

Address by Foreign Minister Matsuoka,
at the Governors' Conference

October 7, 1940

On September 27, the Tri-partite Pact was concluded between Japan, Germany and Italy, and on the same day His Majesty the Emperor was pleased to issue a gracious Imperial Message indicating the direction which our people should follow concerning this historic event and we, the subjects of Imperial Japan, are filled with trepidation. We who are in government service should, observing faithfully this Imperial command, be the first to sacrifice ourselves to materialize it. With regard to how to interpret this command, I believe that my speech broadcast on the evening of the same day, and also the address broadcast by Prime Minister KONOYE on the 28th, the following day, have clearly given the outline of it, and I am afraid it is hardly necessary for me here again to talk about it.

I believe, however, that in order to understand this fact correctly, it is necessary to appreciate the international atmosphere in which this Pact was formed. For your information, therefore, I will briefly explain, in what international atmosphere, and through what course our country reached this conclusion.

Our traditional lofty principle ever since the foundation of our Empire is based upon "HAKKO-ICHIU" (the world as one household), namely, to diffuse morality all over the world and to let all the peoples of

the world live in contentment and peace. And, therefore, our foreign policy should fundamentally be to pervade this lofty principle throughout the whole world and should of course play an important part in contributing to the achievement of the holy mission of realizing this great ideal on earth. However, when we think of the present situation of our country from the standpoint of our foreign policy, we are confronted with the huge problems of how we should support our ever increasing population and how we should increase our national wealth, which is remarkably meagre compared with that of the two great western nations--Great Britain and the United States of America. In order to get a solution for these problems, our Government has long been striving for overseas expansion of our people by means of foreign trade, emigration, and overseas enterprises, etc. However, several nations both in Europe and America have been and are interfering with our overseas development using such measures as prohibiting or restricting Japanese emigrants, imposing heavy customs duties on Japanese goods, etc. In my opinion, the Manchurian Incident was the manifestation of the Japanese Spirit, but in another sense, it might be interpreted as a sort of explosion caused by the oppression by the western powers over our peaceful overseas expansions. Nations in Europe and America, however, denounced our country in the light of their legal theory, and criticized that the Manchurian Incident was against the Nine Power Pact and the Kellogg-Briand Pact, and compelled us in the end to quit the League of Nations, and both the League of Nations and the United States of America adopted a policy not to recognize Manchukuo. And it can also be said that

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Chiang Kai-shek, with his illusion of winning back Manchuria in case a second Washington Conference would meet, just as China ousted Japan out of Shantung, compelling her to retreat and make a considerable concession in Manchuria at the time of Washington Conference, strongly advocated the recovery of the lost territory, which finally provoked the present China Incident. Therefore, it can also be said that, one of the fundamental causes of the China Incident is at least due to the attitude of non-recognition of Manchukuo taken by the western powers. Then, what attitude have the leading western powers assumed toward Japan since the China Incident broke out? While Germany and Italy immediately recognized Manchukuo and supported our claim in the China Incident, other leading powers making every protest against us in the name of protecting their rights and interests in China, or making the League of Nations denounce our state, have put a heavy political pressure upon our country. And also in the district affected, some Chinese have even made our officers and soldiers shed tears of indignation by shooting at our troops from behind the flags of these powers. Before explaining any further the actual situation of the China Incident, I should like, for your information, to speak as briefly as possible, on a certain philosophical observation that I have long cherished.

Since World War I, I have observed closely the trend of the world, especially the relations and trend between Japan and China in East Asia and have long since formed my own opinion, which has been further cemented in my mind with the outbreak of the North China Incident.

The purport of the present China Incident, which was started from the North China Incident, is fundamentally different from that of the wars we had until the end of 19th century, or those originated either from monarchial ambition, or from a mere desire for material gains, or from traditional or unforeseen sentiments or dispute, or from utilitarian struggles among capitalistic states. In other words, the fundamental cause of the present conflict between Japan and China is truly "ideological". To be sure, there may be other secondary or thirdly causes of this conflict, but each of us should clearly understand that this conflict is fundamentally a great ideological one in its character, which I have been explaining to certain people those few years past.

We have firmly held an "ideology" of harmonious cooperation with China for the purpose of stabilizing the whole situation of East Asia. Chiang Kai-shek and his party, however, rather than China herself, tried to oppose to Japan by preparing military or national power strong enough to cope with Japan. By this opposition to Japan they are intending to gain balance of power, and with the ideology of maintaining the peace and order throughout whole East Asia in their mind, they are striving very hard, as you see, to implant Anti-Japanese sentiment in the minds of the whole Chinese people. In short, though there is no difference in the objective of co-operation, our ideology is harmonious cooperation, while theirs is antagonism and resistance. In other words, in their attempt of realizing their ideology, these two different ideologies collided each other in the first stage. Moreover, Great Britain and the United States of America are invariably dealing with

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East Asia by means of an "ideology" of maintaining the status quo, and furthermore, the Soviet has planned to throw East Asia into disorder by means of its "ideology" of both destroying the status quo and of communism. Japan is in the same position with the Soviet as far as destruction of the status quo is concerned. As to the capitalistic system, Great Britain and the United States have the most advanced system, and it is the Soviet that is most emphatic in denying it. It seems that while China is deeply obsessed by communism on one hand, she strongly sticks to capitalism on the other, which may be ascribed to the general policy of China that has mainly aimed at the dependence upon Great Britain and the United States the main stocks of capitalism, and upon France that has been capitalistic until very recently. However, China, being dependent upon the Soviet Union as you know, has been unable to make full effort to check the foregoing trend of communism. I think the reason why such contradictory phenomena as above mentioned can be seen in China is due to these circumstances. And as regards what attitude Japan has assumed in this connection, I shall not touch on.

What I have said above is very brief and far from being exhaustive, however, I think you can understand what I want to point out. That is to say, I believe that you can understand that the confusion or conflict which is causing before our eyes an unprecedented crisis in East Asia is, in its origin, ascribable to the complication of widely different ideologies. Unless you clearly understand this fact, you can hardly understand how deep and how broad the present China Incident is, and that with no ordinary determination, efforts, or struggle can we attain the final settlement of it. That is the reason why I have made a further brief talk on

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these circumstances, though it seemed almost unnecessary. Now, I shall come back to the question of the actual situation, and try to make it clear. Though the China Incident did not take the form of declaration of war, it is, at any rate, a sort of war, and is a war on a considerably large scale. It is unavoidable, therefore, that so long as this state of war exists, those rights and interests of the powers in the areas of hostilities in China, would be affected, especially if the foregoing rights and interests turn out to be at the places impeding our military operations. Therefore, if the powers desire not to sustain any damages that might be inflicted upon their rights and interests in China, they should desire the earliest possible settlement of the Incident. If the Incident is settled, their rights and interests should naturally be safeguarded without any protests. However, some powers have helped and are still helping the Chungking Government by affording the Government various facilities and thus strengthening its power of resistance, and have tried to protract the Incident, Especially they are steadily sending arms and ammunition and other commodities to areas under the Chungking Government by way of so-called "aid-Chiang routes" such as Hongkong, French-Indo China, Kwangchow Bay and Burma; and thus giving the Chiang's regime "conphor-shots," they are trying to strengthen Chiang's power of resistance against Japan and are planning to protract the war even a single day.

It is true, however, the routes through Hongkong and French-Indo China of the above "aid-Chiang routes" have stopped transportation of arms and other commodities in response to our demand since last June.

As regards the "Burman route," Great Britain promised to stop

transportation of munitions, etc. for three months beginning July 18. And though the term will be up on next October 18, it is doubtful whether this blockade of the "Burma route" will be continued or not.

Since the Hongkong and the French-Indo China routes are blocked up, the Burma route is now the only one which is able to transport a considerable amount of commodities. Therefore, whether that route will be reopened or not after it was once blocked, is a great help for us to ascertain the attitude of Great Britain toward us today when the Tripartite Pact has been formed, and we are now watching with great interest what attitude will be taken by Great Britain. And the French-Indo China route was blocked up, as above mentioned, but afterwards it became necessary for us to send our armed forces there, in order to carry out our military operations toward China. Then, negotiations between myself and the French Ambassador in Tokyo came to an agreement on August 30 concerning the passage of our armed forces through the territory of French-Indo China, and the employment of the aerodromes there. Next, on September 4 a sort of agreement was reached between the military authorities of both countries on the spot. Furthermore, on September 22 after much parley, an executive agreement was effected on the spot which enabled our troops stationed at the frontier districts of South China to march across the border line into the territory of French-Indo China, and on the other hand, enabled some of our units to land in Haiphong from the sea. In the mean while only a few cases of trouble broke out, and the relation between our country and French-Indo China has lately developed amicably, and consequently our residents in that territory, who once tried to evacuate on account of the

threatening situation prevailed, have returned to their residences with our consul general there, and the situation seems to have restored to its former normalcy. However, the governments of Great Britain and the United States have made various protests against our Government because they probably misunderstood that Japan was going to occupy French-Indo China by force of arms. But it is clear, as the joint statement of Japan and France shows, that we respect the territorial integrity of French-Indo China, and have no intention of occupying that territory. Concerning this matter, we made clear to the British and American ambassadors whenever they made protests or asked us for informations. As this affair developed, however, the United States has placed a total embargo upon her export of steel scraps to our country, and has given a new credit amounting to \$25,000,000 to Chiang Kai-shek. These policies taken by the U. S. A. seem to justify her protesting attitude toward us.

It goes without saying that our country has absolutely no intention of purposely fighting with any other country, but at the sametime we reject and are determined to fight to the end with any nation which tries to stand by Chiang Kai-shek, and thus protract the China Incident, and prevent East Asia from restoring to peace.

Mean while, in the European theatre, both Germany and Italy have further intensified their attack on Great Britain, and especially German air forces are engaged in bitter bombing over Great Britain. However, their attacks have not yet reached the critical turning -point in the war in their favor. Accordingly, the United States has remarkably increased her assistance to Great Britain. Main events in this period are as follows:

an agreement of joint defense was effected between Canada and the United States on August 17; on September 3 Great Britain took over 50 destroyers from the United States of America on condition that of the British territories along the Atlantic coasts of both North and South America those which are necessary to the United States as bases of her naval and air forces, shall be offered to the United States; and the tendency is that this cooperation between the two countries has lately spread over the areas ranging from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean and to the South Seas. There is also an information reporting that the United States is contemplating to conclude such an agreement of joint defense as effected between the United States and Canada with Australia and New Zealand as well. We should regard that the above will be realized.

This Tripartite Pact is indeed a treaty effected under such circumstances and essentially defensive in its nature. Negatively the Pact aims at checking the aggravation of the world chaos which might be accelerated by the new participation of any country either in the China Incident or in the European War, while, positively, it aims at establishing a new order which enables each nation in the world to live in contentment and peace, and at bringing about permanent peace on the basis of justice and impartiality through the cooperation of the three powers -- Japan, Germany and Italy. The fact is that the lofty spirit of so-called "HAKKOICHIU" (the world as one household), in other words, this great ideal of the "YAMATO" race (Japanese) manifested in the Rescript of Emperor JIMMU at the foundation of our country, has for the first time been given shape in the modern international treaty. It is really a sincere desire of mankind and also a Providence, I believe, for the three peoples of Japan, Germany

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Italy to unit firmly into one under this great ideal and lofty spirit in the face of the unprecedented chaotic crisis that the world has ever had.

I think if the Chiang regime, which is still resisting us, should come to appreciate the intrinsic nature of this strong alliance, the same regime will realize that the way to assure the Chinese people to recover and to save the lives of the Chinese masses out of the difficulty is for her to cooperate with the powers of the Tripartite Pact and the New Chinese Government in Nanking in the construction of the Greater East Asia co-prosperity Sphere, rather than to continue to sacrifice a large number of her innocent people by playing a part in the defensive front of the western imperialism.

On the other hand, I am not yet in a position to tell you concretely what response has the conclusion of the Tripartite Pact created, or is going to create among the powers. It is certain, however, that the great strength of the Tripartite Pact has given such a deep impression upon the powers that some of them are taking strong attitude in desperation toward us, and we should always look out for it. At the same time, it seems that a reflective view of what made Japan, Germany and Italy effect such a pact is gradually gaining ground. At any rate, we should always make preparations in anticipation the worst situation.

In the Imperial Rescript promulgated when Japan withdrew from the League of Nations, His Majesty the Emperor specially declared: "However, the advancement of international peace is what, as evermore, we desire, and Our attitude toward enterprises of peace shall sustain no change. By quitting the League and embarking on a course of its own, Our Empire

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does not mean that it will stand aloof in the extreme Orient nor that it will isolate itself thereby from the fraternity of nations. It is Our desire to promote mutual confidence between Our Empire and all the other Powers and to make known the justice of its cause throughout the world." Furthermore, in the Imperial Rescript issued when the present alliance was concluded, His Majesty the Emperor said at the outset: "It is a great instruction of Our Imperial Ancestors which We always observe faithfully to uphold the cause of justice and humanity throughout the world and to change the universe into one household". In conformity with this Imperial will, we should more positively exert ourselves to improve our diplomatic relations with other nations, and to bring about true peace all over the world. However, we are living in an unprecedented turbulent age and are unable to tell what accident will further happen, when, and where. And jealousy and suspicion are commonly associated with the age of wars. For example, when we declare that we intend to establish the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, some states are apt to doubt if Japan, monopolizing the Greater East Asia including the South Seas, is going to shut out other powers from the area and to deny their rightful actions therein. This is not true. The object thereof is to do away with all the improper conducts and measures which the western powers have hitherto practiced as well as all the unnatural restrictions imposed by them upon the rightful actions of human beings in the field of their economic activities such as commerce, enterprise, communications, traffic and the like in the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. And our country also wishes to act on the same equal basis with the other powers, in order to promote

the prosperity and stabilization of all the races in the Greater East Asia Sphere, so that they may walk along the path of mutual tolerance and welfare with the prerequisite condition of freedom to cut and decide their own respective way to Fortune.

In short, Japan, unlike the practice hitherto committed by the western powers neither intends to swallow up any territories nor conquer, nor exploit any people in this sphere. On the contrary, Japan wants to free, the natives from the imperialistic oppressions, to love them as brothers and sisters instead of treating them as slaves, and to establish a relation of mutual existence and prosperity. The reason why Japan intends to adopt such a policy is not because of the regard for other states, or because she considers it a wise policy under the present trend of the world, but because of her fear of Heaven. That our country is the divine land means, in a sense, that if our state acts in accordance with Providence, we can enjoy divine grace, whereas if not, we shall incur the wrath of Heaven. Therefore, when we carry out our foreign policy, I believe that we must pay attention to the fact that our country is the divine land. Indeed our future is full of difficulties. At the present moment, we should exert ourselves to construct a strong defensive country in which 100,000,000 of us shall be united into one, and at the same time, to consolidate the economic relations in the Greater East Asia Sphere.

With these objectives in view, Mr. KOBAYASHI, Minister of Commerce and Industry, has been specially sent to the Dutch Indies and is now engaged in negotiations with the authorities there, and likewise a special envoy is going to be dispatched to French-Indo China. We want also

to strengthen coalition with Thailand and other countries in the future.

In connection with the present pact, I should like to touch upon how our country should deal with the relations between us and the Soviet Union.

The relations between our country and the Soviet Union, heretofore, have not been friendly for various reasons, but I believe that at this critical moment which might be called the time of a world revolution, both countries should not quarrel with each other at the corner of East Asia. I believe that the time has now come when, if there is any misunderstanding or if there are any pending problems between the two countries, we should now try to remove or settle them and should cooperate for a greater mission. In the Soviet Union they are repeatedly saying that they won't pick up chestnuts in the fire for any other state. This is the same with every nation. Under the present circumstances nothing would be more favorable to other states in the world than conflict between the Soviet Union and Japan. I believe nothing would result more in picking up Chestnuts in the fire for others than this. Accordingly in article 4 of the present treaty, we have made it clear that this pact shall not at all affect the relations between the Soviet Union and the contracting powers -- Japan, Germany and Italy. However, we can never tolerate communism to be prevalent in our country or in both Manchuria and China, and it goes without saying that there is further need for the strict control of it. Therefore, one of the objectives of the movement of "SHINTAISEI" (the New Order), for instance, should be to eliminate, on one hand, every social contradiction from which dangerous thoughts are liable to spring

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and to strengthen the spirit of the Imperial Way by holding our nation closely together, and practising social justice, and on the other, to root out such ideologies as communism and democracy which do not fit to our national structure. Practically speaking, under the present international situation, we are compelled to handle the question of ideology as a domestic problem, rather than an international and we have to deal with international questions, namely questions between one country and another, apart from the question of ideology. Strictly speaking, this is a very difficult problem, but I believe we should consider it as the actual tendency of the existing international political situation and deal with it accordingly. In this connection, I wish you will have a deep insight into the fact, and consider the two factors separately.

The last point I should like to touch upon on this part is the fact that although it has been effected, it does not necessarily mean that Japan will take part in the European War, or will immediately make an enemy of any power other than Germany and Italy. So long as the powers which have not yet participated in the European War or the China Incident do not attack any of the three Countries--Japan, Germany and Italy, nor disturb our plan of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, our country is willing to be in friendly terms with them and to share in the godsend benefits. It goes without saying that we have no intention of breeding unnecessary troubles with them. Therefore we should strictly refrain from raising any rash anti-foreign agitation without any justifiable reasons.

By the way, as there are instances in which a trivial matter result-

ing in a grave consequence or effect, I should like to add a few more words in this connection. I dare say it is not infrequent that the attitude of our policemen in charge of foreign nationals is apt to be unnecessarily irritating toward them. To be frank with you, this state of affair has so far turned out to be unfavourable to our country in dealing with international problems.

We are in a period of emergency today, and it may be more difficult, I am sure, to deal with this affair than in normal times, but for the very reason that this is an emergency, I hope you will be all the more prudent about this matter. I should like to ask you to stop, as far as possible, any interference or supervision which is apparently not in line with our common sense. At the same time, I should like to ask you to instruct our people to be magnanimous worthy of a great nation in advancing toward our great aim. I believe that the pact which has been concluded this time shows this direction very clearly. I am now feeling that the dark clouds and fog that had long been hanging low before us since the outbreak of the China Incident have now been swept away, and we can now see a bright future full of hope, though the way to it may be very difficult and steep. I earnestly hope and am counting on you that you officials will make our people understand well what I have said today and at this critical moment when the destiny of the "YAMATO" race, (Japanese) nay, of the entire human beings of the world may be determined, you will render your service to our country together with our whole 100,000,000 people united as one body.

C E R T I F I C A T E

Statement of Source and Authenticity

I, HAYASHI, Kaoru, Chief of Archives Section, Japanese Foreign Office, hereby certify that the document hereto attached in Japanese consisting of 14 pages and entitled "Address of Matsuoka, Foreign Minister, at the Governor's Conference, October 7, 1940." is an exact and true copy of an official document of the Japanese Foreign Office.

Signed at Tokyo

on this 7th day of December, 1946.

/S/ K. HAYASHI
Signature of Official

Witness: Nagaharu Odo