

## NOMURA SATISFIED with P. I. COOPERATION

**A**DMIRAL Kitisaburo Nomura visited Manila early this month on an inspection tour of the Philippines. The following is the interview which he gave the local press:

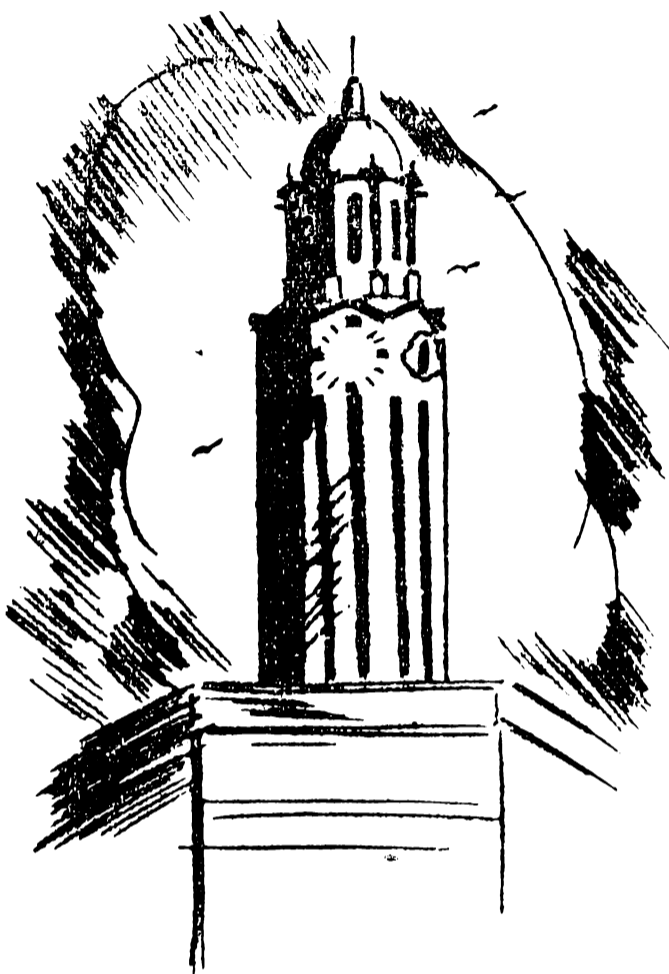
*Question:* What is your impression of Manila and of the Filipino people?

*Answer:* Since my arrival in the Philippines, I have spent my time visiting Corregidor and Cavite. What impressed me most deeply is that in spite of the recent hostilities I see a close and sincere coöperation between the Japanese and the Filipinos. This has impressed me a great deal. I have also another impression which I can express more tangibly. In my recent tour of Corregidor and Cavite, I was struck by the thought that in this age of scientific development and materialism, when the world is being divided into hemispheric regions, such as the Co-Prospcrity Sphere in Asia, the Pan-Americanism in the Americas and the hemispheric bloc in Europe, there cannot be and there is actually no permanence in any materialistic structure that threatens the peace of the world. Corregidor is a good example. There is no justification for its construction and maintenance, or for the building of naval and air bases which America tried to establish here to threaten the peace of the Orient. The hostilities have led us to the conclusion that there is no reason for such bases.

### *Pacific Peace*

*Question:* Can you give us an account of the events that led to your last conference with Secretary of State Cordell Hull?

*Answer:* The events leading to my last conference with Secretary Hull in Washington have been published in the newspapers and are known to all. It has been the consistent policy of the Japanese Government to render its utmost in setting problems in the Pacific in order that an agreement could be reached by both the United States and Japan. Moti-



vated by a sublime and sincere feeling, Japan was prepared to go a step farther in the interest of peace. We were ready to offer our good offices, together with the United States, to settle the problem in Europe. From the very outset, the Japanese Government was sincere in its negotiations with the United States. It was my task to carry out this policy of the Japanese Government and I did my best.

*Question:* What was the temper of the American people regarding a possible conflict with Japan as differentiated from the official government attitude?

*Answer:* This question is rather difficult to answer. Public opinion is hard to gauge accurately. I can only give you my personal view. At the beginning, the attitude of the American public was that the investments and the interests of the United States in China were negligible, and that they were not worth irritating Japan to the point of starting hostilities in order to protect these small interests. It was thought that it would be wise to recall the American gunboats and marines in China. This was the prevailing public opinion when I became Ambassador. Later on, however, public opinion shifted. The Americans took the stand that they were bound by sentiment to support the Chungking regime and that China being the underdog America should not betray her trust. They would rather go to war than depart from their traditional policy of friendship with Chungking. Consequently, propaganda to this effect was intensified, and various measures were taken such as the China relief funds raised by voluntary contributions. So by the end of my term, public opinion favored going to war with Japan in defense of China. I might add in this connection that the Chinese are born diplomats. They speak English even better than the Americans themselves. My Japanese Navy English was no match for theirs. The Japanese are good in fighting but not in propaganda. We give it to the Chinese who are past

masters in getting other people to fight for them by wagging their tongues.

### **Kurusu's Mission**

*Question:* The prevailing opinion here at the outbreak of hostilities was that Ambassador Kurusu's eleventh-hour trip to the United States was merely a smoke-screen to hide Japan's intention to strike without notice. Could you give us first hand information about the actual situation?

*Answer:* I wish to be emphatic that there was definitely no trace of insincerity on the part of Japan in sending Ambassador Kurusu to the United States. He was sent, after extended consultation with the Premier, to make a final attempt to settle the Pacific problem. Japan's stand from beginning to end was to settle the problem in the Pacific. As to the sincerity of Japan, there can be no doubt about it. I have been informed that the American government fully realizes at this time the sincerity of Mr. Kurusu's mission and that there is now no doubt about it.

*Question:* What is the attitude of the Japanese people toward Philippine independence?

*Answer:* I am not answering this question for the Japanese Government, but I wish to speak for myself as an individual. Philippine independence has always been supported by Japan even when your

country was still under American domination. We were really for your independence, but as long as the United States maintained naval and air bases in the Islands, which, with those in Guam, were a constant menace to Japan, the Japanese people had to watch developments carefully. Now you have been assured independence and we want to see you gain that independence. Premier Tozyo's pledge has the support of the entire Japanese nation. But we will be highly concerned if after independence you combine yourself with another foreign power to establish bases here that will menace or threaten Japan. We will not stand for it.

*Question:* Can you give us a comparison of the treatment of enemy nationals by Japan and that of the Japanese nationals by the United States?

*Answer:* I do not have sufficient data to make any comparison of the treatment of Japanese and American nationals interned in enemy countries. We of the diplomatic corps were under strict surveillance but were not interned. However, I learned from reports that the properties of Japanese nationals residing in the United States were confiscated and they themselves were bodily moved to far off places. Although admitting that these steps were against their constitution, the Americans attempted to justify these measures under the heading of national defense.

### **U. S. Ready for War**

*Question:* How did the United States provoke the war?

*Answer:* Washington authorities explained to me personally that public opinion and the attitude of the masses had reached such a point that statesmanship alone was not enough to curb the tide of anti-Japanese feeling. There can be no question that the American people were decided for war when they placed an embargo on gasoline, froze the assets of the Japanese nationals and applied other economic restrictions. It was clear in their minds what the consequences of such an unfriendly act would be. And when they handed to me their note of November 26, 1941, they had made up their minds for war. We have knowledge that the U. S. Army and Navy Departments had issued urgent orders to the various outposts to be ready for emergency. Secretary Hull called newspapermen to a conference to tell them of the gravity of the situation. Incidentally, an American newsman in reporting the conference to his editor declared Secretary Hull had delivered a "funeral speech."

*Question:* How long do you think the war will last?

*Answer:* We will fight even for 100 years or until they cry peace.

