

August 13, 1951
Ciphered Telegram No. 22834, Mao Zedong to Cde.
Filippov [Stalin]

Citation:

"Ciphered Telegram No. 22834, Mao Zedong to Cde. Filippov [Stalin]", August 13, 1951, Wilson Center Digital Archive, APRF, f. 45, op. 1, d. 341, ll. 56-58, and RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 341, ll. 56-58. <https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/113006>

Summary:

Telegram from Mao to Stalin relaying the assessment of Li Kenong of the state of the ongoing armistice talks. He states that the US is unwilling to accept the 38th parallel as the demarcation line and that given the state of North Korean forces, they should consider making concessions to American demands in this regard in the interests of ceasing hostilities.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

SECOND MAIN ADMINISTRATION OF THE GENERAL STAFF OF THE SOVIET ARMY

CIPHERED TELEGRAM No. 22834

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

From BEIJING

Received 17:20 13.8.1951

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TO FILIPPOV [Stalin]

Comrade FILIPPOV!

I send you for familiarization the telegram received from Comrade Li Kenong on 12 August 4:00.

"To Comrade Mao Zedong.

1. I received your telegram of 11 August 7:00.

2. At the evening meeting the mistaken views of the enemy became even more intensified. The enemy considers that it is possible through pressure to force us to abandon discussion of the question of the 38th parallel. He has already four times expressed his wish to discuss a proposal about a military demarcation line and a buffer zone on the basis of the present line of the front and the present military situation.

We consider that the goal of this is to avoid defeat in the area of propaganda but also secretly to show that he can alter his proposal. Taking this into account, in our statement in today's meeting we pursued the goal of striking a blow against his unfounded theory of refusal to discuss the question of the 38th parallel, and also tried to ascertain if he intended to abandon his unfounded proposal.

At today's meeting the enemy displayed some interest in the portion of our statement where we tried to ascertain his intention. However, in his statement in the second half of the day the representative of the enemy expressed a strong [sense of] injustice and tried to lay on us the responsibility for the impasse that has been created in the negotiations.

Our statement for tomorrow will be constructed on the basis of your instructions. The goal of the statement will be to smash this [claim of] injustice of the enemy, to unmask his capacity for deception and simultaneously to advance such questions as to force the enemy more clearly to express his position.

The main goal of the statement is once again to underscore that if the enemy does not renounce his unfounded proposal, there will be no progress in the work of the conference. We consider that we can also express our wish to change the proposal about the buffer zone in the area of the 38th parallel as the military demarcation line only in such case as the enemy clearly gives us to understand that he abandons his earlier proposal.

3. After the resumption of the work of the conference, the mistaken views of the

enemy have become even more intensified and the enemy has become even more convinced that we yearn for peace, and therefore it is possible to get concessions from us. All this was possible to foresee.

However, from the entire course of the conference and the general situation outside the conference it is apparent that it is not possible to force the enemy to accept the proposal about the 38th parallel. In the course of several days the enemy on the one hand will put pressure on us and try to force us to be the first to make a concession, and on the other hand will prepare for a possible breakdown in the conference.

Therefore we consider it necessary to work out a definite resolution with regard to the 38th parallel.

If our final goal consists of conducting a struggle for the principle of the determination of the 38th parallel as the military demarcation line and if in this regard we can admit only certain alterations, then we should have in mind a breakdown in the negotiations and we must prepare for this.

In the opposite case we should have some kind of compromise position determined. Our past proposal, it is true, could not foresee the possible development of the present situation, but it is also not possible to win much time through action in accordance with your orders contained in the telegram of 17.7.51 about a concession to the enemy for the purpose of gaining time,

4. We (Li Kenong, Deng Hua, Xie Fang and Qiao Guanhua) suggest that the final goal of the enemy is to cease military operations at the present front line. In relation to this the enemy may allow small alterations.

It is thus necessary for us to decide: to struggle for the 38th parallel and prepare for an end to the negotiations or, avoiding a breakdown in the negotiations, to carry on the struggle for the cessation of military operations and to study the question of the cessation of military operations at the present front line.

Having studied, on the basis of the limited materials we have, the general world situation, the needs of our state and the fact that at present Korea cannot continue the war, we think that it is better to think over the question of cessation of military operations at the present front line than to carry on the struggle for the 38th parallel and bring the conference to a breakdown.

In connection with this it is necessary to take into consideration that it is possible to gain some concessions from the enemy in the discussion of the proposal about cessation of military operations at the present front line.

Thus it will be possible to secure 3-5 years time for preparation of forces.

Of course, if the enemy does not in any way abandon his unfounded proposal, which he is at present insisting on, then we also intend to choose only the path of a schism.

Having limited materials at our disposal, the situation has been studied superficially. We urgently ask your instructions for future actions.

LI KENONG 12.8.51 4:00."

MAO ZEDONG

No. 4061
13.8.51

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