

the United Kingdom, the overseas Dominions, and the United States. I should add that the negotiations leading up to this common action also involved the consideration of some questions which have been very much to the fore in recent weeks. We had, for example, to consider how far political or military action, were it to be taken, must be based upon the certainty of what each of the countries involved in the common action would do. In the case of economic action there were some steps which could be taken without serious fear of any effective reprisal by Japan. In the case of political action there has always been the possibility that the military heads of the Empire, goaded by their own ambitions for territory and dominance, would be pushed to the point of breaking out. Fresh fuel was added to this fire by the Nazi invasion of Russia in June; when, in addition to all the possibilities of military advances southward or south-westward, the possibility of a northward invasion of Siberia or an expedition against Vladivostock was brought into the field. This possibility was heightened yet again by the accession to power in October of the Cabinet of General Tojo, comprising, as I have mentioned, some of the most anti-Russian elements of the extreme wing of the Army.

I emphasise these points to show why decisions in the field of political or military action could not be taken lightly. The Allied Powers and the United States were vitally concerned in the fate of Free China. The latter, at the instance of President Roosevelt, had sent a military mission to Chungking,