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STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE CORDELL HULL

BEFORE THE

JOINT COMMITTEE

ON THE

INVESTIGATION OF THE PEARL HARBOR ATTACK

S. CON. RES. 27

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The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, was preceded by months of conversations between the Government of the United States and the Government of Japan. The initiative in this matter came from Japan which, by the beginning of 1941, after nearly a decade of relentless pursuit of a policy of aggression and conquest, had apparently reached a stage in the development of that policy at which she felt the need for a showdown with the United States.

A comprehensive documentary history of these conversations, as well as of the whole course of our relations with Japan during the fateful decade from 1931 to 1941, which began and ended with acts of aggression committed by Japan, was prepared and published by the Department of State shortly after the attack at Pearl Harbor. It comprises well over 2,000 pages and is contained in the volume entitled Peace and War, United States Foreign Policy, 1931-1941, and much more fully in the two volumes entitled Foreign Relations of the United States, Japan, 1931-1941. It is, I believe, the most complete account of a diplomatic record ever published so soon after the events to which it relates.

I commend these volumes to the attention of the Committee. In the present statement I shall attempt to supplement this documentary history with such additional material as might be of interest to the Committee and with a personal analysis and interpretation of the events which led up to the treacherous attack launched by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor. While the story I am about to tell relates primarily to the year 1941, it is necessary also to deal, to some extent, with the developments of the preceding decades in order to lay bare the roots of the events which immediately anteceded the Pearl Harbor attack.

I. BACKGROUND OF 1941 CONVERSATIONS

The Japanese proposal for conversations was directed toward the conclusion of an agreement between Japan and the United States relating to the Far East. It was made early in 1941. Before accepting or rejecting this proposal, the President and I gave the subject thorough consideration against the background of such factors as Japan's record of international aggression, her record of duplicity in international dealings, the sharp divergence between the policies traditionally and currently pursued by Japan and by the United States, and the current situation in the Far East, in Europe, and in the United States.

A. Japan's Record of Aggression

The President and I had to bear in mind and to take into account Japan's past record of aggression and the trend of contemporary developments in the Far East.

Almost from the outset of Japan's emergence as a modern state she had been pursuing a policy of military aggrandizement. For the most part, except during certain brief periods when forces of moderation appeared to be in the ascendancy, the intervals between one aggressive step and the next were but periods of consolidation.

In 1895, following Japan's successful war against China, Japan annexed Formosa and tried unsuccessfully to establish a foothold in Manchuria.

In 1905, after the Russo-Japanese war, Japan established herself securely in Manchuria by acquiring a lease of the Kwantung territory and ownership of the South Manchuria Railway. At that time Japan also acquired southern Sakhalin.

In 1910 Japan annexed Korea after years of encroachment by pressure and intrigue.

In 1915 Japan took advantage of the preoccupation of her European allies with the war against Germany to present to China the notorious Twenty-one Demands.

At the end of the first world war Japan participated in the Washington Conference of 1921-22 and became a party to the treaties concluded there. Among those treaties was the Nine Power Treaty relating to principles and policies concerning China. That treaty envisaged the creation of conditions designed to provide the fullest and most unembarrassed opportunity to China to develop and maintain for herself an effective and stable government. Japan pledged herself to the policies of self-restraint toward China on which the Nine Power Treaty rested.

In 1928, however, following the advent of the cabinet of General Tanaka in 1927, Japan adopted a so-called "positive" policy toward China under which it manifested an increasing disposition to intervene in China's internal affairs.

In 1931

In 1931 Japan invaded Manchuria and subsequently established there a puppet regime under the name of "Manchukuo". By that action, which was a flagrant violation of the Nine Power Treaty, Japan broke completely away from the policy of cooperation agreed upon in the Washington Conference treaties.

I recalled how early in 1934 I welcomed an approach by the Japanese Government in the form of a note (February 21, 1934) by Mr. Hirota, the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, in which he stated that he firmly believed that no question existed between the United States and Japan "that is fundamentally incapable of amicable solution". In my reply (March 3, 1934) I concurred in that view and emphasized our Government's belief in adjustments of questions by pacific processes.

Only a short time after that exchange of notes, however, Japan again unmasked the basic purpose of aggression consistently adhered to by powerful policy-making elements in Japan. On April 17, 1934 the Japanese Foreign Office spokesman gave out a truculent official statement known as the "hands off China" statement. In that statement Japan made clear a purpose to compel China to follow Japan's dictate and to permit other countries to have relations with China only as Japan allowed.

On December 29, 1934 Japan gave formal notice of its intention to withdraw at the end of 1936 from the Naval Limitation Treaty signed at Washington on February 6, 1922. That notice was another clear and significant move in the direction of a course of conquest. Following the giving of that notice, Japan proceeded energetically to increase her armaments, preparatory to launching her invasion of China.

About that time Japan entered into conversations with Nazi Germany which resulted in the conclusion by the two countries, on November 25, 1936, of the Anti-Comintern Pact. In 1937 Italy adhered. While the Pact was ostensibly for self-protection against communism, actually it was a preparatory move for subsequent measures of forceful expansion by the bandit nations--the first step in the creation of the so-called "Axis".

In July 1937, Japan deliberately took advantage of a minor incident between Chinese and Japanese forces at a point near Peiping and began flagrantly to invade China on a huge scale. She poured into China immense armies which spread fan-like over great areas, including industrial and other key centers. These armies raped, robbed, murdered, and committed all kinds of lawless acts. Particularly barbarous were the outrages in Nanking following occupation of that city by Japanese military on December 13, 1937.

On December 12, 1937 Japanese aircraft bombed and sank the U.S.S. Panay in the Yangtze River.

To gain public support in Japan for its program of military expansion, slogans were used such as "the new order in Greater East Asia" and "the East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere".

Sphere". The United States and other countries were charged with attempting to choke Japan's development.

In August and September 1940 Japan with German assistance extorted an agreement from Vichy France under which Japanese troops moved into northern Indochina.

In September 1940 Japan entered into the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy. That alliance was aimed directly at the United States. It was designed to discourage the United States from taking adequate measures of self-defense until both Japan and Germany had completed their programs of conquest in Asia and Europe, when they could turn on the United States then standing alone.

On October 4, 1940 Premier Konoe was quoted by the press in a statement on the Tripartite Pact as having said in part:

> "If the United States refuses to understand the real intentions of Japan, Germany and Italy and continues persistently its challenging attitude and acts ..... those powers will be forced to go to war. Japan is now endeavoring to adjust Russo-Japanese political and economic relations and will make every effort to reduce friction between Japan and Russia. Japan is now engaged in diplomatic manoevres to induce Russia, Britain and the United States to suspend their operations in assisting the Chiang regime."

B. Japan's Record of Duplicity

The President and I also gave thought to the fact that Japan had a long record of duplicity in international dealings. This duplicity was due largely to the fact that the Japanese military were a law unto themselves and consistently overrode commitments which civilian Japanese had given.

In 1904, Japan guaranteed Korea's independence and territorial integrity. In 1910, Japan annexed Korea.

In 1908, Japan pledged with the United States to support the independence and integrity of China and the principle of equal opportunity there. In 1915, Japan presented to China the notorious "twenty-one demands".

In 1918, Japan entered into an inter-allied arrangement whereby forces, not exceeding about 7,000 by any one power, were to be sent to Siberia to guard military stores which might be subsequently needed by Russian forces, to help the Russians in the organization of their own self-defense, and to aid the evacuating Czechoslovakian forces in Siberia. The Japanese military saw in this enterprise an opportunity, in which they were eventually unsuccessful, to annex eastern Siberia and sent more than 70,000 troops.

In the Nine Power Treaty of 1922, Japan agreed to respect China's sovereignty, independence, and territorial and administrative integrity. Japan also agreed to use its influence

to

to establish the principle of equal opportunity there. Japan's whole course in China since 1931 of military occupation and economic domination was in violation of those pledges.

On November 21, 1932, Mr. Matsuoka, then Japanese delegate to the League of Nations, said: "We want no more territory." By the end of 1932 Japanese forces had occupied the whole of Manchuria and in subsequent years they moved southward and westward occupying a vast area of China.

On July 27, 1937, Prince Konoe, then Japanese Premier, said: "In sending troops to North China, of course, the Government has no other purpose, as was explained in its recent statement, than to preserve the peace of East Asia." In order to "preserve the peace of East Asia," Japanese forces for four years had carried warfare and suffering over the greater part of China.

On October 28, 1937, the Japanese Foreign Office said, "Japan never looks upon the Chinese people as an enemy..." Japan showed its friendly feeling for China by bombing Chinese civilian populations, by burning Chinese cities, by making millions of Chinese homeless and destitute, by mistreating and killing civilians, and by acts of horror and cruelty.

On April 15, 1940, Mr. Arita, then Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, said the "Japanese Government cannot but be deeply concerned over any development ... that may affect the status quo of the Netherlands East Indies". Following the occupation of the Netherlands by Germany that spring, Japan sent a Commercial Commission to the Indies which asked concessions so far reaching that, if granted, they would have reduced the Indies practically to a Japanese colony.

After the outbreak of Japan's undeclared war against China in July 1937, Japanese civilian leaders time and again gave assurances that American rights would be respected. Time and again the Japanese military acted in violation of those assurances: To illustrate:

On July 30, 1941, Japanese planes bombed the U.S.S. Tutuila at Chungking and struck within 400 yards of the American Embassy there.

On July 31, 1941, Japan assured our Government that Japan would discontinue bombing the city area of Chungking. On August 11, only eleven days later, the American Embassy at Chungking reported that during the preceding four days Chungking had received unusually heavy and prolonged Japanese air raids.

Time and again the Japanese gave assurances that American lives and property in China would be respected. Yet there were reported in steadily mounting numbers cases of bombing of American property with consequent loss or endangering of American lives.

Time and again the Japanese gave assurances that American treaty rights in China would be respected.

Unnumbered measures infringing those rights were put into effect in Japanese occupied areas. Trade monopolies were set up, discriminatory taxes were imposed, American properties were occupied, and so on. In addition, American nationals were assaulted, arbitrarily detained, and subjected to indignities.

C. Divergence between Japanese and American Policies

The President and I had very much in mind the fact that the United States and Japan had widely different concepts and policies. We went over the successive steps our Government had taken to influence Japan to adopt peaceful policies.

We recalled that Japan's action in 1931 in embarking on a course of aggression and expansion by force and of disregard of treaties had ushered in an ever widening conflict between forces of aggression and those desirous of maintaining peace. Our Government's opposition to Japan's course in Manchuria was set forth in a communication addressed by the then Secretary of State, Mr. Stimson, to the Japanese Government on January 7, 1932, and in a further communication of February 25, 1933, to the Secretary General of the League of Nations.

On January 17, 1933 the President-elect, Mr. Roosevelt, made clear his support of the principle of the sanctity of international treaties by writing out, in reply to a question, a statement as follows:

> "I am ... wholly willing to make it clear that American foreign policies must uphold the sanctity of international treaties. That is the cornerstone on which all relations between nations must rest."

In his first inaugural address, on March 4, 1933, President Roosevelt said that in the field of world policy he would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbor--"the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others--the neighbor who respects his obligations and respects the sanctity of his agreements in and with a world of neighbors."

Thus in 1931-1933, when Japan was carrying forward its program of aggression, the American Government was moving steadily ahead in advocacy of world support of sanctity of treaties and peaceful processes.

On May 16, 1934 I had a general conversation with Japanese Ambassador Saito, one of many conversations in which I endeavored to convince the Japanese that their best interests lay in following policies of peace.

Three days later I talked again with the Japanese Ambassador. During the conversation the Ambassador repeated the formula which his Government had been putting forward publicly for some weeks to the effect that Japan had a superior and special function in connection with the

preservation

preservation of peace in eastern Asia. I brought to the Japanese Ambassador's attention the clear implications contained in the Japanese formula of the intention on the part of Japan to exercise an overlordship over neighboring nations and territories.

On June 12, 1936 in a conversation with the Japanese Ambassador to Great Britain, I told the Ambassador that the impression of the American people was that Japan sought economic domination first of eastern Asia and then of other areas such as it might select, and that this would ultimately mean political as well as military domination. I urged upon the Ambassador the benefit to Japan from its associating itself in a peaceful and constructive program.

Despite all our pleas and efforts, Japan in July 1937 proceeded to invade China. Therefore, on July 16 the Government of the United States issued a statement of fundamental principles of international policy which was directed at rallying all countries to the support of peaceful processes.

In a further statement of August 23, 1937, I applied the principles of the July 16 statement expressly to the situation in China. I stated that the issues in that situation of concern to the United States went far beyond the immediate question of the protection of American nationals and American interests. Serious hostilities in any part of the world were of concern to all nations. Accordingly, I urged on both the Chinese and Japanese Governments that they refrain from hostilities.

On October 6, 1937 the American Government stated that the action of Japan in China was inconsistent with the principles which should govern relationships between nations and was contrary to the provisions of the Nine Power Treaty and of the Briand-Kellogg Pact.

In November 1937 the United States participated with eighteen other nations in a conference held at Brussels to "study peaceable means of hastening the end of the regrettable conflict which prevails" in the Far East. The conference was held in accordance with a provision of the Nine Power Treaty of 1922. The repeated refusals of the Japanese Government to participate in the conference effectively prevented efforts to bring about an end to the conflict by mediation and conciliation. On November 24 the conference suspended its sittings.

In the fall of 1937 our Government was confronted with the decision whether to apply the Neutrality Act to the hostilities between China and Japan. It was clear that the arms embargo authorized by the Act would hurt China and help Japan, since China needed to import arms and Japan manufactured a large supply. The President used the discretion provided by law and refrained from putting the Act into operation.

On July 26, 1939 our Government notified the Japanese Government of its desire to terminate the Treaty of Commerce

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and Navigation of 1911. It was felt that this treaty was not affording adequate protection to American commerce either in Japan or in Japanese occupied portions of China, while at the same time the operation of the most-favored-nation clause of the treaty was a bar to the adoption of retaliatory measures against Japanese commerce. The treaty therefore terminated on January 26, 1940, and the legal obstacle to our placing restrictions upon trade with Japan was thus removed.

Beginning in 1938 our Government placed in effect so-called "moral embargoes" which were adopted on the basis of humanitarian considerations. Following the passage of the Act of July 2, 1940 restrictions were imposed in the interests of national defense on an ever-increasing list of exports of strategic materials. These measures were intended also as deterrents and expressions of our opposition to Japan's course of aggression.

On April 15, 1940 the Japanese Foreign Minister issued a statement disclosing an underlying purpose to extend Japanese control to the South Seas regions, especially the Netherlands East Indies. On April 17 I took cognizance of that statement. I pointed out the importance of the Netherlands Indies in international relationships. I said that intervention in the domestic affairs of the Netherlands Indies or any alteration of their status quo by other than peaceful processes would be prejudicial to the cause of stability, peace, and security, not only in the region of the Netherlands Indies but in the entire Pacific area. I urged that peaceful principles be applied not only in every part of the Pacific area but in every part of the world.

Throughout this period the United States increasingly followed a policy of extending all feasible assistance and encouragement to China. This took several different forms, including diplomatic actions in protest of Japan's aggression against China and of Japan's violation of American rights. Loans and credits aggregating some two hundred million dollars were extended in order to bolster China's economic structure and to facilitate the acquisition by China of supplies. And later lend-lease and other military supplies were sent to be used in China's resistance against Japan.

During the winter of 1940 and the spring of 1941 I had clearly in mind--and I was explaining to members of Congress and other Americans with whom I came in contact--that it was apparent that the Japanese military leaders were starting on a mission of conquest of the entire Pacific area west of a few hundred miles of Hawaii and extending to the South Seas and to India. The Japanese were out with force in collaboration with Hitler to establish a new world order, and they thought they had the power to compel all peaceful nations to come in under that new order in the half of the world they had arrogated to themselves.

I was saying to those Americans that beginning in 1933 I had commenced a systematic and consistently earnest effort to work out our relations with Japan. I had been trying to

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see whether it was humanly possible to find any new way to approach the Japanese and prevail on them to abandon this movement of conquest. We had been urging the Japanese to consider their own future from the standpoint of political, economic, and social aspects. The people of China were living on a very low standard. Japan, if it should conquer China, would keep China bled white and would not have the capital to aid in restoring purchasing power and social welfare. It meant everything for the development of that half of the world's population to use the capital of all nations, such as the United States and other countries, in helping China, for example, to develop internal improvements and increase its purchasing power. We had reminded the Japanese of our traditional friendship and our mutually profitable relations.

During these years we had kept before the Japanese all these doctrines and principles in the most tactful and earnest manner possible, and at all times we had been careful not to make threats. I said that I had always felt that if a government makes a threat it ought to be ready to back it up. We had been forthright but we had been as tactful as possible.

I was pointing out in these conversations that if we had not, by previously modifying our Neutrality Act, been in a position to send military aid to Great Britain in the early summer of 1940 there might well have been a different story. Our aid assisted Britain to hold back the invaders for seven months, while we had that seven months in which to arm, and everybody knew that no country ever needed time in which to arm more than we did in the face of the world situation.

With reference to charges which at times were made that the Government did not reveal everything to the public, I pointed out that a government could not come out every morning before breakfast and give a blueprint of its plans and purposes in times of extreme crisis. If we should announce one day that we were not particularly assertive of any rights or interest in other parts of the world, almost over night we would see the aggressor nations move into those parts. I said that for a while after I went to the State Department I thought that when I was talking to representatives of the aggressor nations they were gazing up in the air, but I soon discovered that they were looking over my shoulder at our Navy and our defensive preparations--that was all that meant anything to rulers bent on violence.

The President had an eye to the situation in the Far East when on January 6, 1941 in his address to Congress he declared that "at no previous time has American security been as seriously threatened from without as it is today". The President said that the whole pattern of democratic life had been blotted out in an appalling number of independent nations and that the assailants were still on the march threatening other nations, great and small. The President defined our national policy as follows:

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We were committed to an all-inclusive national defense. We were committed to full support of resolute peoples everywhere who were resisting aggression and were thereby keeping war away from our hemisphere.

We were committed to the proposition that principles of morality and considerations for our own security would "never permit us to acquiesce in a peace dictated by aggressors."

On January 15, 1941, in a statement in support of the Lend-Lease Act before the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House of Representatives, I said:

> "It has been clear throughout that Japan has been actuated from the start by broad and ambitious plans for establishing herself in a dominant position in the entire region of the Western Pacific. Her leaders have openly declared their determination to achieve and maintain that position by force of arms and thus to make themselves master of an area containing almost one-half of the entire population of the world. As a consequence, they would have arbitrary control of the sea and trade routes in that region."

I pointed out that mankind was face to face with an organized, ruthless and implacable movement of steadily expanding conquests, and that control of the high seas by law-abiding nations "is the key to the security of the Western Hemisphere".

D. Situation in Europe

The President and I had to consider also the effect which would be produced on the European war situation if by any chance we should be successful in stabilizing the situation in the Pacific area. We knew that as the forces of aggression gathered strength in Europe and overran one unprepared victim after another, Japan's appetite to add to her empire by seizing rich territories increased.

The record in Europe was an awful one.

In 1933 Hitler had come into power in Germany. From that time the menace to peace from Japan in the Pacific and from Germany in Europe had developed concurrently.

On October 14, 1933 Germany withdrew from the Disarmament Conference and also gave notice of withdrawal from the League of Nations.

On October 3, 1935 Italian armed forces invaded Ethiopia.

In March 1936 Hitler in flagrant violation of the Locarno Pact proceeded to occupy and fortify the demilitarized Rhineland.

In July 1936 peace in Europe was dislocated further by the outbreak of civil war in Spain.

On March 11, 1938 Hitler sent his armed forces into Austria, and on March 13 proclaimed the union of Germany and Austria.

In September 1938, at Munich, Hitler and Mussolini forced a settlement by which Germany acquired the Sudetenland.

On March 14, 1939 Hitler, in violation of pledges given in the Munich settlement, invaded and occupied Czechoslovakia.

In September 1939 war broke out in Europe. Continued Axis aggression which had been proceeding step by step for several years thus sent the European continent into conflagration.

This weakened the military position of all countries, including the United States, opposed to Japanese banditry in the Pacific.

In the early summer of 1940 France's effective resistance collapsed. Britain was virtually under siege. Germany's vast and powerful military machine remained intact.

Nazi submarines and long-range bombers were taking a heavy toll of ships and materials in the North Atlantic. Shipping was inadequate. The countries resisting aggression desperately needed supplies to increase their defenses.

It was clear that any aggravation of the situation in the Far East would have a serious effect on the already dangerous situation in Europe, while conversely, an easement of the Far Eastern tension would aid enormously the struggle against the Nazis in Europe.

E. Situation in the United States

Finally the President and I, in considering the suggestion regarding negotiations with Japan, had to take into account the situation in the United States, especially as it affected foreign policy. A review of this situation is presented not in a spirit of criticism, but merely to remind ourselves of the inner turmoil through which the whole nation was then passing.

In the years following 1931 the United States, like most of the world, was in the throes of a severe economic crisis. Many of our people had a profound sense of disillusionment over our participation in World War I. The nation was much more intent on internal affairs than on potential threats thousands of miles away.

In the spring of 1933 the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations rejected a proposal, supported by the Administration, which would have authorized cooperation by the United States in an arms embargo against an aggressor nation.

In January 1935 the President sent a message to the Senate, requesting the advice and consent of the Senate to United States membership in the World Court. He pointed

out

out that Republican and Democratic administrations alike had advocated a court of justice to which nations might voluntarily bring their disputes for judicial decision. The President declared that the United States had an opportunity "once more to throw its weight into the scale in favor of peace" at a time when "every act is of moment to the future of world peace". The measure, nevertheless, failed of passage.

In August 1935 in the shadow of a new European war, Congress passed a joint resolution known as the Neutrality Act providing that upon the outbreak or during the progress of war between or among two or more foreign states "the President shall proclaim such fact, and it shall thereafter be unlawful to export arms, ammunition, or implements of war" from the United States to any belligerent country. In signing the joint resolution the President said he had done so "because it was intended as an expression of the fixed desire of the Government and the people of the United States to avoid any action which might involve us in war". But the President said, with emphasis, that the "inflexible" arms-embargo provisions "might drag us into war instead of keeping us out". A few months later I urged, in reference to the application of the Neutrality Act, the wisdom of leaving discretion to the Executive.

In January 1936 a "neutrality" bill containing a provision for restricting the export to belligerents of abnormal quantities of war materials was introduced in Congress at my request. Although extended hearings were held in which I and others urged the adoption of the measure, isolationist sentiment was so strong that it failed of passage.

During this period our nation still showed signs of deep suspicion of and hostility toward any line of policy which appeared to extend our commitments abroad.

These signs were interpreted by the aggressor nations as meaning that the United States would not oppose effectively their policies of conquest.

A few examples of this public state of mind may be cited.

Early in 1938 a relatively modest naval expansion program received a great deal of criticism and suspicion as to the use to which the program would be put. So strong was this feeling that I made a public reply on February 10, 1938 to a letter from a member of Congress in which I gave reassurances that the proposed program did not contemplate the use of any of the units in cooperation with any other nation in any part of the world. I also stated that it was the desire of our Government that the United States not be drawn into or forced into war. I warned, however, that if every peaceful nation insisted on a policy of aloofness, the result would be to encourage nations inclined to play lawless roles.

It was during this same period that the movement for a popular referendum as a prerequisite for a declaration of

war

war was at its height. Such a proposal was rejected by the House of Representatives by a very narrow vote (January 10, 1938 by a vote of 209-188).

Fortune published in April 1938 a poll which showed that 54 percent of those polled thought that we should withdraw entirely from China, and only 30 percent thought we should take steps to make the Japanese respect our rights.

In the summer of 1939 an effort led by the President and myself to secure a revision of the neutrality legislation, which would have strengthened the hands of the western democracies against Hitler, was violently opposed and blocked on the wholly mistaken theory that no war was likely to occur and, if it did occur, no attack against us was likely.

Following the outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939 our nation began gradually to awaken to the awful peril of two aggressors on the rampage, one on our left hand, and the other on our right.

Congress speedily enacted revision of the Neutrality Act.

When the Nazis crushed France in June 1940 and Japan began to show strong interest in French, Dutch and other territories in the Far East, we accelerated our rearmament program and adopted the Selective Service Act.

But most of those measures were attended by strenuous public debate and dissension. Many well-meaning people of all political faiths were confused as to what our course should be in a world apparently falling apart. A considerable number of our people were still clinging to the fundamental belief that no serious danger from foreign wars did or could threaten this country, and that about all the nation had to do to keep out of war was to stay at home and mind its own business.

During this period of internal debate, while the nation was gradually moving toward awareness of the menace from abroad, there was forced into the Selective Service Act inclusion of a provision that our new citizen army could not be used outside the Western Hemisphere except in our own possessions. In August 1941, only by the narrow margin of a House vote of 203 to 202, did Congress extend the service of men inducted under the Act, after the measure had been urged in the strongest terms by the President, myself and other members of the Administration.

Throughout these years the President and I repeatedly called attention in public addresses to the darkening clouds of war in the east and west and to their menace to ourselves. We attempted to explain the basic problems confronting us, and at the same time we tried to avoid playing into the hands of the aggressors or causing irritations that would slam the door. The text of the more important public statements made by the President and by me is given in Peace and War.

F. Decision to Enter into Conversations with the Japanese

The constantly growing danger in the Far East, the acuteness of the situation in Europe, the vast expanse of territory to be defended, the necessity of building up our

own

own armanents, the necessity of supplying materials for defense of this hemisphere, of the British Isles, of the Near East and of the Far East, the generally divided attitude of the American public toward the world situation, and growing realization of the far-reaching consequences to the whole world which would follow the extension of the European war and of the hostilities in China to the entire Pacific area and of the importance of averting if possible such a development--all these constituted significant and inescapable factors which the President and I reviewed in considering the Japanese suggestion.

In the light of Japan's past and current record and in view of the wide divergences between the policies which the United States and Japan had been pursuing in the Far East, I estimated from the outset that there was not one chance in twenty or one in fifty or even one in a hundred of reaching a peaceful settlement. Existing treaties relating to the Far East were adequate, provided the signatory governments lived up to them. We were, therefore, not calling for new agreements. But if there was a chance that new agreements would contribute to peace in the Pacific, the President and I believed that we should not neglect that possibility, slim as it was.

We had in mind doing everything we could to bring about a peaceful, fair, and stabilizing settlement of the situation throughout the Pacific area. Such a course was in accordance with the traditional attitudes and beliefs of the American people. Moreover, the President and I constantly had very much in mind the advice of our highest military authorities who kept emphasizing to us the imperative need of having time to build up preparations for defense vital not only to the United States but to many other countries resisting aggression. Our decision to enter into the conversations with the Japanese was, therefore, in line with our need to rearm for self-defense.

The President and I fully realized that the Japanese Government could not, even if it wished, bring about an abrupt transformation in Japan's course of aggression. We realized that so much was involved in a reconstruction of Japan's position that implementation to any substantial extent by Japan of promises to adopt peaceful courses would require a long time. We were, therefore, prepared to be patient in an endeavor to persuade Japan to turn from her course of aggression. We carried no chip on our shoulder, but we were determined to stand by a basic position, built on fundamental principles which we applied not only to Japan but to all countries.

II. CONVERSATIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS PRIOR TO JULY 1941

On February 14, 1941 the President received the new Japanese Ambassador, Admiral Nomura, in a spirit of cordiality and said that they could talk candidly. He pointed out that relations between the United States and Japan were deteriorating and mentioned Japanese movements southward and Japanese entry into the Tripartite Agreement. The President suggested that the Ambassador might like to re-examine and frankly discuss with the Secretary of State important phases of American-Japanese relations.

On March 8, in my first extended conversation with the Japanese Ambassador I emphasized that the American people had become fully aroused over the German and Japanese movements to take charge of the seas and of the other continents for their own arbitrary control and to profit at the expense of the welfare of all of the victims.

On March 14 the Japanese Ambassador saw the President and me. The President agreed with an intimation by the Ambassador that matters between our two countries could be worked out without a military clash and emphasized that the first step would be removal of suspicion regarding Japan's intentions. With the Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka on his way to Berlin, talking loudly, and Japanese naval and air forces moving gradually toward Thailand, there was naturally serious concern and suspicion.

On April 16 I had a further conversation with the Japanese Ambassador. I pointed out that the one paramount preliminary question about which our Government was concerned was a definite assurance in advance that the Japanese Government had the willingness and power to abandon its present doctrine of conquest by force and to adopt four principles which our Government regarded as the foundation upon which relations between nations should rest, as follows:

(1) Respect for the territorial integrity and the sovereignty of each and all nations;

(2) Support of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries;

(3) Support of the principle of equality, including equality of commercial opportunity;

(4) Non-disturbance of the status quo in the Pacific except as the status quo may be altered by peaceful means.

I told the Japanese Ambassador that our Government was willing to consider any proposal which the Japanese Government might offer such as would be consistent with those principles.

On May 12 the Japanese Ambassador presented a proposal for a general settlement. The essence of that proposal was that the United States should request Chiang Kai-shek to negotiate peace with Japan, and, if Chiang should not accept

the

the advice of the United States, that the United States should discontinue its assistance to his Government; that normal trade relations between the United States and Japan should be resumed; and that the United States should help Japan acquire access to facilities for the exploitation of natural resources (such as oil, rubber, tin and nickel) in the southwest Pacific area. There were also other provisions, which Japan eventually dropped, calling for joint guarantee of independence of the Philippines, for the consideration of Japanese immigration to the United States on a non-discriminatory basis, and for a joint effort by the United States and Japan to prevent the further extension of the European war and for the speedy restoration of peace in Europe.

The proposal also contained an affirmation of Japan's adherence to the Tripartite Pact and a specific reference to Japan's obligations thereunder to come to the aid of any of the parties thereto if attacked by a power not at that time in the European war or in the Sino-Japanese conflict, other than the Soviet Union which was expressly excepted.

The peace conditions which Japan proposed to offer China were not defined in clear-cut terms. Patient exploring, however, disclosed that they included stipulations disguised in innocuous-sounding formulas whereby Japan would retain control of various strategic resources, facilities and enterprises in China and would acquire the right to station large bodies of Japanese troops, professedly for "joint defense against Communism", for an indefinite period in extensive key areas of China proper and Inner Mongolia.

Notwithstanding the narrow and one-sided character of the Japanese proposals, we took them as a starting point to explore the possibility of working out a broad-gauge settlement, covering the entire Pacific area, along lines consistent with the principles for which this country stood.

On May 14 Mr. Matsuoka, the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the course of a conversation with Ambassador Grew, said that both Prince Konoe and he were determined that Japan's southward advance should be carried out only by peaceful means, "unless", he added significantly, "circumstances render this impossible". In reply to the Ambassador's inquiry as to what circumstances he had in mind, Mr. Matsuoka referred to the concentration of British troops in Malaya and other British measures. When the Ambassador pointed out that such measures were of a defensive character, the Minister's reply was that those measures were regarded as provocative by the Japanese public, which might bring pressure on the Government to act.

On May 27, 1941 President Roosevelt proclaimed the existence of an "unlimited national emergency" and in a radio address on the same day he declared that our whole program of aid for the democracies had been based on concern for our own security. He warned of the conditions which would exist should Hitler be victorious. The President and I were sure that the proclamation would be noticed not only by Hitler but also by the Japanese war lords.

On May 28 I told the Japanese Ambassador that I had it in mind before passing from our informal conversations into any negotiations with Japan to talk out in strict confidence with the Chinese Government the general subject matter involved in the proposals.

During the next few weeks there were a number of conversations for the purpose of clarifying various points and narrowing areas of difference. We repeatedly set forth our attitude on these points--the necessity of Japan's making clear its relation to the Axis in case the United States should be involved in self-defense in the war in Europe; application of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of another country and withdrawal of Japanese troops from Chinese territory; application of the principle of non-discrimination in commercial relations in China and other areas of the Pacific; and assurance of Japan's peaceful intent in the Pacific. I emphasized that what we were seeking was a comprehensive agreement which would speak for itself as an instrument of peace.

The Japanese pressed for a complete reply to their proposals of May 12. Accordingly, on June 21, the Ambassador was given our views in the form of a tentative redraft of their proposals. In that redraft there was suggested a formula which would make clear that Japan was not committed to take action against the United States should the latter be drawn by self-defense into the European war. It was proposed that a further effort be made to work out a satisfactory solution of the question of the stationing of Japanese troops in China and of the question of economic cooperation between China and Japan. There also was eliminated any suggestion that the United States would discontinue aid to the Chinese Government. Various other suggested changes were proposed in the interest of clarification or for the purpose of harmonizing the proposed settlement with our stated principles.

III. JAPAN'S WARLORDS DISCLOSE THEIR INTENTION OF FURTHER AGGRESSION

On June 22 Germany attacked the Soviet Union, and this action started a chain of developments in Japan.

Following an Imperial conference at Tokyo on July 2 in which, according to an official announcement, "the fundamental national policy to be taken toward the present situation was decided", Japan proceeded with military preparations on a vast scale. One to two million reservists and conscripts were called up. Japanese merchant vessels operating in the Atlantic Ocean were suddenly recalled. Restrictions were imposed upon travel in Japan. Strict censorship of mails and communications was carried out.

During this period the Japanese press stressed the theme that Japan was being faced with pressure from many countries. It charged the United States with an intention to establish military bases in Kamchatka and with using the Philippine Islands as a "pistol aimed at Japan's heart". It warned that if the United States took further action in the direction of encircling Japan, Japanese-American relations would face a final crisis.

In July our Government began receiving reports that a Japanese military movement into southern Indochina was imminent. This Japanese movement into southern Indochina threatened the Philippine Islands, the Netherlands East Indies, and British Malaya. It also threatened vital trade routes. We immediately brought these reports to the attention of the Japanese representatives, pointed out the inconsistency between such a military movement and the discussions which were then proceeding, and requested information as to the facts.

On July 23 the Japanese Ambassador stated in explanation of the Japanese advance in Indochina that Japan needed to secure an uninterrupted source of supplies and to ensure against encirclement of Japan militarily. The Acting Secretary of State, Mr. Welles, replied that the agreement which was being discussed between the American and Japanese representatives would give Japan far greater economic security than she could gain by occupying Indochina. He pointed out that the United States policy was the opposite of an encirclement policy. He said that the United States could only regard the action of Japan as constituting notice that Japan was taking the last step before proceeding on a policy of expansion and conquest in the region of the South Seas. Under instructions from me, he told the Ambassador that in these circumstances I could not see any basis for pursuing further the conversations with the Japanese Ambassador.

Thereafter, no conversations were held on the subject of a general agreement with Japan until in August the Japanese Government took a new initiative.

On July 24 President Roosevelt made a proposal to the Japanese Government that Indochina be regarded as a "neutralized" country. That proposal envisaged Japan's being given the fullest and freest opportunity of assuring for itself a source of food supplies and other raw materials

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which--according to Japanese accounts--Japan was seeking to obtain. The Japanese Government did not accept the President's proposal.

It is pertinent to allude briefly to the estimate which we made of the situation at this juncture.

The hostilities between Japan and China had been in progress for four years. During those years the United States had continued to follow in its relations with Japan a policy of restraint and patience. It had done this notwithstanding constant violation by Japanese authorities or agents of American rights and legitimate interests in China, in neighboring areas, and even in Japan, and notwithstanding acts and statements by Japanese officials indicating a policy of widespread conquest by force and even threatening the United States. The American Government had sought, while protesting against Japanese acts and while yielding no rights, to make clear a willingness to work out with Japan by peaceful processes a basis for continuance of amicable relations with Japan. It had desired to give the Japanese every opportunity to turn of their own accord from their program of conquest toward peaceful policies.

The President and I, in our effort to bring about the conclusion of an agreement, had endeavored to present to the Japanese Government a feasible alternative to Japan's indicated program of conquest. We had made abundantly clear our willingness to cooperate with Japan in a program based upon peaceful principles. We had repeatedly indicated that if such a program were adopted for the Pacific, and if thereafter any countries or areas within the Pacific were menaced, our Government would expect to cooperate with other governments in extending assistance to the region threatened.

While these discussions were going on in Washington, many responsible Japanese officials were affirming in Tokyo and elsewhere Japan's determination to pursue a policy of cooperation with her Axis allies. Both Mr. Matsuoka and his successor as Minister for Foreign Affairs had declared that the Three Power Pact stood and that Japanese policy was based upon that pact. Large-scale preparation by Japan for extension of her military activities was in progress, especially since early July. Notwithstanding our efforts expressly to impress upon the Japanese Government our Government's concern and our objection to movement by Japan with use or threat of force into Indochina, the Japanese Government had again obtained by duress from the Vichy Government an authorization and Japanese armed forces had moved into southern Indochina, occupied bases there, and were consolidating themselves there for further southward movements.

The Japanese move into southern Indochina was an aggravated, overt act. It created a situation in which the risk of war became so great that the United States and other countries concerned were confronted no longer with the question of avoiding such risk but from then on with the problem of preventing a complete undermining of their security. It was essential that the United States make a definite and clear move in self-defense.

Accordingly,

Accordingly, on July 26, 1941, President Roosevelt issued an executive order freezing Chinese and Japanese assets in the United States. That order brought under the control of the Government all financial and import and export trade transactions in which Chinese or Japanese interests were involved. The effect of this was to bring about very soon virtual cessation of trade between the United States and Japan.

On August 6 the Japanese Ambassador presented a proposal which he said was intended to be responsive to the President's proposal regarding neutralization of Indochina. In essence, the Japanese proposal was that:

1. The Japanese Government should undertake to refrain from stationing troops in regions of the southwest Pacific, to withdraw from French Indochina after "settlement of the China incident", to guarantee Philippine neutrality, and to cooperate in the production and procurement of natural resources in east Asia essential to the United States; and

2. The United States should undertake to "suspend its military measures in the southwestern Pacific areas" and to recommend similar action to the Governments of the Netherlands and Great Britain, to cooperate in the production and procurement of natural resources in the Southwestern Pacific essential to Japan, to take measures to restore normal commerce between the United States and Japan, to extend its good offices toward bringing about direct negotiations between Japan and the Chungking Government, and to recognize Japan's special position in Indochina even after withdrawal of Japanese troops.

The proposals advanced by the Japanese Government completely ignored the President's proposal, and on August 8 I so indicated to the Japanese Ambassador.

The movement of Japanese forces into Indochina continued unabated after the President's proposal was made known to the Japanese Government. Also since then Japanese forces bombed Chungking more intensely than ever before, Japanese troops were massing on the Thailand frontier, Japan was making demands on Thailand, and Japanese troops were massing on the Siberian frontier of the Soviet Union.

At the same time, on August 8 and again on August 15, an official Japanese spokesman declared that encirclement of Japan by the ABCD powers--the United States, Great Britain, China and the Netherlands--was an actual fact. The Japanese press, while affirming its approval of efforts by the Japanese Government to improve relations with the United States, stressed that the basis for any negotiations must be predicated upon there being under no circumstances any change in Japan's policies, namely, the "settlement of the China Incident, the firm establishment of the Co-Prosperity Sphere, and the Axis Alliance."

IV. JAPANESE PROPOSAL FOR ROOSEVELT-KONOE MEETING

In the conversation which I had with the Japanese Ambassador on August 8, the Ambassador inquired whether it might not be possible for the responsible heads of the two Governments to meet with a view to discussing means for reaching an adjustment of views. After reviewing briefly the steps which had led to a discontinuance of the informal conversations, I said that it remained to the Japanese Government to decide whether it could find means of shaping its policies along lines which would make possible an adjustment of views.

At the Atlantic Conference in August, Mr. Churchill had informed President Roosevelt that the British Government needed more time to prepare for resistance against a possible Japanese attack in the Far East. This was true also of our defense preparations. Furthermore, President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill had agreed that the American and British Governments should take parallel action in informing Japan that, in the event the Japanese Government should take further steps of aggression against neighboring countries, each of them would be compelled to take all necessary measures to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of its country and nationals and to insure its country's safety and security. The President and Mr. Churchill were also of the view that the American Government should be prepared to continue its conversations with the Japanese Government and by such such means to offer Japan a reasonable and just alternative to the course upon which Japan was engaged.

Accordingly, President Roosevelt on August 17, the day of his return to Washington, informed the Japanese Ambassador that if the Japanese Government took any further steps in pursuance of a program of military domination by force or threat of force of neighboring countries, our Government would be compelled to take any and all steps necessary toward safeguarding its legitimate rights and interests and toward insuring the security of the United States. At the same time President Roosevelt informed the Japanese Ambassador, in reply to the Ambassador's requests of previous weeks, that we were prepared to resume the conversations.

At this meeting on August 17 the President also informed the Japanese Ambassador that before proceeding with plans for a meeting of the heads of the American and Japanese Governments, as suggested by the Japanese Government, it would be helpful if the Japanese Government would furnish a clearer statement than had as yet been given of its present attitude and plans.

On August 28 the President was given a message from the Japanese Prime Minister, Prince Konoe, urging that the meeting of the heads of the two Governments be arranged to discuss all important problems by Japan and the United States covering the entire Pacific area. Accompanying that message was a statement containing assurances, with several qualifications, of Japan's peaceful intent.

The President in his reply given on September 3 expressed a desire to collaborate with the Japanese Prime Minister to see whether there could be made effective in practice a

program

program such as that referred to by the Japanese Government and whether there could be reached a meeting of minds on fundamentals which would afford prospect of success for such a meeting. It was suggested that to this end there take place immediately in advance of the proposed meeting preliminary discussions on fundamental and essential questions on which agreement was sought and on the manner in which the agreement would be applied. We felt that only in this way could a situation be brought about which would make such a meeting beneficial.

On September 6 the Japanese Ambassador presented a new draft of proposals. These proposals were much narrower than the assurances given in the statement communicated to the President on August 28. In the September 6 Japanese draft the Japanese gave only an evasive formula with regard to their obligations under the Tripartite Pact. There was a qualified undertaking that Japan would not "without any justifiable reason" resort to military action against any region south of Japan. No commitment was offered in regard to the nature of the terms which Japan would offer to China; nor any assurance of an intention by Japan to respect China's territorial integrity and sovereignty, to refrain from interference in China's internal affairs, not to station Japanese troops indefinitely in wide areas of China, and to conform to the principle of nondiscrimination in international commercial relations. The formula contained in that draft that "the economic activities of the United States in China will not be restricted so long as pursued on an equitable basis" (underscoring added) clearly implied a concept that the conditions under which American trade and commerce in China were henceforth to be conducted were to be a matter for decision by Japan.

On September 6 Prime Minister Konoe in a conversation with the American Ambassador at Tokyo indicated that the Japanese Government fully and definitely subscribed to the four principles which this Government had previously set forth as a basis for the reconstruction of relations with Japan. However, a month later the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs indicated to the American Ambassador that while these four points had been accepted "in principle", certain adjustments would be necessary in applying these principles to actual conditions.

A meeting between the President and Prince Konoe would have been a significant step. Decision whether it should be undertaken by our Government involved several important considerations.

We knew that Japanese leaders were unreliable and treacherous. We asked ourselves whether the military element in Japan would permit the civilian element, even if so disposed, to stop Japan's course of expansion by force and to revert to peaceful courses. Time and again the civilian leaders gave assurances; time and again the military took aggressive action in direct violation of these assurances. Japan's past and contemporary record was replete with instances of military aggression and expansion by force. Since 1931 and especially since 1937 the military in Japan exercised a controlling voice in Japan's national policy.

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Japan's formal partnership with Nazi Germany in the Tripartite Alliance was a hard and inescapable fact. The Japanese had been consistently unwilling in the conversations to pledge their Government to renounce Japan's commitments in the alliance. They would not state that Japan would refrain from attacking this country if it became involved through self-defense in the European war. They held on to the threat against the United States implicit in the alliance.

Our Government could not ignore the fact that throughout the conversations the Japanese spokesmen had made a practice of offering general formulas and, when pressed for explanation of the meaning, had consistently narrowed and made more rigid their application. This suggested that when military leaders became aware of the generalized formulas they insisted upon introducing conditions which watered down the general assurances.

A meeting between the President and the Japanese Prime Minister would have had important psychological results.

It would have had a critically discouraging effect upon the Chinese.

If the proposed meeting should merely endorse general principles, the Japanese in the light of their past practice could have been expected to utilize such general principles in support of any interpretation which Japan might choose to place upon them.

If the proposed meeting did not produce an agreement, the Japanese military leaders would then have been in a position to declare that the United States was responsible for the failure of the meeting.

The Japanese had already refused to agree to any preliminary steps toward reversion to peaceful courses, as for example adopting the President's proposal of July 24, regarding the neutralization of Indochina. Instead they steadily moved on with their program of establishing themselves more firmly in Indochina.

It was clear to us that unless the meeting produced concrete and clear-cut commitments toward peace, the Japanese would have distorted the significance of the meeting in such a way as to weaken greatly this country's moral position and to facilitate their aggressive course.

The acts of Japan under Konoe's Prime Ministership could not be overlooked.

He had headed the Japanese Government in 1937 when Japan attacked China and when huge Japanese armies poured into that country and occupied its principal cities and industrial regions.

He was Prime Minister when Japanese armed forces attacked the U.S.S. Panay on the Yangtze River on December 12, 1937.

He

He was Prime Minister when Japanese armed forces committed notorious outrages in Nanking in 1937.

He as Prime Minister had proclaimed in 1938 the basic principles upon which the Japanes Government, even throughout the 1941 conversations, stated that it would insist in any peace agreement with China. Those principles in application included stationing large bodies of Japanese troops in North China. They would have enabled Japan to retain a permanent stranglehold on China.

He had been Prime Minister when the Japanese Government concluded in 1940 with the Chinese Quisling regime at Nanking a "treaty" embodying the stranglehold principles mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

Prince Konoe had been Japanese Prime Minister when Japan signed the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy in 1940.

As a result of our close-up conversations with the Japanese over a period of months, in which they showed no disposition to abandon their course of conquest, we were thoroughly satisfied that a meeting with Konoe could only result either in another Munich or in nothing at all, unless Japan was ready to give some clear evidence of a purpose to move in a peaceful direction. I was opposed to the first Munich and still more opposed to a second Munich.

Our Government ardently desired peace. It could not brush away the realities in the situation.

Although the President would, as he said, "have been happy to travel thousands of miles to meet the Premier of Japan," it was felt that in view of the factors mentioned the President could go to such a meeting only if there were first obtained tentative commitments offering some assurance that the meeting could accomplish good. Neither Prince Konoe nor any of Japan's spokesmen provided anything tangible.

At various times during September discussions were held with the Japanese. On September 27 the Japanese Ambassador presented a complete new redraft of the Japanese proposals. He urged an early reply.

On October 2 I gave the Japanese Ambassador a memorandum of an "oral statement" reviewing significant developments in the conversations and explaining our Government's attitude toward various points in the Japanese proposals which our Government did not consider consistent with the principles to which this country was committed. Disappointment was expressed over the narrow character of the outstanding Japanese proposals, and questions were raised in regard to Japan's intentions regarding the indefinite stationing of Japanese troops in wide areas of China and regarding Japan's relationship to the Axis Powers. While welcoming the Japanese suggestion of a meeting between the President and the Japanese Prime Minister, we proposed, in order to lay a firm foundation for such a meeting, that renewed consideration be given to fundamental principles so as to reach a meeting of minds on essential questions. It was stated in

conclusion

conclusion that the subject of the meeting proposed by the Prime Minister and the objectives sought had engaged the close and active interest of the President and that it was the President's earnest hope that discussion of the fundamental questions might be so developed that such a meeting could be held.

During this period there was a further advance of Japanese armed forces in Indochina, Japanese military preparations at home were increased and speeded up, and there continued Japanese bombing of Chinese civilian populations, constant agitation in the Japanese press in support of extremist policies, and the unconciliatory and bellicose utterances of Japanese leaders. For example, Captain Hideo Hiraide, director of the naval intelligence section of Imperial Headquarters, was quoted on October 16 as having declared in a public speech:

> "America, feeling her insecurity..., is carrying out naval expansion on a large scale. But at present America is unable to carry out naval operations in both the Atlantic and Pacific simultaneously.
>
> "The imperial navy is prepared for the worst and has completed all necessary preparations. In fact, the imperial navy is itching for action, when needed.
>
> "In spite of strenuous efforts by the government, the situation is now approaching a final parting of the ways. The fate of our empire depends upon how we act at this moment. It is certain that at such a moment our Navy should set about on its primary mission."

V. TOJO CABINET AND CONTINUATION OF CONVERSATIONS

On October 16, 1941 the Konoe Cabinet fell. On the following day it was replaced by a new cabinet, headed by General Tojo.

The new cabinet informed our Government that it desired to continue the exploratory conversations looking to peace in the Pacific and to an agreement with the United States. But it showed no willingness to effect any fundamental modification of the Japanese position. Instead, Japanese bellicose utterances continued.

On October 17 the American press carried the following statement by Major General Kiyofuku Okamoto:

> "Despite the different views advanced on the Japanese-American question, our national policy for solution of the China affair and establishment of a common co-prosperity sphere in East Asia remains unaltered.
>
> "For fulfillment of this national policy, this country has sought to reach an agreement of views with the U. S. by means of diplomatic means. There is, however, a limit to our concessions, and the negotiations may end in a break with the worst possible situation following. The people must therefore be resolved to cope with such a situation."

Clearly, the Japanese warlords expected to clinch their policy of aggrandizement and have the United States make all the concessions.

On October 30 the Japanese Foreign Minister told the American Ambassador that the Japanese Government desired that the conversations be concluded successfully without delay and he said that "in order to make progress, the United States should face certain realities and facts", and he thereupon cited the stationing in China of Japanese armed forces.

The general world situation continued to be very critical, rendering it desirable that every reasonable effort be made to avoid or at least to defer as long as possible any rupture in the conversations. From here on for some weeks especially intensive study was given in the Department of State to the possibility of reaching some stop-gap arrangement with the Japanese so as to tide over the immediate critical situation and thus to prevent a breakdown in the conversations, and even perhaps to pave the way for a subsequent general agreement. The presentation to the Japanese of a proposal which would serve to keep alive the conversations would also give our Army and Navy time to prepare and to expose Japan's bad faith if it did not accept. We considered every kind of suggestion we could find which might help or keep alive the conversations and at the same time be consistent with the integrity of American principles.

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In the last part of October and early November messages came to this Government from United States Army and Navy officers in China and from Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek stating that he believed that a Japanese attack on Kunming was imminent. The Generalissimo requested that the United States send air units to China to defeat this threat. He made a similar request of the British Government. He also asked that the United States issue a warning to Japan.

At this time the Chinese had been resisting the Japanese invaders for four years. China sorely needed equipment. Its economic and financial situations were very bad. Morale was naturally low. In view of this, even though a Chinese request might contain points with which we could not comply, we dealt with any such request in a spirit of utmost consideration befitting the gravity of the situation confronting our hard-pressed Chinese friends.

I suggested that the War and Navy Departments study this Chinese appeal. In response, the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations sent a memorandum of November 5 to the President giving an estimate concerning the Far Eastern situation. At the conclusion of this estimate the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations recommended:

"That the dispatch of United States armed forces for intervention against Japan in China be disapproved.

"That material aid to China be accelerated consonant with the needs of Russia, Great Britain, and our own forces.

"That aid to the American Volunteer Group be continued and accelerated to the maximum practicable extent.

"That no ultimatum be delivered to Japan."

I was in thorough accord with the views of the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations that United States armed forces should not be sent to China for use against Japan. I also believed so far as American foreign policy considerations were involved that material aid to China should be accelerated as much as feasible, and that aid to the American Volunteer Group should be accelerated. Finally, I concurred completely in the view that no ultimatum should be delivered to Japan. I had been striving for months to avoid a showdown with Japan, and to explore every possible avenue for averting or delaying war between the United States and Japan. That was the cornerstone of the effort which the President and I were putting forth with our utmost patience.

On November 14 the President replied to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, in line with the estimate and recommendations contained in the memorandum of November 5 of the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations. The Generalissimo was told that from our information it did not appear that a Japanese land campaign against Kunming was immediately imminent. It was indicated that American air units could not be sent and that the United States would not issue a warning but there were outlined ways, mentioned in the memorandum of the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations, in which the United States would continue to assist China.

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On November 7, I attended the regular Cabinet meeting. It was the President's custom either to start off the discussion himself or to ask some member of the Cabinet a question. At this meeting he turned to me and asked whether I had anything in mind. I thereupon pointed out for about 15 minutes the dangers in the international situation. I went over fully developments in the conversations with Japan and emphasized that in my opinion relations were extremely critical and that we should be on the lookout for a military attack anywhere by Japan at any time. When I finished, the President went around the Cabinet. All concurred in my estimate of the dangers. It became the consensus of the Cabinet that the critical situation might well be emphasized in speeches in order that the country would, if possible, be better prepared for such a development.

Accordingly, Secretary of the Navy Knox delivered an address on November 11, 1941, in which he stated that we were not only confronted with the necessity of extreme measures of self-defense in the Atlantic, but we were "likewise faced with grim possibilities on the other side of the world--on the far side of the Pacific"; that the Pacific no less than the Atlantic called for instant readiness for defense.

On the same day Under Secretary of State Welles in an address stated that beyond the Atlantic a sinister and pitiless conqueror had reduced more than half of Europe to abject serfdom and that in the Far East the same forces of conquest were menacing the safety of all nations bordering on the Pacific. The waves of world conquest were "breaking high both in the East and in the West," he said, and were threatening, more and more with each passing day, "to engulf our own shores." He warned that the United States was in far greater peril than in 1917; that "at any moment war may be forced upon us."

Early in November the Japanese Government decided to send Mr. Saburo Kurusu to Washington to assist the Japanese Ambassador in the conversations.

On November 7 the Japanese Ambassador handed me a document containing draft provisions relating to Japanese forces in China, Japanese forces in Indochina, and the principle of non-discrimination. That proposal contained nothing fundamentally new or offering any real recessions from the position consistently maintained by the Japanese Government.

In telegrams of November 3 and November 17 the American Ambassador in Japan cabled warnings of the possibility of sudden Japanese attacks which might make inevitable war with the United States.

In the first half of November there were several indeterminate conversations with the Japanese designed to clarify specific points. On November 15 I gave the Japanese Ambassador an outline for a possible joint declaration by the United States and Japan on economic policy.

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I pointed out that this represented but one part of the general settlement we had in mind. This draft declaration of economic policy envisaged that Japan could join with the United States in leading the way toward a general application of economic practices which would give Japan much of what her leaders professed to desire.

On November 12 the Japanese Foreign Office, both through Ambassador Grew and through their Ambassador here, urged that the conversations be brought to a settlement at the earliest possible time. In view of the pressing insistence of the Japanese for a definitive reply to their outstanding proposals, I was impelled to comment to the Japanese Ambassador on November 15 that the American Government did not feel that it should be receiving such representations, suggestive of ultimatums.

On November 15 Mr. Kurusu reached Washington. On November 17 he and the Japanese Ambassador called on me and later on the same day on the President.

In those conversations Mr. Kurusu said that the Japanese Prime Minister, General Tojo, seemed optimistic in regard to adjusting the question of applying the principle of non-discrimination and the question of Japan's relation to the Tripartite Alliance, but he indicated that it would be difficult to withdraw Japanese troops from China. Mr. Kurusu offered no new suggestions on those two points. This was further evidence that Japan was bent on exercising a position of military, political and economic control and dominance of China. The President made clear the desire of this country to avoid war between our two countries and to bring about a settlement on a fair and peaceful basis in the Pacific area.

On November 18 the Japanese Ambassador and Mr. Kurusu called on me. In that conversation the question of Japan's relation to the Tripartite Pact was discussed at length. I asked the Japanese Ambassador if he did not think that something could be worked out on this vital question. The Ambassador made no helpful comment in regard to the continued stationing of Japanese troops in China.

The Ambassador and Mr. Kurusu suggested the possibility of a temporary arrangement or a modus vivendi. The Ambassador brought up the possibility of going back to the status which existed before the date in July when, following the Japanese entry into southern French Indochina, the United States put freezing measures into effect.

I said that if we should make some modifications in our embargo on the strength of such a step by Japan as the Ambassador had mentioned, we would not know whether the troops to be withdrawn from French Indochina would be diverted to some equally objectionable movement elsewhere. I said that it would be difficult for our Government to go a long way in removing the embargo unless we believed that Japan was definitely started on a peaceful course and had renounced purposes of conquest. I said that I would consult with the representatives of other countries on this suggestion. On the same day I informed the British Minister of my talk with the Japanese about the suggestion of a temporary limited arrangement.

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On November 19 the Japanese Ambassador and Mr. Kurusu again called on me at their request. During that conversation the Ambassador made it clear that Japan could not abrogate the Tripartite Alliance and felt bound to carry out its obligations.

VI. JAPANESE ULTIMATUM OF NOVEMBER 20 AND OUR REPLY

On November 20 the Japanese Ambassador and Mr. Kurusu presented to me a proposal which on its face was extreme. I knew, as did other high officers of the Government, from intercepted Japanese messages supplied to me by the War and Navy Departments, that this proposal was the final Japanese proposition--an ultimatum.

The proposal read as follows:

"1. Both the Governments of Japan and the United States undertake not to make any armed advancement into any of the regions in the Southeastern Asia and the Southern Pacific area excepting the part of French Indochina where the Japanese troops are stationed at present.

"2. The Japanese Government undertakes to withdraw its troops now stationed in French Indo-China upon either the restoration of peace between Japan and China or the establishment of an equitable peace in the Pacific Area.

"In the meantime the Government of Japan declares that it is prepared to remove its troops now stationed in the southern part of French Indo-China to the northern part of the said territory upon the conclusion of the present arrangement which shall later be embodied in the final agreement.

"3. The Government of Japan and the United States shall cooperate with a view to securing the acquisition of those goods and commodities which the two countries need in Netherlands East Indies.

"4. The Governments of Japan and the United States mutually undertake to restore their commercial relations to those prevailing prior to the freezing of the assets.

"The Government of the United States shall supply Japan a required quantity of oil.

"5. The Government of the United States undertakes to refrain from such measures and actions as will be prejudicial to the endeavors for the restoration of general peace between Japan and China."

The plan thus offered called for the supplying by the United States to Japan of as much oil as Japan might require, for suspension of freezing measures, for discontinuance by the United States of aid to China, and for withdrawal of moral and material support from the recognized Chinese Government. It contained a provision that Japan would shift her armed forces from southern Indochina to

northern

northern Indochina, but placed no limit on the number of armed forces which Japan might send to Indochina and made no provision for withdrawal of those forces until after either the restoration of peace between Japan and China or the establishment of an "equitable" peace in the Pacific area. While there were stipulations against further extension of Japan's armed force into southeastern Asia and the southern Pacific (except Indochina), there were no provisions which would have prevented continued or fresh Japanese aggressive activities in any of the regions of Asia lying to the north of Indochina--for example, China and the Soviet Union. The proposal contained no provision pledging Japan to abandon aggression and to revert to peaceful courses.

On November 21 Mr. Kurusu called alone upon me and gave me a draft of a formula relating to Japan's obligations under the Tripartite Pact. That formula did not offer anything new or helpful. I asked Mr. Kurusu whether he had anything more to offer on the subject of a peaceful settlement as a whole. Mr. Kurusu replied that he did not.

On November 21 we received word from the Dutch that they had information that a Japanese force had arrived near Palao, the nearest point in the Japanese Mandated Islands to the heart of the Netherlands Indies. Our Consuls at Hanoi and Saigon had been reporting extensive new landings of Japanese troops and equipment in Indochina. We had information through intercepted Japanese messages that the Japanese Government had decided that the negotiations must be terminated by November 25, later extended to November 29. We knew from other intercepted Japanese messages that the Japanese did not intend to make any concessions, and from this fact taken together with Kurusu's statement to me of November 21 making clear that his Government had nothing further to offer, it was plain, as I have mentioned, that the Japanese proposal of November 20 was in fact their "absolutely final proposal."

The whole issue presented was whether Japan would yield in her avowed movement of conquest or whether we would yield the fundamental principles for which we stood in the Pacific and all over the world. By mid-summer of 1941 we were pretty well satisfied that the Japanese were determined to continue with their course of expansion by force. We had made it clear to them that we were standing fast by our principles. It was evident, however, that they were playing for the chance that we might be overawed into yielding by their threats of force. They were armed to the teeth and we knew they would attack whenever and wherever they pleased. If by chance we should have yielded our fundamental principles, Japan would probably not have attacked for the time being--at least not until she had consolidated the gains she would have made without fighting.

There was never any question of this country's forcing Japan to fight. The question was whether this country was ready to sacrifice its principles.

To have accepted the Japanese proposal of November 20 was clearly unthinkable. It would have made the United

States

States an ally of Japan in Japan's program of conquest and aggression and of collaboration with Hitler. It would have meant yielding to the Japanese demand that the United States abandon its principles and policies. It would have meant abject surrender of our position under intimidation.

The situation was critical and virtually hopeless. On the one hand our Government desired to exhaust all possibilities of finding a means to a peaceful solution and to avert or delay an armed clash, especially as the heads of this country's armed forces continued to emphasize the need of time to prepare for resistance. On the other hand, Japan was calling for a showdown.

There the situation stood--the Japanese unyielding and intimidating in their demands and we standing firmly for our principles.

The chances of meeting the crisis by diplomacy had practically vanished. We had reached the point of clutching at straws.

Three possible choices presented themselves.

Our Government might have made no reply. The Japanese war lords could then have told their people that the American Government not only would make no reply but would also not offer any alternative.

Our Government might have rejected flatly the Japanese proposal. In that event the Japanese war lords would be afforded a pretext, although wholly false, for military attack.

Our Government might endeavor to present a reasonable counter-proposal.

The last course was the one chosen.

In considering the content of a counter-proposal consideration was given to the inclusion therein of a possible modus vivendi. Such a project would have the advantages of showing our interest in peace to the last and of exposing the Japanese somewhat in case they should not accept. It would, if it had served to prolong the conversations, have gained time for the Army and Navy to prepare. The project of a modus vivendi was discussed and given intensive consideration from November 22 to November 26 within the Department of State, by the President, and by the highest authorities of the Army and Navy. A first draft was completed on November 22 and revised drafts on November 24 and 25. It was also discussed with the British, Australian, Dutch and Chinese Governments.

The projected modus vivendi provided for mutual pledges by the United States and Japan that their national policies would be directed toward lasting peace; for mutual undertakings against advances by military force or threat of force in the Pacific area; for withdrawal by Japan of its armed forces from southern Indochina; for a modification by the United States of its freezing and export restrictions to permit resumption of certain categories of trade, within certain specified limits, between the United States and Japan;

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for the corresponding modification by Japan of its freezing and export restrictions; and for an approach by the United States to the Australian, British and Dutch Governments with a view to their taking similar measures. There was also an affirmation by the United States of its fundamental interest that any settlement between the Japanese and Chinese Governments be based upon the principles of peace, law, order and justice. There was provision that the modus vivendi would remain in force for three months and would be subject to further extension.

It was proposed as a vital part of the modus vivendi at the same time to give to the Japanese for their consideration an outline of a peace settlement which might serve as a basis for working out a comprehensive settlement for the Pacific area along broad and just lines. On November 11 there had been prepared in the Division of Far Eastern Affairs for possible consideration a draft of a proposal along broad lines. This draft like others was drawn up with a view to keeping the conversations going (and thus gaining time) and to leading, if accepted, to an eventual comprehensive settlement of a nature compatible with American principles. This draft proposal contained statements of general principles, including the four principles which I had presented to the Japanese on April 16, and a statement of principles in regard to economic policy. Under this draft the United States would suggest to the Chinese and Japanese Governments that they enter into peace negotiations, and the Japanese Government would offer the Chinese Government an armistice during the period of the peace negotiations. The armistice idea was dropped because it would have operated unfairly in Japan's favor.

A further proposal to which I gave attention was a revision in tentative form made by the Department on November 19 of a draft of a proposed comprehensive settlement received from the Treasury Department on the previous day. This tentative proposal was discussed with the War and Navy Departments. In subsequent revisions points to which objections were raised by them were dropped. A third proposal which I had under consideration was that of the modus vivendi.

What I considered presenting to the Japanese from about November 22 to November 26 consisted of our modus vivendi draft and an outline of a peace settlement which might serve as a basis for working out a comprehensive settlement for the Pacific area along broad and just lines. This second and more comprehensive part followed some of the lines set forth in the November 11 draft and in the November 19 draft.

While the modus vivendi proposal was still under consideration, I emphasized the critical nature of this country's relations with Japan at the meeting of the War Council on November 25. The War Council, which consisted of the President, the Secretaries of State, War and Navy, the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations, was a sort of a clearing house for all the information and views which we were currently discussing with our respective contacts and in our respective circles. The high lights in the developments at a particular juncture were invariably reviewed at those meetings. At that meeting I also gave the estimate which I then had that the Japanese military were already poised for attack. The Japanese leaders were determined and desperate. They were likely to break out anywhere, at any time, at any place, and I emphasized the probable element of surprise in their plans. I felt that virtually the last stage had been reached and that the safeguarding of our national security was in the hands of the Army and the Navy.

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In a message of November 24 to Mr. Churchill, telegraphed through the Department, President Roosevelt added to an explanation of our proposed modus vivendi the words, "I am not very hopeful and we must all be prepared for real trouble, possibly soon."

On the evening of November 25 and on November 26 I went over again the considerations relating to our proposed plan, especially the modus vivendi aspect.

As I have indicated, all the successive drafts, of November 22, of November 24 and of November 25 contained two things: (1) the possible modus vivendi; and (2) a statement of principles, with a suggested example of how those principles could be applied--that which has since been commonly described as the 10 point proposal.

I and other high officers of our Government knew that the Japanese military were poised for attack. We knew that the Japanese were demanding--and had set a time limit, first of November 25 and extended later to November 29, for--acceptance by our Government of their extreme, last-word proposal of November 20.

It was therefore my judgment, as it was that of the President and other high officers, that the chance of the Japanese accepting our proposal was remote.

So far as the modus vivendi aspect would have appeared to the Japanese, it contained only a little chicken feed in the shape of some cotton, oil and a few other commodities in very limited quantities as compared with the unlimited quantities the Japanese were demanding.

It was manifest that there would be widespread opposition from American opinion to the modus vivendi aspect of the proposal especially to the supplying to Japan of even limited quantities of oil. The Chinese Government violently opposed the idea. The other interested governments were sympathetic to the Chinese view and fundamentally were unfavorable or lukewarm. Their cooperation was a part of the plan. It developed that the conclusion with Japan of such an arrangement would have been a major blow to Chinese morale. In view of these considerations it became clear that the slight prospects of Japan's agreeing to the modus vivendi did not warrant assuming the risks involved in proceeding with it, especially the serious risk of collapse of Chinese morale and resistance and even of disintegration of China. It therefore became perfectly evident that the modus vivendi aspect would not be feasible.

The Japanese were spreading propaganda to the effect that they were being encircled. On the one hand we were faced by this charge and on the other by one that we were preparing to pursue a policy of appeasing Japan. In view of the resulting confusion, it seemed important to restate the fundamentals. We could offer Japan once more what we offered all countries, a suggested program of collaboration along peaceful and mutually beneficial and progressive lines. It had always been open to Japan to accept that kind of a program and to move in that direction. It still was possible for Japan to do so. That was a matter for Japan's decision. Our hope that Japan would so decide had been virtually extinguished. Yet it was felt desirable to put forth this further basic effort, in the form of one sample of a broad but simple settlement to be worked out in our future conversations, on the principle that no effort should be spared to test and exhaust every method of peaceful settlement.

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In the light of the foregoing considerations, on November 26 I recommended to the President--and he approved--my calling in the Japanese representatives and handing them the broad basic proposals while withholding the modus vivendi plan. This was done in the late afternoon of that day.

The document handed the Japanese representatives on November 26 was divided into two parts:

The first part of the document handed the Japanese was marked "Oral". In it was reviewed briefly the objective sought in the exploratory conversations, namely, that of reaching if possible a settlement of questions relating to the entire Pacific area on the basis of the principles of peace, law and order and fair-dealing among nations. It was stated that it was believed that some progress had been made in reference to general principles Note was taken of a recent statement by the Japanese Ambassador that the Japanese Government desired to continue the conversations directed toward a comprehensive and peaceful settlement.

In connection with the Japanese proposals of November 20 for a modus vivendi, it was stated that the American Government most earnestly desired to afford every opportunity for the continuance of discussions with the Japanese Government directed toward working out a broad-gauge program of peace throughout the Pacific area. Our Government stated that in its opinion some features of the Japanese proposals of November 20 conflicted with the fundamental principles which formed a part of the general settlement under consideration and to which each government had declared that it was committed.

Our Government suggested that further effort be made to resolve the divergences of views in regard to the practical application of the fundamental principles already mentioned. Our Government stated that with this object in view it offered "for the consideration of the Japanese Government a plan of a broad but simple settlement covering the entire Pacific area as one practical exemplification of a program which this Government envisages as something to be worked out during our further conversations".

The second part of the document embodied the plan itself which was in two sections.

In Section I there was outlined a mutual declaration of policy containing affirmations that the national policies of the two countries were directed toward peace throughout the Pacific area, that the two countries had no territorial designs or aggressive intentions in that area, and that they would give support to certain fundamental principles of peace upon which their relations with each other and all other nations would be based. These principles were stated as follows:

"(1) The principle of inviolability of territorial integrity and sovereignty of each and all nations.

"(2) The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

"(3) The principle of equality, including equality of commercial opportunity and treatment.

"(4) The principle of reliance upon international cooperation and conciliation for the prevention and pacific settlement of controversies and for improvement of international conditions by peaceful methods and processes."

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This statement of policy and of principle closely followed the line of what had been presented to the Japanese on several previous occasions beginning in April.

In Section I there was also a provision for mutual pledges to support and apply in their economic relations with each other and with other nations and peoples liberal economic principles. These principles were enumerated. They were based upon the general principle of equality of commercial opportunity and treatment.

This suggested provision for mutual pledges with respect to economic relations closely followed the line of what had previously been presented to the Japanese.

In Section II there were outlined proposed steps to be taken by the two Governments. One unilateral commitment was suggested, an undertaking by Japan that she would withdraw all military, naval, air and police forces from China and from Indochina. Mutual commitments were suggested along the following lines:

(a) To endeavor to conclude a multilateral non-aggression pact among the governments principally concerned in the Pacific area;

(b) To endeavor to conclude among the principally interested governments an agreement to respect the territorial integrity of Indochina and not to seek or accept preferential economic treatment therein;

(c) Not to support any government in China other than the National Government of the Republic of China with capital temporarily at Chungking;

(d) To relinquish extraterritorial and related rights in China and to endeavor to obtain the agreement of other governments now possessing such rights to give up those rights;

(e) To negotiate a trade agreement based upon reciprocal most-favored-nation treatment;

(f) To remove freezing restrictions imposed by each country on the funds of the other;

(g) To agree upon a plan for the stabilization of the dollar-yen rate with Japan and the United States each furnishing half of the fund;

(h) To agree that no agreement which either had concluded with any third power or powers shall be interpreted by it in a way to conflict with the fundamental purpose of this agreement; and

(i) To use their influence to cause other governments to adhere to the basic political and economic principles provided for in this suggested agreement.

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The document handed the Japanese on November 26 was essentially a restatement of principles which have long been basic in this country's foreign policy. The practical application of those principles to the situation in the Far East, as embodied in the ten points contained in the document, was along lines which had been under discussion with the Japanese representatives in the course of the informal exploratory conversations during the months preceding delivery of the document in question. Our Government's proposal embodied mutually profitable policies of the kind we were prepared to offer to any friendly country and was coupled with the suggestion that the proposal be made the basis for further conversations.

A vital part of our program of standing firm for our principles was to offer other countries worthwhile plans which would be highly profitable to them as well as to ourselves. We stood firmly for these principles in the face of the Japanese demand that we abandon them. For this course there are no apologies.

Our Government's proposal was offered for the consideration of the Japanese Government as one practical example of a program to be worked out. It did not rule out other practical examples which either Government was free to offer.

We well knew that, in view of Japan's refusal throughout the conversations to abandon her policy of conquest and domination, there was scant likelihood of her acceptance of this plan. But it is the task of statesmanship to leave no possibility for peace unexplored, no matter how slight. It was in this spirit that the November 26 document was given to the Japanese Government.

When handing the document of November 26 to the Japanese representatives, I said that the proposed agreement would render possible practical measures of financial cooperation which, however, had not been referred to in the outline for fear that they might give rise to misunderstanding. I added also that I had earlier informed the Ambassador of my ambition of settling the immigration question but that the situation had so far prevented me from realizing that ambition.

It is not surprising that Japanese propaganda, especially after Japan had begun to suffer serious defeats, has tried to distort and give a false meaning to our memorandum of November 26 by referring to it as an "ultimatum." This was in line with a well-known Japanese characteristic of utilizing completely false and flimsy pretexts to delude their people and gain their support for militaristic depredations and aggrandizement.

VII. THE LAST PHASE

After November 26 the Japanese representatives at their request saw the President and me on several occasions. Nothing new developed on the subject of a peaceful agreement.

On November 26 following delivery of our Government's proposal to the Japanese Ambassador, correspondents were informed by an official of the Department of State that the Japanese representatives had been handed a document for their consideration. This document, they were informed, was the culmination of conferences during recent weeks and rested on certain basic principles with which the correspondents would be entirely familiar in the light of many repetitions.

On November 27 I had a special and lengthy press conference at which I told the correspondents they were free to use the information given them as their own or as having come from authoritative sources.

I said that from the beginning I had been keeping in mind, and I suggested that the correspondents keep in mind, that the groups in Japan led by the military leaders had a plan of conquest by force of about one-half of the earth with one-half of its population. They had a plan to impose on this one-half of the earth a military control of political affairs, economic affairs, social affairs, and moral affairs of each population very much as Hitler was doing in Europe.

I said that this movement in the Far East started in earnest in 1937. It carried with it a policy of non-observance of any standards of conduct in international relations or of any law or of any rule of justice or fair play.

From the beginning, we, as one of the leading free countries, had sought to keep alive the basic philosophy and principles governing the opposing viewpoint in international relations, that is, government by law, government by orderly processes, based on justice and morals and principles that would preserve absolutely the freedom of each country; principles of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries; the preservation inviolate of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries; the peaceful settlement of disputes; equality of commercial opportunities and relations. These and other principles that go along with them have been, I pointed out, the touchstone of all of our activities in the conduct of our foreign policy. We had striven to impress them on other countries, to keep them alive as the world was going more and more to a state of international anarchy. We had striven to preserve their integrity. That was no easy undertaking.

I said that in the spring of 1941 there had come up the question of conferences with the Japanese on the subject of peace. The purpose was to ascertain whether a peaceful settlement relating to the entire Pacific area was possible.

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I mentioned that for a considerable time there had been two opposing groups in Japan. One was the military group, sometimes led by military extremists. They had seemed to be in the saddle when the China undertaking in 1937 was decided upon. As the Chinese undertaking went on, there was an opposing group in Japan, representing honest lovers of peace and law and order. Another portion of this group comprised those who personally favored the policy of force and conquest but considered that the time was not propitious, for different reasons, to undertake it. Some of this group were inclined to oppose Japan's policy because of the unsatisfactory experience of Japan in China and of what they regarded as Japan's unsatisfactory relations with Germany under the Tripartite Pact.

I said that our conferences with the Japanese during the preceding several months had been purely exploratory.

During that time I kept other countries who had interest in that area informed in a general way.

I pointed out that for the previous ten days or so we had explored all phases of the basic questions presented and of suggestions or ideas or methods of bringing Japan and the United States as close together as possible, on the theory that that might have been the beginning of some peaceful and cordial relations between Japan and other nations of the Pacific, including our own.

During the conversations, I said we had to keep in mind many angles. We had to keep in mind phases not only of the political situation but of the Army and the Navy situation. As an illustration, I cited the fact that we had known for some days from the facts and circumstances which revealed themselves steadily that the Japanese were pouring men and materials and boats and all kinds of equipment into Indochina. One qualified observer reported the number of Japanese forces in Southern Indochina as 128,000. That may have been too high as yet. But a large military movement was taking place. There was a further report that the Japanese Navy might make attacks somewhere there around Siam, any time within a few days.

I told the correspondents that we were straining heaven and earth to work out understandings that might mitigate the situation before it got out of hand, in charge, as it was to a substantial degree, of Japanese military extremists.

Referring to Indochina, I said that if the Japanese established themselves there in adequate numbers, which they seemed to be doing, they not only had a base for operations against China but they would be a distinct menace to the whole South Sea area. When we saw what this signified in extra danger, naturally we explored every kind of way to avoid that sort of menace and threat.

I said that we had had the benefit of every kind of view. Some charged us with appeasement, others with having let other countries down. All the time we had been working at just the opposite. All these various views were made in good faith and no fault attached to the proponents thereof. This was just a condition which was not without its benefits.

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We had exhausted all of our efforts to work out phases of this matter with the Japanese. Our efforts had been put forth to facilitate the making of a general agreement. We wanted to facilitate the conversations and keep them from breaking down but at all times keeping thoroughly alive the basic principles that we had been proclaiming and practicing during all those years.

On November 26, I continued, I found there had been so much confusion and so many collateral matters brought in along with high Japanese officials in Tokyo proclaiming their old doctrines of force, that I thought it important to bring the situation to a clear perspective. So I had recounted and restated the fundamental principles and undertook to make application of them to a number of specific conditions such as would logically go into a broad basic peaceful settlement in the Pacific area.

There had been every kind of suggestion made as we had gone along in the conversations. I said that I had considered everything in the way of suggestions from the point of view whether it would facilitate, keep alive, and if possible carry forward conversations looking toward a general agreement, all the while naturally preserving the fullest integrity of every principle for which we stood. I had sought to examine everything possible but always to omit consideration of any proposal that would contemplate the stoppage of the conversations and search for a general agreement for peace.

To a correspondent's question whether I expected the Japanese to come back and talk further on the basis of what I gave them on November 26, I said that I did not know but, as I had indicated, the Japanese might not do that. I referred to the military movements which they were making and said I thought the correspondents would want to see whether the Japanese had any idea of renewing the conversations.

In reply to a further question whether in order to conform to the basic principles of our Government's policy it would be necessary for the Japanese to withdraw the troops they were sending to the Southward, I said, "Yes." In reply to another question as to whether it would not mean withdrawal of Japanese troops from China and Indochina, I said that of course our program announced in 1937 covered all that. The question of getting the troops out of China had been a bone of contention.

In reply to a question whether the assumption was correct that there was not much hope that the Japanese would accept our principles and go far enough to afford a basis for continuing the conversations, I said that there was always a possibility but that I would not say how much probability there might be.

In reply to a question whether the Japanese had proved adamant on the question of withdrawing from the Axis, I replied that they were still in it.

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In reply to a question whether the situation took action rather than words from the Japanese, I said this was unquestionably so, but it took words first to reach some kind of an understanding that would lead to action.

In reply to a question how the Japanese explained these military movements to the south, I replied that they did not explain.

On November 28, at a meeting of the War Council, I reviewed the November 26 proposal which we had made to the Japanese, and pointed out that there was practically no possibility of an agreement being achieved with Japan. I emphasized that in my opinion the Japanese were likely to break out at any time with new acts of conquest and that the matter of safeguarding our national security was in the hands of the Army and the Navy. With due deference I expressed my judgment that any plans for our military defense should include an assumption that the Japanese might make the element of surprise a central point in their strategy and also might attack at various points simultaneously with a view to demoralizing efforts of defense and of coordination.

On November 29 I expressed substantially the same views to the British Ambassador.

I said the same things all during those days to many of my contacts.

On November 25 the American Consul at Hanoi, Indochina, had communicated to the Department a report that the Japanese intended to launch an attack on the Kra Peninsula about December 1, and he reported also further landings of troops and military equipment in Indochina in addition to landings he had previously reported from time to time. On November 26 the American Consul at Saigon had reported the arrival of heavy Japanese reinforcements in Southern Indochina, supplementing arrivals he had reported earlier that month. On November 29 the Department of State instructed its posts in southeast Asia to telegraph information of military or naval movements directly to Manila for the Commander-in-Chief of the United States Asiatic Fleet.

On November 30, I was informed by the British Ambassador that the British Government had important indications that Japan was about to attack Siam and that this attack would include a sea-borne expedition to seize strategic points in the Kra Isthmus.

In a message from Premier Tojo to a public rally on November 30 under the sponsorship of the Imperial Rule Assistance Association and the "Great Japan East Asia League" he stated among other things that:

> "The fact that Chiang Kai-shek is dancing to the tune of Britain, America, and communism at the expense of able-bodied and promising young men in his futile resistance against Japan is only due to the desire of Britain and the United States to fish in the troubled waters of East Asia by putting

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/pitting?/ the East Asiatic peoples against each other and to grasp the hegemony of East Asia. This is a stock in trade of Britain and the United States.

"For the honor and pride of mankind we must purge this sort of practice from East Asia with a vengeance."

On that day, Sunday, November 30, after conferring with our military regarding the Japanese Prime Minister's bellicose statement and the increasing gravity of the Far Eastern situation, I telephoned the President at Warm Springs and advised him to advance the date of his return to Washington. Accordingly, the President returned to Washington on December 1.

On December 2 the President directed that inquiry be made at once of the Japanese Ambassador and Mr. Kurusu in regard to the reasons for continued Japanese troop movements into Indochina.

On December 3 I reviewed in press conference certain of the points covered by me on November 27. I said that we had not reached any more advanced stage of determing questions either in a preliminary or other way than we had in November.

On December 5 the Japanese Ambassador called and presented a reply to the President's inquiry of December 2 containing the specious statement that Japanese reinforcements had been sent to Indochina as a precautionary measure against Chinese troops in bordering Chinese territory.

On December 6 our Government received from a number of sources reports of the movement of a Japanese fleet of 35 transports, 8 cruisers and 20 destroyers from Indochina toward the Kra Peninsula. This was confirmation that the long threatened Japanese movement of expansion by force to the south was under way. The critical character of this development, which placed the United States and its friends in common imminent danger, was very much in all our minds, and was an important subject of my conferences with representatives of the Army and Navy on that and the following day.

On December 6 President Roosevelt telegraphed a personal appeal to the Emperor of Japan that the "tragic possibilities" in the situation be averted.

On December 7, the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor.

Throughout the critical years culminating in Pearl Harbor and especially during the last months, the President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy and the heads of our armed services kept in constant touch with each other. There was the freest interchange of information and views. It was customary for us to pick up the telephone and for the caller to ask one of the others whether he had anything new of significance on the situation and to communicate whatever the caller may have had that was new. These exchanges of information and views were in addition to those which took place at Cabinet meetings and at meetings during the fall of 1941 of the War Council, and in numerous other conversations.

As illustrative of the contacts which I had with officers of the War and Navy Departments during the especially critical period from November 20 to December 7, 1941 I attach a record of the occasions when I talked with such representatives as compiled from the daily engagement books kept by my office (Annex A). That record may, of course, not be complete.

In addition, I attach a statement of the record of the occasions on which I talked with representatives of the War and Navy Departments from October 1940 to December 7, 1941 (Annex B).

I attach also a statement in regard to the arrangements for contacts during the years 1940 and 1941 between the State Department and the War and Navy Departments (Annex C).

In the foregoing I have endeavored to give a simple narrative and analysis of what happened in this country's relations with Japan, especially as they bear upon the inquiry of this Joint Committee. If I can throw light on any aspect of our relations not covered in this statement, I shall be glad to do so.

ANNEX A

Record of the Secretary of State's Conferences, Consultations and Telephone Conversations (as entered in engagement books) with Representatives of the War and Navy Departments, November 20 to December 7, 1941.

November 21	9:55 a.m.	Admiral Stark, General Gerow
November 24	12:15 p.m.	Telephone call from Secretary Stimson
	12:50 p.m.	Captain Schuirmann
	3:30 p.m.	Telephone call from Secretary Knox
	3:30 p.m.	General Marshall, Admiral Stark
November 25	9:30 a.m.	Secretary Stimson, Secretary Knox
	12:00 noon	Meeting at White House with President, Secretary Stimson, Secretary Knox, General Marshall, Admiral Stark
	4:30 p.m.	Telephone call from Secretary Stimson
November 26	9:20 a.m.	Telephone call from Secretary Stimson
	9:50 a.m.	Telephone call from Secretary Stimson
	1:20 p.m.	Telephone call to Admiral Stark
November 27	11:05 a.m.	Telephone call to Secretary Stimson
	4:00 p.m.	Telephone call from Secretary Stimson
	5:10 p.m.	Telephone call to Captain Schuirmann
November 28	12:00 noon	Meeting at White House with President, Secretary Stimson, Secretary Knox, General Marshall, Admiral Stark
	3:20 p.m.	Telephone call from Secretary Stimson
	4:40 p.m.	Telephone call from Admiral Stark
November 30	10:30 a.m.	Telephone call to Admiral Stark
	12: 08 p.m.	Telephone call to Admiral Stark

December 1	12:00 noon	Admiral Stark at White House
December 3	4:45 p.m.	Telephone call to Admiral Stark
December 6	10:45 a.m.	Telephone call from Secretary Knox
	11:50 a.m.	Telephone call from Secretary Stimson
	1:00 p.m.	Telephone call from Secretary Stimson
	1:15 p.m.	Telephone call from Admiral Stark
	1:50 p.m.	Captain Schuirmann
	5:15 p.m.	Telephone call to Admiral Stark
	8:45 p.m.	Telephone call to Secretary Knox
December 7	10:30 a.m.	Telephone call to Admiral Stark
	10:30 a.m.	Secretary Stimson, Secretary Knox
	2:10 p.m.	Telephone call from Admiral Stark

ANNEX B

Record of the Secretary of State's Conversations in the State Department with Representatives of the War and Navy Departments. October, 1940 - December 7, 1941.

With Secretaries Stimson and Knox

October 18, 1940
October 23, 1940
October 30, 1940
November 12, 1940
November 29, 1940
December 3, 1940
December 13, 1940 - Attended also by Admiral Stark, Captain Deyo, General Marshall.
December 23, 1940 - Attended also by Secretary Morgenthau, Senator Byrnes, Admiral Spear, Colonel Maxwell, Mr. Philip Young, Admiral Stark, General Marshall, Major Timberlake.
January 7, 1941
January 14, 1941 - Attended also by Secretary Morgenthau, Mr. Foley.
January 23, 1941
January 28, 1941
February 11, 1941
February 14, 1941
March 31, 1941
April 8, 1941
April 10, 1941 - Attended also by Mr. Harry L. Hopkins, Secretary Morgenthau and Admiral Stark.
April 22, 1941
April 29, 1941
May 5, 1941
May 13, 1941
May 20, 1941
May 27, 1941
June 3, 1941
August 12, 1941
August 19, 1941
August 29, 1941
September 30, 1941- Attended also by General Marshall, Admiral Stark.
November 25, 1941
December 7, 1941

With Secretary Stimson

October 14, 1940
November 1, 1940
December 3, 1940 - Lunch

March 4, 1941

March 4, 1941	-	Attended also by Secretary Morgenthau, Mr. Foley, Mr. Forrestal and Mr. Harold Smith.
May 9, 1941		
August 8, 1941		
October 6, 1941		
October 28, 1941		
December 10, 1941		

With Secretary Knox

November 4, 1941		
November 10, 1941		

With other Army and Navy Officials

November 5, 1940	-	Admiral Stark, Admiral Greenslade, Captain Schuirmann
November 6, 1940	-	Admiral Stark
November 9, 1940	-	Captain Schuirmann
November 25, 1940	-	Admiral Stark, General Marshall, Colonel Turner, Captain Schuirmann
November 27, 1940	-	Admiral Stark
December 2, 1940	-	Captain Schuirmann
December 4, 1940	-	Admiral Stark
December 5, 1940	-	Captain Schuirmann
December 31, 1940	-	Captain Schuirmann
January 2, 1941	-	Captain Kirk
January 3, 1941	-	General Marshall, Admiral Stark
January 9, 1941	-	Colonel Bratton, Admiral Anderson, General Miles and Commander Cramer
March 4, 1941	-	General Marshall
April 11, 1941	-	Colonel Betts
April 12, 1941	-	" "
April 16, 1941	-	" "
April 17, 1941	-	" "
April 17, 1941	-	Captain Schuirmann
April 18, 1941	-	Colonel Mason
April 20, 1941	-	Colonel Betts
May 1, 1941	-	Admiral Stark
May 2, 1941	-	General Arnold
May 7, 1941	-	General Marshall
May 9, 1941	-	Captain Schuirmann
May 13, 1941	-	General Marshall and Admiral Stark
May 15, 1941	-	Admiral Stark
May 21, 1941	-	Commander Peal (Naval Attaché, Berlin)

June 3, 1941.

June 3, 1941	-	Colonel Betts
August 9, 1941	-	Captain Schuirmann
August 21, 1941	-	General Miles, Major Hansen, Captain Schuirmann
August 23, 1941	-	Colonel Bratton
September 4, 1941	-	Admiral Stark
October 4, 1941	-	General Embick
October 14, 1941	-	Admiral Turner
October 17, 1941	-	Colonel Bratton and Major Smett
October 27, 1941	-	General Miles, Captain Schuirmann.
October 30, 1941	-	Admiral Stark
November 1, 1941	-	Captain Schuirmann and Commander McCollum
November 4, 1941	-	General Marshall, Admiral Ingersoll
November 8, 1941	-	General Miles
November 19, 1941	-	Captain Schuirmann
November 19, 1941	-	Captain Schuirmann
November 21, 1941	-	Admiral Stark, General Gerow.
November 24, 1941	-	General Marshall, Admiral Stark
November 24, 1941	-	Captain Schuirmann
December 6, 1941	-	Captain Schuirmann
December 12, 1941	-	Captain Schuirmann

ANNEX C

Arrangements for Contacts Between the Department of State and War and Navy Departments in 1940 and 1941

During the years 1940 and 1941 there were maintained arrangements for contacts between the Department of State and the War and Navy Departments as follows:

(a) The regularly constituted Liaison Committee which began to function in April, 1938 and which consisted of the Under Secretary of State, the Chief of Staff and Chief of Naval Operations. That Committee customarily met at weekly intervals. The meetings of the Liaison Committee were for the purpose of taking up matters of mutual interest to the three Departments and for the interchange of views and information.

(b) The Liaison Office which was established in the Department of State in 1939 and which was responsible under the Under Secretary of State for the regular channeling and expeditious transmission of pertinent information to the War and Navy Departments. The information thus transmitted, in addition to that having an obviously military and naval character, included basic related political and economic information needed for use in the preparation of estimates of the military and naval situation.

(c) Arrangements which the political and functional divisions of the Department had for direct communication with representatives of the War and Navy Departments under which information of pertinent interest received by the Department of State from its representatives abroad was made available to the War and Navy Departments. Conversely, the War and Navy Departments kept the Department of State informed of data of interest.

(d) Other conferences and conversations at frequent intervals between the Secretary of State and the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy as well as other representatives of the War and Navy Departments, including the Chief of Staff and the Chief of Naval Operations. These conferences sought a full interchange of information and views relative to critical situations all over the world, including -- of course -- developments in the Pacific area. At those conferences the Secretary of State was given the benefit of the knowledge which representatives of the War and Navy Departments possessed of military factors involved in the world situation and the Secretary in turn took up the political factors in the world situation of which he had special knowledge. These conferences became increasingly frequent as the world situation became more critical, especially during the final stages of the conversations with the Japanese representatives.