

No 2884

622884

Def. Doc. No. 1401-F-1

From Toyode to Nomura
5 August 1941
No. 447

1. While the Japanese Government is managing Japanese-American diplomacy in spite of various domestic difficulties, the President and the Secretary of State are, according to your repeated reports, taking a calm and sympathetic attitude toward Japan in spite of the trend of public opinion in the United States. There are, however, not a few in Japan who urge that the United States is increasingly strengthening her economic pressure upon Japan. The Yomiuri special dispatch from Washington on 2 August, for instance, reported that the President of the United States had laid an embargo or an extreme limitation on the export of various petroleum products and that even the licenses already issued had consequently all been cancelled. The telegram, irrespective of the truth of the report or the actual extent of the measures taken, is being made much of by the extremists, with a serious influence upon the general situation.

2. It is absurd to think that Japanese national opinion could be intimidated through tightening of the so-called encirclement of Japan or strengthening of economic pressure. The result would, in the light of our national character, be just the reverse. Moreover, it would surely be utilized as fine material by our bellicose elements, as is demonstrated in the above instance, and the situation might consequently hasten in a direction contrary to the adjustment of Japanese-American relations.

3. It is recognized that Japanese-American relations are now confronted with a very serious and delicate crisis. If, at this juncture, the United States thinks over the consideration and restraint of the Japanese Government, and especially its sincerity shown recently in the spontaneous suspension of bombing of Chungking, and if she really wishes adjustment of relations between Japan and the United States, which are two equal powers of the Pacific, it is desirable at the moment that she should promptly withdraw or alleviate to the utmost such measures as are regarded as economic pressure upon Japan, so that adjustment of the relations between the two countries can be conducted in as friendly and calm an atmosphere as possible and that no such misunderstanding be caused within and without the country as that Japan carried on the negotiations under pressure. That Japan is ready to reciprocate is clearly demonstrated by the statement of the Finance Minister the other day.

4. The Japanese Government is making the proposal contained in the separate telegram in accordance with the desire for adjustment of Japanese-American relations which has been harbored since the time of the preceding cabinet.

The present proposal is to be the reply to the proposal of the President of the United States on the 24th, and has been decided upon after careful deliberation, taking fully into consideration the views of the two countries. You should bear this in mind and impress it upon the President and Secretary of State, and call their attention to the importance of the matter.

Def. Doc. No. 1401-F-1

5. Although the present proposal constitutes in form, as stated before, a reply to the proposal of the President of the United States, it is expected that it will be absorbed into the entire framework of the adjustment of Japanese-American relations, because it is our intention to make it the means of resumption of the Japanese-American negotiations which were suspended after the advance into southern French Indo-China which was executed while the presentation of our revised proposal of 14 July 1941 had been delayed. You are directed, therefore, to understand this instruction fully and to convey the separate telegram without delay.