

October 30, 1945

**From the Journal of V.M. Molotov, 'Reception of US
Ambassador Harriman at 2200 30 October 1945'**

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Summary:

Notes on an October 1945 conversation between Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs V. M. Molotov and American Ambassador to the Soviet Union W. Averell Harriman on the American proposal for a control mechanism for Japan.

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SECRET

FROM THE JOURNAL
OF V. M. MOLOTOV

RECEPTION OF US AMBASSADOR HARRIMAN
at 2200 30 October 1945

Harriman said that he had brought two documents on the Far East question. He, Harriman, will leave these two documents with Molotov and he is ready to discuss them right now if this is possible. The first document, said Harriman, is a proposal of the American government about the control mechanism for Japan. In this document the US government meets the Soviet government halfway, and Harriman expressed the hope that the draft will not encounter objections and will be acceptable. Harriman reported that this draft was also delivered to the British and the Chinese.

Molotov asked whether the British and Chinese agree with this proposal.

Harriman replied that this document was presented to the British and Chinese only today. The second document, said Harriman, contains the American proposals about a change of the conditions for the work of the Far East Consultative Commission. This document was presented today to the representatives of the participating governments at a meeting of the Far East Consultative Commission. If Harriman is not mistaken, there are 10 representatives in the Far East Consultative Commission right now. The next meeting of the Commission will be held in a week in order to give its members an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the document presented by the Americans.

Molotov asked what is the connection between both documents and the bodies whose founding is envisioned in these documents [?]

Harriman explained that the Far East Commission, the founding of which is envisioned in the second document, is a body the purpose of which is the formulation of political questions. Harriman said that the first document provides for the institution of a control mechanism for Japan to implement the surrender terms and for the occupation for Japan. From the content of this document, which Harriman considers more important, it is evident that the American government agreed with the proposal of Generalissimo Stalin to decide the Japanese question through bilateral negotiations. Harriman explained that it was decided to call the control mechanism for Japan a Council, and not a Commission.

Molotov asked, what is the difference between the English words "commission" and "council" [?]

Harriman said that there is no difference. Again explaining the content of the documents, Harriman said that the first provides for the creation of a control mechanism in Japan, namely the Allied Military Council, under the chairmanship of an American with the participation of Russian, British, and Chinese representatives.

The establishment of the Commission, whose task is the formulation of policy, is envisioned in the second document. This document includes a point suggested by the British regarding the voting procedure. Harriman jokingly noted that the voting procedure was constructed so that, although the chairman of the Council is an American, nevertheless a decision, the adoption of which the Americans desire, can be rejected by the other members of the Council. The question touched upon in the second document is quite complex and Harriman hoped to discuss it with Molotov

when he is ready for this. As regards the first document, Harriman said that the American government considers it the most urgent and therefore Harriman is completely at Molotov's disposal when the latter is able to make some comments or proposals after having familiarized himself with the documents.

Molotov replied that he will familiarize himself after the translation of both documents, submit them to the Government, and hoped to be ready to discuss them with the Ambassador tomorrow or the day after.

The conversation lasted 20 minutes.

Recorded by Potrubach

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