

JAPAN DEMAND FOR BIG FLEET, STRATEGY ACT

Request at Naval Parley Based on Manila Bay as Battle Site.

BY WILLIAM PHILIP SIMMS
Scripps-Howard Foreign Editor
LONDON, Jan. 31.—It is learned from inside sources that the real reason for the Japanese demand for a fleet 70 per cent as strong as that of the United States revolves around the Philippines and the fear of a possible Anglo-American understanding in the Atlantic. Herebefore, the demand was attributed to political exigencies at

home and reasons of national prestige. These things, as a matter of fact, have little to do with the situation. The demand is based on purely strategic grounds. Japanese naval experts figure that in the event of war between Japan and the United States there are two eventualities on which it is likely their naval policy would be based.

First, they believe it probable that Great Britain would remain neutral, but with American leanings sufficient at least to warrant the entire American fleet being used in the Pacific. They might even assure trans-Atlantic communications. Second, the Japanese assume that virtually the entire fleet would be

massed in Manila bay, whence it would seek a decisive battle with theirs. The Japanese discount the story that in event of war Americans would abandon the Philippines temporarily and seek decision elsewhere. In formulating their naval policy they apparently argue this strategy may or may not be employed. Wisdom, however, compels them to envisage an Atlantic understanding

and the massing of the United States battle fleet in Manila bay. Such, I am told, is the secret reason behind the demand for a bigger ratio.

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By Times Special
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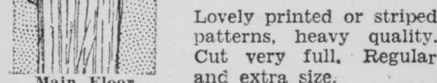
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