

June 8, 1945
**Cable, Summary of Averell Harriman Meeting with
Stalin and Molotov**

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Summary:

Harriman updates the President on the adverse relations between the USSR and the United States; observes that Stalin cannot understand the United State's interest in establishing an independent Poland.

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Transcript - English

PARAPHRASE OP NAVY CABLE JUNE 8, 1945.

TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL FROM HARRIMAN FOR THE EYES OF THE PRESIDENT ONLY:

I thought that you might want me, now that Harry has left, to give you a brief report on his visit Moscow.

When we saw Stalin the first time there is no doubt that he was gravely concerned over the adverse developments during the past three months in the relations between our two countries. The firm position taken by President Roosevelt before he died and by you since on several issues has had its effect. Stalin showed that he did not fully understand the basis of the difficulties. In the early talks he took the offensive in complaining about our misdeeds and aggressively indicated that if we did not wish to deal on a friendly basis with the Soviet Union she was strong enough to look after herself. He was clearly glad to see Harry and accepted without question the fact that you sent him as an indication of your desire to work with him (Stalin).

In presenting your views and in explaining the most important matters, particularly Poland, which were causing us concern Harry did a first rate job. I am afraid Stalin does not and never will fully understand our interest in a free Poland as a matter of principle. He is a realist in all of his actions and it is hard for him to appreciate our faith in abstract principles. It is difficult for him to understand why we should want to interfere with Soviet policy in a country like Poland which he considers so important to Russia's security unless we have some ulterior motive. However, he does appreciate that he must deal with the position we have taken and, in addition, from all reports we have from inside Poland he needs our assistance and that of Great Britain in obtaining within that country a stable political situation.

I told you, I believe, that I was certain Molotov did not report to Stalin accurately and in fact truthfully in all cases. This was brought out again in our talks. It is clear also that Molotov is far more suspicious of us and less willing to view matters in our mutual relations from a broad standpoint than is Stalin. The fact that we were able to see Stalin six times and deal directly with him was a great help. Many of our difficulties could be overcome if it were possible to see him more frequently.

The agreement to start the consultations with the Poles in Moscow is a big step forward, but I am afraid we will have trouble with Molotov when it comes to actual working out of the details of the reorganization of the Warsaw Government.

He probably will not continue in the spirit of our recent talks and the Poles themselves will also be difficult. However, I hope to be able to handle the consultations for my part in such a way that we can either come to a conclusion or point up the differences sufficiently clearly to make it possible for you to come to a conclusion with Stalin when you and Churchill meet with him.

I feel that the talks about the Far East were of real value, particularly Stalin's agreement to take up in the first instance with Soong the political matters affecting China in the Yalta Agreement and also his agreement to allow the Generalissimo's representatives to go into Manchuria with the Russian troops to set up administration for the Chinese National Government.

Our last talk, on voting procedure, was most interesting. It was clear that the Marshal had not understood at all the issue between us. In spite of Molotov's explanation and defense of the Soviet position, Stalin waived him aside and accepted our position. He stated however he did not consider that "a country is virtuous because it is small" and had a good deal to say about the troubles small nations have made in the world.

This he said he was quite ready to state publicly as well as privately. He expressed emphatically his unwillingness to allow the Soviet Union's interests to be affected by such countries.

In conclusion, I feel that Harry's visit has been even more successful than I had hoped. Although there are and will continue to be many unsolved problems with the Soviet Government, I believe that his visit has produced a much better atmosphere for your meeting with Stalin.

Harry stood the trip reasonably well physically. The strain of the first week took a lot out of him and it was a good thing that before starting home he had a few days to rest up.

As usual Bohlen's presence was most helpful.

RPM