

September 20, 1950

Telegram from Zhou Enlai to Ni Zhiliang

Citation:

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Summary:

China approves of Kim Il Sung's idea of fighting a protracted war, and gives advice on military strategies that will make a protracted war possible.

Credits:

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Chinese

Contents:

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Translation - English

关于朝鲜人民军作战方针的电报^[1]

(一九五〇年九月二十日)

倪志亮^[2]同志：

九月十八日电悉。请转告金日成^[3]同志：我们认为你的长期作战思想是正确的。朝鲜军民的英勇是令人感佩的。估计敌人在仁川方面尚有增加可能，其目的在于向东延伸占领，切断朝鲜南北交通，并向三八线进逼。而人民军必须力争保住三八线以北，进行持久战方有可能。因此，请考虑在坚持自力更生、长期奋斗的总方针下如何保存主力便于各个歼灭敌人的问题。在目前主力暴露于敌人阵前，相持不下，消耗必多，而敌人如果占领汉城^[4]则人民军后路有被切断的危险。因此，人民军主力似宜集结机动，寻敌弱点，分割歼灭敌人。在作战上，必须集中兵力，每一次作战以少数兵力及火力，分路钳制多数敌人，而以多数兵力（三至五倍）及火力（二倍以上）的绝对优势，围歼被我分割的少数敌人（例如一个团）。作战最忌平分兵力，最忌只能击溃或阻止敌人而不能歼灭敌人有生力量。只要能歼灭敌人有生力量，那怕每次只歼灭敌人一个团一个营也好，积少成多，就可逐

步将敌人削弱下去，而利于长期作战。如果美军火力配备强，一时难于突入分割，则宜考虑先以李承晚〔5〕伪军为对象，集中主力，每次歼灭其一二个团，每月歼灭其一二个师，半年后即可尽歼伪军，翦去美帝爪牙，使美帝陷于孤立，然后各个歼灭之。在持久战的原则下，必须充分地估计到困难方面，一切人力物力财力的动员和使用，必须处处作长期打算，防止下级发生孤注一掷的情绪。敌人要求速决害怕持久，而我人民军则速决既不可能惟有以持久战争取胜利。以上所陈，系站在朋友和同志的立场提出供你们参考。是否有当，尚祈考虑见复。

周恩来

九月二十日

根据手稿刊印。

注 释

〔1〕 本篇用仿宋体字排印的是毛泽东加写和改写的文字。用楷体字排印的是刘少奇加写和改写的文字。

〔2〕 倪志亮，当时任中国驻朝鲜大使。

〔3〕 金日成，当时任朝鲜民主主义人民共和国首相。

〔4〕 汉城，即首尔。

〔5〕 李承晚，当时任大韩民国总统。

Comrade Ni Zhiliang:

This is to acknowledge receipt of the September 18 telegram. Please tell Comrade Kim Il Sung: We think your idea of fighting a protracted war is correct. The courage of the North Korean army and masses is admirable. Enemy numbers will probably increase at Inchon, the purpose of which is to extend their lines to the east and cut North Korea's north-south transportation lines and also press on towards the 38th Parallel. The People's Army must do all it can to hold the area north of the 38th Parallel; [only in this way] will it be possible to carry on a protracted war. Therefore, please think about the question of how to preserve [your] main forces under the general policy of persisting in relying on one's own efforts and fighting for a long period of time so that the enemy can be destroyed one by one. At present, [your] main force directly faces the enemy's positions and both sides hold their ground. This means much consumption [of resources.] And if the enemy seizes Seoul, there is the danger that the People's Army's route of retreat will be cut off. Therefore, it seems appropriate that the main force of the People's Army should concentrate [but maintain] mobility, seek the enemy's weak points and destroy the enemy part by part. In battles, [you should] concentrate military strength. In every battle, pin down large numbers of the enemy in divided branches with less military strength or firepower while using more military strength [three to five times] and firepower [at least twice] with absolute superiority to surround and annihilate fewer enemies (e.g. one regiment) that have been divided by us. In battles, division of one's forces should be avoided; most of all to be avoided is putting the enemy to flight or blocking the enemy instead of destroying the enemy's effective strength. So long as you can wipe out the enemy's effective strength, annihilating only one regiment or one battalion is still good. A big victory results from the accumulation of small victories. They will progressively weaken the enemy and are beneficial in protracted war. If the US army's firepower and equipment is strong and it is temporarily difficult to charge in and break it up, it is suitable to consider targeting the Syngman Rhee puppet army [by] concentrating [your] main force and annihilating one or two regiments every time, [thereby] annihilating one or two divisions every few months. In half a year, the puppet army can be destroyed completely. These lackeys of American imperialism will be cut off, which will isolate the American imperialists and then [you can] annihilate them separately. Under the principles of protracted war, [one] must fully take into account the difficult side. Long term planning must be made in all aspects of mobilization and usage of manpower, material resources and financial resources and lower-level subordinates must be made to avoid the mentality of putting all one's eggs in one basket. The enemy seeks a quick decision [in the war] and is afraid of it becoming protracted, while our People's Army should avoid quick decisions and can only gain victory in a protracted war. As friends and comrades, we provide the above for your reference. Correct or not, [I] request [your] further consideration and reply.

Zhou Enlai

September 20