The war between Germany and the Soviet Union faced the Japanese military with a severe dilemma. The Japanese policy had shifted toward the south, for resource acquisition and efficiency, for sealing off China, for Axis collaboration. The Imperial Army and Navy may not have had the same direction, and these jibed with Matsuoka's evidence by his pact with the Soviet Union. Now in global balance had shifted as rudely as earlier it had, and the direction, with the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939. Now the Soviet Union, instead of joining in, would in all likelihood join hands with Britain and the United States, increasing the isolation and encirclement of Japan. The earlier Matsuoka had dreamed of arraying Japan and the Soviet Union; now the one had attacked the other, with the briefest intimation of its intentions. For ten days the Japanese government struggled to regain consensus on policies to the vastly altered circumstances.

Amidst the moments swung behind an attack on the Soviet Union. Yes, the Japanese army's traditional foe and most feared. Leading officers were sorely tempted to strike while the Soviet Union was still beset by invasion from the west. If the Soviet Union was isolated, the resources of eastern Siberia secured, Moscow cut off, and the Anglo-Americans became preoccupied with all-powerful Germany, then the southward advance would proceed. This seizure of the initiative was termed the 'green persimmon,' from the notion that the persimmon tree was shaken while the fruit was green and allowed to ripen and fall. Matsuoka, once he had caught