

U. S.-Jap Prewar Peace Plans Held Up 8 Days While Matsuoka Sought To Learn Attitude Of Nazi Reich

(Editor's note: This story is based on the memoirs of Prince Fumimaro Konoye, premier when Japan and the United States were seeking to avert war in 1941. Konoye committed suicide Sunday to avoid arrest as a war criminal.)

By MURLIN SPENCER
TOKYO, Dec. 18 (AP)—Japan's answer to an American plan to preserve peace in the Pacific was blocked for eight days in the spring of 1941 while Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka sought to learn Germany's attitude toward the negotiations, Prince Konoye wrote in his memoirs.

To gain time, Matsuoka proposed a neutrality pact with the United States, a suggestion summarily rejected by Cordell Hull, then U. S. secretary of state.

Konoye said that earlier Matsuoka, returning from Germany in a "bad mood," prevented Japanese acceptance of the American plan eight months before Pearl Harbor. That plan, Konoye wrote, was based on an American promise to help obtain Chungking's agreement to peace in China.

Pressed by political, army and navy leaders to quit stalling—they saw in the American plan an opportunity to pull Japan's chestnuts out of the China fire—Matsuoka forwarded his answer to the United States on May 12.

Shortly thereafter he received from Germany a reply which sought to use the negotiations as a means of preventing the U. S. from conveying goods to Britain, under threat that such action would force Japan to enter the war.

The Associated Press obtained Konoye's memoirs three days before his suicide. They are being translated, and copies have been given to Joseph B. Keenan who will prosecute Japan's leading war criminals.

Matsuoka told the emperor on May 8 that if the U. S. should join in the European war, "Japan would naturally have to stand on the side of Germany and Italy," the former premier wrote.

Earlier Konoye had asked Adm. Isoroku Yamamoto, then commander-in-chief of the combined Japanese fleet, "What are the chances if there should be a Japanese-American war?" Yamamoto replied:

"If they say it must be done, we will run around at will for about half a year or a year. But if it stretches into two or three years, I have no confidence in a successful ending."

Excited
Alarmed by the navy attitude, Konoye related his excitement at receiving the American plan for an understanding between the two nations, an excitement that prompted him to meet Matsuoka at Tachikawa airfield when the latter returned from Europe where he had conferred with Nazi chieftains.

The plan was explained to Matsuoka on the drive back from the airfield, but Konoye noted: "It is said that as expected, Matsuoka was in a bad mood and as-

sumed the attitude of having almost no interest in the plan." Later that night, April 22, Matsuoka waxed "loud and fiery on his visit to Europe and when the problem shifted to the important American plan he showed excitement and especially stressed the problem of Germany's trust of Japan" under the tri-partite pact.

He also declared he understood this American plan as having 70 per cent evil will and 30 per cent good will," Konoye noted.

Matsuoka then stalled. But he did go so far as to draft his own revision of the American plan and his revisions were approved by the Japanese cabinet May 3, or 12 days after he returned from Europe.

However, Matsuoka balked on assuring the U. S. that Japan would not "carry out an armed advance southward" into the Southwest Pacific. He deleted a provision that neither country would base its fleet where it could threaten the other.

He also inserted a provision that the U. S. would mediate between Britain and Germany in an attempt to end the European war at a point when Germany was victorious.

Stalled
With Matsuoka's revisions ready, the cabinet urged that they be sent to the United

States. Again Matsuoka stalled. He told Ambassador Nomura in Washington to give Hull an interim answer and, while acting as if it was Nomura's own idea, to suggest the neutrality pact.

When Nomura presented the suggested pact to Hull on May 7, Konoye said "Hull did not even consider this. It is said that Hull at the conference spoke strongly in a manner rare for him, and urged the earliest possible beginning of negotiations."

Friction between the cabinet and Matsuoka increased. Even the emperor was reported to have lost confidence in the foreign minister and to have inquired as to the feasibility of removing him. But Matsuoka remained adamant in his attitude toward the United States.

"From the words and actions of the foreign minister," wrote Konoye, "I wondered if he had during his stay in Germany made some sort of important promise. I could do nothing but believe his official reports on his talks and according to these, Fuehrer Hitler and Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop urged an attack on Singapore but (the reports) do not say anything which could be taken as a commitment."

The high hopes which Japanese leaders held for a successful understanding with the United States began to fail.

Flashes of Life

YOU CAN'T KEEP A GOOD MAN DOWN

SHAWNEE, Kas., Dec. 18 (AP)—Cpl. John G. Lally, 22, survived Bataan, the death march, three years and five months in a Japanese prison camp, malaria, beri beri, dysentery, Japanese punks, burning torture, and temporary blindness during his army service in the Pacific.

Now he has re-enlisted for a three-year hitch in the regular army.

DOUBLE DUTY

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 18 (AP)—Santa Claus may walk a picket line at the General Motors plant where 1000 CIO workers are on strike, union officials said today. If weather conditions permit, plans call for children of the pickets to spend the day with their daddies—and Santa Claus—in the plant's vicinity.

FOOL PROOF

GALLUP, N. M., Dec. 18 (AP)—With the temperatures 10 below zero, E. Parker Sellard took no chances on the anti-freeze in his automobile.

He had an idea which he said worked like a charm. He drove alongside the Gallup brick plant and parked in the cozy warmth of the roaring kilns.

HOME WORK

DECATUR, Ill., Dec. 18 (AP)—Return of women veterans from military service is posing no problems for the A. E. Staley Manufacturing company.

Four of 11 women employees who returned took their old jobs

Christmas Seal Sale Doing Well

The 1945 tuberculosis Christmas seal sale is coming along fine according to reports of Mrs. Thomas C. Parker, executive secretary of the Klamath County Public Health association.

To date \$5500 of the \$12,000 quota has been received and contributions are continuing to come in steadily. Sincere appreciation for their cooperation in this worthy cause is extended to townspeople and committee volunteers by the association.

Seal sale booths last week took in a total of \$314.24 during the six days they were set up in

back at the pre-enlistment pay, plus increases granted during their absence.

Then all four got married and quit their jobs.



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prominent places throughout the city.

Methodist women took charge of the booths Monday; American Legion auxiliary Tuesday assisted by the Friendship club; Wednesday, Presbyterian women; Thursday, Catholic daughters; Friday, Christian church women.

Appreciation is extended to Mrs. George Grizzle who acted as booth chairman during the last three days, in the absence of Mrs. A. Petersteiner due to illness. She was assisted by

Tuesday, Dec. 18, 1945

HERALD AND NEWS—TWELVE

Mrs. Helen Egan and Mrs. Pearl Hilton.
Eighty-five dollars was turned over to the association by KUHS, which was collected through the sale of bangle pins last Friday. Fremont school turned in \$17.65 from their sale; Fairhaven, \$6.95; Fairview, \$13.05. The health pins sold for 10 cents each. Contributions from outlying schools have not been received to date.

Garnish salads liberally with paprika for eye and taste appeal. Paprika has a mild flavor and can be used without stint.

For the latest and most up-to-date in insurance, consult Hans Norland, 123 N. 6th St.

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Forgotten Man

One trouble with the theory that buying power can be increased merely by boosting wages is that it forgets the man who doesn't live by wages—

The only effect he feels is the higher prices that sudden wage boosts help bring about.

A large portion of our people do not live by wages. Farmers are a good example. So are doctors, dentists, lawyers and those who run small shops and stores—

Even more seriously affected are people like ministers, teachers and government employes of all kinds—and the millions of men and women

living on insurance benefits, pensions or life savings.

Their buying power doesn't go up—it goes down!

As a matter of fact, the rising prices that follow general wage increases tend to eat up even the gains that wage earners seem to have made.

These things are important to consider in connection with the UAW-CIO wage-demand strike against General Motors—

And all the other strikes for sudden wage boosts that are sweeping the nation like an epidemic.

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7⁹⁸ AND 9⁹⁸

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