

September 29, 1950

Telegram from Shtykov to Gromyko and Stalin

Citation:

"Telegram from Shtykov to Gromyko and Stalin", September 29, 1950, Wilson Center Digital Archive, APRF, fond 45, opis 1, delo 347, listy 46-49.
<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/112688>

Summary:

Shtykov gives an insider's report of a meeting with Kim Il Sung and Pak Heon-yeong, in which they discussed the current desperate state of the KPA, possible advancement of the US forces over the 38th parallel and the extent of the enemy's knowledge of Soviet Union deliveries to North Korea. Kim asks for advice concerning the appeal for military aid that the Political Council of the Worker's Party of Korea plans to send to Stalin. Shtykov comments on the nervousness and desperation of the Korean officials.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

CIPHERED TELEGRAM # 600301/sh

From: PYONGYANG

Sent on 09/29/50 at 20:23 p.m.

Received in Moscow on 09/30/50 at 14:45 p.m.

Received at the 8D/GS on 09/30/50 at 14:50 p.m.

Deciphered by Vakushin on 09/30/50 at 15:50 p.m

Distribution list - 12 copies:

Stalin - 2, Molotov - 1, Malenkov - 1,

Beria - 1, Mikoyan -1, Kaganovich - 1,

Bulganin - 1, Gromyko - 1, 8 MDGS - 1,

MFA - 1, on file - 1.

To: MOSCOW

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR

To Comrade GROMYKO

Instantsia [Highest Authority]

On 29 September I met KIM IL SUNG upon his request.

PAK HÒN-YÒNG was present at the meeting. In the beginning of the conversation KIM IL SUNG asked me whether I was aware of the military situation at the front.

I replied that I did not know the latest one.

Then KIM IL SUNG briefly explained to me the predicament of his troops on the basis of the report of the Front Commander and asked my advice as to what one could do in order to improve the situation at the front. KIM IL SUNG believes that in the wake of the enemy's having occupied the Syarye mountain range and moving into the rear of the Second Army Group the front situation is becoming particularly troublesome. Earlier they hoped that they would be able to withdraw troops in an organized manner. But because of their poor discipline and failure to fulfill orders, the enemy managed to cut off the First Army Group and is moving to cut off the Second Army Group by its breakthrough toward P'UNGGI [BUNKEI] and JIJYON [TISEN].

The situation in Seoul is also murky. His orders notwithstanding, CHOE YONG-GEON [Choe Yong Gon] does not report anything, despite the fact that a line of communications with him is available.

I replied that it was hard for me to advise anything regarding this matter because I did not know the predicament of the KPA troops and their location, however, I would consider it expedient for KIM IL SUNG to take urgent steps to organize defense along the 38th parallel, including immediate deployment of troops at the already prepared fortifications there.

KIM IL SUNG asked me, how do you consider [the situation], will the adversary cross the 38th parallel northward?

I replied that it was not clear yet, but that they had to undertake urgent measures to set up defenses along the 38th parallel.

KIM IL SUNG reiterated his earlier stated desire to unify the country by his own means, he stated that he wanted to form 15 divisions and to continue the struggle,

but it was not clear for him whether the adversary would cross the 38th parallel or not. Should the enemy cross the 38th parallel, they [the North Korean leadership - AM] would be unable to form new troops and they would have no means to render any serious resistance to the enemy.

In this connection, he would like to ask my advice regarding his letter to Comrade STALIN. They discussed this idea and want to send the letter.

I responded that I could give no advice on this matter. At that moment, PAK HÒN-YÒNG joined the conversation and said that they had already drafted a letter, that the WPKs Political Council had discussed it, and they wanted to familiarize me with its content.

I dodged the reading by saying that it was up to the Political Council what its members were going to write in their letter.

On 28.9.50, [A.I.] SHABSHIN, a member of MATVEYEV'S group, told MATVEYEV and myself that at a chance meeting with PAK HÒN-YÒNG the latter told him that the Political Council had discussed and adopted a text of the letter addressed to comrade Stalin, containing a request to aid Korea with air support.

PAK informed SHABSHIN that they had dispatched a letter in reply to MAO ZEDONG which contained a hint about aid.

It was obvious that they [Kim and Pak - AM] were not satisfied with my earlier reply and they did not know what to do with their letter to Comrade STALIN.

KIM IL SUNG and PAK HÒN-YÒNG are nervous. In the present difficult situation one can feel some confusion and hopelessness.

The military situation has worsened dramatically lately. The adversary managed to cut off the entire First Army Group composed of six divisions and two brigades, as well as, by advancing to the vicinity of CH'ÒGJU, to cut off the Second Army Group composed of 7 divisions. Seoul fell. There are no standby troops ready to render any serious resistance to the enemy advancing to the 38th parallel.

New military units being formed in the North advance to the frontline very slowly because the railroads in fact do not function due to the demolished bridges and ruined railway stations, while automobile transport is scarce.

These new units lack armaments. The newly formed units and groupings designated to defend CHEMULP'O, HAEJU, WÒNSAN, and CH'ÒNGJIN have weapons designed for training purposes only.

The political situation is also getting more and more complicated.

The enemy stepped up its activity of dropping paratroopers into the territory of North Korea with the task of gathering intelligence on what deliveries are being shipped from the Soviet Union and to conduct subversive activities. Reactionary forces are raising their heads in North Korea.

S H T Y K O V

30.IX.50

No. 1340

Typed by Lobyseva on 09/30/50 at 16:55 p.m.