

Text of Great Britain's Note to Japan

LONDON, Jan. 15 (AP).—Following is the text of the British note to Japan, delivered yesterday in Tokyo by the British Ambassador, Sir Robert Craigie, to Foreign Minister Hachiro Arita:

I am instructed by His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to inform Your Excellency of the uncertainty and grave anxiety in which His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have been left by study of Japan's new policy in Far Eastern affairs as set out in recent statements by the late Prime Minister and other Japanese statesmen.

I am to refer more particularly to Prince Konoye's statements of Nov. 3 and Dec. 22, and to the communication made by Your Excellency to foreign press correspondents Dec. 19. This uncertainty has not been removed by conversations on this subject which I have had with Your Excellency from time to time.

II

From these pronouncements and from other official information issued in Japan His Majesty's Government infer that it is the intention of the Japanese Government to establish a tripartite combination or bloc composed of Japan, China and Manchuria in which supreme authority will be vested in Japan and subordinate roles will be allotted to China and Manchuria.

So far as China is concerned, it is understood that the Japanese Government is to exercise control, at least for some time, through the Asia Development Council in Tokyo, which is charged with the formulation and execution of policy connected with political, economic and cultural affairs in China.

Your Excellency's own communication to the press indicates that the tripartite combination is to form a single economic unit and economic activities of other powers are to be subjected to restrictions dictated by requirements of national defense and economic security of the proposed bloc.

III

According to Prince Konoye, the hostilities in China are to continue until the present Chinese Government has been crushed or will consent to enter the proposed combination on Japanese terms.

China, he said, will be required to conclude with Japan an anti-Communist agreement and Japanese troops are to be stationed at specified points in Chinese territory for an indefinite period, presumably to insure that Japanese conditions for the suspension of hostilities are observed.

Moreover, his Excellency stated that the Inner Mongolian region must be designated as a special

anti-Communist area. It is not clear what is meant by this, but in the absence of fuller information it can only be assumed that Inner Mongolia is to be subjected to an even greater degree of Japanese military control than other parts of China.

IV

His Majesty's Government are at a loss to understand how Prince Konoye's assurance that Japan seeks no territory, and respects the sovereignty of China, can be reconciled with the declared intention of the Japanese Government to compel the Chinese people by force of arms to accept conditions involving the surrender of their political, economic and cultural life to Japanese control, indefinite maintenance in China of considerable Japanese garrisons and the virtual detachment from China of the territory of Inner Mongolia.

V

For their part, His Majesty's Government desire to make it clear that they are not prepared to accept or to recognize changes of the nature indicated which are brought about by force.

They intend to adhere to the principles of the Nine-Power Treaty and cannot agree to unilateral modification of its terms.

They would point out that, until the outbreak of the present hostilities, the beneficial effects which the treaty was expected to produce were steadily being realized.

The Chinese people were maintaining and developing for themselves an effective and stable government and the principle of equal opportunity for commerce and industry of all nations was bringing prosperity to China and to her international trade, including that with Japan.

His Majesty's Government therefore cannot agree, as suggested in Japan, that the treaty is obsolete or that its provisions no longer meet the situation, except in so far as the situation has been altered by Japan in contravention of its terms.

VI

While, however, His Majesty's Government maintain that modification cannot be effected unilaterally and must be by negotiation between all the signatories, they do not contend that treaties are eternal.

If, therefore, the Japanese Government have any constructive suggestions to make regarding modification of any of the multilateral agreements relating to China, His Majesty's Government for their part will be ready to consider them. In the meantime, His Majesty's Government reserve all their rights under existing treaties.

VII

I am further instructed to refer to that portion of Prince Konoye's

statement of Dec. 22 which states that Japan is prepared to give consideration to the abolition of extraterritoriality and rendition of foreign concessions and settlements in China.

This inducement to China to accept Japan's demands would appear to entail but little sacrifice on the part of the Japanese, for, if they succeed in their plans for control of the country, they will have no further need for extraterritoriality or concessions.

On the other hand, His Majesty's Government would recall that they undertook and nearly completed negotiations with the Chinese Government in 1931 for abrogation of British extraterritorial rights.

The negotiations were suspended by the Chinese Government in consequence of disturbed conditions following the seizure of Manchuria by Japanese forces in that year, but His Majesty's Government have always been ready to resume negotiations at a suitable time and are prepared to discuss this and other similar questions with a fully independent Chinese Government when peace has been restored.

VIII

In conclusion I am to state that if, as is possible, His Majesty's Government have in any way misinterpreted the intentions of the Japanese Government, they feel that it is because of the ambiguity with which those intentions have so far been expressed and they would welcome more precise and detailed exposition of the Japanese conditions for terminating hostilities and of the Japanese policy toward China.

Keep in China

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167