Safe: India
MEMORANDUM FOR MR. RUDOLPH FORSTER:

The attached paper was prepared by Field Marshal Sir John Dill for the President's information. He has sent it with a note to General Marshall for transmission and as General Marshall is not here today I am forwarding it direct. Will you please see that the President gets it.

W. B. S.

Incl.
5-page mimeo. with map,
"Appreciation of the Japanese threat to India."

DECLASSIFIED
JCS memo, 1-4-74
By RHP, NLR, Date FEB 19 1974
Public Health Building,
Washington, D.C.

10th March, 1942.

Dear Marshall,

The President asked to be informed as to the scale of a Japanese attack against India in the event of the loss of Burma, and also as to the British forces available to meet it.

Attached hereto is a note along these lines.

General George C. Marshall,
Room 2030,
War Department,
Washington, D.C.
APPRÉCIATION OF THE JAPANESE THREAT TO INDIA.

INVASION BY LAND.

1. The only line of invasion by land is from BURMA through ASSAM, such an invasion being combined with air and sea borne attack in the area of the GANGES DELTA.

2. Unless they over-run BURMA the Japanese cannot invade INDIA by land. Assuming, however, that they do over-run BURMA, the scale of attack is limited by the over-riding factor of communications, which will therefore be considered first.

Communications. (See Sketch map attached).

3. The communications from French INDO-CHINA through YUNNAN to the Northern ASSAM rail-head at LEDO are so difficult that a threat from this direction can be disregarded. Similarly even if the Japanese over-run the MANDALAY Area, communications beyond MYITKYNIA are such that an advance beyond that point in any strength is most unlikely.

4. There are only two other lines of advance.

(a) From MANDALAY via KALEMA - MANIPUR ROAD and BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY; This is served by only one Road of which the Southern Section will be incomplete until April at the earliest and of which the northern-most section is liable to interruption during the summer rainy season. This latter section is, however, also served by a single-line railway from MANIPUR ROAD to INDIA.
(3) From CHITTAGONG across the GANGES - BRAHMAPUTRA DELTA; this consists chiefly of tracks or very poor roads all of which are subject to interruption in the summer rainy season, but it is also served by fairly good railway communications to INDIA. Communications from Southern BURMA to CHITTAGONG are extremely poor, but the Japanese could build up their forces there by the use of small coastal craft which could then be used for landings along the BENGAL Coast. Air cover can also be provided from landing grounds along the BURMA Coast.

Estimation of Japanese Scale of Attack by Land.
5. Japan would have no difficulty in making available the necessary land forces together with strong air forces. It is estimated that they could concentrate, deploy and maintain:-
   (a) One or possibly two Divisions advancing from MANDALAY by the route to the BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY.
   (b) About two Divisions from the CHITTAGONG Area advancing by land and sea against the GANGES DELTA Area.

INVASION BY SEA.
6. The success of a sea borne expedition against INDIA depends on the defeat or neutralisation of British naval forces based on CEYLON. The modern section of this fleet consists only of a striking force of one battleship and two aircraft carriers until April/May when it will be reinforced by a second battleship and a third carrier.
The four old "R" class battleships now on or near the INDIAN OCEAN can only be considered as suitable for convoy escorts. For early warning of any large-scale expedition approaching INDIA, we shall depend upon our ability to maintain sufficient submarine and air patrols.

7. In view of the distance of their nearest repair base, such an operation by the Japanese would be risky and difficult, but the strategical advantage of early attack would be immense and this possibility, therefore, cannot be disregarded. If such an operation were attempted, it is very probable that the initial stroke would consist of a surprise bombing attack on TRINCOMALEE, the defences of which are still relatively weak, and if success were achieved it could be followed up by the immediate invasion of CEYLON with a probable secondary invasion in the MADRAS area.

Scale of Japanese Attack by Sea.

8. In spite of their present commitments, the Japanese still have available sufficient forces and shipping for a seaborne expedition now by two divisions. The provision of garrisons for the Netherlands East Indies is unlikely to prove a heavy commitment and provided therefore that they do not at the same time undertake major operations against Australia, Japan can collect forces for operations against INDIA and CEYLON at a greater rate than we can reinforce those places.
# Army and Air Forces Available to Meet These Threats

## 9. Taking into Consideration

Taking into consideration the need to provide adequate defence of the NORTHWEST FRONTIER, of internal security and the low state of training and equipment of field formations now in INDIA, it is estimated that the following ground forces could be made available to meet these threats.

(a) **Ceylon**

The forces in Ceylon must be considered as fortress troops which cannot be used to reinforce INDIA should the attack develop against INDIA and not Ceylon. They consist of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Now</th>
<th>Reinforcements due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by Mid-March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34th Ind. Div. (less one Bde)</td>
<td>One British Bde. Gp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Fd. Arty Bty.</td>
<td>Heavy A.A. 48 guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy A.A. 48 guns</td>
<td>Three Fighter Sqns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light A.A. 52 guns</td>
<td>One Torpedo Bomber Sqn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Flying Boat Sqn.</td>
<td>One Light Bomber Sqn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One G.R. Sqn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One Flying Boat Sqn.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) **India**

The forces in INDIA must be disposed to meet both the threat by sea to the MADRAS area and the threat by land and sea to BENGAL. The whole strength of the forces in INDIA cannot therefore be concentrated against an attack against either of these places. They consist of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mid-March</th>
<th>Reinforcements due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by April/May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Indian Inf. Divs.</td>
<td>Heavy A.A. 192 guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70th British Div. (less one Bde. Gp)</td>
<td>Light A.A. 88 guns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy A.A. 88 guns</td>
<td>Four Fighter Sqns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light A.A. 87 guns</td>
<td>Two Light Bomber Sqns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Five Miscellaneous Sqns. (obsolete types)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSIONS.

10. After the Japanese have occupied Burma, the two chief dangers in the INDIAN OCEAN, in our view, will be as follows:

(a) Sea-borne expedition to occupy CEYLON.
This would have a dual object first to deny to us the main British fleet base, and second to enable the Japanese directly to threaten sea communications with the MIDDLE EAST and with RUSSIA via the PERSIAN GULF.

(b) Occupation of the CALCUTTA Area by means of combined sea-borne and overland attacks. This operation would have as an important object the complete cutting off of CHINA from outside assistance except by air transport methods.

11. Defence against either of the above attacks will be primarily by sea and air forces, naval forces playing a predominant part round CEYLON, and air forces in the CALCUTTA Area.

12. The crux of the situation is the rate at which we can provide air reinforcements for INDIA and CEYLON. The British air strength in the MIDDLE EAST has already been seriously depleted by transference of air squadrons to INDIA, BURMA and the FAR EAST.

WASHINGTON, D.C.
16th March, 1942.
MEMORANDUM FOR
GENERAL ARNOLD

I do not know whether you have seen this -- nor do I quite know whether this calls for a reply on my part or not. What do you think?

F. D. R.
The attached is a complete copy of No. 155 from New Delhi.

The one previously sent at 10:35 this morning did not contain Section three.
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

SECURITY

SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

RUSH.

155, April 6, 5 p.m., (SECTION ONE).

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE PRESIDENT AND ACTING SECRETARY:

Wavell supplements his personal appeal (See my 145, April 4, 8 p.m.) through me to the President by a secret letter as follows.

JOHNSTON,
President's Representative

AIC

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date 4 1972
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH
155, April 6, 5 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

"PERSONAL SECRET"

When we met on Saturday, you asked me my most immediate need and I replied 'aircraft.'

The Japanese attacks now in progress against Colombo and our shipping and India generally emphasize the vital urgency of this requirement. It is not too much to say that our whole position in India during the next few months depends on whether we can receive an adequate supply of aircraft.

The figures I give you below do not in any way represent our ultimate requirements but are the numbers of aircraft for which I estimate that we can find crews if we can receive them during or before June, the earlier the better of course: Fighters: 120 P-40's; Bombers 120 B-25's; General Reconnaissance: 80 Hudsons; Bomber Transport: 40 DC-3's.

If you could do anything to obtain us these aircraft
-2- #155, April 6, 5 p.m. (SECTION TWO) from New Delhi aircraft as an urgent and vital requirement I shall be most grateful. (Signed) A.P. Wavell."

JOHNSON
President's Representative

EDA
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH.

155, April 6, 5 p.m., (SECTION THREE).

Wavell says holding India depends upon the approximate number above set forth over and above Royal and our own air force. He authorizes me to say to the President that if we can furnish these planes he will hold India. British gradual withdrawal in Burma adding to confusion so I hope I may be able to answer Wavell at earliest date.

(END OF MESSAGE).

JOHNSON
President's Representative
WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON

April 9, 1942

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Subject: Request for Additional Airplanes in India.

In connection with request made by General Wavell of Mr. Louis Johnson for additional airplanes in India, it is my opinion that we should handle this matter with care.

India is in the war theatre for which the British have full responsibility. When this same matter was brought up before the Combined Chiefs of Staff, the British members stated that it was a British responsibility and that they would handle it. Accordingly the document concerning additional airplanes to India is now being considered by the British Joint Chiefs of Staff in London.

In view of the above, I recommend that no further action be taken on this request.

H. H. ARNOLD,
Lieutenant General, U.S.A.,
Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

Incl: Conf. ltr. to Gen. Arnold
frm. the President, 4/7/42,
re attached complete copy
of telegram #155 frm. New Delhi.
MEV
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (MC)

Secretary of State,
Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY
1721, April 9, 5 p.m., (SECTION ONE).

AND PERSONAL FOR THE PRESIDENT FROM HOPKINS.

There is an unfortunate impression here that Louis Johnson is acting as your personal representative and under your instructions mediating between the British and the Indian Congress. Within the past few hours Cripps apparently in cooperation with Johnson has submitted a new proposal relative to the control of defenses in India. This proposal was made to the Indian Congress without consultation with the Governor General or with Wavell and with no knowledge of the British Government here. I have a feeling that Cripps very naturally is using Johnson who in turn uses your name very freely.

I have told the Prime Minister and Eden that Johnson is not acting as a mediator on your behalf but whatever he is doing he is doing at the specific request of Cripps.

MATTHEWS

JMH
RS  
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (HC)  
London  
Dated April 9, 1942  
Rec'd 2:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY.  
1721, April 9, 5 p.m., (SECTION TWO)

The Governor General of India has the distinct feeling that all of Johnson's moves are being directed by you. I believe it important that Johnson's part in this be played down because of the danger of a proposal being made to the British Government which they might reject and which the public might think comes from you. I lunched with Eden today and he is not too encouraged about the outcome in India but it may break favorably before the day is over. I am seeing the Prime Minister again at six o'clock and will cable you the latest news at once. I have found Eden and Lyttelton very sympathetic today to our main proposal.

(END OF MESSAGE.)

MATTHEWS

M.1
From: [Signature]
Number: 120  Dated: 4/11/42
Code: SC
Caption: [Signature]

This telegram has been distributed to:

Please advise the Division of Communications and Records if further distribution should be made.
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH
170, April 11, 9 a.m. (SECTION ONE)

NEW DELHI
Dated April 11, 1942
Rec'd 3:53 a.m.

SECRETARY

The Congress delivered its rejection of Cripps' proposals at 7:00 o'clock Friday night, Nehru sending me a copy. The rejection is a masterpiece and will appeal to free men everywhere.

My substitute defense amendment was informally agreed to at conference between Cripps, Nehru, and Congress President Thursday night but then after they disagreed on giving any authority to new Nationalist Government proposed by Cripps, Cripps said my formula meant same thing as his original amendment which was quite untrue and denied his earlier press remarks that Nationalist Government any more real self government now.

JOHNSON

HTM

DECLASSIFIED
State Dept. Letter, 1-11-72
By J. Schauble Date FEB 4 1972
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

Secretary of State,
Washington.

RUSH
170, April 11, 9 a.m. (SECTION TWO)

Cripps is sincere, knows this matter should be solved. He and Nehru could solve it in five minutes if Cripps had any freedom or authority. To my amazement when satisfactory solution seemed certain, with unimportant concession, Cripps with embarrassment told me that he could not change original draft declaration without Churchill's approval and that Churchill has cabled him that he will give no approval unless Wavell and Viceroy separately send their own code cables unqualifiedly endorsing any change Cripps wants.

JOHNSON

ELP

New Delhi

Dated April 11, 1942.

Rec'd 3:47 a.m.
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

Secretary of State,
Washington.

MOST IMMEDIATE.
RUSH.

170, April 11, 9 a.m. (SECTION THREE)

I never lost confidence until then. London wanted a Congress refusal. Why? Cripps' original offer contained little more than the unkept promise of the First World War. Does England prefer to lose India to enemy retaining claim of title at peace table rather than lose it by giving freedom now? I have my own opinion about it.

The Indian Ocean is controlled by enemy; British shipping from India has been suspended; according to plan determined many days ago, British are retiring from Burma going north while fighting Chinese go south; Wavell is worn out and defeated; the hour has arrived when we should consider a replotting of our policy in this section of the world. Association with British here is bound to adversely affect morale of our own officers. Only the best should be sent and those who have failed
have failed elsewhere should not (repeat not) be dumped here as many have been in recent past. In so dumping here men like General Adler (whose failure in Egypt I know personally) we follow the policy which brought Wavell here and which has been utterly demoralizing to all British who really want to resist enemy.

JOHNSON

EMB
AS
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

New Delhi
Dated April 11, 1942
Rec'd 7:10 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

MOST IMMEDIATE
RUSH
170, April 11, 9 a.m. (SECTION FOUR)

Nehru has been magnificent in his cooperation with me. The President would like him and on most things they agree. I have his personal promise to proceed to Calcutta immediately in effort to allay fear, settle general motors and steel strikes, and keep industry operating there. I shall have his complete help; he is our hope here. I trust him.

Of the 1,350,000 kilowatts of installed electric generator capacity in all India, 1,100,000 kilowatts is located east of the line Bombay-Cawnpore. In the area west of this line, the only area in which additional industrial capacity may be located with reasonable safety, electric power supply is limited to 250,000 kilowatts of which no surplus is available. Therefore landing or bombing in present industrial area will mean the end of India's ability to aid herself materially industrialwise.

JOHNSON,
PRESIDENT'S REPRESENTATIVE
New Delhi
Dated April 11, 1942
Rec'd. 7:02 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

170, April 11, 9 a.m., (SECTION FIVE).

America's effort therefore must be toward direct aid. There is little opportunity for India to aid herself—particularly since Cripps, through no fault of his own, has failed.

Halifax's speech added the finishing touch to the sabataging of Cripps. It is believed here it was so intended and timed, and I am told pleased Wavell and the Viceroy greatly. (END OF MESSAGE)

JOHNSON

RDS
February 25, 1942.
11.40 P.M.

AMBASSADOR WINANT
LONDON

As you may guess, I am somewhat concerned over the situation in India, especially in view of the possibility of the necessity of a slow retirement through Burma into India itself. From all I can gather the British defense will not have sufficiently enthusiastic support from the people of India themselves.

In the greatest confidence could you or Harriman or both let me have a slant on what the Prime Minister thinks about new relationships between Britain and India? I hesitate to send him a direct message because, in a strict sense, it is not our business. It is, however, of great interest to us from the point of view of the conduct of the war.

ROOSEVELT
RECENT RELIABLE INFORMATION FROM INDIA SHOWS INTERNAL SITUATION WORSENING. MAHATMA GANDHI LAUNCHING AROUND MIDDLE JUNE NON-VIOLENT NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT AIMING AT COMPLETE BREAKDOWN ALL COMMUNICATIONS RAILWAYS PUBLIC UTILITIES TO OUST BRITISH RULE. MOVEMENT WILL BE STRONGER THAN ALL PREVIOUS ONES AND MORE THAN CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE. IF INDIA GOVERNMENT PUT GANDHI UNDER ARREST THIS WILL AROUSE ANGER OF WHOLE COUNTRY. HE WILL NOT HESITATE TO GO INTO FAST UNTO DEATH CAMPAIGN TO ATTAIN OBJECTIVE. IF HE DIES WHOLE INDIA WHICH WORSHIPS HIM AS GOD WILL PROBABLY RISE IN REVOLT. AT HIS WORD ALL VILLAGES ESPECIALLY CENTRAL INDIA WILL BE IN POSITION FRUSTRATE EXISTING WAR PLANS ACTIVITIES AND THIS AFFECT ENTIRE CAUSE UNITED NATIONS IN THIS PART ASIA.

RECENT LETTERS FROM NEHRU SHOW THAT DESPITE ALL HE CAN DO INTERNAL REVOLUTION BREWING AS ANTI-BRITISH FEELING GAINING MOMENTUM. HE THINKS ONLY WAY GAIN INDIAN PUBLIC SUPPORT OF WAR IS DECLARATION BY UNITED NATIONS OF INDIA INDEPENDENCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION. HE WRITES "TIME IS PAST NOW WHEN SOME CLEVER FORMULA ACCEPTABLE TO BRITISH AND INDIA CAN BE DEISED. POPULAR AS I AM WITH MY PEOPLE THERE IS SO MUCH ANTI-BRITISH FEELING NOW THAT I CANNOT POSSIBLY GET ANYTHING DONE WHICHignores INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE SELF-DETERMINATION."
"BRITISH HAVE MADE LOT OF JINNAH AND HIS SEPARATIST TENDENCIES. IF THIS ATTITUDE CONTINUES SOLUTION IMPOSSIBLE. AT SAME TIME NO ONE WANTS BRITISH GOVERNMENT THROW JINNAH COMPLETELY OVERBOARD. LET THEM SAY THEY RECOGNIZE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE SELF-DETERMINATION AND LEAVE IT TO US SETTLE WITH EACH OTHER WITHOUT INTERFERENCE FROM THEM. REAL PROBLEM IS HOW TO MAKE OUR PEOPLE ENTHUSIASTIC FOR CAUSE. NO VAGUE PROMISES ASSURANCE POLITICAL OR DIPLOMATIC PHRASIOLOGY IS GOOD ENOUGH BUT SOMETHING THAT STRIKES AT ROOT OF PROBLEM."

PRIVATE MESSAGE FROM NEHRU DATED MAY 26 CONFIRMS THAT MAHATMA GANDHI INCREASINGLY BITTER AND DEMANDS BRITISH WITHDRAWAL FROM INDIA. CONGRESS ATTITUDE TOWARD GANDHI UNCERTAIN BUT MAHATMA GANDHI HIMSELF CAN POWERFULLY INFLUENCE MASS OPINION AND ANY STEP HE TAKES WILL HAVE FAR REACHING CONSEQUENCES. MAHATMA GANDHI'S ACTION MAY ADVERSELY AFFECT INTERNAL AND WAR SITUATION BUT MAHATMA GANDHI SEEMS RESOLVED.

NEHRU SEEING MAHATMA GANDHI TO CLARIFY SITUATION.