

new and doubtful war would gravely accentuate. An attack on Russia would offer great prizes but it would involve great dangers.

4. If Japan should move against Russia it would almost certainly mean that she would abandon for the moment her policy of southern expansion. She could not face the possibility of simultaneous war against Russia, Great Britain and the U.S.A.

5. All things considered it would seem rather more reasonable to expect that Japan would take advantage of Russian preoccupation with Germany to hold her continental boundaries with a minimum strength and to direct all her energies to increasing the tempo of the southern advance. With fear of Russia in the rear removed Tokyo might well decide that it would be relatively safe to take chances in the South which could hardly be contemplated so long as the Russian threat existed.

6. Japan recognizes, however, that action in the South Seas may well result in war with Great Britain and with the United States. It is fear of such developments that has been the operative restraint in the past. One element in Japan has been insistent that no chances should be taken in the Netherlands Indies until Great Britain has been finally defeated in Europe and America has become preoccupied in the Atlantic. So far this argument has prevailed. And now, although the threat from Russia has been temporarily removed, the likelihood of British defeat seems less imminent than at any time since the collapse of France. If Russia should put up a good fight Hitler's long dreaded "two fronts" may become established, and with American aid speeding across the Atlantic, German defeat may be reasonably anticipated. Altogether it is safe to assume that much midnight oil is being consumed in the War Office and Foreign Office in Tokyo while the various changes and chances are being assessed.

7. Nor is the position of the Japanese authorities made easier by the fact that the German attack on Russia has come less than two months after the conclusion of Matsuoka's non-aggression pact with Stalin. There is little doubt that the Japanese Foreign Minister was urged to make this agreement by Hitler himself and yet, almost before the people of Japan have had time to become reconciled to the idea of friendship with Russia, they have been faced with the fact of war between their allies and their newly acquired friends. The *Gaimusho*¹ can hardly have been pleased by this sequence of events and the annoyance of official Japan is probably well matched by the bewilderment of the people. With all her faults Japan is not accustomed to perfidy on this scale and with this speed. Mr. Matsuoka may be able to reconcile himself to the shifts and dodges of Ribbentrop and Hitler but Matsuoka enjoys a freedom from principle and scruple that is unusual among the Japanese.

8. All things considered it is perhaps safe to suggest that it is probable that Japan, after a period of questioning and uncertainty, will find that internal

¹ Le ministère des Affaires étrangères.

¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs.