

DIALOGUE WITH DR. WARWICK J. MCKIBBIN

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As JIAP members will note, Dr. Lincoln is the only Japan specialist on this list. He is also the only one with Japanese language skills. The only other scholar with Asian language skills is Dr. Bush who is fluent in Chinese. No Japan analyst in Washington knew of Dr. McKibbin's work; he is a non-resident fellow working in Australia. Of the eight (see asterisks), only three specifically mentioned Japan as an area of expertise in their Brookings biography. Most surprising, Nessen did not mention Drs. O'Hanlon and Oh, who were on everyone else's guess list.

Professor Warwick J. McKibbin writes (12/22/02)

Dear Ms Kotler,

I read with interest your piece in Asia Policy Weekly (on the JIAP website dates Dec 15) and wonder about the quality of your sources and the motivation of your inaccurate comments. Just so that you are more informed, I consider myself to be a serious scholar on Japan. I have worked on the Japanese economy since I worked at the Japanese Ministry of Finance in 1986 and have been to Japan over 36 times since then mostly at the invitation of the Japanese government for academic conferences and as a consultant to various Agencies. I have written two books on issues related to global policy problems with a major focus on Japan (one of the World Economy with Jeffrey Sachs and one on Climate Change Policy with Peter Wilcoxon). I am currently involved with a major project on Japan through the Japanese Prime Minister's Cabinet office. The following are some recent papers I have written on Japan.

[McKibbin W. \(2001\) "Macroeconomic Policy in Japan" paper prepared for the Harvard Asian Economic Panel meeting held in Seoul, Korea October 25-26.](#)

[McKibbin W. and J. Nguyen \(2001\) "The Impact of Demographic Change in Japan: Some Preliminary Results from the MSG3 Model" paper presented to the Fall 2001 International Forum of Collaboration Projects, Economic and Social Research Institute of the Japanese Cabinet Office, Tokyo Sept 17-19.](#)

[Callen T. and W. McKibbin \(2001\) "Policies and Prospects in Japan and the Implications for the Asia Pacific Region" IMF Working Paper WP/01/131.](#)

The first paper was recently published by MIT Press and the others are in various stages of publication.

My paper for the IMF was for the Article 4 Consultations with Japan in 2001. I am not sure who you consulted for your comments about me. The current Minister for the Economy, Professor Heizo Takenaka (who you mention in your piece) wrote a book together with Naoko Ishii about my modelling research (with Jeffrey Sachs) on Japan in the late 1980s. I think if you check with any of those scholars you named as possible replacements for Dr Lincoln you will see that they know my research well. I was also one of the few non-Japanese invited to the Imperial wedding of the Crown Prince and Crown Princess in 1993.

I found your comments that no-one knows of my research as well that you question my scholarship on Japan as both an insult as well as a reflection of the depth of your analysis.

Sincerely Yours

Warwick McKibbin

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JIAP Director Mindy Kotler's Reply (1/6/03)

Dear Dr. McKibbin,

Please excuse my tardy reply to your note. I, like most of Washington, was out of town over the holidays.

It is regrettable that you misread my articles on The Brookings Institution. They were in no way intended to be a judgment about the quality of your work or any one else's. They were simply a review of the resources on Japan available at Brookings for the Washington policy community. Unfortunately, you are not well-known here.

Indeed, you may wish to discuss your Washington profile as a non-resident fellow with Brookings VP of Communications Ron Nessen (he misspelled your name to me). Among the many prominent Washington journalists and Japan experts I talked with after my conversation with him, no one with the exception of Dr. Lincoln recognized your name. In addition, if you examine your biography (as we did) on the Brookings website you will note that Japan is listed 13th among your 19 specialties. Also the bio does not list any papers on Japan; instead the papers noted emphasize economic modeling and environmental economics—these are also the specialties we found on your ANU website which we checked carefully before publishing our articles on Brookings. We also looked at both sites to see if you had Japanese language skills and neither mentioned Japanese language abilities. Also, under the Brookings listing of “scholars by areas of expertise” you are not listed under “Asia” or “Foreign Policy” as is Dr. Lincoln, but listed under “Developing Countries,” “Economics,” and the “Environment.”

I am delighted to learn of your work on Japan and look forward to learning more. The Japan Information Access Project is known for its careful research and as a research resource of scholars and journalists of Japan and Northeast Asia. I hope you will join several of your colleagues in Australia and become a member of JIAP. Attached is a membership form.

With warm regards,

Mindy L. Kotler
Director
Japan Information Access Project