

MINUTE SHEET.

Reference F.O. No. 281.

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Mr. J. H. Miller.

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It is difficult to understand why the U.S. Ambassador made his statement according to him in his dispatch.

The programme for the United States Fleet was made out & published months ago & they have always been going to sail from New York on May 16th on their return to the West Coast.

As usual they will return to their bases at San Pedro & San Diego, & may pay their usual periodic visits to San Francisco & Honolulu.

There has been been any question of the Fleet remaining in the Atlantic for three years - such a procedure would have been most unusual & entirely contrary to existing U.S. Naval policy.

Therefore his statement that the fleet was being moved back to the Pacific at a much earlier date & that would not be without significance which would be appreciated in Japan, is absolutely nonsense.

It is possible that the U.S. Ambassador got mixed up with the main U.S. Fleet & the small permanent Atlantic Squadron recently formed - though this does not account for his statements.

The programme in which the Fleet would carry out exercises in the Caribbean, then visit New York for the world's fair & return to their usual bases by June was made out many months ago - long before any of the crises.

The fact that the Fleet was to be absent from their bases for six months created an awful howl from the wives & families - had it been for three years I don't know what would have happened.

11/11/44.

The point is that the Fleet may be ordered to return before May 16th, but the C.N.O. is reluctant to do this because a very full programme of festivities for the Fleet has been arranged in N. York & should this be cancelled or curtailed it would cause considerable comment.

11/11/44.

We might pass this on to the 20.

unofficially. 11/12/44

Gr. 70/10/29

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