

A Delegation from KCC-JEE meets with former Vice President Walter Mondale



Front (L-R): Ms. Natsuko Furuya, Mr. Walter Mondale, Ms. Sue Doffing;
Back (L-R): Mr. David Therkelsen, Ms. Megumi Furuta, Mr. Takuzo Ishida, Chancellor Mori

On Thursday, September 8th, a delegation from KCC-JEE met with former Vice President Mondale to discuss the current climate of international exchange in America and Japan. Mr. Mondale appeared to be well-versed in current developments in Japanese politics, as he demonstrated by asking Dr. Mori his opinion of the new Prime Minister, Yoshihiko Noda. The consensus was that Japan, like America, needs a “unity government” (Mr. Mondale’s words) to remain strong in the years to come.

Mr. Mondale, who has been a loyal and consistent supporter of international exchange, spoke of the importance of forging international friendships between young people. “The best thing to do to help countries,” he said, “is to help the young people get together” and to “tighten the relationships,” which he stressed are “so crucial” for global society today. In other words, “You’re doing exactly the right thing.”

Mr. Mondale was pleased to hear from Dr. Mori that Kobe College has an active international exchange program, and mentioned the criteria he uses to judge the quality of an educational institution: “Does it have a healthy international student body, and does it have faculty from other places in the world.”

“Students with no idea about the world,” he added, “Have limited lives.” Mr. Mondale mentioned that although he has seen many failed initiatives in his time, “Working with young people never seems to disappoint.”

When questioned about his ties with Japan, Mr. Mondale explained that his wife Joan is related to Edwin Reischauer, a noted Japan scholar and former Ambassador to Japan. The family is also friends of Warren Mackenzie, a well-known Minnesota potter who was the apprentice of Japanese pottery master Hamada Shoji. Mr. Mondale travelled to Japan several times as a senator, and later assumed the position of Ambassador to Japan from 1993-1996.

Mr. Mondale has supported KCC-JEE on several occasions, most notably when he gave KCC-JEE the Mondale Award in 2006, and when he spoke at a KCC-JEE Symposium in 1998. We are delighted to announce that our own Mr. Takuzo Ishida will be the recipient of this year’s Mondale Award!