

# New Dimensions

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There is a tendency in many quarters, both Japan and the United States, to view the bilateral relationship in the narrowest of contexts—political, security or economic—depending on an individual's particular area of interest.

Unfortunately, this simplistic approach has led to problems, has made resolving genuine differences in each sector more difficult and, more often than not, has badly served the interests of both nations.

Despite the difficulties, I believe we have seen tremendous progress in all areas over the past several years. Japan is shouldering more of the security burden. At the same time it has increased and accelerated long overdue reforms in its economic system, and these have led to increased market access for foreign products and services. Neither action was accomplished without overcoming much internal resistance.

There are positive signs that Japan is now assuming the position of leadership that its trading partners and free world allies have been urging on it. Japan is stepping out on the world stage: witness the recent visit of the foreign minister to Israel, its intention to assist United Nations' peacekeeping efforts, and its proposals made at the Toronto Summit regarding Third World debt.

These actions mean that there are new dimensions to the U.S.-Japan relationship that both nations must consider and attempt to come to grips with. After many years of having Japan more or less just follow America's lead, and despite Washington's past insistence that Japan play a more active role, the United States is having a difficult time adjusting to these new and somewhat uncomfortable aspects of the relationship. Nor is Japan truly comfortable with its new leadership position in the world community despite its recent actions.

America's presidential elections are increasing Japan's discomfiture even more. There is a tendency in Japan to take American election rhetoric at face value as the candidates jockey for votes. This means there is now a sense of uneasiness in Japan as to what direction a new administration might take America regarding the bilateral relationship.

Basically, I believe we will see little change in America's approach to the U.S.-Japan relationship. In the security sector, for example, burden sharing sounds great on the campaign trail but it is another matter to define just what we mean, what is acceptable to all concerned (and this is an issue that extends far beyond the bilateral aspects), and then to

accomplish it within the political constraints that exist.

No matter which candidate wins the presidency in November, I believe we will see a continued emphasis on such issues as market access, fair trading practices, protection of intellectual property and so forth. America will continue to work for a successful round of GATT negotiations.

For Japan, the challenge will be to maintain the momentum of change, for there is still much to be accomplished. It is all too easy to rest on the laurels of our recent accomplishments in regard to the many issues we have faced, especially when foreign pressure temporarily eases. But it would be far better for Japan to take the lead in continuing its domestic economic reform without the pressure of the past.

In the final analysis, America and Japan need each other—perhaps more than either side is willing to admit. This will lead, from time to time, to bursts of ill-conceived rhetoric on both sides of the Pacific. But I believe that the relationship is basically so strong and beneficial to both nations, that despite the changes it is currently undergoing, it will continue to endure and prosper far into the future.

# Ensuring Stability

By Hisahiko Okazaki  
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Since Japan opened its doors to the outside world 120 years ago, there have been only two periods when the Japanese people have been able to put national security concerns behind them and to concentrate on achieving economic prosperity and political freedom. The first of these was when Japan was allied with Britain for about 20 years in the early 1900s, and the second has been the last several decades of alliance with the

United States. Both of these allies have been superpowers with uncontested command of the seas, including Japan's key trading routes.

Entering into alliances with such powerful countries let the Japanese people put aside their national security concerns and turn their attention to the quest for greater political freedom.

The democracy that blossomed in the context of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance

thus found expression in a parliamentary system conceived and created by the Japanese themselves. But after the break-up of the alliance in 1921, the priority naturally shifted from freedom to security as the Japanese became more anxious about national security. And once Japan felt threatened and alone in the world, it tended to go overboard on the defense and security side. In turn, this military buildup strained already-tense interna-