

August 27, 1951
Ciphered Telegram No. 23256, Mao Zedong to Cde.
Filippov [Stalin]

Citation:

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Summary:

A telegram from Mao to Stalin informing the latter of the lack of developments at the armistice talks and accusing the Americans of provocative actions designed to pressure the communist delegation. He discusses the possibility of suspending negotiations and the possible outcomes of such a suspension.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

SECOND MAIN ADMINISTRATION OF THE GENERAL STAFF OF THE SOVIET ARMY

CIPHERED TELEGRAM No. 23256

Copies: Stalin (2), Molotov, Malenkov, Beria, Bulganin

From BEIJING 01:30 27.8.1951

SERIES "G"

To Comrade FILIPPOV [Stalin]

Comrade Filippov!

In view of the fact that the enemy was not in a position to withdraw from the impasse created in the course of the negotiations on the question of a military demarcation line, he has undertaken a whole series of provocative actions.

On August 19 enemy troops, dressed in civilian clothes, made a raid on our security forces in the neutral zone in Gaeseong [Kaesong], as a result of which one man was killed and one was wounded. After an investigation by representatives of both sides, the enemy in justifying himself stated that this was [committed by] partisans from the South Korean partisan detachment active in our region, and therefore he does not take any responsibility for this.

After this, on the night of August 22, one enemy plane dropped nine bombs on the territory of the neutral zone in Kaesong and fired on the house where our delegation is quartered. Although American officers came to investigate that same night, the enemy impudently refused to acknowledge their actions and contended that the fragments and craters found there are not from air force bombs. After this, the enemy, contradicting the former, said that the raid was made by an unidentified plane.

The enemy dared to make these impudent provocations because he considered that our side would not make a breakdown in the negotiations over this. He therefore wanted to use this measure to put pressure on us.

Of course, it is possible [that it was] a South Korean secret service plan to break up the negotiations, but the possibility is excluded that Syngmann Rhee could send a plane to make an attack on Kaesong in the region of the building where the negotiations are being conducted on his own initiative, without agreement from the Americans. Therefore, the provocative acts of the enemy have caused us to make a decisive counter-strike.

We have declared a temporary cessation of the negotiations until the enemy accepts responsibility for what has happened. The negotiations will not be resumed until we receive a satisfactory answer—we'll let them cool their heels. However, we do not want to take the initiative in declaring a breakdown in the negotiations.

We suppose that the enemy will not openly acknowledge his provocative acts.

The dragging out of the negotiations can end in two ways.

First, the delay may bring the negotiations to a breakdown.

We are forcefully preparing ourselves to resist a possible attack by enemy troops directly at the front. We are simultaneously strictly defending the ports on the western and eastern coast of North Korea from landings by the enemy. For the last several days enemy planes have passed through the area of the following cities on the China coast: Qingdao, Shanghai, Hangzhou. This was also done for provocative purposes.

Simultaneously with this, the enemy wanted to reconnoiter the air defense of our coastal regions. With regard to this, we want to strengthen our command in Korea and the air defense of the cities located in the coastal region. In a subsequent telegram I will communicate to you a draft [plan] for sending Soviet military advisers to work with the Chinese volunteer troops in Korea.

Simultaneously with this I will ask you about an additional delivery of artillery armaments.

Second, it is possible that as a result of the delay in the negotiations the enemy will find the means to extricate [himself] from the impasse and an agreement will be reached on the question of a military demarcation line.

At the present time we want to use the period of the break in negotiations for conducting a cold war in order to expose the impudent provocative acts of the enemy. However, we suppose that the enemy will not openly acknowledge his provocations.

If after some period of time the situation will develop so that the enemy wishes to renew the negotiations, then we think that at our own initiative we can propose a way which would lead to a turn in the negotiations and to force the enemy to agree with this.

Comrade Kim Il Sung suggests for the purpose of securing the neutral zone at Kaeseong to ask representatives of neutral states to participate at the conference as monitors and witnesses for the period of negotiations, as a necessary condition for the resumption of the negotiations. Moreover, these representatives can be used in the future as a control organ for the implementation of the ceasefire.

How do you view this? Do you consider this necessary or do you have a better way? I ask your orders on the above.

With greetings.

Mao Zedong.

[...]