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## TOJO KNEW!

The Inside Story of the  
"Peace Mission" that  
paved the way for  
Pearl Harbor.—Page 3.



End of a Mission, Dec. 7, 1941—Special Envoy Kurosu and Ambassador Nomura leave the State Department after hearing Secretary Hull denounce Japan's last note in these words: "I have never seen a document more crowded with infamous falsehoods."

## Infamous Prelude to Pearl Harbor

### The Inside Story of the Kurosu 'Peace Mission'

By Arthur Krock

WASHINGTON.

**A** YEAR ago today Saburo Kurosu, special envoy of the Government of Japan, left Asia for the United States to assume his part in the "peace conversations" that continued until more than an hour after Japanese forces attacked Pearl Harbor.

Why did Kurosu come, since he came with hands empty of a peace formula the United States could accept? Was he playing for time during which the Japanese could sneak up on Pearl Harbor? But the United States was playing for time, too, and Kurosu knew that.

Were the Japanese intelligence services sufficiently informed and deductive to have advance confidence that assaults from the air would find our commanders in the Pacific as non-cooperating and completely unready for this tactic as they proved to be?

History ultimately will disclose the answers to these questions. The fact remains that Kurosu came on what, in both the United States and Japan, was forecast as a sleeveless errand; that under the cover of his activities here the Pearl Harbor expedition was launched; that alertness and Army-Navy cooperation were absent, and the assault was heavily successful.

When Neville Henderson, another spe-

cial envoy, returned from Berlin to London after Hitler's invasion of Poland he wrote a book which he entitled "Failure of a Mission." Considering the opening victories of Japan in this war, Kurosu, in collaboration with the Japanese militarists, could write a book called "Success of a Mission."

He did not achieve peace, and the proposals for settlement advanced by Tokyo, as well as Japan's refusal to consider seriously the counter-plan presented by the Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, make it abundantly clear in retrospect that he could never have expected to achieve it. After their first meeting with Kurosu it was obvious to the President and Mr. Hull that the special envoy had nothing to offer. But he prolonged the conversations until Japan's Navy and Air Force were concentrated off Pearl Harbor and ready to begin the war.

Did Kurosu know before he left Japan that, conscious of the improbability that the United States would accept the Japanese formula, Premier Tojo had assented to the expedition against Pearl Harbor? It was already in preparation on Japan's mandated islands, where international

pledges had long been violated and from which aliens had long been barred. Ships, men and war supplies were undoubtedly on their way to the bases when Kurosu departed.

No one in the United States Government is in a position to express more than an opinion as to whether Kurosu knew or not. Most officials believe he did, and they are certain he had been informed of the actual attack before he and the Japanese Ambassador, Admiral Nomura, made their final call on Secretary Hull.

**H**OW much did Nomura know? The preferred belief is that the Ambassador was kept in ignorance of the plan and its maturing. For he seemed to Washington to have lived always by the code of an officer and gentleman, according to our own view of what that code is.

But Tojo knew—Tojo the Premier who came to power because the Konoye Ministry was too conciliatory to suit the militarists of Japan. And on Tojo must rest both knowledge and responsibility for an act of war by a nation whose representatives were even then asserting that with

the nation attacked there could and must be a basis for peace.

It should be recalled that earlier in the year 1941 the President was invited to sail into the Pacific for a peace meeting with Premier Konoye, an invitation he declined. And before and after this Mr. Hull had been meeting steadily with Admiral Nomura to talk of peace and finding no foundation for it. In both countries, among the really informed, before Kurosu came, war was held to be inevitable whenever the Japanese thought the moment was most advantageous.

When the announcement of his mission was made, influential Japanese newspapers, among them *Nichi Nichi*, angrily protested that the die was cast and the only effect of Kurosu's errand would be to give to the United States and Great Britain precious time they needed to prepare for the inevitable. Yet he came, and, since he seemed more than willing to draw out the "peace conversations," it is reasonable to conclude that time for the Pearl Harbor attack was his objective.

Kurosu cannot be credited with the feat of acquiring this vital segment of time while the Government of the United States remained in blissful ignorance of what he was doing. For weeks Mr. Hull knew what was afoot; the President was

(Continued on following page)

**When Tojo sent Kurosu to talk 'peace' with us he had already planned the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor.**



While Nomura and Kurusu were on their way with Secretary Hull to meet the President, Japan was preparing to move South.



(Continued from preceding page)

fully aware of it; and the Army and the Navy were put on notice by the Secretary, many days before Pearl Harbor, that the Japanese were ready and likely to strike, "by surprise, and simultaneously throughout the Pacific area."

But, in consequence of the six-year neglect of the democracies to prepare for the event some of their elected leaders foresaw, the armed forces of the United States and of the United Nations were not ready for the war that projected its shadow upon the "peace conversations" at Washington. In response to their pleas, Mr. Hull was playing for time, too, though he met the Japanese envoys in good faith and peace was his sincere desire. Had there been at Pearl Harbor and Manila the military alertness the President and he had every reason to expect, and which Mr. Hull had specifically urged on the War Council, the stakes of war at the outset would have remained in the hands of our government as completely as did the stakes of diplomacy and honor.

Kurusu came and went. And now in the wake of his errand American men are being killed on Far Pacific beaches and American ships are going down in Far Pacific waters whose names were unknown to most of us a year ago. From the quiet meetings in the White House and the State Department to the bloody sands of Guadalcanal and the ensanguined South Seas, fate has dispatched the American nation quickly to a desperate, far-away struggle for its life which seemed inconceivable to most people a year ago.

**T**HE first anniversary of Kurusu's departure from Asia to the United States renders appropriate a survey of the conversations that followed and a search for the facts that will be history. This correspondent has made that survey and that search. On the unimpeachable authority of several who were an intimate part of the conversations, he is able to reconstruct them.

The reconstruction does not purport to be a transcript. But the transcript formula is used for narrative purposes; also the chief figures in the conversations speak now and then in direct discourse to the general effect they did, as remembered by this correspondent's sources.

That is a device for clarity; it is not a stenographic record because none was made; but it is factual.

As the drama unfolds, the principals emerge in full color and proportion. Kurusu, wolf into lamb and lamb into wolf again. Admiral Nomura, the Ambassador, melancholy as darkness settled over the prospect of peace. The President, striving to the limit to avert the disaster to both nations. The Secretary, more skillful than any in the give-and-take of debate, standing firmly on the true foundations of peace, wise, prescient and altogether superb.

**N**O conferences in American history were more dramatic in their implications or led into a drama as bodeful and as bloody. Yet, as reconstructed in the memories of the informed, there was nothing dramatic about them but the shadow of war that lay upon them. Now and then Kurusu, dropping the mask of the career diplomat, would make a brief show of irritation or utter an unveiled warning. Occasionally the Ambassador would speak out in sailor terms and show impatience over discussions that were leading nowhere. And often Mr. Hull's eyes would flash and his voice grow stern as he abandoned the diction of diplomacy to indict the war party of Japan.

But that was all until the really dramatic end on the day of Pearl Harbor.

Three conferees more different in mold could hardly be conceived. The admiral is very tall for a Japanese—over six feet—partly, less inclined to use the property smile which is one of the fixed manners of his countrymen. His English is thick and halting, his vocabulary limited. It is easy to see that the quarter-deck and not the conference room is his natural habitat.

Kurusu is short, even for a Japanese, slight and silky. His English is clear and certain. His smile is thin, but frequent. As equipment for his errand he brought some carefully acquired American slang and a good imitation of the airs of what Anglo-Saxons call "a good fellow." With all this, he was never able to remove the distrust of his personal sincerity, as well as of his errand, which arrived in Washington with him.

The Secretary is as different from the

one as from the other. His voice can be silky and his words ambiguous, or his voice can be hard and his words like dagger thrusts. As the conversations went on Mr. Hull put more and more of the silk and ambiguity on the shelf and talked straight Tennessee. But he never forgot his dexterity, or his need for time, too, which explains why Kurusu is supposed to have said after the meeting of Nov. 26, when Mr. Hull had obviously come to the American sine qua non: "We have got the old gray cat in the bag."

The conversations began in a national and international atmosphere unfriendly to the imposition of the fundamental sanctions (embargoes), an atmosphere that had prevailed as far back as the Brussels conference of 1937. At that time sanctions by European signatories to the Nine-Power Treaty other than Japan were considered by those nations. But then and thereafter, to the date of Dec. 7, 1941, no occasion was found when diplomatic and military affairs could be made effectively to march together, and with public opinion. Yet this coherence was necessary because the declaration of sanctions, especially on petroleum, it was obvious, would bring the world to the threshold of war.

**Y**ET, inconsistently enough, in this country demands for the vital oil sanctions against Japan had been coming steadily from groups which at the same time insisted that war with Japan could and must be prevented. The demands for sanctions grew out of a long series of Japanese aggressions from Manchuria, in 1931, forward, and included the "accidental" sinking of the United States gunboat Panay, brutality by Japanese soldiers against Americans, including women, in China, and other evidences of a nation bent on dominance by force.

A perfect example of Japan's aggressive policy was provided in the middle of the Hull-Nomura conversations that preceded the arrival of Kurusu. Tokyo in 1940 had wrung a concession from the Vichy government that Japanese forces might occupy north Indo-China "to protect the empire." In July, 1941, the State Department was advised of heavy Japanese troop movements south from Shanghai, and Tokyo was asked who and where the

troops were bound. The reply was equally local. About the 24th of that month Japanese moved into south Indo-China near Saigon, menacing Thailand, the Philippines and Singapore.

We retaliated with more stringent economic and fiscal measures, keeping them just "short of war," a precaution which those who were demanding oil sanctions and peace simultaneously severely denounced.

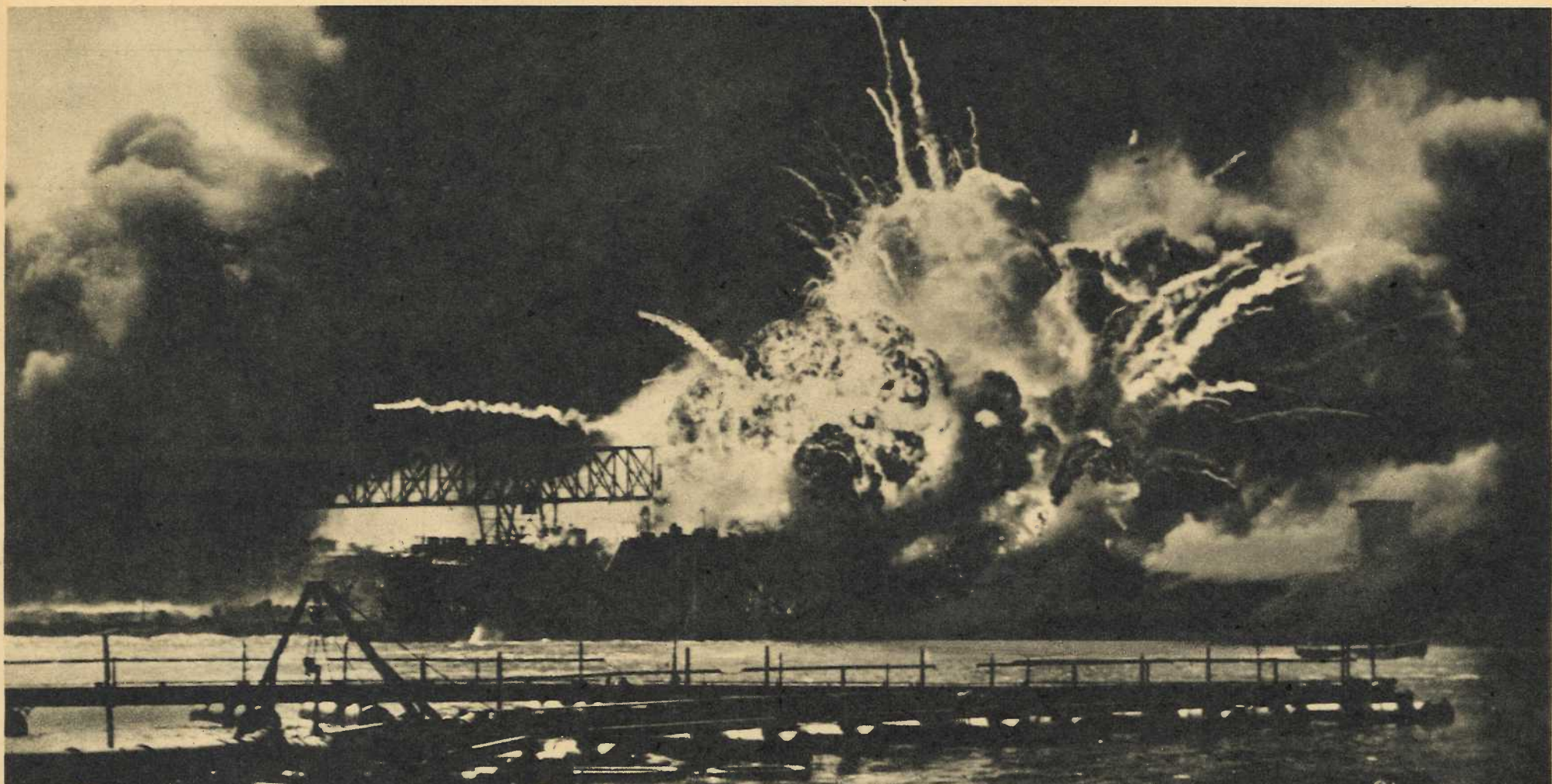
**Y**ET test polls showed a majority sentiment for peace through 1940 and well into 1941. The party platforms of 1940 reflected the national attitude. All branches of the governments of what is now the United Nations recognized this public opinion. The military commanders, on the argument that they were unprepared, steadfastly besought the diplomatic spokesmen to avoid war and play for time. No President could have dispatched a fleet to Japan in those circumstances, and not less would have supported an embargo policy on oil.

Later, when the President sent the fleet into the Atlantic Ocean, where it could stay if oil embargoes were to be invoked against Japan, sanctions were even more impossible. But there the fleet was, had to be to protect the "short-of-policy of aiding the Allies against Japan."

The President explained the background of this policy in remarks he made at the White House to volunteers for the Coast Guard, July 24, 1941. He said: "The Coast citizens might well wonder why we were being asked to curb their use of gasoline when oil shipments were going to Japan to help 'in what looks like an act of aggression.'"

The answer, said Mr. Roosevelt, was that Japan had no oil in its islands and we had cut off the supply, Japan in 1941 would probably have attacked the East Indies to acquire petroleum. "There would have been war on our anti-supply line to and from Australia, Zealand and the Near East."

"Therefore," the President summed up, "there was method in letting this oil go to Japan, with the hope—and it has worked for two years—of keeping war out of the South Pacific for our own good, for



Cecil Jensen in The Chicago Daily News

"Throwing Off the Disguise."



Strube © Cartoon

"The Day of Infamy, Dec. 7, 1941."



Tom Little in The Nashville Tennessean

"Strange Occurrence at a Conference."

Scene at Pearl Harbor after the assault which took place an hour before the final "peace" meeting.

good of the defense of Great Britain and the freedom of the seas."

So oil, scrap iron and other vital supplies went across the Pacific to Japan. But in the six years from 1935 to 1941 Japan got only 6.2 million tons of scrap while the United States was consuming 133 millions. And by August, 1941, our commercial and fiscal relations with Japan had virtually been cut off.

**K**URUSU reached Washington Nov. 16, 1941. The clipper had been held in Hong Kong to facilitate his arrival, and every preparation had been made to hear him out. He first saw the President and Mr. Hull next day. In a later meeting that afternoon with Mr. Hull alone the Japanese envoys pressed so vigorously for acceptance of the Tokyo formula for a Pacific settlement that the Secretary of State was moved to his first trenchant comment. He said he didn't feel that the United States Government should be receiving remarks suggesting ultimatum from a government whose contemporary acts were like those of Japan.

(The Tokyo formula for a Pacific settle-

ment was, generally, that Japan must be left free to crush China and practice war and aggression there, but that she would pursue the ways of peace in the remainder of the Orient. It was this untenable attitude that induced Mr. Hull frequently to say to the envoys during the conversations: "You are trying to face both ways. You can't face both ways and effect real peace.")

Kurusu then handed the Secretary a document which asserted that the Japanese Government did not object to confirming the peaceful statement that had been made by the former Premier, Konoye. It declared that the Premier's qualifying phrases were only those necessary to maintain the rights of a sovereign state and were made with the recently concluded non-aggression treaty of Russia and Japan in mind.

**T**HE President, when earlier that day he had received Kurusu and Ambassador Nomura, said the intentions of the United States were peaceful. Mr. Hull then remarked that, so long as Japan clung to the Tripartite Pact (the treaty of "Mu-

tual defense and common aims" with Germany and Italy), no settlement of the Pacific question purporting to be peaceful would be taken seriously by any one. He said Hitler had put the United States in danger and the American people believed that such Japanese phrases as "a new order in Greater East Asia" were just other names for a program intending to dominate the whole Pacific area economically, socially, politically and by military power.

**K**URUSU minimized this view. He said Premier Tojo wanted peace; he had refused a Cabinet post under Tojo until assured of that, he said, and there was no reason for a serious difference between the two countries. A solution must be found, he asserted, and often he proclaimed it again.

The next day, Nov. 18, there was another meeting, and Mr. Hull repeated his statement of doubt that the American people would have confidence in any agreement with Japan while Japan kept its alliance with Hitler. He reminded the Japanese envoys that "after every atroc-

ity" Japanese leaders sent telegrams of congratulation to Hitler. Then, with great emphasis, he said that the United States had "nothing to offer Japan for bargaining except our friendship." He expressed doubt that a satisfactory agreement could be made in the circumstances.

"Rather than to go beyond a certain point," said the Secretary, "it is better for the United States to stand and take the consequences."

Kurusu promised a much more liberal Japanese policy after the war. But when the Secretary asked him if his government could agree in principle "now" on a commercial policy, there was no reply.

Mr. Hull returned to his attack on the tripartite pact. He said he supposed the Japanese were as surprised as we by Hitler's attack on Russia. Kurusu's response was that while Japan could not abrogate the treaty, it might find some way to "out-shine" it. The Secretary stuck to his line. He pointed out that the United States was leaving the Philippines in 1946, already withdrawing the marines from China, and steadily pressing Great Britain to reduce (Continued on Page 35)

## Infamous Prelude to Pearl Harbor

(Continued from Page 5)

empire trade preferences. He dwelt on the good neighbor policy and its advantages and asked why such could not be applied in the Pacific area.

Admiral Nomura interposed to say that Japan was too poor to imitate American liberality in Latin America or to afford lend-lease, much as Japan would like to do that. You get along with Russia, he argued, despite the fact that you do not approve Russia's policies or system.

**T**HE Secretary answered that while we were not in sympathy with Communist ideology, our first concentration was on beating Hitler. Kurusu, reverting to British Empire preferences, declared they had played their part in driving Japan into the tripartite pact since his country's main dependence was on foreign trade. And the admiral gently remarked, of governments of great nations, that "big ships can't turn around too quickly; they must be eased slowly and gracefully."

But the Secretary continued to ask for a chart of where the big ship was going. To the admiral he addressed this question:

"Do you stand for no annexations, no indemnities, respect for China's sovereignty, territorial integrity and the principles of equality?"

"Yes," the admiral said.

Kurusu then took another tack. The American and British regulations freezing Japanese-American fiscal and commercial relations had caused impatience, he said, in Japan; had evoked the feeling that it was best to fight while one still could. Japan had entered the tripartite pact because she felt isolated, but she would never be a catspaw for Hitler.

At this point the colloquy went something like this, though, of course, the actual words are not recorded:

Hull—How many soldiers do you intend to keep in China?

Kurusu—We may withdraw 90 per cent. Suppose we did.

Hull—How long will you keep the other 10 per cent there? (To this there was no direct reply.)

Hull—Japan is now in a fine situation to produce peaceful goods, if you can get war and invasion out of your minds.

Kurusu—We must move gradually. The United States is responsible for the delay.

Hull—There has been no delay. I have always seen Ambassador Nomura promptly. [They had been conferring for months.] Our views have been made clear from the outset. Your invasion of Indo-China interrupted the conversations.

Kurusu—Do you want to return to the status quo ante Indo-China?

Hull—If you can't withdraw the troops, adopt a liberal commercial policy and solve the question of the tripartite pact, then won't you see what you can do? Would releasing the freezing regulations help the peace party of Japan?

Nomura—Japan's unyielding policy toward Chiang Kai-shek stiffened China. Your unyielding policy toward Japan has stiffened us. Let's go back to the pre-Indo-China status.

Hull—But would you then divert the Indo-China troops to some equally objectionable lo-



Messner in The Rochester Times-Union

Now it's war.

cality? After you invaded Indo-China I could no longer defend our shipments of petroleum to you.

Nomura—We are tired of fighting in China, and we will go as far as we can.

The conversation ended with the Secretary's statement that he would consult the other governments especially interested in the Pacific.

**O**N Nov. 19 the three diplomats met once more. The Secretary asked why Japan did not adopt policies that would permit the Russians in the Far East and the British in Singapore to go back to Europe. To hold them there was a direct help to Hitler, he said. The Ambassador and the special envoy answered obliquely. They began to chat, saying they saw no likelihood of an early Russian defeat or the collapse of the Stalin regime. The Ambassador added that he was surprised at Stalin's strength in holding his government together and deeply admired the Russian Army. He saw no prospect that Germany could successfully invade Britain.

Hull—Then what will be the outcome for Germany?

Nomura—I have no clear idea.

Hull—Aren't you bound equally by your pact with Russia?

Nomura—Yes.

Hull—Can't you tell Hitler to be reasonable?

At this point Kurusu clearly thought he had been tendered a peace feeler and he seized it eagerly. He quickly expressed the view that Hitler would be willing to negotiate peace. But the Secretary was not to be caught in a trap or dig a pitfall for himself.

"I mean," he said, "that Hitler must abandon his program of conquest."

Whereupon the Japanese departed.

There was another meeting on Nov. 20, and for the purpose of brevity and clarity I shall again

attempt to reconstruct the words used by the conferees.

Hull—Before we can have a peaceful settlement there must be an end to Japanese aggression. We need a manifestation of a clear purpose to pursue peaceful courses.

Nomura—But we have this day presented a proposal to that end. [A detailed summary of this follows shortly.]

Hull—I will discuss what you have said with the other governments which have interests in the Pacific.

Kurusu—But, remember, we are unable to abrogate the tripartite pact.

Hull—You didn't talk that way about the Nine-Power treaty.

Kurusu—That was twenty years old and outmoded. I urge you to adopt this proposal and bring about peace. Japan, however, is committed to an expansion policy.

**T**HE "new" Japanese proposal to which Nomura referred was regarded by the American President and State Department as "narrow" and as leaving Japan in a menacing position. It called for a supply from the United States to Japan of as much oil as Japan might "require" and for suspension of freezing measures. It provided that the governments of both the United States and Japan should undertake not to make any armed advance into any of the regions in Southeastern Asia and the Southern Pacific where troops were then stationed; that the Japanese Government should undertake to withdraw its troops from French Indo-China upon either the restoration of peace between Japan and China or the establishment of an equitable peace in the Pacific area; that Japan and the United States should cooperate with a view to securing the acquisition of those goods and commodities which the two countries needed in the Netherland East Indies; that Japan and the United States should mutually undertake to restore their commercial relations to those prevailing prior to the

freezing of the assets, the United States to refrain from such measures and actions as "will be prejudicial to the endeavors for the restoration of general peace between Japan and China."

[In the preceding quotation is a typical Japanese euphemism. What the United States was actually asked to do was to cease all aid to China.]

**O**N Nov. 21 Kurusu brought a formula which he said clarified the obligations of Japan under the tripartite pact and should relieve the fears of the United States in that particular. But it was only a statement that Japan reserved the right to interpret freely her obligations under the pact and that this interpretation need not be the same as Germany's or Italy's. Japan, the formula asserted, was not bound to cooperate or collaborate with Germany and Italy in aggression.

Hull—Have you anything more to offer?

Kurusu—No.

Hull—This is not especially helpful.

It becomes increasingly clear that Japan would not budge from the position of its military leaders. She was steadily refusing to abandon preferential positions in all the occupied areas. She was demanding a victor's peace with China and our assent to it, her army to be kept there indefinitely. Her envoys had made no answer to Mr. Hull's proposal on economic policy, but kept asking if there could be a *modus vivendi*.

Though the fact was kept from the Japanese, the President and Mr. Hull had been exploring a path of temporary adjustment, but had found no solution. It was during this exploration that the Chinese feared they would be abandoned by the Great Powers—a fear that proved baseless. The Army and Navy, as well as the Dutch and British Governments, were calling for more time. It was apparent to Mr. Hull that all hope of meeting the crisis by diplomacy had ceased, but he determined to make one more offer.

Next day, Nov. 22, the conversations were resumed. Mr. Hull said we could not furnish oil to the Japanese Navy, permit the Japanese troops to remain in Indo-China or desist from aiding China while Japan continued to assist Germany. If one more move like that in Indo-China were made there could be no hope of peace.

"Won't some Japanese statesman," he asked, "preach peace for a change?"

He expressed the belief that the Dutch, the British and the United States could arrange to end the freezing regulations if some concrete evidence were given of Japan's peaceful intentions. Japan might have all the materials she wanted on demonstration of this.

Kurusu and Nomura replied on a tangent. They stressed that a Japanese troop withdrawal to the north of Indo-China would relieve pressure on Thailand, but they continued to give no indication that their government was considering the basic suggestions made by the Secretary. Kurusu added it was "hard to get the Japanese Army to agree to leave South Indo-China, yet he had ac-

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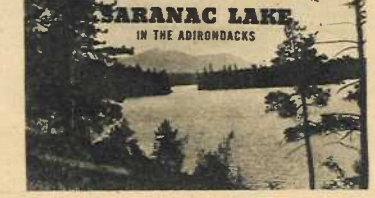
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**Infamous Prelude to Pearl Harbor**

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complished this. The situation was approaching an explosive point, he explained, and a quick settlement was needed.

"No progress" would be a fair summary of this meeting.

On Nov. 25, as he did again on the 28th, Mr. Hull, attending the War Council where were gathered the civilian and military chiefs of the American State, emphasized the critical nature of the conversations and said he saw no possibility of an agreement. He warned that Japan might strike at any moment. And he added that, though he did not venture to speak as a military man, he would counsel his hearers to look for surprise attacks simultaneously at many points throughout the Pacific area. He said that even during the final phase of his conversations with the envoys of Japan, our government had learned of the dispatch of new Japanese troops and equipment to Indo-China and the Gulf of Thailand. The obvious objectives were Singapore and the Burma Road.

**S**ECRETARY HULL brought to the meeting of Nov. 26 for consideration by the Japanese envoys the document now famous in history. In it was outlined a plan for a broad but simple settlement covering the entire Pacific area.

This counter-proposal included a mutual declaration affirming 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 active support to certain fundamental principles of peace upon which their relations with each other and all other nations would be based. There was provision for mutual pledges to support and apply liberal economic principles in their economic relations with each other and with other nations and peoples. These were enumerated and were based upon the general principle of equality of commercial opportunity and treatment. There were steps proposed to be taken by the two governments, envisaging a situation in which there would be no Japanese or other foreign armed forces in French Indo-China or in China. Mutual commitments were suggested in detail.

**T**HE proposals were instantly depreciated by Mr. Kurusu. His government, he said, "would throw up its hands" when it saw them. He asked again for a modus vivendi, and Mr. Hull replied that this had already been explored.

They turned to a discussion of the value of international agreements in general. Japan didn't do well with these, said Kurusu, and reminded the Secretary of The Hague award against Japan in the matter of the Perpetual Leases. The conversation droned on, returned to the Japanese proposals.

Hull—you ask for all the oil you want. I might almost be lynched if I promised that oil would go freely to Japan in these circumstances.

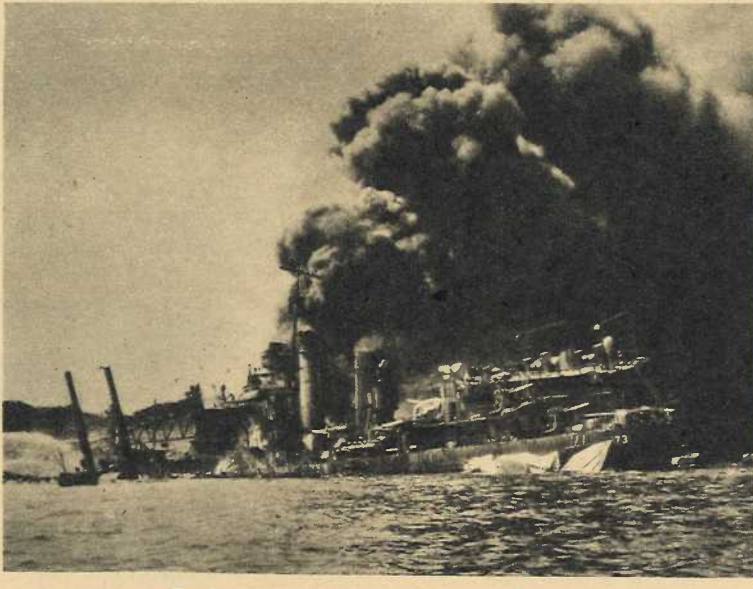
Nomura—Sometimes statesmen fail to get public sympathizers. Only wise men see far ahead, and sometimes they

suffer martyrdom. But life is short and a man can only do his duty.

On this melancholy note, the meeting ended.

It was now Nov. 27. The sands were almost in the bottom of the glass and the war cloud was sweeping in from the West.

On Nov. 27, the day before Mr. Hull's second warning to the War Council, the President and he received the envoys. The President said he had not given up hope, but the situation was serious. The American Government was disappointed by the attitude of the Japanese leaders toward fundamental principles of peace. This



A destroyer afire at Pearl Harbor.

had created difficulties in the atmosphere here and abroad.

The United States had been very patient, and would continue to be if Japan would permit it. But the United States must have manifestations of peaceful intent. The President, saying this, warned the envoys that the best interest of Japan would not be served by Hitler.

Hull—Every one knows that the Japanese slogans of "a new order," etc., are war propaganda, are camouflaged terms of the policy of force and conquest and military domination of all the conquered peoples.

**T**HE envoys offered very little in response except for reiteration by Kurusu that the differences between the two countries were not in fundamentals but only in their application.

The conferees resumed again on Dec. 1. Mr. Hull said the United States would definitely not become a partner with the military leaders of Japan from whom came only "bluster and blood-curdling threats."

"We aren't trying to bluff you," he remarked, "and there is no occasion for you to try to bluff us. There is a limit to these things." He went on to summarize:

To ask us to cease aid to China is the same as asking us to cease aid to Great Britain. We would be prepared to consider your proposal that we use our good offices to bring China and Japan together, but in return Japan pursues a policy that immobilizes anti-Axis troops in the Near East, thus assisting Hitler. The envoys must also recall that Premier Tojo on Nov. 20 had said the United States must be purged of influence in East Asia.

The conversation continued:  
Hull—We won't be driven out

of the Pacific. Why can't we go back to the fundamentals of my proposals of Nov. 26? Japan needs no sword to sit at the head of a table.

Kurusu—The Nov. 26 document has been communicated and we expect a reply soon. But Japan thinks its Nov. 20 proposal is equitable. What is the ultimate aim of the United States? I advise you to make a deep reflection as to that. And, why is the President returning earlier to Washington than he had planned? [Mr. Roosevelt had left for a brief trip.]

Hull—Perhaps it was the loud talk of Premier Tojo.

Kurusu—That was only a

twenty minute broadcast. And bad translation resulted in the Premier's being misquoted.

Nomura—What Tojo said is not much different from your Pan-American policy. Our methods are simply more primitive.

Kurusu—And if you don't look out, China will sell us both down the river.

Nomura—I hope we can come to a peaceful settlement. A war in the Pacific would be a tragedy. Wars don't settle anything.

The President some days before had asked Mr. Hull to inquire why Japan, in the midst of the conversations, had sent reinforcements to Indo-China, this time concentrating them in the north. Long before that, as it later became evident, Japan had prepared its expedition against Pearl Harbor.

Kurusu brought the reply to the question on Dec. 5 at a subsequent meeting. His government, said the envoy, had reinforced Indo-China as a protection against threatened Chinese aggression.

**M**R. HULL was surprised. He had just the opposite impression, he said. He had understood that Japan was going north in Indo-China to attack China. It was new to him that this was a move of defense. He hadn't known the Japanese were on the defensive in Indo-China.

This irony was met by an observation from Nomura that Indo-China could be a menace to Japan, therefore care must be taken that no other power control it.

Patiently once more, although his hope was dead, the Secretary urged the Japanese Government to renounce force and aggression. He declared that the United States is not looking for trouble,

but it isn't running away either.

Kurusu (reverting again)—How are we aiding Hitler?

Hull—I have told you by keeping British, Dutch and American forces immobilized in the Far East.

Nomura (in Japanese)—This isn't getting us anywhere.

Hull—And can you explain the malignant press campaign which is confusing the situation and which your government is permitting to go on during these conversations? You control the press of Japan, and you could stop it.

Kurusu—Your press here is not free from articles that confuse and irritate. For instance, there was one story that I had been sent here to check Ambassador Nomura. That, indeed, was not helpful.

The envoys departed and on Dec. 6 the President sent the message to the Emperor that was the final plea for peace.

**S**UNDAY, Dec. 7, was a day of unusual beauty in Washington. The forenoon was quiet, but at noon the Secretary received a request from Ambassador Nomura to see him and Kurusu as soon as possible. The appointment was made for 1 o'clock, then postponed by the Japanese until 1:45.

The three conferees met together for the last time in Secretary Hull's office at the State Department at 2:20. Kurusu explained the delay by saying there had been difficulties in decoding Japan's reply to Mr. Hull's final proposals.

He handed the Secretary the reply.

Tokyo flatly rejected the proposals made by Secretary Hull in his memorandum of Nov. 26 and notified the American Government that "in view of the attitude of the American Government it cannot but consider that it is impossible to reach an agreement through further negotiations." The Japanese reply charged that the American Government intended to "conspire with Great Britain and other countries to obstruct Japan's efforts toward the establishment of peace through the creation of a new order in East Asia, and especially to preserve Anglo-American rights and interests by keeping Japan and China at war."

**M**R. HULL read the document slowly with a look of unbelief growing on his face. Then he turned to the Japanese envoys and uttered the denunciation that has become a dramatic part of the recorded history of that fateful time.

"I must say that in all my conversations with you [the Japanese Ambassador] during the last nine months I have never uttered one word of untruth. This is borne out absolutely by the record. In all my fifty years of public service I have never seen a document that was more crowded with infamous falsehoods and distortions on a scale so huge that I never imagined until today that any government on this planet was capable of uttering them."

The envoys left without comment.

One hour before, the Japanese fleet and air force had attacked Pearl Harbor.