

SECRET

Leah

See -/42

The Japanese Ambassador asked to see me again today. He began by referring to our previous conversation, since which he said the new Prime Minister had assumed office. He thought that he would pursue much the same policy as Prince Konoye. They were still anxious to reach an understanding with the United States Government.

He said that Mr. Wakasugi was having exploratory conversations with Mr. Welles, but that he feared they were only making slow progress. I asked him whether it was still the case that it was the third point of which he had spoken in our last interview concerning temporary occupation by Japanese troops in North China and Mongolia that was likely to be the most obstinate. He said this was so, and expressed the opinion that the United States Government feared that such occupation would be permanent. This however was not his view, but after all that had happened, the Japanese Government thought that their nationals and traders in North China would receive bad treatment from the Chinese unless for some time there was some Japanese protection at hand.

I said that I was of course interested in what he had said, and that the conclusion of it seemed to me to show the great importance of all parties at such a time as this exercising patience. Only so was there any hope of improving relations. At the present moment the Japanese Government must know that in whatever direction they might make a rash move, whether South or North, this might well have immediate and incalculable consequences.

On the other hand, as I had told him a fortnight ago, there was no desire in Great Britain, and certainly I thought none in the United States, to pick trouble with Japan, and the drawing together of all those who felt themselves threatened by Japanese policy was purely defensive. When there was so much gunpowder lying about, he would be a very rash man who dropped a match.

speech last night, there was some shooting between the Germans and the Americans, the Ambassador said that, as he understood it, the Japanese would be quite free to decide their own course of action.

I expressed the view that the Japanese Government would certainly be wise to consult Japanese interests and not German interests, just as the Ambassador must realise that all Hitler's action were dictated solely by regard for what he conceived to be German interests.

I added that I had never been able to understand what good Japan thought the Tri-Partite Pact could possibly do them, compared with an understanding with the United States and Great Britain, both of whom had effective interests in the Pacific.

The Ambassador, whether from politeness or conviction, expressed general agreement, and concluded by a soliloquy on the impossibility of force providing permanent solution for large international questions, as he thought within a very few years Hitler would himself learn.

The general impression that the Ambassador produced upon me was that he was genuinely anxious to avoid trouble, but I could detect nothing in his conversation that gave me any secure indication of why he had asked to see me.

H.

28th October, 1941

Perhaps G.E. would care to add a sentence to my telegram recording my interview with Mr. Hull, since I think the F. O. would be interested in the fact that the Ambassador called. A copy of the record could then be sent by air bag.

J. A. ...
29/10

*copy to Mr. Casey
30/10/41
Wesley
29/10*

*I agree - & have added a sentence to
Tel. H. 29/10*