

May 19, 1954

**Telegram, Zhou Enlai to Mao Zedong and Others,
Regarding the Second Restricted Session**

Citation:

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Summary:

Zhou Enlai reports to the CCP on the second restricted session on Indochina and propaganda efforts of the Chinese and Russians. During the Indochina session, the US, France, and Britain disagreed with China, Russia, and the DRV on whether or not the Laos and Cambodia issues should be discussed separately from the Vietnam issues.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

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

(1) The second restricted session on Indochina, held yesterday [18 May], devoted all its time to the discussion on whether the question concerning Laos and Cambodia should be dealt with separately. The United States, Britain, and France and three... [original unreadable] countries stood together to emphasize that the Cambodia and Laos questions should be dealt with separately from the Vietnam question. There are no French troops in Cambodia and Laos, so only after the withdrawal of the Vietnamese People's Army will the issue be resolved. We absolutely cannot agree to this point. Pham Van Dong, Molotov, and I all spoke to rebut this point, pointing out that the armed struggle for national liberation by the Cambodian and Laotian people was caused by the military intervention of France. The resistance governments in Cambodia and Laos have their own troops. Therefore an armistice means that a ceasefire should occur on the territory of their own motherlands. There exists no such "issue" of withdrawing from Cambodia and Laos. Peace should be restored in all of Indochina, and peace should not just be restored in Vietnam. The questions involving the three countries cannot be discussed by separating them. The two sides debated for three hours and [the session] was adjourned without any result. The other side attempts to use this issue as the first issue to test our attitude. Before the end of the meeting, Molotov as chair [of the session] proposed that next day the Korea issue should be discussed. However, Eden said that he was afraid that an impression would be created that the discussion on the Indochina issue failed immediately after its beginning, so he contended that discussion should be continued on the Indochina issue on the 19th. Our side has agreed to this.

(2) In the previous several days the other side has used the sick and wounded soldiers at Dien Bien Phu as a means for political blackmail and has conducted a series of slanderous propaganda [activities]. To deal with this, [DRV Ambassador to the PRC] Hoang Van Hoan hosted a press conference on the 18th to publicize the facts and to expose the plots of the other side. Then the French delegation was questioned [on this issue] at a press conference it hosted. In particular, [the fact] that the French military resumed bombardment on the 18th and killed fifteen French prisoners has caused heated repercussions. Consequently, Pravda has published commentaries about this in the past few days. We are also organizing the reporters of the Xinhua News Agency to cooperate in our propaganda [efforts] and expose [the French]. In the propaganda battle, so long as we are able to command the material in a timely manner, we should be able to expose continuously the plots of the other side and to master the initiative.

(3) The French delegation has appointed a person to contact the Vietnamese delegation. The contact will begin today.

Zhou Enlai
19 May 1954