



*Box 30*  
Copies of  
COMMUNICATIONS FROM JAPAN  
in two binders  
Binder No. 2  
May 8, 1939 to November 17, 1941

JR

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

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

INVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
MAR 21 1941

Tokyo

Dated March 13, 1941

Rec'd 10:05 a.m.

FROM

3/14/41 TD  
Secretary of State,  
Washington.

403, March 13, 1 p.m.

A  
file  
MWA

Following is substance of telegram sent by the British Ambassador to the Foreign Office, London, dated March 12:

"I paid a short visit to Minister for Foreign Affairs this evening at his private house prior to his (\*). His Excellency reaffirmed that the objects of his visit were as explained in our interview of February 27, adding that in his farewell interview with the Japanese press he had so defined his purpose and had mentioned to the correspondents the fact of his earlier interview with me as confirmation of what he now told them. He was going to Berlin and Rome to see and to listen. Possibly he would prolong his journey to Paris and Vichy in order to see Marshal Petain, whom he greatly admired. In answer to my inquiry, he said that he only expected to stay one day in Moscow on his outward journey in order to pay his respects to Molotov, though he might remain a little longer should Stalin express a wish to see him. On his return journey he might stay a

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MAR 22 1941

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few

-2- 4403, March 13, 1 p.m., from Tokyo.

few days in Moscow, but he had no definite business there and this visit would be incidental to the remainder of this tour. The fact that he was expecting to be absent from Japan for some six weeks showed clearly enough how unfounded had been our suspicions of impending trouble in the Pacific.

Two. I recapitulated briefly my misgivings as to the course he was taking, based from my knowledge of some of the men he was to meet and of their methods and warned him again that the greatest care would be necessary if an intensification of the strain in Anglo-Japanese relations were to be avoided."

GREW

GW

(\* ) Omission

62

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JR

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

**FROM** Tokyo

Dated March 25, 1941

Rec'd 10:15 a.m.

SUBSTANCE COMMUNICATED ORALLY  
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
3/26/41 30  
Secretary of State,

Washington.

459, March 25, 7 p.m.

Following from Osaka.

"March 24, 2 p.m.

Over weekend anti-American, British and Chinese posters have been observed in the main streets of Osaka. They bear crude caricatures of Churchill, Roosevelt and Chiang Kai-Shek being struck by a hammer and the caption in translation "Strike the enemies of the imperial nation." While they purport to be advertisements of a meeting on March 20 under the auspices of the Seisanto they were still in considerable evidence at noon today. Allison".

This morning I wrote a personal letter to the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, and after referring to my conversations with the Foreign Minister in which he had reported anti-foreign demonstrations, stated that the diplomatic corps and other foreigners in Japan would appreciate whatever he could do to remove the posters and prevent their reappearance.

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MAR 29 1941  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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APR 3 - 1941  
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**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

DES  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (D)

FROM TOKYO

Dated March 27, 1941

Rec'd 2:45 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

474, March 27, 8 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

APR 1 1941  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
SR

702.94/490

During a conversation with a member of my staff whom  
he had known in Moscow, the following observations of  
interest were made by a member of the German Embassy in  
Tokyo

One. In respect of Matsuoka's visit to Berlin and  
Rome informant stated that he could not reveal the immediate  
political objectives of the trip and as he did not wish  
to convey false information he would prefer not to discuss  
the visit, but he could say, however, that one of the  
primary purposes of Matsuoka's visit to Berlin was to  
discuss with Hitler and other German leaders questions  
relating to post-war settlement and Japan's desire in  
connection therewith. When it was pointed out to him that  
the outcome of the war could hardly be regarded as definitely  
settled informant replied that according to all information  
received by the German Embassy here from Berlin post-war  
problems were occupying a very large part of the attention

Confidential File  
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PK

-2- 474, March 27, 8 p.m. (SECTION ONE) from Tokyo

of the German Government at the present time inasmuch as it was felt that the "military situation was well in hand" and that there was every reason to expect either a German victory or peace on German terms before

GREW

NPL

DES

## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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

TCITVO

FROM Dated March 27, 1941

Rec'd 2:40 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

471, March 27 8 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

(the end of the present year, largely as a result of submarine and air attacks on British shipping this spring and summer.

Two. In respect of present and future Japanese policy he stated that he could see no reason why Japan should alter its present course as it had everything to gain and nothing to lose by biding its time and awaiting the outcome of the struggle in Europe.

Three. Informant said that the German Government was now certain that Turkey would not enter the war against Germany unless directly attacked, and that the recent Russian assurances to Turkey should be regarded as further evidence of the determination of the Soviet Union not to become directly involved in the present Balkan situation. He added that developments in the Balkans were awaiting an event which would occur "within two weeks" and while he declined to elaborate on this statement it is believed that he may have referred to German expectations that following the adherence of Yugoslavia to the Axis, Greece might be forced to make peace with Italy without the necessity of the

## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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DES

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

FROM TOKYO

Dated March 27, 1941

Rec'd 2:35 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

474, March 27, 8 p.m. (SECTION THREE)

employment armed force by Germany.

Four. Throughout the discussion informant spoke with apparent frankness and at one point even remarked that among the leaders in the "other camp" President Roosevelt and Churchill appeared clearly to grasp the issues involved.

The foregoing is transmitted in the belief that it might be of value in supplementing information received from other sources and it is requested that in any use which the Department might make thereof every effort be made to safeguard its source and Tokyo origin.

(END OF MESSAGE)

GREW

NPL



THE FOREIGN SERVICE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ADVISED ON POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MAY 31 1941  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AMERICAN EMBASSY  
Tokyo, April 21, 1941.

No. 5529.

SUBJECT: BACKGROUND OF THE SOVIET-JAPANESE PACT OF  
NEUTRALITY OF APRIL 13, 1941, AND SOVIET-  
JAPANESE RELATIONS.

RECEIVED  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1941 MAY 15 PM 1 45

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE

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Division of  
FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS  
Department of State

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
JUN 6 1941  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Copy in 7E  
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Pay \_\_\_\_\_  
In USA    
O.N.I. M.I.D.

CONFIDENTIAL

COPIES SENT TO  
O.N.I. AND M.I.D.  
on confid. 3/27/41

The Honorable  
The Secretary of State,  
Washington.

Sir:

In connection with the conclusion on April 13 of  
the pact of neutrality between the Soviet Union and Japan  
and with reference to the Embassy's telegrams nos. 480,  
March 29, 10 a.m., and 538, April 11, noon, I have the  
honor to outline as background material the following  
account of the course of the Soviet-Japanese negotiations  
leading up to the Pact, which has been conveyed to a

member

761.94/1321

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FILED  
JUN 9 1941

member of my staff by the members of the immediate family of Mr. Togo, former Japanese Ambassador to Moscow.

According to the above-mentioned sources, in early October, 1940, Ambassador Togo, following negotiations begun in the summer\*, had reached a series of agreements with the Soviet Government consisting of the following: (1) a Soviet-Japanese non-aggression pact; (2) a permanent fisheries convention; (3) an agreement in principle for a commercial accord the details of which were to be worked out separately. In addition, the Soviet Government had given categorical assurances that following the signature of a non-aggression pact with Japan Soviet aid to General Chiang Kai-shek would cease. Although these agreements were to be ready for signature in early October, Mr. Matsuoka in connection with the reorganization of the Japanese Foreign Office and diplomatic service did not desire that Mr. Togo, who was already slated for retirement, should sign these agreements which represented a considerable diplomatic victory for Japan. He, therefore, brought about the recall of Ambassador Togo and sent in his place, Lieutenant-General Tatekawa who was to have the honor of signing the agreements. However, when the negotiations were resumed by General Tatekawa

in

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\* As quoted in the Japanese press, Moscow PRAVDA on April 19, in reviewing foreign reactions to the Soviet-Japanese neutrality pact, declared that the first proposal for such a pact was made in July, 1940, by the Japanese Ambassador in Moscow and was accepted in principle by the Soviet Government but that discussions as to the terms delayed the final conclusion.

in the middle of November, 1940, following Molotov's return from Berlin, the Soviet attitude completely changed and the negotiations made no progress largely, according to this source, because of the personal incompetence of General Tatekawa. The Soviet Union then for the first time presented a number of territorial and other demands as the price of the conclusion of a non-aggression pact and cessation of aid to China. These demands included (1) the cession by Japan of southern Saghalien; (2) certain islands of the Kurile and, in addition, important frontier rectification in favor of the Soviet Union of certain portions of the Siberian-Manchurian frontier, and certain "special facilities" for Soviet trade in Korean and Manchurian ports. As a result of these demands which were categorically and definitely refused by the Japanese Government, the political negotiations with the Soviet Union which in October had been virtually successfully concluded came to a standstill.

In the beginning of January, Mr. Matsuoka consulted with former Ambassador Togo as to the advisability of a personal visit to Moscow as a means of breaking the deadlock in the political negotiations, a suggestion which Mr. Togo strongly approved. It was decided, however, that in order to avoid too great an appearance of eagerness that the visit would be announced as one to Berlin and Rome which would likewise afford the Foreign Minister an opportunity of holding important consultations with Hitler and Mussolini. Despite the public announcement that the  
purpose

purpose of Mr. Matsuoka's visit to Europe was to consult the German and Italian Governments, official Japanese circles in Tokyo, particularly in the Foreign Office, were well aware that the concrete aim of his trip was to attempt to rescue the negotiations with the Soviet Union which had broken down due to his "blunder" in changing ambassadors at an unpropitious moment. Consequently, in these same circles it was felt that Mr. Matsuoka would make every effort to obtain some form of agreement with Russia since to return empty-handed would seriously compromise his position. On the other hand, it was felt that if he obtained some political agreement with the Soviet Union on satisfactory terms his personal prestige would be so greatly enhanced that he might well succeed Prince Konoye as Prime Minister in the event of the latter's resignation.

According to the same source, Mr. Matsuoka, during his first visit to Moscow en route to Berlin, was afforded little encouragement by Stalin as to the prospect of effecting a settlement on any reasonable terms and it was only during his stay on the return trip that the Soviet Government showed a disposition to accept a reasonable basis of negotiations and only at the very close of that stay was Soviet agreement to the pact forthcoming.

While it appears obvious that too much emphasis is placed on the personal element in explanation of the failure of Japan to obtain the desired agreement last autumn and that certain of the details of the foregoing account are

colored

colored by the same personal factor, in its main outline the resumé of the Soviet-Japanese negotiations coincides with information from other sources. It is for example true that in early October a Soviet-Japanese political agreement on terms favorable to Japan was believed imminent and in this connection it may be added, according to a member of my staff who was in Moscow at the time, members of the German Embassy there were quite outspoken in characterizing the removal of Mr. Togo at that time as a very serious political mistake on the part of the Japanese Government. The opinion may be offered, however, that in so far as the change of ambassadors had any effect on Soviet policy, such change was due less to the personality of the individuals than to the interval which elapsed between Mr. Togo's departure on October 17th and the beginning of General Tatekawa's negotiations with Mr. Molotov in November, since during this interval occurred the visit of Mr. Molotov to Berlin.

Possibly the chief interest of the foregoing information lies in the illustration it affords of the degree to which Soviet policy in the Far East, particularly towards Japan, varies in ratio to the state of Soviet-German relations.

Without going into details, which do not lie within the purview of this despatch, it can be stated that according to available information the periods in the Soviet-Japanese negotiations outlined above when the Soviet Government was adopting a conciliatory attitude toward Japan correspond in time with periods when Soviet apprehension

hension as to Germany's immediate intentions was greatest and, conversely, that the stiffened Soviet attitude in the negotiations with Japan followed the receipt of assurances by the Soviet Government as to Germany's policy towards the Soviet Union. For example, during the months of September and October, 1940, it was reported that the Soviet Union was extremely uneasy as to the possibility of a complete reorientation of German policy in Eastern Europe which found its reflection in the apparent willingness of the Soviet Government to conclude a far-reaching political agreement with Japan on terms favorable to the latter; following Molotov's return from Berlin the assurances which he obtained there as to Germany's intentions were clearly not without effect in bringing about a revision of the Soviet attitude toward Japan and the demand for territorial and other concessions as the price for an agreement. This attitude remained adamant up to the German military successes in the Balkans which apparently again revived Soviet apprehensions as to the immediate future and it may be assumed were in a large measure responsible for the somewhat sudden decision of the Soviet Government on April 13 to conclude a political agreement with Japan.\*

There is little to be added to the opinions expressed in the Embassy's no. 552, April 14, 6 p.m., in regard to the immediate effect on Japan and Japanese policies of the neutrality agreement with the Soviet Union. Subsequent  
information

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\* See Moscow's telegram no. 762, April 13, 10 p.m.

information tends to confirm the view expressed therein that Mr. Matsuoka obtained an agreement of only a limited character designated as a pact of neutrality involving no Soviet commitment in regard to the question of Soviet aid to China.\* It may be, however, a mistake to place too great emphasis upon the negative character of the pact and thereby to underestimate its actual and potential significance. While it is true that the pact in itself changes little and adds little to the actual state of relations between the two countries, and may therefore be regarded as little more than a formulation in a public document of a previously existing situation, it should nonetheless be borne in mind that the Tripartite Pact itself insofar as Japan is concerned is affirmed by Japan, specifically in the imperial rescript which was issued when the alliance was concluded and by public declarations of its highest officials, to be designed primarily to prevent the extension of hostilities. Indeed even the conditions under which it becomes operative are not clearly defined and are left to Japan to determine. Furthermore all agreements concluded by the Soviet Union prior to and subsequent to the outbreak of the European war, with the exception of the short-lived treaties with the Baltic States, have been entirely negative in character. But it is precisely towards the continuance of such a negative policy on the part of the Soviet Union that, up to the present, Axis and Japanese diplomacy has been successfully directed, whereas the interest of the anti-Axis powers would lie in the adoption by the Soviet Union of a positive anti-

Axis

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\* See Moscow's telegram no. 790, April 17, 2 p.m.

Axis policy. Consequently any reaffirmation on the part of the Soviet Union of its intention to continue a negative policy of non-involvement in the present war and especially, in the present instance, of the extension of that policy to the Far East, must be counted as a diplomatic success for Japan and its Axis associates. Furthermore, even if the agreement is little more than a public statement of an already existing situation it nonetheless indicates on the part of the signatories a certain expectation that that situation will persist for at least the immediate future, and as long as the conditions which gave rise to the pact do persist the trend towards improvement in their relations will be likely to continue.

In regard to the general situation in the Far East perhaps the most important aspect of the pact for Japan lies in the implication which it contains in regard to future Soviet-Chinese relations. Although as indicated above, there is no evidence to justify the belief that the Soviet Union entered into any commitment in regard to China, which appears to have been excluded from Mr. Matsuoka's discussions in Moscow, it remains a fact that the conclusion of a neutrality agreement with Japan would appear to be in direct violation of Article 2 of the Soviet-Chinese pact of non-aggression of August 21, 1937, and whereas in the latter pact Soviet policy in the Far East appeared to have one basis, namely support of the Chinese Republic, it now has two fundamentally contradictory points of departure. It would appear logical that should

Soviet-

Soviet-Japanese relations, as predicted both in the Japanese and Soviet press, develop favorably on the basis of the neutrality pact, then, irrespective of Soviet assurances to China to the contrary, such a development would be accompanied inevitably by a progressive and gradual drift away from previous Soviet policy of aid to General Chiang Kai-shek. There have been indications in recent Japanese press comment which reveal that Japan is hopeful of some such development as a result of the agreement with the Soviet Union. Japan may therefore be expected to use every effort to cultivate its relations with the Soviet Union but in view of the history of the recently concluded negotiations, outlined above, it would appear that the future trend of Soviet-Japanese relations, will be in large measure determined by the progress of the European war and the extent of the real or potential German threat to the Soviet Union.

Respectfully yours,



Joseph C. Grew.

710  
CEB:C

Original and 4 copies to Department.  
Copy to Embassy, Moscow.

3 Carbon Copies  
Received .....

DES

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

OFFICE OF POLITICAL RELATIONS  
 MR. NOMURA  
 MAY 26 1941  
 TOKYO  
 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

COPIES SENT TO  
 O.N.I. AND M.I.D.  
 5-20 HES

Dated May 19, 1941.

FROM  
 DIVISION OF  
 EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
 MAY 21 1941  
 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Rec'd 5:12 p.m.

DIVISION OF  
 FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS  
 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State  
 Washington.

707, May 19, 10 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

One. Unlike my interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs at the Foreign Office on May 14, our conversation this afternoon at his private residence, which lasted for nearly two hours, took place in an atmosphere of informality. After taking tea together we strolled in his private garden, both smoking pipes and chatting informally.

Two. The Minister repeated that in our last conversation, even though it took place at the Foreign Office and was the first since his return from Europe, he had been speaking to me informally and not as to the American Ambassador and he had been much surprised to have received word from Admiral Nomura that you had said to him that the Minister had "intimidated" (Japanese word *kyoi*) me in our last interview. The Minister had therefore cabled back to Admiral Nomura to tell you when he happened to see you again that "he had neither intended ever to intimidate me or ever actually had intimidated me but that he had merely stated in connection with my queries and arguments his own

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RECEIVED  
 MAY 22 1941

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**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

Tokyo

FROM

Dated May 19, 1941

Rec'd 6:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

707, May 19, 10 p.m. (SECTION TWO.)

thoughts honestly and straightforwardly as is his usual custom." He said to me "I always think it best to lay aside as far as possible all formalities pertaining to our official positions and talk very frankly. NEVER have I imagined you would cable our talk to the State Department or else I would have been more careful and have taken a correct attitude."

Three. I said to the Minister that in my report of our conversation I had used the word "bellicose" as applying to the tone and substance of what he had said to me and I thereupon repeated the pertinent remarks which he had made to me which I had been led to characterize as having "grave and far reaching implications." The Minister did not question the accuracy of my report but said smilingly that while his words might have been bellicose his heart and thoughts were peaceful.

Four. I said to the Minister that as American Ambassador to Japan one of my primary duties was to ascertain  
correctly

-2-, from Tokyo #707, May 19, 1941; rec'd 6:30 p.m.

correctly the policy of the Japanese Government and to report that policy to my own Government just as Admiral Nomura must be doing similarly from Washington and that my only

GREW

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RS

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

GRAY

Tokyo

FROM

Dated May 19, 1941

Rec'd 3:16 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

707, May 19, 10 p.m. (SECTION THREE)

official channel for learning that policy was through him as Minister for Foreign Affairs. When, therefore, he discussed policy with me even as Mr. Grew and not as the American Ambassador it seemed to me obvious that I must report his views to my Government because he spoke for the Japanese Government. The Minister disagreed on the point and said that he was opposed to such reports because they often failed to give the correct impression and that while he was in Europe he had sent to the Cabinet only the briefest reports of his various conversations. He said that in discussing with me in our last conversation his views as to the applicability of Article 3 of the Tripartite Pact he was dealing with a hypothetical situation and he was speaking merely his own personal views and not those of the Japanese Government. He nevertheless confirmed to me his views as expressed on May 14, namely that if we should convoy our ships to England and if some of our ships should be sunk by the Germans and

-2-, #707, from Tokyo, May 19, 1941; 3:16 p.m.

and if war between Germany and the United States should ensue he thought that Article 3 would come into force and that it would mean war between the United States and Japan. He said that he himself had strongly urged Hitler not to sink our ships.

GREW

GW

RS

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

GRAY

Tokyo

FROM

Dated May 19, 1941

Rec'd 5:20 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

707, May 19, 10 p.m. (SECTION FOUR)

Five. I then said that the policy and actions of the United States toward the world movement of conquest were based upon the basic consideration of the inalienable rights of self-defense and that we would, of course, take such measures of self-defense as might become necessary in resisting a movement directed at world conquest by force which the utterances and the Nazi leaders had made it abundantly clear to be their policy and intentions. I spoke of the principles of international law in their application to freedom of the seas and to ineffective blockades and expressed the view that if Japan really desired peace with the United States our own measures of self-defense could not be interpreted as acts of aggression. The Minister replied that many principles of international law had been discarded both in the past war and in the present one and that if the

GREW

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## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DES

GRAY

FROM

TOKYO

Dated May 19, 1941.

Rec'd 6:10 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

707, May 19, 10 p.m. (SECTION FIVE)

United States should go to war with Germany there would have to be deliberation with Japan's allies as to the applicability of Article 3 in which Japan would have only one out of 3 votes. I expressed astonishment that Japan could thus be led to surrender her freedom of action in an issue of such vital importance to Japan's own future. The Minister merely remarked that if we were to provoke Hitler the outcome might be exceedingly dangerous. I read to the Minister certain reported utterances of Hitler with regard to his aims at world domination with particular reference to the United States. The Minister expressed surprise and doubt at the authenticity of these reports because Hitler had assured him in Berlin that he bore no animosity and had no intentions against the United States.

Six. I said to the Minister that as he had set forth to me his own views regarding the policy of Japan I desired to make perfectly clear to him the attitude of my own Government towards this whole issue and having

asked

-2- 707, May 19, 1941 from Tokyo (SECTION FIVE)

asked for a further 10 minutes of his time I read to him the entire text of your address before the American Society of International Law on April 24 on the subject "The United States and the World Situation". (I wish that Mr. Matsuoka could have heard your constructive address on the occasion of the inauguration of National Trade Week to which I have just listened on the radio but I shall see that the text is brought to his attention). The Minister listened carefully to my reading, continually nodding his comprehension of every point and at the conclusion he said that he considered your address a very fine and clear presentation

GREW

GW

## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

RS

GRAY

FROM

Tokyo

Dated May 19, 1941

Rec'd 6:05 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

707, May 19, 10 p.m. (SECTION SIX)

of the American point of view. He, however, wished to point out that there were other viewpoints and it seemed to him that we Americans were unable to put ourselves in the place of the other parties concerned. I replied that we must be guided by facts and actions which had rendered the position and attitudes of the other parties perfectly clear.

Seven. I told the Minister of the rumors which were floating around Tokyo with regard to our conversation of May 14, some of which had come to me from highly placed Japanese and which were so contrary to what had been said that I had been astonished at these stories. I repeated some of these reports to him and the Minister said that of course they were absurd. I mentioned one report, without revealing the source, that the Minister had just taken steps to appeal personally to the President to avoid the taking of provocative action against Germany. Mr. Matsuoka

replied

-2-, #707, from Tokyo, dated May 19, 1941; 6:50 p.m.

replied that the only message which he had sent to the President of such a nature was through Ambassador Steinhardt at Moscow.

Eight. At the termination of our conversation the Minister said he hoped for frequent future talks and he thought that to gather informally around the tea table was the best method of conducting them.

Nine. The foregoing is a necessarily discursive report of the principal points which emerged in a two hour conversation.

(END OF MESSAGE)

GREW

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**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

JT

This telegram must be \_\_\_\_\_ TOKYO  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

Dated May 23, 1941

Rec'd 9:25 a.m.

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
JUN 4 1941  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington

Division of  
FIRE AND BURGLARIES  
JUN 4 1941  
Department of State

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

721, May 23, 3 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

The French Counselor, in the temporary absence of  
his Ambassador, <sup>has</sup> read to us in strict confidence a  
telegram just received from the French Ambassador at  
Moscow substantially as follows:

(A) Bergery had been told by the newly appointed  
Soviet Ambassador to Vichy, Bogomolov, that Russia would  
welcome good commercial relations with Germany but that  
she would have no part in any new order in which Germany  
would be the prime beneficiary and Russia would be one  
of the hewers of wood and drawers of water. Bogomolov  
added that Russia would use force if necessary to resist  
attempt by Germany to integrate her into the German new  
order. (We assume that he was here referring to any  
attempt by Germany to dictate Soviet economic policies).

(B) The Japanese Ambassador, with whom Bergery had  
discussed the matter, said that there existed for Germany  
a "vital necessity for living space in and the products of  
Russia".

1 Carbon copies

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## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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This telegram must be \_\_\_\_\_ TOKYO  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated FROM Dated May 23, 1941  
to anyone. (SC) Rec'd 9 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

721, May 23, 3 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

and that therefore Germany would not be satisfied with only barter arrangements with Russia. Tatekawa believed, however, that Russia could be integrated into the new order without war; because, first, Germany's leaders have sufficient political sense not to make the new order a monopoly for Germany alone and would be prepared to share overlordship with Russia; and second, there exists the formidable pressure on Russia of the German armies, now comprising 140 division, stationed on the border.

(C) Tatekawa said that a war between Germany and Russia would be extremely dangerous for Japan which then might well be caught between Russia and the United States.

(D) Bergery added that it was the opinion of the French military officers in Moscow that the figure of 140 divisions mentioned by Tatekawa seemed somewhat high but that it might possibly be correct. (END OF MESSAGE)

Sent to the Department, repeated to Moscow for relay to Berlin.

GREW

HTM

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MR. HORNBECK  
JUN 16 1941  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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

TOKYO

Dated June 13, 1941

Rec'd 1:30 p.m.

son of  
FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS  
1941  
Department of State

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
JUN 19 1941  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
JUN 14 1941

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
MAY 8 - 1942

SECRETARY OF STATE  
JUN 14 1941  
NOTED

Secretary of State  
Washington

820, June 1

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY AND THE UNDER SECRETARY.

One. My Polish colleague has informed me in strictest secrecy of a telegram received from Mr. Zoleski, Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs in London, dated June 11, of which the following is a translation. Even while making full allowances for the Nazi capacity for intrigue, it is difficult to appraise this information at its face value, but I pass it on to the Department in view of its substantial source and in case it should fit in with other information known to our government.

Two. (Begin translation). On May 23 Doctor Schacht informed the Chinese Government that in order to avoid, if possible, the intervention of the United States in the European war, Germany would be prepared to abandon Japan and to effect a rapprochement with China. China has decided to reply with a refusal and to so inform President Roosevelt.

240.0011 EW

240.0011 EUROPEAN WAR 1939 / 12029

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Confidential File

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-2- 820, June 13, 1941 from Tokyo

Roosevelt. Doctor Schacht foresaw that after German offensive in the direction of the Near East, Germany during the course of the summer will attack Soviet Russia. He did not hide the serious losses of Germany, the dissensions among the Nazis and the discouragement which is increasing among German population as a result of the prolongation of the war.

Doctor Schacht's observations may well represent an effort on his part to endeavor to conciliate the British and American pacifists in return for collaboration for the destruction of Communism.

The Soviet Minister in Stockholm is aware that Germany actually proposed to Russia to allow her a free hand in the Pacific which would lead to the assumption that this would entail the abandonment of Japan by Germany. The Soviet Government is reported to have refused to enter such a combination. (End translation).

GREW

PEG

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

DES

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

FROM TOKYO

Dated July 8, 1941

Rec'd 11:18 a.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

953, July 8, 4 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE ACTING SECRETARY

ONLY.

My 943, July 6, 8 p.m.

One. The Minister for Foreign Affairs asked me to call this afternoon and handed me in strict confidence a Japanese text accompanied by a strictly confidential unofficial English translation hereof embodying a "message in reply sent by his Imperial Majesty's Foreign Minister at the request of the Prime Minister for delivery to the President of the United States of America, dated July 7, Showa 16". (See Embassy's 951, July 8, 5 p.m.)

Two. At the same time the Minister handed to me in strict confidence a Japanese text accompanied by a strictly confidential unofficial English translation of the oral statement handed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Soviet Ambassador in Tokyo on July 2, 1941. (See Embassy's 955, July 8, 6 p.m.)

Three.



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(initials)

-2- 953, July 8, 1941 from Tokyo (SECTION ONE)

Three. Having read the Minister's message I said that I was in a position to advance pertinent comment on the final paragraph of the Japanese message and it hereupon conveyed orally to Mr. Matsuoka the substance of Department's telegram No. 355, <sup>126340</sup> June 27, 2 p.m. I particularly emphasized the first sentence of the second paragraph of that telegram and dwelt at some length on the policy of the United States in that connection. The Minister replied to the effect that reports reaching Japan have convinced the Japanese people that the United States is determined to intervene in the European conflict and that this conviction has caused widespread anxiety in view of Japan's obligations to her Allies in the Tripartite Pact.

GREW

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/12902

PS/DE

## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JT

This telegram must be \_\_\_\_\_ Tokyo  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated FROM  
to anyone (SC)

Dated July 8, 1941

Rcv'd 9:35 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

953, July 8, 4 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

Four. I then asked the Minister what sort of "future developments" he had in mind which would largely determine Japan's future policy toward Soviet Russia as set forth in the final sentence of his oral statement of July 2 to the Soviet Ambassador. The Minister replied that he had in mind a good many possible developments among which he might mention as illustrations: the altered situation which would be created if Soviet Russia should form an alliance with Great Britain or if the United States should attempt to send considerable quantities of war supplies to Soviet Russia through Vladivostok to be used against Germany, Japan's ally. He said that there are powerful elements in Japan who are trying to force him into hostilities against Soviet Russia and that if these elements and the Japanese people should become aware of the conveyance of such American supplies great provocation would be created which would strengthen the hand of those extremists and would render his own position

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/12902

PS/DE

-2- 953, July 8, 4 p.m. (SECTION TWO) from Tokyo

position and his own sincere efforts to preserve peace  
EVEN MORE difficult than they are at present.

GREW

RR

## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

LET

This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

Tokyo

FROM Dated July 8, 1941

Rec'd. 12:10 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

953, July 8, 4 p.m. (SECTION THREE).

Five. Mr. Matsuoka especially asked me to convey to you the fact that neither the Soviet Ambassador in Tokyo nor the Soviet Government had raised any question or objection in connection with the public statement which he, Mr. Matsuoka, had issued on returning from Europe (please see Embassy's 588, April 22, 7 p.m.). He also said that he had recently appealed both to Stalin and Molotov to cooperate with him by endeavoring not to render more difficult the extremely difficult path which he is now treading.

Six. The Minister said that he had recently met the Soviet Ambassador at the railway station in Berlin when the latter was saying good bye to his wife and other ladies of the Soviet Embassy who were about to return to Russia. He said to the Ambassador that the ladies of the

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## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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

Tokyo

Dated July 8, 1941

Rec'd 12:40 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

953, July 8, 4 p.m. (SECTION FOUR)

Japanese Embassy in Moscow had left that capital in order to avoid the dangers of possible bombing by the German Army but that no such dangers existed in Tokyo and there was no good reason whatever for the Soviet ladies to leave. The Minister said that the Soviet ladies had, therefore, abandoned their plans for departure.

Seven. The Minister said that in these difficult times we must all of us guard against the often baseless rumors which are floating around in every country and when I mentioned the reports published in various Japanese papers such as the YOMIURI the HOCHI, etc., Mr. Matsuoka shrugged his shoulders and said that he never read newspapers of that nature.

Eight. In the light of the Minister's written and oral statements I find it very difficult to believe that the Japanese Government has decided at this time to embark on hostilities against the Soviet Union.

(END OF MESSAGE)

GW

GREW

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/12902

PS/DE

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

RS

SPECIAL GRAY

Tokyo

FROM Dated July 8, 1941

Rec'd 11:10 a.m.

*Handwritten notes:*  
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(Long)

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
JUL 9 1941  
MR. WELLES

955, July 8, 6 p.m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE ACTING SECRETARY  
ONLY.

Following is the Foreign Minister's unofficial  
English translation of the Japanese text of the second  
document handed me by the Foreign Minister today:

"Oral statement handed by His Imperial Majesty's  
Foreign Minister to the Soviet Ambassador in Tokyo  
on July 2, 1941.

I take pleasure in informing Your Excellency  
that Japan necessarily feels deep concern with the  
German-Soviet war that has unfortunately broken out.  
To be frank, Japan finds herself in the most awkward  
position faced with the war between Germany and Italy,  
her allies, on one hand, and the U.S.S.R. on the other,  
with whom she has but recently begun to improve re-  
lations in sincere desire to promote and maintain good  
neighborliness. Japan is, therefore, most anxious to

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JUL 11 1941

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Confidential File  
PS/DE

-2-, #955 from Tokyo, July 8, 1941; 11:10 a.m.

see the termination of the hostilities at the earliest possible date, earnestly wishing that they may at least be confined to regions not immediately adjacent to the Far East where she possesses vital interests.

The Japanese Government take this opportunity to state that they do not at present feel compelled to modify their policy towards the U.S.S.R. except to the extent of their natural desire not to give rise to misunderstandings to their allies. It is their sincere hope that they will be able to pursue a course of policy carefully calculated at once to serve their own interests and to preserve the spirit of mutual trust among the allies, while maintaining good relations with the U.S.S.R. . I need hardly add that their excellencies, Messieurs Stalin and Molotoff, may rest assured that I will do my best but that future developments will largely decide if the Japanese Government can consistently abide by this policy."

GREW

GW

DES

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

Tokyo via Shanghai & N. R.

Dated October 29, 1941

FROM

Rec'd 10:41 a.m. November 3.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

Twenty-ninth.

"1705, Twenty-eighth.



Following summary ADVERTISER account today's press conference.

71194  
Deputy spokesman Ishii stated Japanese Government 'surprised' at Secretary Knox October twenty-fourth statement collision with Japan inevitable and Japan must assume Knox expressed some extent opinion American Government people. Spokesman discounted importance Pepper's proposal complete economic blockade Japan.

Again questioned regarding sending war supplies Vladivostok spokesman admitted action legally correct but Japanese sentiment oppose any supply war materials neighboring country.

Regarding Japanese-American discussions Ishii asserted we have said everything and all we want say United States. We now expect American Government deepen understanding. We shall wait and see. Unthought

Nomura

NOV 6 1941

711.94/2405

PS/LB

-2- October 29, 1941 from Tokyo via Shanghai & N. R.

Nomura return Tojo Cabinet but might send member his staff.

Questioned regarding editorial today's ADVERTISER stated although only ADVERTISER editorial it expressed opinion Japanese people.

Ishii denied regarding Tass report any clash occurred Manchukuo Soviet border.

Spokesman affirmed Japanese Government recognized that Anglo-American maneuvers occurring in Thailand against Japan and take serious view maneuvers. Denied Yoshizawa mission Indochina has military character.

Sent Department via Shanghai."

GREW

RR

*Paraphrase of this telegram in full  
given to Commander Wells, C.V.I.  
by telephone on Nov. 8, 1941.*

## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

BAS

Tokyo

This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

Dated November 3, 1941  
FROM  
Rec'd. 6:06 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

1736, November 3, 5 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY AND  
UNDER SECRETARY ONLY.

One. I telegraphed textually on November 1  
(please see Embassy's 1729, November 1, 4 p.m.)  
a translation of the leading article in that morning's  
NICHU NICHU which under the banner headline "Empire  
approaches its greatest crisis" preceded a New York  
despatch summarizing a statement reportedly given  
to the NEW YORK TIMES by the Japanese Embassy at  
Washington with regard to the need for putting a  
stop to the economic war between the United States  
and Japan. That article and the paper's editorial  
also telegraphed textually (Embassy's 178, November  
1, 7 p.m.) closely reflect the atmosphere now pre-  
vailing in this country as we sense it.

Two. There is nothing to add to my analysis  
as presented in the telegram over the past several  
months of the factors which affect Japan's policy;

711.24/2406

PC/HH

CONFIDENTIAL

APR 22 1943

-2- #1736, November 3, 3 p.m. (SECTION ONE) from Tokyo.

nor do I see need for substantially revising them.

I believe that Japan's position can conclusively  
be estimated by applying.

GREW

HSM

## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

MEV  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

Tokyo

FROM  
Dated November 3, 1941  
Rec'd 10:29 A.M.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

1736, November 3, 3 p.m., (SECTION TWO)

to the situation which now seems to be shaping up  
certain considerations as follows:

(a) Japan cannot dissociate either herself or  
the China conflict from the European war and its  
fluctuations.

(b) Unlike public opinion in the democracies  
where there exists a homogeneous body of principles  
directing or influencing foreign policies and where  
differences of opinion are more likely to arise  
from consideration of methods rather than of prin-  
ciples public opinion in Japan where political  
thought varies from medievalism to liberalism is  
a variable quantity and at any given time only  
that school of thought predominates which is  
brought to the top by the impact of conditions  
and events outside the country. It was the im-  
pact of the German victories in Western Europe  
last year which brought to power the pro-Axis  
elements;

-2-  
1736, November 3, 3 p.m., (SECTION TWO), from Tokyo

elements; the failure of Germany to invade England  
thereby creating doubt concerning the ultimate vic-  
tory of Germany,

GREW

RR

## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

MEV  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

Tokyo  
FROM dated November 3, 1941  
Rec'd 10:03 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

1738, November 3, 3 p.m., (SECTION THREE)  
was among other factors tending to strengthen the  
moderate elements, while the attack by Germany on  
Russia, by upsetting the calculation of continued  
peace between those two countries, brought reali-  
zation that those who had taken Japan into the  
Axis alliance had misled the country.

C. The efforts of Prince Konoye, and the  
efforts which the present Cabinet proposes to put  
forward, to adjust relations with the United States  
and thus to open up a way to conclude peace with  
China, represent an attempt to correct last year's  
error. If that attempt should fail, and if Ger-  
man arms should continue to be successful, I look  
to see a final and closer alignment of Japan  
with the Axis.

D. The theory put forward by many of our  
leading economists that depletion and eventual  
exhaustion of resources and financial resources

-2- #1736, November 3, 3 p.m., (SECTION THREE), from Tokyo  
would in a short time bring about the collapse of  
Japan as a militaristic power has never seemed

GREW

HSM

EJ  
This telegram must be  
closely guarded  
from being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

Tokyo

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

Nov 3, 1941

Rec'd 10:35 P.M.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

FROM

1736, November 3, 3 P.M. (SECTION FOUR).

convincing to us for the reason that large numbers of  
this character were unconsciously based on the as-  
sumption that retention by Japan of the capitalist  
system would be a dominant consideration. Despite  
a loss of the greater part of her commerce, drastic  
curtailment of industrial production and depletion  
of her national resources the predicted outcome has  
not transpired. On the contrary the process of in-  
tegrating the national economy, without which the  
predicted collapse might well have occurred, is being  
drastically prosecuted. The view therefore that war  
in the Far East can best be averted by continuation  
of trade embargoes and, as proposed by some, the  
imposition of a blockade is not supported by what  
has thus far occurred.

Three. In this connection I venture to refer  
to my 827 of September 12, 9 P.M., 1940. That tele-  
gram was sent at a time and under circumstances when  
conciliatory measures on the part of the United.

GREW

HSM

## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

BAS

Tokyo

This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

FROM

Dated November 3, 1941

Rec'd 10:44 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

1736, November 3, 3 p.m. (SECTION FIVE)

states appeared to be futile and unwise. As previously pointed out, it was the subsequent strong policy of the United States therein recommended, added to the impact upon Japan of political developments abroad, that brought the Japanese Government to seek conciliation with the United States. Should those efforts fail, the pendulum in Japan will in all probability swing back once more to its former position, or still farther back, leading to what I have called "an all out, do or die" attempt to render Japan impervious to foreign economic embargoes, even risking national hara kiri rather than cede to foreign pressure. Those of us who feel the national psychology and temper from day to day realize beyond her adventure that such a contingency is not only possible but probable.

Four. Having in mind the temper and fibre of  
the Japanese

Confidential File

-2- #1736, November 3, 3 p.m. (SECTION FIVE) from Tokyo.

the Japanese people, the view that the progressive imposition of drastic economic measures, while attended with some risk of war, would probably avert war, is a dangerously uncertain.

CREW

RR

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

WA

Tokyo

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

FROM

Dated November 3, 1941

Rec'd 3:39 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

1736

~~1737~~, November 3, 3 p.m. (SECTION SIX)

uncertain hypothesis upon which to base the considered policy and measures of the United States. Our own view is that such a course if taken would not (repeat not) avert war. Nevertheless both views are no more than opinion, and it is therefore our belief that it would be contrary to our national interests to postulate the correctness of either opinion and to erect thereon a definitive policy. To do so would be to put the cart before the horse. The primary point for decision would appear to involve the question as to whether our national needs, policies and objectives justify war with Japan in the event that diplomacy, our first line of national defense, should fail, for only on the basis of such decision could the administration follow a course divested so far as possible of elements of opinion, speculation and uncertainty. I do not doubt that such decision, which might well prove

to be

FD 711.24/2406 (SECTIONS 6, 7) Confidential File

-2- #1737, November 3, 3 p.m. from Tokyo

to be irrevocable, has already been fully debated and adopted, for the sands are running fast.

FIVE. Please realize that in discussing the foregoing grave and momentous subject I am out of touch with the Administration's thoughts and intentions thereon and that it is far from my intention to imply that

GREW

EMB

EMC

Tokyo

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

Dated November 3, 1941

Rec'd. 4:19 p. m.

FROM

Secretary of State

Washington

1736, November 3, 3 p. m. (SECTION SEVEN)

An undeliberated policy is being followed in Washington. It is equally far from my intention for a single moment to advocate so-called "appeasement" on the part of the United States or that our Government should in the slightest degree recede from the fundamental principles which it has laid down as a basis for the adjustment and conduct of international relations including our relations with Japan. Methods may be flexible but with principles there should be no compromise. My purpose is only to ensure against my country's getting into war with Japan through any possible misconception of the capacity of Japan to rush headlong into a suicidal conflict with the United States. National sanity would dictate against such an event, but Japanese sanity cannot be measured by our own standards of logic. We need not be over-concerned by the present bellicose tone and substance of the Japanese press which has attacked the United States in recurrent waves of intensity during the past several years, but it would be shortsighted to underestimate Japan's obvious

preparations

-2- #1736, November 3, 3 p.m. (SECTION SEVEN) from Tokyo

preparations for a program to be implemented if her alternative program for peace should fail. It would be similarly shortsighted to base our policy on the belief that these preparations are merely in the nature of saber rattling the exclusive purpose of giving moral support to Japan's high pressure diplomacy. Japan's resort to measures which might war with the United States inevitably may come with dramatic and dangerous suddenness.

(END OF MESSAGE)

GREW

CSB

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MR. ROBINSON  
NOV 18 1941  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CJ  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased **BE-FROM**  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (SC)

Tokyo

Dated November 17, 1941

Rec'd 2:09 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
NOV 18 1941

Division of  
FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS  
NOV 18 1941  
Department of State

1814, November 17, 8 p.m.

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY AND  
UNDER SECRETARY ONLY.**

Reference Embassy's 1736, November 3, 3 p.m.,  
last sentence.

In emphasizing need for guarding against  
sudden military or naval actions by Japan in  
areas not at present involved in the China con-  
flict, I am taking into account as a probability  
that the Japanese would exploit all available  
tactical advantages, including those of initia-  
tive and surprise. It is important, however,  
that our Government not (repeat not) place upon  
us, including the military and naval attaches,  
major responsibility for giving prior warning.  
The control in Japan over military information,  
both primary and secondary is extremely effective,  
and we have no expectation that any advance in-  
formation would be obtained either through the  
press

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HNS

-2- #1814, November 17, 8 p.m., from Tokyo.

press or from personal contacts with Japanese; the few Americans left in Japan are mostly concentrated in Tokyo, Yokohama and Kobe, and are in no position to observe military movements; and the absence of American and other foreign vessels in adjacent waters almost assures to the Japanese the ability to despatch troop transports in various directions without foreign observation. Recent reports from our consuls at Taihoku and at Harbin point to Japanese troop concentrations in both Taiwan and Manchuria, and all other available indications are that since the general mobilization of July last, troop dispositions have been made to enable new operations to be carried out on the shortest possible notice in either Siberia or the southwest Pacific or in both.

We fully realize that possibly our most important duty at this time is to watch for premonitory indications of military or naval operations which might be forthcoming against such areas, and we are taking every precaution to guard against surprise. However, our

field

-3- #1814, November 17, 8 p.m.; from Tokyo.

field of military and naval observation is almost literally restricted to what can be seen with our own eyes, which is negligible. We would, therefore, advise that our government, from abundance of caution, discount as far as possible the likelihood of our being able to give substantial warning.

GREW

LMS