

Prescribed subject 3: The move to global war

Read sources I to L and answer questions 9 to 12.

The sources and questions relate to Case study 1: Japanese expansion in East Asia (1931–1941) – Responses: International response, including US initiatives and increasing tensions between the US and Japan.

Source I Andrew Gordon, a US historian, writing in the book *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (2003).

When Japan moved into northern Indochina, the US responded with a gradually expanding export embargo. This provoked some sections of the Japanese military to argue for a pre-emptive strike against the United States and its allies. Japan followed this by extending their hold over Indochina, gaining Vichy permission to occupy the entire peninsula in July 1941 [‘Vichy’ refers to the government of the French state between 1940 and 1944]. The agreement left Japan as the virtual ruler of the French colony.

The Americans countered this advance with a strong and threatening move. Roosevelt immediately pulled together an international embargo that cut off all foreign oil supplies to Japan. He also offered military supplies to China. Without oil Japan could not sustain its military or economy. It faced a difficult choice. It could agree to American conditions for lifting the embargo by retreating completely from China. Or it could take control of the Southeast Asian oil fields by force and negotiate for a ceasefire from that strengthened position.

For a time, it pursued both courses. Japanese diplomats sought in vain to negotiate a formula for a partial retreat in China that might satisfy both their own reluctant army and the United States. The Japanese military, meanwhile, drew up plans for an attack that might force the Western powers to recognize its hegemony in Asia.

Source J Osami Nagano, Chief of the Japanese Naval General Staff, speaking at the Imperial Conference, 6 September 1941.

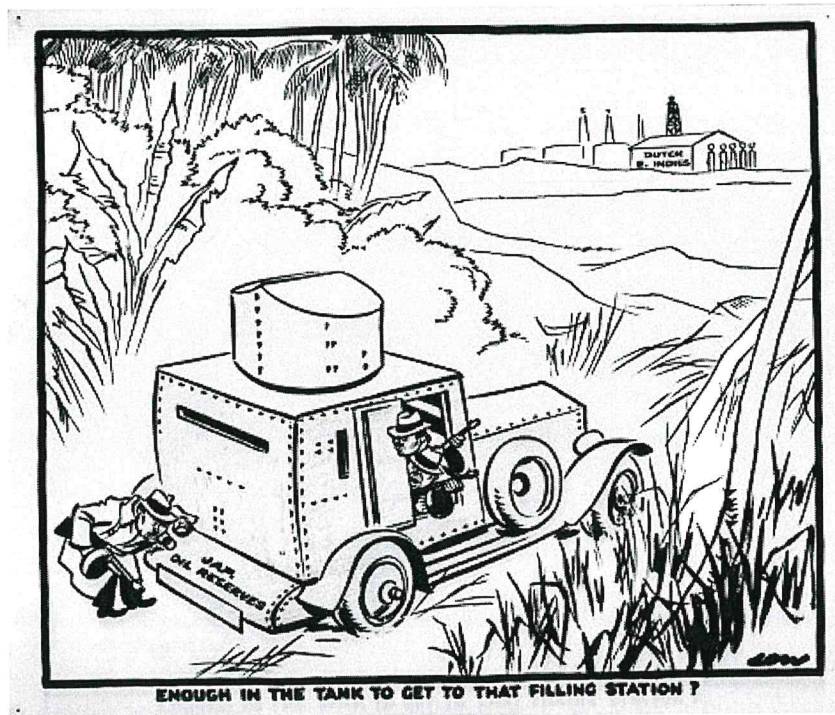
Based on the assumption that a peaceful solution has not been found and war is inevitable, the Empire’s oil supply, as well as the stockpiles of many other important war materials, is being used up day by day with the result that the national defence power is gradually diminishing. If this deplorable situation is left unchecked, I believe that, after a lapse of some time, the nation’s strength will diminish.

On the other hand, the defence of military installations and key points of Britain, the United States and other countries in the Far East, as well as military preparations of these nations, particularly those of the United States, are being strengthened so quickly that by next year we will find it difficult to oppose them. Therefore, wasting time now could be disastrous for the Empire. I believe that it is imperative [essential] for the Empire that it should first make the fullest preparations and lose no time in carrying out positive operations with firm determination, in order that it can find a way out of the difficult situation.

Source K Chihiro Hosoya, a Japanese professor of history, writing in the article "Miscalculations in Deterrent Policy: US-Japanese Relations, 1938-1941", for the academic publication *Journal of Peace Research* (1968).

According to a US public opinion survey of late September [1941], the number of Americans favouring strong action against Japan had greatly increased. Furthermore, Roosevelt stated on 12 October that the United States would not be intimidated. The Tripartite Pact had worsened relations with the United States. Japanese army officers demanded an acceleration of southern expansion. Even before the Tripartite Pact, Japan had demanded permission to move troops into southern Indochina and did so on 28 July. The Japanese pressures on Indochina led the US government to freeze Japanese assets in the United States and to impose an embargo against Japan. Officers in the Japanese navy were resolved to go to war because of the oil embargo. They were anxious about the existing supply of oil turning the Japanese navy into a "paper navy" [powerless navy].

Source L David Low, a cartoonist, depicts Japanese expansion in the cartoon "Enough in the tank to get to that filling station?" in the British newspaper *The Evening Standard* (8 August 1941). The sign on the side of the building is "DUTCH E. [East] Indies and on the vehicle it is "Jap. [Japanese] Oil Reserves."



[Source: David Low / Solo Syndication]

End of prescribed subject 3

Turn over