

RUSSO-JAPANESE RELATIONS
(13-20 July 1945)

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For nearly two months (since the heavy air raids of late May), Foreign Minister Togo has been urging Ambassador Sato at Moscow to "miss no opportunity to talk with the Soviet leaders", as it was "a matter of extreme urgency that Japan should not only prevent Russia from entering the war but should also induce her to adopt a favorable attitude toward Japan".

Sato, who since abrogation of the Neutrality Pact on 5 April saw further interviews as "utterly meaningless" since there was "absolutely no hope" of effecting the desired favorable attitude, counselled a policy of watchful waiting to see what developed at the Berlin Conference.

Although he had recently received "Extremely Urgent" despatches from Togo who was anxious to learn Russia's attitude toward a proposal which had been made to Soviet Ambassador Malik at Tokyo*; and although Premiera Soong of China and Choibalsan of Outer Mongolia were conferring with Stalin and Molotov, Sato appears to have done nothing other than continue to submit his "frank opinions" to Tokyo until, on 10 July, moved by a curt despatch ("Your opinions notwithstanding, please carry out my orders".), he obtained an

* On 29 June ex-Premier Hirota had handed to Soviet Ambassador Malik at Tokyo a memorandum embodying a proposal for a treaty of non-aggression and of mutual assistance in the maintenance of peace in the Far East, and a statement of Japan's willingness to (1) conclude an agreement for the "neutralization" of Manchukuo, obligating her to withdraw her troops after the end of the war, and both countries not to interfere with Manchukuo's internal political situation; (2) renounce her fishing rights (in return for oil); and (3) discuss any matter Russia might want to bring up.

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interview with Vice Commissar Losovsky.

During the interview, it appears that Sato repeatedly urged an "immediate reply" to the proposal made at Tokyo to Soviet Ambassador Malik; and was informed by Losovsky that "it is naturally difficult to predict what my Government's reply will be, but we shall do our best to comply with your wishes.....so far as I am aware, the Russian Government has not yet given full consideration to Mr. Hirota's proposal. I shall, however, transmit your present representations to my Government and some sort of a reply will be made". Replying to a leading remark of Sato -- that the foreign press and radio interpreted Soong's visit as a mission involving discussion of Manchukuo, the Greater East Asia War, etc., Losovsky replied that: "One should pay no particular attention to newspaper rumors".

Reporting to Tokyo, Sato noted that although T.W. Soong was still in Moscow, Premier Chofbalsan of Outer Mongolia had left for home after a four-day visit, contrary to Sato's earlier expectations, and that accordingly "his visit may have been primarily connected with victory festivities and he may have participated only indirectly in the Sino-Russian talks".*¹

*Sato had previously reported (6 July) that judging "from the formal reception given to the Premier of Outer Mongolia by Russian representatives from Molotov on down, and the treatment accorded him as a leader of an independent country, I would surmise that there is some sort of an agreement between China and Russia as to the status of Outer Mongolia and that a treaty may be signed by the three countries shortly".

¹H-196176, 10 July, Moscow-Tokyo; Dip. Sum. #1204, 12 July.

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The following day (11 July), Sato had a twenty minute interview with Molotov. The latter, remarking that he had received a brief report of the prior day's conversation, told Sato that he could "confirm without modification" what Lozovsky had said... "newspaper and radio reports are full of contradiction; one can hardly get the truth from them".

Sato then brought up the proposal which had been made to Ambassador Malik at Tokyo, concluding with:

"I myself played no part in this proposal and learned about the Hirota-Malik conferences only after they had been concluded. Japan's proposal, however, is simple and clear and I hope that it will result in the furtherance and improvement of Russo-Japanese relations. I would be happy if you could inform me in any fashion as to Russia's views on the subject."

Molotov, however, was non-committal, informing Sato merely that:

"We shall study Japan's proposal very carefully and make up our minds. Malik's complete report should arrive shortly and I should like to consider it also."

During the twenty-minute interview, Molotov "said nothing about the 3-Power Conference except that it was supposed to begin sometime around the 15th".²

On 12 July, the day following his interview with Molotov, Sato sent a long despatch to Tokyo, in which he made the following points:

"Your proposal that Japan and the Soviet Union cooperate to maintain peace in East Asia, as well as the whole question of the neutralization of Manchukuo, are both based on the assumption

² H-196232, 11 July, Moscow-Tokyo; Dip. Sum. #1205, 13 July.

that Japan and Manchukuo will continue to exist....however, as the very existence of Japan has become problematical as far as the Soviet Union is concerned, we can easily see that the whole foundation on which our offers are based is shattered*.

.... I cannot help but feel that the end result of negotiating with the Soviet Government on the basis of these offers will be that our own uneasiness will be made glaringly apparent, the self-confidence of the Soviet Government will be even further heightened, and she will thus be less inclined than ever to accept our proposals.....

In view of this it is well that we should devote our every effort to making Russia (stand fast ?). Therefore, if we succeed in that, to that extent we shall be able to guarantee our existence; beyond that there is no alternative but to attempt to work out our own destiny by our own efforts. Indeed such an idea as that of winning Russia over to our side, even to the point of making her desert her own Allies, is nothing but pinning our hopes on the utterly impossible.....

As to T.V. Soong's activities, from the statements of Lesovsky and Molotov on the 10th and 11th, I have the feeling that they had barely been able to make a beginning. The Russo-Chinese conferences are still going on, and as yet nothing has been settled. The fact that there are numerous signs that the negotiations will be long drawn out indicates that they touch on (agreements ?) relating to such questions as collaboration in maintaining peace on the frontier, etc. In addition it is to be recognized that they may have decided it is appropriate to (carry on ?) negotiations concerning trade relations between the two countries, etc.....and there may be a treaty in the very near future. What I have secretly feared from the beginning is that there might be emphasis on the fostering of friendship between the two countries.....I think that there are good grounds for my anxiety lest Stalin hastily announce the conclusion of a political treaty before his departure and Japan be forced to fall into complete isolation without a single friend. (I feel deeply ?) that that would be the final misfortune".³

When Sato conferred with Molotov and when he prepared the above despatch, he had not yet received Foreign Minister Togo's "Extremely Urgent"

³H-196541, 12 July, Moscow-Tokyo.

despatches of 11th and 12th July* (quoted in PSIS 400-21, 14th July), instructing him to sound out the Russians regarding the possibility of mediation in terminating the war, and informing him that Japan intended to send Prince Fumimaro Konoye** to Moscow bearing a proposal to this effect from the Emperor.

On July 12th, after receiving the 11th July messages from Togo (in which he was instructed merely to "sound out" the Russians without disclosing Japan's intention), Sato addressed Togo, censuring the continued use of "nothing more than academical fine phrases". He developed his argument with the following wholesome if unpleasant truths:

"...As for considering the maintenance of peace in East Asia to be one aspect of the maintenance of world peace, since the Anglo-Americans may be about to wrest the power to maintain peace in East Asia from the hands of the Japanese, and now that even the Japanese mainland has been reduced to such a critical state it is indeed unfortunate that Japan is no longer in a position to be responsible for peace throughout East Asia.

* A previously reported delay in receiving despatches at Moscow was ascribed (PSIS 400-21, 14th July) to disruption of communication difficulties at Tokyo as a result of air raids. While (according to Foreign Minister Togo) this difficulty did exist, it appears upon further examination that the two messages in question — sent on 30th June and received by Sato on 3rd July — were actually intercepted on 1st July. If, as seems probable, the Japanese Embassy at Moscow is dependent upon Soviet radio facilities, a repeated delay in the delivery of "Extremely Urgent" despatches, raises an interesting point. Although neither Sato nor Togo appear to have questioned the delay as yet, they may believe it to result from communication difficulties known to exist at Tokyo.

** Prince Fumimaro Konoye - Premier from June 1937 to January 1939, and July 1940 to October 1941.

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"Furthermore, you state that 'Japan has not the slightest intention of annexing or keeping in its possession the occupied territories'. Now the fact is that we have already lost Burma and the Philippines, and even Okinawa, which is at the very tip of our Empire, has fallen into the hands of the enemy. How much of an effect do you expect our statements regarding the non-annexation and non-possession of territories which we have already lost or are about to lose will have on the Soviet authorities?

As you are well aware, the Soviet authorities are extremely realistic and it is extremely difficult to persuade them with abstract arguments. We certainly will not convince them with pretty little phrases devoid of all connection with reality.....

If the Japanese Empire is really faced with the necessity of terminating the war, we must first of all make up our own minds to terminate the war. Unless we make up our own minds, there is absolutely no point in sounding out the views of the Soviet Government.

At this time when the enemy is stepping up its air raids at an ever increasing pace, how much reserve strength does Japan have left for carrying on the war? Is there any sense in continuing the war no matter how many hundreds of thousands of our able-bodied men and no matter how many millions of our city populations are sacrificed?

.....Assuming that the course of the war has brought us to a real extremity, then, indeed, the government should make the great decision. Once that resolve is taken, there may perhaps be some hope of setting the Soviet Government into motion and getting it to give its good offices toward terminating the war. But there can be no doubt that the result which faces us in that event will be virtually equivalent to unconditional surrender.

.....Though I am filled with thoughts of fear and heartbreak (at the knowledge that ?) even the Imperial Court is concerned in this, we must face the facts of the international situation without flinching, and I have, therefore, reported these facts as they are. I send this telegram in the belief that it is my first responsibility to prevent the harboring of illusions which are at variance with reality. I beg your indulgence."⁴

4-196544, 12 July, Moscow-Tokyo; Dip. Sum. #1206, 14 July.
Dip. Sum. #1207, 15 July.

The following day, 13 July, having received Foreign Minister Togo's despatch of 12 July (conveying the Emperor's attitude toward peace and proposing that Prince Konoye fly to Moscow), Sato hurriedly informed Togo that:

"Although the date of Molotov's departure for Berlin is drawing extremely close, I shall do my best to fulfill your instructions.

If by chance I cannot possibly get an interview, I will convey the Emperor's wishes before Molotov's departure for the 3-Power Conference."

From a despatch to Tokyo, later the same day, it appears that Sato asked for an interview with Molotov but was told that Molotov "simply could not manage it", and that ("any matters of importance?") should be communicated to Vice Foreign Commissar Lozovsky. Sato continued:

"I therefore went to see Lozovsky at 5 p.m. on the 13th. I had previously translated the Imperial instructions into Russian and had included them in a confidential letter from me to Molotov, in which I also mentioned His Majesty's private intention of sending Prince Konoye. I presented this letter to Lozovsky and asked him to convey it to Molotov at once. I also requested that the Russian Government consent to the Prince's coming and asked that in that event the Russians provide an airplane and other facilities.

I said: 'I should like the Soviet Government to bear particularly in mind the fact that the present special envoy will be of an entirely different character from the special envoy I have discussed with Molotov three times in the past*'; this time the envoy will be

* On the first two of these occasions -- in the fall of 1943 and in April 1944 -- the Japanese were apparently attempting to bring about a German-Russian peace. On the third occasion -- September 1944 -- the ostensible purpose of the Japanese move was to improve Russo-Japanese relations, although there were some indications in traffic that the Japanese hoped to obtain a general world peace. Each of the three overtures was rejected by the Russians.

'sent at the particular desire of His Majesty'.

I added: 'The Japanese Government wishes to know of the Soviet Government's agreement to this with all speed, even if simply an agreement in principle, so I should like to have an answer before Molotov's departure, if that is possible. We wish to arrange things so that the special envoy can meet with the Soviet authorities as soon as possible after their return from Berlin'.

"Lozovsky asked: 'To whom is the Soviet Government will the Japanese Emperor's message be addressed?'

"I replied: 'The message is to communicate His Majesty's private intentions, and it will not be addressed to anyone in particular, but we should like to have Mr. Molotov communicate it to Mr. Kalinin, who is head of the Soviet Union, and to Mr. Stalin, who is Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars'.

"Lozovsky then said: 'I can understand that the Japanese Government is in some haste about this, and I should like to get you a speedy reply, as you desire, but some members of the Government are supposed to be leaving this very night, so it will be really impossible to make any reply before Molotov's departure'.

"I replied: 'We shall have to think about making preparations for the special envoy's party. If we are too late, I should like you, if possible, to get in touch with Berlin by telephone or the like, and then give us an answer'.

"Lozovsky said he would certainly try to do this, and promised that in any case he would send the letter to Molotov without loss of time."⁵

Sato, in a later despatch the same day (13 July), gave further expression to his convictions in the following terms:

"I imagine that the Russians will agree at the present time to the sending of a special envoy, but it is difficult to say anything until we actually get a reply".....

"I kneel in veneration before the exalted solicitude of His Majesty for the restoration of peace, as conveyed in your #293 (despatch of 12 July), and I resign myself to his will with deep feelings of

⁵H-196657, 13 July, Moscow-Tokyo; Dip. Sum. #1207, 15 July.

awa, but if the proposal of the Japanese Government, brought by a special envoy at the particular desire of His Majesty, goes no further than we have gone in the past, if it is to be a proposal lacking in any concreteness (beyond ?) abstract words, then we shall uselessly disappoint the expectations of the authorities of this country and, more than that, we shall generate feelings of dissatisfaction at the Japanese Government's lack of good faith, and thus bring evil even upon the Imperial Household. I feel very serious anxiety about this point."

"It is my firm conviction that, once having resolved to send a special and important envoy on a long trip, he can have no function except to propose an armistice and peace. The Russians may understand His Majesty's desire for peace on the basis of what I tell them, but they may ask for further information on the ground that the function of the envoy himself is not clear. The envoy can of course let me know the details after his arrival, but, if the Russians ask, I may have to give them an explanation in advance about the precise nature of the envoy's mission. Please (reply ?) by return....."6

Meanwhile, from Tokyo, Foreign Minister Togo had despatched two further messages to Sato. In one of them (12 July), referring to his prior despatch of that date (regarding the Emperor's attitude toward peace and the sending of Konoye), he said:

"Please ask them to keep absolute secrecy with regard to the (word missing) of this matter. While your adroitness is not in question, this is for your information."

In the other message (13 July), he informed Sato that he had sent Ando (Head of the Political Affairs Bureau) to see Soviet Ambassador Malik (who was sick in bed), to inform him of the Emperor's views and the desire to send Prince Konoye to Moscow. Malik was stated to have promised to communicate

⁶H-196637, 13 July, Moscow-Tokyo; Dip. Sum. #1207, 15 July.

⁷H-196732, 12 July, Tokyo-Moscow; Dip. Sum. #1207, 15 July.

with his government at once.⁸

Despite Sato's anxious urgings of Lozovsky during the interview on 13 July, he was obliged the next day to inform Togo of the following:

"In the dead of night on the 13th, Generalov, the head of the Japanese Section of the Foreign Commissariat, sent word as a verbal message to me from Lozovsky that 'because of the departure of Stalin and Molotov, a reply will be delayed. Therefore, please understand!.'⁹

Upon receipt of this despatch, Foreign Minister Togo, possibly fearing that the Russians were putting off a reply, sent a "Very Urgent" despatch (15 July), instructing Sato to inform him as to when Stalin and Molotov left.¹⁰ The following reply from Sato (the same day) confirmed any fears he may have had on that score:

"It appears that Stalin and Molotov left Moscow for Berlin in the evening of the 14th. Therefore, so far as I can surmise, in spite of the fact that they probably had at least a half-day remaining before their departure, they must have decided to put off a reply on the matter.....

"The following are four probable reasons for the hesitation of the of the Russians in this matter:

(a) They are uncertain as to whether the Imperial instructions concerning the termination of the war signify that the actual mission of the Special Envoy will involve the submission of a concrete plan for ending the war.

(b) They fear that, if Japan proposes unconditional surrender or terms approximating thereto, unless there is a specific proposal, she may actually intend to request their assistance in order to secure a so-called 'negotiated peace'. In such an event, it would be very difficult for them to approve our request.

(c) They wish to avoid any deterioration of relations with the United States and Great Britain, in Japan's interest, at a moment when cooperation among the three countries is needed more than ever.

⁸H-196795, 13 July, Tokyo-Moscow.

⁹H-196708, 14 July, Moscow-Tokyo.

¹⁰H-196832, 15 July, Tokyo-Moscow.

(d) Since Far Eastern problems will inevitably come up for discussion both within and outside the meetings of the Big-Three, they believe that it is necessary to ascertain the views of the British and Americans on the question of the Special Envoy prior to their giving a definite reply one way or the other. Perhaps Stalin believes, therefore, that it will be impossible to determine the Soviet attitude until he has informed the British and American authorities of the recent Japanese (word missing) and has learned their views.*

"In connection with the 'negotiated peace' mentioned above, we must remember that the Americans and British — and particularly the former — have always opposed the conclusion of a peace treaty by means of negotiation, in regard to both the European and Pacific wars. Moreover, since Russia herself insisted upon the unconditional surrender of Germany and spurred the British and Americans on to the opening of the second front, finally defeating Germany with their cooperation, it can be seen that it will be extremely difficult to obtain the support of the Soviet Union for any proposal concerning the negotiation of a peace treaty.

"In the long run, since Japan sincerely desires the termination of the war, I believe that she has indeed no choice but to accept unconditional surrender or terms closely approximating thereto.

"I would like to point out, however, that I have obtained no clear idea of the situation which existed prior to the recent receipt of your confidential opinions, even on the basis of your successive wires. Nor am I clear about the views of the Government and the Military with regard to the termination of the war. Moreover, I have been of the belief that, in case it were finally decided to bring the war to an end, it would be necessary to obtain a new formal resolution which would be sufficient to overrule the decision reached at the Council held in the Imperial presence last

* If Sato (as instructed by Togo) asked the Russians (via Lozovsky) to keep the matter "absolutely secret", he apparently was not very hopeful that they would do so.

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June.* Therefore, since learning of your desire to have a special envoy sent out at once, without taking such formal action, and realizing that such an envoy might not carry specific terms with him -- as mentioned in (a) above -- I have become fearful lest he be despatched with the approval of the Russians, only to achieve unsatisfactory results in the end.*

"Please consider the facts presented in this wire as well as in my (former wires); and, if the decision is finally made to dispatch the envoy, I sincerely pray that a Resolution be passed in the Cabinet Council to have the envoy carry a concrete plan for the termination of the war."¹¹

However sound Sato's views may be, he seems to be, so far as Japanese policy is concerned, merely a voice crying in the wilderness. In reply to his above despatch, Togo on 17 July sent the following:

"The difficulty, in the present situation, of strengthening the ties of friendship between Japan and Russia or in making effective use of Russia in bringing about the conclusion of the war has from the outset been apparent, but the situation is such that we have no recourse but to try to do so. Consequently, not only is it difficult for us to be satisfied with keeping Russia from entering the war against Japan, but we are negotiating on the basis of our decision to recognize their wishes on a broad scale in order that we may solicit their favor the more for ourselves in accord with our wire 890.** Hence, negotiations to strengthen Russo-Japanese amity are necessary as a (sounding-board ?) to solicit Russia's

*The Diet convened on 8 June, with the Emperor personally appearing at a joint session of the two houses. In his opening address, Premier Suzuki said: "...unconditional surrender will only mean that our national structure and our people will be destroyed. Against such boastful talk, there is only one measure we must take -- that is, to fight to the last". (Non-Ultra; ONI-OP-16-FE-1/S, 16 June).

**Underscoring supplied. Despatch #890 of 11 July refers to the proposed treaty of mutual assistance in maintenance of peace in the Far East; neutralization of Manchukuo; revision of Portsmouth Treaty by renunciation of fishing rights (in return for oil); and Japan's willingness to discuss "other matters".

¹¹H-196911, 15 July, Moscow-Tokyo.

sincere good offices in bringing the war to an end and also in strengthening the ground for negotiations with England and America. Furthermore, without stopping at sounding out Russia's attitude in regard to ending the war, we must solicit her to use her sincere good offices."

"Not only the (directing powers ?) but the government as well is convinced that our war strength still can deliver considerable blows to the enemy, but since this does not necessarily enable us to feel an absolutely secure peace of mind, we are maintaining our strength against an enemy who will attack repeatedly. If today America and England were to recognize Japan's honor and existence, they would put an end to the war and save humanity from participation in the war, but if they insist unrelentingly upon unconditional surrender, Japan is unanimous in its resolve to wage a thorough-going war. The Emperor himself has deigned to express his determination. Hence, we have made this request of the Russians, but we are not seeking their mediation for anything like an unconditional surrender. Please bear this point particularly in mind. It is extremely vital* that we obtain as speedily as possible the Russians' reply and consent in regard to sending (Prince Konoye ?), so please endeavor through Lozovsky to get this done."¹²

Minister Kase in Switzerland, who on prior occasions has forwarded to Tokyo his own and others' suggestions that Japan make peace immediately, on 9 July forwarded to Cabinet Adviser Ogata (via the Foreign Office) a very lengthy despatch from the European representative of the Tokyo paper Asahi. Following are excerpts:

".....it is Russia's plan to make the present East Asia War her instrument to accomplish her plans.

.....it need hardly be said that the reasons given by Russia for refusing to extend the treaty with Japan are such as can be used

*Underscoring supplied. The expression "extremely vital" weakens considerably the previously expressed "resolve to wage a thorough-going war". Apparently the second paragraph of the above despatch is intended merely to set the tone of the talks with the Russians.

¹²H-197211, 17 July, Tokyo-Moscow.

"at any time as an excuse for breaking off relations or going to war. (Note: 'helping Germany' — a violation of Article 2 of the treaty).

.....if one considers that the Russians, finding England and the United States back-watering into an attitude of opposition to a Soviet advance into East Asia, are in a position which makes it desirable for them to take the initiative...then one cannot be far wrong in thinking that the Russians are ready to go a step further in their East Asia policy without loss of time. I think matters have already reached the stage where it is too late for such steps as breaking diplomatic relations....the possibility is that the Soviet Union will move directly into the war with Japan....I imagine half a year will be needed to make full preparations on the Soviet-Manchukuoan border, but if circumstances require it, the Russians would not find it unprofitable even to retire to the Siberian hinterland at the beginning, and make war at any rate on paper, thus assuring themselves of a powerful voice in the peace. It is difficult to make a flat statement about when this might happen. If the Russians see a trend toward peace between Japan and the Anglo-Americans, then the possibility of this will be increased.....

.....I believe that we should not be in error in concluding that "unconditional surrender" is merely the 'asking price', and that (the Americans) are prepared to allow some discount..

.....On the other hand, the Americans have been making vast preparations for a decisive battle against Japan. Once the invasion of our homeland has begun, there will be no turning back..... Our first chance is in the period before the 3-Power Conference; our second chance is in the period before the invasion of Japan; and if these go by, I fear that our last chance may be gone forever."

".....We cannot expect any sudden, dramatic deterioration of Soviet-Anglo-American relations... in fact we must expect that a temporary period of good feeling may be inaugurated by the 3-Power Conference.

.....It is worth noting that of late there have been very few British declarations on the Japanese question.....it would not be unreasonable to suppose that she might offer us favorable conditions or that after the war...might be willing to go quite far in improving (relations with us ?)

.....Now, if we let these opportunities slip by...the enemy has at his disposal a crushing accumulation of materiel.....the experience of the European war has shown quite clearly that the overwhelming power of air bombardment makes possible the success

of landing operations.....it is merely a problem of physics
.....Once such a landing succeeds....the fighting will rage from
street to street.....we will literally have to fight to the
last woman and child....

.....It was the dastardly cowardice of the German leaders who
were concerned to the very last only with saving their own skins,
their brutal lack of consideration for the people and their
complete lack of insight with regard to the international situation
which brought the Germans to their present plight — little more
than slaves of other powers..... Of course Japan's prospects
are in no way comparable, but.....at this juncture a truly great
general would cast aside his arms in order to save his Emperor
and his people.

....We may as well anticipate, of course, that, in the beginning
at least, we will be exposed to the present arrogant and cruel
disposition of the United States, however....by suffering and
enduring now, we will help to give rise to a completely new Japan
within 50 years or so. We will simply have to leave this task
to the next generation. Now it rests with those who wield the
power to make the great decision.I therefore beseech you to
mobilise all our organs of public opinion at this time to help
prepare our people before hand for the day...*

.....I pray that the grave decision which you must make will not
be delayed too long.*¹³

* On 7 July Foreign Minister Togo stated that: "there is a great
demand in all quarters to hear about the situation in Germany;
therefore, it has been decided to remove the prohibition on
newspaper articles by those returning home (from Germany)
beginning with the morning editions of 9 July". (H-195514)

¹³ H-196320, 9 July, Berne-Tokyo.

Feeling, like Togo, that Russia can be appeased, Minister Morishima* at Lisbon, on 11 July offered the Foreign Office the benefit of his "humble opinions", which include the following:

".... Any way you look at it, it is urgently necessary that the Empire reach an understanding with the Soviet Union with all possible speed.

....In addition to (steps previously suggested), it should be of value to study such ideas as these: joint operation of important industries in Manchukuo; joint use of Port Arthur and Dairen, mutual establishment of an extensive zone of disarmament, participation of the Outer Mongolian Government and the Maritime Provinces administration in the Japan-Manchukuo-China block, a Yen-an-Nanking compromise, with the Soviet Union as mediator etc."¹⁴

In the previously reported war of nerves which Russia has been waging on Japan, the enlistment even of Cupid is seen in the following incident reported to Tokyo by Consul General Miyagawa in Harbin:

A Russian officer who went along part way on the Trans-Siberian with a group of Japanese evacuees from Germany, was attracted by the charms of one of the women. When he got off the train he gave the lady of his choice a gold chain, and the promise: "I'll look you up in Tokyo in a few months".

*When last previously heard from (3 July), Morishima was assisting Minister Okamoto at Stockholm in following the trail of a certain character wearing "a black beard and glasses". The elusive individual (whose services were apparently being sought for contact with the Russians) has been persona grata with the latter since 1919, when, as Danish Consul at Riga he issued visas which made possible the escape of Kalinin, Molotov and others.¹⁵

¹⁴H-196946, 11 July, Lisbon-Tokyo.

¹⁵H-195515, 3 July, Lisbon-Stockholm.

The reporting Consul General thought that the incident was perhaps "not to be taken lightly".¹⁶

The same consular official last month reported the appearance in Harbin of propaganda handbills which, under the caption "Fatherland News", summoned "White Russian youth to be up and doing"; and subsequent nocturnal excursions of suspected individuals believed to be "carrying on a very brisk intelligence activity".¹⁷

A report from the Japanese Army espionage agency in Shanghai includes the following "serious and frank remarks recently made in private by a member of the staff of the Tass Agency, who is a person of some influence with the Soviet authorities":

"Soviet Russia has not yet massed the strength to take part in the Pacific war, and is not expected to do so. This, does not however take into account what Russia would do if the war situation should further deteriorate for Japan.....The might of the U. S. Army probably will be directed against Korea, whose independence Russia acknowledges.....
The influence of Yenan is considerable, but Soviet Russia is Soviet Russia and Yenan is Yenan.....The relationship between the Japanese national structure and world socialism is similar to that between the Romanov dynasty and present-day Russia..."

The reporting officer did not know whether the above were personal opinions or "based on instructions from Moscow".¹⁸ (The day after the above report was submitted (3 July), an allotment of two million yen was requested

¹⁶ Dip. Sum. #1200, 8 July.

¹⁷ H-195028, 5 July, Tokyo to Moscow.

¹⁸ F.E. Sum. #484, 17 July.

for collecting intelligence on Russian activities in Shanghai.)¹⁹

From Moscow, Ambassador Sato continues to report the sightings of couriers, indicating an uninterrupted flow of Soviet military strength to the East (approximately 30 trains a day). During an 8-day period ending 6 July, in addition to the planes, trucks, guns and tank units noted, "there were 2,932 cars carrying troops".²⁰

A report to Tokyo (6 July from the Embassy at Hsinking includes the following:

"From the beginning of the shipments up until recently we roughly estimate that 200,000 men and 2,000 planes have been shipped eastward. We assume that 900,000 men and 4,000 planes are in the (word missing) area."

In submitting his usual monthly report on the situation in the Vladivostok area, Consul General Hirose on 5 July injected an unaccustomed note of optimism about Russia's immediate intentions. Although he reports "a steady stream of troops"; a large number of large-type naval vessels entering and leaving port; military and naval training, air defense drills, barrage balloons, etc.; he added:

"The demobilization (of troops who had seen long service) has done more than anything to make the population here realize that the period of peace has now dawned. There have been news articles concerning the increase in the production of consumers goods, and the relaxation of wartime restrictions. Prices in the shops have dropped.....There seems to be a movement under way -- even though partial -- to beautify the city. In fact it looks as if a general program had finally been undertaken to change the living habits of the people from a wartime to a peacetime pattern."²¹

¹⁹H-195177, 3 July, Shanghai-Tokyo.

²⁰H-187271; H-196022, 10 July, Moscow-Tokyo.

²¹H-195516, 5 July, Vladivostok-Tokyo; Dip. Sum. #1203, 11 July.
H-197056, 6 July, Hsinking-Tokyo.

As previously noted (PSIS 400-18, 2 July), the Japanese have been uneasy over the prospect that Russia would lay claim to German property in the Far East. These fears were partially borne out on 30 June when the Soviet Consul at Harbin asked the Manchukuoan Government to turn over to him -- as the only representative of the United Nations in Manchukuo -- the German Government's "movable and immovable property" in Harbin, Hsinking and Mukden.

A 10 July circular (only the second half of which is available) from Foreign Minister Togo, indicates that the Russians have now asked for German property in Japan and other Japanese-controlled areas.

It appears that in an interview between Counselor Amurov of the Soviet Embassy at Tokyo and the Chief of the Political Affairs Bureau of the Japanese Foreign Office, the former proposed transfer of the property, pointing out that the only representatives of the four victors over Germany "in Japan and the territory occupied by the Japanese Army" were Soviet officials, who "are vested with the function of taking over the property". In reply the Bureau Chief stated that:

"Since Japan is at war with England and America, she cannot recognize a 4-Power agreement between Russia and such countries as England, America and France (i.e. the 4-Power Declaration of 5 June). Consequently, it would be absurd to think that any such agreement should apply to Japan itself, and Japan could not even consider recognizing the Soviet proposal..... Such being the case, the problem could not be settled as the Soviets demanded."²²

²²H-196214, 10 July, Tokyo Circular (Moscow).
H-196025, 10 July, Tokyo-Moscow.
Dip. Sum. #1197, 5 July; Dip. Sum. #1204, 12 July.
H-194751, 30 June, Hsinking (Yamada)-Tokyo.
P.E. Sum. #476, 9 July.

~~TOP SECRET ULLTRA~~ (

(On 7 July, the Japanese Vice Minister of War had informed Army Commands that:

"Japan will refuse demands to hand over German property, on the ground that Japan is not a nation concerned with the (German) surrender terms and other arrangements made between Germany and Russia or between Germany and the Allied Nations, and therefore cannot recognize these arrangements..... In regard to property which we intend to keep, we shall state that it has already been seized in retaliation for violation of the Tripartite Pact".

Togo states that the attitude taken in the above-mentioned interview at Tokyo was adopted after conferring with the Army and Navy. Possibly it was thought that the subject could be saved for bargaining purposes later at the hoped-for conferences between Prince Konoye and Molotov.)

Another matter which has caused some uneasiness in the Japanese Foreign Office, was announced by the Tokyo radio as follows:

- (a) On 13 June the Russian vessel Transbalt (10,000 G.R.T.) was torpedoed and sunk while sailing west through LaPerouse Strait (between Hokkaido and Sakhalin);*
- (b) 94 members of the Transbalt's crew were rescued by Japanese naval patrol boats;
- (c) The sinking must have been the act of an American submarine since no Japanese submarines had been in that area at the time.

In a 29 June circular, Foreign Minister Togo observes that "the Russian Government has not entirely renounced its suspicions of Japan" in connection with the sinking, and "according to a Japanese Army report, the Russian authorities at Shanghai have stated quite openly that the 'Transbalt incident' was a "master plot on Japan's part to win Russia over to her side". As no official Soviet charge had yet been made, Togo decided to "call to

*Mining by the Japanese of LaPerouse (Soya) Strait was reported in PSIS 400-18, 2 July.

"the attention of the Soviet Government the fact that the United States has remained silent regarding the charge made in our announcement".²³

What was possibly a thinly-veiled Soviet reference to this incident, was made during negotiations at Moscow on 8 July for entry into Japan of a small Soviet vessel from Vladivostok, for the purpose of bringing six tons of food for the Soviet Embassy, and bringing out 29 minor members of the Embassy staff and their families*. During the discussion, Secretary Matsudaira remarked that "if any such incident as a sinking by an American submarine should take place, it should be made amply clear that the Japanese Government bears no responsibility". He then inquired of Generalov, Head of the Japanese Affairs Section of the Foreign Commissariat, whether a "safe-conduct" had been obtained from the American Government; to which the latter replied that he did not know, but that "if we give advance notice of this trip, the United States is not likely to make any mistake. I trust that the Japanese Government also will take all necessary measures to prevent any error". Bridling at this, Matsudaira stated "I cannot

*Explaining the withdrawal, to Tokyo, Sato stated "they are all persons who have been in Japan 4 to 5 years, and this figure includes their families and children".

²³
E-191798, 17 June, Tokyo-Moscow
H-193217, 20 June, Tokyo Circular
H-193544, 25 June, Tokyo-Moscow
E-194712, 29 June, Tokyo Circular
Dip. Sum. #1198, 6 July.

"help but construe your words as an insult which we cannot accept. I would like you to realize once and for all that the Japanese Government cannot assume responsibility for the military acts of the United States". Generalov replied that he had no intention of insulting the Japanese Government but was merely expressing his anxiety.²⁴

Analysing traffic reflected in this and the preceding Summary, it may be said that Japan now, officially if not publicly, recognizes her defeat. Abandoning as unobtainable the long-cherished goal of victory, she has turned to the twin aims of

- (a) reconciling national pride with defeat, and
- (b) finding the best means of salvaging the wreckage of her ambitions.

Pending developments at the Berlin Conference, Russo-Japanese relations appear for the moment to be in a deadly calm, as at the center of a typhoon which, soon moving on, will catch them up and swirl them to an unpredictable destination.

Although Molotov's departure for Berlin without replying to Sato's appeal for approval of Prince Konoye's mission, may or may not have been intended as a polite rebuff, it was not a definite refusal, and it is safe to assume that Japan, though she has lost the war, has not lost the hope that she may succeed, even in defeat (or paradoxically, because of defeat),

²⁴H-196871, 13 July, Tokyo-Moscow.
H-195979, 8 July, Moscow-Tokyo.

in her long-sustained efforts to alienate the Russians from the Anglo-Americans -- thereby realizing one or both of her newly-acquired aims mentioned above.