

Ambassador at Washington has reported interview on morning of November 23rd between the United States Secretary of State, Australian and Dutch Ministers and himself, in which they were joined by Chinese Ambassador.

2. Hull recalled the past history of Japanese talks as reported in my telegram of November 20th, Circular M.368,¹ and added that in latest conversations with Kurusu and Japanese Ambassador he had emphasized United States view that Hitler's attempt to dominate Conference was being supported by a small Hitler in Tokyo, and that the United States were no more likely to stop giving aid to China than they were to stop giving aid to the British Commonwealth.

3. The two governing motives in his mind in regard to these conversations had been:

- (a) To strengthen peace party in Japan;
- (b) To gain vital time.

As to first, Kurusu had emphasized urgent importance of giving peace party some evidence of progress however small, and as to second, the United States navy and army were most anxious to gain time for further strengthening of the Philippines.

Hull had therefore, while standing, as he said, 100 per cent firm in all vital principles, done his best to keep conversations going. He thought position had now been reached where little further delay was possible.

4. On night of November 20th Japanese communicated to Hull document of which text is contained in my immediately following telegram.

5. Hull said that when he saw Japanese again his inclination was to make an alternative proposal to them on the following lines.

United States Government, while maintaining their position on fundamental points, would be willing to consider conclusion of some limited agreement which might give time for wider discussions, but which would probably not last more than two or three months unless progress could be made on larger questions. Basis of such an agreement is therefore that Japan should agree to withdraw the bulk of her troops out of Indo-China, leaving in Indo-China only a few thousand, roughly approximating to what was envisaged under their agreement with Vichy in August.

In return it might be possible by general agreement with the United States, the British Commonwealth and Dutch, to give Japan some relief for present economic pressure. At one point Hull spoke of getting Japan to agree to make no aggressive move in any other direction, but His Majesty's Ambassador did not gain a clear impression whether this was to be specific part of limited agreement.

¹Non reproduit.

¹Not printed.