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ECONOMIC SUMMITS: U.S. - JAPAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS DURING THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, 1977-1981

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**Economic Summits: U.S.-Japan Economic Relations during
the Carter Administration, 1977-1981**

Synopsis:

This paper delves into U.S.-Japan economic ties during the Carter Administration, emphasizing protectionist rhetoric's influence on trade and energy talks against post-Vietnam War global shifts. Analyzing diplomatic exchanges and summit discussions show how Japan's ascent and engagements with communist countries challenged U.S. authority, underscoring economic diplomacy's critical role in navigating trade imbalances and energy dependencies for global cooperation.

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Abstract:

Economic summits were pivotal meetings where world leaders convene to tackle pressing global issues. Amidst these high-stakes gatherings, the relationship between the U.S. and Japan during the Carter Administration provides a fascinating glimpse into the complexities of international diplomacy. As Japan rose to economic prominence following the U.S. withdrawal from the Pacific, these two nations grappled with balancing national interests and global economic stability. Central to their discussions was the concept of protectionism. Unlike typical economic diplomacy where protectionism is an implicit strategy, I seek to examine why President Jimmy Carter and Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda explicitly used “protectionism” in their correspondence. At the center of tensions was a bilateral trade imbalance caused by Japan’s export of color televisions to the U.S., which vividly illustrates the nuance dynamics in their bilateral relations related to global responsibility and U.S. hegemony. As I’ve examined archival documents, including summit minutes and diplomatic correspondence, my research highlights the dynamic of tensions between the two states. These correspondences provide broader insights into the challenges of the Carter administration in navigating the world economy and his consistent presidential confidence in the future of both humanity and the economy. By understanding the specificity of world leaders’ explicit references to protectionism we better our understanding of the delicate balance between economic power and diplomatic relations, offering lessons that resonate in today’s complex global landscape.