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My dear Mr. Secretary:

The spokesman of the Japanese foreign office is quoted this morning as asserting the policy of Asia for the Asiatics in reply to your recent note complaining of unjust treatment of American interests in the Orient. The Japanese statesman evidently has in mind the Monroe Doctrine. The Monroe Doctrine did not contemplate any denial to any country in the world of the right to transact commercial business in any part of the western hemisphere under the safeguards provided by local law.

The Monroe Doctrine merely objected to the monarchies of Europe establishing their system of government by military force on the newly erected democracies in the western hemisphere. The Secretret Treaty of Verona, signed by the members of the Holy Alliance, had denounced the right of democracies to live and had denounced the freedom of the press.

Japan itself has been brought into the highest development of civilization through the commerce brought to its shores by the democracies of the world. The democracies have never attempted to deny the Japanese people the right to govern themselves as they saw fit. Nor did they ever attempt to deny Japanese commerce equal
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The Honorable
Cordell Hull
The Secretary of State

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terms with the commerce of other nations anywhere in the world. Japan itself recognized the justice of this policy in relation to the commerce of foreign nations in Japan as well as in China, where the Open Door was established.

The United States has adopted the Good Neighbor Policy, not only with regard to the democracies in the western hemisphere, but to every nation on earth, including Japan.

Modern thought in the United States forbids any conquest or military aggression of its government upon any nation. The United States has observed this policy so strictly that for one hundred years there has been three thousand miles of undefended border between Canada and the United States. The United States has no desire to dominate any people or to interfere with their right to govern themselves. The people of the United States do not believe, in this stage of civilization, that any nation should by military force attempt to deprive the people of other nations of the right of self-government.

It is a part of the Good Neighbor Policy that all nations should be allowed equal freedom of commerce, leaving each nation to determine for itself the conditions which its domestic policy seems to require in dealing with foreign commerce. This policy denies nothing to the Japanese people or the Japanese Government which is not freely conceded to the peoples and the governments of every other nation in the world.

These principles, based upon justice, true friendship, and good
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will, it is hoped may be useful in advancing the welfare of the people in every nation in the world, including the people of Japan.

The right of the Japanese people to freedom for Japanese commerce with every nation is freely recognized. This policy has been of advantage both to Japan and the United States in their commerce with each other.

Please forgive an old friend for "bring coals to Newcastle."

Yours very sincerely,

Robert L. Owen

RLO/eg