March 03, 1944
Stalin and Harriman Discuss Air Power and the Japanese

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Summary:
Ambassador Harriman and Joseph Stalin discuss Far East Air Power and intelligence about Japanese military movements.

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English

Contents:
- English Transcription
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Conversation. March 3, 1944, 9:30 p.m.

The Kremlin

Present: The American Ambassador, Mr. Harriman

Mr. F. B. Stevens, Second Secretary of Embassy

Marshal J. V. Stalin

Mr. V. M. Molotov

Mr. Berezhkov, interpreter

Subject: Military Question.

During his conversation with Marshal Stalin tonight the Ambassador stated that he desired to thank
Marshal Stalin for the reception which had been given to the United States Air Force officers who
had come to Moscow to make arrangements for shuttle bombing. He said that he understood the
officers were leaving tomorrow to inspect possible fields. He added that these officers had come to
Moscow in one of the latest types of combat Flying Fortresses which he understood had been of
considerable interest to the Red Air Force. He felt that this plane would be of interest to Marshal
Stalin and said that it would be a great honor to the United States Air Force if Marshal Stalin could
find time to inspect the plane.

Marshal Stalin replied that he had no time.

The Ambassador stated that the last time he saw Marshal Stalin, Stalin had said that at an
appropriate time the Chief of the Far Eastern Air Forces would come to Moscow to meet General
Deane and discuss bases in the Far East. The Ambassador asked whether his arrival could be
expected soon. Marshal Stalin replied that he would arrive in Moscow in the near future.

The Ambassador said he desired to inquire whether Marshal Stalin had received his letter
concerning intelligence information about Japan and whether Marshal Stalin had received any
additional information on this subject. Stalin replied that he had not seen the letter.

The Ambassador stated that it appeared that the Japanese had withdrawn all their heavy naval
vessels from the Pacific area now under attack and since they were unable to provide air
replacements were leaving their troops in forward positions to fight until destroyed. Marshal Stalin
asked whether the Ambassador was referring to the Central Sector of the Pacific, to which the
Ambassador replied in the affirmative mentioning Rabaul, Truk, and the Marianas. He said that the
main Japanese naval vessels had apparently been withdrawn from this area to the Philippines or to
home waters.

Marshal Stalin replied that this was good. He said that the Japanese had inadequate forces to hold
their outer defense lines and that they were trying to shorten their front.

The Ambassador asked whether Marshal Stalin had received any information concerning
Japanese intentions with regard to the defense of the Philippines, to which Marshal Stalin replied
that unfortunately he had not.

The Ambassador stated that we would accordingly await the arrival of the Chief of the Far Eastern
Air Forces before beginning the conversations regarding bases. Stalin replied in the affirmative.

FBS: nn
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