

September 20, 1950

Cable, Gromyko to the Soviet Ambassador, Peking

Citation:

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Summary:

Cable explaining that China and the Soviet Union are getting incomplete information from North Korea. Also discussing how North Korea is doing militarily and China's admission into the UN.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

[handwritten: 20 September 1950]

PEKING, TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR

In connection with your 18 September conversation with Zhou Enlai on the military situation in Korea you should meet with Zhou Enlai and present him with the following at the instructions of Moscow.

"First. It has become clear to us from the conversation between Cdes. Roshchin, Kotov, and Konnov and Zhou Enlai that the Korean friends are poorly informing the Chinese comrades about the military situation and the decisions of the command and Korean government about questions ensuing from the course of military operations. We for our part find such a situation abnormal, and if Cde. Kim Il Sung does not give us regular information, then is necessary to explain this by the weakness of communications with the front, and not the absence of a desire to inform the Chinese comrades.

Unfortunately, Moscow is also receiving fragmentary and tardy information about the military situation in Korea through its ambassador in Pyongyang. As is evident, this is the result of the fact that the Korean People's Army is still young, inexperienced, and the Korean command's communications with the troops is poor, by virtue of which the Korean comrades themselves analyze the situation at the front poorly and with a great delay. It ought to be remembered that the Korean People's Army [inserted by hand: like the Communist Party] is too young and has a total of three months' experience of war. Considering this circumstance one needs to be surprised at those serious successes which the Korean People's Army has had in the war with well-armed foreign troops.

Second. Of course, the loss of Chemulpo is a great minus, but this minus is explained by the fact that the Korean People's Army has to fight not only with the troops of Syngman Rhee but also with British and American forces, with their air forces, and with their navy, which creates new additional difficulties. Without doubt, if the Korean People's Army was dealing only with the domestic forces of Syngman Rhee there would have been no loss of Chemulpo and Korea would long been cleansed of reactionaries.

Third. As regards the opinion of the Chinese comrades presented by Zhou Enlai regarding measures to eliminate the enemy which has landed and the creation of a strong group of forces with withdrawing large forces from the front to the north, we find these views to be correct.

For our part, we think that:

a) the measures being pursued up to now by the command of the Korean People's Army in the region of Seoul tell of an underestimation by it of the entire seriousness of the operation undertaken by the enemy. One cannot assume that, having begun this operation, the enemy will limit himself to only the forces of a first landing party. The presence of a large number of ships allows him to conduct a subsequent reinforcement of the Seoul sector with troops with the goal of cutting off the forces of the Korean People's Army and thereby isolating the main front from the supply bases;

b) in the conditions of the serious situation which has been created in the region of Chemulpo and Seoul the tactic of throwing and using individual battalions and regiments is incorrect and harmful, since it leads only to the destruction of these battalions and regiments piecemeal and does not on any account solve the question as a whole;

c) the elimination of the danger which has been created might be solved by the immediate withdrawal of considerable forces to the region of Seoul from the main front and the creation of a strong front in the region of Seoul north and east of it;

d) in the southeast the troops ought to cross over to an active defense, with the missions of not allowing a breakthrough by the enemy in the direction of Seoul.

We made Cde. Kim Il Sung aware of these views on 18 September through our ambassador in Pyongyang.

Fourth. As regards the possibility of solving the Korean question peacefully, it seems to us that the recent complications of the military situation in Korea in connection with the landing in the region of Chemulpo still further complicate the possibility of settling the Korean question peacefully. Our delegation at the General Assembly session has a directive to persistently defend the proposals of the Soviet Government and the Chinese Government about a peaceful settlement of the Korean question.

Fifth. Like the Chinese comrades, we think that the Americans will continue a policy of not allowing the representatives of People's China in the UN. Our delegation at the General Assembly has a directive to insistently seek the expulsion of the representatives of the Kuomintang group from the UN and allowing the representatives of the People's Republic of China into the United Nations.

Telegraph about the results of your conversation with Zhou Enlai.

At the instructions of headquarters [instantsiya] GROMYKO

[Translator's note: a draft version of the above cable follows with changes inserted by hand]

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