

Takashi Itoh, ed., *Sokichi Takagi: Nikki to Joho* [Sokichi Takagi: Diary and Documents] (Tokyo, Japan: Misuzu-Shobo, 2000), 916-917

July 20 [, 1945]

A meeting was held at the Prime Minister's office at 6 P.M. on July 20.

The participants were: the Prime Minister, the Navy Minister, the Chiefs of the General Staff, and the Foreign Minister (the Army Minister was absent because of a trip).

The Foreign Minister started the meeting by showing a recent telegram from Moscow. The telegram said, "The message from the Japanese Emperor is too general and does not contain anything concrete. It is also unclear to us for what purpose Prince Konoe is to be sent as a special envoy. Therefore we won't be able to reply to you [properly] at this moment." Also, Ambassador Sato cabled us that there was little hope [for getting cooperation from the Soviet Union]. The council discussed how to deal with this situation.

After careful consideration, the council agreed that we should articulate to the Soviet Union by telegram that (1) The Emperor's concrete proposal would be a request for Stalin to mediate an end to the Greater East Asia War and (2) The purpose of the Konoe Mission would be to have direct talks with Stalin regarding the details of our request for his mediation to end the war. It was decided that the Prime Minister would visit the Imperial Palace tomorrow, on the 21st, and the telegram would be sent right after his briefing to His Majesty.

A further issue of concern is how we should formulate our position in preparation for our request to Stalin. Our focus for the time being is our relationship with Russia, but we should also develop our basic position toward the United States and Britain before the negotiations.

[Original editor's note:] (The above portion is from the typed memoranda)

We must make the following points in His Majesty's letter:

1. The idea for the Japanese-Soviet negotiations came directly from His Majesty and he commits himself to the negotiations.
2. We must convey His Majesty's desire that the Japanese-Soviet relationship be permanently stable.
3. In order to have negotiations without misunderstanding, we must make it clear that His Majesty truly wants to create and maintain peace in the Far East and in the world.

4. When we sign [the agreement], we will be able to send an Imperial prince on behalf of His Majesty to either the border [with the Soviet Union] or Vladivostok, if the Soviet Union so requests.

[Original editor's note:] (The above portion is from one of the index card notes dated July 20)

We have to take the following points into consideration:

1. While it should serve the purpose of gaining complete trust of the Soviet Union, the letter should also express [our position] fairly assertively so that we will be able to control domestic opposition after the signing.
2. We can make our position paper an appendix to His Majesty's letter so that [the mission] will not need to consult our government repeatedly and have ample room for negotiations on details of the agreement. Otherwise, we can provide [the mission] with a guideline from the government, but in this case we have to be prepared for the possibility that we have to accept change [to our proposals].
3. Secret codes must be chosen by the special envoy himself or else we should take measures to strictly prohibit the dissemination of the codes beyond the Cabinet and other specific agencies.
4. Until the mission comes back and reports to His Majesty, we must not announce anything about the details of the negotiations and we should take steps to avoid leaks. (In other words, there should be no cable traffic between [the mission] and Tokyo.)
5. In case of emergency, we must prepare a contingency plan to have the mission return, not via Manchuria, but directly from Vladivostok.

[Original editor's note:] (The above portion is from one of the index card notes dated July 20)

The proceedings of negotiations should be in the following order:

1. Arrangements about diplomatic relations between Japan and the Soviet Union:
  - (a) Agree that mutual diplomatic relations between Japan and the Soviet Union must be kept unchanged for thirty years from now.
  - (b) Make the Soviet Union promise that it will maintain its neutrality until the end of the Greater East Asia War.
  - (c) Agree that the two countries will develop trade relations in both war supplies and living

goods.

2. Request for peace mediation:

- (a) Ask the Soviet Union for its opinion about the continuation of the Greater East Asia War.
- (b) If the Soviet Union says it has no problem with the war's continuation, start negotiations about Article 1, Paragraph 3 (friendly neutrality and aid to Japan).
- (c) If the Soviet Union says it also wants to bring about world peace, ask for mediation.
- (d) If the Soviet Union agrees to neither type of negotiations above, hint at [the existence of] our secret contact (with the United States) in Switzerland and express our resolve to break off [talks with Moscow].

3. [original editor's note:] (blank)

[Original editor's note:] (The above portion is from one of the index card notes dated July 20)

A telegram from our naval attaché in Switzerland:

- 1. Our contact met Gauvernity [sic; Gero von Gävernitz], [Allen] Dulles's personal secretary (a German American), in early July.
  - (a) The United States doesn't want a clash with the Soviet Union. Americans are confident that they can co-opt the Soviet Union.
  - (b) American businessmen share with the American military strong confidence in defeating Japan. They are involved in the war against Japan as if it were a sporting event and give support to their government's policies.
  - (c) Americans assume that Japan's gravest concern should be the maintenance of the Imperial House and [they say that] the U.S. government has no intention to abolish the Imperial House.
  - (d) If Japan is going to continue the war, the country will fall into a terrible situation where the nation is divided, food runs short, etc., and the Japanese population will be reduced by almost half.

Comment by the naval attaché:

I find it advantageous to keep contact [with Americans]. ...

[Original editor's note:] (The above portion is from one of the index card notes dated July 20)