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Speeches/Documents

Title: The Korean Cease-fire Negotiations and Making Peace with Japan

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Description: Speech to the Central People's Government Council by Zhou Enlai emphasizing the need to remain steadfast during negotiations with America on the Korean issue, in order to assure that the treaty is favorable to China and Korea. Notes that aiding Korea and resisting the United States is the only way to prevent Western dominance of East Asia.

ZHOU ENLAI's Speech to the Central People's Government Council 1
The Korean Cease-fire Negotiations and Making Peace with Japan
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1. US imperialism fears both long-term war and enduring peace.

Over a year of war and two months of [cease-fire] negotiations in Korea have proved that [the Americans] fear a high-casualty, long-term [war] as well as the development of the peace movement and détente [songjin] at home and abroad. Thus, [US Secretary of Defense George C.] Marshall said that after ten [sic] years of tension, the Korean War should end.

Now that truce negotiations are being held, why do the American imperialists so shamelessly continue to carry out provocations to disrupt the negotiations? They attempt to delay the negotiations by displaying their strength, creating tension and pressuring us in order to reach a cease- fire on favorable terms. But there is also a possibility that the negotiations will collapse and the war will escalate.

2. If the negotiations break down and the war escalates, is it equivalent to the adoption of MacArthur's adventurist policy?

We cannot say that there is no risk of adventurism. If American imperialism does so, there is no doubt that, facing opposition at home and abroad, they will fail.

But viewed overall, at present American imperialism's provocations and adventures are not strategic, but tactical or campaign- level. Various conditions restrict it.

Furthermore, should the negotiations break down, people will continue to die and the war will be protracted. Military preparations will deteriorate and flaws of every kind will increase.

This will not only fail to solve problems, but threaten [the American] election next year and their leading position in the reactionary world.

All this demonstrates American imperialism's frenzied nature [*fengkuangxing*] and opportunism.

3. Therefore, at present negotiations are stalled, not settled.

At the end of all delays, we must keep our eye on the bottom line [*fexiaode*]. Since American imperialism cannot obtain a unilaterally favorable truce, it will either cause a breakdown in negotiations as discussed above or accept a just and reasonable truce. Stalling the negotiations until after the San Francisco Conference [on a peace treaty with Japan] is crucial.

When delays cannot be delayed further, either they'll put the ir cards on the table [*tanpai*] or change direction [*zhuanwan*].

4. We fear neither war nor peace. We recognize that the anti-American struggle is long-term and that American imperialism wants a peace by threats, a humiliating peace, a peace of aggression.

Otherwise, they'll undertake this goal through war. Only if we are not afraid of war can we have peace. We are willing to settle the Korean, Far East and world problems peacefully, but we must not fear righteous, anti-aggressor wars for that is the only possibility of obtaining a lasting peace. Furthermore, only by training in just war can we become a mainstay of world peace. Through this experience, our strength becomes daily greater. An enemy who has suffered [*chiku*] thus, will not carelessly play with fire again. The possibility of preventing war will then increase further.

5. Therefore, only if we do not fear the [negotiations'] breakdown can the armistice be reached. The peace we strive for is an agreement on just and reasonable terms. Only by not fearing collapse, while not giving cause for collapse ourselves, can we force the opponent's acceptance of such conditions. And that is but the first step towards peacefully solving the Korean question. Solving the whole Far East problem will be a long-term and complicated struggle.

6. The American-English Japanese Peace Treaty is not acceptable and the San Francisco Conference is not recognized.

The treaty itself is hostile to China and the USSR, dividing the countries that previously fought Japan. [The treaty] colonizes Japan, arms Japan, which is detrimental to the Japanese people and threatens the peace of Asia and the Pacific.

Like the North Atlantic Treaty and the arming of West Germany, the treaty with Japan speeds up preparations for world war and the enslavement of the world's people. Its contradictions and difficulties will facilitate the development of the world people's peace movement.

7. The strongest weapon against the American- English Japanese peace treaty is the strengthening of the "resist America, aid Korea" movement and the world peoples peace movement.

The "resist America, aid Korea" [movement's] three main tasks should be carried out to support the long-term struggle. To strengthen the world peace movement, we should first strengthen the Asian peace movement.

This time the countries that oppose the American-English Japanese peace treaty will perhaps have two kinds of approaches. One is to attend the San Francisco conference to uphold one's own opinions and to struggle for them. The other is to refuse to sign this peace treaty and therefore refuse to attend the conference. We should welcome both attitudes. The USSR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia belong to the former group, while India and Burma [Myanmar] belong to the latter. This opposition line-up hit American imperialism hard. We were in contact with the USSR, India, Burma, and Indonesia. It is possible to strengthen the Asian peace movement. After the American-English Japanese peace treaty has been signed, we will consider our approach to Japan.

As for the diplomatic line- up, aside from the development of the peace and democracy camp, we should separate Asian and Arab countries from the influence of the imperialist war group. At least we should get them to adopt neutrality. It will be better if we can get them to waver for this could shake the war group itself, widening the influence of the world peace and democracy camp. This is of great significance to us.

[Source : Zhou Enlai junshi wenxuan [Selected Military Writings of Zhou Enlai], v. 4 (Beijing, 1997), pp. 234-237; translated from Chinese by David Wolff.]

Note

1 This organ brought together 56 top government leaders, including patriotic front figures from outside the CCP.

Therefore, this was not a foreign policy decision-making body per se. Zhou is presenting decisions in an analytical format, probably for discussion and certainly for execution.