



RSC

Moscow

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

Dated Feb. 5, 1938

Rec'd 5:44 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington, D. C.

35, February 5, 5p.m.

REFERENCE to my telegram No. 5, January 8, 7 p. m.

Yuiming, Chinese Charge d'Affaires, told me the  
following yesterday in strict confidence.

ONE. (A) The mission of Sun Fo has obtained its  
first objective, namely, the creation of an atmosphere  
of mutual confidence which permits a friendly exchange of  
views (whether or not he meant by this statement that  
contact had been established with Stalin is not clear).

(B) The negotiations are considered to be of so  
delicate a nature that the members of the mission avoid  
seeing any persons except the highest Soviet officials  
for fear their statements or actions may be given a false  
interpretation; they are not even telegraphing their  
home government since they do not trust their own codes.  
Telegraphing is unnecessary, however, since the mission  
has full powers to negotiate and sign without reference  
to the Chinese Government.

(C) Most members have an American education and are  
carrying

carrying on negotiations with best western traditions; they will give no promise which China will not keep, which it may regret in happier years or which may prejudice the position in China of other friendly powers.

(D) Rumors that the Soviet Government is agreeing to recognize full Chinese sovereignty over Outer Mongolia in return for certain concessions or that the Kremlin is intriguing with the purpose of having Chiang Kai Shek replaced by more liberal Chinese leaders are Japanese inspired.

Two. Although I elaborated somewhat on the various rumors relating to Mongolia, he did not deny that Mongolia figures in the negotiations. It has not been possible as yet to obtain through any authoritative source in this particular the concrete points under discussion.

Three. (A) Japan estimates the present strength of the Trans-Baikal army at about twenty divisions totalling slightly more than 350,000 men. Our Military Attache considers this figure as excessive.

(B) During recent weeks there has been a tendency to move Japanese troops out of the neighborhood of the border towards the east and to replace them with Russian troops.

(C) His Government

(6) His Government is somewhat concerned at unconfirmed rumors that troops are being concentrated in rather large numbers in central Siberia in localities which would permit their rapid transfer into the Trans-baikal region.

(7) There are two fully equipped Soviet divisions in Outer Mongolia.

(8) In his opinion the Soviet Union does not desire to enter into an armed conflict with Japan at present although during recent weeks it has been following a policy only short thereof.

Four. There is little doubt that shipments of supplies and equipment which could be devoted to military purposes have been going to the Far East in larger volume than usual during the last six weeks. The supplies apparently include both clothing and foodstuffs; nevertheless the foreign observers in whom I have most confidence still feel that these measures (?) precautionary measures only and that the Soviet Union is not seriously preparing to make an attack on Japan.

Five. The Soviet press although continuing to carry on an anti-Japanese campaign nevertheless from time to time displays reluctance at rumors that the Soviet Union is preparing to enter the war in the Far East. An article

14 ( ) of I WDA for instance denounces the authors of  
such articles who are seeking to excite Japan against  
the Soviet Union by intimating "that the Soviet Union is  
preparing to take an attack on Japan". The article continues:  
"They are trying to frighten the Japanese to persuade  
them that it is necessary to hurry and beat the Soviet  
Union to it. On the other hand they are endeavoring to  
provoke the Soviet Union by trying to prove the necessity  
of a preventive move against Japan. In vain are the  
reactionary English circles secretly nourishing the hope  
that they will be able to turn the wave of aggression  
away from the British Empire."

HENDERSON

HP

#apparent omission

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

LMS

A portion of this telegram must be closely paraphrased FROM before being communicated to anyone. (E)

Moscow

Dated February 11, 1938

Rec'd 3:52 p. m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

43, February 11, 7 p. m.

(GRAY) One. Today's PRAVDA carries a long unsigned front page article entitled "instigators of war" in which it attacks authors of "provocative rumors" appearing in the foreign press in regard to a possibility of a Soviet-Japanese war and takes particular exception to reports of an increase in Soviet military preparations in the Far East. The American correspondent Knickerbocker and several British papers are made the particular target for attack.

Two. After stating that instigators of war "whether English or others" will not succeed in seeing the Soviet Union follow "a policy on orders from anyone, or as a result of pressure from anyone, or on account of anyone's promises" the article continues:

"The Soviet Government, unwaveringly adhering to a policy of peace, will wage war only with aggressors, only with violators of peace, with the violators of

Soviet

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FEB 25 1938

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DIVISION OF AFFAIRS  
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LMS 2-No. 43, February 11, 7 p. m., from Moscow.

Soviet frontiers. No stormy international orchestra of slander and excitement can shake the iron Soviet resolution and calmness."

Three. The article in question has been given so prominent a place in the newspaper and is intended to represent a statement of Soviet foreign policy particularly with regard to the Far East. (END GRAY)

Four. The above passage is so worded as to make it subject to two different interpretations. Examined from a strictly grammatical point of view it would appear to mean that the Soviet Union will go to war only in the event of an invasion of Soviet territory by an aggressor. Since the article appears to be devoted almost entirely to the denial of Soviet intentions to attack Japan it is believed that the passage above quoted is intended to relate only to the conditions under which the Soviet Government would go to war in the Far East. It contains no geographic reservations and taken literally may be construed to apply to Soviet foreign policy in general.

Five. (GRAY) The article also contains an attack upon "a certain important personage from the Afghan Embassy", apparently the Afghan Ambassador, whom it

ACCUSES

LMS 3-No. 43, February 11, 7 p. m., from Moscow.

accuses of spreading "inciting rumors in regard to preparation by the Soviet Union for war with Japan". The writer asks "was it for this reason that this personage was sent here by the Afghan Government."

(END GRAY)

I doubt if this charge has any foundation. I have had numerous conversations with the Afghan Ambassador and have never heard him even mention the Far Eastern situation. It is my belief as well as that of other members of the diplomatic corps that this attack is motivated by Soviet displeasure with the attitude taken by him with regard to the Soviet request that Afghan Consulates in the Soviet Union be closed (SEE my despatch No. 898 of January 31, 1938) and can be partially attributed to the fact that he is the first dean of the diplomatic corps for many years who has made any real effort to prevail upon the Soviet authorities to grant to the diplomatic corps privileges and courtesies customarily extended by other governments to members of foreign diplomatic missions. It is believed also from the wording of the attack that it represents an effort on the part

of

IMS 4-No. 43, February 11, 7 p. m., from Moscow.

of the Soviet authorities to bring pressure upon the members of the diplomatic corps to prevent them from exchanging with one another their views regarding Soviet policies.

HENDERSON

CSB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

MOSCOW

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
MAY 23 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ML  
This telegram must be \_\_\_\_\_  
closely paraphrased before  
being communicated to anyone.  
(C-1) <sup>and</sup>

Dated May 22, 1938  
FROM Rec'd 5:30 P. M.

Secretary of State

Washington

123, May 22, 8 p. m.

Reference to my telegram No. 122, May 22, 5 p. m.

One. The Czechoslovak Minister stated today that

(a) he has received information from his Government to the effect that the Czechoslovak Government had called out one class of reserves amounting to about 80,000 men. This action had been taken in order to counteract the concentration of German troops along the Czechoslovak boundary and to curb the aggressive activities of the Nazis in Czechoslovak territory in connection with the elections. The calling out of the reserves and the moving of additional Czechoslovak troops into the Sudeten area had caused the Nazis in that area to modify their tactics.

(B) He was in constant touch with the Soviet authorities here who were manifesting "one hundred percent pessimism" on the possibility that war could be avoided.

(C) He was of the opinion that the Soviet Government had already taken certain military measures in the face of possible eventualities but admitted that there were practical

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MAY 21 1938

G/Hc

ML -2- Moscow May 22, 1938 #123 5:30 p.m.

practical difficulties in the way of effective assistance being rendered by the Soviet Government to Czechoslovakia (in this connection there are reports from other sources of certain troop transfers from the Moscow military district to the Kiev district within the last three weeks and that the troops involved may amount to two rifle divisions and eight tank companies. Up to the present, however, there is no evidence that this transfer represents more than a strengthening of the defense in that district).

Two. Members of the British and Japanese Embassies in discussing the immediate situation offered the opinion that the Soviet Union would not come to the aid of Czechoslovakia in case of the out break of war between Germany and Czechoslovakia. It has been reported to the Embassy through confidential sources that the German Embassy in Moscow has recently expressed the same opinion to its Foreign Office.

Three. An official of the Soviet Foreign Office while discussing the situation today reiterated the attitude of extreme pessimism with regard to the situation of Central Europe which the Soviet authorities of late have consistently manifested and repeated the Soviet view that Germany will undoubtedly attach Czechoslovakia unless a strong stand is taken by the great powers. In this connection

EL -3- Moscow May 22, 1938 #123 5:30 p. m.

connection he specifically mentioned Great Britain and France whom he accused of having thus far followed a policy of vacillation.

DAVIES

EMB:RGC



liberal outlook. He is, nevertheless, stalwartly loyal to the present policies of his Government. Apparently, he speaks quite frankly. The gist of his observations was the following:

1. Soviet-Japanese relations are very difficult; constant difficulties were being experienced in the Island of Saghalin in connection with the operation of Japanese concessions; where, necessarily, reliance was placed in large part upon Soviet employees; these difficulties arise primarily from the fact that such Soviet employees, fearing charges of being Trotskyites and Japanese spies and wreckers, refused to have anything whatever to do with the Japanese; that there were also other matters of serious difference.\*

I obtained the impression that the attitude of Russian diplomacy was definitely hardening toward Japan and more aggressive than last summer.

2. That in his (Shigemitsu's) opinion there were approximately 450,000 to 500,000 Soviet armed troops in the eastern area. He stated, however, that "they" had no absolute or definite information with reference thereto; that such information was very difficult to get.\*\* Shigemitsu stated, however, that it was the Japanese understanding that for every Japanese soldier in Manchukuo the Soviets maintained, in Manchuria, three Soviet soldiers. I gathered that the Japanese armed forces in Manchuria were from 150,000 to 200,000 in number. This checks with other information current here.

3. With reference to the campaign in China, he stated that the alleged Chinese successes were much exaggerated; that what really had taken place recently was the following:

The

\* See my despatches No. 414-A of July 1, 1937, and No. 1065 of March 29, 1938.

\*\* Litvinov recently advised me that the Japanese were extensive buyers of Soviet rubles "outside"; that this accounted for the rise in the price of the "black" ruble, and that in his opinion Japan was procuring rubles for the purposes of bribery in the East.

The Japanese high command had decided sometime ago not to continue their advance; but to establish their lines on the then existing western frontier; that this had been done for three reasons; to wit, that:

- (a) It was considered good military judgment;
- (b) They did not desire to disturb international relations further in the south or in the interior; and
- (c) They desired a breathing spell for the Chinese to think the situation over.

Pursuant to this plan the original Japanese forces which were largely reserves or second line forces, were withdrawn and regulars were being substituted therefor; and that during such operations the Chinese attack had utterly achieved some successes but that these were greatly exaggerated.

He said that this development in the situation might require, for reasons of prestige and morale, that the Japanese should recoup and project their lines still farther inland. This, he confidently expected, would happen very shortly and stated that the fall of Soochow was imminent.

4. That in his opinion the European situation seemed to be more composed; that much would depend upon the attitude of France toward the Soviet; that France has always historically feared the union of Germany and Russia; that the question now has been as to whether France, in view of Hitler's intransigent attitude toward Russia, would acquiesce in the English policy of cutting loose from the Soviet Union; I gathered that it was his opinion that France would not do so. He also expressed the opinion quite definitely that Mussolini was not entirely happy over Hitler's seizure of Austria. For the present, he considered that the European situation was more composed; that the "crux" in the situation was in his opinion whether the Russian-French pact would

be set aside, and what the attitude of France would be in the Czechoslovak question.

The Japanese Ambassador also advised me that he was leaving in a week or ten days for a trip through the Balkans by way of Odessa; from Odessa by boat to Constanza; and thence to Bucharest and other Balkan capitals.

Respectfully yours,

*Joseph E. Davies*  
Joseph E. Davies.

126-

File No. 710-Japan.

ED:gv

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
AUG 29 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AF  
EU

1-1204

FROM

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

Moscow  
Dated August 29, 1938  
Rec'd 9 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

271, August 29, 9 a.m. (SECTION TWO)

In my opinion even the Germans, with the possible  
exception of Hitler himself, realize that in the event  
of a general conflict in Europe the Soviet Union is  
in a position to derive the maximum profit with the  
minimum risk; for that matter, what alignments may take  
place or what the course of military operations may be,  
the internal-strain on the various countries involved  
in war will prepare the way for a social upheaval  
within those countries which will manifest itself  
in various forms and in varying degrees of intensity.  
This country has declared that it would fight to  
defend its territories and it must be assumed that this  
limitation on its war policy is based on some  
realization that its main strength lies in the weight  
of its physical mass and not in any capacities as  
a powerfully organized state. It has bound itself by  
treaty to take positive action in the case of certain  
eventualities involving other countries, but those

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SEP 1 1938

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very

-2- #271, August 29, 9 a.m. (SECTION TWO) from Moscow.

very agreements offer lines of escape from actual participation if so desired, and the general geographical factors themselves render dubious the efficacy of that participation. It is true that Soviet Russia has made itself the advocate of peace and has chosen to make public (\*) of its alignment with the democracies of the world by the misguided policy of the Kremlin (as?) can be characterized on a championship, preferably passive of a war in which the Soviet Union would be sufficiently involved to reveal the weakness inherent in the ponderous structure of the Russian state, and its profession of democracy is an artifice invented for export purposes with a view to sustaining the sentimental support of a state order which is now Socialist, principally in name, and which for all practical purposes operates solely as an autocratic despotism. At the present moment the Soviet Government as a result of immediate circumstances is concentrating its animosity against Nazi Germany and in order to curtail the power of that state would welcome any measures to that end provided the costs would be borne principally by others. But concurrently the Soviet Government must still be recognized as the avowed enemy of what it chooses to call the capitalist

system

-3- #271, August 29, 9 a.m. (SECTION TWO) from Moscow.

system and as such would, in the attainment of its objective as regards Germany at least, be inclined to envisage with equanimity the precipitation of eventualities within other countries which might result in the substitution of social and economic orders more in harmony with its own. (END MESSAGE).

KIRK

WTC:GN

(\*). Apparent omission.

NOTE--GARBLED GROUPS HAVE BEEN SERVICED.

RDC 10

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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

Moscow  
Dated August 29, 1938  
Rec'd 6:39 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.  
271, August 29, 9 a.m.

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
AUG 29 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Referring to my telegram 270, August 27, 11 a.m..

The Soviet press today carries a despatch from Praha to the effect that the Czechoslovak Minister for Foreign Affairs stated to journalists that the German Government had made a demarche in a series of European capitals namely, London, Warsaw, Bucharest, Belgrade and others, to the effect that further delay in the solution of the nationality problem might cause the German Government to give active support for the protection of Sudeten Germans.

The German Embassy states that no (repeat no) such demarche has been made in Moscow but that the German Ambassador has called on Litvinov in the last few days in respect to other matters and the Czechoslovak situation was also discussed. I understand that Litvinov stated to the German Ambassador that the chief interest of the Soviet Government in this question was directed

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SEP 1 1938

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-2- #271, August 29, 9 a.m., from Moscow.

directed towards opposing the extension or strengthening of National Socialist Germany and that if there were another form of government in Germany the Soviet attitude would be quite different. Litvinov, I am informed further, stated that he was convinced that the Czechs would offer no provocation to Germany and that therefore in any conflict which might arise between the two countries Germany would be the aggressor. In that case he was convinced that France would come to the aid of Czechoslovakia and that England would be forced in even against the wishes of Chamberlain and that in such an event the Soviet Government would remain faithful to its treaty obligations and would "hold to its word and do its best". I also understand that the German Embassy here has reported to Berlin that it believes that even in the event of a general conflict the Soviet Government would limit its aid to some aircraft and war supplies and the possible use of submarines in the North and the Baltic Seas to threaten German communications with Scandinavian countries but that no extensive military participation on the part of the Soviet Union was to be expected.

In

-3- #271, August 29, 9 a.m., from Moscow.

In regard to immediate developments, I have received the impression from the German Embassy here that in their opinion the danger lies in the fact that apparently Hitler is not convinced that England and France would come to the aid of Czechoslovakia in the event of <sup>a</sup> German-Czech conflict and that until that doubt is expelled or complete autonomy granted to the Sudeten Germans no relaxation in tension may be expected. In the light of the foregoing some step on the part of the British Government to make unequivocally known its position in the event of a German-Czech conflict would be regarded as salutary. (END SECTION ONE).

KIRK

HPD

FS

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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

Moscow

Dated August 31, 1938

FROM

Rec'd 6:55 a.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

273, August 31, 10 a.m.



The Czechoslovak Minister here states that he regards the conversation between Litvinov and the German Ambassador referred to in my 271, August 22, 9 a.m., as a part of the series of demarches which Germany is said to have recently been making in various capitals and he characterizes the Ambassador's observations to Litvinov as a bid for Soviet neutrality in case of a conflict. The Minister says that the German Ambassador presented to Litvinov the argument that the intervention of France against Germany in aid of Czechoslovakia would amount to an act of aggression on the part of France and that consequently the Soviets need not be bound to intervene and adds that Litvinov in rejecting this argument declared that if Germany should move against Czechoslovakia his Government would live up to its commitments to the full.

The Czechoslovak Government, the Minister continued, would go far in concessions in the present crisis but

that

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SEP 1 1938

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FS 2-No. 273, August 31, 10 a.m. from Moscow

that there was a limit to such a course and that if that limit should be reached his country would fight and fight on a larger scale than was generally believed possible. He felt sure that France and the Soviet Union would come to the aid of Czechoslovakia and although he avoided specifying the exact nature of Soviet aid, he preferred personal confidence in the efficacy thereof. He admitted, however, that the position of England had not been definitely clarified in spite of the fact that the British Government must realize the danger which an unchecked Nazi Germany combined with Italy constitutes in Europe and particularly in the Mediterranean. The Minister added that he does not believe that Germany in reality wants a general war and that the justification for any optimism lies in the hope that the British Government will declare to Germany that England will not (repeat not) stand aloof in the event of a conflict and thus confront the German Government with the choice between a compromise in the Czechoslovakia controversy and the necessity of engaging in a major conflict. Other democracies the Minister felt should also make clear their position against aggressor states and in that connection mentioned appreciatively the recent utterances emanating from the highest sources in the United States.

The

FS 3-No. 273, August 31, 10 a.m. from Moscow

The Minister concluded with the statement that he believed that Hitler personally who is reported to be in an abnormally nervous state at the moment, was not convinced that England would move and that it would require the operation of that conviction to restrain him from pursuing his present course as well as some "psychological pressure" to enable him to desist from that course before it should lead to its inevitable end.

RR:MC

WIRM

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~~KCC~~  
~~JSP~~

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

JR

GRAY

1-1330

FROM Moscow

Dated August 31, 1938

Rec'd 12:50 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

274, August 31, 4 p.m.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
AUG 31 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
*Con UP*

The JOURNAL DE MOSCOW which is generally believed to reflect the Foreign Office opinion published in today's edition on editorial entitled "intensification of blackmail and danger of war" devoted to the Czech, German situation. The editorial states that as a result of the German maneuvers the intensification of the German press campaign against Czech, German provocations on the Czech frontier and the official demarches of the Hitler Government in Bucharest and Belgrade the atmosphere in Europe has become more tense than at any time since the war; but while these German measures are the usual blackmailing tactics of the aggressor it would be a very serious mistake to consider them only as blackmail since where and how this blackmail will end, even whether it will end, or whether Germany will not pass from menaces to the concrete use of armed force" therefore the editorial continues "it is to the interest of the other states concerned

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-2- #274, August 31, 4 p.m., from Moscow.

concerned to adopt counter measures to force Germany, as the instigators of the recently attempted aggression in the Far East were forced to beat a retreat."

According to this editorial the German calculations in the present situation are based on the following considerations:

One. The possibility of internal divergences in Czechoslovakia as a result of the policy of concession adopted by Hodza at the instigation of Runciman which has given Germany reason to hope for either Czech capitulation or a paralysis of Czech powers of resistance.

Two. Hitler's belief that the British Government will not come to the aid of Czechoslovakia.

Three. Due to the deterioration in the foreign position of France which has taken place in the last three months, Hitler feels it possible to leave independent French action out of consideration; and,

Four. "finally, Hitler considers that the entry into force of the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact of mutual assistance is conditional upon the aid which France may give to Czechoslovakia, the victim of aggression. For this reason, he supposes that, in the event that

France

-3- #274, August 31, 4 p.m., from Moscow.

France remains passive, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, being no longer formally bound, will perhaps refrain from intervening in the conflict." The editorial then states that "whether these considerations which lie at the base of Hitler's calculations are true or not, it is evidently useless to expect from Neville Chamberlain any declaration, and even less acts, which could be capable of destroying these calculations"; and that, because of the systematic policy of laissez faire and even encouragement to aggression on the part of the bourgeois democracies, even Hitler is mistaken in his calculations, it will nevertheless be necessary to administer to him palpable proofs of his error. The editorial adds that it is a mistake to believe that these proofs can be demonstrated to Hitler through diplomatic conversations on the part of any one country; that this can be done only by practical measures as dictated by the circumstances and resulting from a joint examination of the situation on the part of the countries interested in the preservation of the existing order in Europe and in the maintenance of peace. The editorial concludes with the following words "In this connection we will recall the declaration made

by

-4- #274, August 31, 4 p.m., from Moscow.

by the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Mr. Litvinov at the beginning of the crisis precipitated by Fascist Germany on the frontiers of Czechoslovakia. At the same time it must not be forgotten as Mr. Litvinov stated <sup>in</sup> his speech to his electors in Leningrad on June 23 that the situation which has been created is dangerous not particularly for the Soviet Union but in the first instance for the little countries and in the second instance for the states responsible for the post war international order, that is to say, once again for England and France. These countries will be chiefly responsible for the future course of events as well for not having taken in time the necessary measures to prevent the catastrophe which is approaching.

-- KIRK

HPD

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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

FROM Moscow

Dated September 11, 1938

Rec'd 5:18 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

284, September 11, 4 p.m.

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 12 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Rumors originating outside the country have reached here to the effect that extraordinary "war councils" are now being held in Moscow in anticipation of the outbreak of hostilities in Central Europe but foreign military authorities here have been unable to obtain capable evidence that any such special activities are taking place. It is pointed out in this connection that plans in preparation for any such contingency would in the normal course have already been determined by the Red Army general staff and would be constantly under deliberation but that until an actual situation arose which would necessitate a definite military move there would be no occasion for any war council. Reports have been circulated also regarding an extraordinary concentration of airplanes, troops and material along the western frontiers especially in the Kiev district where maneuvers have recently taken place. According to the views of foreign military observers, however, there

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SEP 12 1938

-2- #284, September 11, 4 p.m., from Moscow.

there is no evidence that there have recently been any special military concentrations or activities which could not be explained by the movements and operations which might normally be expected at this time of year.

The extent and nature of possible Soviet military action is still a matter of conjecture. In discussing the question of any immediate direct aid to Czechoslovakia emphasis is placed on Soviet aviation and although the possible use of Soviet submarines in the Baltic Sea is discussed there is no (repeat no) general opinion that any such naval measures would be efficacious or even possible. Furthermore as regards large scale assistance through the transport by land of Soviet troops and material the impression prevails that any such movements could be rendered effective only after a considerable lapse of time and would involve the determination of the (\*).

From a strategical standpoint the movements of Soviet troops over Rumanian territory might offer greater difficulties than over Polish territory. The position of Rumania from a political standpoint, however, might render such action more feasible than in the case of Poland. As stated in my 270, August 27 the possibility of effecting immediately following an outbreak of

hostilities

-3- #284, September 11, 4 p.m., from Moscow.

hostilities the transfer of Soviet troops over Rumanian territory has been envisaged. It has since been intimated principally in Czechoslovak circles here that Rumanian acquiescence in the passage of Soviet troops over its territory might be forthcoming on the basis of some preliminary arrangement between the Soviet and Rumanian Governments and rumors from abroad state that steps along these lines have already been taken. It has also been suggested that Rumanian acquiescence in the passage of Soviet troops might follow League action on German aggression or the threat thereof. Members of the Rumanian Legation here, however, have denied that discussions along these lines have been taking place and point out that the attitude of the Little Entente on the obligations under Article 16 of the Covenant as indicated in the communique following the recent conference at Bled has undergone a certain modification which might affect the interpretation of the mandatory nature of these obligations insofar as Rumania was concerned. No expression of opinion on the position of Rumania in the foregoing contingency has been obtained from Soviet officials other than a noncommittal discussion of the possible effect of League action on the policies of the countries directly or indirectly involved

-4- #284, September 11, 4 p.m., from Moscow.

involved, and in French Embassy circles comment is confined to a vague statement that a process of "psychological preparation" may have been undertaken in regard to Rumania with a view to facilitating an extension of aid to Czechoslovakia in case of necessity.

The foregoing observations in regard to Soviet aid in case of a conflict over Czechoslovakia are based on an evaluation of the possibilities which might be open to the Soviet Union in the event that it should take an active part in eventual hostilities. It should be borne in mind, however, that so far the declaration of Soviet policy has gone no farther than an assurance that the Soviet Government would fulfill its treaty obligations and there has been no open reference to the nature and extent of Soviet military action.

Among members of the Diplomatic Corps here special emphasis is being placed on the serious effect of the publication of the TIMES article which in spite of the subsequent denial is still being regarded as reflecting views obtaining within the British Government. The French Ambassador who was ordered urgently to return to Moscow points to the disturbing consequences of the TIMES article and stresses the increased importance at the present moment of a demonstration of firmness on the part of the British Government as a restraint on Germany.

7

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SER 12 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

EG  
This message must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (C)

FROM

Moscow

Dated September 12, 1938

Rec'd 11:26 a.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

287, September 12, 5 p.m.

My telegram No. 284, September 11, 4 p.m.

I understand that the French Ambassador has been endeavoring to obtain from the Soviet Government some definite commitment in regard to Soviet military participation in the event of a conflict in Europe with particular reference to the participation of the Soviet air force and Soviet submarines. Insofar as can be ascertained his efforts up to yesterday resulted in nothing more than a reiteration of the general statement that the Soviet Union will live up to its treaty obligations.

As regards the participation of the Soviet air force the impression prevails here that a possibly favorable disposition on the part of Rumania, indicated in my above mentioned telegram, would be confined at least in the initial stage of a conflict to a passive acquiescence in the flight of Soviet aircraft over Rumanian territory.

KIRK

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SEP 13 1938

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# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 13 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

F3  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (C)

FROM Moscow

Dated September 13, 1938

Rec'd 12:30 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

289, September 13, 3 p.m.

Supplementing my 287, September 12, 5 p.m. I understand that the French Ambassador here in making his overtures to the Soviet Government with a view to obtaining some commitment in regard to the immediate operation of the Soviet air force and navy in the event of conflict, gave assurances of French aid to Czechoslovakia in the event of German attack and of his Government's belief that England would follow, it is said an approach along identic lines has been made to the Soviet Ambassador in Paris. In response to the request for a categorical commitment I understand that the Spanish Government suggested that conversations between the military staffs of the two countries should first be inaugurated prior to the delivery of any such engagement. The French however are maintaining that any such conference should follow and not precede the categorical commitment as to Soviet military on the border along the foregoing lines. Up to the present it is not known

760F.62/771

CC

SEP 14 1938

FILED

FS 2-No. 289, September 13, 3 p.m. from Moscow

known that the Soviet Government has agreed to give the desired commitment.

I understand further that the French Embassy here now admits the accuracy of the report referred to in my 277, September 4, 4 p.m., of a Soviet approach to France in regard to the question of invoking Article 11 with reference to the Czechoslovak question before the present session of the League and it is assumed that Litvinov has continued discussions along these lines in Paris and Geneva. At the same time it is reliably reported that the Soviet Government has recently suggested a joint British, French and Soviet demarche in Berlin but has been met with a refusal on the part of the French and British Governments.

The Soviet press publishes for the first time today the composition of the Soviet delegation to Geneva, it includes in addition to Litvinov three major Ambassadors and the Soviet Minister to Stockholm.

RR:CSB

KIRK

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 14 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

NO

GIAY

FROM

Dated September 14, 1938

Rec'd 10:05 a.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

291, September 14, 11 a.m.

My 290, September 14, 10 a.m.

Soviet press today reproduced prominently Tass despatches from abroad in regard to the Czech situation, particular prominence being given to reports from Praha of the recent incidents in the Sudeten regions which are characterized as a "putsch" on the part of the Henlein party, as well as to reports of the ultimatum of the Henlein party to the Czech Government. Tass despatch dated September 14 from Praha reports that the Czech Government had agreed to discuss with the Sudeten leaders the question of the withdrawal of the emergency decrees in the Sudeten regions provided the Henlein party would guarantee not to repeat recent incidents but that the Sudeten leaders had not replied to this proposal. The other demands of the ultimatum were categorically rejected by the Government according to this report. Also prominently reproduced in a Tass despatch from London

7509.02/730

TC

FILE

HC 42- #291, from Moscow, September 14, 1938

to the effect that the Czech Minister had informed the British Foreign Office that a plebiscite was unacceptable to the Czech Government. Other reports refer to military preparations in Europe and the reports of English popular dissatisfaction with the policy of Chamberlain.

The JOURNAL DE MOSCOW of September 13th appearing today carries an editorial entitled "The Hour of Responsibility", presumably written prior to Hitler's speech, chiefly devoted to strong criticism of English policy along the lines of the London letter reported in my 286, September 12, 4 p.m. After repeating that the British Government in pursuance of its basic policy of "making deals with the aggressors at the expense of third countries" has arrived at forcing Czechoslovakia to yield to the demands of Hitler without resistance, even at the expense of territorial integrity and political independence and at the same time preventing France from fulfilling its obligations to come to the aid of Czechoslovakia in the event of an aggression. The editorial continues that the TIMES article despite official denial was undoubtedly reflecting views of an influential group in the British Government and was intended to test the extent of the demoralization of the Czech Government to encourage Hitler.

The

NC -3- #291 from Moscow, September 14, 1938

The German policy subsequent to the annexation of Austria clearly shows, according to the editorial that the British hope that the appetite of the German Fascists will be satisfied by the absorption of the Sudeten districts is entirely without foundation. After emphasizing the responsibility of those who are exerting pressure on the Czech republic the editorial goes on to say that certain English political figures are attempting to blame their own crimes on the Soviet Union which is characterized as being as absurd as accusing the Soviet Union of the responsibility for the latest typhoon in Japan. The editorial contends that these attempts to mislead the public are meeting with little success "for at last even in London the necessity of a consultation between France, England, and the Soviet Union on the Czech problem with the eventual participation of the United States is being spoken of". The editorial concludes "it is not excluded that the League of Nations will occupy itself with this problem and the question arises what action will the states who are hesitating take. However, if an imposing majority of states represented in the Council of the League, or at least let us say, three great powers declare firmly that they are ready to resist the aggressor the attitude of these hesitant states may change. Already

NO. -4- #291 from Moscow, September 14, 1938

at the beginning of the crisis in a declaration made on 17th of March when Mr. Litvinov Peoples Commissar for Foreign Affairs, had stated the Soviet had declared itself ready to 'participate in collective actions which will be decided with this and which would have as its aim the checking of the future development of aggression and the elimination of the growing danger of a new world situation'. Faithful to its policy of peace and to its international undertakings the Soviet Union has not modified and does not intend to modify its attitude. In this hour, charged with dangers for peace, the gravest responsibility rests on England and on France. Today there is still time to stop the aggressors and spare Europe a catastrophe. Tomorrow it will be too late."

In the article by the Geneva correspondent of IZVESTIYA, referred to in my 290, September 14, 10 a.m., it is stated in discussing the 19th session of the League that no attention is paid to the League's decision in regard to the present crisis since "either there will be no such decisions or they will be of no significance", that neither in the agenda nor in the

opening

-5- #291, September 14, 1938, from Moscow

opening speech of the President of the Council was reference made to Germany's threat to Czechoslovakia and that since the League of Nations during the past two or three years has been guided by England and France the latter must bear the responsibility for the League's systematic capitulation to the aggressors.

KIRK

G7:CSB

ADC  
#

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

EG  
This message must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (C)

FROM

Moscow

Dated September 16, 1938

Rec'd 12:06 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

296, September 16, 4 p.m.

My 295, September 16, 2 p.m.



Although no authoritative statement of Soviet  
reaction to the Chamberlain visit to Hitler is so far  
forthcoming the impression apparently prevailing in  
Foreign Office and military circles, which follows the  
trend of Soviet opinion openly advanced during the Czecho-  
slovak crisis, is that this visit should be regarded as  
further support of the contention that Great Britain is  
ready to sacrifice Czechoslovakia to avoid war and is  
only seeking the least costly method of relieving the  
immediate crisis without present consideration of the  
eventual danger to Europe of continued concessions to  
Nazi Germany.

It should be borne in mind, however, that beyond  
the declaration that the Soviet Government will fulfill  
its treaty obligations there still appears to be no  
definite grounds on which may be based a clear estimate

of

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ADG

SEP 16 1938

FILED

-2- #296, September 16, 4 p.m. from Moscow

of the extent to which that Government may be willing to proceed in fulfilling those obligations or the practical measures which it may be in a position to undertake to that end. It must be admitted that the final decision on the foregoing matters as well as on all other questions of Soviet policy rests with Stalin himself and would depend, <sup>is</sup> it/believed, on his personal evaluation of what would best serve his own power as dictator and the maintenance of the regime which he directs. No one here, however, even among the representatives of the countries most deeply concerned, profess to know what is in his mind in that regard but the impression prevails that Stalin even for the purpose of checking Hitler's course will not, at least at the present juncture, be inclined to embark the Soviet Government on a military venture on a scale which might endanger the Soviet structure itself and his position in the regime.

KIRK

GW:RR

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

EG

GRAY

FROM

Moscow

Dated September 17, 1938

REC'd 10:25 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

297, September 17, 3 p.m.

My 295, September 16, 2 p.m.

An article in today's PRAVDA reviewing the international situation states the attempted putsch of the Henlein party which has been suppressed by the energetic but calm measures of the Czech Government reveals that Henlein under orders from Hitler was endeavoring merely to gain time in order to make the preparations for the putsch which in the last analysis was to result in German invasion of Czechoslovakia. In discussing the Chamberlain visit the article states that despite the attempts of British and French press to view this visit as a move for peace the real motives behind this visit were as follows: (one) The complete failure of the Runciman Commission to bring about the capitulation of the Czech Government on the one hand and on the other discovery of the complete futility of an attempt

to



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SEP 20 1938

FILED

EE

-2- #297, September 17, 2 p.m. from Moscow

to negotiate with the Henlein party; (two) That the Henlein putsch and the resulting developments have brought on the real possibility of a German attack on Czechoslovakia which would result in French participation into which England might have been drawn. After reiterating the Soviet thesis that England's policy is directed toward deals with the aggressor the article continues that there can be no doubt that if Chamberlain had wished to declare that England together with the other peace loving powers would not permit the destruction of the Czech Republic there would have been no need for any such dramatic gesture as that undertaken by the British Prime Minister. While no accurate information is available in regard to the contents of the Chamberlain-Hitler conversation, the article continues: at the present time it is possible and essential to consider as established that the British Government will not follow a course of collective defense of peace and the creation against the aggressor of a front of peaceful powers and that Chamberlain is trying to revive his old aim of a four power pact. The events of last night, according to the writer, have clearly demonstrated that only a firm front of the peace loving powers can halt the aggressor and that

any

-3- #297, September 17, 2 p.m. from Moscow

any other measures in regard to Czechoslovakia will most likely result in the destruction of Czech independence and the opening of the paths to German hegemony of Central and Southeast Europe which will mean the practical encirclement of France. The article goes on to say that one of the decisive factors in the situation is the position of France and that if France will occupy a stronger position in Czechoslovakia no attempt of Chamberlain could force Czechoslovakia to deal with the aggressor, and concludes that "the visit of Chamberlain to Berlin is an attempt to deceive world public opinion, to deceive the people under the banner of peaceful gestures to bring about an agreement with the aggressor. It is an attempt through useless means which life will unmask in the very near future".

KIRK

GW:CSB

ML

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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

MOSCOW

Dated September 19, 1938

FROM

Rec'd 9:40 a.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

298, September 19, 9 a.m.

*De*  
*PM*

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 19 1938
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

I have no means of evaluating information obtained here on the latest developments in other countries and as ways of communication with the Embassy in Berlin except by this cipher, with which I understand it is not (repeat not) furnished, would be either insecure or delayed, I am relaying to the Department for possible consideration in its proper aspects, certain information on conditions in Germany which although I am not in a position to know have been already reported or may be subject to correction in the light of other material.

FILED  
SEP 19 1938

The following statements have been made in the strictest confidence by a German returned yesterday from Berlin whose accuracy and veracity I have every reason to credit and whose access to official sources of information in Germany are undoubted.

(Begin statement):

At the present time Hitler is paying no attention to the counsels of any of his advisers either in the Foreign

Office

Confidential File

760F-62/902 GEG

ML -2- Moscow #298 Sept. 19, 1938 9 a.m.

Office or in the Army and any German official attempting to observe sober realistic advice is summarily dismissed from Hitler's presence. For example, General Beck, Chief of the German Staff, has recently resigned because of his inability to influence Hitler. Despite the statements of Nazi leaders at Nuremberg, Germany has not sufficient supplies to wage a general war for any period exceeding three weeks or a month and there is a serious shortage of spare parts for army equipment. For instance, officers of tank corps had told my informant quite frankly that because of the lack of replacement parts many of the tanks would be out of action at the end of three weeks. There is no illusion among army officers in regard to the outcome of a general war and there is a noticeable lack of martial spirit in the army.

Ninety nine percent at least of the German people are against war but unfortunately the feelings of the people will have no influence in the matter whatsoever and it is the opinion of many people in Germany that there would be a very good possibility of a revolution shortly after the outbreak of a general war. The opinion is openly expressed in various quarters that the only hope for Germany would be the realization on the part of her opponents that they were not fighting the German people but merely the Nazi Regime. He further stated that on September 13, 14, the decision to

attack

ML -3- Moscow #298 Sept. 19, 1938 9 a.m.

attack Czechoslovakia had already been taken and that only the announcement of Chamberlain's visit had postponed it. He stated that in view of Hitler's psychological state and his refusal to listen to any sober advice it was believed in official circles in Berlin that unless the demand for a plebiscite was granted in the near future Hitler would resort to force against Czechoslovakia.

In the Foreign Office in Berlin the opinion prevails that if Hitler would listen to reason the Sudeten area could be obtained in time without fighting but even the fact that on September 2, the French Foreign Minister had intimated to the German Ambassador in Paris that France recognized that eventually the Sudeten regions would have to be given to Germany apparently had failed to influence Hitler's determination for an immediate plebiscite or failing that, a settlement by force of arms. In conclusion my informant who left Berlin on the night of September 15, stated that in his opinion there was an even chance that some agreement might in fact be reached on the matter of a plebiscite. (End of statement).

I venture to urge that all precautions be taken to safeguard the Moscow source of the foregoing information and its German origin.

KIRK

DDM:RR

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 20 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

EQ

GRAY

FROM Moscow

Dated September 20, 1938

Rec'd 6:52 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

299, September 20, 11 a.m.

Under the title "London and Paris have capitulated to Hitler" today's IZVESTIYA publishes an article from their correspondent in Geneva which after reviewing in Geneva the reports of the British and French plan for the "dismemberment of Czechoslovakia" writes that no one in Geneva is surprised at the British action in this connection as the entire course of British policy since May in regard to Czechoslovakia has shown that there were no limits to which the Chamberlain Government would go in satisfying Hitler's demands at the expense of Czechoslovakia. However, the writer continues the acquiescence of France is much more difficult to explain since leaving aside the question of the treaty obligations which bound France to Czechoslovakia, the present capitulation means that French influence in Europe is ended and that Hitler has succeeded in eliminating France from central and southeastern Europe. The writer continues that after the Sudeten regions w

7:07 P.M. 9/21/38

FILED  
SEP 21 1938  
COMER

-2- #299, September 20, 11 a.m. from Moscow

come the turn of the Polish Corridor, the turn of Alsace-Lorraine and that any expectations to the contrary are nothing but illusions. The writer continues that had England and France taken as firm an attitude at the present time as they did in May Hitler would have yielded and concludes with the statement that it is still possible that Czechoslovakia will refuse to commit suicide at the request of England and France and will defend its liberty. An article in today's PRAVDA reviews the reports of the contents of the British and French plan in much the same light but states that this plan may meet considerable opposition not only from the people of France but also from the French general staff and characterizes the plan as a new step towards a world war.

Repeat to Paris, London, Berlin and Praha.

KIRK

RR:CSB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 22 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MJD

FROM

Moscow

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

Dated September 21, 1938.

Rec'd. 4:55 p. m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

301, September 21, 7 p. m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

The Czechoslovak Minister in a conversation today characterized the Anglo-French proposals to the Praha Government as a virtual ultimatum; that it amounted in substance to a dismemberment of Czechoslovakia; that if events followed the course which they were pursuing at present he expected the Germans would move against Czechoslovakia within a day or two and that in that event his country would fight.

He professed to be unable to explain the apparent weakening in the attitude toward Germany of England and especially of France and was outspoken in his criticism of the vacillating policy of the French Government. The treatment of the Czechoslovak crisis he said constituted a danger to both France and England for the future and the effects of their policy was already resolved to itself in the preparations which both Poland and Hungary were making on behalf

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SEP 22 1938

Confidential File

MJD -2- No. 301, September 21, 7 p. m. from Moscow

half of their minority in Czechoslovakia although Poland, he believed, would be the next victim of Nazi aggression and need expect no greater protection on the part of France than Czechoslovakia might receive.

The Soviet Government, the Minister stated, had been entirely straightforward in the declaration of its attitude in the present crisis. It had declared that it would fulfill its treaty obligations and he was convinced that the aid which it might render in meeting those obligations would be immediate and efficacious. As to the means which the Soviets would employ in a conflict, the Minister alluded only to the use of Soviet aviation. The fact remained, however, that Soviet aid to Czechoslovakia was dependent upon assistance being rendered to that country by France, and the Minister said in strict confidence that it would be quite understandable if the Soviet Government would not (repeat not) be inclined to move if France did not. The matter of League formalities as provided for in the mutual assistance pact between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union offered no difficulties especially at the present moment while the League was in session but if owing to the Anglo-French attitude German action against Czechoslovakia was localized the Soviet Government would, in the Minister's opinion, be fully justified

MJD -3- No. 301, September 21, 7 p. m. from Moscow

justified in refraining from coming alone to the aid of Czechoslovakia in a form which might be characterized by the German Government as a communist putsch and result in launching the Soviet Union on an undertaking which would repeat the experiences in Spain.

KIRK

ROW  
EMB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 26 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1-1339

EG  
This message must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (C)

FROM

Moscow

Dated September 26, 1938

Rec'd 7:44 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

309, September 26, 9 a.m.

My telegram No. 289, September 13, 3 p.m.

I am informed that the French Minister here has  
recommended to his Government that Franco-Soviet  
military conversations be initiated forthwith pre-  
sumably without the prior specific commitments re-  
ferred to in my above mentioned telegram.

I understand from British sources that both  
Bonnet, when he was in Geneva, and subsequently  
Butler, the British representative there, had re-  
quested a definite commitment of settled participa-  
tion from Litvinov but that the latter had in both  
instances reiterated the intention of the Soviet  
Government to fulfill its treaty obligations "through  
the means available to it" and in addition had said  
to Butler that he had nothing to add to the statements  
set forth in his Geneva utterances.

Repeated to Paris.

KIRK

KLP

760F. 62/1096

DDG

FILED  
SEP 27 1938

~~EG~~  
~~ST~~  
~~RSC~~  
~~JST~~

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

EG

1-1334

GRAY

FROM

MOSCOW

Dated September 26, 1938

Rec'd 8:55 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

310, September 26, noon.

My 306, September 24, 11 a.m.

In addition to the usual despatches from abroad reporting developments in the crisis PRAVDA today carried an article devoted to Chamberlain's policy in which it is stated that there should be no doubt now of the failure of Chamberlain's efforts to negotiate with Hitler and that far from serving the cause of world peace Chamberlain has been endeavoring to protect his own foreign policy that only deals with the aggressors. Had France and England, the article continues, adopted a firm position following the attempted Henlein putsch in Czechoslovakia Hitler would have been forced to retreat and renounce his onslaught on the independence and integrity of the Czech Republic. According to the article, during the second visit Hitler had advanced new demands of such a character that even Chamberlain had been forced to

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 26 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
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of  
C*

recognize

SEP 28 1938

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DEC

-2- #310, September 26, noon, from Moscow

recognize that the policy of concession merely increased the appetites of the aggressors. After stating that the British foreign policy had registered another failure the article advances the opinion that the question at the present time is whether British democracy together with the French will draw the necessary conclusions from these lessons and warns the British and French Governments to take into consideration the fact that their plan for the betrayal of the interests of the Czechoslovak people had aroused great indignation in the public opinion of their countries while the news of the strong opposition adopted by the Czechoslovakia Government had been greeted everywhere with satisfaction. The article then cites Churchill to the effect that the British Government, faced with the choice of dishonor or war, had chosen dishonor only to receive war and concludes "there is still time. The English Government may avoid dishonor and prevent war. Otherwise it will have both". The IZVESTIYA reproduces the text of the Soviet-Czech treaty of mutual assistance together with protocols of signature. In a short explanatory comment it points out the origins of the treaty in connection with the plan for an eastern regional pact and draws

special

-3- #310, September 26, noon, from Moscow

special attention to the fact that Soviet assistance to Czech is conditional on prior assistance from France and concludes "thus in the event of the invasion or refusal of France to assist Czechoslovakia the Soviet Government in the literal sense of the treaty is free from all obligations vis a vis Czechoslovakia." It then quotes article 2 of the protocol of signature to that effect. Today's contains no indication of the contents of the German memorandum nor of the attitude of the Czech Government thereto.

KIRK

GW:KLP

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

paraphrase to  
war & last  
paragraph to  
name  
9-27-38  
Sept 27 1938

EC 1-1334  
This message must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (D)

FROM Moscow  
Dated September 26, 1938  
Rec'd 1:05 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

312, September 26, 3 p.m.  
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

Following estimate of Soviet military forces  
available for action in a possible European theater  
of war is furnished by Military Attache to this  
Embassy:

"If the Soviet Union renders military aid to  
Czechoslovakia in a war against Germany this aid will  
probably be rendered (1) by the despatch to Central  
Europe of Red army air units; (2) by launching an ex-  
peditionary force made up of ground units of the Red  
army; (3) by naval action in the Baltic Sea.

Certain Red army air units could be made available  
for an offensive mission in Central Europe immediately  
upon the opening of hostilities. These units would  
consist of bombing planes of the S B (medium bomber)  
type. The number would probably not exceed 200. After  
being committed to battle these units could no longer  
be counted as part of the air strength of the Soviet  
Union.

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SEP 29 1938

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Confidential File

401-20

-2- #312, September 26, 3 p.m. from Moscow

Union. The rendering of further air assistance would depend upon the course of combat but it seems it is contemplated that more than 200 additional planes would be made available for independent missions in Central Europe since the Soviet Union will not critically weaken its own defense in order to assist in Central Europe.

The training equipment, organization, and strategic location of the Red army all indicate that its maximum usefulness will be achieved if it holds a defensive line approximately along the present borders of the Soviet Union. If however political requirements necessitate the organization of a ground force for an expeditionary campaign such a force would be organized from troops in the Leningrad, White Russian, Kiev and Kharkov military districts. Such a force numbering 100,000 men could be ready in home garrisons a few hours after the mobilization order. Within seven days this force could be concentrated in a border region prepared to launch an offensive. By the fourteenth day after mobilization the force could be increased to 400,000 men. By the thirtieth day after mobilization an additional 200,000 could be added to the force. The extreme danger of attempting an offensive

with

-3- #312, September 26, 3 p.m. from Moscow

with inadequate troops dictates that no expedition be undertaken outside the borders of the Soviet Union until the concentration of at least 400,000 troops has been accomplished.

Naval action in the Baltic designed to interrupt the flow of Swedish iron ore to Germany would be attempted by Soviet submarines. Not more than fifteen or twenty submarines are available in the Baltic for this duty. No other type of naval action by Soviet ships seems possible. As practically the entire resources of the German navy would be available to combat twenty Soviet submarines, it is not believed that Soviet naval action could seriously menace German control of the Baltic."

Foregoing is submitted for information of War Department also.

KIRK

HPD

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

HR

GRAY

FROM

Moscow

Dated September 28, 1938

Rec'd 8:45 a.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington,

318, September 28, 11 a.m.

My telegram No. 308.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 28 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The JOURNAL DE MOSCOU appearing today comments editorially on the present crisis and after reviewing the situation along the accepted Soviet lines states that while the question of the very existence of the Czechoslovak State is being decided without its participation "the Soviet Union putting firmly and systematically into effect its policy of the defense of peace and of fidelity to its international engagements" as undertaken a demarche which is a warning to the aggressors".

After outlining the contents of the Soviet demarche to Poland the editorial states "the cynical and impudent reply of the Polish Government only proves that the rulers in Warsaw were caught in flagrante delicto, they are in reality preparing under orders from Berlin an act of aggression against Czechoslovakia. Another fact which shows the state of frenzy in which the Polish Government is

acting

SEP 29 1938

FILED

7-09-62/1204

609

HR -2- No. 318 from Moscow, September 28, 11 a.m.

acting is the violent campaign waged against France by the governmental Polish press.

The demarche of the Soviet Government refutes indeed once again the lying assertions of the agents of Fascism who have claimed that in these critical days for Europe the Soviet Government was looking for pretexts to divert itself of its obligations". The editorial concludes

"The Soviet Union has shown in act where the nations must look for safety before the catastrophe which is menacing them. It is in the loyal carrying out of international engagements, the energetic defense of indivisible peace and the organization of collective resistance to the aggressor".

KIRK

GW:CSE

RBS  
~~FILE~~

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 29 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FROM

RAW

GRAY

Moscow

Dated September 28, 1938.

Rec'd 10:12 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington,

322, September 28, 11 p.m.

My 321 September 28, 6 p.m.

The Acting Commissar for Foreign Affairs has just handed me a statement of which the following is a translation and which he asked me to transmit to my Government.

"The Government of the U.S.S.R. in its foreign policy by an aspiration for general peace. Renouncing the use of force for the settlement of international conflicts the U.S.S.R. at the time supported the initiative of the Government of the United States which proposed in the Kellogg Pact the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy. Furthermore on the proposal of the Government of the U.S.S.R. in Moscow on February 9, 1929 there was concluded between the U.S.S.R. and a number of countries a treaty concerning the prior entry into force of this pact.

At

760 F. 62/1286

FILED

-2- 322, September 28, 11 p.m., from Moscow.

At the present time in Central Europe events are developing which threatens to grow into a new world war. At the grave moment the Government of the U.S.S.R. cannot but value the declaration of the President of the United States appealing for the pacific settlement of the conflict which has arisen. The Government of the U.S.S.R. accepts systematically the proposal made to it by the Government of the United States to assist in the prevention of war and in the pacific settlement of the present international crisis.

Noting the presence of obstacles in the way of Anglo-French mediation between the Czech Republic and Germany despite the declared willingness of Czechoslovakia to sacrifice its vital interests for the sake of general peace the Government of the U.S.S.R. sees in the immediate convocation of an international conference the most effective means of preventing further aggression and averting a new world war. As early as the seventeenth of March of this year after the forcible seizure of Austria which created a threat to the peace of Europe the Government of the U.S.S.R. proposed for the prevention of further and more dangerous international complications the urgent calling of such a

conference

-3- 322, September 28, 11 p.m., from Moscow.

conference which could explore practical measures for checking aggression and the preservation of peace by collective efforts. Faithful to its aspiration for peace the Government of the U.S.S.R. is prepared at the present moment as well to support the proposal put forward by the Government of the United States of America for the calling of an international conference and to take an active part therein." (END SECTION ONE)

KIRK

CSB

RR

( This message m  
closely paraphrased  
before being communi-  
cated to anyone. B )

## TELEGRAM RECEIVED

Dated Sept. 28, 1938

REC'd. 11:10 p.m.

FROM

Secretary of State,

Washington.

322, September 28, 11 p.m.

(SECTION TWO)



When the Acting Commissar delivered to me the Russian text of the foregoing and official of the Commissariat read what purported to be a summary or translation of the statement in English and I thereupon pointed out to the Commissar that (one) the communication which I had read to him this morning related to a suggestion that the Chief of State or the Government of the Soviet Union send a message to Germany and Czechoslovakia along the lines of the appeal of the President of the United States the text of which as contained in the Department's circular of September 27 I had communicated to him at the same time and that I failed to find in his statement any indication as to the intention of the Soviet Government in that regard and that (two) I was at a loss to understand the reference in his statement to the convocation of an international conference as no mention thereof appeared in the President's appeal

2 - 322, Sept. 28, 11 p.m., from Moscow.

appeal in question.

As to the first point, the Acting Commissar stated in reply that his Government had decided to deal with the matter by means of a statement of its views directed to the Government of the United States and that an explanation of the choice of this procedure might be found in the allusion in the statement to the obstacles which Anglo-French mediation had encountered in the present conflict. As regards the second point, the Acting Commissar stated that his Government had taken cognizance of a second appeal which had been made by the President to the German Chancellor in which the convocation of an international conference had been mentioned and that his Government preferring to base its views on larger aspects of the problem than those specified in my communication to him of this morning, had accordingly emphasized the matter of an international conference which had been a favored instrumentality in Soviet foreign policy. In reply I stated that I regretted that his Government had not seen its way clear to following the suggestion of my Government as communicated to him and that I was in no position to make any comment on the reference to the convocation of an

3 - 322, Sept. 28, 11 p.m., from Moscow.

of an international conference as contained in the statement which he was delivering to me other than to repeat that this matter was not raised in the suggestion which I had conveyed to him this morning and to state that I had only heard a report by radio of the transmission of a second message from the President to the German Chancellor but had not been appraised of its contents. I stated, however, that I would not fail to transmit to my Government the document which he had handed me.

In conclusion the Acting Commissar stated that the Soviet press tomorrow would carry the text of the statement of the Soviet Government together with the substance of my representations of this morning. I informed the Commissar that I was not in a position to apprise him of the intention or wishes of my Government as to any publicity to be given to the suggestion contained in the Department's circular.

(End Message)

KIRK

KLP

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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

FROM

Moscow

Dated September 29, 1938

Rec'd 6:20 a.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

323 September 29, 9 p.m.

CONFIDENTIAL

By telegram No. 372, September 28, 11 p.m.

In a conversation with the Acting Commissar for Foreign Affairs last night he alluded briefly to the report of the meeting of Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain and Daladier at Munich tomorrow and characterized this meeting as an apparent effort to renew the Four Power Pact.

It is recognized that the Four Power Pact and the possibility that it might be revived has been consistently viewed with hostility and alarm by the Kremlin and accordingly the opinion cannot be excluded that the report of the proposed meeting at Munich of the Chiefs of Government and Prime Ministers of those powers has furnished an incentive to the Soviet Government to avail itself of any opportunity to press the convocation of an international conference in order to obviate the danger of isolation with which

the



760E. 67/1290

SEP 30 1938

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CONFIDENTIAL

-2- No. 323 dated September 2, 1945 Moscow.

the Soviet Union feels itself threatened through  
possible Four Power Pact.

KIRK

KLP

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 29 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RAW:

FROM

GRAY

Moscow

Dated September 29, 1938.

Rec'd 11:15 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

325, September 29, noon.

My 318 September 28, 11 a.m.

Tass despatches from New York in today's press report the President's direct appeal to Hitler which is characterized as a proposal for the calling of an international conference "of the powers directly interested in the settlement of the conflict". It was reported that the President's secretary had stated that by "direct powers" the President had in view Czechoslovakia, Germany, Poland, the Soviet Union, England, Hungary and Italy. A further report states that the President has sent a personal letter to Mussolini. The Soviet press reports without comment the announcement of the meeting at Munich today of Chamberlain, Daladier, Hitler, and Mussolini.

The Geneva correspondent of the IZVESTIYA in an article entitled "the usual attempt to pamper the

aggressor

70 OF 62 / 1295

SEP 30 1938

RECEIVED

-2- 325, September 29, noon, from Moscow.

aggressor" criticizes Chamberlain's radio speech which according to the correspondent only served to convince Hitler that he could exact further concessions from the British. After stating that the new time limit of two o'clock on September 28 set by Hitler was for the purpose of increasing the pressure, the article states that it is evident that Chamberlain is preparing to make further concessions and is ready to return to Germany, or if that is not agreeable designates Hitler then to arrange a four power meeting at which according to the author France may be forced to pay dearly for her friendship with England. The article concludes that word has just been received of the proposed Munich meeting on the 29th.

PRAVDA publishes an article on the defense capacity of Czechoslovakia which after emphasizing the high quality of the Czech army and its fortification defenses and referring to certain deficiencies in the German military forces concludes "if Germany begins a war against Czechoslovakia then that war might last as unpredictably long as the war in Spain."

KIRK

CSB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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SEP 30 1938  
Cupit

GAL

FROM

GRAY

Moscow

Dated September 30, 1938

Rec'd 10:45 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

327, September 30, noon.

IZVESTIYA today publishes without comment Tass report quoting Reuter's on the conclusion of the agreement between the Four Powers at Munich and giving the contents thereof. The IZVESTIYA, however, publishes an article from its Geneva correspondent entitled "The usual Anglo-French capitulation" which in view of the presence of Litvinov in that city presumably reflects his views and which strongly criticizes the capitulatory policies of England and France. After stating that while the first Franco-British plan produced shame and confusion among the representatives of those countries in Geneva, all feeling of shame before the new and more complete capitulation has vanished. Very few in Geneva, and least of all the French, the article continues, take into consideration what the conference of the Four Powers implies from the point of view

7800F. 62/1044

OCT 3 1938

FILED

-2- No. 327 dated September 30th From Moscow

view of the vital interests of France. It can hardly be doubted that Mussolini and Hitler would let such a favorable opportunity go by to squeeze France between the Pyrenees and the Maginot Line and that in the course of three weeks France has ceased to be a great power on the European continent. There is no need, the article continues, to harp on the "sentimental" theme of the destruction of international obligations and betrayal of the interests of the Czechoslovak people. It is necessary to examine the real reasons which impelled France to make such a complete capitulation. After stating that it is more than a question of the "cowardice" on the part of a few political leaders the article advances the opinion that the real reason is to be found in the fear of the British and French ruling classes to place arms in the hands of the masses of the people. Frightened by the spectacle of a people in arms the rulers of France and England have preferred capitulation and betrayal of their own national interests for, the article states, it must not be forgotten that although there are differences in method and temperament the social and political class-structure of the aggressors and that capitulators are identical according to the author, only fools and naive persons could believe that the conference

EDA - 3 - #327, September 30, noon, from Moscow

conference with four has done away with the threat of war, it has only postponed war for a very short period and that following the conference new demands of the aggressions will be advanced and England and France will be faced again with the choice under infinitely worse circumstances of either resistance or further capitulation. The article concludes that on the 30th the League will finish its work but that during the three weeks of tense crisis the League in fact has not existed. IZVESTIYA carries reports of Chamberlain's account of developments in the House of Commons and the publication of the British White Paper as well as the text of Litvinov's speech at Geneva on the Spanish question. No comment appears in PRAVDA.

KIRK

RR

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 30 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RAW <sup>GPO</sup>

FROM

A portion of this telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone (C)

Moscow

Dated September 30, 1938.

Rec'd 11:35 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

329, September 30, 3 p.m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

In reference to my 328, September 30, 2 p.m, I submit the following for what it may be worth. A member of the clerical staff of this Embassy who has a knowledge of the Czech language has just overheard while listening in on a radio broadcast from Praha what purported to be a conversation between a person at the broadcasting station in that city and a person speaking from a telephone in Moscow of which the number was also overheard. In this conversation the person in Praha asked advice as to the course which the Czechoslovak Government should take and the recommendation from the person in Moscow was to "stand firm". Upon investigation the telephone number in question was found to be that of the Czechoslovak Legation here.

SEP 30 1938

FILED

700F.62/1345 GDD

Confidential File

KIRK

GW

KLP

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

RAW

GRAY

FROM Moscow

Dated October 1, 1938.

Rec'd 5:10 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

330, October 1, 10 a.m.

The PRAVDA which is the only paper appearing today carries what is purported to be the full text of the Munich agreement. An article from its special correspondent in Praha, after describing the effect of the news of the Munich agreement in the Czech capital, states that a serious political crisis has begun and that the "reactionary" elements in Czechoslovakia are attempting to exploit the situation for the purpose of establishing a reactionary regime in the country. The author is of the opinion that the occupation by German forces of the designated regions will be carried out with great difficulty as it is not certain that the Czech army can be induced to withdraw from their prepared positions without disorder.

KIRK

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

GRAY

1-1334

MOSCOW

FROM

Dated October 4, 1938

Rec'd 1:08 p. m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

337, October 4, 2 p. m. By 335, October 2, noon.

Although the Soviet attitude towards the solution found in the Czech crisis has been indicated in articles from Geneva the first important comment appears in the PRAVDA and IZVESTIYA today which publish editorials denouncing the results of the Munich Conference and indicating the menace to continued peace inherent therein. The editorial in PRAVDA under title "the brave peacemakers and the genuine struggle for peace" states that the whole world is now seeing clearly that at Munich was accomplished an act which by its shamefulness transcended any which took place following the world war. After an ironical comparison of Chamberlain to William Pitt the editorial ridicules Chamberlain's letter to Daladier and in particular to his mention of Daladier's courage and dignity which, according to the writer, are terms difficult to apply to the conduct of the French and British Ministers in Munich. In this connection

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OCT 11 1938

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2-#337, From Moscow, Oct. 2, noon.

connection the editorial calls attention to the fact that Hitler personally met Mussolini and consulted with him while the French and British Ministers were left to play the role of supplicant "poor relations" and points out that the capitulation on the part of Chamberlain and Daladier to the demands made by Hitler and Mussolini can in no way be characterized as an agreement. The editorial then refers to attempts to involve in the "shameful Munich Agreement" the Soviet Union "the one power which has consistently and undeviatingly fought for general peace, the disinterested friend and defender of the independence of little countries" and denounces as absolutely unfounded the reports of Soviet connection with Munich agreement (see my telegram No. 335, October 2, noon, and No. 336, October 2, 11 a. m.). The editorial states in this connection "It is not difficult to fix the source of this false information which is undoubtedly to confuse the public opinion of Europe and America in regard to the position of the Soviet Union in the Czech question. The traces of these reports which are fabricated from beginning to end lead directly to those circles of England and France which are attempting before their peoples to justify, if only to a certain degree

REB

3-#337, From Moscow, Oct. 2, noon.

degree, their retreat before the aggressor and their signature to the shameful document known as the Munich Agreement". After reiterating that these reports have no foundation the editorial continues that the Soviet position was made clear by Litvinov at the recent session of the League of Nations and adds that this firm position of the Soviet Union and its loyalty to its obligations was appreciated and understood by the Czech public opinion and the Czech people and quotes in support of this a statement attributed to the leader of the Czech Agrarian Party to the effect that the only ally which remained loyal to Czech was the Soviet Union which had guaranteed real help within the realm of existing possibilities. After warning that the capitulation of England and France will have far-reaching consequences, the article concludes that "the eyes of all progressive humanity, of all the people, are directed to the Soviet Union whose international authority has increased even more. Only the Government of the Socialist State stands aside from the various plans and agreements directed towards the plundering and destruction of the independence of little countries and only the policy of the Soviet Union is the policy of the consistent struggle for

REB

4-#337, From Moscow, Oct. 2, noon.

for general peace, for the independence and freedom of the peoples against the Fascist aggressors and brigands."

The editorial in IZVESTIYA also sarcastically and bitterly criticizes the attempts portrayed before the Munich Agreement as a victory for peace and states that the mention of the consolidation of peace in Europe in Chamberlain's letter to Daladier is entirely unfounded and that the alarm of the little countries of Europe is entirely justified. The editorial also indignantly denies that the Soviet Union took any part in the Munich Conference or could have or has any responsibility for its results. After quoting the words of Litvinov in his speech on September 21 at the Plenum of the League with reference to the Soviet position in regard to the Czech question and the general subject of peace the editorial concludes that "if these words of Soviet representatives clearly express the direct and honest policy of the Soviet Union, the policy of defense of the peace and loyalty to obligations which it has assumed, then the Munich Conference which led to the dismemberment and plundering of Czech shed a clear light on the policy of the present ruling circles of England and France who have come under the thumb of the Fascist aggressors."

KIRK

HPD

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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FROM GRAY

Moscow

Dated October 6, 1938.

Rec'd 11:46 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

344, October 6, 2 p.m.

My 340, October 5, 2 p.m.

Moscow PRAVDA this morning in commenting on the resignation of Benes implies that it was due to German pressure and states that a new reactionary orientation of Czech policy is indicated by the appointment as Foreign Minister of Chvalkovski, former Czech Minister at Rome and Berlin, and by the attempts of Czech politicians to carry favor with their new "masters" indicated by the presence in Berlin of Minister Vavrechka and the Chairman of the Agrarian Bank Preis. PRAVDA states in this connection that while the maneuvers of political "careerists" are going on "among the masses of the Czech people the feeling of friendship and thankfulness to the Soviet Union, the only one which did not abandon Czech in misfortunes, is growing. The Czech people remember firmly that the Soviet Union was true to its treaty with Czech, as it is true to all treaties concluded by it". PRAVDA likewise

publishes

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OCT 10 1938

-2- 344, October 6, 2 p.m. from Moscow.

publishes an appeal from the union of Czech authors together with the answer of a group of prominent Soviet writers containing an expression of sympathy for the Czech state and the statement "may the Fascist barbarians realize that no deprivations and sacrifices will break the free spirit of the Czech people. You will not be alone, we will not abandon you, we will aid you".

In a news item relating to the Slovak demands for autonomy published today the Tass correspondent in Praha characterizes the leader of Slovak autonomy as "an agent of Polish Fascism in Czech".

An editorial signed by "observer" published in PRAVDA today states that there is no doubt ~~but~~ that Germany would have capitulated before fighting had a "front of peaceful powers" been created; that Italy had taken no active steps toward mobilization and that German opinion was lukewarm towards a war. "Observer" states that the Munich agreement did not prevent the Italian Government on the following day from attacking France violently for the purpose of obtaining new concessions from France in regard to the Spanish problem as well as in Tunis and, as regards the latter, he says it is no secret that Hitler promised Mussolini German support. The article concludes with the statement that

"aggression

-3- 344, October 6, 1938, 2 p.m. from Moscow.

"aggression is developing further and further. The aggressive policy of the Fascist incendiaries of war has been given a new impetus. This impetus the Munich agreement gave, bringing closer the term of new conflicts, of new war clashes."

KIRK

KLF

RR

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

GRAY

RAM GPO

FROM

Moscow

Dated October 11, 1938.

Rec'd 6:40 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

352, October 11, 9 a.m.

My 347, October 7, noon.



The Soviet press continues the publication of articles indicating that the so-called reactionary elements in the Czech Government and in other influential circles in Czechoslovakia are directing their efforts towards a complete capitulation to Germany and that the latter is playing up Czech resentment against France and England in order to undermine Anglo-French influence and lead the smaller countries to believe that they have more to gain by conciliating Berlin than by opposing it. The theme is further developed that the countries of eastern and southeast Europe even including Poland and Italy would find it in their interest to form a solid front against further German expansion.

In an article entitled "the story of a betrayal" IZVESTIYA states that in abandoning Czechoslovakia the French bourgeoisie has betrayed its own people and that France will eventually pay for her recent surrender to Hitler by territorial losses. Another article points out the unfavorable situation of France

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-2- 352, October 11, 9 a.m., from Moscow.

as a result of the Munich Conference in that Germany in the event of war, would now be able to direct against France twenty-five or thirty divisions which would previously have been occupied against Czechoslovakia and adds that not only had the French General Staff told Daladier that France would be victorious in a war with Germany but also the writer states there would have been no war if France had firmly supported Czechoslovakia. The article asserted further that the French popular masses had been prepared at the time to repulse Germans but that a pro-Hitler group of officials and financiers led by Flandin had opposed mobilization during the crisis, raised the cry that Czechoslovakia was "red" and said "better Hitler than the Popular Front". The popular masses, the article concludes, hold the key salvation of France. "The future France of the real Popular Front full of strength and energy will be the true ally of its friends and a menacing enemy to its foes."

KIRK

HPD

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FC  
ROC  
JH  
DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
OCT 20 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RAW

FROM

GRAY

Moscow

Dated October 20, 1938

Rec'd 6:45 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

362, October 20, 10 a.m.

By 358, October 15, 10 a.m.

The Journal De Moscow of today carrying an editorial entitled "The Succession to France is open". Recapitulating the views already indicated in recent press utterances the article states that the Munich Conference closed the first act of the drama and that the second part the division of the French heritage has now commenced, for France has lost everything in Europe, its honor, the military support of the Czechs and the confidence of its remaining allies.

The article continues that the lions share of the spoils has fallen to Germany. However, Italy now driven from the Danube is supporting Poland and Hungary in their efforts to establish common frontiers crossing the sub-Carpathian Ukraine in order to create a bloc including Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia under Italian domination. Hitler, on the other hand, does not intend to give up his plan for further penetration into Hungary and in addition requires a Carpathian

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RECEIVED  
OCT 24 1938

-2- 362, October 20, 10 a.m., from Moscow.

Carpathian corridor to facilitate access to Rumania. Consequently he is opposing Polish-Hungarian demands which states the article puts Hitler in the comic and impudent light of defender of ~~Czechoslovakia~~ <sup>Czechoslovakia</sup>. Poland's attitude is described as extremely cynical and it is asserted that the question of national minorities may well turn out to be a boomerang in the case of Poland which is certain eventually to suffer territorial losses.

The article concludes that the Munich Agreement "has merely untied the aggressors hands; is preparing further annexations; and is hastening the unleashing of a new war".

KIRK

EDA

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WJD  
RDC  
Gray

CA

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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1-1200

FROM

Dated October 22, 1938

Rec'd 1:35 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

363, October 22, 4 p.m.

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
OCT 24 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Today's PRAVDA carries an editorial asserting that a conflict of interest between the aggressor nations is now becoming apparent and that relations between Warsaw and Berlin have become somewhat cooler as a result of the conviction that Poland is "on the list of Germany's victims" and because of German opposition to Poland's persistent efforts, with Italy's support, to establish common boundaries with Hungary at the expense of Czechoslovakia. Moreover, the article continues, Italy has for some time been seeking means to counterbalance German influence in south-eastern Europe by the establishment of a bloc within the "bloc of aggressors" through the creation of a Rome-Warsaw axis in which Hungary, Rumania and, possibly, Yugoslavia would participate. Although according to PRAVDA the question of the Hungarian claims on Czechoslovakia may be settled by a compromise more or less satisfactory to all parties "there exist serious internal contradictions (within the aggressive bloc), which are increasing in proportion as

Fascist

760C.62/400

OCT 25 1938

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CA

--2--363 from Moscow

"Fascist Germany develops its plans of conquest."

Today's Moscow press reports the suppression of the activities of the Communist Party in Bohemia and Moravia suggesting that it is at the dictation of Berlin but making no direct comment.

KIRK

EMB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
OCT 29 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MJD

GRAY

FROM

Moscow

Dated October 29, 1938.

Rec'd. 8:20 a. m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

373, October 29, 11 a. m.

The Munich agreement and its consequences continue to occupy the attention of the commentators on foreign affairs in the Soviet press. The JOURNAL DE MOSCOW of October 25 publishes a scathing editorial characterizing the Munich agreement as a shameful "diktat" and its consequences as treasonable to the cause of democracy, peace and civilization. The reasons allegedly advanced by France and England to justify their position in the Czechoslovak question are declared to be completely false and the editorial maintains that Germany merely outbluffed its adversaries. The editorial continues that the effects of the Munich agreement are making themselves felt in all parts of the world. Japan's operations in Southern China are interpreted as proof that it is convinced of Britain's inability to defend its interests in the Far East. Italy's increased armaments in Lybia and the expected resumption of its claims on Tunis as well as its attitude in the

Spanish

760F.62/1778

OCT 31 1938

RECEIVED

MJD -2- No. 373, October 29, 11 a. m. from Moscow

Spanish question are all attributed to the effects of the Munich agreement. The editorial concludes that the parties substituting Munich for Versailles has not yet terminated and that the crucial question at present is whether the world will fatalistically await the developments of events or whether the still independent powers will at least meet to discuss collective action before Hitler forbids international gatherings.

The KRASNAYA GAZETTA, a Leningrad newspaper, published an editorial in its number of October 25 stating that the British reactionaries led by Chamberlain, governed by class and economic considerations are actively supporting and even instigating the Fascist powers in the preparation of a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union thereby expecting to divert their aggressive energies away from British interests and to prevent the development of international revolutionary forces.

KIRK

RR

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

ADVISED ON POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MR. DUNN  
NOV 1 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PA 12

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

Moscow

FROM Dated October 31, 1938

Rec'd 11:56 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

374, October 31, 11 a.m.

PM Feb  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The general tenor of Soviet opinion on foreign  
affairs since the Munich agreement as revealed in  
recent published expressions may be summarized as openly  
condemnatory of that agreement on the basis that it  
represents a betrayal of Czechoslovakia by Great Britain  
and France; that it constitutes a blow to the policy of  
collective security and the safety of the smaller  
countries; that it has encouraged further aggression on  
the part of the Fascist countries; and that it has  
created a situation which threatens world peace in  
general. The Governments of England and France have  
been the object of special denunciation and their policies  
have been adversely contrasted in the Soviet press  
with the fidelity of the Soviet Government to its  
international obligations in the interest of **peace**.

Although speculation from the Soviet standpoint  
as to events and tendencies in foreign countries has  
been

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NOV 4 1938

-2- #374, October 31, 11 a.m., from Moscow.

been indulged in, there have been no clear indications as yet of any change in Soviet policy in regard to those countries or of any positive orientation of that policy as a consequence of the recent events in Central Europe. The chief preoccupation of Soviet foreign policy continues to be its relations with Nazi Germany and Japan and events abroad are envisaged primarily from the standpoint of their possible effect on those relations. Furthermore, the recent developments in connection with the Czechoslovak crisis have confronted the Soviet Union with the threat of isolation and, although a favored theme of published utterances here is the ability of the country to stand alone on the strength of its own resources and the adequacy of its own defenses, the weight of evidence at present points to a disinclination on the part of the Soviet Government to maintain a position of isolation as regards other countries and to a readiness to join in any moment of international concern which would enhance the prestige of the Soviet Government without incurring too great a risk. The impression prevails however that for the moment at least the Kremlin is inclined to await the course of further developments abroad to assist it in determining its policy in relation to other countries, either singly or collectively, and to refrain from any definite

commitment

-3- #374, October 31, 11 a.m., from Moscow.

commitment in policy until those developments are more clearly defined. In the meantime it is believed the Soviet Government is continuing its program of armaments especially as regards the air force and the navy even in spite of the danger to the internal structure inherent in an increased burden and sacrifice which the concentration on heavy industries imposes upon the population. It is also believed that an added impetus may be given to the activities abroad of the Comintern and certain indications have become apparent of an attempt in this way to accentuate the class struggle and the differences between Government factions in certain countries.

Closely allied with any consideration of Soviet foreign policy at present is the personal position of Litvinov. With the weakening of League influence and the blow dealt by the Munich agreement to the policy of collective security and to the system of mutual assistance pacts to which the Soviet Union was party, his well grounded position as a sponsor of those policies has been regarded in certain circles as definitely compromised and rumors circulate to the effect

-4- #374, October 31, 11 a.m., from Moscow.

effect that he will follow the fate of many others who have been made to serve as scapegoats for a failure in Soviet policy. It is true that the continuation in office of high Soviet officials is a permissible subject for speculation but in this instance it should be pointed out that even if Litvinov's prestige has suffered, his resignation now need not necessarily follow. In the first place there appears to be no other person available who combines the qualities required to replace him and furthermore his usefulness as Commissar for Foreign Affairs may well continue in view of the fact that in any event he can do no more than devote his efforts to carrying out whatever policies may be dictated to him from time to time by the Kremlin.

KIRK

RR

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 740.00/509 FOR Tel. #386, 9pm

FROM U.S.S.R. (Kirk) DATED November 9, 1938.

TO NAME 1-1127 \*\*\*

REGARDING: Czecho-German Crisis. The Munich Agreement.  
"Marxian Analysis" -, by Molotov, Chairman of the Soviet of Peoples Commissars.

760f. 62 / 1840

In regard to the Munich agreement Molotov said that although touted as a victory for peace in reality it was only a victory of the governments of England and Germany over the French Government and of the English, German, French, and the Italian Governments over the Czech Government. The Munich agreement he said had only whetted the appetites of the aggressors and a struggle for the partition of certain other European countries had already commenced. The Soviet Union did not and could not participate in this imperialist deal, and in spite of crooked attempts to represent the attitude of the Soviet Union on the Czech question as vague and evasive, the Soviet Union had proved to the whole world that its faithfulness to signed treaties and its struggle against aggression remained unshakable. Molotov continued that the international authority of England and France had been seriously impaired by their capitulations in the Czech question and that this was demonstrated by the recent settlement in Vienna of Hungary's claims without their participation. Only the Soviet Union, the land of socialism, stood firm in its struggle against fascist aggression and for the defense of peace, liberty, and the independence of peoples against fascist attack.

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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

FROM

Moscow

Dated March 31, 1939

Rec'd 10:10 a.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

157, March 31, 10 a.m.

My telegram No. 148, March 25, 5 p.m.



CONFIDENTIAL. The Polish Ambassador here informs me that it seems to be an accepted fact that Poland will not (repeat not) join the proposed four power declaration. The Polish Government in pursuit of its established policy to maintain an independent course insofar as both Germany and Russia were concerned was unwilling to take a definite step which might embroil Poland with Germany especially in the absence of assurances as to the support it might expect to receive if faced with the possible consequences of such a step and although it could rely upon its alliance with France much depended upon the extent of British cooperation on the continent which had not of late been clearly stated or accurately ascertained. Soviet acceptance of the British proposal, the Ambassador said, was not insofar as he was aware made specifically contingent on the acceptance thereof by Poland and it was possible though doubtful that Litvinov might

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APR 9 1939  
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-2- #157, March 31, 10 a.m., from Moscow.

might express agreement to join in a declaration without Poland as a party. The stand which Poland had taken, however, and the latest developments in Polish German relations had in the Ambassador's opinion eliminated the British proposal from immediate consideration.

The following additional observations were offered by the Ambassador as personal opinion and are submitted for what interest they may present.

These developments referred to above had been precipitated, the Ambassador said, through no fault of the Polish Government. Certain questions such as the treatment of minorities in both Poland and Germany and the status in Danzig after an eventual withdrawal of the League Commissioner had been the subjects of negotiation between the two Governments but with the recent adoption of tactics of intimidation on the German side Poland had refused to continue the negotiations in the prevailing circumstances, was refusing to make any concessions to Germany and was not inclined to reopen negotiations until the Government had some assurance that they would be conducted in an atmosphere conducive to an amicable settlement. In the meantime it was true that Poland was taking some practical measures

in

-3- #157, March 31, 10 a.m., from Moscow.

in the face of the threatening attitude of Germany and these measures had proved to the Government the unity of support which might be expected from all classes, races and political parties in Poland in the event of war with Germany. As a part of these preparations the Ambassador denied that recent commitments had been entered into with other countries and in this connection Soviet Union was specifically mentioned and maintained that no such commitments would be made until Poland should be confronted with a clearly defined situation. The Ambassador concluded with the statement that the situation was very serious but that there was still a possibility that the immediate tension might be relieved either by the adoption by Hitler of a more restrained attitude toward Poland or even by the diversion of his activities towards the southeast and Hungary and repeated that a knowledge of the extent of possible British cooperation on the continent was the principal factor at present.

KIRK

CSB

# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MR. DUNN  
MAY 18 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1-1336

FROM

Moscow

Dated May 17, 1939

Rec'd. 7:30 a.m.

AC  
This telegram must be  
closely reviewed be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (D)

Secretary of State

Washington

251, May 17, 11 a.m.

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
MAY 17 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

A member of the German Embassy, who has just returned from Tehran has stated in the strictest confidence that the German Ambassador here, who was the official German representative at the recent marriage ceremonies in that city, had intended to return directly to Moscow but that just prior to his departure he had been urgently summoned to Berlin for consultation by Ribbentrop. It was added that the Ambassador is arriving in Moscow tomorrow bearing instructions from the German Government, the tenor of which is not known to the German Embassy here, and that at the request of Berlin appointments for the Ambassador to see Molotov and Potemkin have been made for Saturday morning. In this connection it was categorically stated that the rumors of a German approach to the Soviet Government which were current at the time of Litvinov's replacement (see my telegram No. 218, May 4, 7 p.m.) were completely without foundation.

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Confidential File  
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2 - #251, May 17, 11 a.m., from Moscow

foundation.

The same source stated that the Assistant Military Attache here was called to Berlin last week where he was asked by the German War Ministry whether there was any reason to believe that the Soviet Union was stronger in a military sense or in a better position to undertake offensive action than in September of last year and that the Attache had replied in the negative.

GRULLON

CSB

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

LMS  
This telegram must be  
closely paraphrased be-  
fore being communicated  
to anyone. (BR)

FROM Moscow

Dated May 22, 1939

Rec'd 4:50 p

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE  
MAY 27 1939  
MR. MESSERSMITH

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

259, May 22, 1 p. m.

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
MAY 23 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The publication in PRAVDA yesterday half  
page review of a book by a Soviet author directly  
predicts the outbreak of a war between the Soviet  
Union and "Fascist Germany" has aroused comment in  
foreign circles here especially in view of the author's  
description of the circumstances under which such a  
conflict would occur. The PRAVDA review characterized  
this "fantasy" as realistic and described as "prophetic"  
the author's analysis of the events in Europe which  
would precede a Soviet-German war. According to this  
version a Soviet-German war will break out following  
the announced decision of the Soviet Government to  
support the democracies in a war against Fascism; and  
both prior and subsequent to this announcement the  
present "bourgeois" French and British governments  
will, in betrayal of the national interests of their  
countries,

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LMS 2-No. 259, May 22, 1 p. m., from Moscow.

countries, have made every effort to prepare a "second Munich". The firm stand of the Soviet Union, however, according to the author will lead to the setting up in those countries of popular front governments which will then join the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the war. The remainder of the article describes in highly colored terms the defeat of the initial Fascist air attack on the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

While to judge from the review the main purpose of the book is to support the contention of the invincibility of Soviet aviators the publicity given at this time to the open prediction of a Soviet-German war and to the "treacherous" role which the present British and French Governments may be expected to play in such an eventuality is of interest as possibly reflecting a Soviet desire to dispel rumors concerning the possibility of a German-Soviet rapprochement on the one hand and to publicize the view that the present British and French Governments constitute the chief obstacles to Soviet cooperation with the Western democracies.

GRUMMON

EMB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN  
MAY 25 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PAID

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

FROM

Moscow

Dated May 24, 1939

Rec'd 12:10 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

DIVISION OF POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MR. DUNN  
MAY 25 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

263, May 24, 1 p.m.

The Embassy is aware, since the delivery of the Soviet counterproposal on May 14 (see my 249, May 15, 9 p.m.) there have been no diplomatic conversations or negotiations on the subject between the British Ambassador and Molotov. There is no evidence up to the present to justify an opinion that the Soviet Government intends to modify its position in accordance with the views expressed in the IZVESTIA editorial of May 11 or to accept anything less than a direct and unequivocal commitment from England and France for the protection of the Soviet western frontier against attack as the price of Soviet association in the Franco-British system of guarantees in eastern Europe. In the opinion of most neutral diplomatic observers in Moscow the firmness of the Soviet position may be in large part attributed to the following factors.

One.

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-2- #263, May 24, 1 p.m., from Moscow.

One. The increased sense of security felt by the Russian Soviet Government as a result of the prior British and French commitments in respect of Poland and Rumania and the later Anglo-Turkish agreement, and the realization on the part of the Soviet Government that under the circumstances the inclusion of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics in an anti-aggression front in eastern Europe is of vital necessity to England and France.

Two. The fear of the Soviet Government, based on its suspicion of the Chamberlain and Daladier Governments that in the absence of a direct commitment from England and France the Soviet Union might be left to continue alone a war in eastern Europe in the event that the states guaranteed by England and France were overrun by Germany in the early stages of a conflict in that area. In the opinion of the French Embassy at least, this fear of a "separate peace" on the part of England and France lies at the root of the Soviet insistence on a direct pact of mutual assistance with those countries.

Other points which it is understood have arisen in the negotiations such as the question of the guarantee of the Baltic States and the possible Soviet resentment at Polish and Rumanian reluctance to be bound by any commitments

-3- #263, May 24, 1 p.m., from Moscow.

commitments to the Soviet Union are considered here as of secondary importance and as having been advanced by the Soviet Government largely as of possible value in negotiation.

While the effect if any of the somewhat indirect and half-hearted German approach to the Soviet Government, reported in my telegram 258, May 12, 11 a.m., will presumably be confined to strengthening the latter's insistence on the satisfaction of its demands in the present negotiations with England and France, the possibility, however remote, cannot be completely excluded that it may raise a question in the mind of the Soviet Government as to the advisability of committing itself openly at the present time on the side of the western democracies.

It is expected here that Molotov during the course of the sessions of the Supreme Soviet which open tomorrow will make an important statement on Soviet foreign policy.

GRUMMON

RR:CSB

REB

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

**TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

MOSCOW

Dated June 2, 1939

FROM

Rec'd 3:30 p. m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

285, June 2, 6 p. m.

DIVISION OF  
PROPROPAGANDA  
JUN 3 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The general tenor of Molotov's speech -- in particular his objections to the latest British proposals, which, as previously indicated, would appear to satisfy most of the major Soviet demands -- has raised the question among foreign observers here as to the real intentions of the Soviet Union in the present negotiations and is viewed as possibly indicative of a general Soviet reluctance to commit itself openly at the present time to any anti-German coalition. This opinion is largely based on the following elements in Molotov's speech: his expression of continued Soviet suspicion regarding the sincerity of present French and British policy; his insistence upon the satisfaction of apparently every Soviet demand in the current negotiations; and the possible injection of the Far East implied by his statement that Soviet policy in regard to China is in conformity with the task of the creation of a united front against aggression in Europe.

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Confidential File

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2-#285, From Moscow, June 2, 6p.m.

There is a tendency to regard the various objections raised by Molotov as preparing the ground for a continued Soviet refusal even in the event that Great Britain and France should comply with the Soviet insistence upon a guarantee to the three states on its northwest frontier which I understand from the French Embassy are Latvia, Estonia, and Finland. The comparatively mild references, reproaches, and the statement that the negotiations with Great Britain and France will not prejudice economic relations with Italy and Germany, as well as Molotov's intimation that the commercial negotiations with the latter may be resumed, may well be associated with the German approach reported in my 258, May 22, 11 a. m. It is possible that, as indicated in the Embassy's telegram No. 263, May 24, 1 p. m., this indication of an altered German attitude vis-a-vis the Soviet Union may have led the Kremlin to question the advisability of any immediate commitment on the side of England and France.

I am informed in confidence by a member of the French Embassy that the question of guaranteeing the three states referred to above formed an integral part of the original Soviet proposals and that at the present time there is no  
reason

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3-#285, From Moscow, June 2, 6p.m.

reason to believe that the Soviet concern with regard to that area is based largely on a fear of German penetration and control of those states without direct attack; and the opinion was offered that the Soviet Union apparently desires the pact of mutual assistance with France and England to come into operation in the event that it should become involved in hostilities in attempting to forestall any such move on the part of Germany.

In the opinion of the Embassy, Molotov's remarks are susceptible of two interpretations (a) either the Soviet Government because it sees a chance of remaining neutral in a European conflict does not intend to align itself at present with England and France and consequently will continue to raise objections no matter what further proposals are received from those countries; or (b) realizing the advantageous position which it enjoys in these negotiations the Soviet Union intends to exact full compliance on the part of England and France with all of its demands, even those of a secondary nature.

The French and British Ambassadors saw Molotov at the latter's request this afternoon, presumably to receive the formal Soviet reply, which in the opinion of the French Embassy here is not (repeat not) expected to be an acceptance.

GRUMMON

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EMB

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# TELEGRAM RECEIVED

CJ  
A portion of this telegram must be closely paraphrased FROM before being communicated to anyone. (D)

MOSCOW

Dated July 19, 1939

Rec'd 2 p.m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

393, July 19, 6 p.m.

(GRAY) My 378, July 10, 10 p.m.



The meeting between the French and British Ambassadors Strang and Molotov which took place on July 17 was reported in the press yesterday without comment beyond a statement that "protracted negotiations" took place. (END GRAY).

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. A member of the British Embassy has stated that the latest meeting marked little or no progress towards a final solution of outstanding points and indicated that the points of difference centered primarily around the definition of indirect aggression in respect of the Baltic States and the matter of the chronology of military conventions with relation to the political agreement. The impression was received that although each meeting has narrowed the gap between the Soviet and Franco-British positions on the points at issue the British negotiators themselves were still very much in doubt as to the ultimate intentions of the Soviet Government in respect

of

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CJ -2- #393, July 19, 6 p.m., from Moscow

of an alliance with England and France.

76122  
In respect of the general question of Soviet adherence to the anti-German front it is of some interest to note that members of the German Embassy who until recently were of the opinion that the Soviet Union would in the last resort sign some sort of an agreement with England and France are now openly confident that the Soviet Union will not align itself with England and France against Germany on the ground that the Soviet Union will not be disposed to run the risk of unnecessary war with Germany by openly aligning itself with the latter's enemies which would have the effect of directing German animosity against the Soviet Union. Insofar as I have been able to ascertain there are no specific grounds for this change in opinion in German circles here although members of that Embassy here state in confidence that vague intimations of a Soviet reluctance to conclude an agreement with England and France have been conveyed by Soviet diplomats abroad to their German colleagues. It is possible also that the comparatively favorable reception given by Molotov to the observation of the German Ambassador (see my telegram No. 359 July 1, 9 a.m.) may have had a certain effect in determining the views of the German Embassy here.

GRUMMON

CSB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

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

Moscow

Dated August 6, 1939

Rec'd 1:55 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

431, August 6, 3 p.m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

My 579, July 10.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
AUG 7 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

I am informed in the strictest confidence that the German Ambassador saw Molotov on August 3 and assured the latter under instructions from his Government that Germany entertained no aggressive designs against the Soviet Union itself; had no intention of impairing the status quo in the Baltic; and would respect all Soviet interests. Molotov I am informed expressed the greatest interest in the Ambassador's communication and inquired whether the reference to the Baltic included Lithuania, to which the Ambassador replied in the affirmative. Molotov then frankly set forth the specific bases of Soviet distrust of Germany which he outlined as follows: (1) the anti-Comintern Pact; (2) the direct or indirect encouragement given by Germany to Japan in the Far East; and (3) the apparent intention of Germany since the advent of Hitler to "outlaw" the Soviet Union as evidenced by the refusal of Germany during recent years to attend any

European

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ML -2- from Moscow Aug, 6, 1:55 p.m. #431

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6  
European Conference at which the Soviet Union was represented. The Ambassador stated that the anti-Comintern Pact was in reality not directed against the Soviet Union but against England and that Germany was interested in developing good relations with the Soviet Union. He added however that if the Soviet Union allied itself with England and France it could naturally expect to incur a share of the German hostility directed against those countries. Molotov replied that the Soviet Government was interested in "normalizing" and improving its relations with Germany but at the same time would continue its policy of attempting to assure a "genuine defence against aggression".

My informant offered the opinion that Molotov's reception of the Ambassador's assurances indicated that an improvement of Soviet-German relations was possible but that because of past German policy it would take some time to remove Soviet distrust. He stated that Molotov's reference to the continuation of present Soviet policy of attempting to assume a "genuine" defence against aggression would appear to indicate that the Soviet Union is prepared to conclude a pact with the British and French but only on Soviet terms.

My informant added that the instructions to the Ambassador here had resulted from political conversations along the

above

ML -3- from Moscow Aug. 6, 1:55 p.m. #431

above lines which had taken place in Berlin between the Soviet Charge d'Affaires Astakov, Schnurer, and Ribbentrop in connection with the economic negotiations there. In respect of the economic negotiations my informant stated that they were progressing satisfactorily and that there was reason to expect a successful conclusion within two or three weeks.

In respect of German--Japanese relations my informant stated that there were indications that the Japanese were alarmed at the recent developments in Soviet--German relations and that at the present moment the Japanese were more disposed as a result thereof to join the military alliance of the axis powers but that for the same reason the German Government was less eager to conclude such an alliance with Japan.

GRUMMON

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
MR. DUNN  
1939

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

MOSCOW

FROM

Dated August 30, 1939

REC'D - NOON

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
AUG 30 1939  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

487, August 30, 2 p.m.

I am informed in confidence by a member of the Bulgarian Legation here that the Soviet Government has for the past month been manifesting a marked desire to establish closer and more friendly relations with Bulgaria; that the Bulgarian parliamentary delegation which visited the Soviet Union from August 7 to August 20 had during its stay here been treated with the greatest hospitality and kindness. It was added that although the purpose of the delegation was to visit the agricultural exhibition nevertheless on August 10 there had been an exchange of views between Molotov and the head of the delegation Markov, Vice President of the Bulgarian Parliament and chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee. At that time Molotov developed the thesis that Soviet Bulgarian interests coincide in the necessity of defending both the Peninsula and the Straits against any threat of aggression from Germany but that subsequent to the signature of the Soviet German treaty the attitude of the Soviet Government had altered and was now directed towards persuading

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-2- #487, August 30, 2 p.m., from Moscow

persuading Bulgaria of the necessity of remaining neutral in the event of a European conflict. My informant added that he had reason to believe that the Soviet Government was now endeavoring to persuade Turkey to remain neutral or at least to close the Straits in the event of war and that as quid pro quo the Soviet Government would agree to the conclusion of a Turkish-Soviet defensive alliance.

STEINBARDT

CBB