

Japan Congressman Invites U.S. To Join Science & Technology Deals

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Mr. Tsutomu Kawara, a member of the House of Representatives of the Japanese Diet, expressed concern that the United States' lack of an official policy for energy development could impede participation in cooperative technological development with Japan. Accompanying Prime Minister Fukuda during his beginning of May tour of the U.S., the Diet member, who also leads a study group on Future Energy Sources, gave the following interview last week.

Q: The idea of joint Japanese-United States cooperation in the industrialization of Third World areas such as Southeast Asia has been raised in discussions between Americans and Japanese business and government officials, as a way to solve the bilateral trade and other economic problems between our countries. What do you think about this?

A: As you may know, the new fiscal year began in Japan on April 15, fiscal year 1978, and the first goal of the year is the domestic recovery of the Japanese economy. The second goal however, is to help the world emerge from the global depression. We are determined to cooperate with the less developed countries in this effort. In this regard, we like the idea of trilateral cooperation with the developing countries, involving the United States, Japan, and maybe West Germany. However, no consensus has been reached on such a policy among the various possible participants. On his trip to southeast Asia last August, Prime Minister Fukuda took the initiative in proposing this idea. It now remains for concrete ideas in this regard to be developed.

Q: Prime Minister Fukuda spoke about cooperation between the United States and Japan in his speech today. Can you tell us any more about this?

A: As you know, much research is already taking place on the development of alternative energy sources, and cooperation between Japan and the United States in this regard already exists. But this can be expanded.

Last summer, I came to the United States with a group of other members of the Diet, and we traveled around the United States exchanging ideas on alternative energy sources. We spoke with General Electric and General Atomic about research and development efforts, we traveled to Houston and talked with oil producers, came to New York and discussed with executives from the major oil producers. We also traveled to a research and

development facility in New Jersey. In Washington, D.C. we met with Senator Jackson, Senator Mike McCormick, and others.

In Japan 31 legislators, including myself, have formed a group to study future energy sources. We particularly like thermonuclear fusion (power).

I believe that mankind must continue to develop and grow, and the industrialized countries can greatly benefit, both materially and culturally, from the development of fusion power. Prime Minister Fukuda supports this project.

Today, just five minutes before his speech, Fukuda asked me if I liked the idea of emphasizing fusion power and I told him yes, I liked the idea very much.

Q: Some people in the United States have mentioned Senator McCormick as a possible replacement for Schlesinger as Energy Secretary.

A: I wouldn't know about that, but much would depend on President Carter changing his present nuclear power policy. I don't know if McCormick is a strong supporter of fusion power. I know he very much wants the Clinch River breeder reactor.

Q: Are you aware that both Schlesinger and Treasury Secretary Blumenthal have come under heavy criticism in the United States for their low growth ideas, Schlesinger in relation to energy, and Blumenthal because of his policy of allowing the dollar value to fall?

A: Let me give my frank opinion of the situation in the United States. I think the United States has been a great pioneer in many fields and really has a pioneer spirit. But recently the United States has been losing a sense of a national objective, and this has led to many problems.

Q: We refer to this as the "British disease."

A: I wouldn't go that far. I don't think the United States will ever be that weak.

Before I came to the United States I saw the American movie "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," and I think that the United States must have an "encounter" with the future. The United States must face the future with courage. If this is done, the dollar will regain its international prestige as the key international currency. In this regard, I think Japan and the United States should cooperate very closely in developing the technologies of the future, for the benefit of both countries.