

No. 425

2898/56745-46

The Japanese Ambassador to the Reich Foreign Minister

BERLIN, May 22, 1939.

Pol. VIII 818.

HERR REICHSMINISTER: I have the honour to inform Your Excellency herewith that I have been directed by the Japanese Government to transmit to the German Government the text of the following telegram which has just arrived from Tokyo.

“The Japanese Government are firmly convinced that the conclusion of the Pact of Friendship and Alliance between Germany and Italy, the two nations with whom Japan is on terms of close friendship, will continue to deepen the close relations existing between the two countries, will provide firm support for the extremely insecure European situation and thus make an exceedingly valuable contribution towards preserving and strengthening world peace. It is in this spirit that the Japanese Government tender their most sincere congratulations on the occasion of this event of importance to world history.”¹

I therefore venture to request Your Excellency to acquaint the German Government with the above telegram and at the same time I also avail myself of this opportunity to assure you once more of my highest consideration.

OSHIMA

¹ Handwritten marginal note dated May 26: “Telephoned through to Sonnenburg”. A similar telegram was sent to Mussolini; see *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 27.

No. 426

2871/563592-603

*Pact of Friendship and Alliance between Germany and Italy*¹

THE GERMAN CHANCELLOR

AND

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF ITALY AND ALBANIA,

EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA

deem that the time has come to strengthen the close relationship of friendship and homogeneity, existing between National Socialist Germany and Fascist Italy, by a solemn Pact.

¹ The text of this Pact, but without the secret additional Protocol, was published at the time of signature and appears in the *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, Part II, pp. 825-833. This Pact, as signed and deposited in the German Foreign Ministry archives, has the German and Italian texts printed on alternate pages. This translation has been made from the German text.

Now that a safe bridge for mutual aid and assistance has been established by the common frontier between Germany and Italy fixed for all time, both Governments reaffirm the policy, the principles and objectives of which have already been agreed upon by them, and which has proved successful, both for promoting the interests of the two countries and also for safeguarding peace in Europe.²

Firmly united by the inner affinity between their ideologies and the comprehensive solidarity of their interests, the German and Italian nations are resolved in future also to act side by side and with united forces to secure their living space² and to maintain peace.

Following this path, marked out for them by history, Germany and Italy intend, in the midst of a world of unrest and disintegration, to serve the task of safeguarding the foundations of European civilization.

In order to lay down these principles in a pact there have been appointed plenipotentiaries:

by the German Reich Chancellor:

the Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Herr Joachim von Ribbentrop;

by His Majesty the King of Italy and Albania, Emperor of Ethiopia:

the Minister for Foreign Affairs,

Count Galeazzo Ciano di Cortellazzo;

who having exchanged their full powers, found to be in good and due form, have agreed on the following terms.

Article I

The High Contracting Parties will remain in continuous contact with each other in order to reach an understanding on all questions affecting their common interests or the general European situation.

Article II

Should the common interests of the High Contracting Parties be endangered by international events of any kind whatsoever, they will immediately enter into consultations on the measures to be taken for the protection of these interests.

Should the security or other vital interests of one of the High Contracting Parties be threatened from without, the other High Contracting Party will afford the threatened Party full political and diplomatic support in order to remove this threat.

Article III

If, contrary to the wishes and hopes of the High Contracting Parties, it should happen that one of them became involved in warlike complications with another Power or Powers, the other High Contracting

² For the change of wording here from the draft of May 12, see document No. 371, footnote 1.

Party would immediately come to its assistance as an ally and support it with all its military forces on land, at sea and in the air.

Article IV

In order to ensure in specific cases the speedy execution of the obligations of alliance undertaken under Article III, the Governments of the two High Contracting Parties will further intensify their collaboration in the military field, and in the field of war economy.

In the same way the two Governments will remain in continuous consultation also on other measures necessary for the practical execution of the provisions of this Pact.

For the purposes indicated in paragraphs 1 and 2 above, the two Governments will set up commissions which will be under the direction of the two Foreign Ministers.

Article V

The High Contracting Parties undertake even now that, in the event of war waged jointly, they will conclude an armistice and peace only in full agreement with each other.

Article VI

The two High Contracting Parties are aware of the significance that attaches to their common relations with Powers friendly to them. They are resolved to maintain these relations in the future also and together to shape them in accordance with the common interests which form the bonds between them and these Powers.

Article VII

This Pact shall enter into force immediately upon signature. The two High Contracting Parties are agreed in laying down that its first term of validity shall be for ten years. In good time before the expiry of this period, they will reach agreement on the extension of the validity of the Pact.²

In witness whereof the Plenipotentiaries have signed this Pact and affixed thereto their seals.

Done in duplicate in the German and the Italian languages, both texts being equally authoritative.

Berlin, May 22, 1939, in the XVIIth year of the Fascist Era.

JOACHIM V. RIBBENTROP

GALEAZZO CIANO³

³ Ciano paid an official visit to Berlin, May 21-22, to sign the Pact.

SECRET ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE PACT OF FRIENDSHIP AND ALLIANCE BETWEEN GERMANY AND ITALY⁴

At the time of signature of the Pact of Friendship and Alliance, both Parties have reached agreement on the following points:

⁴ The signed original of this Secret Protocol in the German Foreign Ministry archives is, like the Pact, printed with the German and Italian texts on alternate pages. It has not been bound with the rest of the Pact, but is inserted loose in the volume.

1. The two Foreign Ministers will reach agreement as quickly as possible on the organization, headquarters and working methods of the commissions for military questions and questions of war economy to be set up under their direction as provided for in Article IV⁵ of the Pact.

2. In execution of Article IV, paragraph 2, of the Pact the two Foreign Ministers will as quickly as possible take all necessary steps to ensure continuous collaboration in the fields of the press, information and propaganda in accordance with the spirit and aims of the Pact.

For this purpose each of the two Foreign Ministers will assign to his country's Embassy, in the capital of the other, one or more specially qualified experts who, in direct collaboration with the Foreign Ministry there, will continually consult on the steps which are suitable for promoting the policy of the Axis and counteracting the policy of opposing Powers in the fields of the press, information and propaganda.

Berlin, May 22, 1939—in the XVIIth year of the Fascist Era.

JOACHIM V. RIBBENTROP

GALEAZZO CIANO

⁵ The draft of May 12 (see document No. 371, footnote 1) has "Paragraph 1" inserted here.

No. 427

174/135950

The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOKYO, May 23, 1939—12:20 p.m.

SECRET

Received May 23—7:30 a.m.

No. 217 of May 23

For the State Secretary.

With reference to my telegram No. 213 of May 20.¹

As I do not know whether the wording of the Cabinet decision of May 20 allows the underlying Japanese point of view to be clearly seen, I give herewith to supplement the (group mutilated) here, an account, differing from the Army statement, of the genesis of this decision, which account I received from the leading Foreign Ministry officials mentioned in my telegrams Nos. 187 and 192.² According to this account the Minister President, determined to secure the tripartite pact, found a formula which provided the present Government with the only possibility of overcoming the fundamental cleavage within the Cabinet, often reported on. Hereby Japan allegedly wished to make entry into war, not indeed against the Soviet Union, but against

¹ Document No. 410.

² Documents Nos. 339 and 344.