

The Role of “Magic” Distortions in “Crisis Management” During the U.S. – Japan Peace Talks of 1941

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INTRODUCTION

The mistranslations of Magic¹⁾ which led to the crisis in 1941 were influenced by misunderstanding and misperception, and the persistence of stereotypes and “images” within the parties involved. The study of these kinds of phenomena has been an important part of the growth of the discipline of International Relations since the Second World War. John Farrell and Asa Smith have expressed the need “to consider the subjective dimension in international conflict, to understand how and why the images held in other nations may differ from our own”.²⁾ Once they are formed, as Robert Jervis says, “[these] images become overgeneralized as expectations established from behavior in one set of circumstances are carried out into quite different situations”.³⁾

This thesis is concerned mainly with existing preconceptions and assumptions, which can be seen as important factors influencing the mistranslations and misperceptions of the Magic material. The detailed

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- 1) Magic was the information obtained from the breaking of secret Japanese diplomatic codes by the Americans during the period of the negotiations leading up to the Pearl Harbor attack and during the Pacific War.
 - 2) Farrell, John C. and Smith, Asa P. *Image and Reality in World Politics*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. viii.
 - 3) Jervis, Robert. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1976, p. 274.

mistranslations and their influence on decision-making during the talks of late 1941 have been analysed in a previous thesis entitled “Mis-translation of Decoded ‘Magic’ Messages as a Contributing Factor in the Breakdown of U.S. – Japan Peace Talks in 1941” in Seijo University Economics Papers (Keizai Kenkyu 経済研究) No. 136, published by The Economics Institute of Seijo University. Both these theses are based on a comprehensive study by the author in his doctoral dissertation at the University of Oxford, 1994.⁴⁾

COMPARISON WITH THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

It is easy to identify certain general factors which led to a crisis situation by 1941: ideological differences between the two countries, the difference in their strategies in foreign affairs, their mutually incompatible national interests, the endless political disputes and criticism which arose between the two sides, and the considerable internal discord within both countries. An international crisis, however, need not always develop into an actual war. The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 illustrates this significant point. One can identify several factors, such as ideological differences between the sides, the difference of the participants’ foreign strategies, etc., which resemble factors in the U.S.–Japan crisis of the early 1940s.

In fact, since the end of the Cold War, it has become known how dangerously close to war the situation came during the Cuban crisis. That is because it has been analysed on a day-by-day basis with the co-

4) Komatsu, Keiichiro 小松啓一郎. Doctoral Thesis, *Misunderstanding and Mistranslation in the Origins of the Pacific War of 1941–1945: The Importance of “Magic”*, Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, Oxford, 1994. It is also available for reference at Seijo Daigaku Toshokan 成城大学図書館 (Seijo University Library), Tokyo, and the British Library (Daiei Toshokan 大英図書館), London.

operation of the participants, of politicians who were actually involved in the events, and of scholars from the United States, the former Soviet Union and Cuba. A Third World War, however, in contrast with the Pacific War, did not break out. In other words, in addition to the root causes of the U.S.–Japan crisis, a further element was added ; the misunderstanding arising from Magic. The comparison with the Cuban crisis is the more apposite given the importance of communication between Washington and Moscow and the fact that its limitations led to the establishment of the telephone hot–line between the two capitals.⁵⁾

CONTRASTING VIEWS OF “MAGIC”

The traditional view of Magic is perhaps best exemplified by Roberta Wohlstetter in “Pearl Harbor—Warning and Decision”, published in 1962 : “The ability to read these codes gave the United States a remarkable advantage over the enemy”. “They knew in advance the diplomatic moves that Japan was contemplating”⁶⁾. Her work is possibly the most prestigious in its field and is widely accepted as authoritative.⁷⁾ As she herself states, “Even Magic was not magical in its properties ; its interpretation required subtlety and political good sense”⁸⁾ but she has no knowledge of Japanese and did not examine the decoding and transla-

5) Garthoff, Raymond L. *Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis*, The Brookings Institution, Washington D.C., 1987, pp. 85–8.

6) Wohlstetter, Roberta. *Pearl Harbor—Warning and Decision*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1962, p. 170.

7) Long after the publication of Wohlstetter’s work in 1962, selected testimonies at the Congressional Hearings were compiled and published. See Worth, Roland H. *Pearl Harbor: Selected Testimonies, Fully Indexed, from the Congressional Hearings (1945–1946) and Prior Investigations of the Events Leading Up to the Attack*, McFarland & Company, Inc., Jefferson, North Carolina, 1993.

Worth’s work has eased access to the record of testimonies, although it is selective.

8) Wohlstetter, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

tion of Japanese diplomatic traffic. She is not, therefore, checking the accuracy of translation and then applying “subtlety and political good sense”. Rather she starts with a preconception of Japanese intentions and then approaches the intercepts from a point of view which has already been formed. She uncritically accepts the accuracy of the aggressive “tone” of the translations and notes “how they [the messages from Tokyo] differed in tone from the messages coming out of the Japanese embassy in Washington”.⁹⁾

She accepts the repeated assertion of Alwin D. Kramer, chief of the section of Naval Intelligence in charge of the decoding, that “the Japanese tended to describe desperate situations in a milder way than they were really thinking”.¹⁰⁾ There is no evidence for such a statement, but it led Kramer in the early 1940s, and Wohlstetter some twenty years later, to believe that the translation rendered should have been harder than the literal translation. Wohlstetter goes further, stating generally that “our own MAGIC translation was milder than the original”.¹¹⁾ There is the hint here of a general perception of Japanese as a subtle, understated language that needs to be “corrected” to a stronger version to convey the writer’s real intention.

A fluent Japanese speaker, however, such as Jay Rubin, Professor of Japanese Literature at the University of Washington, points out that this is just an assumption which is part of the myth of Japanese “uniqueness”. He states that “Japanese is not the language of the infinite. Japanese is not even vague ... The Japanese speak and write to each other as other literate peoples do ...”¹²⁾

9) Ibid., p. 197.

10) Quoted in Wohlstetter, *ibid.*, p. 225.

11) Ibid., p. 347.

12) Rubin, Jay. *Gone Fishin’ : New Angles on Perennial Problems*, Kodansha International, Tokyo, 1992, pp. 15–16.

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Even until fairly recently, the image of Magic persists. Ronald Lewin, without any critical examination, described, as late as 1983, “the picture of Japan painted by Magic : a country engaged with ruthless and devouring energy in pursuing its own interests, and not to be deflected from that pursuit”¹³⁾ and “If Magic did nothing else, it never ceased to warn about Japan’s hard, incessant and (for all her cosmetic tricks of diplomacy) inflexible drive toward an act of aggression ... somewhere”.¹⁴⁾

In 1988, however, in a commentary attached to the translation of Lewin’s work, Takao Tokuoka 徳岡孝夫 notes that “With regard to the episode of decoded intercepts ... Most of the mistranslations twisted the intentions of the Japanese government [making them] more war-like than they were”. He goes further, saying that “[Secretary of State Cordell Hull] read in advance the intercepts which contained a number of mistranslations, and resented Japan’s duplicity. Such a resentment therefore could not have been caused if such intercepts had not existed”.¹⁵⁾

Ted Morgan, writing a biography of Roosevelt without (understandably) any knowledge of Japanese, still insisted in 1985 : “Hull, who saw Nomura [Japanese Ambassador to Washington Kichisaburo Nomura 野村吉三郎] almost daily, was shocked by the contrast between his protestation of peaceful intentions and the contents of the Magic messages ... Hull ... knew from the inflamed tone of the Magic intercepts that Japan was preparing for war”.¹⁶⁾

13) Lewin, Ronald. *The American Magic—Codes, Ciphers and the Defeat of Japan*, Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1983, p. 57.

14) *Ibid.*, p. 60.

15) Lewin, Ronald. Shirasu, Eiko 白須英子, trans. *Nihon no Ango o Kaidoku seyo 日本の暗号を解読せよ (Decipher the Japanese Codes!)*, Soshi-sha 草思社, Tokyo, 1988, p. 275.

16) Morgan, Ted. *FDR : A Biography*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1985,

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In 1977, Michael Blaker of Columbia University, who has extended his study of original Japanese texts covering eighteen cases of pre-war Japanese diplomacy,¹⁷⁾ reaches a confident conclusion in his publication : “The materials examined for this study do not support an image of Japanese diplomats as devious and underhanded. This popular stereotype seems both unwarranted and undeserved. Japanese statements made during decision-making meetings in Tokyo closely resembled those made both in public and to the other side during bargaining ... even if they may not have been believable to outside observers”.¹⁸⁾ The contrast in the conclusions reached through two lines of historical study, the one based on an expert and scholarly examination of the texts and the other proceeding from received ideas without any such study, is sharply obvious.

Some Japanese writers, including Professor Toshikazu Kase 加瀬俊一 and Professor Shinji Sudo 須藤眞志, have also noted the negative role of the Magic mistranslations in worsening U.S.–Japan relations prior to the outbreak of the conflict.¹⁹⁾ However, they have not concentrated on the particular effect of these mistranslations on the peace talks.

Roberta Wohlstetter is aware that several observers have pointed out the issue of misinterpretations in Magic. She states that “They [the Japanese] have pointed out ... how their secret diplomatic messages

p. 608.

- 17) These texts contain the cases dating from “Sino–Japanese negotiations, 1895” up to “U.S.–Japanese pre–Pearl Harbor negotiations, 1941”.
- 18) Blaker, Michael. *Japanese International Negotiating Style*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1977, pp. 223–4.
- 19) Kase, Toshikazu 加瀬俊一. *Nihon Gaiko–shi 23—Nichi–Bei Koshō 日本外交史 23—日米交渉 (A History of Japan’s Foreign Policy Vol. 23—U.S.–Japan Negotiations)*, Kashima Kenkyusho Shuppan–kai 鹿島研究所出版会, Tokyo, 1970.
Sudo, Shinji 須藤眞志. *Nichi–Bei Kaisen Gaiko no Kenkyū 日米開戦外交の研究 (A Study of U.S.–Japan Diplomacy leading up to the Outbreak of War)*, Keio Tsushin 慶應通信, Tokyo, 1986.

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were incorrectly interpreted because our decoders had not translated them accurately”,²⁰⁾ but she has regarded it as merely “Japanese responses to American criticism” centring “on justification of this particular part of their war plan [Pearl Harbor attack]”, and emphasises that “The point of such exchanges [including the argument of misinterpretation] becomes largely irrelevant if the basic Japanese war plan is considered” on “the basis of the Japanese data made available since the close of the war”.²¹⁾

The same writer, however, asserts inconsistently in the same work, sixteen years after the publication of a large part of the original messages in Japanese : “Our decision-makers were dependent on the translations with which they were presented, and the present analysis will be confined to the signals in that form”.²²⁾ Thus, it has been acceptable to continue to refuse to examine the original texts and compare them with the translated version, and at the same time to dismiss any argument on the misinterpretation issue as being merely an apologist view. Under the circumstances, on the Japanese side questions are evaded in the general literature partly for this reason, namely the continuing sensitivity with regard to pre-war events in Japanese politics and culture.

HUDDLESTON’S WORK AND THE RELEASE OF THE MAGIC FILES

A year after Wohlstetter’s publication, Jackson Noyes Huddleston Jr. of the University of Washington attempted in an unpublished thesis to an-

20) Wohlstetter, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

21) *Ibid.*, p. 339.

22) *Ibid.*, p. 216.

The Japanese messages are included in Gaiko Shiryo—Nichibei Kosho Kiroku no Bu 外交資料—日米交渉記録ノ部 (Records of Foreign Affairs—Section on U.S.—Japan Negotiations’ Records), Gaimu-sho 外務省 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), 1946.

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alyze the Magic materials in depth, comparing them with the Japanese originals and concentrated on revealing the seriousness of the mistranslations and misinterpretations in the light of their significance in interrupting the efforts to reach an agreement between the United States and Japan.²³⁾ His analysis led him “to conclude tentatively that Ambassador Nomura followed Foreign Minister Togo’s instructions quite closely and was a good representative of his country’s policy”.²⁴⁾

The unusual difficulties which Huddleston faced at that time were stated in his thesis :

In order to judge the quality of intercepts and decoding, one would have to have access to the MAGIC file. The location of this file is not exactly known. It is somewhere in an Intelligence library in or near Washington, D.C. Mrs. Roberta Wohlstetter, whose definitive study on Pearl Harbor was published last year, informed me that the MAGIC file exists but added : “What you should know is that access to MAGIC will automatically disqualify you for writing or speaking on the subject. This is a strict rule of Intelligence. It took me about a year to be convinced about this ...”²⁵⁾

Under these circumstances, he eventually decided to give up publishing his work in 1963. Consequently, it has not been made public up to the present. In this context, the author thinks it worthwhile to introduce part of his work in this thesis, since some part of his work is still important despite the later publication of “The ‘Magic’ Background of Pearl Harbor” in 1978 by the Department of Defense in Washington, and the subsequent declassification of the original Magic materials.

Although the original Magic documents were finally declassified

23) Huddleston, Jackson Noyes Jr., unpublished essay : Aspects of Japanese-American Negotiations, November 1 to November 25, 1941.

24) *Ibid.*, p. 49.

25) Correspondence : Huddleston, *ibid.*, p. iv.

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under Executive Order 12065, authorised by President Carter, and scholarly attention was paid to them immediately afterwards, there are still serious difficulties as stated by James Rusbridger and Eric Nave :

In 1980, the U.S. National Security Agency suddenly declassified over 130,000 pages of wartime Magic decrypts. This was done in a haphazard fashion so that researchers were confronted with marching rows of anonymous gray cardboard boxes on the thirteenth floor of the National Archives in Washington. As these were in no particular order, it was a matter of luck that anyone came across anything of interest.²⁶⁾

BACKGROUND OF MISPERCEPTIONS

The translation of the Magic material, as well as its interpretation by those who saw it, must be set in the context of the mutual apprehensions and misperceptions which existed between the two sides in the period leading up to the peace negotiations. The role of stereotyped images can also be discerned in these specific areas of contention.

APPOINTMENT OF TOJO CABINET

One event which caused serious misgivings in the U.S. was the appointment of General Hideki Tojo 東條英機 as Head of the Cabinet (Shuhan 首班) in October 1941. He was proposed by the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal Koichi Kido 木戸幸一 and this was adopted by the conference of the former prime ministers, Jushin Kaigi 重臣会議 (literally the conference of the “senior statesmen”). On the basis of several materials, including Kido’s Diary written at that time, the proposal of Tojo as Head had the following aims.²⁷⁾

26) Rusbridger, James and Nave, Eric. *Betrayal at Pearl Harbor*, Michael O’Mara Books Ltd., London, 1991, p. 105.

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First, he was regarded as a capable leader who could effectively “conduct” both the Army and Navy, which had previously tended to act independently of each other. Second, Tojo was expected to be capable of leading the government’s reconsideration of the policy document entitled “Guidelines for Implementing National Policies”, Teikoku Kokusaku Yoko 帝国国策要綱, from the “Imperial Conference”, Gozen Kaigi 御前会議,²⁸⁾ of September 6th, which had decided on preparation for war against the U.S., Britain and the Netherlands in case of a failure to reach a diplomatic agreement within the period up to the middle of October.²⁹⁾

It was also decided at the Jushin Kaigi that the new Head of the Cabinet Tojo should take on the positions of Army Minister and Home Minister, while still serving as Army commander, to solve the continuing political problem of lack of control. However, it has become clear that this problem was so intractable that he was unable to succeed, partly because he was not given enough authority to control the Navy.³⁰⁾

27) Kido, Koichi 木戸幸一. Kido Koichi Nikki (Ge-kan) 木戸幸一日記 (下巻) (Koichi Kido Diary (Vol. 2)), Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan-kai 東京大学出版会, Tokyo, 1966, p. 917.

28) Gozen Kaigi, which is generally rendered as “Imperial Conference” but which means literally “conference in the presence of the Emperor”, i.e. the Emperor’s presence as symbolic head of state conferred legitimacy on the proceedings

29) This reconsideration is called in Japanese “Hakushi Kangen 白紙還元”, which literally means “Going Back to Blank Paper”, abandoning the previously adopted document.

30) In fact, according to the record of Shigenori Togo 東郷茂徳, the Foreign Minister in the Tojo Cabinet, written in Sugamo 巣鴨 prison for the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (the Tokyo Trial), Tojo was not informed by the Navy until after the opening of the Trial that the first secret order for war to the combined forces had already been issued on November 10th, 1941, and that the Combined Fleet left Hitokappu Bay in the Kurile Islands for Pearl Harbor on the 26th. See Togo, Shigenori 東郷茂徳. Jidai no Ichimen 時代の一面 (A Dimension of the Times), Chuokoron-sha 中央公論社, Tokyo, 1989, p. 299.

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Whatever the American perception of the formation on October 20th of the new Tojo Cabinet was, the Japanese leaders’ intention in forming it was, thus, to abolish the policy of opening hostilities in late October and to continue peace efforts through negotiations with the U.S. and Britain.³¹⁾ In fact, some Americans, including Ambassador Joseph Grew who accurately reported to Washington on the 20th about Japanese intentions in the formation of the new cabinet, realised the true meaning of the appearance of Tojo.³²⁾

While some American leaders, for instance Brigadier General Sherman Miles of the Army in his memorandum of October 17th, regarded Tojo as a very aggressive pro-German militarist, other leaders including William Langton in his memorandum of the 17th and Maxwell Hamilton in his memorandum of the 18th, both in the Far Eastern Division of the State Department, predicted the possibility of success under the new Tojo Cabinet in reaching an agreement for peace.³³⁾ One should recognise here that when the Tojo Cabinet began, there were leaders on both sides who were still attempting to solve the U.S.–Japan conflicts through diplomatic means and who predicted the possibility of success.

JAPAN AND GERMANY

A significant point is that many American leaders including Langton and Hamilton at this stage regarded the Tojo Cabinet as being pro-German and pro-Tripartite Alliance by pointing out that Tojo was a former attache to Germany, that Foreign Minister Shigenori Togo 東郷茂徳 as the former ambassador to Germany and that his wife was German.

31) S. Sudo, *op. cit.*, pp. 238–9.

32) *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers 1941, Vol. IV* (hereafter FRUS, 1941, Vol. 4), United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1956, pp. 541–3.

33) *Ibid.*, pp. 519–20, pp. 522–3.

Similarly, Hull expressed his deep suspicion of the posting of Ambassador Saburo Kurusu 来栖三郎 to Washington in November, emphasising his role as the former Japanese Ambassador to Germany.³⁴⁾ As is noted by Professor S. Sudo, however, the Japanese leaders could not imagine that such a strong impression would be given to the Americans from these profiles.³⁵⁾ Abraham Ben-Zvi of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem points out that the Americans “ignored those which might have indicated a different impression, such as that Kurusu had served in the Japanese consular service in the United States, and that his wife was American”.³⁶⁾ The Japanese thus underestimated the American authorities’ hostility to Nazi Germany, while to some extent the Americans overestimated the link between Japan and Germany.

In fact, Secretary of State Hull, for example, states even in his work published after the end of the Pacific War :

We knew from our intercepts of Japanese Government messages how strong was the German pressure being applied in Tokyo. One such message, of October 16, from Toyoda to Nomura, stated that the German authorities were demanding that the Japanese Government submit a note of warning to the United States. The Germans were aroused over the President’s “shoot on sight” order of September 11, the incidents that had already occurred between German and American vessels, and the possibility that the Neutrality Act would be amended.³⁷⁾

However, Eugen Ott, German ambassador to Tokyo, sent a report

34) Hull, Cordell. *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, Vol. 2, Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., Norwich, 1948, p. 1056, p. 1063.

35) S. Sudo, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

36) Ben-Zvi, Abraham. *The Illusion of Deterrence : The Roosevelt Presidency and the Origins of the Pacific War*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1987, p. 63.

37) C. Hull, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 1034.

to Berlin on the 28th, 12 days after the message of the 16th from Foreign Minister Teijiro Toyoda 豊田貞次郎 to Ambassador Nomura, saying that the Japanese government had not yet submitted such a note of warning to the United States, after Ott met new Foreign Minister Togo.³⁸⁾

German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop had already requested that Japan attack British Singapore at a meeting with Hiroshi Oshima 大島浩, Ambassador to Germany, on February 23rd, 1941. Then, on March 4th, Ambassador Ott again urged Japan to attack Singapore as soon as possible, but General Hajime Sugiyama 杉山元, Chief of Staff of the Army, responded negatively. On March 27th Adolph Hitler once more requested an attack on Singapore when he met Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka 松岡洋右 on his visit to Germany, but Japan, instead of complying, opened the U.S.–Japan peace talks in April.

Consequently, the U.S.–Japan Draft Understanding Proposal, Nichibei Ryokai—an 日米諒解案, of April 16th itself was reported by Ott on May 5th as an attempt to end the effectiveness of the Tripartite Pact.³⁹⁾ After the outbreak of the Russo–German War, the German gov-

38) Yoshii, Midori 義井みどり. “Nichi–Doku–I Kyodo Kodo Kyotei no Teiketsu to Doitsu no Tai–Bei Sensen Fukoku 日独伊共同行動協定の締結とドイツの対米宣戦布告” (The Conclusion of the No–Separate–Peace Treaty and Germany’s Declaration of War on the United States), in Nihon Kokusai Seiji Gakkai 日本国際政治学会 (The Japan Association of International Relations), Kokusai Seiji 91—Nitchu Senso kara Nichi–Ei–Bei Senso e 国際政治 91—日中戦争から日英米戦争へ (International Politics, Vol. 91—From the Sino–Japanese War to the Japanese–Anglo–American War), Yuhikaku 有斐閣, Tokyo, 1989, p. 9.

39) Ohki, Takeshi 大木毅. “Doitsu no Tai–Bei Kaisen (1941 nen)—Sono Seiji Katei o Chushin ni ドイツの対米開戦 (1941年) —その政治過程を中心に” (Political Process of the German Decision to Open the War against the United States in 1941), in Nihon Kokusai Seiji Gakkai 日本国際政治学会 (The Japan Association of International Relations). Kokusai Seiji 91—Nitchu Senso kara Nichi–Ei–Bei Senso e 国際政治 91—日中戦争から日英

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ernment repeatedly requested the Japanese government, on June 30th and July 2nd, to attack Russia, but the Japanese government decided on a non-participation policy in the Russo-German War at the Gozen Kaigi of July 2nd. Thus, the persistent requests from the German government to the Japanese government did not necessarily mean that the Japanese government was constrained in its decision-making towards the U.S.—Japan peace talks by German pressure at that time. While the Japanese did not fully understand that the Americans were already involved in reality in the undeclared naval war against Germany in the Atlantic, the Americans over-emphasised the link between Japan’s decision-making and pressure from Germany.

Later, Japan had sought and been given a formal guarantee on December 5th that Germany would enter the war against the U.S., but it was not a factor to which any importance was given in Japanese decision-making, although it would have been an advantage to have German co-operation. Japan’s formal decision to attack Pearl Harbor had already been made on the 1st of the same month, several days before the German guarantee was received.⁴⁰ It is known that Germany was

米戦争へ (International Politics Vol. 91—From the Sino-Japanese War to the Japanese-Anglo-American War), Yuhikaku 有斐閣, Tokyo, 1989, p. 110.

40) According to a document attached to the “National Policies” of November 5th, Japan would begin to negotiate with Germany and Italy for “German (and Italian) participation in the war against the United States” if a U.S.—Japan war became inevitable. It was, however, also confirmed that Japan would not accept a German request to participate in the Russo-German war, and in the event of a strong demand from Germany for Japan’s participation against Russia “Even if this should lead to a situation whereby Germany will delay her entry into the war against the United States, it cannot be helped”. See Ike, Nobutaka. *Japan’s Decision for War—Records of the 1941 Policy Conferences*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1967, p. 242.

Sanbo Honbu 参謀本部 (General Staff of the Army). *Sugiyama Memo (Jo) 杉山メモ (上)* (Sugiyama Memorandum (Vol. 1)), Hara Shobo 原書房, To-

not informed about Japan’s plan until the attack began, so that “Pearl Harbor came as a surprise to Hitler”.⁴¹⁾ Before the attack on Pearl Harbor Hitler was increasingly impatient with U.S. support for Britain and “was coming to the conclusion that a virtual state of war already existed with the U.S.A.”⁴²⁾ Moreover, he had his own reasons for deciding to declare war on the United States. He underestimated the strength of the United States and he was determined that the Russian counter-offensive launched on December 5th/6th should be resisted. Thus, independently from German pressure, Japan’s decision to attack Pearl Harbor was influenced mainly by developments in the course of the U.S.–Japan peace talks.

ATTACK TO THE NORTH OR TO THE SOUTH?

In addition, it is important to remember that the vital question of whether Japan might have fought against the Russians in the North instead of opening hostilities against the Western Allies in the southern and eastern regions was still open at this stage. As noted by Professor Waldo Heinrichs, “[Prime Minister] General Tojo Hideki, previously war minister ... was known for his ‘particular dislike of the Russians’ and his prediction in 1938 that Japan would have to fight the Soviet Union”. As late as October the U.S. still thought that there was more likelihood of a Japanese Army attack against the Soviet Far Eastern Army in the North.

On October 17th high-ranking Chinese military officers predicted an attack by the Japanese Kwantung Army in Manchukuo (Manchuria) against the Soviet Siberian Army “in a few days”. U.S. Army intelli-

kyo, 1989 (hereafter Sugiyama Memo 杉山メモ Vol. 1), p. 520.

41) Bullock, Alan. *Hitler—A Study in Tyranny*, Penguin, London, 1990, p. 661.

42) *Ibid.*, p. 662.

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gence judged the Kwantung Army and the Siberian Army to be roughly matched as a result of a reduction in Soviet Far Eastern military forces and Japanese military movements towards the North, but that a further reduction of the Soviet forces would lead to a Japanese attack. The U.S. Navy under the influence of Admiral Kelly Turner warned that hostilities between Japan and the Soviet Union were now a “strong possibility”. Roosevelt himself repeatedly stated his concern about the northern front in the Far East. On October 10th he told British Ambassador Lord Halifax that he feared a Japanese attack on Vladivostok, and on the 15th he wrote to Winston Churchill that the “Jap situation” was “definitely worse” and that the Japanese were “headed North”.⁴³⁾

Even in the following month, the figures of the military and naval summaries on November 1st, for instance, stressed the disposition of Japanese forces for a possible Russian attack ; “The Japanese forces in Manchukuo, Korea and Inner Mongolia, disposed for attack upon Russia, are very reliably reported to have been increased to 684,000”, while the same source on November 15th reported a further diminution in the number of Japanese troops in the southern area ; “It is believed that actually there are about 60,000 Japanese troops in Indo-China”.⁴⁴⁾

In fact, as observed by Makoto Ikuta 生田惇 of the Military History Department (Senshi-shitsu 戦史室) of the National Institute for Defence Studies of the Defence Agency, the number of Japanese troops in the northern front, both in Manchuria and Korea, in the Kan-Toku-En 関特演 (the Kwantung Army Special Manoeuvres) was increasing rapidly towards the beginning of November to about 800,000 in total. In contrast, the number of Japanese troops in the southern and eastern ar-

43) Heinrichs, Waldo. *Threshold of War—Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Entry into World War II*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1988, p. 191.

44) Quoted in Wohlstetter, op. cit., pp. 325–6.

eas facing the Western Allied forces was less than 100,000 during the same period, and even by the date of the outbreak of the Pacific War, that number had increased to only 150,000, while 740,000 were still stationed on the northern front.⁴⁵⁾ In this sense, U.S. military intelligence seems to have successfully obtained accurate information about the shift of the Japanese Army towards the North.⁴⁶⁾

On the basis of this information, the U.S. Army estimated on November 2nd that Japan’s “most probable line of action ... will be to continue her efforts to secure a relaxation of American economic pressure, while completing her plans ...” although what “her plans” were was not clearly predicted. By comparing this conclusion with the Japanese primary sources, one can clearly recognise that U.S. military intelligence described contemporary Japanese intentions quite accurately,⁴⁷⁾ al-

45) Ikuta, Makoto 生田惇. *Nihon Rikugun-shi* 日本陸軍史 (A History of the Japanese Army), Kyoiku-sha 教育社, Tokyo, 1980, p. 177.

46) The material published by the Military History Department (Senshi-shitsu) of the National Institute for Defence Studies in 1974 entitled *Kanto-gun* 関東軍 (The Kwantung Army) shows the precise number of troops on a unit basis which moved towards the North under the Kan-Toku-En Manoeuvres. However, while the original plan of manoeuvres estimated that the number of officers and men in the North was increasing by 500,000 up to 850,000 in total, Ikuta calculates the number which actually mobilised as up to 800,000. In fact, a precise figure of officers and men which participated in those manoeuvres has been very difficult to calculate since the size of each unit always changed depending on the development of the situation on each front with the Russians. Accordingly, while the number of units has been known precisely, the number of officers and men has been indicated in slightly different figures by each historian, owing to the factor mentioned above. Nonetheless, a further overwhelming shift of the contemporary Japanese Army towards the North, rather than towards the South, has commonly been indicated by those historians. See Boei-cho Boei Kenkyu-sho Senshi-shitsu Boei-cho Boei Kenkyu-sho Senshi-shitsu 防衛庁防衛研究所戦史室 (Military History Department of the National Institute for Defence Studies of the Defence Agency), *Kanto-gun* 関東軍 <2> (The Kwantung Army (Vol. 2)), Asakumo Shimbun-sha 朝雲新聞社, Tokyo, 1974, pp. 22–32.

47) For instance, even after abandoning the plan of preparation for opening

though some historians including Wohlstetter regard American intelligence as merely unrealistic optimism : “This commitment [of the report of November 2nd] ... was still guided by the optimism that characterized the October predictions of MID [Military Intelligence Division of the U. S. Army]”⁴⁸⁾

Furthermore, it is important to recognise that the Kan-Toku-En Manoeuvres did not end until the early summer of 1942, several months after Pearl Harbor, and the material published by the Military History Department in 1974 clearly proves the existence of quite precise war plans against the Russian Siberian Army, with a number of military maps of the region showing in detail a possible war of the summer of 1942.⁴⁹⁾ A significant indication of the extremely high tension in the North is the fact that more than 1,600 Russo-Japanese military conflicts were reported from the mid 1930s up to the end of the Pacific War⁵⁰⁾ although the official Russian war declaration of 1945 was announced only six days before the end of the War. A number of historians have overlooked the significant developments throughout this period in

hostilities against the Soviet Army in the summer of 1941, the Army was, on the basis of the decision of August 8th, still in the process of massive mobilization towards the North, fearing a possibility of Russian attack on Japan during the winter of 1941-2. At the meeting of August 20th between representatives of the General Staff of the Army and the Kwantung Army, they judged that the decision to implement the military plan against the Soviet Army had to be made in March 1942. See Boei-cho Boei Kenkyu-sho Senshi-shitsu 防衛庁防衛研究所戦史室 (Military History Department of the National Institute for Defence Studies of the Defence Agency). Dai-hon-ei Rikugun-bu 大本營陸軍部 <2> (The Army Department of the Imperial Headquarters (Vol. 2)), Asakumo Shimbun-sha 朝雲新聞社, Tokyo, 1968, pp. 378-9, pp. 400-1.

48) Wohlstetter, op. cit., p. 293.

49) See the Military History Department. Kanto-gun 關東軍 Vol. 2 (The Kwantung Army, Vol. 2), op. cit., and its maps.

50) Shimada, Toshihiko 島田俊彦. Kanto-gun 關東軍 (The Kwantung Army), Chuokoron-sha 中央公論社, Tokyo, 1965, p. 126.

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the North.⁵¹⁾ Ted Morgan, for instance, over-emphasises the “stability” in the North, making the extraordinary statement that “Never, until August 1945, did a Russian soldier fight a Japanese soldier”.⁵²⁾ As Professor Toshihiko Shimada 島田俊彦 observes, the volume of ammunition sent to the northern front was so large that a half of it remained when the War ended, even though much of it was increasingly sent to the southern fronts as the fight against the Western Allied forces escalated throughout the four-year period of war in the Pacific.⁵³⁾

From a strategic point of view, therefore, some historians have questioned in retrospect America’s coercive posture, starting with the embargoes, and particularly the ban on oil shipments towards Japan from August. As emphasised by Professor Waldo Heinrichs, the Japanese Army was eventually “of one mind on the necessity for attack southward including war with the United States” because “Even proponents of an attack northward were converted by the necessity of first securing adequate resources in the South”.⁵⁴⁾ Similarly, Professor of Political Science Anthony Kubek notes that “Invasion of Siberia ... offered no material advantage to Japan, other than a purely military one. Japan needed oil, and, with the United States constantly applying economic pressure, it was to [the] Japanese advantage to move in the direction of Southeast Asia, where oil was available. This was the view strongly advocated by the Japanese naval officials, who opposed simultaneous war with the Anglo-Saxon powers and the Soviet Union”.⁵⁵⁾

51) Komatsu, *op. cit.*, pp. 67–8, pp. 79–83, pp. 87–110.

52) Morgan, Ted, *op. cit.*, p. 591.

53) T. Shimada, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

54) Heinrichs, *Threshold of War*, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

See also The Military History Department. Dai-hon-ei Rikugun-bu 大本営陸軍部 <2> (The Army Department of the Imperial Headquarters (Vol. 2)), *op. cit.*, pp. 376–8.

55) Kubek, Anthony. *How the Far East was Lost—American Policy and the*

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According to the Japanese primary source, the Army traditionally had its main concern in the northern border, i.e. the threat from the Russians from the early modern period to the years of the Pacific War. The Americans’ primary interest, particularly for the Roosevelt administration, was the German threat in Europe. The important question arises here whether the national interests of the U.S. and Japan conflicted seriously enough to warrant fighting over in the Pacific region.

MILITARY PLANS AND MOVEMENTS

The Japanese advance southwards to southern French Indo-China was also partly a response to the so-called ADB report made at a conference known as ADB-1, the American, Dutch and British military staff conference (ADB), convened in Singapore in April 1941. The conference determined their pre-conditions for war against Japan, and proposed “to attack Japan itself with long-range bombers, a form of violent economic pressure that would bring about its collapse more surely ... than gradual denial of resources”.⁵⁶⁾ Although the ADB report was later rejected by the Chief of Naval Operations Harold R. Stark and the Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall in early July, the Japanese Army felt a serious threat posed by the explicit “united front”. Consequently, on May 1st, the Ministry of the Army began to make a plan to advance to the South using military force if necessary. In this context, the plan was, in the Army’s view, a means for Japan’s national survival in the event of strict Allied sanctions.⁵⁷⁾

Creation of Communist China, 1941–1949, Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1963, p. 9.

56) Miller, Edward S. *War Plan Orange—The U.S. Strategy to Defeat Japan, 1897–1945*, Airline Publishing Ltd., Shrewsbury, England, 1991, p. 61.

57) See *ibid.*, p. 61, and Nihon Kokusai Seiji Gakkai 日本国際政治学会 (The Japan Association of International Relations). *Taiheiyo Senso e no Michi—Dai 7-kan—Nichibeï Kaisen 太平洋戦争への道—第七卷—日米開戦* (The

Thus, the Japanese felt a threat despite the fact that the Allies’ strategies were in reality defensive rather than offensive, with a few exceptions not endorsed by the authorities. Churchill had in reality no prospect of holding the British territories in the region in the event of Japan’s involvement in a war,⁵⁸⁾ and the U.S. had already made the Germany–first and Pacific defensive decisions in 1940. The American political decision was consequently a “global strategy that urged accelerated re–armament and avoiding provocations of Japan such as overt alliances, economic sanctions, or sending arms to China”.⁵⁹⁾

Whatever the current retrospective view, according to those primary sources, most of the members of the Japanese Army and Navy in fact regarded their own plan as “defensive” rather than “offensive” while they thought of the allies’ strategy as more offensive, and therefore they felt a serious sense of national crisis at that time.⁶⁰⁾ This was exactly the same stance as that seen among most of the contemporary

Road to the Pacific War—Vol. 7—The Outbreak of the U.S.–Japan War), Asahi Shimbun–sha 朝日新聞社, Tokyo, 1963 (hereafter TSM, Vol. 7), p. 209.

58) In “Churchill’s Personal Minute” of January 1941, released as recently as 1992, he recognised the possibility of a Japanese attack on British territories, but he also allowed for a different interpretation. He was opposed to the plan of increasing the troops there stating that “Japan will think long before declaring war on the British Empire, and whether there are two or six battalions at Hong Kong will make no difference to her choice” and also that “If Japan goes to war with us there is not the slightest chance of holding Hong Kong or relieving it. It is most unwise to increase the loss we shall suffer there. Instead of increasing the Garrison it ought to be reduced to a symbolical scale ... I wish we had fewer troops there, but to move any would be noticeable and dangerous” (See the references at the Public Record Office in Kew F.O. 371/27886, p. 142).

Thus, Churchill correctly foresaw that the allies’ military movements could cause Japanese miscalculation about Western intentions, and therefore could worsen relations.

59) Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

60) See in detail in Komatsu, *op. cit.*, Chapters 6 and 7.

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Western leaders who believed their own strategies were “defensive”, while regarding the Japanese strategies as “offensive”. Thus, the contemporary leaders of both sides could not get precise information about the intentions of the opposition but got only very limited information and could only interpret from reports of the adversary’s actions. The same limited perspective can still be seen in the publications of the post-war period. In his work of 1961, Professor Robert Butow dismissed the Magic mistranslations as having no importance, insisting that the U.S. was guided by Japanese actions, not words.⁶¹⁾ This kind of perception gap has occurred very naturally and universally in the history of international relations, particularly under this type of hostile atmosphere. Thus, they understood the same events differently.

In mid-October of 1941, the U.S. Navy entered stage one of its War Plan of the Pacific Fleet (WPPac 46). This plan was based on the older WPL46, the War Plan of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations known as Rainbow Five, which was the contingency war plan for an attack on Japan; stage one to start before the opening of hostilities, stage two just after the beginning of a war, and stage three from then on. As a part of stage one of the contingency plan, the Eighth Fleet led by Vice-Admiral William Halsey and the Twelfth Fleet left Pearl Harbor, sending planes out to the Pacific islands.⁶²⁾ Also, on November 21st, General Douglas MacArthur received the “Offensive Air Operations”, the revised Rainbow Five War Plan.⁶³⁾ Although these actions could be seen by an adversary as relatively hostile, it should be recognised that they

61) Butow, Robert J. C. *Tojo and the Coming of the War*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1961, p. 335.

62) Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 272, pp. 274–5.
Kojima, Noboru 児島襄. *Taiheiyo Senso (Jo) 太平洋戦争 (上)* (The Pacific War (Vol. 1), Chuokoron-sha 中央公論社, Tokyo, 1965, pp. 38–9.

63) Wohlstetter, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

were actually only a preparation for the possibility of war.

Meanwhile the Japanese Task Force carried out manoeuvres from November 4th to the 6th, based on the contingency plan to attack Pearl Harbor,⁶⁴ while the Gozen Kaigi adopted the “Guidelines for Implementing National Policies”.⁶⁵ The Navy issued a series of orders to prepare for the possibility of war with the U.S., in each case followed by a proviso that the attack would be aborted if the U.S.–Japan negotiations were successful.⁶⁶ Thus, neither side’s military movements and actions observed at this stage were evidence of a determination to go to war. That depended on the outcome of the diplomatic talks.

AMBASSADOR GREW

In contrast to the inaccurate perceptions of the majority of decision-makers, Ambassador Grew had maintained quite reliable sources of information on Japan’s intentions, while naturally making every effort to keep his original source secret. In his work entitled “Ten Years in Japan” of 1944, for instance, he carefully omitted several Japanese personal names although they had been recorded as sources in his original diary. He even deliberately confused Admiral Zengo Yoshida 吉田善吾 and Shigeru Yoshida 吉田茂 of the Foreign Office by mentioning only

64) Sanematsu, Yuzuru 実松謙. *Shinju-wan made no 365 nichi 真珠湾までの365日* (365 Days up to Pearl Harbor), Kojin-sha 光人社, Tokyo, 1982, p. 185.

65) Sugiyama Memo 杉山メモ Vol. 1., pp. 406–30.

66) The Naval General Staff transmitted the First Naval Order 大海令第一号 (Dai-kai-rei Dai-ichi-go) of November 5th to the Commander-in-Chief of the Combined Fleet Isoroku Yamamoto 山本五十六. This proviso was included in the First Combined Fleet Order 連合艦隊命令第一号 (Rengo Kantai Meirei Dai-ichi-go) transmitted by Admiral Yamamoto subsequent to the First Naval Order. The proviso was also included in the Fifth Navy Chief of Staff Order 大海指第五号 (Dai-kai-shi Dai-go-go) of the 21st transmitted by Navy Chief of Staff Osami Nagano 永野修身 to Yamamoto. TSM, Vol. 7, op. cit., p. 371.

the family name in his work.⁶⁷⁾ Although Herbert Feis emphasises that “Grew was moved by portents, not by evidence”,⁶⁸⁾ Grew stayed in Japan, and, as has been revealed by post-war examination, often obtained surprisingly accurate information, including the precise dialogue of the Gozen Kaigi of September 6th, 1941. The source of such information, as pointed out by Sudo, is not yet known by historians.⁶⁹⁾ Heinrichs, however, notes that “the Tokyo Embassy played no part in the Japanese-American diplomacy of late November. His (Grew’s) advice was neither asked nor given. He was not informed of the various ... proposals ... and he did not comment on them”.⁷⁰⁾

The evaluation of Grew’s view in the historical context has been controversial. However, even Herbert Feis states that “It will be always possible to think that Grew was correct”⁷¹⁾, although, as pointed out by Robert Dallek, Feis’s work has been labelled as an “official history” because “of its sympathetic portrayal of the Roosevelt Administration’s politics”,⁷²⁾ and although Feis himself expressed his view that “the records ... do not support the belief that a real chance of maintaining peace in the Pacific ... was missed”.⁷³⁾ More sympathetically, Akira Iriye

67) See Nakamura, Masanori 中村政則. *Shocho Tenno-sei e no Michi-Beikoku Taishi Guru to Sono Shuhen 象徴天皇制への道—米国大使グループとその周辺* (The Road to the Symbolic Emperor System—American Ambassador Grew and the Surrounding Circumstances, Iwanami Shoten 岩波書店, Tokyo, 1989, pp. 87–99.

68) Feis, Herbert. *The Road to Pearl Harbor: The Coming of the War Between the United States and Japan*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1950, p. 41.

69) S. Sudo, *op. cit.*, pp. 252–3.

70) Heinrichs, Waldo H. Jr. *American Ambassador, Joseph C. Grew and the Development of the United States Diplomatic Tradition*, Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1966, p. 357.

71) Feis, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

72) Dallek, Robert. *The Roosevelt Diplomacy and World War II*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1970, p. 26.

73) Feis, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

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of Harvard University states that “Had the embassy [in Tokyo] been given more leeway ... it is not inconceivable that the Japanese military might have retained some hope that the China War could be settled without inviting open conflict with the United States”.⁷⁴⁾

In fact, Grew’s insistence on a cautious posture up to the end is significant, when taking into account that, as General Marshall emphasised in his testimony before the Congressional Committee investigating the attack on Pearl Harbor, “if the 90-day truce had been effected, the United States might never have become involved in the [Pacific] war at all; that a delay by the Japanese from December, 1941, into January, 1942, might have resulted in a change of Japanese opinion as to the wisdom of the attack because of the collapse of the German front before Moscow in December, 1941”⁷⁵⁾ and that, as Anthony Kubek observes, “A growing conviction existed in Japanese military circles that Germany was in a death struggle in her war with Russia [in the winter of 1941–2]”.⁷⁶⁾

However, Grew had, as already mentioned, little influence in the formation of the American foreign policy towards Japan in the most crucial period, and the following episode, which was related by Grew in an interview with Walter Johnson in 1949, symbolises the seriousness of the lack of his influence: Following the outbreak of war, Grew “had talked to Hull and asked why Konoye’s [Prime Minister Fumimaro Konoe 近衛文麿] proposal of a visit with Roosevelt [offered in August] had not been accepted” since “he [Grew] felt that such a meeting might

74) Iriye, Akira. “The Role of the United States Embassy in Tokyo”, in Borg, Dorothy and Okamoto, Shumpei, eds. *Pearl Harbor as History: Japanese–American Relations, 1931–1941*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1973, pp. 125–6.

75) Quoted in Kubek, *How the Far East was Lost*, op. cit., p. 19.

76) *Ibid.*

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have brought peace”. Hull replied, “If you thought so strongly, why didn’t you board a plane and come to tell us?” Grew reminded Hull “of the daily telegrams which he had sent explaining the situation and his feeling about it” and “It was at this point ... that he wondered whether Mr. Hull had been given and had read all of the despatches from Tokyo”.⁷⁷⁾

Magic again played a crucial role in this matter, as observed by Michael Barnhart; “Everyone in Washington believed that it [Magic] provided incontrovertible evidence of the Imperial Conference decisions of 2 July. So Grew’s cries for flexibility ... were ignored”, and “Magic combined with old but still–vital preconceptions of the Japanese as beelike, incapable of internal differences, and Grew’s constantly discredited predictions ... made little sense” in the effort to avoid war. Barnhart concludes that “In this belief, Magic played a vital and tragic role”.⁷⁸⁾

Grew was eventually promoted to Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs of the State Department in May 1944 and played a very important role in the formation of the U.S. policy towards Japan afterwards, both towards the end of the War and after the War was over, but was not given enough opportunity before the outbreak of the War.⁷⁹⁾

THE SITUATION IN LATE 1941

In late November 1941, just before Pearl Harbor, neither the Japanese Navy nor the Army could foresee any possibility of final victory in the event of a war with the U.S.⁸⁰⁾ In practical terms, “final victory” under

77) Grew, Joseph C. Johnson, Walter, ed. *Turbulent Era : A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years 1904–1945*, Vol. 2, Hammond, Hammond & Co. Ltd., London, 1953, p. 1330.

78) Barnhart, Michael A. *Japan Prepares for Total War : The Search for Economic Security, 1919–1941*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1987, pp. 264–5.

79) In this connection, see Heinrichs, *American Ambassador*, op. cit., pp. 357–80.

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these circumstances necessarily implied at least the permanent securing of oil supply routes without subsequent threat from the U.S. and Britain, and at most the actual military occupation of Washington D.C. itself. In awareness of this impasse, the Japanese were in a sense inexorably led to the miscalculated attack on Pearl Harbor based on the assumption that the U.S. might compromise if its Pacific Fleet was largely destroyed.

At the same time, the American Navy and the Army both requested their government “to keep Japan out of the war”⁸¹⁾, or at least “to delay matters” for three months until March 1942 to enable them to prepare for war with Japan.⁸²⁾ “Yet”, as Professor Russell Weigley states, “the war came. It came in part because the civil departments of the U.S. government formulated policy toward Japan with little regard for the military capacities and limitations of the United States in the western Pacific.”⁸³⁾ Thus, neither side showed any real confidence in its readiness to engage in military conflict in the Pacific.

As noted in the preceding thesis, the later stages of the crisis were really precipitated by the exchange and misinterpretation of proposals by both sides, namely the “Plan for Negotiation with the U.S.” (Taibei Kosho Yoryo 対米交渉要領), consisting of Proposal A (ko-an 甲案) and Proposal B (otsu-an 乙案)⁸⁴⁾ prepared in early November by Japan, and

80) Kuroha, Kiyotaka 黒羽清隆. *Taiheiyo Senso no Rekishi 太平洋戦争の歴史* (A History of the Pacific War) Vol. 2, Kodan-sha 講談社, Tokyo, 1985, pp. 43–53.

TSM, Vol. 7, op. cit., pp. 366–7.

81) Weigley, Russell F. “The Role of the War Department and the Army”, in Borg, Dorothy and Okamoto, Shumpei. eds., *Pearl Harbor as History: Japanese–American Relations, 1931–1941*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1973, p. 185.

82) Wohlstetter, op. cit., pp. 246–50.

TSM, Vol. 7, op. cit., pp. 450–1.

83) Weigley, op. cit., p. 167.

on the American side the so-called “Hull Note” presented by Secretary of State Cordell Hull to Japan in late November. The most important point of the latter was the omission of the “modus vivendi”, which was in effect a temporary compromise that could have delayed any action until March of the following year. The probability has to be recognised that Japan would have lost the opportunity to choose a suitable time to open hostilities against the U.S. if the Pearl Harbor plan had been postponed until March 1942, for the following reasons.

Firstly, the Japanese pro-German group might have lost their influence, since by that time the German forces were facing their first major defeat against the Red Army on the Moscow front. Secondly, Japan would have used up nearly half of her six month stock of oil for military use during the modus vivendi period from December to the following March. Although the modus vivendi was postulated on the resumption of oil supplies, in fact it spoke specifically of “lower-grade petroleum products in quantities appropriate to civilian use”. Thirdly, Japan’s motivation for opening hostilities would have been reduced if the modus vivendi had been offered, since a version of it consisted of conditions which were more or less acceptable to the Japanese, as may be seen from the fact that they were actually pleased with those conditions

84) The Supreme Command supported a plan to open hostilities because of its fear of losing further oil stocks. Prime Minister Tojo was prepared to consider the resignation of his cabinet until the Supreme Command agreed to a new Japanese strategy : to continue efforts for diplomatic success, but, if necessary, to declare war. As a result the Liaison Council adopted in the early hours of November 2nd the “Guidelines for Implementing National Policies” and the “Plan for Negotiation with the U.S.” The latter consists of Proposal A and Proposal B. The Liaison Council also decided that December 1st should be the deadline for reaching an agreement, at least to delay the final crisis. See TSM, Vol. 7, op. cit., p. 309, Akamatsu, Sadao 赤松貞雄. Tojo Hishokan Kimitsu Nikki 東條秘書官機密日記 (Confidential Diary of Tojo’s Secretary), Bungeishunju 文藝春秋, Tokyo, 1985, p. 43, and Sugiyama Memo 杉山メモ, Vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 378–80.

when they intercepted and read them⁸⁵⁾ before the American decision to remove them from the Hull Note. In fact Japan decided, at the conference of the Liaison Council of November 24th, on several procedures for the preparation of a trade treaty with the U.S. in the event of a successful result of the talks.⁸⁶⁾ On the 25th, one day before the removal of the *modus vivendi*, Foreign Minister Togo prepared the drafts of official “reciprocal documents” both with Britain and with the Netherlands, and also a draft announcement for the newspapers in the event of an agreement being reached.⁸⁷⁾

Again, as analysed in the previous thesis Proposal B, which was offered by the Japanese government in November, could also be taken as a kind of “*modus vivendi*” in its original Japanese version, although the inadequate Magic translation clearly defined it as an “ultimatum”. Proposal B in the Magic version of #727 is exaggerated as “the idea of making a last effort to prevent something happening”, while the phrase “a last effort” does not exist in the original Japanese text.⁸⁸⁾ This part of the original telegram states that “the contents of our second proposal [Proposal B]” was “drawn up with the thought in mind that it is better to prevent something from happening before it arises”. Thus, the original text indicates that the purpose in preparing Proposal B was not to present Japan’s “last” proposal, but rather to prevent a breakdown in

85) The Japanese intercepted the *modus vivendi* when the representatives of Great Britain, Australia, China and Holland wired it from Washington to their governments. See T. Kase, *op. cit.*, p. 277, pp. 393–4.

86) See T. Kase, *ibid.*, p. 282, *Nihon Gaiko Bunsho—Nichibei Kosho 1941 日本外交文書—日米交渉 1941 (Japanese Foreign Affairs Documents—U.S.–Japan Negotiations in 1941)*, 2 vols., *Gaimu-sho 外務省 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)*, 1990, Vol. 2, p. 183.

87) See T. Kase, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

88) Cf. *Nihon Gaiko Bunsho—Nichibei Kosho 1941*, Vol. 2, *op. cit.*, p. 72, and *The “Magic” Background of Pearl Harbor*, Vol. 4, Department of Defense, Washington D.C., 1978, Appendix, p. A–16.

the negotiations. As Huddleston notes, “The concept of a *modus vivendi* is clearly expressed in the ‘original’”.⁸⁹⁾

Also, as pointed out by Professor T. Kase there was an agreement between Prime Minister Tojo and Foreign Minister Togo that they would not regard proposals A and B as the final ones in the event of a positive American response.⁹⁰⁾ This is where the significant role played by Magic mistranslations should be noted.

“CRISIS MANAGEMENT”

“Crisis Management” has recently become a popular area of debate, in both the press and academic circles, where its consideration has been applied to the history of international relations. It is clear that in the kind of negotiating situation examined here, where effective “crisis management” is essential, at least three distinct procedural steps need to be taken : collecting relevant information, determining its accuracy, and assessing its relative importance in the decision-making process. In the case of Magic information, none of these steps has been fully attempted, even to this day.

Few of the events which form the subject matter of both this and the previous thesis are unknown to historians; all have been studied in one way or another. The claim made for the two theses is that, by making a comprehensive, systematic study of both American and Japanese decision-making in close detail, the author has been able to demonstrate how misunderstanding was a contributory factor in the causation

89) Correspondence, Huddleston, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

90) T. Kase, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

Kyokuto Kokusai Gunji Saiban Sokki-roku 極東国際軍事裁判速記録,
(Japanese Record of Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal
for the Far East), Vol. 9, Court House of the Tribunal War Ministry Building,
Tokyo, Japan, Yushodo Shoten 雄松堂書店, Tokyo, 1968, p. 602.
Shigenori Togo, *op. cit.*, p. 313.

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of a war which neither side wanted.

Over fifty years after Pearl Harbor, some revision of different historical views is taking place, and much of the publication has been journalistic, owing to the media’s interest in the anniversary. Considering that only a very small number of the scholarly works in Japanese have been translated into English,⁹¹⁾ one should recognise that the factor of linguistic barriers and deep-rooted misperceptions still exists between the U.S. and Japan. This is a good moment to take advantage, in a critical manner, of the opportunity to combine the Western works and the new Japanese research.

91) For instance, only 4 out of 260 Japanese records and essays on the subject of the origins of the Pacific War of 1941–5 were available in English in 1990, according to the list of the relevant records and scholarly works published in 1991 by the Military History Society of Japan (Gunjishi Gakkai 軍事史学会), Tokyo.