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MOST SECRET
Report No. 650 - Series "A"

December 27, 1943

RIBBENTROP TALKS WITH OSHIMA

C247749

EXTERNAL(3) FROM MOST SECRET JAPANESE SOURCES IN BERLIN(November 30) AND
D.M.I. TOKYO(December 13) WE HAVE AN ACCOUNT OF TALKS RIBBENTROP HELD WITH
OSHIMA RECENTLY.

D.A.I. The German Foreign Minister had just returned from a week's
D.W.I. holiday and appeared in good spirits. He began by expressing sympathy
for the damage suffered by the Japanese Embassy in air raids, and
thanked the Japanese Ambassador for his decision to remain in Berlin.
Ribbentrop said that he also would continue to stay in Berlin,
although he would like to return to Headquarters.

The German Foreign Minister admitted that the military situation on the Eastern Front appeared serious, but he assured Oshima that proper counter-measures were being taken, from which favourable results would be seen in the near future. Despite their losses around Gomel, the Germans' counterattacks at Kiev were successful; and whereas the Russians were throwing in reserves which had been held for the winter offensive, the German army had not used large numbers of troops as yet, so that Ribbentrop was confident of the future. The main German strategy was to wear down and bleed the Russian army, but this might still take considerable time.

The Foreign Minister minimized the chances of an Allied invasion of the Balkans, although he would not rule it out entirely; he rather felt that the Anglo-American forces would launch a second front in Western Europe at the end of the winter. He indicated the most likely points of attack would be across the English Channel along the Belgian coast. Oshima, however, thought that this area would present too many difficulties, and that a more likely place for the Anglo-Americans to establish a bridgehead would be on peninsular points of the Norman and Breton coasts. Ribbentrop stated that the British were becoming alarmed about the war, and that a state of war-weariness was prevalent, according to the reports of returning war prisoners. (Ribbentrop must have been referring to the recent exchange of British and German prisoners --Editor).

Although Germany was in no position at the moment to deal a blow at the United States, American troops were very inexperienced and the Germans were confident of being able to repel any American forces which might succeed in landing in Europe. As for Britain, Ribbentrop promised that the Germans would destroy London completely and devastate the island. The next six months would be the most critical period of the whole war.

Ribbentrop told Oshima that the following points were settled by the Big Three at the Moscow Conference:

- (1) The three allies were all most anxious to finish the war as soon as possible, and for that reason were going to concentrate on Germany first;
- (2) Britain and the United States agreed to Stalin's demand for a second front;
- (3) Eden was to undertake to put pressure on Turkey with a view to bringing her into the war, but up to the present the Turks had not yielded to this pressure;
- (4) The United States demanded the use of air bases in the Soviet Union. Stalin refused this, saying he would consider the matter once more when the war in Europe was finished.

Oshima stated that after his recent talk with the President and Prime Minister of Slovakia, he felt that the small nations allied to the Axis needed some further assurances from Germany, because they were becoming increasingly anxious about the Eastern Front. Ribbentrop agreed, and added that there was no question of Germany's reaching a compromise