

September 24, 1949

Politburo Decision to Confirm the Following Directive to the Soviet Ambassador in Korea

Citation:

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Summary:

The Soviet Politburo argues that North Korea is not ready to launch a successful overthrow of the South Korean regime and suggests North Korea should concentrate its efforts on developing partisan groups in South Korea.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

- English Translation

Copies to Malenkov, Molotov, Gromyko, Shtykov, Beria, Mikoyan, Kaganovich, Bulganin.

Commission Comrade Shtykov to meet with Kim Il Sung and Pak Heon-yeong [Pak Hon Yong] and, strictly adhering to the text given below, to declare the following:

In connection with the questions raised by you in conversation with me on August 12 of this year, I received an order to transmit to you the opinion of Moscow on the questions touched on by you. Your proposal to begin an attack by the Korean Peoples' Army on the south calls forth the necessity of giving a precise evaluation of the military as well as the political sides of this question.

From the military side it is impossible to consider that the Peoples' Army is prepared for such an attack. If not prepared for in the necessary manner, the attack can turn into a prolonged military operation, which not only will not lead to the defeat of the enemy but will also create significant political and economic difficulties for North Korea, which, finally, cannot be permitted. Since at present North Korea does not have the necessary superiority of military forces in comparison with South Korea, it is impossible to acknowledge that a military attack on the south is now completely prepared for and therefore from the military point of view it is not allowed.

From the political side, a military attack on the south by you is also not prepared for. We, of course, agree with you that the people are waiting for the unification of the country and in the south they, moreover, are waiting for liberation from the yoke of the reactionary regime. However, until now very little has been done to raise the broad masses of South Korea to an active struggle, to develop the partisan movement in all of South Korea, to create there liberated regions and to organize forces for a general uprising. Meanwhile, only in conditions of a peoples' uprising which has begun and is truly developing, which is undermining the foundations of the reactionary regime, could a military attack on the south play a decisive role in the overthrow of the South Korean reactionaries and provide the realization of the task of the unification of all Korea into a single democratic state. Since at present very little has been done to develop the partisan movement and prepare for a general uprising in South Korea, it is also impossible to acknowledge that from a political side an attack by you on the south has been prepared.

As concerns a partial operation to seize Ongjin peninsula and the region of Kaesong, as a result of which the borders of North Korea would be moved almost to Seoul itself, it is impossible to view this operation other than as the beginning of a war between North and South Korea, for which North Korea is not prepared either militarily or politically, as has been indicated above.

Moreover, it is necessary to consider that if military actions begin at the initiative of the North and acquire a prolonged character, then this can give to the Americans cause for any kind of interference in Korean affairs.

In view of all that has been stated it is necessary to acknowledge that at present the tasks of the struggle for the unification of Korea demand a concentration of maximum effort, in the first place, to the development of the partisan movement, the creation of liberated regions and the preparation of a general armed uprising in South Korea in order to overthrow the reactionary regime and successfully resolve the task of unifying all Korea, and secondly, to further strengthen in every way the Peoples' Army of Korea.