

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

This telegram must
be closely paraphrased
before being communicated
to anyone. (A)

LONDON

FROM

Dated August 28, 1939

10 a.m.

Secretary of State

Washington



1939, August 28, 2 p.m.

1939, August 27, 8 p.m.

PERSONAL AND STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

A responsible official of the Foreign Office this morning in comment on Hitler's reply to the French Prime Minister, the text of which was given out at Berlin during the course of the night, said that in opinion here the text of Hitler's statement itself particularly with reference to his demand that Danzig and the corridor must return to Germany, did not necessarily make the situation any worse but that they do view with great concern the fact that he has made it public. The official also said that in his opinion this publicity would not however effect any material change in the reply that the British are to send to Hitler. The Cabinet is to go over this reply again today and there may of course be changes in drafting. (END SECTION ONE).

KENNEDY

HFD

FILED

G/HG

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

CJ

PLAIN

FROM

LONDON

Dated August 28, 1939

Rec'd 10 a.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1233, August 28, 2 p.m. (SECTION TWO).

According to press messages from Berlin, Hitler decided to release the reply he had made to Deladier through pique at a "unfair" statement made by the French Premier at his press conference yesterday to the effect that Hitler had not given a satisfactory reply, the inference being that Hitler took M. Deladier's statement without the publication of the text of his letter as an almost personal and unfriendly act.

(END SECTION TWO).

KENNEDY

KLP

3/410

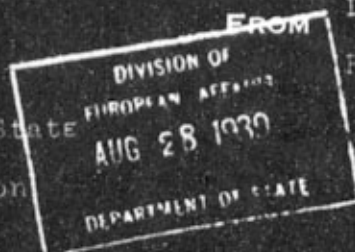
TELEGRAM RECEIVED

London

Dated August 28, 1939

Rec'd 10:20 a.m.

Secretary of State
Washington



1204, August 28, 2 p.m. (SECTION THREE)

I have also been informed by the Foreign Office that in view of the urgency of keeping all of Great Britain's allies in line, quantities of war materials are being sent to Turkey without reference to the still pending credit agreement. Negotiations on the political agreement (my No. 1192 August 15, 9 p.m. and despatch No. 3233 August 21, 1939) are being pushed as fast as possible, and they are considering sending a mission to Istanbul.

A telegram from the British Ambassador at Warsaw just received by the Foreign Office reports that the "full mobilization" in Poland does not mean "general mobilization". (END MESSAGE)

KENNEDY

CSB

7500.62/4100.016.2

8/30

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM

NC
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased
before being communicated
to anyone. (A)

LONDON

Dated August 28, 1939

Rec'd 11:50 a.m.

Secretary of State

Washington



TRIPLE PRIORITY

1293, August 28, 6 p.m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

By 1293, August 28, 5 p.m.

I have just learned from the Foreign Office that an affirmative reply has been received from Poland, stating that they are ready to enter at once into direct negotiations. This will be incorporated into the official reply to Fisher.

HPD

FILED

CJ
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased
fore being communicated
to anyone. (D)

LONDON

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

Dated August 29, 1939

Rec'd 7:53 a.m.

FROM

Secretary of State,

Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY.

1299, August 29, noon.

PERSONAL AND STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

My 1293, August 28, 6 p.m.

A full summary of the British reply to Hitler was
telegraphed at 6 o'clock yesterday to Sir Ronald Lindsay for
communication to you.

The following is a resume of Henderson's preliminary re-
port of his meeting with Hitler last night when the British
note was delivered. Hitler has promised a written reply
for today. In conversation with Henderson Hitler is reported
as having been calm but as usual self-contradictory. He
said he would be willing to negotiate with the Poles if there
was a Polish Government which was reasonable and which could
control the country. He could not, however, repeat his
March offer to the Poles. He said definitively that what he
wants now is Danzig, the whole Corridor and rectification of
the frontier in Upper Silesia. At one point he talked about
annihilating

7600.62/1135

Confidential File

G/H

FILED

AUG 31 1939

-2- #1299, August 29, noon, from London

annihilating Poland; said that he had the entire German people behind him, the army was eager to fight, and he could not tolerate any longer the ill-treatment of Germans in Poland.

In reply to direct questions from Henderson, Hitler said that he would be willing to discuss an exchange of population. Henderson, however, thinks that Hitler was thinking in terms of territorial rectification, and that putting all of the Poles out of the Corridor where they constitute 90% of the population, and that this mental qualification was undoubtedly in his mind when he spoke of "exchanging populations" in reply to a specific question from Henderson as to his willingness to enlisting direct negotiations with the Poles, he said he could not give a reply until he had studied the British note. Henderson thinks that there will be no real indication of Hitler's reply until the written answer is in. Feeling expressed by responsible Foreign Office officials is that this preliminary report of Henderson is not entirely unsatisfactory; that the door is still open; that the final decision is balanced on the edge of a knife; that Hitler is trying through blackmail to squeeze the last possible advantage out of Poland without a war.

KENNEDY

DDM:KLP



TELEGRAM RECEIVED

PLAIN

London

Dated August 29, 1939

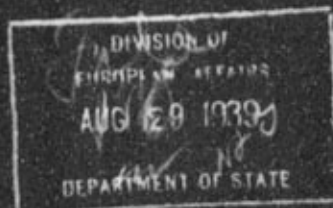
Rec'd 6:25 a.m.

FROM

Secretary of State

Washington

1300, August 29, 12 noon



A waiting attitude marks the press comment this morning. The German reaction to the British memorandum is awaited with almost fatalistic composure.

The Daladier-Hitler correspondence is reproduced in full today. The more the press studies it, the less it is reassured. It is felt that by giving publicity to the German demand for Danzig and the Corridor, in a communication over his own signature, Hitler has made withdrawal more difficult. Meanwhile, British preparations for war are being steadily pushed forward. The Admiralty yesterday ordered British merchant ships to leave both the Baltic and the Mediterranean. The first list of regulations designed to make effective the wide powers granted the Government under the Emergency Powers Act was issued yesterday. They cover sixty eight pages and deal with almost every form of activity which may affect the security of the state or public order. Parliament has been called this afternoon to hear a report on the situation by the Prime Minister.

KENNEDY

ALC

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (C)

LONDON

FROM Dated August 29, 1939

Rec'd 6:44 p. m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

URGENT PRIORITY.

1314, August 29, midnight.

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
AUG 30 1939
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PERSONAL AND STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

My 1209, August 29, noon.

Hitler's reply was handed in person to the British Ambassador at 7:15 this evening. Henderson is forwarding translation of full text as soon as possible. Following is a summary:

In reply to the British proposals, namely direct German-Polish negotiations and an international guarantee of any settlement the German Government declares:

(One) That in spite of skepticism as to prospects of success, it accepts direct negotiations with Poland solely out of a desire to insure lasting friendship with Great Britain and (two) in case of any modification of territories the German Government cannot undertake to guarantee them nor to participate in guarantees without consulting the Government of Soviet Russia.

(END SECTION ONE)

KENNEDY

NFL

7500.62/1156

FILED

G/HC

REB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (C)

LONDON

Dated August 29, 1939

FROM

Rec'd 7:06 p. m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY.

1314, August 29, midnight. (SECTION TWO)

The Note observes that German proposals have never had as their object any diminution of the vital interests of Poland and declares that the German Government accepts the mediation of Great Britain with the view to securing the visit to Berlin of a Polish plenipotentiary. The note adds that the German Government counts on the arrival at Berlin of this plenipotentiary tomorrow, Wednesday, August 30th.

Ambassador Henderson remarked that this last stipulation sounded like a ultimatum. After a heated exchange of remarks Hitler and Ribbentrop assured him it was intended only to stress the urgency of the matter, at a moment when two fully mobilized armies were facing each other.

The Ambassador said that he would like to transmit to his Government the assurance, in the event that such a Polish plenipotentiary did go to Berlin, that he would be received and the discussions

(END SECTION TWO)

KENNEDY

NPL

REB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be- LONDON
fore being communicated
to anyone. (C)

Dated August 29, 1939

FROM
Rec'd 7:25 p. m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY.

1314, August 29, midnight. (SECTION THREE)
with him would be conducted on a basis of full equality.
To this Hitler replied "of course".

The German demands are declared to be revision of
the Versailles Treaty, that is, the return of Danzig and
the Corridor to Germany and the security of the German
national minorities in the rest of Poland.

The note concludes by stating that the German Govern-
ment is ready immediately to elaborate proposals for an
acceptable solution and to inform the British Government
if possible before the arrival of the Polish plenipotentiary.

A responsible official of the Foreign Office stated
that it is unlikely any action will be taken on this note
before tomorrow, when the full text will be here. They will,
however, probably inform the Poles at once of the substance
of the German reply.

(END OF MESSAGE)

KENNEDY

NPL

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

CJ

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (C)

LONDON

FROM

Dated August 30, 1939

Rec'd 8:05

U.S. DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

AUG 30 1939

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State,

Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY.

1315, August 30, noon.

PERSONAL AND STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

My 1314, August 29, midnight.

The full text of Hitler's reply was received at the Foreign Office very early this morning and I understand that a full translation was cabled to Sir Ronald Lindsay immediately and should be available to you this morning. The full note of course greatly amplifies the original summary. The latter however appears to be accurate in all essentials except the two following: In the antepenultimate paragraph of my telegram under reference the following "in conformity with" should be inserted after "are declared to be"; in the penultimate paragraph the words "a solution acceptable to themselves" should be substituted for the words "an acceptable solution".

Shortly after the receipt last night of Ambassador Henderson's first report, the Foreign Office telegraphed

the

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FILED

3/10

-2- #1315, August 30, noon, from London

the British Ambassador at Warsaw to inform the Polish Government that it could not take the responsibility for advising the Polish Government with respect to general mobilization but that the British Government hoped that no measures would be taken which could in any way be regarded as provocative. Ambassador Henderson was instructed early this morning to inform the German Government that it was quite impracticable for a Polish plenipotentiary to arrive in Berlin today. The Foreign Office does not consider that this German demand was intended to be taken with too great literalness. Insofar as responsible officials are prepared to express an opinion, they say that the German reply insofar as it expressly states German demands is not as bad as might have been expected. They point out however that Hitler's own interpretation of what his note means must always be borne in mind, particularly the portion dealing with the German national minorities in Poland and the relation of that problem to any rectification of the frontiers which Germany might desire.

The German note is before the Cabinet which is now meeting and it was said at the Foreign Office that the reply would probably be sent this afternoon.

KENNEDY

HPD

REB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (D)

FROM

LONDON

Dated August 30, 1939

Rec'd 4:42 p. m.

Secretary of State, AUG 31 1939

Washington, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

TRIPLE PRIORITY.

1325, August 30, 8 p. m.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

My 1324, August 30, 7 p. m.

I have just seen the Prime Minister. The whole discussion was taken up with the subject matter contained in my No. 1321, August 30, 5 p. m. He is not kidding himself that this thing is settled by any manner of means and sees great difficulties ahead. Frankly he is more worried about getting the Poles to be reasonable than the Germans. He feels there is a great body of public opinion in England headed probably by Eden and Churchill who will suggest to the Poles that they give up nothing and that they have Hitler on the run. This, of course, will mean war but in the meantime he is urging Henderson to keep telling Hitler that after all the Danzig situation is a small item and that what really needs to be done is to work out the whole European economic political problem, which Chamberlain,

now

7600.62/1208

FILED

AUG 31 1939

Confidential File

5/70

REB

2-#1325, From London, Aug. 30, 8 p.m.

now with England solidly behind him, is willing to do with Hitler if Hitler will cooperate. He is hoping that the Poles will give the matter serious consideration and attempt to work something out. During that period, while the British cannot urge the Poles to make concessions, they can at least point out the value of a settlement to the future of Poland. Of course, he always remembers Czechoslovakia in this picture and that gives him great misgivings. He is not at all enthusiastic about the prospects, but he is hopeful.

KENNEDY

NPL



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

LONDON, August 30, 1939.

No. 3285

SUBJECT: Prime Minister Chamberlain's Statement
on the European Crisis



SEP 12 1939



1939 SEP 9 PM 2 26

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that in a statement in the House of Commons yesterday dealing with the European crisis the Prime Minister indicated that the issue of peace or war was still undecided, that the British Government still hoped for and would work for peace, but that it would abate no jot of its resolution to maintain its announced policy involving support for Poland in the event of German

aggression

SEP 13 1939

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760C.62/1279

FP



aggression against it, a statement which met with the united support of all parties.

Since the last meeting of Parliament on August 24, Mr. Chamberlain said, there had been little change in the main features of the European situation. Catastrophe had not yet come upon the country, but he could not say that the danger of it had receded. Alluding to Herr Hitler's invitation to Sir Neville Henderson to see him last Friday, and the British Ambassador's flying visit to London and return to Berlin, Mr. Chamberlain said that he could not disclose the full contents of the communications exchanged with Herr Hitler, since it would not be in the public interest to do so at this stage. He would, however, indicate in quite general terms some of the main points with which they dealt.

Herr Hitler, he explained, had been concerned to impress upon the British Government his wish for an Anglo-German understanding of a complete and lasting character. On the other hand, he had left the British Government in no doubt of his views as to the urgency of settling the German-Polish question. As regarded these matters, Mr. Chamberlain said, the British Government had frequently expressed its desire to see the realization of an Anglo-German understanding and as soon as circumstances permitted the British Government would naturally welcome an

opportunity

opportunity of discussing with Germany the several views, a settlement of which would have to find a place in any permanent agreement. But, he continued, everything turned upon the manner in which the immediate differences between Germany and Poland could be handled and the nature of the proposals which might be made for any settlement. On the latter point, he said, "We have made it plain that our obligations to Poland, cast into formal shape by the Agreement which was signed on 25th August, on Friday last, will be carried out."

Reiterating that the British Government had said more than once publicly that German-Polish differences should be susceptible of solution by peaceful means, Mr. Chamberlain asserted that the first prerequisite, if there were to be any chance of useful discussion, was that the tension created by frontier clashes and by reports of incidents on both sides of the border should be diminished. He consequently hoped that both Governments would use their best endeavors to prevent the recurrence of such incidents, the circulation of exaggerated reports and all other activities that resulted in dangerous inflammation of opinion. If an equitable settlement of German differences could be reached by free negotiations, he said, the British Government would hope that this might in turn lead on to a wider

agreement

agreement which would accrue to the lasting benefit of Europe and of the world at large.

At the moment, the position was that the British Government was waiting for the reply of Herr Hitler to its latest communication and on the nature of that reply would depend whether further time could be given for the exploration of the situation and for the operation of the many forces which were working for peace.

The issue of peace or war, Mr. Chamberlain said, was still undecided and the Government still hoped and would still work for peace, but it would abate no jot of its resolution to hold fast to the line which it had laid down for peace.

There was no general debate but statements made by the leaders of the Opposition Parties reflected the united support of the House of Commons. Mr. Arthur Greenwood (Socialist), Deputy Leader of the Opposition, in commenting on the situation, stated that insofar as the Labor Party was concerned, "aggression must cease now" and "its determination, once and for all, is that threats, menaces, open aggression shall come to an end."

Sir Archibald Sinclair, the Opposition Liberal Leader, stated that he wished to say with what gratification the House listened to the Prime Minister's assurance that the Government was standing firm in regard to the discharge of its obligations to Poland.

The

The country could not go from one September to another always in a crisis over some further series of demands. This had to be stopped. His Party was equally grateful to hear from the Prime Minister that within the framework of that determination every possibility of a peaceful solution was being sought. The last word rested with Herr Hitler, and he (Sir A. Sinclair) knew nothing which the Government could have done at this stage which it had left undone to make it possible for Herr Hitler to speak the word of negotiation. In his opinion, there was only one road which was barred by the British Government and that was surrender to demands based on no higher sanction than the alleged national will of a single nation backed by the threat of force.

In moving the adjournment until September 5, which was agreed to, Mr. Chamberlain said that he intended to keep the House informed fully and continuously. In consequence, while next Tuesday was the day mentioned, he anticipated that it would be necessary for him to ask that the House should be called together earlier.

In the Upper House, the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, prefaced a statement similar to that made by the Prime Minister, with a few remarks to the effect that the position remained one of great anxiety and danger, but there was still hope that peace might prevail.

The

The full texts of the proceedings in
1-2/ both Houses of Parliament are enclosed.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:

Herschel V. Johnson
Herschel V. Johnson
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosures:

1. Parliamentary Debates, August 29, 1939
House of Commons, Cols. 111-124, in
quintuplicate.
2. Parliamentary Debates, August 29, 1939
House of Lords, Cols. 907-912, in
quintuplicate.

RES:WMC

CJ

PLAIN

LONDON

Dated September 2, 1939

Rec'd 2:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

1389, September 2, 10 p.m.

Lord Halifax has just made a statement in the House of Lords to the following effect: His Majesty's Ambassador was received by Herr von Ribbentrop at 9:30 last night when he delivered the warning message which was read to the House yesterday.

Herr von Ribbentrop replied that he must submit the communication to the German Chancellor. The Ambassador declared his readiness to receive the Chancellor's reply but up to the present no reply has been received. It is possible that delay has been due to proposals meanwhile put forward by the Italian Government that hostilities should cease and there should immediately be a conference between the five powers: Great Britain, France, Poland, Germany and Italy.

While appreciating the efforts of the Italian Government, His Majesty's Government, for their part, would not find it possible to take part in a conference while Poland has been
subject

12
-2- #1389, September 2, 10 p.m., from London

subject to invasion, her towns are under bombardment and Danzig has been made a subject of unilateral settlement by force.

74162 His Majesty's Government will, as stated yesterday, be bound to take action unless the German forces are withdrawn from Polish territory.

They are in communication with the French Government as to the limit of time necessary for His Majesty's Government and the French Government to know whether the German Government were prepared to effect such withdrawal.

If the German Government should agree to withdraw their forces, then His Majesty's Government would be willing to regard the position as being the same as it was before the German forces crossed the Polish frontier. That is to say, the way would be open for discussion between the German and Polish Governments on the matters at issue between them on the understanding that the settlement arrived at was one that safeguarded the vital interests of Poland and was secured by international guarantee.

If the German and Polish Governments wished that other powers should be associated with them in discussion, his Majesty's Government, for their part, would be willing to agree.

There is one other matter to which allusion should be made

-3- #1389, September 2, 10 p.m., from London

made to make the present situation perfectly clear. Yesterday Herr Forster who, on August 23rd in contravention of the Danzig Constitution, became head of the state decreed the incorporation of Danzig in the Reich and the dissolution of the Constitution. Herr Hitler was asked to give effect to this decree by German law. At a meeting of the Reichstag yesterday morning a law was passed for the reunion of Danzig with the Reich. The international status of Danzig as a Free State was established by treaty of which His Majesty's Government is signatory and the Free State was placed under the protection of the League of Nations. The rights given to Poland in Danzig by treaty are defined and confirmed by agreement concluded between Danzig and Poland. The action taken by the Danzig authorities and the Reichstag yesterday is the final step in the unilateral repudiation of this international instrument which could only be modified by negotiation. His Majesty's Government, therefore, did not recognize either the validity of the grounds on which the action of the Danzig authorities was based or the validity of this action itself or of the effect given to it by the German Government. The Prime Minister has made the same statement in the House of Commons.

KENNEDY

ALC

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

REF. (1) (1)

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (C)

FROM

London

Dated January 4, 1940

Rec'd 6:15 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

26, January 4, 8 p.m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY AND THE UNDER

SECRETARY.

I had a talk this afternoon with Lord Halifax. He referred to information which he said had been communicated to Department by Lord Lothian regarding the British and French approach to Sweden and Norway with respect to assistance to Finland. The Swedish Minister delivered the Swedish reply this morning and had indicated the willingness of his Government to give every facility to the despatch of necessary material through Sweden to the Finns from both Great Britain and France. The Swedish Government is not, however, prepared to allow the passage of foreign troops through Sweden to join up with the Finnish forces. The Swedish Minister also informed Lord Halifax that his Government was not replying to the Anglo-French offer of assistance to Sweden in case she got into trouble through facilitating Allied aid to Finland. The Swedish point of view is that they would rather not discuss at the present time any question of Allied assistance

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CONFIDENTIAL

GML

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751.61
RFP -3- #26, January 4, 8 p.m. from London

There is no intention here of declaring war on Russia and Lord Halifax said he knew that was the view of the French Government also however much anti-Communist elements might advocate it.

A blue book is to be published next week of the Anglo-French-Russian negotiations at Moscow giving the full story of the breakdown.

(END OF SECTION ONE)

JOHNSON

EMB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

RFP

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (C)

FROM

London

Dated January 4, 1940

Rec'd 6:58 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

26, January 4, 8 p.m. (SECTION TWO).

Referring to the terrible disaster which has just (*) Turkey Lord Halifax said that it was difficult to judge now to just what extent this calamity may affect the Turkish war potential. He is more apprehensive than anything else of its effect on morale and of the general discouragement which such a misfortune would naturally bring about. He said that they are offering Turkey substantial monetary assistance in addition to the very considerable amounts which had been made available following the tripartite agreement between Great Britain, France, and Turkey. He did not specify any amount nor what form such assistance would take but he made it clear that it was being given with the idea of offsetting any possible weakening of Turkish adhesion to the Anglo-French cause.

He said that he could only note with satisfaction the increasing strained relations between Russia and Italy. The attitude of Italy being of primary importance in the Balkan setup he seemed inclined to deprecate any immediate possibility of an extension of the war front to the Balkans

due



RFP -2- #26, January 4, 5 p.m. (SECTION TWO) from London.

due to concerted German-Russian action. Italy would probably take a strong stand and possibly even intervene in the event of a Russian entry into the Balkans. Hitler would not be likely to put himself now in the embarrassing position of having to choose between his Italian and Russian allies.

761.94
Referring briefly to the Far East he mentioned a report that had been sent by Lord Lothian of a talk with the Under Secretary (Department's instruction 1107 of December 4, 1939) and said that this statement of the United States Government's views was in fact a statement of his own views better than he could have made. He agreed entirely with what Mr. Welles had said in regard to the probabilities of formal agreement being reached between Japan and Soviet Russia. I gathered that he does not attach altogether the same importance to Wang Ching Wei as apparently the ^{British} ~~Belgian~~ Ambassador at Tokyo does (Tokyo message 4229 November 8, 1939). Lord Halifax said that Wang's sole importance is his uncompromising anti-Soviet attitude and that if his utility from this point of view evaporated he would simply disappear. Lord Halifax also apparently attaches no permanent or great importance to the recent announced agreements between Japan and Russia in regard to the Sakhalin fisheries and delimitation of frontiers. These he feels are adhoc arrangements which will not greatly affect

RFP -3- #26, January 4, 8 p.m. (SECTION TWO) from London

741.94
affect the fundamental relations between the two countries. Great Britain who now has her hands full in the west desires only friendly relations with Japan. If the Tientsin incident can be liquidated satisfactorily Great Britain is prepared to do everything reasonable to further these good relations. There are, however, ^{certain} (A) limits which cannot be passed. Great Britain cannot let Chiang Kai Shek down and she must keep in step with the Far Eastern policy of the United States; from the purely British viewpoint Lord Halifax hopes that American-Japanese relations can progress favorably. He said that he thought the recent strong stand taken by the United States vis a vis Japan had been helpful and he welcomed it referring particularly to the speech made by Mr. Grew shortly after his return from America. I had the impression from Lord Halifax that the Far Eastern situation is not causing him any acute anxiety in the sense that he fears it is likely to become any worse than it already is. It seems that he has had information from trusted sources that the Japanese Government is frankly favorable to the Allied cause in the present European war and that the Japanese military ^{never} had a more profound shock than when they received word of Hitler's agreement with Soviet Russia. They detest the Russians anyhow and now they have no longer any trust in Germany.

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Lord

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RFP -4- #26, January 4, 8 p.m. (SECTION TWO) from London

Lord Halifax referred cordially to the President's message of yesterday to Congress. He said he had read it with the greatest interest and thought it an admirable speech.

As is inevitable nowadays when discussing the world situation, the speculative subject of war developments was touched on. No one knows where or when Hitler is going to jump of course and anything is possible. Lord Halifax said however that he personally thought it possible he might stay static for a long time and produce peace offensives one after the other until people were wearied of them.

(END OF MESSAGE)

JOHNSON

EMB

(*) apparent omission.



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

LONDON, January 28, 1940.

No. 4481

SUBJECT: Italy and Great Britain Continue to
Exchange Military Information under
the Anglo-Italian Agreement of 1938

Rating	Classification
Group	601
For	m 15

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1940 FEB 20 PM 1 50



741.65/779

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

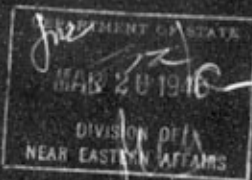
I have the honor to report, as a seemingly favorable symptom of the state of Anglo-Italian relations, the statement by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on January 24 that the British and Italian Governments were continuing the exchange of military information on the distribution of their forces in the Mediterranean and Near East areas in accordance with the Anglo-Italian Agreement of 1938.

The

GRR

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MAR 21 1940



The full text of Mr. Chamberlain's statement as given in Hansard is transcribed below:

"Mr. Arthur Henderson asked the Prime Minister whether the exchange of military information affecting the Mediterranean and Near East areas, as provided in the Anglo-Italian Agreement of 1938, has taken place?

"The Prime Minister: Yes, Sir. Annex 2 of the Anglo-Italian Agreement of 16th April, 1938, provides for the exchange of information regarding any major prospective administrative movements or redistribution of naval, military or air forces within the areas specified during the month of January of each year. An exchange of information on military matters has already taken place, and similar exchanges on naval and air matters will be completed before the end of the month."

Respectfully yours,

Herschell Johnson
Herschel V. Johnson
Chargé d'Affaires ad interim

RES:WMC

Copy sent to American Embassy, Rome.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

RS

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)



Dated June 13, 1941

Rec'd 3:17 p.m.



Secretary of State,
Washington.

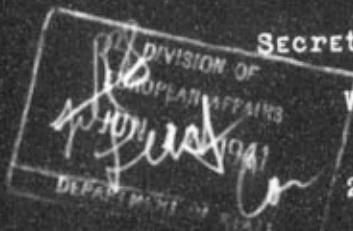
2435, June 13, 6 p.m. (SECTION ONE)

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY AND THE UNDER SECRETARY.

My 2394, June 11, 8 p.m.

Mr. Eden asked me to see him this afternoon to inform me of his interview earlier today with the Russian Ambassador. Last night the Prime Minister, Mr. Eden and Sir Stafford Cripps, the British Ambassador at Moscow now in London, had a long discussion about Russia and Russian-German relations in particular. It was finally decided that the Foreign Secretary should send for the Russian Ambassador today and make certain proposals to him of which the following is in substance the account given me by Mr. Eden.

He reminded Mr. Maisky again of the formidable German military concentrations on the Russian-German frontier and said that the British Government could not ignore the possibility that Germany is planning an early



FILED

2- #2435 from London, June 13, 1941; 3:17 p.m.

741.61
an early military attack on Russia. He told the Ambassador that based on this hypothesis, once hostilities had actually broken out between the two countries, the British Government would be willing to assist the Russian Government in the following ways: (one) by such air action in the west as might be practicable to divert in some measure German air attack from Russia; (two) the despatch to Moscow of a military mission of first class quality composed of men who had actual experience in all branches of land and air operations in the present war and (three) economic assistance within the limits practicable. On this point Mr. Eden suggested that unless Japan entered the conflict on the side of Germany, which did not appear probable, this economic assistance might be got to Russia over the trans-Siberian Railway, but that other ways of getting economic assistance to Russia would be explored.

JOHNSON

GW

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DES

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

FROM

LONDON

Dated June 13, 1941

Rec'd 4:38 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

2435, June 13, 6 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

Mr. Maisky said "yes" and that he would be glad to transmit the proposals to his Government. He then for the first time indirectly admitted that there were German military concentrations on the Russian frontier by asking Mr. Eden if he could not furnish him in detail the information possessed by the British Government as to the location and numbers of these concentrations saying that it was always helpful to check information derived from different sources. Mr. Maisky also asked Mr. Eden if he meant that his offer of economic assistance would be available at once or only after armed conflict had broken out between Russia and Germany. Mr. Eden told him that it was clearly contingent on an actual state of war existing between Germany and Russia and asked the Ambassador how he could expect Great Britain fighting such a struggle as she is now engaged in, to denude herself of precious materials to send Russia if Russia were not at war with Germany. Mr. Maisky also said that the proposals would have he thought, a more sympathetic reception at Moscow if they could

-2- 2435, June 13, 1941 from London

could be preceded by general negotiations to improve relations between the two countries. Mr. Eden said "I suppose you mean questions concerning the Baltic States and related problems" and Mr. Molotov said "yes". Mr. Eden replied that both Great Britain and Russia were now faced with an immediate military emergency and that it was no time to be discussing political and general relations between the two countries as preliminary to agreed action in the military field.

JOHNSON

GW

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DES

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

FROM

LONDON

Dated June 13, 1941

Rec'd 6:55 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

2435, June 13, 6 p.m. (SECTION THREE)

Mr. Eden told me that he had some doubts whether Moscow will even reply to this communication but he said that he and the Prime Minister and Sir Stafford Cripps after weighing the pros and cons of making such an offer to Russia had decided that it ought to be done and felt there was little likelihood that any harm might come of it even if Stalin told the Germans. Mr. Eden expressed the view even more strongly than he did when I saw him the other day that a German attack on Russia is imminent and he said that the Prime Minister was of the same opinion and felt that Hitler would have to make the Russian attack for a number of reasons. Sir Stafford Cripps is also said to be of this opinion.

If the Russians accept these proposals Mr. Eden said that the British Government will undertake to use its influence for what it may be worth with the Finns to hold them in line and to get an engagement from them that they will not join in the war against Russia,

promising

-2- 2435, June 13, 1941 from London

promising them such assistance from Great Britain as may be possible. In as much as there are considerable German forces presumably with armament reliably reported already to be in Finland I cannot personally see how any British assistance could be given to the Finns which would not be of almost direct benefit to Germany in the event of that country being at war with Russia. I think Mr. Eden realizes this too but he believes that Marshal Mannerheim and other Finnish leaders have not been taken into the German camp and that they are aware a tieup with Germany now would seriously jeopardize Finland's position at the conclusion of the war and British and Allied victory. British assurances might therefore be of some moral value if not of immediate utility. Mr. Eden does not think, however, that the Finns could be expected to resist a German demand for passage of troops through that country to Russia nor to take any active steps of opposition against Germany. They would rather expect Finland at best to be in the position of a neutral Hungary.

(END OF MESSAGE)

JOHNSON

GW

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

Division of
FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS
OCT 29 1941
Department of State

London

TK
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (SC).

Dated October 22, 1941

FROM

Rec'd 8:45 p.m.

Handwritten notes:
2
4
Left
File

ADVISED ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. HURMBECK
OCT 28 1941
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State
Washington

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
OCT 23 1941
MR. WILLIS

SECRETARY OF STATE
OCT 23 1941
NOTED

5048, October 22, 11 p.m.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE SECRETARY.

Knowing that you are following every detail
of the situation developing in the Far East, I
thought that the conversations which I have had
with the Russian Ambassador and with Eden would
be of interest to you and perhaps of some help.
Last night Maisky asked me to have dinner with
him as he wanted to talk with me informally. He
is concerned about a possible attack by Japanese
in Siberia. He wanted the British Government to
join with the United States to warn Japan against
an attack upon Russia. I saw Eden today. He was
distrubed on similar grounds. The question of a
possible sequence of events in which Japan would
be tempted to strike against Russia under German
pressure, the compromising of England as Russia's
ally, and our own position, all seriously troubled
him. Although he recognized that it would not be
possible

Handwritten:
New
7:45
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OCT 30 1941

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PS/WHA
Confidential File

2400601 DEPARTMENT OF STATE 1939/16039

-2- #5048, October 22, 11 p.m., from London.

possible for us under our division of powers and treaty position to issue a joint secret warning with the British to the Japanese and perhaps unwise to issue separate independent public statements challenging Japan because of prestige and "face", he hoped that if we were continuing conversation with Japanese we would press the Russian cause and he added that the British would be willing to have it said in the conversations that they would support our position. I did not ask concerning precise language because I wanted first to forward the suggestion for your consideration.

WINANT

CSB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED



AMT
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (SC)

London
FROM
Dated December 19, 1941

Rec'd 8 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY

6147, December 19, 11 p.m., (STATION ONE).

PERSONAL AND SECRET FOR THE SECRETARY

Your 6885 deeply appreciated. Eden's cables

which I am forwarding in a summary statement confirm
your judgment. The following is a summary of a four
hour conversation that Eden had with Stalin:

It began with a full survey of the political
situation when Stalin produced draft projects of two
treaties, one to cover mutual military assistance
irrespective of the war and the other political
collaboration now and after the war. The terms do
not greatly differ from those which Eden had fore-
shadowed and the latter gave Stalin a draft prepared on
the approved basis. A further meeting was to take place
on the following day to evolve an agreed text which Eden
thought would not present any insuperable difficulty.

Stalin then suggested the signature of a secret
protocol



*appropriate excerpts
given May. 1942*

740001 EUROPEAN WAR 1939 / 17699

FEB 7 - 1941

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PS/WHA
Confidential File

*NEW
741.6*

-2- #6147, December 19, 11 p.m., (SECTION ONE) from London.

740.00119 EW
protocol embodying the joint views of the British Government and the Soviet Government for a settlement of postwar frontiers and outlined in detail his conception of such a settlement for Europe as a whole which was drastic and severe upon Germany. Eden told him that for many reasons it was impossible for him to enter into a secret agreement; he was pledged to the United States Government not to do so; the British Government's own discussion of a peace settlement had not advanced to this point and he would have to consult his colleagues. He would, however, take back a full account to London where the proposal would be studied and the matter could then be taken up through diplomatic channels.

WINANT

GW

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

PS
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (SC)

London

Dated December 19, 1941

FROM Rec'd. 8:45 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY

6147, December 19, 11 p.m. (SECTION TWO)

Stalin agreed to this and also to the pro-
posals being communicated to the United States Gov-
ernment. His desire was to establish that our war
aims were identical as then our alliance would be
stronger. If our war aims were different then,
he said, there was no true alliance.

The war situation was then discussed. Stalin
said his military advisers believed Germany had
given Japan about 1500 aircraft. Eden urged the
difficulties of transit but Stalin said he had come
to believe that this was not a Japanese war in the
Far East. He thought that some of the Japanese pilots
had been trained in Germany and that others were Ger-
mans.

Eden gave Stalin some account of the British
Government's military objectives in Africa and he
fully endorsed these. Hitherto the war policy of the
Soviet Union had been to fight rear guard actions with
the object of gradually wearing down the German forces.

Now

not
894.248
11 PW

-2- 6147, December 19, 41 p.m. (SECTION 4.0) From London

Now the latter were beginning to feel the tension. German soldiers were tired and their commanders had not prepared for a winter campaign. The arrival of new Soviet reinforcements had made possible the change seen in the last two weeks. The Germans had tried to dig in but they had not made very strong fortifications. Soviet troops had been able to hold their own and were now able to attack. Counterattacks were gradually being developed into counter offensives. The Germans were reorganizing their forces and creating new formations but he did not think that these would be ready before two months. In any case his army would continue to keep up the offensive all winter. He thought Russia had no slight superiority in the air but emphasized that the Germans had great superiority in tanks. He said that the position in the South was satisfactory and that the arrival of fresh Russian reinforcements had resulted in the recent successes.

IN. NT

G

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

BS

London

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

Dated December 19, 1941
FROM
Rec'd. 10:45 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

TRIPLE PRIORITY.

6147, December 19, 11/p.m. (SECTION THREE)

There was some discussion about Turkey, Persia and other matters on which Eden will report later. Stalin seemed reasonably satisfied with the position in these countries.

As regards the Far East, Stalin said he was sorry that in the present circumstances he was not now in a position to help us there.

Eden accepted a suggestion by Stalin that the British military mission should come to Moscow where contact could more easily be kept with the Russian commanders.

Eden reported that the conversation throughout was most cordial and was to be resumed the next day. The contents of the treaties in their final form would generally accord with the basis approved by the Cabinet. The Russians attach importance to the term "treaty" and Eden thinks it essential that his visit should be marked by some agreement which will convince the Russians of the sincerity of our collaboration both now and in the future.

(End Summary)

-2- #6147, December 19, 11 p.m. (SECTION THREE) from London

(End Summary).

7006
561.24

There was a military reference in a detailed section of Eden's report which I think is important because I have understood that the army air service has held a contrary view. The reference reads as follows: "As regards rocket bomb, Stalin stated that this had not turned out to be very useful against tanks, though it was useful against troops. Russians had found that airplanes fitted with cannon were better against tanks than those fitted with rocket bombs."

Would you please see that General Arnold gets this information but make sure that Eden is protected as conversations were informal and confidential in character.

Done & done
Army Service

Eden sent an additional special note today which reads as follows:

7006
561.94

"Stalin's attitude about the Far East is perfectly loyal and in fact he stated that he would be in a position to help us there in the spring. He is, however, clearly determined not to provoke Japan at present and considers that he is not in a position to do so. In these circumstances I felt that it would not only be useless but also unwise to speak to him about the United States use of air bases in Siberia.

561.561

Please

-3- #6147, December 19, 11 p.m. (SECTION THREE) from London

Please explain the position to Mr. Winant who spoke to me about this just before I left England and say how sorry I am not to have been able to do more."

(END OF MESSAGE)

WINANT

KLF

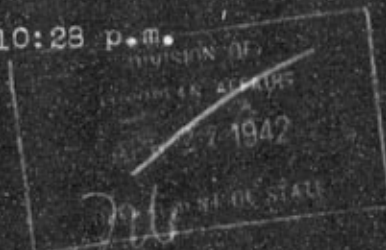
TELEGRAM RECEIVED

London

WWM
This telegram must be
closely paraphrased be-
fore being communicated
to anyone. (MC)

Dated April 24, 1942

FROM Rec'd 10:23 p.m.



Secretary of State,
Washington.

2142, April 24, midnight.

Following a luncheon given him by the American correspondents today, which I attended, the Prime Minister spoke briefly off the record and then replied to questions. While a bit on the defensive at first, he warmed to the occasion and won the complete sympathy of an audience which is not accustomed to taking people for granted. His extemporaneous speech was devoted largely to an expression of appreciation of the reception given him in the United States and to a plea on the importance of complete Anglo-American cooperation to see the war through and to preserve what we are fighting for thereafter. He spoke frankly of Japanese military successes and in no way belittled them. He said he was glad, however, that we realized in the United States that Hitler is the principal enemy and that until he is defeated

APR 28 1942

Confidential File
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PS/WHA

-2- #2142, April 24, midnight from London

defeated the war will go on, whether the Japanese are beaten or not. He told the American correspondents that by their understanding they could make an important contribution to victory and that their capacity for harm was equally great.

The many questions which followed were varied, direct and not always discreet. Those in the last category (such as "Where and when is the second front to start?") were usually parried with skill or humor, or a mixture of both.

One correspondent asked Mr. Churchill what he thought of the French situation with the return of Laval. The Prime Minister replied that he found much that was encouraging with regard to France that has developed in the past two years since the state of despair at the time of the armistice. Our entry into the war, he said, had brought over to the side of hope and resistance a large segment of the French public that had previously been in despair. The situation in France, he said, must be viewed with great tolerance. It is not easy for us here, he went on, fully to appreciate the sufferings of the French, the constant

-3- #2142, April 24, midnight from London

constant series of alternating threats and tantalizing offers which their "oppressors" held over them, and their complete helplessness to defend themselves. "Even Vichy", he said surprisingly, "does its best, I suppose, to resist". When we are in a position, he said, to give them help they will certainly do all they can to throw off their "oppressors", as the action of the French people at St. Nazaire had recently shown. He added, with a chuckle: "If news came through that some patriot had done in Laval, I can't say that I would enjoy my dinner any less".

To the question whether he thought the Japanese would attack Russia, he replied briefly that he thought the chances were fifty fifty. Would Hitler be defeated this year, he was asked, and answered that he knew little more than his audience. He could not see that Germany could be militarily crushed this year; he thought it foolish to count on any internal collapse this year and he saw no signs of it. People react badly when the war news is bad, they grow more depressed as the news gets worse, but there comes a further stage when, with their backs to the wall, they fight desperately:

all this

-4- #2142, April 24, midnight from London

all this may happen in Germany, though the collapse came quickly in the last war. He expected however that they would have no longer superiority in the air and this was important.

As to the postwar world, he gave no very specific picture other than to emphasize the importance of the United States and Great Britain pulling together. He himself didn't expect "to be here to see much of it". As for a name for the present war, he thought it might well be called the "unnecessary war" for had the United States and Great Britain pulled together after the last one and devoted their attention to enforcing treaties rather than to cutting down the size and numbers of each others battleships - which could only have caused the Germans and Japanese to question Anglo Saxon sanity - the war need never have taken place. On the battle of the Atlantic he said that he felt our "authorities" fully realized the importance of the situation and would, he believed, take effective steps to reduce the very heavy sinkings; he does not however expect the "shipping bottle neck" to be overcome this year. Heaviest American ship

production

-5- #2142, April 24, midnight from London

production will only come in the latter part of 1942.

The Prime Minister seemed genuinely to enjoy himself and I believe that the time he spared in accepting (with Brendan Bracken) the invitation our correspondents have been urging upon him for the past year was well repaid.

MATTHEWS

KLP