



JRJ at San Francisco



J.R. Jayewardene addressing the San Francisco Peace Conference in 1951



SUZUKI Yasuo
(Chief Representative, COSMOS Scholarship)



GOKITA Kyoko
(Vice Representative, COSMOS Scholarship)

'HATRED CEASES NOT BY HATRED, BUT BY LOVE'

"We in Ceylon were fortunate that we were not invaded, but the damage caused by air raids, by the stationing of enormous armies under the South-East Asian Command, and by the slaughter- tapping of one of our main commodities, rubber, when we were the only producers of natural rubber for the Allies, entitle us to ask that the damage so caused should be repaired. We do not intend to do so, for we believe in the words of the Great Teacher whose message has ennobled the lives of countless millions in Asia, that 'hatred ceases not by hatred, but by love'.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF SAN FRANCISCO PEACE CONFERENCE

A SPEECH THAT SHAPED WORLD HISTORY

FORMER PRESIDENT J.R. JAYWARDENE'S HISTORIC SPEECH REMEMBERED

RASIKA SOMARATHNA

Seventy years ago, in September 1951, the San Francisco Peace Treaty was signed and Japan was readmitted into the international community after World War II. The historic San Francisco Peace Conference with the participation of 51 nations was convened to determine the status of Japan in the post-World War II international system.

While a number of countries argued for strict terms and sanctions against Japan for its part in the War, the delegation from the then Ceylon, headed by then Finance Minister J.R. Jayewardene, argued for Japan's independence and rejected war reparations. While stressing on peace, nonviolence and compassion and referring to the Buddha's teachings in the *Dhammapada*, Jayewardene stated, "We do not intend to seek reparations (for damages caused to cultivations in Ceylon during WWII) for we believe in the words of the Great Teacher whose message has ennobled the lives of countless millions in Asia, that hatred ceases not by hatred but by love."

Jayewardene's defense of Japan and his momentous speech on September 6, 1951, at the conference received overwhelmingly positive attention. More significant was the subsequent impact. Not only did it help Japan's cause of getting readmitted to the international community and avoiding severe sanctions, but it also earned Sri Lanka a true friend and long-standing Japanese support.

Seventy years hence, former Sri Lankan President Junius Richard Jayewardene's speech is still remembered by the Japanese people with reverence and appreciation.

The following are the views expressed by several intellectuals to the *Daily News* on J.R. Jayewardene's speech at the 1951 San Francisco Peace Conference that changed world history:

'JRJ's speech remembered by Japanese people with profound gratitude'



SUGIYAMA Akira
Ambassador of Japan to Sri Lanka

Seventy years ago this month, the San Francisco Peace Treaty was signed and Japan was admitted again into the international community after World War II. On this occasion, I would like to recall the historic San Francisco Peace Conference held in September 1951, in which the Government of Ceylon, represented by J.R. Jayewardene, the then Finance Minister, had stood by Japan by expressing strong support for a free and independent Japan, renounced reparation claims, and, thus, most effectively solidified the tone of the Peace Conference.

In his moving speech on September 6,

1951, J.R. Jayewardene eloquently emphasized the spirit of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, that is, reconciliation, fairness, and generosity, with the eternity of the truth phrased in "Hatred ceases not by hatred, but by love", which was ennobled in the sacred scripture – the *Dhammapada*. The moving speech reflected the whole-hearted support by the friendly people of the beautiful island of Ceylon and continues to ring louder in the hearts of the Japanese people with profound gratitude.

In fact, the Buddhist literature between Japan and Sri Lanka is age-long, and it was Srimath Anagarika Dharmapala, one of the leading makers of modern Buddhism, who had pioneered binding our hearts by this common faith of peace, and kindled the warmth of friendship during his first visit to Japan in the late 19th century. With the presence of special ties that bound us together at the deeper sphere of our soul, the relations between Japan and Sri Lanka grew from strength to strength through the test of time.

Next year, Japan and Sri Lanka will celebrate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. I would like to take this opportunity to renew my firm resolution to further consolidate our mutual cooperation and prosperity, while embracing the virtuous spirit which had sprouted in San Francisco.

'JRJ's speech helped restore Japan's battered pride'



SHIRAKOMA Hitomi
Historian

The Japanese people lost a lot due to the Second World War. But I think the biggest loss for our people was their pride. The speech by Sri Lanka's former President, the late J.R. Jayewardene at the San Francisco conference helped the Japanese people restore their battered pride. Among other impacts I think this was the most significant for the people of Japan.

The speech by Jayewardene was very timely for Japan which was struggling on many fronts following the devastation caused by the war. The section which touched my heart most was where he referred to Buddha's teachings and said, "Hatred ceases not by hatred, but by love". By doing so he brought to the attention the value of Buddhist principles such as compassion, love and loving kindness. He refrained from making religion the primary focus of his message and fearlessly called on the international community to ensure a free and independent Japan.

The people of Japan still remember that speech made by Jayewardene which changed the course of our country. Recently when I mentioned about it in a TV programme the response was overwhelming. However, unfortunately the younger generation is not very aware how significant this



Monument to honour J.R. Jayewardene at Kotokuin Temple in Kamakura, Japan.

was for the development of their country after the Second World War. I think it is our duty to make them aware about this epoch-making speech.

'JRJ wanted to help a fellow Asian Buddhist country'



Prof. SATO Takao
Chief Monk of Kotokuin Temple, Kamakura, Japan

At the Kotokuin Temple in Kamakura we have built a monument to honour Jayewardene. It was built in 1991 when my grandfather was the chief priest. There is a lot of history relating to Kamakura and the former President of Sri Lanka. On his way to San Francisco in 1951 Jayewardene touched down in Japan and visited the Kotokuin Temple. My grandfather told me he was very impressed with the thinking and character of the politician from the then Ceylon. Jayewardene visited Japan again and a person called Kamisaka Moto took care of him. He wanted to build a monument in honour of Jayewardene and Kotokuin Temple was chosen.

I came to know that Jayewardene visited Japan before going to San Francisco because he wanted to personally witness the situation in Japan at the time. He had spoken to my grandfather about the importance of helping Japan as a fellow Asian Buddhist country. When Kamisaka proposed the monument, my grandfather readily agreed.

Jayewardene's reference to Buddha's teachings in his speech "Hatred ceases not by hatred, but by love" is inscribed in the monument.

The late Jayewardene's comments are very important today as well, especially in these troubled times when the world is facing the Covid epidemic as well as many violent conflicts.

Before the pandemic we had about two million visitors per annum. In recent times, we made a movie about the monument and Jayewardene's speech and also Kamisaka Moto wrote a book which I helped edit. Several years ago, the grandchildren of Jayewardene visited our temple to see the monument. The great Buddha statue at the temple is a big attraction and is world famous. Having J.R. Jayewardene's memorial monument at the same premises is a tribute to the late politician from Sri Lanka who changed Japan's journey in history.

'JRJ helped Japan re-establish international relations post-World War II'



Prof. NOGUCHI Yoshinori
Former Professor, Aoyama Gakuin University

In World War II Japan suffered heavy losses and its people were devastated. Allied forces occupied Japan. Before the San Francisco Conference Japanese people were terrified that there would be more restrictions and difficulties. They thought the Allied Forces would recover damages due to war, from Japan.

The Japanese people were so worried that some of them protested against the conference. Japan fought war against 46 countries. So relations with other countries were at very low ebb. The Soviet Union and several countries at the outset of the conference called for strict sanctions against Japan including claims for damages. However, Jayewardene was adamant and said his country was against imposing severe restrictions on Japan. "The purpose of the Treaty then is to make Japan free, to impose no restrictions on Japan's recovery," he said.

Sri Lanka, at that time called Ceylon, was a colony of the British. So British forces were present at the Colombo and Trincomalee Ports and Japanese planes had attacked those ports. Cultivations in Ceylon, especially the rubber cultivations were damaged extensively.

Jayewardene's speech had two very important points; one is that the position of Ceylon was not solely his country's but was the view of other Asian countries as well. He also proposed the Colombo Conference related to the Peace Treaty with Japan.

He argued that the development and independence of Japan was important for the development of the whole Asian region. He also quoted Buddhist scriptures on the importance of compassion and love. He

received a big applause from the audience. The next day, all the Japanese papers highlighted his speech.

The then Japanese Prime Minister said in Ceylon, Japan has a true friend. After the conference in 1951, the Peace Treaty was inked and Japan established bilateral relations with Sri Lanka. Meanwhile following a proposal by Jayewardene, Japan participated in the Colombo Plan conference on October 6, 1954, marking the beginning of Japan's Official Development Assistance. The Government of Japan has designated October 6 as 'International Cooperation Day' in order to increase public awareness and participation in international cooperation among the Japanese people.

Japan has since then helped the development efforts of Sri Lanka in numerous ways with landmark initiatives such as the Sri Jayewardenepura Hospital and the Cosmos Scholarship programme which, among many others, are testimony to that. The Cosmos Scholarship has helped many deserving students further their education and reach great heights.

'SJGH a gift from Japan in appreciation of JRJ'



Dr. Rathnasiri A. Hewage
Director, Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital

The Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital is located in Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte and serves as one of the country's main healthcare institutions. The hospital was gifted by Japan in appreciation of President J.R. Jayewardene's support of Japan and diplomatic efforts on its behalf after the Second World War. The hospital was donated with 1,000 beds and all other amenities in 1983. While the hospital functions as part of Sri Lanka's free healthcare system, it also contains a section where citizens could pay for private rooms and more personalized levels of treatment and care.

The appreciation of the medical community and in general the Sri Lankan public should go to Japan for this wonderful facility. The hospital is built under the green concept with a lot of emphasis on the environment aspect. We have always strived to enhance this quality. However, currently some of the facilities and infrastructure at the hospital needs renovation and we hope that Japan will once again help.

This wonderful facility is due to former President J.R. Jayewardene's efforts. The friendship between Sri Lanka and Japan was consolidated over six decades ago with the great speech made by him at the Conference held in San Francisco to ink the Peace Treaty, between Japan and Allied Powers. JRJ defended Japan in her hour of need.

(Pictures courtesy: Japanese Embassy, J.R. Jayewardene Centre and Rukmal Gamage)

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