

1950

Speeches/Documents

Title: Telegram Mao Zedong to Zhou Enlai

Author: Mao Zedong

Date: 13-10-1950

Source:

Description: On October 13th, Mao Zedong discussed the issue of sending troops to Korea again with Peng Dehuai, Gao Gang, and other members of the Politburo. They unanimously agreed that even without Soviet air support, and given the large-scale northward advance of US troops across the 38th parallel, China should still send troops to aid Korea

"(I) After discussing with Comrades Gao Gang and Peng Dehuai, as well as other Politburo members, we unanimously agreed that it would be advantageous for our army to be deployed to Korea. In the first phase, we could focus on attacking the puppet troops. Our army is confident in dealing with the puppet troops and can open up base areas in the large mountainous region north of the Wonsan-Pyongyang line. This would inspire the Korean people to reorganize the People's Army. Two months later, the Soviet Volunteer Air Force would arrive. Six months later, we would receive artillery and tank equipment from the Soviet Union, and after training, we could attack the US forces. In the first phase, as long as we can annihilate a few puppet army divisions, the situation in Korea will change in a way that is favorable to us."

(ii) Our adoption of the above-mentioned positive policies is extremely beneficial to China, North Korea, the East and the world; while if we do not send troops and allow the enemy to press to the Yalu River, the reactionary arrogance at home and abroad will increase, which will be detrimental to all parties, especially to the Northeast, where the entire Northeast border defense army will be tied down and the power grid in South Manchuria will be controlled.

(III) In a joint telegram to you and Filippov, it was stated that the Soviet Union could fully meet our needs for aircraft, artillery, tanks, and other equipment. It is unclear whether this would be done through a lease agreement or by purchasing them. As long as a lease agreement can be used and a budget of 200 million US dollars is maintained for economic, cultural, and other construction projects as well as general military and political expenses, our army can confidently enter Korea to wage a protracted war and maintain the unity of the majority of the population.

(iv) As long as the Soviet Union can send volunteer air force to help us fight in Korea within two or two and a half months, and also send escort air force to Beijing, Tianjin, Shenyang, Shanghai, Nanjing, Qingdao and other places, we will not be afraid of the whole air attack. However, we will have to suffer some losses if we encounter US air attack within two or two and a half months.

(v) In conclusion, we believe that we should participate in the war, and we must participate in the war. The benefits of participating in the war are enormous, while the damage of not participating is enormous.

Remark: Zhou Enlai relayed Mao Zedong's telegram to Stalin through Molotov. Stalin responded that the Soviet Union would only send air force units to be stationed in China, and had no intention of entering Korean territory to fight after two or two and a half months.