

**Chicago Tribune, August 19,1945**

**JAPS ASKED PEACE IN JAN. ENVOYS ON WAY -- TOKYO**

**Roosevelt Ignored M'Arthur Report On Nip Proposals**

**By Walter Trohan**

Release of all censorship restrictions in the United States makes it possible to report that the first Japanese peace bid was relayed to the White House seven months ago.

Two days before the late President Roosevelt left the last week in January for the Yalta conference with Prime Minister Churchill and Marshal Stalin he received a Japanese offer identical with the terms subsequently concluded by his successor, Harry S. Truman.

**MacArthur Relayed Message to F.D.**

The Jap offer, based on five separate overtures, was relayed to the White House by Gen. MacArthur in a 40-page communication. The American commander, who had just returned triumphantly to Bataan, urged negotiations on the basis of the Jap overtures.

The offer, as relayed by MacArthur, contemplated abject surrender of everything but the person of the Emperor. The suggestion was advanced from the Japanese quarters making the offer that the Emperor become a puppet in the hands of American forces.

Two of the five Jap overtures were made through American channels and three through British channels. All came from responsible Japanese, acting for Emperor Hirohito.

**General's Communication Dismissed**

President Roosevelt dismissed the general's communication, which was studied with solemn references to the deity, after a casual reading with the remark, "MacArthur is our greatest general and our poorest politician."

The MacArthur report was not even taken to Yalta. However, it was carefully preserved in the files of the high command and subsequently became the basis of the Truman-Attlee Potsdam declaration calling for surrender of Japan.

This Jap peace bid was known to the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Washington Times-Herald* shortly after the MacArthur communication reached here. It was not published

under the paper's established policy of complete co-operation with the voluntary censorship code.

### **Must Explain Delay**

Now that peace has been concluded on the basis of the terms MacArthur reported, high administration officials prepared to meet expected congressional demands for explanation of the delay. It was considered certain that from various quarters of Congress charges would be hurled that the delay cost thousands of American lives and casualties, particularly in such costly offensives as Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

It was explained in high official circles that the bid relayed by MacArthur did not constitute an official offer in the same sense as the final offer which was presented through Japanese diplomatic channels at Bern and Stockholm last week for relay to the four major Allied powers.

No negotiations were begun on the basis of the bid, it was said, because it was feared that if any were undertaken the Jap war lords, who were presumed to be ignorant of the feelers, would visit swift punishment on those making the offer.

It was held possible that the war lords might even assassinate the Emperor and announce the son of heaven had fled the earth in a fury of indignation over the peace bid.

### **Defeat Seen Inevitable**

Officials said it was felt by Mr. Roosevelt that the Japs were not ripe for peace, except for a small group, who were powerless to cope with the war lords, and that peace could not come until the Japs had suffered more.

The Jap overtures were made on acknowledgment that defeat was inevitable and Japan had to choose the best way out of an unhappy dilemma -- domination of Asia by Russia or by the United States. The unofficial Jap peace brokers said the latter would be preferable by far.

Jap proposals to Gen. MacArthur contemplated:

1. Full surrender of all Jap forces on sea, in the air, at home, on island possessions and in occupied countries.
2. Surrender of all arms and munitions.

3. Occupation of the Jap homeland and island possessions by Allied troops under American direction.

### **Would Give Up Territory**

4. Jap relinquishment from Manchuria, Korea and Formosa as well as all territory seized during the war.

5. Regulation of Jap industry to halt present and future production of implements of war.

6. Turning over of any Japanese the United States might designate as war criminals.

7. Immediate release of all prisoners of war and internees in Japan proper and areas under Japanese control.

After the fall of Germany, the policy of unconditional surrender drew critical fire. In the Senate Senator White (R.) of Maine Capehart (R.) of Indiana took the lead in demanding that precise terms be given Japan and in asking whether peace feelers had not been received from the Nipponese.

### **Terms Drafted in July**

In July the *Tribune* reported that a set of terms were being drafted for President Truman to take to Potsdam. Capehart hailed the reported terms on the floor of the Senate as a great contribution to universal peace.

These terms, which were embodied in the Potsdam declaration, did not mention the disposition of the Emperor. Otherwise they were almost identical with the proposals contained in the MacArthur memorandum.

Just before the Japanese surrender the Russian foreign commissar disclosed that the Japs had made peace overtures through Moscow asking that the Soviets mediate the war. These overtures were made in the middle of June through the Russian foreign office and also through a personal letter from Hirohito to Stalin. Both overtures were reported to the United States and Britain.