

April 28, 1954

**Telegram, Mao Zedong to Peng Dehuai and Huang
Kecheng**

Citation:

"Telegram, Mao Zedong to Peng Dehuai and Huang Kecheng", April 28, 1954, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, ed., Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao (Mao Zedong's Manuscripts since the Founding of the People's Republic of China), vol. 5 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1991), p. 90. Translated by Chen Jian. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/121145>

Summary:

Mao Zedong writes to comrades Peng Dehuai and Huan Kecheng informing them of the dangers that face the communists in Vietnam. There is a risk of enemy movement near the transportation line in the rear area which could force troops out of Dien Bien Phu.

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Transcript - Chinese
Translation - English

彭德怀、黄克诚同志：

目前越南最大可能发生的危险，似乎不在奠边府以南，而在我们军的后方交通线。如敌以两个伞兵营降落在我后方交通线上最扼要的地点，筑堡据守起来，整个交通将为之切断，如我军不能迅速歼灭此敌，旷日持久，奠边府我军即有被迫撤退之可能。军委去电已估计到敌有袭占交通线可能，但强调不够，并以之与琅勃拉邦方向并列。请你们再加考虑，叫越方迅调必要兵力位于适当地区，专门对付此种意外事变，以免奠边府作战功亏一篑。

毛泽东

四月廿八日

Comrades Peng Dehuai and Huan Kecheng:

It seems that the biggest possible danger in Vietnam now exists not in areas south of Dien Bien Phu, but in the transportation line in our rear area. If the enemy uses two parachute battalions to land at the most crucial points in the transportation line in our rear area, and construct strongholds to defend these point and thus interrupting the whole of our transportation system; and if our troops cannot eliminate the enemy quickly and allow the fight to become a prolonged one, it is possible that our troops at Dien Bien Phu might be forced to withdraw. The telegram by the Military Commission has noticed the possibility of the enemy occupying our transportation line, but the emphasis of this issue is not sufficient and this question is only listed together with (the problem existing) in the Luang Prabang direction. Please give this issue reconsideration, and ask the Vietnamese side to quickly deploy the force that is needed in the proper area, which should be specifically for dealing with such a sudden change of development, so that the operations at Dien Bien Phu will not fall short of success because of lack of sufficient effort.

Mao Zedong

April 28