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From the Joint Resignation of the 2nd /Konoye/ Cabinet
to the Establishment of the 3rd /Konoye/ Cabinet.

The reasons for the need of presenting
first the rejection of the Oral Statement.

(1) The "Oral Statement" and the plan for Japanese-American Understanding, originally speaking, are not the same. Consequently, the question as to which should be submitted first to the American Government should be decided by the relative importance and urgency of the matter.

However, the "Oral Statement", in reality, is American^s demand for the reorganization of our cabinet and very clearly indicates the American Government's intention to interfere with our internal affairs, and it is impossible for any one to say that there is no possibility of America, regarding us as easy to deal^{with}, intimidating us further and even taking steps to interfere and meddle with our affairs, if the Japanese Government, by any chance, should make a mistake in her disposition of the matter. In other words, there is a great fear that the "Oral Statement" will injure our independent national structure, which has never been spoiled by a foreign invasion.

Nevertheless, the substance of our amendment^{ed} plan in regard to the Japanese-American Understanding is not at all in accord in principle with America's contention, that is, her insistence on our withdrawal from the Tripartite Alliance and the restoring of the Chinese-Japanese relations to the former state existing prior to the Manchurian Incident, and that this, by no chance, will ever be accepted by the other party /America/ should already be known to the intelligent mind of Your Excellency. Your Excellency, don't you think that the

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RE: ~~Prince Kenoye (cont'd)~~

above mentioned "Oral Statement", so far as the negotiation of this matter is concerned, is tantamount to a notice of severance of relations from the American Government? So long as we do not shed the bond of the Tripartite Alliance like an old sandal and abandon our continental policy, which has been gradually advanced without regard to the tremendous sacrifice and tears and blood of many of our compatriots, it is the firm belief of this minister that there is absolutely no hope for the readjustment of Japanese-American relations.

For this reason, since not only are the "Oral Statement" and the plan for Japanese-American Understanding entirely different in their intrinsic nature, but also have all the differences in the world as to their relative importance and urgency, they should not be submitted to the American Government at the same time. If they should be submitted simultaneously, both will receive a similar treatment. Besides, it will give such an impression as to make it appear as if the notice of rejection of the "Oral Statement" were an appendage of the plan for Japanese-American Understanding. Such a thing should absolutely be refrained from by one who respects the national structure even in a slight degree. Such a thing as to needlessly achieve the end without clarifying this basic principle will injure the sacredness of the national structure and leave ridicule down to posterity. What would you say if the historians in the coming generations denounce you as a long-sleeved court-noble /fence sitter/? It is absolutely unbearable for this minister to imagine this. This is the reason why I dare tender my outspoken advise to you.

The "Oral Statement", although it is so exquisite in diction and so carefully worded, is full of such approbrious words as to look upon our Empire as ^a dependency or protectorate, and its aim is to intimidate us into making a fundamental change in our basic national policy. Moreover, the weak-kneed and, servile attitude on our part, as shown in the negotiations now being carried on by Ambassador Nomura, has already made her increasingly despise our country, and she is attempting to suppress our activities she considers as obstacles in her way to enforce her injustice, taking no account at all of our Empire and the Yamato Race. Her attitude is quite similar to the attitude manifested by Kobo of Ming toward our country during the era of Oyei 1892. At this moment, there is only one step but never two that should be taken by our Government. The historical fact that Prince Yoshinaga dared to send away the envoy of Ming with the state-

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RE: ~~Prince Kenyo (cont'd.)~~

ment "We have no fear even if you attack us", ought to be a good lesson for our Imperial Government.

(2) As to the handling of the "Oral Statement", even a slight delay should not be permitted.

A considerable time has elapsed since Ambassador Nomura received the "Oral Statement". That is, he should have reported it to this minister as soon as he had received this Statement, but he neglected to do so, and reported it to us by telegraph after a delay of some time. Since then, about twenty days have been spent by our government in carefully considering the disposition of this matter. Now that the policy of rejection of the Statement has been decided upon at the liaison conference held recently, it should be plain enough, without any explanation, that even a minute's delay cannot be permitted because of its nature.

(3) If there is a fear that the rejection of the "Oral Statement" will prevent the effectuation of the plan of Japanese-American Understanding, such danger would not increase nor decrease in the slightest even if we were to present both the plan for Japanese-American Understanding and the rejection at the same time, or present the rejection only a few days before. This minister can hardly understand the reason why you insist on presenting both simultaneously.

Depending on the viewpoint, it can be said that there is a greater fear of hindering the effectuation of the plan for Japanese-American Understanding if we dare to present both at the same time.

(4) Although I believe it almost impossible to get this plan for Japanese-American Understanding to reach a compromise, this minister had made all necessary preparations in order to prolong the negotiations as long as possible from the standpoint of our national policy. Namely in the plan of rejection, not only have I made an extremely polite explanation but also made known beforehand that we were devoting ourselves faithfully and sincerely to drafting such a plan as would enable us to reach a satisfactory compromise with regard to Japanese-American understanding. By doing so, I expected to leave some room for the American Government to pay an unprejudicial consideration to our plan for Japanese-American

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Understanding, which will be submitted several days later. I think you ought to rely upon me in regard to grasping the psychology of the American people.

(5) In other words, it is the understanding of this minister that the policy of disposition has already been decided upon at the liaison conference held recently, as far as this matter is concerned. Inasmuch as this policy has already been agreed to, I firmly believe that you ought to leave such matters as measures, methods, time, etc. entirely in the hands of this minister in starting the diplomatic operation. This minister has maintained the firm belief up to this day that Your Excellency meant such by "concentration of diplomacy" which was decided prior to the organization of this Cabinet. It is needless to say that in case the Premier or Army and Navy representatives should express their opinions regarding matters relating to diplomatic operations at the liaison conference as reference for the Foreign Minister, I shall be very willing to listen to them. Nevertheless, I absolutely cannot agree to ~~such~~ principle that the Foreign Minister should always heed these opinions, and I have never taken such an attitude till this day. Of course, I will respect these opinions, but when the ~~diplomatic~~ operation finally is to be started after a very careful consideration has been given /to these opinions/, the ~~diplomatic~~ tactics should be decided by the Foreign Minister. At the liaison conference held recently, as you will know, it was decided that the rejection of the "Oral Statement" should be presented first, apart from the plan for Japanese-American Understanding, and from the progress of the discussions at that liaison conference it is clear that the interpretation that the method of executing that decision has been wholly left in the hands of the Foreign Minister is proper.

Nevertheless, opposite opinions have arisen from among the Army and Navy officers of lower rank since (This Minister has reached this decision on after having carefully listened to the Vice-Minister and the Directors of the Bureaus of the Foreign Office, and has never flatly declined to hear them), and that they are attempting stubbornly to force their opinions through in spite of their knowledge of the intention of this minister and force Your Excellency to change the method of execution already decided upon by the Foreign Minister. (Moreover, the reason for their contention is absolutely not consistent, as I have already mentioned) really is absolutely beyond words.

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RE: ~~Prince Konoze (cont'd.)~~

This minister has never meddled into the functions of the Army and the Navy, and has never made his subordinates take such actions. Frankly speaking, I think it is only proper for Your Excellency to admonish the military ministers to refrain from criticizing this and that since the procedure and method of the diplomatic negotiations have been entirely left to the Foreign Minister.

In concluding this letter, one thing I am anxious to point out is the conduct of Ambassador Nomura. I believe your Excellency is already aware, without my pointing it out, that the said Ambassador is trying to conceal from the Japanese Government what we don't like and from the American Government what she does not approve of through his sly actions as a middleman and bring the plan for Japanese-American Understanding to a successful conclusion by hook or crook. It can be imagined without danger that the said Ambassador is not thoroughly transmitting to the Secretary of State Hull even half of my instructions, and if he goes on in this way, such important negotiations as this will be hopeless to conclude satisfactorily. I like to cite the following marked instances:

1. As you know well, he made a Japanese translation, in which the important points differed in meaning from those of the original American plan in English, and cabled us only that Japanese version as the plan for Japanese-American Understanding several days prior to my return from Europe with such an attitude as to invite a misconception to the effect that the Japanese version would be the basis of the negotiations with America. I, reading it after my return from Europe, told my subordinate that since Ambassador Nomura could not be negotiating with the Secretary of State in the Japanese language, there undoubtedly should be an English version and sent him telegraphic instructions requesting for the immediate transmission of the English version. Hence Ambassador Nomura reluctantly sent in the English version by cable without any explanation or apology. As I compared this with the Japanese version previously received, I was extremely surprised to find out that the translation was absolutely incorrect and that there were many such points as to make me suspect that he consciously drew up a false translation for the purpose of making us readily agree to points unfavourable to us. Thus, the grave matter, which I had been worried about and considering quietly for a week after my return, was confirmed. The truth is

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RE: ~~Prince Kono~~ (cont'd.)

that I intended to recall the said Ambassador, but I put up with this because of my earnest desire for the readjustment of Japanese-American relations.

2. In spite of the fact that Secretary of State Hull had handed to Ambassador Nomura the amended ^{draft} plan for our first plan on May 30th, (you are aware that this amended ^{draft} plan was instantly cabled to the General Staff Headquarters, but, frankly speaking, if there had been no liaison conference, the military would not have informed Your Excellency ^{and} this minister ^{on} this matter.), but Ambassador Nomura hid and kept it away from this minister until it was urged by me, and only upon receiving my telegraphic instruction did he reluctantly cable it. His excuse was that since the negotiations were being still continued, he had not regarded it as the plan to be transmitted. Properly speaking, in negotiations pertaining to such important matters, it goes without saying that diplomatists sent abroad should cable to their Government, without any delay, all important documents received from the other party, together with the necessary explanations in regard to their nature, regardless of whether they are the final plan or not. There is no room for doubt that Ambassador Nomura's attitude was based wholly on the same psychology just pointed out in the preceding clause.

3. The document of reciprocity between Japan and America requested of Ambassador Nomura by the Secretary of State in connection with the plan for Japanese-American Understanding was of such an important nature that even Ambassador Nomura refused to accept it. Nevertheless, he concealed it and did not cable it to the Japanese Government. So this minister ordered him to cable immediately the whole text of the said document and was finally able to get it. It is needless to state that such document, in continuing a negotiation, would be the best reference for the government. Hence, diplomats abroad should like the initiative to report such without any delay as important information. But Ambassador Nomura didn't do this. His psychology was the same as that which has already been pointed out and is really beyond words.

The aforementioned document of reciprocity (enclosed herein) is such that if you are to read it, you will come to regard it as only proper for the said Ambassador to have refused accepting it and that it is beyond words. That is (1) it stubbornly attempts to make Japan

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approve the text of Secretary of State Hull's speech of 24 April, which they had previously tried to use as a supplement of the plan for Japanese-American Understanding, (if we agree to it, it is needless to say, the Tripartite Alliance becomes void that instant) and it is tantamount to stating that Japan should not participate in the war even in case America should go to war under the name of self-defense, and (2) it attempts to question us on three points regarding the China problem, (including those ^{in which} that America has been questioning us the past four years) and to make Japan bow her head. It is very clear that their intention is to boost to the Chungking Government and to tell the American people that ~~America~~ has succeeded in bringing Japan under control and making her surrender. And the most lamentable thing is that there is evidence foolishly enough that America was asked to draft Japan's request. This thing alone would be enough to cause public opinion to rise, if it were to leak to the public.

I wonder if there has ever been any case, even in regard to a diplomat of a small nation, when a diplomat of a nation has asked the other party to draft such a document of submission. Apart from this, it is very obvious after reading the document of reciprocity, that America is now despising Japan to the utmost as a coward, and it is believed that she is well aware, from a common sense point of view, that Japan would never accept the said plan, as long as Japan is not a dependent of America. If so, there is now no room for doubt, even from this aspect alone, that America's firm intention is to break-off the negotiations in this matter. If this point is understood, it is evident that it is useless to continue the negotiations at this time. Nevertheless, if Your Excellency is to continue the negotiations any longer, I wonder what excuse you are expecting to make to the coming generations? This minister feels greatly distressed and concerned about this matter.