

Exhibit 2913

9

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Page 4008

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After Japan's final comprehensive plan had been determined upon at the joint conference of September 20th, the activities of the Government frequently began to show an acute seriousness. This was by reason of the balance struck between the progress of Japanese-American negotiations on the one hand and on the outline of national policy determined upon in the conference that was held on September 6th in the presence of the Emperor. On September 24th and 25th, I held conferences for two days with the War Minister, the Navy Minister and the Foreign Minister and the President of the Cabinet Planning Board. From the 27th to October 1st, I took a rest at Kamakura, but during that time I called the Navy Minister, Oikawa, and asked in detail concerning the atmosphere in his circle. Upon the arrival of the American memorandum of October 2nd, I went to the Imperial Palace on the 4th. Afterwards, driving away a group of bureau chiefs, I held a liaison conference with only the Cabinet Ministers and the leaders of the Supreme Command. On the evening of the 5th, I asked the War Minister to come to my house in Ogikubo, and expressed my opinion that I would continue negotiations to the very end.

Late on the night of the 7th, the War Minister visited me in my Japanese-style rooms, and declared, "As to the problem of withdrawing troops from China, such a formality as to once withdraw-- in principle--all troops and after that to station them there, as insisted upon by the United States, is something that is difficult for the Army to submit to". In view of the stiff attitude of the Army, on both the 6th and 8th, I conferred separately with the Minister of the Navy and with the Foreign Minister, and deliberated with them on the methods of avoiding a crisis. The Foreign Minister further visited me twice on the 10th, and we spoke intimately on how we might somehow or other continue the negotiations. The joint conference also held a meeting on October 11th. During this time the movements of the three chokan (the President of the Cabinet Planning Board, the Director of the Bureau of Legislation, and the Chief Secretary of the Board) and especially of President Suzuki (of the Cabinet Planning Board) became objects of attention.

October 12th. My fiftieth birthday. In spite of its being Sunday, early in the afternoon I gathered together the three ministers, the Minister of War, the Minister of the Navy, and the Foreign Minister, together with President Suzuki of the Cabinet Planning Board at Ogikubo, and held with them almost the last conference relative to peace or war. Before this meeting there was previous notification from the Chief of the Military Affairs Bureau of the Navy to the Chief Secretary of the Cabinet as follows: "The Navy does not desire a rupture in the negotiations. Thus it wishes as much as possible to avoid war. But as far as the Navy is concerned it can not of itself bring this openly to the surface and say so. At today's conference the Navy Minister is expected to say that the decision for peace or war is entirely up to the Premier, so I beg you to keep this matter in your mind."

Surely enough, at the very beginning there were the following opening remarks by the Minister of the Navy: "We have now indeed come to the crossroads where we must determine either upon peace or war. I should like to leave this decision entirely up to the Premier, and, if we are to seek peace, we shall go all the way for peace. Thus, even if we make a few concessions, we ought to proceed all the way with the policy of bringing the negotiations to

fruition. If in the midst of negotiations--after negotiations have gone on for two or three months, one says that "they won't do from any point of view, and "well, we've got to have war now,--the Navy will be put to inconvenience. If we are to have war, we must determine upon war here and now. Now is the time. We are now at the final moment of decision. If we decide that we are not to have war, I should like to have us proceed upon the policy that we will bring negotiations to fruition no matter what happens." To this I said, "If we were to say that we must determine on war or peace here, today, I myself would decide on continuing the negotiations." But the Minister of War said, "This decision of the Premier's is too hasty. Properly speaking, ought we not to determine here whether or not there is any possibility of bringing the negotiations to fruition? To carry on negotiations for which there is no possibility of fruition, and in the end to let slip the time for fighting, would be a matter of the greatest consequence. In fact, does the Foreign Minister think that there is any possibility or not of bringing the negotiations to fruition?" Thus, turning to the Foreign Minister, he asked this question, whereupon the Foreign Minister replied, "That depends entirely on the conditions. The most difficult point in the problem today, I believe, is the matter of stationing troops in China, but if in this regard the Army says that it will not retreat one step from its former assertions, then there is no hope in the negotiations. But if on this point the Army states that it would be all right to make concessions, however small they may be, then we can not say that there is no hope of bringing the negotiations to fruition." But the Minister of War said in answer to this, "The problem of the stationing of troops, in itself means the life of the Army, and we shall not be able to make any concessions at all." I said, "At this time isn't it all right to forget about the glory but to take the fruits; perform the formalities as America wants, and achieve a result that will in actuality be the same as 'stationing troops.'" To this, the Minister of War did not yield, and in the end, though the conference lasted from two o'clock till six o'clock, we did not arrive at any conclusion and adjourned.

On the next day, the 13th, I went to the Palace and made a detailed report on the crisis which the Cabinet was facing. Then I spoke intimately with the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, Marquis Kido. On the following day, the 14th, at nine o'clock in the morning, prior to the meeting of the Cabinet, I asked the Minister of War to come to my official residence and once again asked his considered opinion concerning the problem of the stationing of troops. I said, "I have a very great responsibility for the China Incident, and today, when this Incident has lasted four years and still sees no settlement, I find it difficult to agree, no matter what is said, to enter upon a great war the future of which I can not at all foresee. On this occasion, we ought to give in for a time, grant to them the United States the formality of withdrawing troops, and save ourselves from the crisis of a Japanese-American war. Moreover, I believe that on this occasion both from the point of view of the nation's strength and from the point of view of the people's thinking it is necessary to end the China Incident. The advancement and development of the nation are, of course, things that we should aspire to, but in order to develop greatly we need also at times to fall back and to cultivate the national strength." Thus did I declare my sincerest feelings and explain them to the Minister of War. To this, the Minister of War declared, "If at this time we yield to the United States, she will take steps that are more and more high-handed, and will probably find no place to stop.

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The problem of withdrawing troops is one, you say, of forgetting the honor and of seizing the fruits, but, to this, I find it difficult to agree from the point of view of maintaining the fighting spirit of the Army." Thus he insisted and did not move from his position. Therefore, my talk with the Minister of War ended at odds, and as soon as possible as the meeting of the Cabinet opened, the Minister of War strongly and excitedly set forth the reasons why the Japanese-American negotiations should no longer be continued.

These opening remarks of the Minister of War were so sudden that the other Cabinet Ministers were somewhat taken aback and there was no one who would open his mouth to answer. The Cabinet meeting, after settling other subjects for discussion, made no reference to this problem of continuing negotiations and adjourned.