

SECURITY VIOLATIONS

from "The Memoirs of Cordell Hull," Vol. II, The MacMillian Company, N. Y., 1948, Chapter 71, "We Talk with Japan," pp. 998.

Actually, we already knew the contents of the message. It contained a statement from Matsuoka to me that the German and Italian leaders were confident of victory, that American participation in the European War would merely prolong it and bring about the destruction of civilization, and that Japan could not injure the position of her allies.

We knew this because of the fact that our Navy and Army cipher experts, with remarkable ingenuity, had broken the Japanese code and were deciphering Government messages from Tokyo to Washington and other capitals, translating them and sending them to the State Department for our information.

These intercepts, bearing our code name "Magic," played little part in our early negotiations, but were of great importance during the final phases. They enabled us to know many of the instructions the Japanese Foreign Minister was sending to Nomura and to other Japanese representatives; they gave us a check on what Nomura was reporting to Tokyo concerning the conversations he was holding with me; and they showed that the Japanese Government was going ahead with its plans even while talking of peace with us. I looked upon them as I would upon a witness who was testifying against his own side of a case.

I naturally had to be careful never to give Nomura the slightest impression of this special knowledge. I had to take care to keep our conversation limited to the knowledge I might have gained from him or from normal diplomatic sources. So as to safeguard the security of these messages, I named one of my secretaries to handle them, keep track of them, and make sure they were either returned to the Navy or destroyed.