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Skelton Papers, PAC

*Le ministre-conseiller, la légation aux États-Unis, au sous-secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires extérieures*

*Minister-Counsellor, Legation in United States, to Under-Secretary of State
for External Affairs*

MOST SECRET

[Washington,] November 22, 1941

Dear Mr. Robertson,

Sir Ronald Campbell¹ has shown me the telegrams which he has sent to the Foreign Office reporting the information that he secured from Mr. Hull and Mr. Welles concerning the conversations with Mr. Kurusu² and the Japanese Ambassador. Mr. Hull sent for Sir Ronald Campbell to inform him of the course of the discussions, and he also sent for the Australian and Netherlands Ministers to give them similar information. To all three he was insistent that the information given by him should have the most restricted circulation, and he particularly asked Sir Ronald that the report made to the Foreign Office should not be repeated to other British missions. In view of this injunction of special secrecy, the Dominions Office telegrams which you will have received from London may be unusually sketchy.

Despite this request for secrecy, it seems that the accounts in the press of the course of the conversations convey the correct impression. Mr. Hull told Sir Ronald that he had dealt with the conditions of a settlement with Japan under three heads. First, he said that any agreement between the United States and Japan must not be in any way for the benefit of the Axis. He had told Mr. Kurusu that the Government of the United States would not go six inches in a thousand years to do anything which would assist the greatest international butcher of all time. The implication of this is that Japan must leave the Axis before any progress can be made. Second'y, he had made it clear that an essential condition of a general settlement would be the withdrawal of Japanese troops from China, and of course also from Indo-China, and also that this withdrawal must be part of a *bona fide* settlement between China and Japan. Thirdly, he said that there was no prospect of concessions by the United States in the commercial and economic fields unless the first two points were met.

Mr. Kurusu pointed out to Mr. Hull the obvious difficulties in the way of meeting his conditions, in view of the inflamed state of opinion in Japan. He did not reject the possibility of a settlement embodying Mr. Hull's conditions, presumably because he wished to inform his own Government before breaking off the conversations. He asked Mr. Hull whether it would be possible to make a temporary arrangement which might tide over the next few weeks on some such terms as the withdrawal by Japan from Indo-China, in

¹ Ministre de Grande-Bretagne aux États-Unis, 1941-1945.

¹ Minister of Great Britain in United States, 1941-45.

² Ministre du Japon aux États-Unis.

² Minister of Japan in United States.