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JOURNALISM SERIES, No. 56

T. C. MORELOCK, *Editor*

## Journalism and Diplomacy

Addresses by Mr. Katsuji Debuchi, Japanese Ambassador to the  
United States and by Senor Don Manuel C. Tellez,  
Mexican Ambassador to the United States



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ISSUED FOUR TIMES MONTHLY; ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER AT THE  
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*The addresses published in this bulletin were among many delivered during Journalism Week, May, 1929, at the School of Journalism of the University of Missouri.*

*Each year journalism in its widest and narrowest phases is discussed by scholars, statesmen and newspaper men on the programs of Journalism Week. The Missouri Writers Guild and the Missouri Press Association hold conventions at the school in connection with Journalism Week.*

*Everyone interested in journalism is invited to attend the annual exercises. Announcements of the program may be obtained in advance by writing to the Dean of the School of Journalism, Columbia, Mo.*

# JOURNALISM AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

By MR. KATSUJI DEBUCHI

Japanese Ambassador to the United States.

“Public opinion is a second conscience,” is an old saying, but at no time has the expression been more significant than it is today. Ours is an age of democracy in which we seek wisdom in the open forum of the many rather than in the cloistered sanctum of the few. In such an age foreign relations, no less than domestic affairs, must be conducted with due regard for public sentiment. All over the world the steady advancement of the popular cause has marked modern politics, ushering in an era in which public opinion has become a dominant factor. No longer can a government endure which does not command the tacit acquiescence, if not the explicit approval, of public opinion.

For a long time diplomacy was shrouded in secrecy and mystery. It was even regarded as an art of hypocrisy and intrigue which shunned the light of publicity. It might have been that the desire for secrecy was due not so much to the intention to deceive the people as to the supposed necessity of deceiving other governments. Whatever might have been the motive, the practice was deplorable. If any evidence is needed of the evil possibilities of secret diplomacy, we may point to wars and conflicts which for ages marred the pages of history. Indeed, no one can think without horror of the recurrence of another holocaust, and world opinion now demands that war must be abolished as an instrument of national policy. It is, I think, this world opinion which has brought about what we may call the democratization of diplomacy. Today, diplomacy is no longer the clandestine art of a few exalted personages. No diplomat in these days can afford to ignore the wishes of the people in conducting foreign relations.

And this new tendency, this new system of diplomacy, if system it may be called, has brought with it many a new danger. With the powerful printing press turning out daily newspapers by the ton, with cables and telegraph wires flashing news across oceans and over continents, with the radio and telephone eliminating distance in the transmission of messages, with the aid of all such paraphernalia of modern civilization, the masses of people in different countries call to one another not always in friendly spirit or in courtesy but often in defiance and insolence. Not infrequently they fail to remember that democracy has imposed upon them a great responsibility as much as it has conferred a great power. They are inclined to forget the duties of democracy, emphasizing only its rights. In such circumstances such direct communication of the peoples as has been made possible by modern inventions has its disadvantages as well as its advantages. Indeed, the importance of educating public opinion cannot be overestimated, especially when we consider the serious consequences certain to follow hasty judgment and rash action based

upon ignorance in international relations. Popular control of diplomacy is possible and desirable only when public opinion is enlightened so that democracy may appreciate its responsibilities as well as its freedom and its privileges.

Viewed in this light, principles laid down by the late Emperor Meiji at the very beginning of the new Japan are worthy of particular notice. When he was called upon to assume the reins of government in 1868, the emperor, then a very young man, proclaimed the historic Oath of Five Articles which has become the foundation of the new regime. The First Article, perhaps the most important one, declares that councils shall be organized, and all governmental affairs shall be decided in accordance with public opinion. This oath constitutes the foundation of our Constitution and our parliamentary institutions.

The Constitution of Japan was promulgated in 1889. During the last forty years, the franchise was gradually extended until in 1925 a restricted suffrage was replaced by a universal manhood suffrage. I am sure that in due course suffrage will be extended to the fair sex, which, through higher education and greater enlightenment, will prove itself capable of sharing with men the privileges and responsibilities of the franchise. And these two scores of years have also witnessed the freedom of speech and of the press ever growing under our Constitution. Today there are in Japan, smaller than California in area, more than one thousand daily newspapers and about three thousand periodicals. Some of these newspapers have a daily circulation of more than a million copies, and the total circulation of the daily press is well in excess of ten million copies a day, or a copy to every six of the population.

I have stressed the necessity of popular enlightenment in the administration of public affairs under democracy. It is in this respect that the press is in a position to render a great service, for it is unquestionably one of the most effective organs for the promotion of public enlightenment. It is not a mere coincidence that the modern press has grown in power and influence side by side with the development of democracy. As Lord Bryce says, it is the newspaper which has made democracy possible in most countries. Without the news it disseminates, and without the free discussion it stimulates, the public would have no adequate means of informing itself of the problems and affairs which are its vital concern. Public opinion which is not based upon adequate and unbiased information cannot be enlightened, and democracy without enlightened public opinion would be no better than autocracy. The responsibility of the press is as great as its power. Especially is this true in regard to diplomacy and international relations. It is as easy for an irresponsible press to stir up ill feeling as it is for a responsible one to promote better understanding among nations. I am happy to observe that the standards of the newspapers in dealing with international affairs have become and are still

growing higher. This is largely due to better co-operation between the press and the government, and between the journalist and the diplomat. In all modern countries it has been the increasing tendency of the government to give out accurate information for publication about its dealings with foreign countries. It may be safely said that the diplomat of today takes the journalist into his confidence so far as practicable without jeopardizing the best interests which are entrusted to him by the government and people.

I must admit that in all diplomatic negotiations there are stages in which matters should be held confidential. It is, of course, impossible to tell everything that is going on or everything that is being planned. When President Wilson advocated as one of his celebrated fourteen points, "open covenants openly arrived at," he did not mean, I am sure, that all diplomatic dealings must be done in public view. This is as impracticable as to smooth out private family differences before the curious gaze of gossiping neighbors. Such a practice will serve no good purpose, but will on the contrary make agreement difficult and even impossible. The wisdom and necessity of this limitation is, I believe, fully recognized by all governments. Within this inevitable limitation, the diplomats of today are willing to take into their confidence the newspapers and newspaper men, whose public spirit and sense of responsibility they have come to appreciate.

I am not here to lecture on journalism even in its limited aspect in connection with diplomacy. I have already spoken too long on this subject. I wish only to add that I feel that in the Orient and in its relationship with America, there is a new and wide field for the American newspapers to explore and develop. Heretofore the United States has faced the Atlantic and turned her back to the Pacific. The Atlantic Ocean, to use a homely metaphor, has been her front garden, the Pacific but her back-yard. What more natural than that the Americans and American newspapers have been absorbingly interested in the countries across the Atlantic? You are eager to go to Europe and to know about its politics, its culture, its social conditions, while only a few of you cherish a desire to study the Orient. But this condition cannot much longer remain unchanged. Almost three decades ago the late President Roosevelt predicted the coming of the Pacific era. "The Atlantic era," he said, "is now at the height of its development and must soon exhaust the resources at its command. The Pacific era, destined to be the greatest of all, and to bring the whole human race into one great comity of nations, is just at the dawn." Today I feel that the transition from the Atlantic to the Pacific era is well under way.

It is a matter for congratulation that this transition has been characterized with friendliness on the part of the peoples and governments whose relationship it has vitally affected. In the particular case of the United States and



Japan, they have, on the whole, lived up to the guiding principle laid down in the treaty of 1854 in the following language:

“There shall be a perfect, permanent and universal peace and a sincere and cordial amity between the United States of America on the one part and the Empire of Japan on the other, and between their peoples respectively without the exception of persons or places.”

It would be neither candid nor true to say that there have been no disagreements between Japan and America. But whatever differences we may have had will eventually yield to mutual respect and concession. In these days when we hear so much about commercial rivalry among nations, it is a remarkable fact that Japan's trade relationship with America is one of co-operation rather than of competition. For example, we sell you silk and buy your cotton. Your cotton you spin. Our silk you weave. I am convinced that commercial rivalry will never find a place in our relations. Even in the Chinese market, vital to our manufacturing industries, few of our exports compete with American goods. It is our firm belief and sincere desire that there should be a close economic co-operation among the three countries whose shores are washed by the same ocean.

The diplomatic horizon of the Pacific is also very clear. Take, for instance, the Chinese question. The open door and territorial integrity of China have long since ceased to be an issue as between the United States and Japan. Whatever military measures Japan was forced to take in Korea and Manchuria at the turn of the century were for self-defense against the powers which concocted sinister designs upon us. On this point unbiased opinions are agreed. Having secured our position from the external menace of aggression, we are now devoting our attention to assist China in her cultural and economic development, more particularly in Manchuria, to the benefit of all interested peoples. We have already invested more than a billion dollars in various enterprises in Manchuria alone, and have made the conditions there so attractive that the Chinese in war-torn, famine-stricken provinces south of the Great Wall are immigrating to this new territory at the rate of about one million a year.

It is a matter of common knowledge that Nature has been extremely niggardly in bestowing Japan with her bounties. To support our ever growing population in the limited space of land devoid of natural resources, taxes the utmost effort of our people. It is not our desire, however, to attempt to alleviate the difficulties by sending our emigrants to countries where they are not welcome. We believe that with the aid of advanced science and advanced methods we can attain a high state of industry and trade, thus increasing our national wealth and advancing the happiness of our people. This means that we must obtain more raw materials from abroad and sell more goods to foreign countries. And the only way to do this is to maintain and cultivate friendly

relations with foreign nations. In other words, Japan must follow a policy of peace and good will if she is to become a great industrial and commercial nation. Therefore, what Japan wants today is not territory, but raw material for her factories, and market for her manufactured goods.

It has been my good fortune to have many warm friends among the representatives of the American press, for which I have a profound respect. Therefore, I am happy to be with you today at this School which has contributed much to the progress of journalism. To us of Japan it is a matter of particular interest that this School has sent forth from its portals many capable young newspaper men to the journalistic world of the Far East.

In concluding my address, I wish to say a few words more. In a corner of your campus stands a quaint old stone lantern. Perhaps you know its story. The lantern, before it was transplanted to this campus, stood on an estate adjoining a certain temple in Tokyo where the first American representative to Japan, Townsend Harris, had his headquarters. A few years ago it was presented to this institution by my predecessor, Ambassador Matsudaira, on behalf of the America-Japan Society of Tokyo. The gift is a modest one, but it is symbolic of the bond of friendship binding our two countries. To cement this bond is a task worthy of the best efforts on the part of all journalists on both sides of the Pacific— a cause to which the United States and Japan may well consecrate themselves in the interest of international peace and understanding.

# JOURNALISM AND DIPLOMACY

By Senor Don Manuel C. Tellez

Mexican Ambassador to the United States

There are few professions so alluring and so enticing to the imagination of young educated and enterprising minds as journalism and diplomacy. The reason for this, I venture to believe, may be found in youth's own qualities: faith, courage and ambition coupled with that stern determination of purpose that may lead to sacrifice, once the elusive conception of ideal, duty or destiny has been realized. Because without those qualities and that determination of purpose there can be no sincere journalist, there can be no true diplomat.

It is an irony—natural, of course, because abstractions are difficult to grasp—that to some common imaginations journalism and diplomacy may still be considered as mere trifling pastimes to occupy the incapacity of some or to satisfy the vacuity and vanity of others, at the expense of all; and it is an irony—but natural, I repeat—that in some common imaginations may still prevail the belief that in the sphere of human endeavors and activities journalism and diplomacy are the opposite poles: that the one is so far apart from the other as salvation from doom.

Nothing is more erroneous than that. It may be true that, at times, in olden days, the gossip and the tattler were the carriers of news; that the first inkling of diplomacy came out from fragrant rooms full of nothing transcendental; that at first, the journalist had to be indiscreet, he having nothing else to do in order to satisfy his community; and that the diplomat, having little else to represent but the vanities and frailties of a sovereign, was naturally and consistently self-conceited and reserved.

But now such is not the case. If there are few professions so enticing and so alluring to the imagination of young educated and enterprising minds as journalism and diplomacy, there are still fewer more open to the comprehension and understanding of human values and, therefore, more loaded with responsibilities.

Through the miraculous achievements of Progress—which have been removing and will unfailingly continue to remove not only the physical barriers, but also those, harder to destroy, of prejudices that for so long have divided the efforts and kept apart the aggregates of the human family—the tattler and the gossip, Mercuries of domestic mischief and amusement, have been transformed into one of the major institutions that human intelligence, perseverance and endeavor have built: The Press.

In Mexico, where the first printing press had been established and the first newspaper in the American continent was already being edited more than a century before the bow of the Mayflower headed for these shores in her fruit-

ful voyage, in Mexico the Press is said to be and popularly it is considered to be a fourth power. If the democratic conception of government is right, if government is the direction and the administration of the business of the people by the people and for the people, then such a conception of the power of the press is not erroneous, since there is at present no other available agency better suited and qualified, not only to foster education, and thereby progress, keeping everybody who cares to be up-to-date in world events and ideas, but to inform the people of their trust and to give broad unrestricted and frank expression in a concrete form to the consensus of the people's opinion about their wants, their hopes, their ideals and their criticisms.

To comply with its commitment, the Press should always enjoy the privilege of freedom, with no more restrictions than those that the common law may deem fit to impose upon the conduct of private citizens for the up-keep of morals and the safeguard of the community. But at the same time it should always be vigilant not to overstep the bounds of that freedom, because if censorship—when unjustified and tyrannical, is always symptomatic of decayed political organizations—propaganda, that is to say, publicity made with the deliberate purpose of deviating public opinion from sane judgment toward a preconceived and selfish end, is a license fraught with the gravest dangers which may lead to national disasters.

Journalism promotes and develops trade and commerce. Journalism supplements education and enhances progress. Journalism, in harmonious cooperation with the people and the government, is the best suited agency to control the excesses of both; thence, an important factor for the material, moral and political aggrandizement of the community. And last, but not least, journalism, which cannot be easily or permanently harnessed with undue limitations and has the whole world as its sphere of action, is the most efficient and powerful instrumentality still at our disposal to promote or hinder among the nations of the world, through the spread knowledge of conditions, possibilities and ideals, that reciprocal understanding leading to sincere international amity which ought to be the goal and, as an aspiration, the pride of our Christian civilization.

Journalism is indeed a power. Its influence may be an undeniable factor for the promotion of individual happiness, of communal welfare and prosperity and of international concord and amity, but its independence as a public institution needs necessarily demand from it heavier responsibilities and a more strict accountability.

Strange as it may seem to some, diplomacy is not in a more placid nor in a less responsible position. When the whims of vanity and unruly ambitions were norms of governmental policies, diplomats may have been personal retainers or mere tea tattlers. Progress in governmental democracy, which has already cost so much and is so dear to the people of the world, has neces-

sarily changed this conception. Now the diplomat may no longer represent a whim nor work for vanities, but without prejudice he must have at heart, paramount in his endeavors, the individual happiness and well-being of the community to which he belongs—happiness and well-being that can not be attained without understanding, peace and co-operation among nations.

Sagacity may still be a requirement in diplomacy, as it is a quality of high value in journalism, because an advanced knowledge may always help to thwart purposes; but now it seems to be inconsistent with moral philosophy, as well in the individual as in the international fields of action, to promote unduly through it the advancement of the interests of the ones at the expense of the interests of the others.

To deserve respect and confidence, to be worthy of their trust, both journalism and diplomacy must be unflinchingly true to themselves, must—no matter what the temptations are, no matter what the hardships may be—keep faith and be always subservient to the happiness of the individual, to the welfare of the community and to the amity of nations. These attainments are the highest ambition to which any imagination may aspire, and their accomplishment, even within modest limits, may well deserve the renunciation of much other happiness.

The opportunity to make a few remarks on journalism and diplomacy on this occasion is a great honor. I could not have the presumption to be doctrinaire on either subject; as in both professions, which have occupied my life, I have never had any other schooling than that of life itself. But these professions have taught me the value of sincerity, of good will and of understanding, here plainly manifest not only in what may concern my modest self, but essentially in what concerns my people, my country and the ideals for which my government is so laboriously working.

Permit me to assure you, in expressing in behalf of my country and in my own name our most sincere thanks for this splendid reception, that not only for the people of Missouri, whose hospitable and friendly feelings are for us traditional, but for the people of all the United States as well, we entertain no other sentiments than those that should always exist between neighbors: understanding, tolerance, good will and amicable and disinterested co-operation.





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Associate Professor of Journalism

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