

JLL 1

1 United States. I replied that my furlough in the United  
2 States coincided with one of the most significant and important  
3 periods in the history of our country, and that if he had time  
4 I would be glad to tell him briefly of what I had seen and heard  
5 while at home. Mr. Ohashi said that fortunately he was not  
6 busy that day and that I could stay as long as I wished.

7 I gave Mr. Ohashi a fairly long account of the trends in  
8 opinion with regard to the war in Europe as they developed  
9 during the election campaign. I dwelt on the remarkably swift  
10 crystallization of opinion at home with regard to the question  
11 of American aid to England, which I attributed in large part first  
12 to the disclosure on the part of the British that they were  
13 rapidly approaching the end of the resources in dollar ex-  
14 change, and second to the belief that the effects on Britain's  
15 capacity to produce aircraft and other munitions of German  
16 bombing raids had been more serious than the British communi-  
17 ques would lead one to suppose. I said that although the  
18 large majority of the American people abhorred the idea of  
19 American involvement in war, the fact was that an equally large  
20 majority of the American people believed that there was one  
21 consideration which transcends even that of avoiding involvement  
22 in the war, and that is helping England to the limit of our  
23 capacity.

24 I said that all this was not without direct bearing on  
25 relations between the United States and Japan. I had found

JLL 2

1 that American opinion is pretty clearly opposed to the taking  
2 of action by the United States which would make war with  
3 Japan inevitable. Nevertheless Mr. Ohashi could readily  
4 understand that the American people, being an eminently prac-  
5 tical people, are quite aware that an adequate supply of air-  
6 planes and other munitions is not the only prerequisite to a  
7 British victory: the supply to England of foodstuffs and raw  
8 materials by the British dominions and colonies and the  
9 maintenance of British commerce with the outside world are  
10 equally essential to a British victory. It would be absurd to  
11 suppose that the American people, while pouring munitions into  
12 Britain, would look with complacency upon the cutting of com-  
13 munications between Britain and British dominions and colonies  
14 overseas. If, therefore, Japan or any other nation were to  
15 prejudice the safety of those communications, either by direct  
16 action or by placing herself in a position to menace those  
17 communications, she would have to expect to come into conflict  
18 with the United States. There are many indications of the  
19 Japanese moving down slowly toward Singapore and the Nether-  
20 lands East Indies. The United States cannot but be concerned  
21 by the various initiatives taken by the Japanese in Indo-  
22 China and elsewhere, for the reason that if Japan were to  
23 occupy these strategically important British and Dutch areas,  
24 it could easily debouch into the Indian Ocean and the South  
25 Pacific and create havoc with essential British lines of com-

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1 munication. The United States for its part was well aware  
2 that an alternative source of supply for Japanese purchase of  
3 petroleum and certain other products of the United States is  
4 the Netherlands East Indies, and for that reason it has been  
5 reluctant to impose embargoes on the sale to Japan of commodi-  
6 ties of which it has a surplus; but the Japanese must clearly  
7 understand that the forbearance of the United States in this  
8 respect springs from a desire not to impel Japan to create a  
9 situation which could lead only to the most serious conse-  
10 quences. I recalled the axion in geometry that two bodies  
11 cannot occupy the same space at the same time: However greatly  
12 Japan's security might be enhanced by occupying the Netherlands  
13 East Indies it must be realized by Japan that any such move  
14 would vitally concern the major preoccupation of the United  
15 States at this time, which is to assist England to stand  
16 against German assault.

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17 Mr. Ohashi then took the floor and launched into an im-  
18 passionate apologia of Japanese policies in recent years. He  
19 started by describing conditions in Japan during the middle 20's,  
20 the lack of employment in Japan at that time was driving  
21 young Japanese to despair; communism began to spread in amazing  
22 fashion, the estimates being that there were at one time more  
23 than 50,000 Japanese communists and there was fear of decay  
24 and disintegration of the Japanese political system. There  
25 developed at the same time a growing antagonism in China

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1 toward Japan. General Chiang Kai-shek initiated a series  
2 of military campaigns which finally resulted in the down fall  
3 of the northern group of Chinese generals, including Feng  
4 Yu-hsiang, Yen Hsi-shan, and others. General Chang Tso-lin  
5 made his historic trip to Nanking to consolidate himself with  
6 General Chiang Kai-shek, and upon his return to Mukden he  
7 raised the flag of Chinese nationalism and proclaimed that  
8 his action manifested the complete unification of China and  
9 at about this time, Mr. C. T. Wang, then Minister for Foreign  
10 Affairs, publicly declared in a speech at Nanking that China  
11 was now prepared to "drive Japan off the Continent of Asia".  
12 There had occurred elsewhere other events which also gave grounds  
13 for complete pessimism in Japan. Pressure by the United  
14 States on England had led to the abrogation of the Anglo-  
15 Japanese alliance, which England discarded after it had served  
16 British purposes; the United States in 1924 excluded Japanese  
17 from emigrating to the United States, even though the granting  
18 of a small quota of 140 would have amply served to prevent  
19 Japanese pride and honor from being injured, and when Australia  
20 followed with its White Australia Policy and other parts of  
21 the British Empire had also taken action to exclude Japanese,  
22 the Japanese had found themselves effectively prevented from  
23 expanding into areas which could use their industry and initia-  
24 tive. At the same time the United States and Great Britain  
25 encouraged China in every possible way to implement the policy

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1 proclaimed by Dr. C. T. Wang to drive Japan off the Asiatic  
2 Continent. He recalled travelling with Admiral Kanji Kato  
3 in 1930 from Mukden to Japan. Admiral Kato expressed himself  
4 as being extremely despondent of the future if matters were  
5 allowed to proceed as they were then proceeding, and he dis-  
6 closed to Mr. Ohashi the determination of certain elements in  
7 the Japanese Army and Navy to take action toward opening up a  
8 way for Japanese expansion. This determination manifested  
9 itself finally in the Mukden Incident of September 18, 1931.  
10 Mr. Ohashi said that the League of Nations had placed upon  
11 Japan the responsibility for seeking to alter by force the  
12 status quo in the Far East. However, it was clear that it was  
13 China and not Japan which had taken the initiative in seeking  
14 to alter the status quo, and the responsibility for the de-  
15 plorable conflict now taking place between China and Japan  
16 must largely be borne by those nations which encouraged China  
17 to pursue this disastrous policy. The United States and  
18 England must also be responsible in some measure for Japan's  
19 aligning itself with Germany and Italy, for the present Sino-  
20 Japanese conflict would never have occurred if the Anglo-  
21 Japanese alliance had not been abrogated. The United States  
22 and England had further driven Japan into a position of com-  
23 plete isolation, and it was accordingly necessary for Japan to  
24 find friends. Japan has no special friendly feelings towards  
25 Germany and Italy and certainly has no ideological association

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1 or identity with either of those two countries. Nevertheless  
2 Germany, Italy, and Japan have a close identity of interests  
3 in revolting against attempts to keep them permanently under  
4 subjection. It would be a great mistake to suppose that Japan  
5 would not honor its commitments under the alliance if the  
6 United States "were to attack Germany".

7 I observed that Mr. Ohashi's presentation of Japan's  
8 case had the eloquence of one suffering under a sense of  
9 grievance. We do not deny that Japan has grievances, but we  
10 object to the methods pursued by Japan to rectify those  
11 grievances. After the war in Europe is over, there is bound  
12 to be a more rational world, and in the creation of the more  
13 intelligent world economy which we must earnestly hope will  
14 be brought into being after the war, there would be ample  
15 room for entirely satisfying Japan's legitimate needs. I then  
16 quoted Mr. Churchill's remark "If we allow the past to quarrel  
17 with the present, we shall lose the future". As difficult  
18 and important as were the problems arising in China, they had  
19 not led to a war between the United States and Japan. It was  
20 certainly not the intention of the United States to seek a war  
21 with Japan, but at the same time I wished to make it clear  
22 that it would be idle and extravagant to believe that, so  
23 long as Japan remained a partner of Germany and Italy and so  
24 long as she was unable to resolve her troubles with China on  
25 a mutually satisfactory and equitable basis, a stabilization

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1 of relations between the United States and Japan could be hoped  
2 for. I believed that it was quote possible to pass over the  
3 present critical period without war, but that one essential  
4 condition to this more or less happy issue out of our difficul-  
5 ties must be the realization on the part of the Japanese that  
6 they cannot substantially alter the status quo in Southeast  
7 Asia, particularly, without incurring the risk of creating a  
8 very serious situation.

9 Mr. Ohashi asked whether he was correct in understanding  
10 me to say that war could be averted only by Japan standing  
11 still and allowing itself to be tied hand and feet by the  
12 United States and Great Britain. I replied that it was not  
13 my intention to give him specifications as to what Japan should  
14 or should not do, but I wished to express my opinion that if  
15 Japan did not exercise the same degree of restraint and for-  
16 bearance as that being exercised by the United States, it was  
17 very difficult to see how a war could be averted.

18 Mr. Ohashi then asked me whether we had been sending to  
19 Washington such extravagant and sensational reports as those  
20 being sent by Sir Robert Craigie to London. Without waiting  
21 for a reply he said that Mr. Eden had recently called in the  
22 Japanese Ambassador at London and had talked to Mr. Shigemitsu  
23 very harshly about recent Japanese moves in Siam and Indo-China.  
24 Mr. Eden was apparently greatly excited by telegrams which he  
25 had received from Sir Robert Craigie. Mr. Ohashi said that he

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1 had just had a talk with Sir Robert Craige and that he had  
2 reminded Sir Robert that he had repeatedly given the latter  
3 assurances that Japan had no intention whatever of moving toward  
4 Singapore and the Dutch East Indies unless Japan was "pressed"  
5 by other nations through the imposition of embargoes by the  
6 United States or by the sending of an American fleet to Singa-  
7 pore. I said to Mr. Ohashi that, in my opinion, the award  
8 by Japan to Siam of the provinces of Laos and Cambodia would  
9 undoubtedly lead to the most serious disorders in Indo-China,  
10 as the French are strongly opposed to any substantial cession  
11 of territory to the Siamese. I asked Mr. Ohashi what Japan  
12 would do in the event that the disorders were beyond the  
13 French to control. He replied "we shall have to suppress  
14 these disorders". I then went on to say "once having occupied  
15 Indo-China, Japan would be in a position to control Siam and  
16 to undertake operations toward Burma or the Malay States.  
17 You see how this intervention in Southeast Asia is capable of  
18 having the most widespread consequences". I asked whether he  
19 should not consider, in the light of Japanese intervention  
20 in the dispute between Indo-China and Siam, whether alarm over  
21 Japanese policies in this area is not justified. Mr. Ohashi  
22 protested that Japan's interests in Southeast Asia were pre-  
23 dominantly economic. Was it our intention to prevent Japan  
24 from entering into more satisfactory and closer economic re-  
25 lations with Indo-China and the Netherlands East Indies?



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1 I replied that we were not concerned with arrangements calou-  
2 lated to be mutually profitable and which were entered into  
3 freely and not as a result of demands with menaces, open or  
4 implied. He would understand that proposals concerning trade  
5 arrangements presented under the guns of naval vessels could  
6 hardly be regarded as ordinary trade arrangements. Mr. Ohashi  
7 said that no Japanese warhips were in the Indies and that the  
8 commercial negotiations now being carried on by Japan with  
9 the Netherlands Indies and Indo-China were of a normal charac-  
10 ter.

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11 Mr. Ohashi said that he was waiting with great interest  
12 reports which Admiral Nomura would be sending in shortly of  
13 his forthcoming interviews with the President and the Secre-  
14 tary of State. I had then been in Mr. Ohashi's office more  
15 than an hour. I rose to go. I said that upon my return to  
16 Tokyo I asked various colleagues what sort of a man Mr. Ohashi  
17 was and that they had all replied that he was extremely frank --  
18 that some had added that he was frank to the point of un-  
19 pleasantness. I went on to say that I was very glad that he  
20 had been both frank and courteous with me, and that he could  
21 count on me to maintain equal frankness and courtesy with him  
22 in our future conversations. A faint smile came to Mr. Ohashi's  
23 face and he said that he would be glad to receive me at any  
24 time.

25

E(UGENE) H. D(OOMAN)

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WARD & PAUL, WASHINGTON, D. C.

1 Witness Grew

Questions by: Senator Ferguson

2 Senator Ferguson: Mr. Grew, we will discuss that telegram.  
3 I would like to have you go to No. 4 paragraph. Will you just  
4 read part of that so that you are familiar with it. You need  
5 not read it aloud.

6 Mr. Grew: Section 4?

7 Senator Ferguson: Yes, just glance at it.

8 Mr. Grew: Well, this is all mixed up. I have the true  
9 reading here. Possibly you have the paraphrase.

10 Senator Ferguson: I have the paraphrase.

11 Mr. Grew: That is quite different. I hope the true  
12 reading will be made the record and not the paraphrase.

13 The Chairman: The exhibit is the true reading of the  
14 message.

15 Mr. Grew: Can you tell me how the passage begins that  
16 you wish to refer to?

17 Senator Ferguson: It begins in the book, "If the fibre  
18 and temper of the Japanese people are kept in mind."

19 Mr. Grew: I will see if I can find that.

20 Yes, I have it here. Do you wish me to read that part?

21 Senator Ferguson: Yes.

22 Mr. Grew: This is the original text.

23 Senator Ferguson: Yes. Will you read the original text.

24 Mr. Grew: "Having in mind the temper and fibre of the  
25 Japanese people, the view that the progressive imposition of

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1 Witness Grew

Questions by: Senator Ferguson

2 drastic economic measures, while attended with some risk of war,  
3 would probably avert war, is a dangerously uncertain hypothesis  
4 upon which to base the considered policy and measures of the  
5 United States. Our own view is that if such a course is taken  
6 would not avert war. Nevertheless both views are no more than  
7 opinion, and it is therefore our belief that it would be contrary  
8 to our national interests to postulate the correctness of either  
9 opinion and to erect thereon a definite policy. To do so would  
10 be to put the cart before the horse. The primary point for  
11 decision would appear to involve the question as to whether our  
12 national needs, policies and objectives justify war with Japan  
13 in the event that diplomacy, our first line of national defense  
14 should fail, for only on the basis of such decision could the  
15 Administration follow a course divested so far as possible of  
16 elements of opinion, speculation and uncertainty. I do not doubt  
17 that such decision, which might well prove to be irrevocable,  
18 has already been fully debated and adopted, for the sands are  
19 running fast."

20 Senator Ferguson: What did you mean by "the sands were  
21 running fast"?

22 Mr. Grew: I meant that the risk of war was steadily  
23 increasing.

24 Senator Ferguson: Another part of the telegram, under  
25 Section 4, 1736 -- I have just received the original copy:

LC3  
1 Witness Grew

Questions by: Senator Ferguson

2 "The view therefore that war in the Far East can  
3 best be averted by continuation of trade embargoes and,  
4 as proposed by some, the imposition of a blockade is  
5 not supported by what has thus far occurred."

6 Were you of that opinion on the 3rd of November?

7 Mr. Grew: What part is that? Is that a separate tele-  
8 gram?

9 Senator Ferguson: This is No. 1736. It is marked 1736,  
10 and it is November 3, 3 p.m., at the top, section 4.

11 Mr. Grew: Can you tell me what paragraph it is?

12 Senator Ferguson: Will you show it to him, Counsel?

13 It is underscored with red in my copy. I will show you  
14 my original.

15 Mr. Grew: All right, I have it.

16 The Chairman: Is there any significance to the under-  
17 scoring in red?

18 Senator Ferguson: Not unless the chairman wants to make  
19 something of it.

20 The Chairman: I don't know who underscored it.

21 Mr. Grew: I have it.

22 Senator Ferguson: Now, what did you mean by that para-  
23 graph?

24 Mr. Grew: "The view therefore that war in the Far East  
25 can thus be averted by continuation of trade embargoes

WLC4

Witness Grew

Questions by: Senator Ferguson

1  
2 and, as proposed by some, the imposition of blockade  
3 is not supported by what has thus far occurred."

4 It is obvious that by November 3 our trade embargoes  
5 had not served to restrain the Japanese army from its expan-  
6 sion. They were going right ahead.

7 Senator Ferguson: Am I correct that in 1938 you were  
8 somewhat of the opinion that embargoes would not avert war  
9 or they might cause war and then that you changed in 1940  
10 your opinion and advised a different course, as you did in  
11 the telegram of October 12, 1940 -- or was that September 12,  
12 1940?

13 Mr. Grew: September 12.

14 Senator Ferguson: And your letter to the President of  
15 December 14, 1940, that you changed your attitude.

16 Mr. Grew: Yes, sir.

17 Senator Ferguson: And now, are you changing back on  
18 November 3?

19 Mr. Grew: Very definitely. You see, the policy which  
20 I had advocated in September, 1940, and which was put into  
21 effect brought up precisely the situation which I had envisaged,  
22 namely, that the Japanese intelligent leaders would realize  
23 that they were on the brink of an abyss and that they had  
24 better pull back. I think they tried to do so at that time.  
25 Unfortunately, those efforts failed and a military dictatorship

55  
1 Witness Grew Questions by: Senator Ferguson  
2 cabinet came in and from that moment on the chances were very,  
3 very slim of being able to bring the thing about. So, natural-  
4 ly, I, under those circumstances, my views as reflected here,  
5 were of that particular moment.

6 Senator Ferguson: You wanted to convey that to the State  
7 Department, that your views had changed, and that is why you  
8 sent this telegram of November 3 to the Secretary of State  
9 and the Under Secretary of State, so that it would receive  
10 their attention?

11 Mr. Grew: Naturally, Senator, every telegram which I sent  
12 the Secretary I wanted to have receive attention.

13 Senator Ferguson: Where you designated the Secretary and  
14 the Under Secretary, did that place more importance upon it?

15 Mr. Grew: That places more importance upon a telegram,  
16 that is true. I did want that telegram to receive special  
17 attention, without question.

18 Senator Ferguson: Because it was a change in your views?

19 Mr. Grew: It was a definite change, undoubtedly, because  
20 of changes of circumstances.

21 Senator Ferguson: From the original telegram, I would  
22 like to have you go to the last sentence.

23 Mr. Grew: The last sentence of the whole telegram?

24 Senator Ferguson: Well, it is in the book as "Action by  
25 Japan which might render unavoidable an armed conflict with the

WLC6

1 Witness Grew

Questions by: Senator Ferguson

2 United States" --

3 Mr. Grew: "It would be similarly shortsighted to base  
4 our policy on the belief that these preparations are  
5 merely in the nature of saber rattling the exclusive  
6 purpose of giving moral support to Japan's high pressure  
7 diplomacy. Japan's resort to measures which might make  
8 war with the United States inevitable may come with  
9 dramatic and dangerous suddenness.

10 The Chairman: The Chair would indicate that it is now  
11 after 4 o'clock and unless the Senator from Michigan can con-  
12 clude, we will recess.

13 Senator Ferguson: I cannot finish, Mr. Chairman.

14 The Chairman: Then, we might as well recess.

15 The Chair is advised that Secretary Hull will return at  
16 10 o'clock tomorrow morning. So, Mr. Grew, your further punish-  
17 ment will be deferred for an hour or so.

18 Mr. Grew: I shall be glad to be here. Thank you.

19 (Whereupon, at 4:02 p.m., a recess was taken until  
20 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, November 28, 1945.)

21 - - - - -