

return for arrangements permitting the passage to Japan through the economic blockade of "a little oil and rice" under safeguards to ensure that the Japanese forces would not benefit from these supplies. Mr. Hull answered that he would give some thought to the question whether such an arrangement was even worth consideration. Mr. Kurusu made it clear that he had advanced this proposal on his own authority and that he would have to secure the approval of his Government. Mr. Hull's uncompromising reply was probably intended as a flat negative, and I believe that he so informed the Netherlands Minister. Mr. Casey,¹ however, understood from his conversation with Mr. Hull that the possibilities of an agreement on these lines were being examined, although there was little prospect that they would be acceptable in Washington. I should doubt very much whether Tokyo could accept withdrawal from Indo-China in return for a limited amount of oil and rice.

Mr. Hull told Sir Ronald that, so far as he could make out, Mr. Kurusu had brought no special message from the Japanese Government to the President and had no specific instructions.

It is interesting that the Japanese, both in London and in Tokyo, have been attempting to persuade the British Government to participate in these conversations, apparently in the hope that the British would be more ready to compromise than the United States. The British have not risen to this fly. They feel that, if war comes in the Pacific after the collapse of these discussions, it is very much in our interest that the complete responsibility for breaking off negotiations should rest with Washington. I gather that every opportunity has been taken to impress on Mr. Kurusu the volume and character of the naval, military, and air reinforcements which have been sent to the Far East by the United States and the United Kingdom. There has been no direct contact between Mr. Kurusu and Lord Halifax, although a meeting may be arranged before Mr. Kurusu returns to Japan.

Will you please see that a very restricted circulation is given to this letter?

Yours sincerely,

H. H. WRONG

1381.

28-C(s)

Le secrétaire aux Dominions au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures
Dominions Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs

TELEGRAM CIRCULAR M.376

London, November 23, 1941

MOST IMMEDIATE. MOST SECRET. Following for your Prime Minister. Begins. My telegram of November 22nd, Circular M. 375.² Japan. His Majesty's

¹ Le ministre d'Australie aux États-Unis.

² Non reproduit.

¹ Minister of Australia in United States.

² Not printed.