment”

Foreign Affairs – March/April 2010 – “The United States-Japan Security Treaty at 50”
(Note: Charlie distributed copies of this article at the 12/7 meeting)

Google Book Reviews – (1) “The Frugal Superpower: America’s Global Leadership in a Cash Strapped Era” – Michael Mandelbaum; (2) “Washington Rules” – Andrew Bacevich; (3) “Fault Lines” – Raghuram Rajan

The Economist – 11/20/10 – “A Special Report on Japan” – “Into the Unknown”

NYT – 12/13/10 – “Japan Plans Military Shift To Focus More on China”

NYT – 12/17/10 – “Japan’s New Military Policy Keeps Wary Eye on China” – a focus on defending disputed islands to the south

The Economist – “The World in 2011” – “United States: The Limits of Power” AND “Way to Lead” AND “Let’s Make a Deal” – flush with cash, Japanese firms are poised for a global acquisition spree

Supplementary

Summaries of Recent Prior Chapter Discussions

1/29/08 – “America’s Leadership in The World”

12/9/08 – “Book Review – The Post-American World”

5/12/09 – “The U. S. and Rising Powers”

12/7/10 – “North Korea: Reclusive, Dynastic, and Very Dangerous”

“America and the World – Conversations on the Future of American Foreign Policy” – Zbigniew Brzezinski and Brent Scowcroft – Basic Books - 2008

“Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower” – Zbigniew Brzezinski – Basic Books - 2007

“The Post American World” - Fareed Zakaria – W. W. Norton & Company - 2008

“Theodore Rex” – Edmund Morris – Random House - 2002

“The Imperial Cruise: A Secret History of Empire and War” – James Bradley – Little, Brown, & Company – 2009

* - “Rogue Regime: Kim Jong Il and the Looming Threat of North Korea” – Jasper Becker

Foreign Affairs – May/June 2010 – “The Geography of Chinese Power: How Far Can Beijing Reach on Land and at Sea?”

The Economist – 6/26/10 – “Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia – The Power of Nightmares”

Foreign Affairs – November/December 2010 – “The Future of American Power: Dominance and Decline in Perspective” AND “The Game Changer: Coping With China’s Foreign Policy Revolution”

NYT – 11/12/10 – “Obama Shifts Tone to Draw North Korea Back to Talks”

WSJ – 11/22/10 – “North Korea Nuclear Fears Grow”

WSJ – 11/29/10 – “China Seeks Urgent Talks on Korea” – suggestion to restart disarmament negotiations gets cool reception; Seoul, Washington fear rewarding bad behavior AND “Border Bridge Reflects Dilemma” – Kim sees China’s model as a threat to his grip on power AND “The Emperor’s Nuclear Clothes” – a world with fewer nuclear weapons is in the interest of the U. S. That is precisely why it won’t happen, and it’s time to face reality

Foreign Affairs – November/December 2010 – “The Future of American Power”

The Economist – 1/7/11 – “Tensions on the Korean peninsula: Talking down the barrel of a gun” – after a bold show of force, South Korea revives the prospect of talks

Time – 1/10/11 – “Two Cheers for 2011” – despite an unsettled year politically and economically, things are looking up

NYT – 1/2/11 – “China’s Naval Ambitions”

NYT – 1/3/11 – “Despite Shortage, Japan Keeps a High Wall for Foreign Labor”

WSJ – 1/6/11 – “The Italy of Asia” – Japan’s entitlement dilemmas are a warning to Washington

Topic Introduction

Drawing on his personal observations and commentary cited in the three “Priority Reading and Reference Books” (Authors Mandelbaum, Bacevich, and Rajan), Charlie highlighted the changing U. S./Japan relationship, including related economic, governmental/political, military, Asian neighbor, Western alliance, and world governance issues. Subsequently, the group turned to the questions listed below.

Preliminary Discussion Questions

1-The sacred trinity of American foreign policy (global presence, intervention, and power projection) is undergoing change. What will this likely mean for our relationship with Japan?

2-How will China’s increasing ascendancy and the rising tensions on the Korean peninsula impact the U. S./Japan relationship?

3-Forthcoming U. S. Defense Department cutbacks might require significant reduction in U. S. troop presence around the globe. Were the U. S. to withdraw its troops from Europe and perhaps Japan as well, what would be the impact on the U. S./Japan relationship and

on Asian neighbors?

4-Assuming implementation of the U. S./Russian New Start treaty, the U. S. nuclear stockpile will be reduced to several hundred. What would be the implications for the U. S./ Japan relationship?

5-Throughout the late 1990s and early 2000's, a significant portion of the increase in U. S. household demand was met from abroad from countries such as Germany, Japan, Korea, and increasingly China, which have traditionally relied on exports for growth with plenty of spare capacity to make more. In view of the decrease in U. S. demand arising from our financial crisis, how will this impact our relations with Japan?

Participant Observations

The following issues were raised during discussion:

-The U. S. defence budget as a percentage of GDP - the escalating cost of the U. S. debt - and implications for the U. S. defence budget, the U. S. "military/industrial complex", and our continuing military presence around the world

-The pros and cons of withdrawal or maintenance of U. S. troops from Okinawa, mainland Japan, and the Korean DMZ (It was noted marines consider Okinawa as their Temple Mount – they will never leave!) Also, Okinawa is the U. S.'s Western Pacific major military staging cite

-While U. S. naval construction has been cut back, China's naval and other military power is on the rise, leading to uncertainty re China's long range intentions in Asia and elsewhere

-The impact of other Asian countries' increasing economic viability and their role in the worldwide geopolitical and economic system

-Byproducts of the far reaching U. S. military presence are: the U. S. retains its world reserve currency role; and enhanced U. S. (perceived) credit worthiness

-Whether the U. S. can or should continue in the role of the "world's leading policeman" (It was noted that the perceived U. S. imperialist role dates back to the late 1800s/early 1900s)

-Whether a far reaching U. S. military/defence presence and readiness help to deter war – (Note - in last week's announcement re forthcoming cutbacks in the defence budget, Secretary Gates emphasized for reason of national security it is imperative the U. S. maintain a strong military)

-Because of escalating worldwide economic interdependence, have we entered into an era likely absent of world wars?

-The pros and cons of Japan going nuclear and/or the military broadening its role beyond defense of the homeland

-Underlying drivers of the change in U. S. worldwide power projection – due to our economic/financial challenges and/or the rise of other countries' economic and military capabilities?

-The pros and cons of reducing U. S. defense/war expenditures and increasing funding for rebuilding of our infrastructure (roads, bridges, high speed trains, education, etc.)

-The continuing failure of the U. N. and many other associations of nations to prevent wars

Meeting Assessment/Feedback

Participant feedback was highly positive – an interesting, informative, provocative, and spirited discussion!

Hope you can join us on 1/25.

Best regards,