

December 17, 1957

Cable from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Public Security, and Central Overseas Chinese Committee, 'Views on Handling the Issue of Ethnic Koreans in the Northeast Illegally Crossing the Border to Korea'

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Summary:

The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs informs the Chinese Embassy in North Korea and the Public Security Offices in Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang Provinces of China and North Korea's policies regarding illegal border crossings.

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[...]

[To the Chinese] Embassy in [North] Korea and the Public Security Offices in Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang Provinces; copy to the [Provincial] Foreign Affairs Offices:

Regarding Comrade Qiao Xiaoguang's request for instructions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on how to handle illegal border crossings by Korean residents of the northeast region into [North] Korea, after studying the issue, we believe that [we should] handle the issue based on the principle that border personnel from both sides [China and North Korea] will leniently approve legal border crossings, while severely punishing illegal border crossings. Therefore:

1. For residents who have already illegally crossed into [North] Korea, in principle we should still mobilize them to return to China in accordance with the spirit of the Sino-Korean Agreement. If after mobilization, some individuals are still unwilling to return to China and the [North] Korean side consents to their remaining [in Korea], they do not need to be repatriated and can be issued an emigrant passport following an investigation and education by the [Chinese] Embassy. If they request to renounce their People's Republic of China citizenship, then you can also process this according to the principles of renouncing [Chinese] citizenship.
2. For [North] Korean citizens who have illegally crossed the border into China, we should, in principle, repatriate them. If it is indeed inconvenient for some of these people to return, then they can continue their residency [in China] after the approval of the [North] Korean side. If the necessity arises in the future, then they can be mobilized to return to [North] Korea.
3. If an illegal border-crosser has committed a crime or has a pending civil or criminal case in their home country, both sides [China and North Korea] should absolutely repatriate them.
4. From today onward, both China and [North] Korea should continue to strictly comply with the relevant provisions of the "Record of the Joint Meeting on Handling Affairs along the Sino-Korean Border" from the June 1955 conference of the Chinese and [North] Korean Public Security and Internal Affairs [ministries]; each side should take all the necessary measures to prevent and stop residents from illegally crossing the border. People who illegally cross the border should be punished severely. However, in order to curb the continuation of illegal border crossings and to adequately address the request of the Korean side, in the future, [we should], in principle, leniently approve applications to go to [North] Korea from ethnic Koreans in China. As long as the applicant does not have any political issues or a pending civil or criminal case, all applications which are justified should all be approved. At the same time, [we should] ask the [North] Korean side to take all necessary measures and operate in close coordination [with us].

At the appropriate time, please inform the [North] Korean side of the above points. If you have any views, please inform us.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Public Security
Central Overseas Chinese Committee

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