

November 26, 1941.

Personal and confidential

Dear Mr. President:

I am sending herewith

1. Another memo about the Japanese movement to the south from Shanghai. This is highly abbreviated from the verbal information given me but it will give you the substance.
2. The British estimate as to Japanese intentions of which I spoke to you and of which you asked me to send you a copy.

Will you kindly return this last paper when you have read it?

Faithfully yours,

HENRY L. STIMSON

Secretary of War.

The President,
The White House.

ORIGINAL ~~MAILED~~ *by hand - Sgt. Litch*
OFFICE SECRETARY OF WAR
Nov 26/41 12 20

DECLASSIFIED
By *[signature]*
DATE *[signature]*

ENCLOSUREBox 13
Folder 1
Item 6
Page 2~~SECRET~~U.S. CONFIDENTIALSummary of estimate by J.I.C., London, of
Japanese intentions.

1. It is not certain that Japan has reached a decision to risk conflict with Britain and U.S.A., but events are driving her to early decision. Japan hopes that present conversations in Washington may provide a way out. The climax of the conversations now reached by KURIBAYASHI'S arrival and fundamental decision on policy is likely to follow their outcome. Meanwhile only course open to Japan which she may think would not involve a risk of war with us and United States is to try to finish war in China.

2. To end China war Japan must either make peace with CHIANG-KAI-SHEK or stop his supplies by cutting BURMA ROAD. Two routes of attack possible. Shortest is from TONGKING to KUEILING, but terrain makes this a very difficult operation. Longer route westward of KWANSI province feasible but operation would take longer time than Japan prepared to give. Latest intelligence indicates that southward movement of forces from TONGKING and CANTON suggest major operation against BURMA ROAD unlikely at present.

3. If Washington conversations fail and Japan decides to proceed irrespective of risk of war with Britain, U.S.A. and Netherlands East Indies, she may attack -

- (a) THAILAND,
- (b) MALAYA,
- (c) NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES,
- (d) MARITIME PROVINCES.

4. THAILAND. Japan's infiltration into THAILAND and building of communications in Indo China, construction of aerodromes, work on Naval base at CAMBANG BAY, indicates preparation for move into THAILAND. Japan would consider this move least likely to involve action by ourselves and U.S.A. Main strategic advantage only gained if IRA Isthmus occupied simultaneously with land move from INDO CHINA. Little economic advantage to Japan in occupation of THAILAND but object of attack would be to secure important bases for further move south.

5. MALAYA. Occupation of THAILAND leads logically to attack on MALAYA. This would be certain to involve ourselves probably U.S.A.

6. NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES. Capture of Dutch BORNEO would remedy Japan's most urgent shortage i.e. oil. Operation would however be strategically unsound from naval point of view and Japan would think it would involve conflict with us and U.S.A. We believe attack would be preceded by occupation of THAILAND.

7. RUSSIAN MARITIME PROVINCES. Since beginning of Russian campaign Japanese forces facing Russia increased from 11 to 29 Divisions. Only interest Japan would have in attacking Russia would be the removal of traditional enemy. Operation would be long and expensive if Russian resistance were maintained. Japan now lacks sufficient superiority to make offensive operations against Russia probable unless Russian forces are weakened.

8. CONCLUSIONS.

(a) Japan will make last effort at agreement with U.S.A. Decision whether or not to take aggressive action involving major powers would follow failure of conversations.

(b) If such decision is taken THAILAND will be first probable objective involving least risk of major conflict. Occupation of bases in THAILAND including KRA Isthmus is a sound strategic preliminary culminating in operation against MALAYA or NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES. Recent military movements support opinion that THAILAND is next objective.

(c) Action against Russia likely to be deferred until position of Russia in Far East is seriously weakened.

(d) Operation in China will continue in absence of a general agreement with U.S.A.

(e) Early attack on BURMA ROAD is unlikely in view of latest information of diversion of forces southward from NORTHERN INDO CHINA and CANTON.