

May 30, 1954

**Telegram, Zhou Enlai to Mao Zedong and Others,
Regarding the Situation at the Eighth Restricted
Session**

Citation:

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Translated by Chen Zhihong.

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Summary:

Zhou reports on the restrictive session on Indochina. Participating countries agreed to a three-point proposal regarding peace in Indochina.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Chairman [Mao Zedong], Comrade [Liu] Shaoqi, and report to the Central Committee:

(1) At the restricted session on the Indochina issue yesterday, the three-point proposal concerning the meeting between the representatives of the two military commands at Geneva (see previous telegram [not printed]) was passed.

(2) During the discussion, the other side continuously stressed that they preserved their own different opinions toward the Laos and Cambodia issue, stating that "the concentration of formal forces in Vietnam should not be detrimental to the political and economic integrity of Vietnam." [US Under Secretary of State General Walter Bedell] Smith particularly stated that the conference should have the right to make new decisions over the proposals put forward by the military representatives of the two sides on the Vietnam and Laos questions.

(3) Pham Van Dong pointed out in his presentation that for the purpose of reaching a ceasefire it was absolutely necessary to adjust zones, and he exposed that America's opposition to division of zones and America's emphasis upon unification were actually excuses used for its attempt to block progress of the conference. Pham requested that the conference adopt our comprehensive proposal, as the conference would have to achieve agreement on the general principles concerning terminating all hostile activities. Pham also explained the importance of the on-site contact between the military representatives of the two sides, taking the on-site agreement reached at Dien Bien Phu on the issue of retrieving sick and wounded soldiers as an example. He pointed out that, despite the fact that the other side unilaterally tore up the agreement and bombarded Route 41, due to the efforts of our side, altogether 858 wounded soldiers (of 21 nationalities) of the French expeditionary Army had been retrieved by 28 May. Thus Pham delivered a satisfactory explanation on the wounded soldiers issue at the conference.

(4) Molotov affirmed in his presentation the items on which the conference had reached agreement to a different degree. He began with explaining that the first step toward restoring peace in Indochina should be that all troops of both sides in the confrontation should stop fighting simultaneously throughout all of Indochina, and that this was the exact spirit of the communique from the [1954] Berlin Conference and the task of this conference. Molotov explained the six points-point by point-introduced in my comprehensive proposal, and expressed his support to them.

(5) Toward the end of the discussion, as a resolution was about to be passed, Smith outrageously stated: "The government of the United States authorizes me neither to accept nor to object to the principles of the British proposal." And he also said that he reserved the right to explain to the press the attitude of the US delegation. However, because the atmosphere in the conference hall favored passing the resolution, and also because Molotov's handling of the session was very good, Smith's statement only embarrassed himself and also revealed contradictions between Britain and the United States. Eden expressed then and there that he was not happy with Smith's statement.

Zhou Enlai
30 May 1954