

Memoranda for the President: Japanese Feelers

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Documents tracing some fervent but fruitless Japanese efforts to end the war in the Pacific.

The last two volumes of the OSS Reports to the White House preserved among General Donovan's papers¹ include records of several different Japanese approaches in 1945 to the Vatican and to OSS Lisbon, Bern, and Wiesbaden seeking a way to end the war. These peace feelers were generally the product of local initiative and had at most only a tacit approval from official Tokyo, where government quarreling over the question of capitulation was growing more and more desperate as the year advanced. They did not lead in any way to the eventual Japanese notes sent through standard diplomatic channels on 10 and 14 August, but they may have helped define for both sides the conditions therein drawn which made "unconditional" surrender a practical possibility.

The intelligence reports provide interesting and sometimes puzzling footnotes for Robert J. C. Butow's fastidious -- and fascinating -- reconstruction of the intricate political maneuverings that ended in Japan's Decision to Surrender.² The documents are reproduced below.

Through the Vatican

17 January 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

On 10 January the Japanese Emperor attended a secret council meeting during which someone dared to speak about peace feelers.³

The Emperor was informed that certain Japanese individuals have been attempting to interest the highest authority at source⁴ in mediating the Pacific War. The Emperor did not express any disapproval of these efforts.

Someone at the meeting declared that such activities might be a useful preparation for a time more opportune than the present. The Council was skeptical of mediation possibilities, evidently believing that only force of arms would settle the conflict.

24 January 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

On 17 January a conference, the substance of which is reported below, took place with the following people present:

Masahide Kanayama, Japanese representative at the Holy See

Giovani Montini, acting Secretary of State

Mgr. Domenico Tardini, President of the Pontifical Commission for Russia

Pio Rossignani, Private Secretary of the Pope

KANAYAMA: The pacifists in Japan have great faith in the Holy See. An attempt by the Holy See to initiate mediation would greatly encourage our pacifists, even if there should be no immediate concrete results.

MONTINI: It is clear to us that the gap between the viewpoints of the two belligerents is too wide to permit Papal mediation.

TARDINI: Japanese adherence to the tripartite pact seriously hurts the Japanese case in Allied countries. World opinion stigmatizes Japan as an aggressor, and even Soviet Russia concurs.

KANAYAMA: Our Ambassador in Moscow has informed our Government that the Far East will be discussed when the Big Three meet. The United States, supported by Churchill, will ask for Russian help to crush us completely. The Anglo-Americans will ask that Russia denounce the pact of non-aggression with Japan and that Russia passively participate in the Pacific War and permit AngloAmerican use of Russian air bases. Our Government also understands that, before Stalin will agree to this, he will request a whole hearted attempt on the part of the Anglo-Americans to mediate, and that he will even offer to act as mediator. Our Government also understands that the Big Three will discuss European problems first, and that if they are not settled to Russia's satisfaction, especially the Polish question, then Stalin will not discuss the Far East.

TARDINI: The United States and England have already made a declaration on Poland. American public opinion is behind Roosevelt.

KANAYAMA: It is a diplomatic maneuver to draw concessions from Russia. Moreover, Roosevelt and Churchill have another move to make against Russia. Turkey and the countries of the Middle East are ready to enter the war against us. Stalin is opposed to these countries entering either the Pacific or the European War.

ROSSIGNANI: In view of all this, would it not be better for the Pope to synchronize his mediation with that of Stalin?

KANAYAMA: On the contrary, it is urgent that His Holiness come to our assistance before the Big Three meet to discuss Japan, and that this mediation be in full swing at the time. Stalin is interested in close collaboration with the Anglo-Americans, but he wishes to gain the maximum benefits from this collaboration. Stalin knows that the Japanese reaction will be swift when it becomes evident that Russian denunciation of the non-aggression pact is imminent. There may be a stiffening of Japanese resistance, or the pacifists may prevail. In this latter case, Stalin would cut a big figure, and he would be able to gain satisfying terms for the Anglo-Americans. And even to the Japanese he might appear as the savior of Japan from destruction. Stalin desires to have De Gaulle at the coming conference, but Roosevelt and Churchill are opposed. However, should De Gaulle be admitted to the conference, then Chiang Kai-shek will be present also.

MONTINI: Would it not be possible for the Japanese Government to offer terms that would be closer to those of the Anglo-Americans so that the Holy See could begin mediation on more concrete bases?

KANAYAMA: We will communicate your request to our government at once, together with an account of this conference. Meanwhile, it would be useful if

the Holy See would begin mediation attempts.

ROSSIGNANI: Very well. This evening I will present Mr. Kanayama's memorandum and the minutes of this conference to His Holiness.

27 January 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The following is source's account⁵ of the conference held on 19 January between the Pope and Mr. Myron Taylor:

When asked whether he considered Papal mediation in the Pacific war possible, Taylor was skeptical. He stated that recent developments had evidently not brought the Japanese point of view any closer to that of the Anglo-Americans. The Pope asked if he would discuss the situation with the Japanese Ambassador to the Holy See, and Taylor replied that he was neither an official nor semi-official representative of the United States, and accordingly could speak only as a private individual. Taylor promised to communicate with the President, for which the Pope thanked him, and asked him to explain the sentiments which animated this inquiry.

2 February 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

On 25 January, Harada Ken, Japanese Ambassador to the Holy See, made the following assertions to the Pope:

The Japanese Government would be willing to interpret the Vatican's wishes to the Kremlin.

The Kremlin has assured the Japanese Ambassador in Moscow that Russia will ask the Anglo-Americans to attempt to reach a negotiated peace in the Pacific, provided the Japanese Government accepts the Soviet proposal that the Far East peace conference include Russia, China, Great Britain, the United States, France, and Japan.⁶ ...

2 February 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Source⁷ has been informed by connections in Japan that the Japanese Government is confident that Stalin will categorically refuse to abrogate the non-aggression pact with Japan. The Japanese hope for new Soviet-Japanese pacts strengthening the non-aggression pact.

The Japanese Government feels that Japan can continue the Pacific war indefinitely in view of Russia's certain refusal to enter the war. Japan therefore cannot reduce its minimum terms for a peace settlement.

16 February 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The following is a resume of the first talk between Myron Taylor and Harada Ken, Japanese Ambassador to the Holy See, as reported by Vessel:

Harada declared that Japanese elements desirous of peace are not responsible for the Pacific war, and that those elements might be able to make their will felt if the Anglo-Americans would offer acceptable terms.

Taylor reminded Harada that American public opinion still remembers the unprovoked attack on Pearl Harbor. He promised, however, to initiate a friendly investigation of the possibilities for negotiation.

Taylor and Harada agreed that the terms of the two belligerent groups, as they knew them, were too far apart to permit negotiations.

Harada stated that the United States' chief war aim apparently was a victory that would give Japanese pacifist elements ascendancy over the military and prevent any future militarist aggression. He added that Japan was exhausted by the war she has been fighting since 1937, and that she needs a long period of peace.

11 April 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

An OSS representative has transmitted the following information, reportedly sent to the Vatican on 6 April⁸ by Lorenzo Tatewaki Toda, the Apostolic Delegate in Yokohama:

Tatewaki Toda, who is a member of a Japanese princely family and related to the Emperor, proposes to call on the Emperor in order to "comfort him with the certain hope that the Holy See will not abandon its attempt at mediation" of the war in the Pacific. Tatewaki Toda believes that the present is the most favorable moment to conquer the intransigence of the extreme militarists in the interests of a peaceful solution to the war. He promises as soon as possible to send the Holy See a set of conditions which it may judge acceptable to the Anglo-Americans, and he beseeches the Pope to pray that Japan's rulers may become convinced of the necessity of an honorable peace.

In Lisbon

31 May 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The following information has been transmitted by the OSS representative in Lisbon:

On 7 May 1945 the OSS representative reported that during a contact with a regular source of varying reliability, source stated that he had been asked by Masutaro Inoue, Counsellor of the Japanese Legation in Portugal, to contact United States representatives. Source quoted Inoue as saying that the Japanese are ready to cease hostilities, provided they are allowed to retain possession of their home islands. Inoue stressed American and Japanese "common interests" against the USSR. He said, however, that unconditional surrender would not be acceptable to Japan.

(The OSS representative believes that Inoue selected this particular source to carry his message to American representatives, because of source's long experience in Portugal and Japan.)

On 19 May, the OSS representative reported that Inoue again had repeated to source his desire to talk with an American representative. On this occasion Inoue declared that actual peace terms were unimportant so long as the term "unconditional surrender" was not employed. The Japanese, he asserted, are convinced that within a few weeks all of their wood and paper houses will be destroyed. Inoue insisted, however, that such destruction would not lead to unconditional surrender and that the war would still be prosecuted in China. The destruction of the Meiji Jinja shrine, Inoue added, had strengthened Japanese will to resist.

[The information contained in the above messages was given the United States Ambassador by the OSS representative.] The OSS representative on 23 May reported that the United States Ambassador, after consultation with the British and Chinese, instructed that Inoue be told he must show proof that he is authorized to speak for the Japanese Government and that he is prepared to discuss unconditional surrender--the only basis acceptable to the United States.

In Bern

12 May 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The following information, transmitted by the OSS representative in Bern,⁹ originates with a German source, an authority on the Far East who is considered anti-Nazi but pro-Japanese:¹⁰

The source, on 11 May, talked with Shunichi Kase, the Japanese Minister to Switzerland. He reports that Kase expressed a wish to help arrange for a cessation of hostilities between the Japanese and the Allies. Kase reportedly considers direct talks with the Americans and the British preferable to negotiations through the USSR,¹¹ because the latter eventually would increase Soviet prestige so much that the whole Far East would become Communist.

Kase allegedly believes that one of the few provisions the Japanese would insist upon would be the retention of the Emperor as the only safeguard against Japan's conversion to Communism. Kase feels that Under Secretary of State Grew, whom he considers the best US authority on Japan, shares this opinion.

Added by hand: Should we pursue this? Donovan

4 June 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The following information, transmitted by the OSS representative in Bern on 2 June, is a sequel to memorandum dated 12 May 1945 concerning an alleged Japanese peace feeler. The source of the information is the same German authority on the Far East who is considered anti-Nazi but pro-Japanese:

Source is in touch with Fujimura, who is understood to be one of the principal Japanese naval representatives in Europe and a former Assistant Naval Attache in Berlin. Fujimura is reported to be in direct and secret contact by cable with the Japanese Minister of Marine [Navy?] and is believed to enjoy the confidence of the Japanese Government.

Fujimura indicated to source that the Navy circles who now control [?] the Japanese Government would be willing to surrender but wish, if possible, to save some face from the present wreckage. These Navy circles, he declares, particularly stress the necessity of preserving the Emperor in order to avoid Communism and chaos. Fujimura emphasizes that Japan can not supply itself with basically essential foodstuffs and is dependent upon Korea for sugar and rice. He also insists that Japan needs to retain some of its merchant marine for necessary food imports.¹²

22 June 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The following information, transmitted by the OSS representative in Bern, is a sequel to memoranda dated 12 May and 4 June concerning peace feelers emanating reportedly from the Japanese Legation in Bern. The source of the information is the same German authority referred to in previous memoranda, a description of whom is appended below:

According to source, Fujimura insists that the Japanese, before surrendering, would require assurances that the Emperor would be retained. Fujimura has read accounts in the Bern press of Mr. Allen Dulles' part in arranging for the German capitulation in North Italy. Fujimura is obviously interested in knowing what terms short of unconditional surrender might have been granted these Germans.¹³

* * *

[Source is a German national who was taken prisoner by the Japanese in World War I. Upon his release he remained in Japan and established important commercial relations there. He placed Japanese purchases in Germany, made a substantial fortune, and gained the confidence of high Japanese circles, particularly in the Navy. Some years ago he returned to Europe and, as he was *persona non grata* with the Hitler Government, took up residence in Zurich. He maintained contacts, however, with Japanese circles in Berlin, particularly with Admiral Nomura, the Japanese Naval Attache. He is understood to have advised the Japanese two years ago that Germany would be decisively defeated, while Ambassador Oshima at that time officially predicted a German victory.]

In Wiesbaden

13 July 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The following information, received from Mr. Allen Dulles in Wiesbaden, dated 12 and 13 July, concerns a new Japanese attempt to approach Allied authorities through OSS representatives in Switzerland:

Per Jacobson,¹⁴ a Swedish national and economic adviser to the Bank for International Settlements, has been approached by Kojiro Kitamura, a director of the Bank, a representative of the Yokohama Specie Bank and former financial attache in Berlin. Kitamura indicated to Jacobson that he was anxious to establish immediate contact with American representatives and implied that the only condition on which Japan would insist with respect to surrender would be some consideration for the Japanese Imperial family. Kitamura showed that he was completely familiar with OSS operations which led to the surrender of the German forces in North Italy, and declared that he wished to establish a contact similar to that made by General Karl Wolff.

According to Jacobson, Kitamura is acting with the consent of the Japanese Minister to Switzerland, Shunichi Kase, and is working with Brigadier General Kiyotomi Okamoto, a former Japanese Military Attache in Bern. [Okamoto is probably the chief of Japanese Intelligence in Europe.] Kitamura claims that the Japanese group in Switzerland has direct communications with Tokyo and is in a position to make definite commitments.

(Responsible OSS cut-out sources who talked with Jacobson at Basel believe that the Kitamura approach was initiated locally rather than on the basis of instructions from Tokyo. Hence it is difficult to assess the seriousness of the approach.

(The OSS representative in Bern reports that Jacobson has urgently requested him to come to Basel to see him this coming week-end. The OSS representative has declined the invitation but has told Jacobson that he could see him in Bern¹⁵ on Sunday, 15 July. The OSS representative in Bern will see Jacobson only to obtain such intelligence as Jacobson is able to give, and expects to treat the entire matter with the greatest caution and reserve.)

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The following information, a sequel to a memorandum dated 13 July ... has been received from Mr. Allen Dulles in Wiesbaden. ...

Jacobsson reports that between 10 and 13 July he had a series of conferences with Yoshimura, a Japanese official attached to the Bank for International Settlements, and Kojiro Kitamura, a director of the Bank, representative of the Yokohama Specie Bank, and former financial attache in Berlin. Yoshimura and Kitamura claim to be acting in consultation with the Japanese Minister to Switzerland, Shunichi Kase, and Brigadier General Kiyotomi Okamoto, former Japanese military attache in Bern, who now is believed to be chief of Japanese Intelligence in Europe. Yoshimura and Kitamura claim further that Kase and Okamoto have direct and secret means of communicating with the Japanese Chief of Staff. Yoshimura also claims that the peace group which he represents includes General Ushijiro Umezu, Army Chief of Staff;¹⁶ Admiral Mitsumasa Yonai, Minister of Navy; and Shigenori Togo, Foreign Minister.

Yoshimura and Kitamura appeared to Jacobsson no longer to question the principle of unconditional surrender, though at one point they asked whether unconditional military and naval surrender might not be sufficient. On his own initiative Jacobsson replied that such a proposal would not be acceptable to the Allies but would be considered merely a quibble.¹⁷ Both Japanese officials raised the question of maintaining Japanese territorial integrity, but they apparently did not mean to include Manchukuo, Korea or Formosa.

Throughout discussions with Jacobsson, the Japanese officials stressed only two points: (a) the preservation of the Emperor, and (b) the possibility of returning to the constitution promulgated in 1889. Kitamura prepared and presented to Jacobsson a memorandum asking him to sound out Mr. Dulles' opinion on the two points.

(Mr. Dulles feels that these two Japanese are insisting on the retention of the Emperor because they feel that he alone can take effective action with respect to surrender and that some hope of survival must be held out to him in order to gain his support for unconditional surrender.)

Later Yoshimura and Kitamura prepared a second memorandum in which they asked how, if Tokyo were ready to proceed, conversations could be arranged with Allied representatives and what form of authorization would be required.

Jacobsson is personally convinced that these approaches are serious and that the Japanese group in Switzerland is in constant cable contact with Tokyo.¹⁸ This conviction appears to be based on impressions only, since his two Japanese contacts never stated precisely that they had received

instructions from any authorized agency in Tokyo.

(Mr. Dulles, in carefully guarded statements, pointed out to Jacobsson that:

(1. Mr. Grew's statement of 10 July covered the situation. As yet these approaches which Jacobsson described, in the absence of conclusive evidence that they emanated from a fully-empowered official, fall squarely into the category of "peace feelers" described by Mr. Grew.¹⁹

(2. If competent Japanese authorities accepted unconditional surrender, appropriate Allied authorities would determine how such a surrender should be effected.

(3. He (Mr. Dulles) had no comments to make with regard to dynastic and constitutional questions.²⁰

(4. Prompt unconditional surrender appears to be the only way to save anything out of the wreckage.

(Mr. Dulles agrees with Jacobsson that the Japanese have taken to heart the consequences which Germany has suffered, including extensive physical destruction and the collapse of all German authority, because it prolonged a futile struggle many months after its hopelessness was wholly apparent. Jacobsson feels therefore that a tendency is growing in certain Japanese circles to try to terminate the war at any cost, provided that non-militaristic Japanese governmental institutions can be preserved in the Japanese home islands.

(Mr. Dulles expects within a few days to obtain some evidence as to whether these approaches by Yoshimura and Kitamura have any serious backing or represent merely an effort by the Japanese group in Switzerland to start something on their own initiative.)

18 July 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

* * *

Mr. Dulles has been informed by OSS representatives in Switzerland that Yoshimura and Kojiro Kitamura, Japanese officials in the Bank for International Settlements, were scheduled to confer at once with Brigadier General Kiyotomi Okamoto at Zurich, and immediately thereafter to cable Tokyo. ...

(Mr. Dulles believes that for the next few days important developments in this matter are not likely, but that a line is being opened which the Japanese may use when the situation in Tokyo permits Japan to accept unconditional surrender.)

2 August 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

* * *

Immediately following is a summary of a report by Per Jacobsson, a Swedish national and economic adviser to the Bank for International Settlements, transmitted to Mr. Dulles through an intermediary:

The Japanese Chief of Staff has acknowledged without comment a long cable which Brigadier General Kiyotomi Okamoto sent from Switzerland on 19 July. Okamoto's telegram reportedly stated that Japan has lost the war and must promptly accept the consequences. ...

The Japanese Foreign Minister has also acknowledged a detailed report from Shunichi Kase, Japanese Minister in Bern. Kase's report, sent on or about 21 July, included (a) Mr. Grew's statement of 10 July, (b) a memorandum from Kojiro Kitamura, director of the Bank for International Settlements and former financial attache in Berlin, who has been active in the current Japanese approaches to Mr. Dulles, and (c) a statement of Kase's own position. The Foreign Minister's reply to Kase's message contained the following query: "Is that all you have to say?" Kase interprets this query as an invitation to continue peace approaches.

The recent tripartite ultimatum to Japan²¹ has been the chief topic of discussion among Japanese groups in Switzerland. Their first reaction, on the basis of excerpts published in the Swiss press, was that (a) the proclamation showed a lack of understanding of Japanese character, (b) the document should have not been framed on a basis of "take it or leave it," (c) the inclusion of China as a signatory represented an "added element of humiliation," and (d) the document should have been sent through private channels rather than

publicly. After receiving the full English text through Jacobsson, and after further study, the attitude of the group changed, and the proclamation was accepted as an "astute document which left a possible way out." The group was particularly impressed by "unconditional surrender" in connection with the "Japanese armed forces" and to the reference to revival and strengthening of democratic tendencies among the Japanese people. As a result, a telegram stressing these points was to be sent to Tokyo on 30 July.

The following is a summary of a memorandum to Mr. Dulles from the Japanese group in contact with Per Jacobsson. Jacobsson transmitted this memo along with his own report summarized above.

The Japanese group emphasizes that it is hoping for some decision within a week unless "resistance is too great." The Allies should not take "too seriously" what was said over the Tokyo radio about the tripartite proclamation.²² This radio comment was merely "propaganda to maintain morale in Japan." The real reply will be given through some "official channel," possibly by Minister Kase or General Okamoto, if an official Government reply is not made over the Tokyo radio.

Mr. Dulles also has been informed, by a German authority on the Far East living in Switzerland who is one of his regular contacts, that Yosikazu²³ Fujimura, a Japanese Navy representative in Bern, has sent seven long cables to his superiors in Tokyo during the past two months urging immediate cessation of hostilities. His superiors cabled in reply that the Japanese Navy no longer is able to "act alone," and instructed Fujimura not to take the initiative without orders from Tokyo, but to maintain his "most valuable contacts."²⁴

* * *

The German source reports and Jacobsson confirms that Fujimura and Kitamura have established close contact with each other. The two men, Jacobsson confirms, are agreed that joint action by all Japanese services in Switzerland might make some impression on the Japanese Government, since Bern now "is probably next to Moscow the most important Japanese foreign post."

9 August 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

* * *

Per Jacobsson ... has transmitted the following information to Mr. Dulles through an intermediary:

Kojiro Kitamura ... has held a number of conversations on the significance of the tripartite ultimatum to Japan issued at Potsdam with the Japanese Minister in Bern, Shunichi Kase, and Brigadier General Kiyotomi Okamoto, believed to be the head of Japanese intelligence in Europe.

According to indications from the Tokyo Radio, the three men all feel that the declaration initially was badly received. They emphasize, however, the "brief and perfunctory" nature of the formal reply as given over the Tokyo Radio by Premier Suzuki. They attribute the terseness of the reply as evidence of the influence of a "peace party."

This group in Switzerland has been sending daily cables to Tokyo stating that the Potsdam declaration to Japan was merely a simple statement of Allied war aims and not a "take-it-or-leave-it ultimatum which Japan could not honorably accept, as was first believed." The group feels that these daily messages to Tokyo have served to bolster the efforts of the "peace Party" in Tokyo. The group finds encouraging the fact that it has not been rebuked for such frank statements, and attaches considerable importance to a report in the Swiss press on 5 August that Foreign Minister Togo was received in private audience by the Emperor.²⁵ The group considers that Togo belongs to "a new peace party."

The group requested Jacobsson to ask Mr. Dulles whether he would be willing to see an authorized representative of the Japanese Government. If so, one of the following would be selected as the representative: (1) Minister Kase, acting as Japanese Government delegate to the conversations, not as Minister to Switzerland; (2) Ambassador Sato in Moscow; or preferably (3) some Swiss civilian now in Tokyo who could be sent under the cover of a representative of the International Red Cross. The group prefers the third alternative because it feels that such a person would know the situation in Tokyo and "would evaluate the situation as envisaged in Europe."

Mr. Dulles comments that there is no direct evidence that these suggestions from the Japanese group in Switzerland are based on instructions from Tokyo. Mr. Dulles has again cautioned Jacobsson on this point and has emphasized to Jacobsson that the only question is whether the Japanese are ready to accept unconditional surrender as set forth in the Potsdam and other previous official declarations. Realizing the extreme delicacy of this matter, Mr.

Dulles continues to handle it with the greatest caution.

13 September 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

The following, prepared to complete your records, is the substance of a final report, dated 27 August, from Mr. Allen Dulles, Chief of the OSS Mission in Wiesbaden, concerning the Japanese pre-surrender attempt to approach Allied authorities through OSS representatives. ...

On 17 August, Per Jacobsson transmitted the following information to Mr. Dulles:

Brigadier General Kiyotomi Okamoto, believed to be head of Japanese intelligence in Europe until his suicide 15 August, received a telegram just before his death from the Japanese Chief of Staff, thanking him and his associates in Bern for their work in communicating with "the Americans" in Switzerland. The wire stated that their work in Switzerland had been most useful in enabling Tokyo to reach a decision.

(Mr. Dulles comments that the Navy and civilian groups were prepared to seek peace before the Army had come to such a decision. The initiation of formal peace offers therefore was blocked until someone in the Army group came out in favor of surrender.)²⁶

After receiving the message, General Okamoto wrote Fujimura asking him to express thanks to Jacobsson and Mr. Dulles. In recognition of his work, Jacobsson is to be entertained by both Fujimura and Kitamura. Jacobsson feels that the Japanese in Bern must have been praised by Tokyo for their work.

In his messages to Tokyo prior to the Japanese surrender, General Okamoto had insisted that his government should deal solely with the United States. Jacobsson believes it is likely that the suggestions of the Japanese in Bern "persuaded the Emperor finally to turn to the United States alone." The Swiss group, inspired by Jacobsson, suggested the face-saving formula that avoided the use of the word "surrender" in Japanese official communications.²⁷

Before he died, General Okamoto collected all of Fujimura's letters and other pertinent papers and directed that they be saved for historians' use. Jacobsson learned from Fujimura that immediately after General Okamoto's death, the Japanese Chief of Staff sent Okamoto's "military office" in Bern a message of condolence. The message apparently was not a mere formality, since it was much longer than customary and included the following sentence: "I appreciate his patriotic service rendered at our country's most critical moment."

Fujimura and Kitamura regard this action as expressing approval and appreciation of the General's last telegrams advocating surrender.

Shunichi Kase, Japanese Minister in Bern, decided in July that he had been wrong in favoring the USSR as the intermediary for peace negotiations. He radioed Tokyo that the Soviet Union was not a satisfactory channel and that the wisest course would be to deal directly with the United States through Swiss contacts.

Jacobsson believes that, because of the above, the Japanese Government elected to send the final surrender communication through Bern. Stockholm, he points out, would have served as well and would have been the normal transmittal point since the USSR, by then at war, had diplomatic representatives in the Swedish capital.²⁸

1 Described in the first of this series, subtitled "Sunrise," in *Studies* VII 2, p. 73 ff.

2 Stanford University Press, 1954.

3 Butow, who had examined the Japanese records most thoroughly, does not mention such a 10 January meeting. It was at this time, however, with the American return to the Philippines, that the Emperor and the government began to be seriously worried about the outcome of the war. On 6 January the Emperor proposed consulting the senior statesmen (former premiers) about the war situation, and individual audiences were set up for them during February. The imperial favorite among them, Prince Konoye, declaring that "Japan has already lost the war," suggested purging the military of its extremists in order to clear the air for negotiations.

4 The Pope.

5 Reports from this source in the Vatican were code-named Vessel. By March some of them were proved false, and it was soon suspected that many of them had been fabricated or planted. This may explain the discrepancies between them and Butow's account.

6 Butow touches on these feelers through the Vatican only in one footnote reference to an AP dispatch of the preceding 17 July, shortly after the fall of Saipan, reporting Harada to have told the Pope that Japan was ready for any peace that would leave its national life and economy intact. The report was categorically denied by a government spokesman in Tokyo.

7 Of the Vessel reports.

8 That is, just after the assault on Okinawa, the collapse of the Koiso cabinet,

and the USSR's announcement that its neutrality pact with Japan would not be renewed.

9 Allen Dulles.

10 Butow identifies this man as a Dr. Friedrich Hack (apparently in retransliteration from the Japanese "Hakku") and connects him with incidental references in Willoughby's *Shanghai Conspiracy* to a man named Haak or Haag.

11 The official Japanese efforts to bring an end to the war were all mistakenly directed at securing Soviet mediation. These efforts continued right up to the Soviet invasion of Manchuria on 9 August.

12 Butow carries a detailed account of this approach from Yoshiro Fujimura's own testimony, but there are gross discrepancies especially with respect to dates. It has Hack meeting as intermediary for Fujimura with Gero von Gaevernitz and others of Mr. Dulles' staff from 23 April on and Mr. Dulles receiving authorization "from the State Department" to continue the meetings on 3 May. According to this account Minister Shunichi Kase, whose 11 May approach is reported above, did not enter the picture until 20 June, when Tokyo finally instructed Fujimura to work with him. Fujimura is said to have cabled urgent operational dispatches to the Navy chiefs in Tokyo on 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, and four later dates in May, presenting the contact as effected on American initiative and urging that he be authorized to negotiate. But in Tokyo there was too much opposition even in Navy circles, most notably from Naval Chief of Staff Toyoda.

13 At about this time Admiral Leahy, according to his account in *I Was There*, asked Mr. Dulles about "rumors that some OSS agents were trying to arrange for conversations with high Japanese officials regarding peace terms" and Mr. Dulles said "he had no knowledge of any such activity and did not believe the OSS was involved."

14 The surname should be spelled with a double. Butow, apparently not finding a given name in his sources, calls him "a certain Mr. Jacobson."

15 All three anachronistic references to Bern in this paragraph should read Wiesbaden.

16 Umezu was actually one of the bitter-enders wanting to the last to give battle to the invaders on home soil. He, with War Minister Anami and Naval Chief of Staff Toyoda, were brought into line with the "peace group" only by the intervention of the Emperor on 10 and again on 14 August.

17 But this quibble, incorporated on 26 July into the Potsdam proclamation, became an important argument for accepting the surrender terms.

18 Okamoto and Kase sent many cables (in which they, like Fujimura,

apparently implied that the initiative for the contact had come from Mr. Dulles), but the only encouragement they got from Tokyo was the lack of any rebuke.

19 "Conversations relating to peace have been reported to the Department from various parts of the world, but in no case has an approach been made ... by a person who could establish his authority to speak for the Japanese Government. ... The purported 'peace feelers' ... are the usual moves in the conduct of psychological warfare by a defeated enemy."

20 But according to Butow's information from the postwar testimony of Kase, Yoshimura, and Kitamura, Mr. Dulles' reply as relayed by Jacobsson had been that the United States was not opposed to preserving the imperial institution but had to take its allies' views into account and so could not make any firm commitment. It could state its "understanding" that the imperial system would be retained. The constitution, however, would have to be changed.

21 The Potsdam proclamation.

22 It had been formally decided at cabinet level to withhold public comment on the proclamation while seeking clarification through Soviet good offices. But this decision was somehow twisted in the next day's press and radio into one to show "silent contempt" for the tripartite terms, and then Premier Suzuki, under pressure from the military, confirmed this interpretation.

23 Error for Yoshiro.

24 Butow has him receiving only two replies from Tokyo, one in mid-May enjoining caution against an enemy trap and the one on 20 June telling him to work with Kase. See note 12 above.

25 Butow does not record this audience. Togo was received on 8 August to report what enemy broadcasts were saying about the bomb that had destroyed Hiroshima and to emphasize the urgency of accepting the Potsdam proclamation.

26 But Okamoto's coming out in favor of surrender had had no evident effect on Army circles in Tokyo. See note 16 above.

27 To judge from Butow's study, the cables from Switzerland commanded little attention in Tokyo.

28 The surrender notes were communicated to Britain and the USSR through the Swedish government, to the United States and China through the Swiss.

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