

and was extending to the Chinese Government mounting assistance in weapons and supplies under the provisions of the Lend-Lease Act. The Netherlands Indies, ever since the return to Japan of an economic mission which had sought in vain to secure important economic concessions from these rich islands, had maintained a high state of preparedness. The defences of the Malay peninsula, particularly of the fortress of Singapore, had been strengthened throughout the summer and autumn, alike in aircraft, warships, and specially-trained troops. In the face of this evident preparedness, backed by continuing close consultation, there ought to have been no misunderstanding on Japan's part of the forces which stood ready to challenge any further demonstration of open aggression on her part. Equally, on the other hand, repeated assurances were given of the conditions upon which a peaceful settlement might be arrived at.

These conditions were the subject of conversations extending over several weeks between the Japanese Ambassador to the United States (Admiral Nomura) and the Secretary of State (Mr. Cordell Hull). It may now be stated that there was never any close approach by the Japanese representative to the conditions which the United States regarded as essential to any permanent settlement, the chief of which was that Japanese troops should be withdrawn entirely from Chinese territory.

It may also be noticed that in Japan, despite the background of the Tojo Cabinet, there was no very obvious