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PREMIER KONOYE'S ADDRESS AT THE 76TH SESSION
OF THE IMPERIAL DIET

Jan. 21, 1941

Today, at the opening of the 76th session of the Imperial Diet, it is with sincere gratification that I take this opportunity to express the conviction of the Government.

We are deeply moved that a specially gracious Imperial Rescript has been granted on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the present session. It is my wish that with your cooperation we act in obedience to the wishes of His Majesty, rendering our best, and fulfill our duties to the nation at this time of emergency.

To the officers and men of the Imperial Army, who, since the outbreak of the Incident tided over great difficulties, and who, by the august virtue of His Majesty made brilliant gains, I extend my sincere thanks. And to the men who fell to defend our country I wish to express my deepest sorrow.

Our country is now confronted with the gravest situation that ever existed in her history. At this moment, in view of the present conditions at home and abroad, it is necessary, first in the line of domestic affairs, to build up a state of national defense by which the whole power of the nation can be displayed and bring armaments to completion so as to thoroughly carry out our definite national policy.

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Next in foreign relations, it is especially necessary to make the establishment of the New Order in the Greater East Asia our basic aim, to lay the main stress on the successful settlement of the China Incident, to see through the great changes in the international situation, and to devise appropriate steps when the time comes, and thus plan for a great development of our country.

To attain this end the present Government decided upon the outline of its national policy soon after its formation, and has ever since been strenuously striving for its realization.

The purport of the recently concluded Japan-German-Italian Tripartite Treaty was clarified in the Imperial Rescript issued at that time. With the conclusion of this treaty, Japan aims to maintain world peace and advance towards the high aim of stabilization of Greater East Asia. Needless to say, we do not want any more war evils to develop. But before Japan can realize her convictions, it has a long road to travel, and from the first, it is necessary to expect to meet with numerous obstacles. Moreover, the approach of the time to prepare to overcome an unprecedented national danger can be anticipated. Therefore, at this moment I am keenly desirous for the entire nation's still more vigorous efforts.

We recently elucidated our basic policy for adjusting our relations with the reborn new China, and suggested to her that she partake in the great work of constructing the New Order in East Asia. The new Chinese Government established by those who responded to our suggestion

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kept step with the successful activities of our army and steadily marched forward. Finally, last year a treaty regulating the relations of Japan, Manchukuo, and China was concluded. But in China there still remains a power which does not realize what concord of nations means and which is trying to save the country through the one method of resistance in war. Recently, the United States, Great Britain, and others, have made their pro-Chiang policy more undisguised and are trying to check our movement. Japan plans to completely destroy those who resist us, to act closely in concord with those who join hands with us and thus proceed resolutely to establish the New Order in the Greater East Asia.

I believe it to be a most urgent matter of our domestic affairs to consolidate a national defense state system by renovating our administration in conformity with the basic principle of our national constitution. To achieve this aim, I believe that first we must endeavor to foster the beautiful custom of respecting God and our ancestors, introduce a new system of education which is in perfect conformity with the basic principle of our national constitution reject self-centered utilitarianism, and establish the national morality which will have as its first good point devotion to the country. This plan, from the first, concerns the whole of the government, but it is needless to say that it will chiefly depend on the power of education. And therefore, special attention is being paid by the Government to the development of education.

In regard to the establishment of a people's organization supported by the whole of the population, which is going to be the basis for the

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new domestic system, a statement has already been made. But now that the Imperial Rule Assistance Association has been established, the spirit of Imperial Rule Assistance is spreading.

The existing situation at home and abroad calls for the complete unanimity of the one hundred million people in the nation. It is really a rejoiceful situation for the nation that today the public trend is for the whole nation to disregard minor differences, truly agree in the common cause and support Imperial Rule. The Imperial Rule Assistance movement, needless to say, means for all the people of the nation to observe the basic principle of the nation's constitution, and by conforming to the provisions of the constitution, to try day and night to serve the country loyally. It means no more than practicing the duties as subjects. The Government is most solicitous that the Imperial Rule Assistance movement will be materialized hereafter in a very prompt and active way. It is thought the result will have a farreaching effect upon the development of this country. Therefore, I am keenly desirous of the sincere and ardent cooperation of the whole nation.

The Government, with the intention of establishing a new system in officialdom first, recognized the necessity to revise the Civil Service System, and decided to carry out reforms in various lines, such as to abolish the system of guaranteeing the positions of civil officials and to widen the field for the selection of civil officials. Imperial orders concerning these reforms have already been issued. For their application, every care has been taken, and it is hoped that by these actions the morale of the Government personnel will undergo a

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complete change. Moreover, to cope with the present critical situation we are now deliberating on the reorganization of the business system in the government offices and are going to initiate and carry out necessary changes.

With Japan, China, and Manchukuo as the integral parts, the Government is aiming to gain the economic independence of the whole area of Greater East Asia and complete a synthetic and planned economic system centering around major industries through the cooperation of the Government and the people. By these means, it is hoped that the production power will be fully increased affording a solid foundation for the completion of armaments as well as for the security of national life. For this end, the Government is planning to guide the national spirit along the lines of "Public Interests First" and "Serve the State in all Walks of Life", and at the same time to establish the new economic system, and by the display of maximum efficiency based on the vigorous initiative of the people to increase and strengthen the productive power and thus bring about the display of its total power.

Owing to the changes in economic conditions today, it appears that quite a number of general industries, especially middle and small scaled commercial and industrial firms, have suffered considerably serious losses. The Government is now making every effort to help and support these marchants and industrialists, as well as to devise necessary facilities for those who find it inevitable to change to other lines.

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Every possible step is being taken to reduce to the minimum the sacrifices of the people accompanying the execution of our national policy.

With the transition of the situation, the problem of the supply of staple food has become very acute. To cope with this, greater attention is being paid to the security of production, the just and fair rationing of commodities and the restriction of consumption. Especially, rice has been placed under Government control, and concerning the adjustment of demand and supply of rice, all necessary measures have been taken so that the secure foundation of the national life may be afforded. Moreover, the Government together with plans for stabilizing the livelihood of the farmers, is endeavoring to develop and expand the agricultural production by supplying fertilizers and other necessary materials for production, and is confident that nothing has been left undone in the plan for increasing the yield of rice. With the development of the situation, a shortage of the necessities of life is gradually felt by the people in general. The Government has adopted the low price policy endeavoring most energetically to secure the supply of necessities so as to stabilize national living. It is highly desirable that every one will fully realize the importance of the situation and make up his mind to lead a simple life with the firm purpose in mind to tide over the crisis.

I have stated the most important policies for forming a system of high national defense state. The Government pledges to carry out these policies with all its power. It is my warmest desire that the people

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of this country, one and all, facing the most extraordinary emergency in our history, recollecting that the remarkable progress of our country since its foundation is due to the endurance and inspiration our ancestor, which came from loyalty and bravery under the august virtue of the Emperor will determine to make their best to tide over the crisis in perfect cooperation, believing that glorious end cannot be attained in no other way than the desperate advance through these tremendous difficulties. I hope that you will give your kind deliberation and prompt approval to the budget and bills presented here by the Government, fully appreciating the intention of the Government.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

Statement of Source and Authenticity

I, HAYASHI, Raoru, Chief of the Archives Section, Japanese Foreign Office, hereby certify that the document hereto attached in Japanese consisting of 8 pages and entitled "Address of Prime Minister Fumimaro Kono at the 76th Session of the Diet, January 21, 1941." is an exact and true copy of an official document of the Japanese Foreign Office.

Certified at Tokyo,
on this 28th day of January, 1947.

/s/ K. Hayashi
Signature of Official

Witness : /s/ Nagaharu Odo