

July 7, 1952

Cable, Vyshinsky to Molotov

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Summary:

Vyshinsky reports the proposals of a Chinese-Korean delegation concerning an armistice in Korea and Korean POW's.

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to Cde. V. M. MOLOTOV

[Handwritten at the bottom of the first page: N623-VK 7 July 1952]

1. The new proposals of the Chinese-Korean delegation concerning an armistice in Korea made on 3 July 1952 touch on the issue of POWs.

Before the meeting which was held on 3 July the Chinese-Korean side advocated their following position in negotiations on the issue of POWs:

"We propose the adoption of the following agreement about the principles of the settlement which contains specific conditions regarding repatriation while adhering to the general principles described in our proposal of 21 March:

a) All non-Korean POWs of the United Nations command and all Korean POWs whose place of residence was located in areas of your side which the Korean People's Army and the Chinese people's volunteers have should be repatriated; all POWs who are Chinese people's volunteers of non-Korean nationality and all Korean POWs whose place of residence was in areas of our side which the United National armed forces have should be repatriated.

b) All Korean POWs should be repatriated who the Korean People's Army and Chinese people's volunteers have and whose place of residence is in areas of our side and also all Korean POWs who the United Nations command has and whose place of residence is in areas of our side with the exception of those who wish to return to the place of their original residence; there is no need to repatriate the latter".

The above proposal is contained in the draft Agreement about the principle of settling the issue of the repatriation of POWs which was offered by the Chinese-Korean side at a meeting of staff officers on 27 March 1952. (TASS Far East Official Information Bulletin of 10 May 1952, pages 1-3d).

On 3 July 1952 General Nam Il, the head of the Korean-Chinese delegation, made a new proposal about the issue of POWs. The main provisions of Nam Il's 3 July statement come down to the following:

The main contentious issue, declared Nam Il, is the following: the results of our inspection of the lists of POWs are not in conformity with the principle about which we have agreed. We have always thought that inasmuch as both sides guarantee the non-involvement of POWs in the Korean War after repatriation in accordance with paragraph 52, the prisoners of both sides "should just be permitted to return home to a peaceful life". Thus, the prisoners of both sides should be reclassified and the lists of POWs verified, taking the nationality and place of residence of the prisoners into consideration. This would simplify the repatriation of all POWs, as was provide for in paragraph 51, that is, all foreign armed personnel (of the armed forces of the United Nations and the Chinese people's volunteers) taken prisoner by any side should be repatriated; all Korean armed personnel taken prisoner by any side (of the South Korean forces and the Korean People's Army) whose residence is in areas of the other side should be repatriated, but personnel whose residence is in areas of the side that took him prisoner might be permitted to return home directly and there is no need to repatriate him. (TASS Far East Official Information Bulletin of 4 July 1952, pages 17-20d).

This statement was made by Nam Il in accordance with an instruction from Mao Zedong about which Cde. Razuvayev informed us in telegram № 2118.

2. It follows from the above that from 27 March to 3 July the Chinese-Korean delegation had insisted that after the conclusion of an armistice:

- a) all POWs of Korean nationality should be repatriated;
- b) Korean POWs whose place of residence is on the territory of the opposing side should be returned to their place of residence;
- c) Korean POWs whose place of residence is on the territory of the side that took them prisoner should be left on that territory if they wish it.

On 3 July the Chinese-Korean delegation offered a proposal so that Korean POWs would be returned to their place of residence regardless of their wishes.

The position of the Chinese-Korean delegation with regard to the POWs of non-Korean nationality remained as before.

Thus, the new proposal of the Chinese-Korean delegation affects only Korean POWs and intends that Korean POWs should be returned to enemy territory if their place of residence is there but that all Korean POWs who lived on the territory of the side which took them prisoner before mobilization should be left on that territory, released, and sent home.

[signed] A. A. VYSHINSKY

7 July 1952

Authenticated: V. Vasil'yeva

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1 - to Cde. Molotov

2 - to file