

Japanese forces in Indo-China which prompted enquiry addressed by the United States Government to the Japanese Government on December 2nd. They have found Japanese reply to that enquiry extremely disquieting. Whatever the explanation in regard to north Indo-China—as to which they inserted expression of reserve of their views—the reply of Japan entirely fails to explain the fact that bulk of Japanese forces are stationed in south Indo-China and are being constantly and heavily augmented.

There is no threat from any quarter against Indo-China, and this concentration is only explicable on the assumption that the Japanese Government are preparing for some further aggressive move directed against the Netherlands East Indies, Malaya or Thailand.

The relations between the Governments of the British Commonwealth and the Netherlands Government are too well known for the Japanese Government to be under any illusion as to their reaction to any attack on territories of the Netherlands. In the interests of peace, His Majesty's Governments feel it incumbent upon them however to remove any uncertainty which may exist as regards their attitude in the event of an attack on Thailand.

His Majesty's Governments have no designs against Thailand. On the contrary, the nearness of full independence and sovereignty of Thailand is an important British interest. Any attempt by Japan to impair that independence or sovereignty would affect the security of Burma and Malaya, and His Majesty's Governments could not be indifferent to it. They feel bound therefore to warn the Japanese Government in the most solemn manner that if Japan attempts to establish her influence in Thailand by force or threat of force she will do so at her own peril, and His Majesty's Governments will at once take all appropriate measures. Should hostilities unfortunately result, the responsibility will rest with Japan. Text ends. Message ends.

1418.

2860-40

*Le secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures au chargé d'affaires au Japon*

*Secretary of State for External Affairs to Chargé d'Affaires in Japan*

TELEGRAM 172

Ottawa, December 7, 1941

MOST IMMEDIATE. Have received text of draft note prepared for presentation by British Ambassador to Japanese Government, on behalf of United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. You should at once obtain text from British Embassy. We may suggest that references to Canada be deleted and that you arrange to accompany British Ambassador to Japanese Foreign Office and deliver separate note associating Canada completely with United Kingdom representations. Instructions will follow shortly.