

9. His political goal was the creation of a two-party system such as in the United States and Great Britain. He deprecated the growth of small parties and said that Japan could not afford the luxury of many parties representing various shadings of political interest. He hoped to see emerge in Japan only one large party representing the conservative influence and another representing radical or socialist influence. In reply to a question of mine he expressed the hope that such a merger could be accomplished soon. Coalition governments he said were always a failure, except in time of war; when the Socialists had returned with a plurality during the elections of 1947 he had hoped that they would form a single-party government. However they had seen fit to make a coalition with the Democrats of Ashida and this had given rise to all kinds of manoeuvring and political horse-dealing which had lowered the tone of politics. Ashida had followed a similar policy when his government was created early this year by aligning himself with the Socialists, thus he also was unable to steer a clear course. Mr. Yoshida said that even though he did not command a majority in the House he preferred a single-party government which maintained unity and discipline to a heterogeneous coalition cabinet. He emphasized that what Japan needed was a strong government; even though it was an unpleasant task which fell to him of house-cleaning, he was prepared to do it quite ruthlessly.

10. In regard to international affairs he seemed resigned to the fact that Japan could not expect to see a peace treaty in the near future. He even expressed some doubt as to whether such countries as Australia, the Philippines and China had outlived their resentment and suspicion of Japan. As for the United States he said he was amazed at the speed with which they had come to look upon Japan favourably and sympathetically. He hoped other countries would soon follow their example.

11. I came away from the interview with a feeling that Mr. Yoshida has no great love for the rough and tumble of politics, but prefers to direct affairs from the quiet retreat of his country home in Oiso, and only when necessity absolutely requires, from the Prime Minister's official residence. I