

POOR PRINT
Epreuve illisible

MOST SECRET

J/C

NAR/SR
28.1.43

VS

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

C249207

The following decypherment of a telegraphic message sent on January 15th by the Japanese Minister at Budapest to his Government is of considerable interest:-

"(MOST SECRET) When I talked with the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs on the 14th, he said that though the situation on the Eastern Front had reached a serious point, the German counter-offensive was gradually strengthening, and he thought the situation would improve somewhat. However, the Soviet Union was still hurling huge quantities of men and munitions into the Eastern Front, and it was thought that there were no Soviet troops at all left in the Far East; and in fact the Russians had probably withdrawn most of their forces from the Far East to send to the Eastern Front. (This is generally believed in this part of the world). I answered this agitated statement by saying that perhaps a part of the Soviet Far Eastern Army had been removed, but the bulk of it must be, as before, in the Far East, ranged along the Soviet Manchurian border. The Vice-Minister then asked me if Germany had not demanded that Japan attack the Soviet Union; to which I answered that I certainly did not know; but if the present war ended merely with the liquidation of the Soviet Union, and Britain and the U.S. were not utterly smashed, then as long as that was the case, in the last analysis the aims of the war would not be achieved. It was just this job of smashing Britain and the U.S. that was Japan's most important role in the war. The Vice Minister said he understood this all right, but it could not be denied that the idea was rapidly becoming general in this part of the world that the strength of the Soviet counter-offensive must necessarily depend on their being able to withdraw their Siberian and Far Eastern Armies, and their ability to do this was the result of Japan's policy of neutrality toward the Soviet Union."

W.L.M.