

SEE P. 71-72

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I Theodore Roosevelt to President William Howard Taft, 22 December 1910, criticizing his administration's policy of challenging Japan in Manchuria.⁹

Our vital interest is to keep the Japanese out of our country, and at the same time to preserve the good will of Japan. The vital interest of the Japanese, on the other hand, is in Manchuria and Korea. It is therefore peculiarly our interest not to take any steps as regards Manchuria which will give the Japanese cause to feel, with or without reason, that we are hostile to them, or a menace—in however slight a degree—to their interests. Alliance with China, in view of China's absolute military helplessness, means of course not an additional strength to us, but an additional obligation which we assume; . . . and as regards Manchuria, if the Japanese choose to follow a course of conduct to which we are averse, we cannot stop it unless we are prepared to go to war, and a successful war about Manchuria would require a fleet as good as that of England, plus an army as good as that of Germany. . . .

. . . [W]hereas our interests in Manchuria are really unimportant, and not such that the American people would be content to run the slightest risk of collision about them, our interest in keeping the Japanese out of our own country is vital. . . .

2 Secretary of State Philander C. Knox, reply to Theodore Roosevelt (prepared for Taft but never sent), 7 January 1911, insisting on both defense of rights in China and rejection of Japanese immigrants.¹⁰

[A]lthough I am aware that some Japanese statesmen have recently attempted to connect [the Manchurian and immigration questions], . . . I am unable to see any essential connection between them.

We have an expressed treaty right to control the immigration of Japanese

laborers to our territory and we have likewise a treaty right to equal opportunity in Manchuria. . . .

. . . [Y]our letter seems to imply that there is no alternative between silently renouncing our historic policy [of the open door] in China whenever it may cross the interest of another power and being prepared to go to war in defense of that policy. Whether the American people would ever go to war or not in defense of our interests in China I am not prepared to say. It might depend upon the nature of the provocation. But in any case it certainly is not for us to prejudice our case at the start by admitting to the world that we would *not*, under any circumstances, go to war. . . .

. . . [I]n any event I think it would be much better for us to stand consistently by our principles even though we fail in getting them generally adopted.

3 Prince Yamagata Aritomo to Prime Minister Okuma Shigenobu, August 1914, urging solidarity with China and accommodation with the United States.¹¹

There are people in our country who rely excessively on the military prowess of our empire and who believe that against China the application of force alone will suffice to gain our objectives. But the problems of life are not so simple as to permit of their solution by the use of force alone. The principal aim of our plan today should be to improve Sino-Japanese relations and to instill in China a sense of abiding trust in us....

The recent international situation points to an increasing intensity in racial rivalry from year to year. . . . When the present great conflict in Europe is over and when the political and economic order [is] restored, the various countries will again focus their attention on the Far East and the benefits and rights they might derive from this region. When that day comes, the rivalry between the white and the non-white races will become violent, and who can say that the white races will not unite with one another to oppose the colored peoples?

Now among the colored peoples of the Orient, Japan and China are the only two countries that have the semblance of an independent state. . . . Thus, if the colored races of the Orient hope to compete with the so-called culturally advanced white races and maintain friendly relations with them while retain-

9. Elting E. Morison et al., eds., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* (8 vols.; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951–54), 7:189–90.

10. William Howard Taft Papers, presidential series 7, file 26, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington.

11. Ryusaku Tsunoda et al., eds. and trans., *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (2 vols.; New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 2:207–8. The omission in the first paragraph appears in the source text.

ing their own cultural identity and independence, China and Japan, which are culturally and racially alike, must become friendly and promote each other's interests. . . .

... America is rich, and of late she is giving great attention to the commerce, industry, and trade of China. Moreover, the great European war has not deterred her in the least. . . . And the government of China, suspicious of the true motives of our empire, and as a means of restraining our activities in China, has been turning to America. If we fail to dissipate China's suspicion of us, she will rapidly turn against us and instead turn more and more to America. America herself will take advantage of such a situation and will increasingly extend her influence over China.

... [I]t is advisable, for the realization of our China policy, not to aggravate America's feelings toward us nor needlessly to arouse her suspicions over our actions. . . .

**4 K. K. Kawakami, "A Japanese Liberal's View," November 1921,
voicing frustration over the international restrictions placed
on Japan.¹²**

[T]he Caucasian race, having completed the occupation of Europe and the Americas, has conquered and secured control of the whole of Australasia, almost all Africa, the greater part of Asia, as well as the adjacent islands. And the Caucasian peoples who control so vast a territory number only 623,000,000. . . .

... [T]he Caucasian nations are always on the alert to exclude outside enterprises, and especially those of non-Caucasian peoples, from the territories they control. Even where they profess to follow the principles of free trade, they set up a barrier against non-Caucasian immigration. Moreover, by reason of their priority and their accumulated wealth, they have so firmly entrenched themselves that outsiders, most of all non-Caucasian outsiders, find little chance to launch new enterprises in competition with them.

...
...[I]t is not only the question of land shortage and overpopulation that weigh[s] heavily upon Japan. Equally depressing is the fact that she has not within her own confines adequate mineral resources essential to modern industry. She depends almost entirely upon foreign countries for iron ores. Of

12. *The Nation* 113 (9 November 1921): 530–31. Kiyoshi Karl Kawakami (1875–1949), a journalist and longtime resident of the United States, was a frequent commentator on Pacific affairs during the interwar period, usually along lines favorable to Japan.

coal she has little that can be used in the steel industry. But the most serious handicap is the lack of petroleum, a material which is becoming more and more important in transportation and in manufacturing industries. If you watch the chessboard of European and American diplomacy, you cannot fail to see how each nation is trying to outwit the other in gaining control of oil resources in different parts of the world.

And here is Japan, struggling to solve, partly at least, her population problems by becoming an industrial and trading nation, and yet harassed by the lack of three essential materials of industry—oil, iron, and coal. If she steps an inch out of her narrow precincts and tries to obtain, say in Siberia or China, the privilege of working such mineral resources, down comes the sword of Damocles in the shape of protest, official or otherwise, from the Western nations.

**5 Amur Society, statement of 1930, calling for national strength
and discipline essential for realizing Japan's imperial mission.¹³**

Japan's status among the empires of the world has risen until today she ranks as one of the three great powers, and from this eminence she can support other Asiatic nations. . . .

However, in viewing recent international affairs it would seem that the foundation established by the great Meiji emperor [reigned 1867–1912] is undergoing rapid deterioration. The disposition of the gains of the war with Germany was left to foreign powers, and the government, disregarding the needs of national defense, submitted [at the Washington conference] to unfair demands to limit our naval power. Moreover, the failure of our China policy made the Chinese more and more contemptuous of us, so much so that they have been brought to demand the surrender of our essential defense lines in Manchuria and Mongolia. Furthermore, in countries like the United States and Australia our immigrants have been deprived of rights which were acquired only after long years of struggle, and we now face a highhanded anti-Japanese expulsion movement which knows no bounds. Men of purpose and of humanity who are at all concerned for their country cannot fail to be upset by the situation.

When we turn our attention to domestic affairs, we feel more than deep

13. The ultranationalist Amur (or Black Dragon) Society was organized in 1901 by former samurai who wished to promote Japan's influence in East Asia. It began to focus in the 1930s on the strains developing within Japanese society. Tsunoda et al., *Sources of the Japanese Tradition*, 2:256–58.

concern. There is a great slackening of discipline and order. Men's hearts are become corrupt. Look about you! Are not the various government measures and establishments a conglomeration of all sorts of evils and abuses? The laws are confusing, and evil grows apace. The people are overwhelmed by heavy taxes, the confusion in the business world complicates the livelihood of the people, the growth of dangerous thought threatens social order, and our national polity, which has endured for three thousand years, is in danger. This is a critical time for our national destiny; was there ever a more crucial day? . . .

... [W]e are resolved to reform the moral corruption of the people, restore social discipline, and ease the insecurity of the people's livelihood by relieving the crises in the financial world, restore national confidence, and increase the national strength, in order to carry out the imperial mission to awaken the countries of Asia. . . .

**6 Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson, diary entries,
October 1931–January 1932, describing his and President
Herbert Hoover's divergent reactions to the Japanese occupation
of Manchuria.**

—Account of cabinet meeting, 9 October 1931:¹⁴

[Hoover's] main proposition in this conference was not to allow under any circumstances anybody to deposit that baby [Manchuria] on our lap; and second, not to get ourselves into a humiliating position, in case Japan refused to do anything to what he called our scraps of paper or paper treaties. . . . The question of the "scraps of paper" is a pretty crucial one. We have nothing but "scraps of paper." This fight has come on in the worst part of the world for peace treaties. The peace treaties of Modern Europe made out by the Western nations of the world no more fit the three great races of Russia, Japan, and China, who are meeting in Manchuria, than, as I put it to the Cabinet, a stovepipe hat would fit an African savage. Nevertheless they are parties to these treaties and the whole world looks on to see whether the treaties are good for anything or not, and if we lie down and treat them like scraps of paper nothing will happen, and in the future the peace movement will receive a blow that it will not recover from for a long time. As I pointed out to the President in Cabinet, if Japan runs amok, Congress will never let him cut a single dollar off on navies.

14. Henry L. Stimson diaries, vol. 18, pp. 111–12 (microfilm ed. reel 3), Stimson Papers, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, New Haven, Conn.

—Reflections after a private meeting with Hoover, 7 November 1931:¹⁵

It looks now as if the military element in Japan might get control of the situation and oust the Government at any time. So the President and I discussed . . . what we would do under such circumstances. Any such thing as an embargo or an attempt to put on economic pressure he ruled out on the ground that it was as [*sic*] step which would be provocative and lead to war. His idea was that we might withdraw our Ambassador, and, if we did so, he would give out a statement at the same time putting war out of the question, an announcement that we would not under any event go to war and that that was contrary to our present policy and to all the treaties and contrary to the views of the world. Of course, the argument on the other side of this is manifest, it would remove from Japan any fear of any further economic blockade. . . .

I concur with him as to the danger of a blockade leading to war. It is almost a belligerent step. . . .

**—Reflections after a private meeting with Hoover,
27 November 1931:¹⁶**

In the first place, probably an embargo, if joined in by all the world against Japan, would be a very brief event. She would have to surrender very quickly. It would, therefore, not be a strain upon the rest of the governments. In the next place, it would seem now that the militaristic elements in Japan could learn only through suffering and not by the sanctions of public opinion, which we in America are committed to and deem enough for ourselves. In the third place, it would be a tremendous loss to the higher motives and higher policies if Japan really gets away with this, if the army teaches itself, Japan, and the rest of the world that the higher efforts towards peace by the rest of the world can be successfully defied in the way in which Japan is now defying them. The poor old President is in a bad plight. As he says, he has been making speeches against sanctions of force all this time and he cannot reverse himself. . . .

—Account of cabinet meeting, 26 January 1932:¹⁷

[T]he President stated his view forcibly and emphatically. . . . [H]e felt that the mere size of China, 350,000,000 [people] as he expressed it, always had succeeded and would succeed in throwing off the efforts of other nations like Japan to penetrate it and dominate it. He believes now that in time China would throw Japan out of Manchuria and that she would throw her out of the Yangtze Valley. He had no doubt, however, that Japan was going ahead now. . . . He pointed out strongly the folly of getting into a war with Japan on this

15. Stimson diaries, vol. 19, pp. 18–19 (microfilm ed. reel 4).

16. Stimson diaries, vol. 19, p. 103 (microfilm ed. reel 4).

17. Stimson diaries, vol. 20, pp. 100–111 (microfilm ed. reel 4).

subject; that such a war could not be localized or kept within bounds, and that it would mean the landing of forces in the Far East which we had no reason or sense in doing. He said he would fight for Continental United States as far as anybody, but he would not fight for Asia. . . . He said that he thought [Stimson's 7 January nonrecognition] note would take rank with the greatest papers of this country, and that that was the safe course for us to follow now rather than by getting into a war in China.

. . . I told him then that the only difference I could see between his point and mine was that in respect to the reliance which I felt we could put upon America's strength both economically and military. I quoted Roosevelt's saying, "Speak softly but carry a big stick." I told him that I thought that this represented a great truth; that we were responsible for our words. I was against putting any threat into words. I thought we had a right to rely upon the unconscious elements of our great size and military strength; that I knew Japan was afraid of that, and I was willing to let her be afraid of that without telling her that we were not going to use it against her. The difference which I have just mentioned is really the great difference and difficulty which I have with the President's policy. He has not got the slightest element of even the faintest kind of bluff. He is too likely to let the other fellow know the element against ourselves which the other fellow might not guess. I am a thorough believer in the policy of not drawing until you are ready to shoot, but when you have a case where the chances are a thousand to one that you will not be drawn into a fight, I am willing to let our size and strength speak for itself and not to disclaim publicly our willingness to fight if it becomes essential. . . .

7 Secretary of State Cordell Hull, meeting with Japanese Ambassador Saito Hiroshi, 16 May 1934, discussing Japanese claims to regional preeminence.¹⁸

[The Japanese ambassador stated that] his Government did feel that it had a special interest in preserving peace and order in China. He then repeated the same formula that his government had been putting out for some weeks about the superior duty or function of his government to preserve peace and of its special interest in the peace situation in—to quote his words—"Eastern Asia". . . . [Hull responded] that my hope and prayer was that all the civilized nations of the world, including Japan, should work together and in a perfectly friendly and understanding way so as to promote to the fullest extent the

18. Saito was a professional diplomat appointed to Washington in December 1933. Hull memorandum of the meeting, 19 May 1934, in *FRUS: Japan 1931–1941*, 1:234–36.

welfare of their respective peoples and at the same time meet their duties to civilization and to the more backward populations of the world; and that my Government would always be ready and desirous of meeting his Government fully half-way in pursuing these latter objectives.

I then remarked that . . . just now there was considerable inquiry everywhere as to just why his government singled out the clause or formula about Japan's claiming superior and special interests in the peace situation in "Eastern Asia" and her superior rights or duties in connection with the preservation of peace there; and that many were wondering whether this phrase or formula had ulterior or ultimate implications partaking of the nature of an overlordship of the Orient or definite purpose to secure preferential trade rights as rapidly as possible in the Orient or "Eastern Asia"—to use the Japanese expression. The Ambassador commenced protesting that this was not the meaning contemplated or intended. . . .

. . . [Hull said] that this was peculiarly a time when our civilized countries should be especially vigilant to observe and to preserve both legal and moral obligations. . . .

8 President Franklin D. Roosevelt, speech in Chicago, 5 October 1937, calling for an international "quarantine" in the face of Japan's invasion of China and German remilitarization.¹⁹

[T]he hopes of mankind for a continuing era of international peace were raised to great heights when [in 1928] more than sixty nations solemnly pledged themselves not to resort to arms in furtherance of their national aims and policies. The high aspirations expressed in the Briand-Kellogg Peace Pact and the hopes for peace thus raised have of late given way to a haunting fear of calamity. The present reign of terror and international lawlessness began a few years ago.

It began through unjustified interference in the internal affairs of other nations or the invasion of alien territory in violation of treaties; and has now reached a stage where the very foundations of civilization are seriously threatened. . . .

. . . There is a solidarity and interdependence about the modern world, both technically and morally, which makes it impossible for any nation completely to isolate itself from economic and political upheavals in the rest of the world,

19. Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1937* (New York: Macmillan, 1941), 407, 409–11.

especially when such upheavals appear to be spreading and not declining. There can be no stability or peace either within nations or between nations except under laws and moral standards adhered to by all. International anarchy destroys every foundation for peace. . . .

... The peace, the freedom and the security of ninety percent of the population of the world is being jeopardized by the remaining ten percent who are threatening a breakdown of all international order and law. Surely the ninety percent who want to live in peace under law and in accordance with moral standards that have received almost universal acceptance through the centuries, can and must find some way to make their will prevail.

... When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease.

... War is a contagion, whether it be declared or undeclared. It can engulf states and peoples remote from the original scene of hostilities. We are determined to keep out of war, yet we cannot insure ourselves against the disastrous effects of war and the dangers of involvement. . . .

... America hates war. America hopes for peace. Therefore, America actively engages in the search for peace.

9 Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro, 3 November 1938, formally staking Japan's claim to a "New Order in East Asia."²⁰

What Japan seeks is the establishment of a new order which will insure the permanent stability of East Asia. In this lies the ultimate purpose of our present military campaign [in China].

This new order has for its foundation a tripartite relationship of mutual aid and co-ordination between Japan, Manchoukuo and China in political, economic, cultural and other fields. Its object is to secure international justice, to perfect the joint defence against Communism, and to create a new culture and realize a close economic cohesion throughout East Asia. This indeed is the way to contribute toward the stabilization of East Asia and the progress of the world.

What Japan desires of China is that that country will share in the task of

20. FRUS: Japan, 1931-1941, 1:478.

bringing about this new order in East Asia. She confidently expects that the people of China will fully comprehend her true intentions and that they will respond to the call of Japan for their co-operation. Even the participation of [China's Nationalist] Government would not be rejected. . . .

Japan is confident that other Powers will on their part correctly appreciate her aims and policy and adapt their attitude to the new conditions prevailing in East Asia. . . .

10 Foreign Minister Arita Hichiro, comments to a U.S. embassy official, 19 November 1938, justifying Japan's claims to a "New Order."²¹

Japan, like other nations, was maintaining military and naval forces adequate for national defense needs. However, there was another method by which pressure could be exerted on Japan, and that was by withholding from her foreign markets and raw materials necessary for her existence. Her army and navy would be useless against pressure applied in that form. It had, therefore, become necessary for Japan to place herself in a position to resist that method of applying pressure, and she was now in process of putting herself in that position by acquiring certain access to necessary raw materials.

... He could say definitely that Japan has no intention whatever of assimilating politically any part of China or of "Manchukuo," and he saw no inconsistency between that statement and the settled policy of economically linking together the three countries in order to provide for their common security. Such an arrangement would not necessarily be exclusive of American and other foreign enterprise and capital. What the Japanese Government has in mind is that the new bloc, while providing Japan a market and a source for raw materials, will offer other countries an opportunity for trade and for investments. . . .

... When he came into office, he decided that it would be mischievous as well as useless to attempt to reconcile the principle of the open door, as understood in the United States and elsewhere abroad, with the new situation which Japan was endeavoring to bring about. . . .

... He realized that there were extended historical and even sentimental associations in the United States with regard to that [open-door] principle. . . . [He] was confident that by quiet discussion between the two governments and

21. The official who recorded Arita's remarks was Eugene H. Dooman, counsellor of the U.S. embassy. FRUS: Japan, 1931-1941, 1:802-5.

by refraining from engaging in disputes through exchanges of official notes which are later made public, substantial progress could be made toward an eventual satisfactory solution of the present difficulty.

I 1 President Roosevelt, national radio address from the White House, 3 September 1939, reacting to the outbreak of war in Europe set off by the German invasion of Poland.²²

For four long years a succession of actual wars and constant crises have shaken the entire world and have threatened in each case to bring on the gigantic conflict which is today unhappily a fact.

...

You must master at the outset a simple but unalterable fact in modern foreign relations between nations. When peace has been broken anywhere, the peace of all countries everywhere is in danger.

...

This Nation will remain a neutral nation, but I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well. Even a neutral has a right to take account of facts. Even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience.

I have said not once, but many times, that I have seen war and that I hate war. I say that again and again.

I 2 Japanese Imperial Conference, 19 September 1940, discussing an alliance with Germany and Italy (the Tripartite Pact) and the likely American reaction.²³

[PRESIDENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL HARA YOSHIMICHI:] [T]his Pact is a treaty of alliance with the United States as its target. Germany and Italy hope to prevent American entry into the European war by making this Pact public.

22. Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1939* (New York: Macmillan, 1941), 460–63.

23. Nobutaka Ike, ed. and trans., *Japan's Decision for War: Records of the 1941 Policy Conferences* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1967), 9–10, 12. Imperial conferences were formal gatherings before the emperor intended to ratify policy around which consensus had developed. It was opened by the prime minister followed by others with prepared statements. The president of the Privy Council (a group of advisers to the emperor) would then raise questions nominally to inform the emperor and lay the basis for the handing down of an imperial sanction for the conference decisions.

Recently the United States has been acting as a watchdog in Eastern Asia in place of Great Britain. She has applied pressure to Japan, but she has probably been restraining herself in order to prevent Japan from joining Germany and Italy. But when Japan's position becomes clear with the announcement of this Pact, she will greatly increase her pressure on us, she will greatly step up her aid to Chiang [Kai-shek], and she will obstruct Japan's war effort. I assume that the United States, which has not declared war on Germany and Italy, will put economic pressure on Japan without declaring war on us. She will probably ban the export of oil and iron, and will refuse to purchase goods from us. She will attempt to weaken us over the long term so that we will not be able to endure war. The Director of the Planning Board has said that all available steps will be taken to obtain iron and oil, but the results are uncertain. Also the Foreign Minister's statement shows that we cannot obtain iron and oil right away, and that in any case the amount will be restricted. You cannot carry on a war without oil. The capital in Netherlands East Indies oil is British and American, and the Dutch Government has fled to England; so I think it will be impossible to obtain oil from the Netherlands East Indies by peaceful means. I would like to hear the Government's views on this.

...

[FOREIGN MINISTER MATSUOKA YOSUKE:] If Japan would abandon all, or at least half, of China, it might be possible for the time being to shake hands with the United States; but [American] pressure on Japan will certainly not come to an end in the future. The Presidential election that is coming up very shortly is especially dangerous. Roosevelt, who has high ambitions, will stop at nothing to achieve them if he believes that he is in danger. He might well undertake a war against Japan, or enter the war in Europe. Both of the Presidential candidates can build up their popularity by condemning Japan. Minor military clashes between Japan and the United States in China could easily lead to war. At present, American sentiment against Japan has become stronger, and this cannot be remedied by a few conciliatory gestures. Only a firm stand on our part will prevent a war. Of course, we should firmly suppress any useless anti-British and anti-American activities. . . .

...

HARA: The United States is a self-confident nation. Accordingly, I wonder if our taking a firm stand might not have a result quite contrary to the one we expect.

MATSUOKA: I see your point; but Japan is not Spain. We are a great power with a strong navy in Far Eastern waters. To be sure, the United States may adopt a stern attitude for a while; but I think that she will dispassionately take her interests into consideration and arrive at a reasonable attitude. As to whether

she will stiffen her attitude and bring about a critical situation, or will levelheadedly reconsider, I would say that the odds are fifty-fifty.

**I 3 Pact uniting Germany, Italy, and Japan, concluded in Berlin,
27 September 1940.²⁴**

The Governments of Japan, Germany and Italy, considering it as the condition precedent of any lasting peace that all nations of the world be given each its own proper place, have decided to stand by and co-operate with one another in regard to their efforts in Greater East Asia and the regions of Europe respectively wherein it is their prime purpose to establish and maintain a new order of things calculated to promote mutual prosperity and welfare of the peoples concerned. . . .

ARTICLE 1

Japan recognizes and respects the leadership of Germany and Italy in the establishment of a new order in Europe.

ARTICLE 2

Germany and Italy recognize and respect the leadership of Japan in the establishment of a new order in Greater East Asia.

ARTICLE 3

Japan, Germany and Italy agree to cooperate in their efforts on the aforesaid lines. They further undertake to assist one another with all political, economic and military means when one of the three Contracting Parties is attacked by a power at present not involved in the European War or in the Sino-Japanese Conflict.

**I 4 Secretary of State Hull and Ambassador to the United States
Kensuke Horinouchi, meeting of 8 October 1940, exchanging
views on the scrap-iron and steel embargo imposed by the
Roosevelt administration.²⁵**

I said that it was really amazing for the Government of Japan, which has been violating in the most aggravating manner valuable American rights and

interests throughout most of China . . . to question the fullest privilege of this Government . . . to impose the proposed scrap iron and steel embargo, and that to go still further and call it an unfriendly act was still more amazing in the light of the conduct of the Japanese Government in disregarding all law, treaty obligations and other rights and privileges and the safety of Americans while it proceeded at the same time to seize territory by force to an ever-increasing extent. . . .

The Ambassador again said that he very much regretted the serious differences between our two countries. . . . He added that any Japanese or any American must know that strife between the two countries would be extremely tragic for both alike. . . . I went on to say that we have stood for law and order and treaty observance and justice along with genuine friendliness between our two countries; that it was clear now, however, that those who are dominating the external policies of Japan are, as we here have believed for some years, bent on the conquest by force of all worthwhile territory in the Pacific Ocean area. . . .

The Ambassador undertook to repeat the old line of talk about how fair Japan proposed to be with respect to all rights and privileges of foreign nations within its conquered territory. . . .

. . . I made it clear that it is the view of this Government that two nations, one in Europe and one in Asia, are undertaking to subjugate both of their respective areas of the world, and to place them on an international order and on a social basis resembling that of 750 years ago. In the face of this world movement, extending itself from day to day, peaceful and interested nations are to be held up to denunciation and threats if they dare to engage in any lawful acts or utterances in opposition to such wide movements of world conquest.

**I 5 Ambassador Joseph C. Grew in Tokyo to President Roosevelt,
letter of 14 December 1940, appraising the prospects for a policy
of pressure against Japan.²⁶**

Only insuperable obstacles will now prevent the Japanese from digging in permanently in China and from pushing the southward advance, with economic control as a preliminary to political domination in the areas marked down. Economic obstacles, such as may arise from American embargoes, will seriously handicap Japan in the long run, but meanwhile they tend to push the Japanese onward in a forlorn hope of making themselves economically self-sufficient.

24. *FRUS: Japan, 1931-1941*, 2:165.

25. Hull memorandum of conversation, in *FRUS: Japan, 1931-1941*, 2:226-27.

26. *FRUS, 1940*, vol. 4 (Washington: GPO, 1955), 469-71.

History has shown that the pendulum in Japan is always swinging between extremist and moderate policies, but as things stand today we believe that the pendulum is more likely to swing still further toward extremes than to reverse its direction. . . .

...
A progressively firm policy on our part will entail inevitable risks—especially risks of sudden uncalculated strokes [by Japan] . . . which might enflame the American people—but in my opinion those risks are less in degree than the far greater future dangers which we would face if we were to follow a policy of *laissez-faire*.

... The principal point at issue, as I see it, is not whether we must call a halt to the Japanese program, but when.

It is important constantly to bear in mind the fact that if we take measures “short of war” with no real intention to carry those measures to their final conclusion if necessary, such lack of intention will be all too obvious to the Japanese who will proceed undeterred, and even with greater incentive, on their way. Only if they become certain that we mean to fight if called upon to do so will our preliminary measures stand some chance of proving effective and of removing the necessity for war. . . .

If by such action we can bring about the eventual discrediting of Japan’s present leaders, a regeneration of thought may ultimately take shape in this country, permitting the resumption of normal relations with us and leading to a readjustment of the whole Pacific problem.

16 President Roosevelt, national radio address from the White House, 29 December 1940, calling for the United States to become an “arsenal of democracy.”²⁷

[O]n September 27, 1940 . . . three powerful nations, two in Europe and one in Asia, joined themselves together in the threat that if the United States or America interfered with or blocked the expansion program of these three nations—a program aimed at world control—they would unite in ultimate action against the United States.

...
Some of our people like to believe that wars in Europe and in Asia are of no concern to us. But it is a matter of most vital concern to us that European and

Asiatic war-makers should not gain control of the oceans which lead to this hemisphere.

...

If Great Britain goes down, the Axis powers will control the continents of Europe, Asia, Africa, Australasia, and the high seas—and they will be in a position to bring enormous military and naval resources against this hemisphere. It is no exaggeration to say that all of us, in the Americas, would be living at the point of a gun. . . .

...

The history of recent years proves that shootings and chains and concentration camps are not simply the transient tools but the very altars of modern dictatorships. They may talk of a “new order” in the world, but what they have in mind is only a revival of the oldest and the worst tyranny. In that there is no liberty, no religion, no hope.

...

Our national policy is not directed toward war. Its sole purpose is to keep war away from our country and our people.

Democracy’s fight against world conquest is being greatly aided, and must be more greatly aided, by the rearmament of the United States and by sending every ounce and every ton of munitions and supplies that we can possibly spare to help the defenders who are in the front lines. . . .

...

We must be the great arsenal of democracy. For us this is an emergency as serious as war itself. We must apply ourselves to our task with the same resolution, the same sense of urgency, the same spirit of patriotism and sacrifice as we would show were we at war.

17 President Roosevelt to Ambassador Grew, letter of 21 January 1941, putting policy toward Japan in the context of a global struggle.²⁸

[T]he fundamental proposition is that we must recognize that the hostilities in Europe, in Africa, and in Asia are all parts of a single world conflict. We must, consequently, recognize that our interests are menaced both in Europe and in the Far East. We are engaged in the task of defending our way of life and our vital national interests wherever they are seriously endangered.

²⁷ Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 1940 (New York: Macmillan, 1941), 634–35, 639–41, 643.

²⁸ Drafted by Alger Hiss working under Stanley K. Hornbeck, the State Department’s senior specialist on East Asia. *FRUS*, 1941, vol. 4 (Washington: GPO, 1956), 6–8.

Our strategy of self-defense must be a global strategy which takes account of every front and takes advantage of every opportunity to contribute to our total security.

You [ask] . . . whether our getting into war with Japan would so handicap our help to Britain in Europe as to make the difference to Britain between victory and defeat. In this connection it seems to me that we must consider whether, if Japan should gain possession of the region of the Netherlands East Indies and the Malay Peninsula, the chances of England's winning in her struggle with Germany would not be decreased thereby. . . . The British need assistance along the lines of our generally established policies at many points, assistance which in the case of the Far East is certainly well within the realm of "possibility" so far as the capacity of the United States is concerned. Their defense strategy must in the nature of things be global. Our strategy of giving them assistance toward ensuring our own security must envisage both sending of supplies to England and helping to prevent a closing of channels of communication to and from various parts of the world, so that other important sources of supply will not be denied to the British and be added to the assets of the other side.

...

. . . [T]he problems which we face are so vast and so interrelated that any attempt even to state them compels one to think in terms of five continents and seven seas. . . .

18 Secretary of State Hull, comments to Ambassador Nomura Kichisaburo, 21 June 1941, indicting Japan's alignment with Germany.²⁹

At a time when Nazi Germany had invaded some fifteen or twenty countries the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs was declaring in effect that measures of resistance by countries not already actually invaded would call for action by Japan under the Tripartite Pact. This would be like saying that if a tiger should break loose in the countryside and if a villager living a mile or so away from where the tiger is committing depredations and killing neighbors should go out and attack the tiger in order to protect his own family[,] the action of the villager would constitute aggression.

...
It seemed to us that the Japanese Government would decide either to

29. Memorandum prepared by Joseph W. Ballantine, in *FRUS: Japan, 1931-1941*, 2:483-84.

sume control of those elements in the Japanese body politic which supported Nazi Germany and its policies of aggression or to allow those elements to take over entire charge of Japan's policies. If the Japanese Government decided before it was too late that Hitler was dangerous to Japan and if then Japan decided to come forward with a program which offered a basis for cooperation along peaceful courses, we should be glad to consider such a program.

19 Japanese Imperial Conference, summary of decisions reached at the 2 July 1941 meeting, contemplating war with the United States and Britain.³⁰

I. POLICY

1. The Imperial Government is determined to follow a policy which will result in the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and world peace, no matter what international developments take place.
2. The Imperial Government will continue its efforts to effect a settlement of the China Incident and seek to establish a solid basis for the security and preservation of the nation. This will involve an advance into the Southern Regions [Southeast Asia] and, depending on future developments, a settlement of the Soviet Question as well.
3. The Imperial Government will carry out the above program no matter what obstacles may be encountered.

II. SUMMARY

1. Steps will be taken to bring pressure on the Chiang Regime from the Southern approaches in order to bring about its surrender. . . .
2. In order to guarantee national security and preservation, the Imperial Government will continue all necessary diplomatic negotiations with reference to the southern regions and also carry out various other plans as may be necessary. In case the diplomatic negotiations break down, preparations for a war with England and America will also be carried forward. . . .

In carrying out the plans outlined in the foregoing article, we will not be deterred by the possibility of being involved in a war with England and America.

3. Our attitude with reference to the German-Soviet War will be based on

30. U.S. Congress, *Hearings before the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack*, 79th Cong., 1st and 2nd Sess. (39 parts; Washington: GPO, 1946), pt. 20, pp. 4018-19.

the spirit of the Tri-Partite Pact. However, we will not enter the conflict for some time but will steadily proceed with military preparations against the Soviet [Union] and decide our final attitude independently. At the same time, we will continue carefully correlated activities in the diplomatic field.

In case the German-Soviet War should develop to our advantage, we will make use of our military strength, settle the Soviet question and guarantee the safety of our northern borders.

- ...
4. In carrying out the preceding article all plans, especially the use of armed forces, will be carried out in such a way as to place no serious obstacle in the path of our basic military preparations for a war with England and America.
 5. In case all diplomatic means fail to prevent the entrance of America into the European War, we will proceed in harmony with our obligations under the Tri-Partite Pact. However, with reference to the time and method of employing our armed forces we will take independent action.
 6. We will immediately turn our attention to placing the nation on a war basis and will take special measures to strengthen the defenses of the nation.

20 Japanese Liaison Conferences, 10 and 12 July 1941, discussing Hull's 21 June comments to Japan's ambassador.³¹

—Conference of 10 July:³²

[ADVISER TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAITO YOSHIE:] The present world, divided into those who are for the maintenance of the status quo and those who are for its destruction, the democracies and the totalitarian states, is in the midst of a war. Hull's reply is for the status quo and for democracy. It is obvious that America sent it after consultation with Britain and China. Thus I think the countries that are for the status quo are getting together to put pressure on Japan....

...
Hull's "Oral Statement"³³ contains especially outrageous language. . . .

31. Liaison conferences were informal meetings at which the government and the military high command could seek agreement.

32. Ike, *Japan's Decision*, 94, 96–97.

33. A written statement given by Hull to the Japanese ambassador at their meeting on

attitude is one of contempt for Japan. I have been in the foreign service for a long time. This language is not the kind one would use toward a country of equal standing: it expresses an attitude one would take toward a protectorate or a possession. These words are inexcusable.

—Conference of 12 July:³⁴

[FOREIGN MINISTER MATSUOKA:] [W]hen I read the "Oral Statement," I really felt that we should reject it immediately. It is indeed absurd. . . . [T]he United States regards Japan as either her protectorate or her dependency. . . . It is characteristic of Americans to be high-handed toward the weak. The "Statement" considers Japan a weak, dependent country. . . . I propose here and now that we reject the "Statement," and that we discontinue negotiations with the United States.

...

[ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF SUGIYAMA [GEN]:] I myself agree with the Foreign Minister's views. However, we among the military believe it is appropriate on this occasion to leave room for negotiation. It is not [yet] suitable to tell the United States that we might cut off diplomatic relations, since in the near future we plan to move troops into French Indochina, and since in the North [in Manchuria, located adjacent to the Soviet Union] we are directly faced with the grave necessity of strengthening the Kwantung Army [Japan's army in Manchuria].

MATSUOKA: I believe that the American attitude will not change, no matter what attitude Japan takes. It is the nature of the American people to take advantage of you if you show weakness. Therefore, I believe it is better to take a strong position on this occasion.

...

. . . [G]iven the situation, the American President is trying to lead his country into the war. There is, however, one thread of hope, which is that the American people might not follow him. The President has even managed somehow to get things that appear rather difficult to get. He finally managed to get elected three times. Roosevelt is a real demagogue. We probably cannot prevent American entry into the war in the end. . . . Japanese-American accord has been my cherished wish ever since I was young. I think there is no hope, but let us try until the very end. . . .

[WAR MINISTER TOJO [HIDEKI]:] Even if there is no hope, I would like to persist

June. It reiterated Hull's direct statement (document 18) to the ambassador but in more formal and restrained terms. *FRUS: Japan, 1931–1941*, 2:485–86.

34. Ike, *Japan's Decision*, 99–102.

to the very end. I know it is difficult; but it will be intolerable if we cannot establish the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere and settle the China Incident. Because of the Tripartite Pact, can't we at least prevent the formal participation of the United States in the war? Of course, since the "Oral Statement" affects the dignity of our national polity,³⁵ I believe we cannot help but reject it, in line with the Foreign Minister's judgment. However, if we sincerely convey to the Americans what we, as Japanese, believe to be right, won't they be inwardly moved?

...

NAVY MINISTER OIKAWA [KOSHIRO]: According to Navy reports, it appears that Secretary of State Hull and others are not prepared to provoke a Pacific war. Since Japan does not wish to engage in a Pacific war, isn't there room for negotiation?

MATSUOKA: Is there room? What will they accept?

OIKAWA: Well, something minor.

MATSUOKA: If we say we will not use force in the South, they will probably listen. Is there anything else they would accept?

OIKAWA: Won't they accept the security of the Pacific? The Open Door Policy in China?

MATSUOKA: ... They sent this kind of letter because they believe that we give in easily....

21 Tokyo to the Japanese embassy in Washington, cable of 31 July 1941, explaining pressures prompting the move into French Indochina.³⁶

Commercial and economic relations between Japan and third countries, led by England and the United States, are gradually becoming so horribly strained that we cannot endure it much longer. Consequently, our Empire, to save its very life, must take measures to secure the raw materials of the South Seas. Our Empire must immediately take steps to break asunder this ever-strengthening chain of encirclement which is being woven under the guidance and with the participation of England and the United States, acting like a cunning dragon seemingly asleep. That is why we decided to obtain military bases in French Indo-China and to have our troops occupy that territory.

35. The Japanese phrase used here was *kokutai*, meaning roughly "national structure," with the emperor at the core.

36. This despatch was decoded and made available to U.S. policymakers. *Pearl Harbor Attack: Hearings*, pt. 12, p. 9.

22 President Roosevelt, oral statement to Ambassador Nomura, 17 August 1941, warning against any further expansion by Japan.³⁷

Notwithstanding [American efforts to negotiate a settlement in the Pacific], the Government of Japan has continued its military activities and its disposals of armed forces at various points in the Far East and has occupied Indochina with its military, air and naval forces.

...

Such being the case, this Government now finds it necessary to say to the Government of Japan that if the Japanese Government takes any further steps in pursuance of a policy or program of military domination by force or threat of force of neighboring countries, the Government of the United States will be compelled to take immediately any and all steps which it may deem necessary toward safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of the United States and American nationals and toward insuring the safety and security of the United States.

23 Japanese Imperial Conference, 6 September 1941, resolving to prepare for war while continuing to negotiate.

—Agenda:³⁸

In view of the increasingly critical situation, especially the aggressive plans being carried out by America, England, Holland and other countries, the situation in Soviet Russia and the Empire's latent potentialities, the Japanese Government will proceed as follows in carrying out its plans for the southern territories [as presented in the July 2 conference].

1. Determined not to be deterred by the possibility of being involved in a war with America (and England and Holland) in order to secure our national existence, we will proceed with war preparations so that they [will] be completed approximately toward the end of October.
2. At the same time, we will endeavor by every possible diplomatic means to have our demands agreed to by America and England. . . .
3. If by the early part of October there is no reasonable hope of having our demands agreed to in the diplomatic negotiations mentioned above, we will immediately make up our minds to get ready for war against America (and England and Holland).

37. *FRUS: Japan, 1931–1941*, 2:556–57.

38. *Pearl Harbor Attack: Hearings*, pt. 20, pp. 4022–23.

...
I. Japan's Minimum Demands in her Negotiations with America (and England).

1. America and England shall not intervene in or obstruct a settlement by Japan of the China incident.

...
2. Japan is prepared to withdraw her troops from French Indo-China as threat to the defense of the Empire.

...
3. America and England will cooperate with Japan in her attempt to obtain needed raw materials.

...
II. Maximum Concessions by Japan.

1. Japan will not use French Indo-China as a base for operations against any neighboring countries with the exception of China.

2. Japan is prepared to withdraw her troops from French Indo-China as soon as a just peace is established in the Far East.

3. Japan is prepared to guarantee the neutrality of the Philippine Islands.

—Discussion:³⁹

[NAVY CHIEF OF STAFF NAGANO OSAMI:] A number of vital military supplies, including oil, are dwindling day by day. This will cause a gradual weakening of our national defense, and lead to a situation in which, if we maintain the status quo, the capacity of our Empire to act will be reduced in the days to come. Meanwhile, the defenses of American, British, and other foreign military facilities and vital points in the Far East, and the military preparedness of these countries, particularly of the United States, are being strengthened with great speed. By the latter half of next year America's military preparedness will have made great progress, and it will be difficult to cope with her. Therefore, it must be said that it would be very dangerous for our Empire to remain idle and let the days go by.

Accordingly, if our minimum demands, which are necessary for the self-preservation and self-defense of our Empire, cannot be attained through diplomacy, and ultimately we cannot avoid war, we must first make all preparations, take advantage of our opportunities, undertake aggressive military operations with determination and a dauntless attitude, and find a way out of our difficulties.

39. Ike, *Japan's Decision*, 139–40, 148, 151.

... We can anticipate that America will attempt to prolong the war, utilizing her impregnable position, her superior industrial power, and her abundant resources.

Our Empire does not have the means to take the offensive, overcome the enemy, and make them give up their will to fight. Moreover, we are short of resources at home, so we would very much like to avert a prolonged war. However, if we get into a prolonged war, the most important means of assuring that we will be able to bear this burden will be to seize the enemy's important military areas and sources of materials quickly at the beginning of the war, making our operational position tenable and at the same time obtaining vital materials from the areas now under hostile influence. If this first stage in our operations is carried out successfully, our Empire will have secured strategic areas in the Southwest Pacific, established an impregnable position, and laid the basis for a prolonged war, even if American military preparedness should proceed as scheduled. What happens thereafter will depend to a great extent on overall national power ... and on developments in the world situation.

...
[DIRECTOR OF THE PLANNING BOARD SUZUKI TEIICHI:] ... [A]s a result of the present overall economic blockade imposed by Great Britain and the United States, our Empire's national power is declining day by day.

Our liquid fuel stockpile, which is the most important, will reach bottom by June or July of next year, even if we impose strict wartime control on the civilian demand.

Accordingly, I believe it is vitally important for the survival of our Empire that we make up our minds to establish and stabilize a firm economic base. ... I believe that if important areas in the South were to fall into our hands without fail in a period of three or four months, we could obtain such items as oil, bauxite, nickel, crude rubber, and tin in about six months, and we would be able to make full use of them after two years or so.

...
[PRESIDENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL HARA:] ... [A]t the present time some people are opposed to the adjustment of relations between Japan and the United States. They might be patriots, but I feel a great anxiety when I see that some people are opposed to what the Government is doing. It is indeed deplorable that some people will resort to direct action [attacks on government officials and offices thought to favor a conciliatory policy] when our nation has its very destiny at stake. ...

...
[EMPEROR HIROHITO, closing the conference by reading a poem composed by his grandfather, the Meiji emperor:] "All the seas in every quarter are as

brothers to one another. Why, then, do the winds and waves of strife rage so turbulently throughout the world?"⁴⁰

24 Secretary of State Hull to Ambassador Nomura, oral statement of 2 October 1941, fending off a Japanese proposal for a summit meeting between Roosevelt and Konoe to seek a last-minute settlement.⁴¹

[T]his Government has endeavored to make clear that what it envisages is a comprehensive program calling for the application uniformly to the entire Pacific area of liberal and progressive principles. From what the Japanese Government has so far indicated in regard to its purposes this Government derives the impression that the Japanese Government has in mind a program which would be circumscribed by the imposition of qualifications and exceptions to the actual application of those principles.

If this impression is correct, can the Japanese Government feel that a meeting between the responsible heads of government under such circumstances would be likely to contribute to the advancement of the high purposes which we have mutually had in mind?

. . . [I]t is the President's earnest hope that discussion of the fundamental questions may be so developed that such a meeting can be held. It is also the President's hope that the Japanese Government shares the conviction of this Government that, if the Governments of Japan and of the United States are resolved to give those principles practical and comprehensive application, the two Governments can work out a fundamental rehabilitation of the relations between the United States and Japan and contribute to the bringing about of a lasting peace with justice, equity and order in the whole Pacific area.

25 Tokyo to the Japanese embassy in Washington, cable of 21 October 1941, stressing the limited time left to break the diplomatic deadlock.⁴²

The new cabinet [under Tojo] differs in no way from the former one in its sincere desire to adjust Japanese–United States relations on a fair basis. Our

40. This surprise intervention by the usually silent emperor was meant to stress the importance of diplomacy.

41. Tokyo had put the summit proposal before the Roosevelt administration in early August. *FRUS: Japan, 1931–1941*, 2:660–61.

42. This despatch was decoded and made available to U.S. policymakers. *Pearl Harbor Attack: Hearings*, pt. 12, p. 81.

country has said practically all she can say in the way of expressing of opinions and setting forth our stands. We feel that we have now reached a point where no further positive action can be taken by us except to urge the United States to reconsider her views.

We urge, therefore, that, choosing an opportune moment, . . . [you] let it be known to the United States by indirection that our country is not in a position to spend much more time discussing this matter. . . .

26 Japanese Liaison Conference, 1 November 1941, discussing military options in a tense seventeen-hour session.⁴³

FINANCE MINISTER KAYA [OKINORI]: If we go along, as at present, without war, and three years hence the American fleet comes to attack us, will the Navy have a chance of winning or won't it? (He asked this several times.)

NAVY CHIEF OF STAFF NAGANO [OSAMI]: Nobody knows.

KAYA: Will the American fleet come to attack us, or won't it?

NAGANO: I don't know. I think the chances are 50–50.

KAYA: I don't think they will come. If they should come, can we win the war on the seas? (He could not very well ask the Supreme Command whether we would lose.)

NAGANO: We might avoid war now, but go to war three years later; or we might go to war now and plan for what the situation will be three years hence. I think it would be easier to engage in a war now. The reason is that now we have the necessary foundation for it.

KAYA: If there were chances of victory in the third year of the war, it would be all right to go to war; but according to Nagano's explanation, this is not certain. Moreover, I would judge that the chances of the United States making war on us are slight, so my conclusion must be that it would not be a good idea to declare war now.

FOREIGN MINISTER TOGO [SHIGENORI]: I, too, cannot believe that the American fleet would come and attack us. I don't believe there is any need to go to war now.

NAGANO: There is a saying, "Don't rely on what won't come." The future is uncertain; we can't take anything for granted. In three years enemy defenses in the South will be strong, and the number of enemy warships will also increase.

KAYA: Well, then, when can we go to war and win?

43. Ike, *Japan's Decision*, 201–4.

NAGANO: Now! The time for war will not come later! (He said this emphasis.)

NAVY VICE CHIEF OF STAFF ITO [SEIICHI] (he suddenly says at this point as the Navy is concerned, you can negotiate until November 20)

TSUKADA [KO; Army Vice Chief of Staff]: As for the Army, negotiations will be all right until November 13, but no later.

TOGO: You say there must be a deadline for diplomacy. As Foreign Ministers cannot engage in diplomacy unless there is a prospect that it will be successful. I cannot accept deadlines or conditions if they make it too difficult. Diplomacy will succeed. You must obviously give up the idea of war. (Thus Togo from time to time speaks of no war and the maintenance of the status quo.)

TOGO: November 13 is outrageous. The Navy says November 20.

TSUKADA: Preparations for military operations are tantamount to military operations. Airplanes, surface vessels, and submarines are going to be ready to tell you. Thus the time for ending diplomatic negotiations must be prior to the time when preparations for military operations will be considered as to be tantamount to military operations. That day is November 13.

NAGANO: Small collisions are incidents, and not war.

[PRIME MINISTER] Tojo and Togo: We are going to undertake both political and military operations simultaneously; so you must give your word that if diplomacy is successful we will give up going to war.

TSUKADA: That's impossible. It will be all right until November 13, but that you will throw the Supreme Command into confusion.

SUGIYAMA [Gen; Army Chief of Staff] and Nagano: This will end the Supreme Command.

NAVY MINISTER SHIMADA [SHIGETARO] (to Navy Vice Chief Ito): It is all right to negotiate until two days before the outbreak of war, won't it?

TSUKADA: Please keep quiet. What you've just said won't do. What does the Foreign Minister want?

Thus the deadline for diplomatic negotiations became the subject of debate. A twenty-minute recess was called. . . . [T]he Army Chief of Staff decided that "it would be all right to carry on negotiations until November 30." Meanwhile, the Navy Chief of Staff also . . . discussed the matter. The meeting was reconvened.

TOJO: Can't we make it December 1? Can't you allow diplomatic negotiations to go on even for one day more?

TSUKADA: Absolutely not. We absolutely can't go beyond November 30. I sincerely hope not.

SHIMADA: Mr. Tsukada, until what time on the 30th? It will be all right until midnight, won't it?

TSUKADA: It will be all right until midnight.

27 Tokyo to the Japanese embassy in Washington, cable of 4 November 1941, voicing urgency and frustration as time runs out on negotiations.⁴⁴

Conditions both within and without our Empire are so tense that no longer is procrastination possible, yet in our sincerity to maintain peaceful relationships between the Empire of Japan and the United States of America, we have decided, as a result of these deliberations, to gamble once more on the continuance of the parleys, but this is our last effort. . . .

When the Japanese-American meetings began, who would have ever dreamt that they would drag out so long? Hoping that we could fast come to some understanding, we have already gone far out of our way and yielded and yielded. The United States does not appreciate this, but through thick and thin sticks to the self-same propositions she made to start with. Those of our people and of our officials who suspect the sincerity of the Americans are far from few. Bearing all kinds of humiliating things, our Government has repeatedly stated its sincerity and gone far, yes, too far, in giving in to them. There is just one reason why we do this—to maintain peace in the Pacific. . . . This time we are showing the limit of our friendship; this time we are making our last possible bargain, and I hope that we can thus settle all our troubles with the United States peaceably.

28 Japanese Imperial Conference, 5 November 1941, formally reaffirming the decision to prepare for war while negotiating.⁴⁵

[PRIME MINISTER TOJO:] The Government and the Army and Navy sections of Imperial Headquarters have held eight Liaison Conferences. . . . As a result of this, we have come to the conclusion that we must now decide to go to war, set the time for military action at the beginning of December, concentrate all of our efforts on completing preparations for war, and at the same time try to break the impasse by means of diplomacy. . . .

44. This despatch was decoded and made available to U.S. policymakers. *Pearl Harbor Attack: Hearings*, pt. 12, pp. 92–93.

45. Ike, *Japan's Decision*, 211–13, 220, 229–30, 236–38.

...

[FOREIGN MINISTER TOGO:] The successful conclusion of the China Incident and the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere would assure the existence of our Empire and lay the foundations for stability in East Asia. To achieve these objectives, our Empire must be prepared to sweep away any and all obstacles.

...

Since the outbreak of the China Incident, both the British and American Governments have obstructed our advance on the continent. On the one hand, they have aided Chiang; on the other hand, they have checked our activities in China or have stepped up their economic measures against us. Needless to say, Great Britain, which has acquired more interests than anyone else in East Asia, took all kinds of measures to obstruct us from the beginning. The United States, cooperating with her, abrogated the Japanese-American Trade Agreement, limited or banned imports and exports, and took other measures to increase her pressure on Japan. Particularly since our Empire concluded the Tripartite Pact, the United States has taken steps to encircle Japan by persuading Great Britain and the Netherlands to join her and by cooperating with the Chiang regime. Since the start of the German-Soviet war [June 1941], she has taken unfriendly action against us by supplying oil and other war materials to the Soviet Union through the Far East, despite warnings from our Government. As soon as our Empire sent troops into French Indochina . . . America's actions became increasingly undisguised. Not only did she cut off economic relations between Japan and the United States, with Central and South America going along with her, under the guise of freezing our assets; but also, in cooperation with Great Britain, China, and the Netherlands, she threatened the existence of our Empire and tried harder to prevent us from carrying out our national policies. Accordingly, our Empire, which is the stabilizing force in East Asia, was compelled to try to overcome the impasse by showing firmness and determination.

President Roosevelt has stressed, as his national policy, the rejection of "Hitlerism"—that is, policies based on force—and he has continued to aid Great Britain, which is almost tantamount to entering the war, by utilizing the economically superior position of the United States. At the same time . . . he has adopted a policy of firm pressure on Japan. In the middle of April of this year unofficial talks were begun, seeking a general improvement in relations between Japan and the United States. . . . The American Government, however, maintained an extremely firm attitude . . . and refused to make any concessions. . . . Moreover, she has taken many measures to tighten the encirclement of Japan—strengthening of military facilities in the South; encouragement to Chiang through economic assistance, supplying

arms, and sending military missions; meetings with military leaders in Singapore and Manila; and holding frequent military and economic conferences in Batavia,⁴⁶ Hong Kong, etc. There has been nothing to demonstrate her sincerity. Hence we cannot help but regretfully conclude that there is no prospect of the negotiations coming to a successful conclusion quickly if things continue as they have in the past.

...

[PRESIDENT OF THE PLANNING BOARD SUZUKI:] In brief, it is by no means an easy task to carry on a war against Great Britain, the United States, and the Netherlands—a war that will be a protracted one—while still fighting in China, and at the same time maintain and augment the national strength needed to prosecute a war over a long period of time. . . .

...

[PRIME MINISTER TOJO:] We sent a large force of one million men [to China], and it has cost us well over 100,000 dead and wounded, [the grief of] their bereaved families, hardship for four years, and a national expenditure of several tens of billions of yen. We must by all means get satisfactory results from this. If we should withdraw troops stationed in China under the Japanese-Chinese treaty, China would become worse than she was before the Incident. She would even attempt to rule Manchuria, Korea, and Formosa [Taiwan]. We can expect an expansion of our country only by stationing troops. This the United States does not welcome. However, the stationing of troops that Japan insists upon is not at all unreasonable.

Concerning the Japanese-American conference of heads of state, we do not agree with each other. The United States insists that the meeting be held after the major questions have been agreed upon; whereas Japan proposes to settle the major questions at the talks.

...

[HARA:] . . . According to the briefing given today, the present American attitude is not just the same as the previous one, but is even more unreasonable. Therefore, I regret very much that the negotiations have little prospect of success.

It is impossible, from the standpoint of our domestic political situation and of our self-preservation, to accept all of the American demands. We must hold fast to our position. As I understand it, the Japanese-Chinese problem is the important point in the negotiations, and there is suspicion that the United States is acting as spokesman for the [Nationalist] Chungking regime. . . .

On the other hand, we cannot let the present situation continue. If we

46. The capital of the Dutch East Indies, now known as Djakarta.

miss the present opportunity to go to war, we will have to submit to American dictation. Therefore, I recognize that it is inevitable that we must decide to start a war against the United States. I will put my trust in what I have been told: namely, that things will go well in the early part of the war; and that although we will experience increasing difficulties as the war progresses, there is some prospect of success.

... I do not believe that the present situation would have developed out of just the China Incident. We have come to where we are because of the war between Germany and Great Britain. What we should always keep in mind here is what would happen to relations between Germany and Great Britain and Germany and the United States, all of them being countries whose population belongs to the white race, if Japan should enter the war. Hitler has said that the Japanese are a second-class race, and Germany has not declared war against the United States. Japan will take positive action against the United States. In that event, will the American people adopt the same attitude toward us psychologically that they do toward the Germans? Their indignation against the Japanese will be stronger than their hatred of Hitler. ... [W]e must be prepared for the possibility that hatred of the yellow race might shift the hatred now being directed against Germany to Japan. ...

... [W]e must ... exercise constant care to avoid being surrounded by the entire Aryan race—which would leave Japan isolated—and take steps now to strengthen relations with Germany and Italy. ... [D]on't let hatred of Japan become stronger than hatred of Hitler, so that everybody will in name and in fact gang up on Japan. ...

TOJO: ... There is still some hope for success. The reason the United States agreed to negotiate with us is that they have some weaknesses: (1) they are not prepared for operations in two oceans; (2) they have not completed strengthening their domestic structure; (3) they are short of materials for national defense (they have only enough for one year); and so on.

... The United States has from the beginning believed that Japan would give up because of economic pressure; but if they recognize that Japan is determined, then that is the time we should resort to diplomatic measures. ...

If we enter into a protracted war, there will be difficulties. ... But how can we let the United States continue to do as she pleases, even though there is some uneasiness? Two years from now we will have no petroleum for military use. Ships will stop moving. When I think about the strengthening of American defenses in the Southwest Pacific, the expansion of the American fleet, the unfinished China Incident, and so on, I see no end to diffi-

culties. We can talk about austerity and suffering, but can our people endure such a life for a long time? The situation is not the same as it was during the Sino-Japanese War [1894–1895]. I fear that we would become a third-class nation after two or three years if we just sat tight. ...

29 Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Harold Stark and Army Chief of Staff General George Marshall, joint memorandum to President Roosevelt, 5 November 1941, calling for postponing conflict in the Pacific.⁴⁷

At the present time the United States Fleet in the Pacific is inferior to the Japanese Fleet, and cannot undertake an unlimited strategic offensive in the Western Pacific. In order to be able to do so, it would have to be strengthened by withdrawing practically all naval vessels from the Atlantic except those assigned to local defense forces. An unlimited offensive by the Pacific Fleet would require tremendous merchant tonnage, which could only be withdrawn from services now considered essential. The result of withdrawals from the Atlantic of naval and merchant strength might well cause the United Kingdom to lose the Battle of the Atlantic in the near future.

The current plans for war against Japan in the Far East are to conduct defensive war, in cooperation with the British and Dutch, for the defense of the Philippines and the British and Dutch Indies. ...

...

The Chief of Naval Operations and the Chief of Staff are in accord in the following conclusions:

(a) The basic military policies and strategy agreed to in the United States-British Staff conversations remain sound. The primary objective of the two nations is the defeat of Germany. If Japan be defeated and Germany remain undefeated, decision will still not have been reached. In any case, an unlimited offensive war should not be undertaken against Japan, since such a war would greatly weaken the combined effort in the Atlantic against Germany, the most dangerous enemy.

(b) War between the United States and Japan should be avoided while building up the defensive forces in the Far East, until such time as Japan attacks or directly threatens territories whose security to the United States is of very great importance. ...

...

47. Pearl Harbor Attack: Hearings, pt. 14, pp. 1061–62.

(c) If war with Japan cannot be avoided, it should follow the strategic lines of existing war plans; i.e., military operations should be primarily defensive, with the object of holding territory, and weakening Japan's economic position.

**30 Ambassador Nomura to Secretary of State Hull,
20 November 1941, proposing final terms for a
peaceful settlement.⁴⁸**

1. Both the Governments of Japan and the United States undertake not to make any armed advancement into any of the regions in the South-eastern Asia and the Southern Pacific area excepting the part of French Indo-China where the Japanese troops are stationed at present.

2. The Japanese Government undertakes to withdraw its troops now stationed in French Indo-China upon either the restoration of peace between Japan and China or the establishment of an equitable peace in the Pacific area.

In the meantime the Government of Japan declares that it is prepared to remove its troops now stationed in the southern part of French Indo-China to the northern part of the said territory upon the conclusion of the present arrangement. . . .

3. The Governments of Japan and the United States shall cooperate with a view to securing the acquisition of those goods and commodities which the two countries need in Netherlands East Indies.

4. The Governments of Japan and the United States mutually undertake to restore their commercial relations to those prevailing prior to the freezing of the assets.

The Government of the United States shall supply Japan a required quantity of oil.

5. The Government of the United States undertakes to refrain from such measures and actions as will be prejudicial to the endeavors for the restoration of general peace between Japan and China.

**31 President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hull, comments to
Ambassadors Nomura and Kurusu Saburo, 27 November 1941,
blaming Japanese hard-liners for the failure of negotiations.⁴⁹**

The President proceeded to express the grateful appreciation of himself

and of this Government to the peace element in Japan which has worked hard in support of the movement to establish a peaceful settlement in the Pacific area. . . . The President added that in the United States most people want a peaceful solution of all matters in the Pacific area. He said that he does not give up yet although the situation is serious. . . . The President then made [the point] . . . that Japan's own best interests will not be served by following Hitlerism and courses of aggression. . . . If, however, Japan should unfortunately decide to follow Hitlerism and courses of aggression, we are convinced beyond any shadow of doubt that Japan will be the ultimate loser.

...

The President further referred to the matter of encirclement that Japan has been alleging. He pointed out that the Philippines were being encircled by Japan so far as that is concerned.

I [Hull] made it clear that . . . everyone knows that the Japanese slogans of co-prosperity, new order in East Asia and a controlling influence in certain areas, are all terms to express in a camouflaged manner the policy of force and conquest by Japan and the domination by military agencies of the political, economic, social and moral affairs of each of the populations conquered; and that so long as they move in that direction and continue to increase their cultural relations, military and otherwise with Hitler through such instruments as the Anti-Comintern Pact and the Tripartite Pact . . . , there could not be any real progress made on a peaceful course.

**32 Japanese Imperial Conference, 1 December 1941, registering
the failure of diplomacy and giving the green light for the attack
on Pearl Harbor.⁵⁰**

[FOREIGN MINISTER TOGO:] America's policy toward Japan has consistently been to thwart the establishment of a New Order in East Asia, which is our immutable policy. We must recognize that if we were to accept their present proposal [for ending the conflict with China as the precondition for a Japanese-American settlement], the international position of our Empire would be reduced to a status lower than it was prior to the Manchurian Incident, and our very survival would inevitably be threatened.

First, China under Chiang's control would increasingly come to rely on Britain and the United States. . . . We would be forced to retreat completely from the mainland, and as a result our position in Manchuria would neces-

48. *FRUS: Japan, 1931-1941*, 2:755-56.

49. Kurusu Saburo came to Washington in mid-November to assist Nomura in the final effort to avoid war. Hull memorandum, in *FRUS: Japan, 1931-1941*, 2:770-72.

50. Ike, *Japan's Decision*, 270-73, 281-83.

sarily be weakened. Any hope of settling the China Incident would be swept away, root and branch.

Second, Britain and the United States would gain control over these regions. The prestige of our Empire would fall to the ground, and our role as stabilizer would be destroyed. Our great undertaking, the establishment of a New Order in East Asia, would be nipped in the bud.

Third, the Tripartite Pact would be reduced to a dead letter, and the reputation of our Empire abroad would decline.

...

[TOJO HIDEKI, concurrently Prime Minister, War Minister, and Minister for Home Affairs:] The so-called nationalistic organizations [in Japan] have advocated a strong foreign policy; and once diplomatic negotiations end in failure, they will very likely demand that we move southward at once. Even the owners of small and medium-sized enterprises, whose livelihood has been much affected by the recent strengthening of economic controls—to say nothing of the laboring and peasant classes—are clearly aware of the position in which our country finds itself, and their spirits are high. It appears that they tend to want the Government to take an unambiguous position in executing a strong policy. There are, however, some within our large nation who would like to avoid war as much as possible at this time; but even these people have made up their minds that as long as the United States refuses to acknowledge our legitimate position, does not remove the economic blockade, and refuses to abandon her policy of oppressing Japan, our moving southward is inevitable; and if this action leads to a clash between Japan and the United States, this also cannot be helped.

...

[PRESIDENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL HARA:] In negotiating with the United States, our Empire hoped to maintain peace by making one concession after another. But to our surprise, the American position from beginning to end was to say what Chiang Kai-shek wanted her to say, and to emphasize those ideals that she had stated in the past. The United States is being utterly conceited, obstinate, and disrespectful. It is regrettable indeed. We simply cannot tolerate such an attitude.

If we were to give in, we would give up in one stroke not only our gains in the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars [of 1894–1895 and 1904–1905], but also the benefits of the Manchurian Incident. This we cannot do. We are loath to compel our people to suffer even greater hardships, on top of what they have endured during the four years since the China Incident. But it is clear that the existence of our country is being threatened, that the great achievements of the Emperor Meiji would all come to nought, and that there is nothing else we can do. Therefore, I believe that if negotiations with

the United States are hopeless, then the commencement of war, in accordance with the decision of the previous Imperial Conference, is inevitable.

...

[TOJO:] I would now like to make one final comment. At the moment our Empire stands at the threshold of glory or oblivion. We tremble with fear in the presence of His Majesty. We subjects are keenly aware of the great responsibility we must assume from this point on. Once His Majesty reaches a decision to commence hostilities, we will all strive to repay our obligations to him, bring the Government and the military ever closer together, resolve that the nation united will go on to victory, make an all-out effort to achieve our war aims, and set His Majesty's mind at ease.

I now adjourn the meeting.

⟨During today's Conference, His Majesty nodded in agreement with the statements being made, and displayed no signs of uneasiness. He seemed to be in an excellent mood, and we were filled with awe.⟩

33 Ambassador Nomura, meeting with Secretary of State Hull, 7 December 1941, announcing an end to talks.

—The U.S. State Department account:⁵¹

The Japanese Ambassador asked for an appointment to see the Secretary at 1:00 p.m., but later telephoned and asked that the appointment be postponed to 1:45 as the Ambassador was not quite ready. The Ambassador and Mr. Kurusu [Saburo] arrived at the Department at 2:05 p. m. and were received by the Secretary at 2:20 [one hour after the beginning of the attack on Pearl Harbor].

The Japanese Ambassador stated that he had been instructed to deliver at 1:00 p.m. the document [which follows] which he handed the Secretary, but that he was sorry that he had been delayed owing to the need of more time to decode the message. . . .

...

. . . The Secretary as soon as he had finished reading the document turned to the Japanese Ambassador and said,

“. . . In all my fifty years of public service I have never seen a document that was more crowded with infamous falsehoods and distortions—infamous falsehoods and distortions on a scale so huge that I never imagined until today that any Government on this planet was capable of uttering them.”

51. Memorandum prepared by Joseph W. Ballantine, in *FRUS: Japan, 1931–1941*, 2:786–87.

The Ambassador and Mr. Kurusu then took their leave without making any comment.

—The formal Japanese statement handed to Hull:⁵²

The American Government, obsessed with its own views and opinions, may be said to be scheming for the extension of the war. While it seeks, on the one hand, to secure its rear by stabilizing the Pacific Area, it is engaged, on the other hand, in aiding Great Britain and preparing to attack, in the name of self-defense, Germany and Italy, two Powers that are striving to establish a new order in Europe. Such a policy is totally at variance with the many principles upon which the American Government proposes to found the stability of the Pacific Area through peaceful means.

Whereas the American Government, under the principles it rigidly upholds, objects to settle international issues through military pressure, it is exercising in conjunction with Great Britain and other nations pressure by economic power. Recourse to such pressure as a means of dealing with international relations should be condemned as it is at times more inhumane than military pressure.

. . . [T]he American Government desires to maintain and strengthen, in coalition with Great Britain and other Powers, its dominant position it has hitherto occupied not only in China but in other areas of East Asia. It is a fact of history that the countries of East Asia for the past hundred years or more have been compelled to observe the *status quo* under the Anglo-American policy of imperialistic exploitation and to sacrifice themselves to the prosperity of the two nations. The Japanese Government cannot tolerate the perpetuation of such a situation since it directly runs counter to Japan's fundamental policy to enable all nations to enjoy each its proper place in the world.

34 President Roosevelt, national radio address from the White House, 9 December 1941, condemning the attack on Pearl Harbor.⁵³

The sudden criminal attacks perpetrated by the Japanese in the Pacific provide the climax of a decade of international immorality.

Powerful and resourceful gangsters have banded together to make war upon the whole human race. Their challenge has now been flung at the United States

of America. The Japanese have treacherously violated the long-standing peace between us. Many American soldiers and sailors have been killed by enemy action. American ships have been sunk; American airplanes have been destroyed.

The Congress and the people of the United States have accepted that challenge.

Together with other free peoples, we are now fighting to maintain our right to live among our world neighbors in freedom and in common decency, without fear of assault.

...

The course that Japan has followed for the past ten years in Asia has paralleled the course of Hitler and Mussolini in Europe and in Africa. Today, it has become far more than a parallel. It is actual collaboration so well calculated that all the continents of the world, and all the oceans, are now considered by the Axis strategists as one gigantic battlefield.

...

. . . We must be set to face a long war against crafty and powerful bandits. The attack at Pearl Harbor can be repeated at any one of many points, points in both oceans and along both our coast lines and against all the rest of the hemisphere.

It will not only be a long war, it will be a hard war. That is the basis on which we now lay all our plans. That is the yardstick by which we measure what we shall need and demand; money, materials, doubled and quadrupled production—ever-increasing. The production must be not only for our own Army and Navy and Air Forces. It must reinforce the other armies and navies and air forces fighting the Nazis and the war lords of Japan throughout the Americas and throughout the world.

...

. . . [T]he United States can accept no result save victory, final and complete. Not only must the shame of Japanese treachery be wiped out, but the sources of international brutality, wherever they exist, must be absolutely and finally broken.

52. *FRUS: Japan, 1931–1941*, 2:791.

53. Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1941* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), 522–23, 526, 528.