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The John Doe Associates

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Further field research on the kumedyá would also have been useful, since, as already mentioned, the kumedyá was replaced by the modern forms only in the cities, but with both the zarzuela and the drama continues to survive in the provinces to the present. Research in ongoing theatrical performances and practices (affected by, but not obliterated by the advent of film) could have yielded information relevant to this study of what constitutes modernity in Philippine drama.

As it stands, however, the Hernandez study is a valuable contribution to research in Philippine drama. It gathers together and organizes some information from ethnographic, literary, and historical sources that would be valuable to other researchers in the field. Most vitally, it examines this information against the background of Philippine society and history. Its suggestion that the growing nationalism, the Revolution against Spain, and active opposition to American colonization, brought about a turning point in the content and form of Philippine drama, is a valid insight that should be considered and strengthened by further research into the plays of this period and their performance.

Doreen G. Fernandez

THE JOHN DOE ASSOCIATES: Backdoor Diplomacy for Peace, 1941.
By R. J. C. Butow. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1974.
480 pages, \$16.95.

International diplomatic moves in the year prior to Pearl Harbor affected enormously the lives of all men of my generation, and the course of history in East and Southeast Asia through the past 36 years.

This readable and carefully researched monograph of R. J. C. Butow, professor of Foreign Area Studies and Diplomatic History at the University of Washington, takes us behind the scenes of the 1941 top-level diplomatic conversations between American Secretary of State Cordell Hull and Admiral Kochisaburu Nomura, ambassador of Japan, in Washington, D.C. Butow focusses the reader's attention on the persistent and rather effective efforts of a Maryknoll priest, a Japanese banker, and an Imperial Army colonel to shape the course and contents of those crucial talks.

A State Department official aptly dubbed the trio, with a small circle of named and unnamed helpers, "the John Doe Associates," — well-intentioned, private meddlers whose considerable influence on events ultimately turned out to be clearly more harmful than helpful to the preservation of the peace they had hoped to serve.

Butow is the author of two other important works on the Pacific War, *Tojo and the Coming of the War*, and *Japan's Decision to Surrender*. He writes with scholarly integrity from uncommon familiarity with primary sources, both Japanese and American.

The story begins in November 1940 when Bishop James E. Walsh, then superior-general of Maryknoll, and Father James M. Drought, his vicar or chief administrative aide, visited the society's missions in Japan. They came to Tokyo furnished by American public figures with introductions to Japanese prominent in political, press, and financial circles.

Japan's military sweep over Manchuria deep into north, central, and coastal China, the looming clouds of Communism, and the recent linking of Rome and Berlin in the ruthless Roberto Axis boded ill for any long-range free missionary service in the Orient. Among those with whom Bishop Walsh and Father Drought talked was Japan's unstable and devious foreign minister, Yosuke Matsuoka. From this and other talks Drought became convinced that Japan was badly misunderstood in the West. He felt that President Roosevelt, as mediator, could at a Honolulu summit conference persuade or pressure China and Japan to accept "equitable" peace terms.

(The peace terms would sanction Manchuria's *status quo* as a puppet in the Nippon empire. Should the Chiang Kai-shek regime reject the request of Roosevelt, the American government was to discontinue assistance to China. This supposed that the Americans would ask China to accept, under diplomatic duress, terms that would bestow on Japan the victory she had been unable to win by force of arms. The Honolulu summit meeting would have ended as a mid-Pacific Munich.)

Drought was led to believe that in Japan and its government, a large force of pro-American moderates would prevail in policy over the military extremists if only they gained support and understanding from the top American political leaders.

He set to work promptly, finding a dedicated co-worker in Tadao (Paul) Wikawa, a financier zealous to play some part in laying foundations for peace in Asia through the decades ahead. Wikawa had access to the Prime Minister, Prince Konoye. Enchanted by Drought's vision, Wikawa decided to go to the United States and help the Maryknoll priest with the project they had discussed in Tokyo, and he recruited the third core-member of the John Doe team, Colonel Hideo Iwakuro, an officer close to Hideki Tojo, the Minister of War, and "well-regarded by all factions in the Japanese army."

In the first months of 1941 Bishop Walsh and Father Drought were back in the States, and through the Catholic Postmaster General, Frank C. Walker, were able to present Drought's proposals first-hand to Secretary Hull and President Roosevelt. The impression was created that the initiative had risen from Konoye and Matsuoka, whereas the details of the draft were largely Drought's own blueprint for peace in the Pacific, his ideas of what should be acceptable to the two sides. Incidentally he was treating China's sovereignty and territorial integrity as negotiable chips of little value. From the start Stanley K. Hornbeck, State Department expert on Chinese affairs, questioned the merits of the proposal and the extent to which its bearers

could vouch for the mind and dispositions of the men really in power in Japan.

Father Drought had a flair for ghostwriting. Butow relates instances when he wrote speeches for Matsuoka, Frank Walker, Manuel Quezon, and Carlos P. Romulo. "Perhaps he saw his ghost-writing," Butow observes, "as a necessary first step toward later, direct, personal involvement. In the meantime, he was able to propagate his ideas through the platform performance of men who commanded the attention of audiences that he might otherwise not have reached" (p. 343).

On 14 February 1941 Admiral Nomura presented his credentials as the new Japanese ambassador to the United States. Nomura had been in the States briefly in 1899 as a midshipman trainee, and during World War I as a junior naval attaché. It seems he honestly hoped to improve prospects for peace and good feeling between his country and America. But "he knew virtually nothing about the art and practice of diplomacy" (p. 318). He was at no time actively or passively at home in the English language. "Lacking diplomatic experience, he needed help. He was grateful to the John Doe Associates when they provided it early in his mission. They were his 'rescuers,' and he followed them through thick and thin thereafter. He was, consequently, *their man, not the foreign minister's*" (p. 319).

Not seldom Nomura failed to deliver statements from his own government to the Secretary of State because he thought them bellicose or too demanding. He let Drought retouch, significantly, translations of incoming State documents and outgoing official dispatches. As one result, Butow tells us: "Despite the relationship that existed between the John Doe 'Draft Understanding' sent by Nomura to Tokyo in mid-April and the 'Confidential Memorandum' cabled by Matsuoka to Washington on 12 May, a fundamental misconception with regard to who was offering what to whom was already firmly implanted in the thinking of everyone concerned at the official level on both sides of the Pacific" (p. 190).

As conversations developed, Tokyo felt that Washington was stiffening its terms and pulling back from earlier conciliatory positions. Tokyo considered that the United States was not concerned for peace, but simply stalling for time. Roosevelt and Hull kept insisting that Japan match its words with deeds, and offer practical evidence of the peaceful intentions it professed, by ceasing its southward drive into China and then to Saigon.

To the question, "what is the point of unraveling the secrets of a group of men who did not accomplish what it set out to do?" Butow answers validly: "In the nature of diplomatic history, exploring a classic failure in the field of international relations can be as meaningful as investigating a success." Moreover, he says, "the innumerable backdoor incursions into policy formation and decision-making that are brought to light in these pages constitute a hitherto unseen view of the diplomatic prelude to Pearl Harbor, thus adding a

new dimension to our understanding of a crisis of cataclysmic proportions" (p. 311).

The book will richly repay reading by those in diplomatic service and by students of twentieth century history of the Far East. This reviewer recommends it especially to his fellow missionaries. Years ago his friend Bishop Walsh told him that through this whole episode he had acted simply as "a messenger boy," a "friend of peace" go-between anxious only to avert the spread of war.

He emerges from Butow's book as a figure more prudent and aware of his limitations than was Drought. "I am not one of those," Bishop Walsh said in a Tokyo speech of 20 December 1940, "who think that amateur individuals are more likely to solve these problems than are the responsible officers of government whose specialty this is . . . It is incumbent on us all to have confidence in those statesmen who are conspicuously striving to solve these problems" (p. 106). Still, it is difficult to exonerate the bishop completely from blame for the trouble that ensued; on a few occasions he became more involved than a messenger should be.

In the United States Code, the Logan Act has been on the books since 1799, providing that "it is unlawful for any citizen of the United States, wherever situated, to commence or carry on, either directly or indirectly, without the permission or authority of the American government, any verbal or written correspondence with any foreign government or any officer or agent thereof, with an intent to influence the measures or conduct of the same in relation to any disputes or controversies with the United States."

Any citizen found guilty "of having counseled, advised, or assisted in any such correspondence with such-intent" was subject to a \$5,000 fine and a maximum three years prison term. No one has ever been brought to trial on such charges, or in present American thinking, is likely to be prosecuted hereafter. But the reader of Butow's book will see that Father Drought was liable under that law for actions in the early part of his adventure at least, and, in view of the results of his meddling, will sympathize with the Logan Act legislators.

Drought was not disloyal or consciously plotting against American interests. He did, however, underestimate the extent to which moral principles and a broad historical perspective entered into the policy-making of the American State Department of his day. And most of the time he was not critical enough regarding verbal declarations which came to him from Japanese sources. Pitfalls aplenty, this book reveals, await the clergyman who dares to venture into the fascinating, bewildering, complex world of the professional diplomat.

Charles J. McCarthy