

councils are still too divided to permit any drastic alteration of her present temporizing policy. Unless some group of extremists in the Army, Navy or among the "patriotic" societies should present the nation with some drastic *fait accompli* (and this is always a clear possibility), Tokyo is likely to continue to push Southward as far and as fast as possible short of provoking Britain and America to war—and otherwise to await the culmination of events in Europe. In spite of the bombast of many of her leaders and the enthusiasm of the "young officers" of the Army and Navy, Japan is in no condition to fight a major war. Only a German victory in the West can offer Japan a free field in the East. The prospects of that victory have not yet been enhanced by the events of the past twenty-four hours.

1290.

804-35

*Le haut commissaire en Grande-Bretagne au secrétaire d'État
aux Affaires extérieures*

*High Commissioner in Great Britain to Secretary of State
for External Affairs*

TELEGRAM 1175

London, June 26, 1941

MOST SECRET. Personal for the Prime Minister. Begins. It is the Foreign Office's view that there is a sharp conflict of opinion in the Japanese Cabinet between group who, under German pressure, favour declaration of active support of the Axis in the present emergency, and those who favour aggressive movement to the south. The Foreign Minister, Matsuoka, apparently feels that, in view of his recent conversations in Moscow, his prestige would suffer if Japan entered into hostilities with Russia, and, in that event, he would be forced to resign. His departure from the Cabinet, should that take place, may therefore mean that such a decision had been taken. Ends.

MASSEY

1291.

Skelton Papers, PAC

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

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

TELEGRAM 104

Tokyo, June 26, 1941

My telegram No. 102 of June 23rd.¹ Various extremist elements, including key men in Black Dragon Society,² have been meeting to decide on what they

¹ Non reproduit.

² Une société secrète nationaliste qui préconisait l'expansion vers le nord contre l'Union soviétique plutôt que vers le sud contre les colonies des puissances occidentales.

¹ Not printed.

² A nationalist secret society which advocated expansion northward against the Soviet Union rather than southward against colonies of Western powers.