

Exhibit 2856

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Excerpt from Exhibit No. 33 of the Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack - Congress of the United States, Seventy-Ninth Congress, First Session.

EXHIBIT NO. 33

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES PREPARED BY G-2, WAR DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

(11) 2 September 1941, Subject: Conversation between the Japanese Military Attache and the Chief, Far Eastern Section.

SEPTEMBER 2, 1941.

Memorandum for the Chief of Staff:

Subject: Conversation between the Japanese Military Attache and the Chief, Far Eastern Section.

1. Coincident with the Japanese Ambassador's call on the President on the morning of August 28, 1941, Major General Saburo Isoda, Japanese Military Attache, called by appointment on Colonel R. S. Bratton, Chief of the Far Eastern Section, Intelligence Branch, this Division. The following are notes of Colonel Bratton on the visit:

"I have known General Isoda and been associated with him under various circumstances for eighteen years. In consequence, our conversation was friendly, informal and entirely 'off the record.'

"General Isoda stated that, like the Ambassador, he was exploring ways and means to relieve Japanese-United States tension and bring about better relations between the two countries. During the course of a conversation which lasted for an hour and a half, General Isoda made statements to the following effect:

a. Due to restrictions imposed by our export control, the Japanese have begun to use a portion of their war reserve of petroleum.

b. He, the Naval Attache, the Ambassador and the entire Embassy Staff are in accord in an earnest desire to better United States - Japanese relations.

c. Japan made a great mistake in joining the Axis.

d. The Army frequently gets out from under control of the Civilian Government and has to be restrained by Imperial Command.

e. Japan has her back to the wall. She can be pushed just so far, then will have to fight us to save her national honor and integrity, though war with the United States is the last thing desired by Japan.

"When asked flatly my opinion as to what assurances on the part of Japan would be acceptable to the United States Government at this time, I told him that Prince Konoye, if he comes to talk with the President, must come with Imperial sanction and armed with authority to speak for and on behalf of the armed forces of Japan as well as on behalf of the Civilian Government. I said that, in my opinion, nothing short of this would be productive of lasting results or be acceptable to the President.

"General Isoda received this statement of opinion on my part with entire good will, expressed his pleasure over the opportunity of having a frank talk, and stated his desire to have other and more frequent talks in the future. I, in turn, assured him that I would be glad to meet him in a private and unofficial capacity at any time."

2. General Isoda's visit clearly parallels the conversations now in progress between the Japanese Ambassador and the State Department. In effect he speaks for the Japanese Embassy, the entire staff of which is sincerely working for the betterment of Japanese-American relations. He obviously did not feel empowered to speak for the Japanese Army.

SHERMAN MILES,  
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Acting Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2

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