

Personal to Mr. W.F. Friedman

EXTRACT FROM "HISTORY OF H.M.S. ANDERSON", pp. 27-28

A circular code telegram from Tokyo informed all Japanese representatives abroad of the arrangements for notifying the decision to commence hostilities; i.e. at the end of certain broadcasts a weather report would be issued in which the phrases "East wind, rain", "North wind, snow", "West wind, cloudy" ("rain", "snow", etc. may not be quite right, but the salient words were the winds) meant that it had been decided to break off relations with U.S.A. (East), Russia (North) or England (West) respectively.

"East Wind",
"West Wind"

F.E.C.B. called the attention of Hong Kong and Corregidor to this message, and Corregidor in reply asked a question about the text of the message. D.N.I. London asked F.E.C.B. if it had received this message.

A receiving set was installed in the S.I. Office, and S.I. Officers (linguists) kept a listening watch at the scheduled times. However, it was Hong Kong who first heard the fateful message. Owing to ionospherics Singapore did not hear the broadcast until some hours later.

At about 2300 on Sunday 7th December 1941 (Saturday at Honolulu) a priority message from Hong Kong reported that the broadcast mentioning "East" and "West" winds had been heard. The Naval C. in C. and the C.O.I.S. were immediately notified. At about 0530 on Monday 8th December (Sunday 7th December at Honolulu) Japanese bomber formations arrived over Singapore, and after this "alerts" became frequent.

War with Japan

Japanese Diplomatic and Consular code messages between Tokyo and Philippines, Malaya and N.E.I., which formed the bulk of Diplomatic S.I., of course ceased, and 3 of the 4 S.I. Officers on diplomatic work were allocated to other work (one of them was sent to Melbourne to reinforce the Australian S.I.).

Diplomatic S.I.