

760d.61/528: Telegram

The Chargé in Finland (Shantz) to the Secretary of State

HELSINKI, December 1, 1939—1 a. m.
[Received November 30—8:15 p. m.]

377. Foreign Office Information Chief just informed press that after unanimous vote confidence by Diet the Government has resigned to make way for a government with which the Russians will negotiate. He asked me to have you relay this information to Moscow at once as Finnish authorities have no means of communication. He said this announcement authorized by Tanner.

SHANTZ

760d.61/540a: Telegram

*The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the Soviet Union (Thurston)*⁹⁰

WASHINGTON, November 30, 1939—[10:18 p. m.]

257. The Chief of the Information Bureau of the Finnish Foreign Office has requested the American Legation in Helsinki to inform the Soviet Government in view of the lack of direct communication between Helsinki and Moscow that after a unanimous vote of confidence by the Diet the Finnish Government has resigned in order to make

⁹⁰ A note at the end of this telegram reads: "Approved by the Secretary, the President, Mr. Dunn and Mr. Moffat." The Assistant Chief of the Division of European Affairs, Loy W. Henderson, wrote on the margin: "A draft of this telegram was dictated by telephone at 10:00 p. m., to the Soviet Ambassador who said he would also telegraph contents to his Gov[ernmen]t. At 10:30 a draft was dictated by telephone to Mr. Sterling at Stockholm who promised to try to relay it by telephone to Moscow."

way for a government with which the Soviet Government will negotiate.

He said that he had been authorized by Tanner, who we understand was Finance Minister of the outgoing government and a leader of the Social Democratic Party, to make this statement.

You are authorized to transmit this information immediately to the appropriate Soviet authorities.

This Government accepts no responsibility except for the transmission of this message.

HULL

760d.61/551 : Telegram

The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Thurston) to the Secretary of State

Moscow, December 1, 1939—2 a. m.
[Received November 30—11:57 p. m.]

978. The first announcement by the Soviet authorities of the opening of hostilities with Finland was made at 12:45 this morning, when a Tass despatch from Leningrad was broadcast over the Moscow radio stations stating that at 2 a. m. on November 30 Finnish forces invaded the Soviet Union on the north shore of Lake Ladoga, but were repulsed. At 3:15 a. m. Finnish infantry attempted to invade Soviet territory on the Karelian Isthmus but were repulsed with machine gun fire, after the Soviet forces had taken prisoner 10 soldiers and 1 non-commissioned officer. Another attack was launched by the Finns at 4 a. m. on the Karelian Isthmus and this too was repulsed.

In view of these events orders were given to the military forces of the Leningrad district to advance into Finland and at 8 a. m. (almost 5 hours previous to my interview with Potemkin at which he professed to have no knowledge of any new developments since the breaking of relations with Finland) the Soviet forces crossed the Finnish frontier on the Karelian Isthmus and "in several other regions." They penetrated from 10 to 15 kilometers into Finnish territory during the day, occupying Metsapirtti and Kuokkala (both small places near the frontier) and advancing toward Terijoki. Moreover, the airdromes at Helsinki and Viborg were bombed.

The foregoing was followed by the reading of a Tass despatch from London stating that President Kallio of Finland had declared that a state of war exists.

THURSTON