

June 26, 1954

Cable from Li Kenong, 'Concerning the Content of a Meeting between the Soviet, Chinese, and Vietnamese Delegations'

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Summary:

The Chinese, Vietnamese, and Soviet delegations meet to discuss the division of zones in Indochina.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

[....]

Concerning the Content of a Meeting between the Soviet, Chinese, and Vietnamese Delegations

(Top secret)

Chairman [Mao Zedong], Comrade, and the Central Committee, and convey to Zhou, Zhang, and Wang:

At 5:30 this afternoon, the Soviet, Vietnamese and Chinese delegations met to study the plan prepared by the Vietnamese side concerning division and adjustment of zones in Vietnam and Laos. Concerning Vietnam, the plan introduced by Comrade Pham Van Dong is that the enemy will withdraw from the northern plain and Ping-zhao-tian [sic], and that our troops in Quang Nam area will withdraw from the southern and central region. Our maximum [goal] is the line from Tuy Hoa, Jiao-yao [sic], and Pleiku, along Route 19, to the Vietnamese-Cambodian border (between the 13th and 14th parallels); the medium goal is the 15th parallel, and the minimum is the 16th parallel. At today's meeting with the chief military negotiators from the two sides the French side already introduced the principles that its government would follow concerning the dividing line in Vietnam (that is, withdrawing completely from the north, dividing the line along the 18th parallel, and (using Haiphong only for the purpose of withdrawal); France's military negotiator [Henry] Deltiel will go back to Paris to get instructions today; and the two sides have agreed to discuss the situation in Vietnam next Monday (the 28th). Considering these three developments, the Vietnamese side should not delay putting forward the maximum plan. But in order for negotiations to be carried out smoothly, it is necessary to combine introducing the political, military, and economic situation in the three countries of Indochina with the settlement plans, and present them simultaneously, as this will be more advantageous. Concerning Laos, the division of zones plan presented by Comrade Pham Van Dong focuses on pursuing Sam Neua, Phong Sali, and such new liberation zone as Meng-ke [sic] and Meng-wei [sic] in upper Laos, and strive to expand the Nan-huhe [sic] area (toward the west expand to Muong Souei, and toward the south to Nam Bac), and in the Sam Neua area expand to Pan-pan [sic] and Ta-tong [sic] and to be linked with the liberation zone of Central Laos. In central Laos, strive to maintain the liberation zone on Route 12 neighboring Vietnam, and toward the south expand to Route 9. In lower Laos, at the beginning raise the question of maintaining the liberation zone here, but only in this area concessions can be made. In order to maintain the integrity of the liberation zone in upper Laos, at the last stage concessions can also be made regarding the liberation zone in central Laos. In the meantime, Pham [Van Dong] contends that in Laos the question of a division of zones should be solved in connection with the political questions there. If a coalition can be established, then it is not necessary for adjustment or withdrawal to be conducted in various zones, and for special system to be maintained in the administration of our zones. Then Comrade [K.V.] Novikov of the Soviet Union [Foreign Ministry Southeast Asian Department] pointed out that Pham says that he has no mature ideas; in the meantime, he has no clear ideas on the plan for division of zones. (It seems) as if he agrees to Premier Zhou's opinion, that is, the bottom line is to adhere to maintaining a part of upper Laos, neighboring on Vietnam and China (the whole of Sam Neua, Phong Sali, and a small part of Luang Prabang); however, Pham also wants to expand the liberation zone in upper Laos in exchange for withdrawing from middle Laos. Therefore, it is difficult to discuss to make decisions, so he asks Pham to have further studies and then come up with concrete ideas, and three sides will have another discussion at 11:00 am of next Monday. Before the military affairs conference gets down to discussing the zone division issues in Laos, the two sides should first examine and correct the maps reflecting the current status, and will then enter the discussions about a settlement. This way, (1) we will know more about the situation and thus put forward adjusted plans, and (2) we will get more time to wait for the decisions of the meetings in Nanning.

Li Kenong
26 June 1954
(dispatched on the 27th)

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