

SECRET CONTROL

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
Washington, D.C.

COUNTRY : Japan, Sweden, U.S.A.

SUBJECT : ONODERA's Version of Swedish Offers to Initiate Peace Negotiations between Japan and the Western Allies.

DATE OF INFORMATION: May and July 1945.

EVALUATION : (Compare with version given by ERICKSON, as noted parenthetically below.)

REFERENCES : (a) Japanese Wartime Intelligence Activities in Northern Europe: SSU 30 September 1946, DB #1225.

(b) ONODERA, Major General Makoto -- Biographical Sketch of: SSU, 25 September 1946, DB #1226.

(c) INOUE, Yoichi, et al. -- Biographical Sketches of: SSU, 27 September 1946, DB #1246.

(d) March 1945 Attempt by VON RIBBENTROP to Secure a Separate Peace between Germany and the USSR through Japanese Intermediaries: SSU, 7 October 1946, DB #1240.

1. The following account was given by the subject of Reference (b) during his interrogation at Sugamo Prison in Tokyo (6 May - 20 July 1946) by a representative of SSU, and may be of interest in connection with what is already known about ONODERA's role as a Japanese intelligence figure operating in Sweden.

2. ONODERA states that on 8 May 1945 he received a visit from a Swedish businessman named Eric ERICKSON, a friend of Kichinosuke SATO and Jiro HOMMA of ONODERA's office (see References (c) and (a), respectively). Unaware of ERICKSON's wartime role on behalf of the Allies (see parenthetical note below), ONODERA remarks in passing that he later became an agent of the United States intelligence service in Stockholm.

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On the occasion in question, according to ONOSE, he and ERICKSON discussed the news of the German surrender, with the latter expressing the opinion that further continuation of the war by Japan had become very difficult and that the Bolshevik danger had increased throughout the world. He also stated that the smaller nations greatly desired the end of the war, and went on to say that he had excellent contacts with the president of the Swedish Red Cross, Prince CARL (brother of the king), whose son was a friend of both ERICKSON and ONOSE and of whom the king was very fond. Furthermore, the king at a recent dinner had expressed friendly sentiments for the Japanese Imperial family. Accordingly — ONOSE states — ERICKSON proposed that together they take advantage of these sentiments to begin peace negotiations at once.

Young Prince CARL (the son) being absent at the time, ERICKSON suggested that contact be made directly with his father. ONOSE replied that, although he greatly appreciated ERICKSON's sympathy for Japan, he as a Japanese general without instructions could not initiate such negotiations. He added that the Japanese Government had undertaken to fight the war to the last man and that he was obliged to conduct himself accordingly. However, if the Swedish Government itself should initiate such negotiations on humanitarian grounds, he would be delighted to inform Tokyo. They must naturally be kept entirely secret in order to succeed. ERICKSON promised that they would be, adding that they would be handled only through ONOSE.

ONOSE did not notify Tokyo of the result of this conversation. He wished it all cost to avoid giving the impression that a Japanese might have taken the initiative in any negotiations, and hoped that if he waited it would be done openly by Sweden, a neutral state. During the following weeks he heard from ERICKSON that preliminary arrangements were proceeding satisfactorily; however, they were not in touch with each other and six weeks elapsed without further developments.

In July 1945 the Swedish Foreign Office made contact with Japanese Minister OKAMOTO in the same connection. The Minister, his headquarters in Tokyo having been advised, conveyed to the Swedes a Tokyo refusal to enter into the negotiations. Unfortunately for ONOSE, the Swedes had revealed his earlier participation in the matter and he afterwards found out through Japanese friends in the Legation that OKAMOTO had called in the Naval Attache and had spoken violently against ONOSE because of the role he had supposedly played.

(NOTE: Eric ERICKSON, a Swedish industrial promoter who had been placed on the Anglo-American Black List for trading with Germany, approached Allied authorities some time after American entry into the war with a view to ultimate deletion of his name from the Black List, in return for which consideration he offered to aid the Allies in any way possible. Subsequently, from May 1944 to 8 May 1945, he worked for U.S. Government agencies; one of his last services was the furnishing of an account of Japanese peace feelers as they progressed. His version of subject negotiations is dated 8 May 1945 and describes the conversation as having taken place the evening before:

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"(I) invited (ONODERA, HOEISA and KIGUCHI) to a dinner at the Restaurant Foresta (in the course of which) General ONODERA wondered whether or not it would be possible for us to get in touch with Prince CARL Senior, the idea being through his help to suggest to the Allies some workable peace proposition. I suggested that the conversations (at) dinner be dropped and we then went to General ONODERA's home. ONODERA pointed out (that he) had seen enough of the war in Germany to realize that Japan was doomed in the same way that Germany had been doomed by the bombardment of cities and the destruction of places of culture and so forth and he wished if possible to prevent this. This being the case, he asked me whether or not I would be willing to get in touch with Prince CARL Senior with the idea that he approach either the king and/or the Allies to draft some proposition which would be the basis of discussion, pointing out that they would not agree to unconditional surrender since it would mean losing face towards the Chinese.Furthermore he pointed out that he had the power of attorney to carry on such discussion and (that) only he and not the Minister to Sweden or anyone else (had) that right. I suggested that probably it would be better to wait until the return of Prince CARL Junior before taking this matter up with Prince CARL Senior. Not knowing exactly when Prince CARL would return he desired that quicker action be taken.

"The Japanese do not know that I have any contact with the American Legation and my part in this has been entirely that of a neutral Swede.")

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