

*Memorandum of the Conversation Between the Reich Foreign Minister and the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, V. M. Molotov, in the Presence of the Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Dekanosov, as Well as Counselor of Embassy Hilger and Herr Pavlov, Who Acted as Interpreters, Held in Berlin on November 12, 1940)*

RM41/40

After some introductory words the Reich Foreign Minister stated that since the two visits which he had made to Moscow last year much had happened. Referring to the talks which he had had in Moscow with the Russian statesmen, and supplementing what he had recently written in the letter to Stalin, he now wanted to make a few more statements regarding the German view of the general situation and on Russo-German relations, without thereby anticipating the Führer, who would talk in detail with Herr Molotov in the afternoon and would give him his considered opinion regarding the political situation. After this discussion with the Führer, there would be further opportunities for talks with the Reich Foreign Minister, and it might be assumed that this German-Russian exchange of views would have a favorable effect upon the relations between the two countries.

Molotov replied that the contents of the letter to Stalin, which already contained a general review of events since last fall, were known to him, and he hoped that the analysis given in the letter would be supplemented by oral statements of the Führer with regard to the over-all situation and German-Russian relations.

— — —

Molotov replied that precision was necessary in a delimitation of spheres of influence over a rather long period of time. Therefore, he had asked to be informed of the opinion of the authors of the Pact or, at least, of the opinion of the Reich Government on this point. Particular vigilance was needed in the delimitation of the spheres of influence between Germany and Russia. The establishment of these spheres of influence in the past year was only a partial solution, which had been rendered obsolete and meaningless by recent circumstances and events, with the exception of the Finnish question, which he would discuss in detail later. It would necessarily take some time to make a permanent settlement. In this connection, in the first place, Russia wanted to come to an understanding with Germany, and only then with Japan and Italy, after she had previously obtained precise information regarding the significance, the nature, and the aim of the Tripartite Pact.

At this point the conversation was interrupted in order to give the Russian delegates time for breakfast in a small circle before the conversation with the Führer began.

SCHMIDT  
(Minister)

BERLIN, November 13, 1940.

*Source:* Nazi-Soviet relations 1939-1941. Documents from the Archives of The German Foreign Office. Washigton, Department of State, publication 3023, 1948.