

Exhibit 2723

10

Def. Doc. # 1632

Translated by
Defense Language Branch

Before distribution
to be presented first
to the State Secretary

Berlin 20, July 1939

Woermann

Berlin 19, July 1939

The Japanese Counsellor of the Embassy who was apparently dispatched by his Ambassador to gain information, visited me today and began a talk with an extremely detailed explanation of the late incident which occurred on the border between Manchukuo and Outer-Mongolia. The events, according to his explanations, occurred in the area where a river called Halahaho on most maps forms the border-line. It is true that there exists no clear agreement on the border line, but the said river has been practically recognized as the border-line. Since April of this year Outer Mongolian troops at first appeared on the east side of the river again and again; later they were reinforced with Russian troops. At the same time Outer-Mongolian or Russian airplanes often appeared over Manchurian territory. In one case an airplane flew deep into the land and dropped a bomb upon a bridge about 30 - 40 Km

Def. Doc. # 1632

to the east of Tsitsihar. Finally the Mongolians and Russian in large formation have appeared on the east side of the river and that with motorized troops and tanks.

Thereupon a pitched battle with major units developed, whereby the Japanese gained the upperhand. The fighting activities, however, have not yet entirely ceased along the whole line. The Outer-Mongolians and Russians have lost thousands of men and hundreds of airplanes. On the Manchurian side, Japanese troops have also taken part in the battle. The total loss of our side amounts to about 1,000 men. As to the reason of such Russian action, the Japanese Government is entirely dependent upon a supposition: The action might have the aim to ascertain whether the Japanese despite the war-like events in China are still strong enough also in Manchukuo.

Another possibility might be to give a kind of moral help to the Englishmen in relation to the occurrence in Tientsin. A third interpretation is that the Russians are desiring to display, in consideration of the negotiation in Moscow, that they are not interested in the events in Europe but that they are looking toward the Far East.

Finally it is even insisted that the Russians are eager to create difficulties between the Anti-Comintern Powers in this way.

Hereupon Mr. Usami apparently reached the point, to which he was steering. First he inquired after our information about

Def. Doc. # 1632

the English-French-Russian negotiations.

I have given him our information concerning the negotiation of the Western Powers with Moscow, which coincided with his own.

Then he inquired after our relation with the Soviet Union in a very emphatic form.

He referred among others to a report of the "News Chronicle," according to which a Non-Aggression Pact between Germany and Russia is now being negotiated and which mentioned the rumor of the dispatch of prominent German persons to Moscow.

I replied to him that all those news were nothing but a swindle. It is true that we are now keeping contact with Soviet Union because of an economic negotiation. The quantity of trade between us has been reduced to an insignificant sum from its very considerable height in former times. There are plenty of useful things in Russia, which we can utilize quite well, so it is quite natural that we are trying to further our economic relation to some degree. This has led to nothing more than preliminary diplomatic talks, being held partly in Moscow, partly in Berlin.

Mr. Usami then inquired after the details on the German credits given to the Soviet Union in former days. I have referred him to Mr. Wiehl for further information on this question.

Mr. Usami then came out with the following: Between Germany and Japan economic negotiations are also being held at this moment. Japan is extraordinary capable of accepting German machines. Our negotiators, however, have explained that the German capacity in this connection is restricted and that some sorts of machines could not be delivered because of her own requirements. It would make an extremely unpleasant impression in Japan, if those machines which Japan had been denied, would yet be sent to the Soviet Union. I have referred Mr. Usami to Mr. Wiehl also in this point. In the end the Counsellor of the Embassy came back again to the rumour on the political rapprochement between Germany and the Soviet Union and said, it would be anyway quite good, if a soothing declaration in this regard would be given in Tokyo. The Embassy has on its part already reported to that effect.

During our talk I have also stated upon inquiries that it is a known fact that the German press does not attack the Soviet Union to such a degree as in the past, and described this as a fact which implies nothing sensational because of the neighbourhood of the Soviet Union with Poland.

/s/ Voermann

C E R T I F I C A T E

O F

O R I G I N

I, YALE MAXON, Chief of the Document Division, IPS, hereby certify:

1. That I am Chief of the Document Division of the International Prosecution Section, GHQ, SCAP, and as such have possession, custody, and control of original or copies of all documents obtained by the said Section.

2. That frames 135989 - 135991 being 3 sheets of a photostatic copy of a memorandum signed by Woermann of 20, July 1939 and contained in IPS Document 4044 were received by the IPS from the office of the Chief of Counsel of the Nuremburn War Crimes Trials.

/s/ YALE MAXON