

*The Minister in Finland (Schoenfeld) to the Secretary of State*

HELSINKI, December 9, 1940  
—4 p.m.

[Received December 9—3:03  
p.m.]

483. My telegram No. 466, November 14. Soderhjelm who has just returned from Moscow to continue discussion of Petsamo nickel situation on behalf of the company informed me last night that the Russians still demanded transfer of the concession to joint Finnish-Russian company, that the Germans are willing to acquiesce provided they get 60% of the output, that the British agree in principle to proposed transfer to Russian interests provided Germans get none of the output, and that Finnish Foreign Minister has given Germans assurance that their desires regarding output will be met. Russians are not prepared to make any commitment regarding supply of ore to Germans and Molotov says bluntly they want the concession. German generals in northern Norway express readiness to oppose Russian move on Petsamo nickel mine but Soderhjelm says that no one expects German Government to sanction any such action. Ramsay, member of the board of the Petsamo Nickel Company [Canada], left Stockholm yesterday for Berlin to discuss with representatives of I. G. Farben Industrie how present concession can be preserved. Interest of this German company seems to coincide with that of British and American nickel enterprises and to be plainly at variance with interests of German Government. Soderhjelm says Ramsay still believes it may be possible to keep situation in suspense and to avoid an issue which is evidently the line of thought of Prime Minister Ryti as reported in my telegram No. 461, November 6.

Soderhjelm is preparing detailed report for Stanley [president of International Nickel Co., New York, N. Y.] of International Nickel of which he promises me a copy in about two weeks.

He says situation changes almost daily and remains confusing which seems obvious from foregoing.

SCHOENFELD

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*Lähde:* Foreign relations of the United States. Diplomatic papers. 1940. Volume I. General. (ACTIVITIES OF THE SOVIET UNION IN E A S T E R N EUROPE, AND SOVIET RELATIONS WITH THE BELLIGERENT POWERS). Department of State, Historical Division, Bureau of Public Affairs, 1959. (*University of Wisconsin Digital Collections*)