

U. S. Ambassador to Japan John Roos

April 4, 2011 (aboard US Ronald Reagan) Transcribed

Let me start by just saying, looking out over this spectacular view in front of all of you great Americans, I am awed to be here and I can't tell you how deeply moved I am by all that you have accomplished in the last several weeks.

On behalf of the United States of America, let me begin by offering my deepest condolences to the people of Japan for the losses that you have so dearly suffered as the result of the unprecedented disasters that struck your country beginning on March 11th. I recently travelled to Miyagi prefecture to some of the areas that were struck by the tsunami and the earthquake. As most of you know here today, one cannot even begin to imagine the extent of the devastation until you witness it for yourself and even then it's hard to fathom.

In Inshinomaki, I met with a people who lost almost everything in their lives, including their loved ones. But I also could not help but be moved, as I'm sure many of you have been over the last few weeks, by their calm dignity and resilient spirit. Included among the thousands of precious Japanese lives lost in the tsunami, was a young twenty-four year old American English teacher, Taylor Anderson. Last week, Taylor's father told me that the Anderson family was going to find a way to contribute to rebuilding the community in which Taylor lived and loved so much, because that is what she would have wanted in some way to help the kids who she taught for three years. And it is that fabric of friendship between our two countries, represented by each one of you here today, that brings our two countries together.

Today, we stand together, Japan and the United States, side-by-side on the deck of the USS Ronald Reagan as friends who over the last three and a half weeks have worked together day and night to uplift this great country from the horrific devastation. We pause to acknowledge the great work we've done, you on this deck have done, but we also acknowledge the long road ahead.

As Americans, we are all proud to have played, even a small role to support our Japanese friends in their great time in need. So often, we have watched the Japanese play a leadership role around the world in responding to calls for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. This time, the United States and the world has come to support Japan. As we look forward, the United States and Japan will adjust to the needs of the critical work required to rebuild Japan, but our efforts will not diminish. As you, our Japanese friends, continue to work to face the multitude of challenges your great nation faces now and will continue to face in the weeks, months and years ahead, please never, never forget that our country will be here for you, whenever you need us, where ever you need us. Thank you all so much for all you have done. I am so proud of you as an American. Thank you and now let me call upon Minister Kitazawa once again, who it has been my honor and privilege to work with over the last few years. Thank you.