The directive of People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, V.M. Molotov, for the London session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, dated 5 September 1945

[…]

Notify Byrnes that while your report on his proposal for the USSR and the USA to sign a treaty on prevention of German aggression[[1]](#footnote-1) has not yet been passed on to the Soviet Government, you have received instructions from the Soviet Government to declare to Byrnes that, according to the Soviet Government, it is probably time to conclude a treaty against future Japanese aggression. Tell Byrnes, on your own behalf, that the Soviet Government thinks that the signing of an anti-Japanese treaty is a serious and timely issue, as Japan, by virtue of its capitulation terms, has retained certain serious opportunities, which are not available to Germany now and which might facilitate future Japanese aggression.

Regarding the Soviet Government’s reply to Byrnes’ proposal to sign an anti-German pact, tell him you are expecting a reply to be received shortly.

If during your conversation Byrnes asks you what kind of opportunities for aggression Japan has been left with, please find below the following brief for your information:

First. Japanese divisions on the main islands and their officers are not taken prisoners by the Americans, but they are demobilised and allowed to go home; the armament of these divisions is left in warehouses guarded by the Japanese. This means that Japan retains trained soldiers and the entire officer cadre.

Second. The same is happening in the Japanese Navy; that is, Japan retains privates and naval officer cadre.

Over a million and a half privates and officers have been demobilised to date.

All of this is being done without consultation with us, in spite of the fact that we believe these tactics towards the Japanese to be a very risky business, which may lead to big opportunities for future Japanese aggression.

You need to tell Byrnes that we do not share such tactics and so do not want to be responsible for it before the global public opinion.

[FPARF, f. 0431/I, inv. 1, fold. 1, file 1, pp. 26–27]

Keywords: post-war Germany, Japan, inter-allied relations

1. The reference is to Byrne’s proposal for the conclusion of a ‘Twenty-Five-Year Treaty for the Disarmament and Demilitarization of Germany’, which was first voiced at a session of the Council of Foreign Ministers in London in September 1945 and developed by him later. See: Roberts G. Moscow’s Campaign against the Cold War, 1948 – 1955 // Visions of the End of the Cold War in Europe, 1945 – 1990 / Ed. by F. Bozo, M.-P. Rey, B. Rother and N.P. Ludlow. N.Y., 2012. P. 49. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)