

Telegram

MOST URGENT

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For the Ambassador personally.

I request that you call upon Herr Molotov personally and communicate to him the following:

1) The ideological contradictions between National Socialist Germany and the Soviet Union were in past years the sole reason why Germany and the U.S.S.R. stood opposed to each other in two separate and hostile camps. The developments of the recent period seem to show that differing world outlooks do not prohibit a reasonable relationship between the two states, and the restoration of cooperation of a new and friendly type. The period of opposition in foreign policy can be brought to an end once and for all and the way lies open for a new sort of future for both countries.

2) There exist no real conflicts of interest between Germany and the U.S.S.R. The living spaces of Germany and the U.S.S.R. touch each other, but in their natural requirements they do not conflict. Thus there is lacking all cause for an aggressive attitude on the part of one country against the other. Germany has no aggressive intentions against the U.S.S.R. The Reich Government is of the opinion that there is no question between the Baltic and the Black Seas which cannot be settled to the complete satisfaction of both countries. Among these are such questions as: the Baltic Sea, the Baltic area, Poland, Southeastern questions, etc. In such matters political cooperation between the two countries can have only a beneficial effect. The same applies to German and Soviet economy, which can be expanded in any direction.

3) There is no doubt that German-Soviet policy today has come to an historic turning point. The decisions with respect to policy to be made in the immediate future in Berlin and Moscow will be of decisive importance for the aspect of relationships between the German people and the peoples of the U.S.S.R. for generations. On those decisions will depend whether the two peoples will some day again and without any compelling reason take up arms against each other or whether they pass again into a friendly relationship. It has gone well with both countries previously when they were friends and badly when they were enemies.

4) It is true that Germany and the U.S.S.R., as a result of years of hostility in their respective world outlooks, today look at each other in a distrustful fashion. A great deal of rubbish which has accumulated will have to be cleared away. It must be said, however, that even during this period the natural sympathy of the Germans for the Russians never disappeared. The policy of both states can be built anew on that basis.

5) The Reich Government and the Soviet Government must, judging from all experience, count it as certain that the capitalistic Western democracies are the unforgiving enemies of both National Socialist Germany and of the U.S.S.R. They are today trying again, by the conclusion of a military alliance, to drive the U.S.S.R. into the war against Germany. In 1914 this policy had disastrous results for Russia. It is the compelling interest of both countries to avoid for all future time the destruction of Germany and of the U.S.S.R., which would profit only the Western democracies.

6) The crisis which has been produced in German-Polish relations by English policy, as well as English agitation for war and the attempts at an alliance which are bound up with that policy, make a speedy clarification of German-Russian relations desirable. Otherwise these matters, without any German initiative, might take a turn which would deprive both Governments of the possibility of restoring German-Soviet friendship and possibly of clearing up jointly the territorial questions of Eastern Europe. The leadership in both countries should, therefore not allow the situation to drift, but should take action at the proper time. It would be fatal if, through mutual lack of knowledge of views and intentions our peoples should be finally driven asunder.

As we have been informed, the Soviet Government also has the desire for a clarification of German-Russian relations. Since, however, according to previous experience this clarification can be achieved only slowly through the usual diplomatic channels, Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop is prepared to make a short visit to Moscow in order, in the name of the Führer, to set forth the Führer's views to Herr Stalin. Only through such a direct discussion, in the view of Herr von Ribbentrop, can a change be brought about, and it should not be impossible thereby to lay the foundations for a definite improvement in German-Russian relations.

ANNEX: I request that you do not give Herr Molotov these instructions in writing, but that you read them to him. I consider it important that they reach Herr Stalin in as exact a form as possible and I authorize you at the same time to request from Herr Molotov on my behalf an audience with Herr Stalin so that you may be able to make this important communication directly to him also. In addition to a conference with Molotov, an extended conference with Stalin would be a condition for my making the trip.

RIBBENTROP