

September 14, 1961

Reception by N.S. Khrushchev of Japanese Ambassador H. Yamada, September 14, 1961

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Summary:

The two parties discuss solutions for improving Soviet-Japanese trade relations. Khrushchev expresses concern about Japan's military ties with the US, given that there are US army bases in Japan. Yamada raises the concern of logistical difficulties faced by Japanese businesspeople visiting the USSR. The two parties also discuss Soviet-Japanese treaties and geopolitical relations.

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Russian

Contents:

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Reception

by N.S. Khrushchev of Japanese Ambassador H. Yamada

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[Handwritten at the bottom of page one] *Not reviewed by Comrade Khrushchev.*

Yamada says that he regards his reception by N.S. Khrushchev as a great honor. He was in the Soviet Union two times in the past, but only in transit and not long. For a long time, he wanted to represent Japan before the Soviet Government, and he is extremely glad that this dream has come true. Given that he, Yamada, has received such an appointment, he will make all efforts for the development of good-neighborly and friendly relations between the USSR and Japan on the basis of mutual understanding.

It cannot be said, says Yamada, that presently there are no unresolved issues between our countries, but he is personally convinced that with both sides' commitment to mutual understanding the resolution of all of these issues is completely reachable. Yamada asks N.S. Khrushchev and, through him, the Soviet Government, for assistance in fulfilling the ambassador's duties, which demand a lot of work from him.

N.S. Khrushchev answers that he is happy to welcome Mr. Yamada as the new ambassador of Japan to the USSR. N.S. Khrushchev indicates that the Soviet Union, as he already said repeatedly to different Japanese representatives, wants to live in peace and friendship with Japan. N.S. Khrushchev notes that A.I. Mikoyan's trip to Japan not long ago was beneficial. As it appears to us, relations between the USSR and Japan should be good. Trade between our countries is developing quite well. Japanese business circles display a great interest in economic ties with the USSR. We believe that the development of trade is a mutually beneficial matter. However, there still remains the unresolved issue about the conclusion of a peace treaty. Another issue which cannot not bother us is that Japan provided its lands for American military bases and took on certain military obligations for the USA. We believe that this is an unfriendly act in relation to the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea. The Soviet Government repeatedly expressed its view to the government of Japan in relation to this.

If this issue were settled and there could be a full normalization of relations, then the development of trade, cultural, and other ties with Japan would occur more on favorable terms.

N.S. Khrushchev says that Yamada in his work as ambassador will receive the Soviet Government's assistance, since we want this work to be beneficial for the full normalization and development of relations between the USSR and Japan.

Yamada expresses complete agreement with Khrushchev's given assessment of A.I. Mikoyan's visit to Japan. He is glad that this visit received such an assessment by the Soviet Government. As for N.S. Khrushchev's further statements related to the conclusion of a peace treaty between the USSR and Japan and about the Japanese-American security agreement, the ambassador, states that the position of the Japanese government on these issues was laid out not long ago in a responding letter by Japanese Premier Minister Mr. Ikeda, which was addressed to N.S. Khrushchev. Yamada expresses regret that the parties' positions diverge somewhat on these issues. Yamada adds that collectively they can find a way to resolve these issues and that he personally would like to contribute to this.

Noting that N.S. Khrushchev referred to the development of Soviet-Japanese trade, Yamada says, that in connection with this, he would like in passing to touch upon one issue, even though this might not be completely appropriate here. On the Soviet side, trade with Japan is conducted by state organizations on the basis of the state's monopoly over external goods. On the Japanese side, private companies, as you know, conduct trade. Their representatives, heading to the Soviet Union, often face difficulties in obtaining visas and securing numbers in hotels or apartments. Yamada notes that he, of course, does not expect to receive an answer today, but, in his opinion, addressing these difficulties would facilitate the broadening of Soviet-Japanese trade.

N.S. Khrushchev answers that he is not clear what kinds of issues the ambassador means. If, however, there are some concrete requests from the Japanese, then the Minister of Foreign Affairs could be instructed to figure this matter out and take measures. If it proves necessary, the Minister will represent his views to the government, and the issue will be reviewed by the Soviet government. N.S. Khrushchev indicates that the Soviet Union stands for the full development of trade with Japan, and we, certainly, want to assist the work of the Japanese business people visiting our country.

N.S. Khrushchev further says that he read over Premier Minister Ikeda's responding letter and would like to note that some of the issues in the letter are construed incorrectly. Really, the conclusion of a peace treaty between both countries is conditional on the territorial problem. We do not accept such a formulation of the issue. We do not have any account with Japan on the territorial issue. After the unconditional surrender of Japan, its historical territory went to the Soviet Union and this is recorded in the peace treaty signed by Japan with the US. Japan, obviously, wants to review this situation, but this is out of the question. Recognizing Japanese claims to the Kurile Islands is not an option. Japan still has not freed itself from American occupation, and the island of Okinawa, for example, is completely in the USA's hands. You want the Soviet Union to give over the islands so they can be turned into American military bases directed against us. These islands do not represent an economic interest for the Soviet Union or Japan, but they have important strategic significance. The Japanese side maintains a very strange and unrealistic position in this matter.

Yamada asks for permission to extend the conversation some so that he can express an opinion on this issue with complete frankness. He says that one hundred million Japanese live very close together on small islands. Therefore, they have a special interest in resolving the territorial issue, which is probably difficult for people living in such an expansive country like the Soviet Union to understand. Yamada says that he does not want to touch on the resolved or unresolved territorial issue now. However, Japan does not believe that it gave up its traditional territory. Small Japanese fishermen, who always conducted traditional sea fishing there, are especially interested in these small islands. From the military point of view, these islands do not interest Japan. As for the island of Okinawa, Japan tried to have it returned and now has achieved recognition from the USA of the Japanese's right to raise the Japanese national flag on Okinawa. Since the Soviet government fears a threat from the Northern Islands, maybe it will agree to reconsider its position in relation to these islands if it is guaranteed that they will not be used for military purposes after they are transferred to Japan. Yamada makes a disclaimer that he raises this point now on his own personal initiative.

N.S. Khrushchev says that he already talked about this topic with one Japanese leader at some point and can now repeat to Mr. Yamada, as the Ambassador of Japan, that the Soviet government will not conduct any kind of negotiations on this issue with Japan. Territorial issues have already been resolved by history. When we conducted negotiations with Mr. Hatoyama, it was then recorded in the Joint Declaration that the islands of Habomai and Shikotan could be transferred to Japan. But the Japanese government did not show further interest in obtaining these islands. Well, that is already its business! I have already outlined our point of view.

Yamada expresses regrets that he was not successful in convincing his conversationalist. Yamada says that Japan is very interested in the islands of Habomai and Shikotan. But the conclusion of a peace treaty between the USSR and Japan is necessary to obtain them. To achieve this, the Soviet Union put forward a subsequent new condition for the transfer of these islands, connected to the elimination of American military bases on Japanese territory. It is very regrettable, says Yamada, that the Soviet Union's promise in relation to these islands has still not been fulfilled.

Yamada repeats that he wanted his visit to testify to his respect to N.S. Khrushchev, that he does not want to escalate the issues raised in the course of the conversation, and asks that his efforts for the open exchange of opinions be correctly understood as being appropriate between longtime friends and neighbors. In conclusion, Yamada again asks that assistance for his work be provided, to which N.S. Khrushchev repeats

that the Ambassador will be provided due assistance and support.

The Deputy Head of the Far East Division Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR Krutikov K.A. attended the conversation. Attaché of the Far East Division of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR Prokhorov V.I. and 3rd Secretary of the Japanese Embassy in Moscow K. Nishida translated the conversation. V.I. Prokhorov recorded the conversation.

True

Prokhorov [signature]

/V. Prokhorov/

[signature]

September 23