Telegram from the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, V.M. Molotov, to the Chairman Council of the People's Commissars, I.V. Stalin, 19 September 1945

Copy.

Strictly confidential.

NOT IN ORDER

I want to mention some preliminary results of the Council of Foreign Ministers and to make suggestions for the future.

1. No final decisions have been made on any agenda item. It is somewhat unnerving to our partners, but as we all know, the first half or the first three quarters of the time of such international conferences are taken up with disagreements and feeling out each other's positions. The time has now come to prepare some of the decisions that will probably take place during the restricted-attendance meetings between the heads of delegation. I think, this will be a specifically American initiative. We have many opportunities to use the situation in these negotiations in our favour.

2. We are actively participating in the discussions of issues mostly important for the allies - the peace treaty with Italy. We did not agree to a number of important points, partly because we essentially do not agree with the Anglo-American position - for example, on Italian colonies - and partly for tactical reasons, because we want to first figure out their position on the question of peace treaties with the satellites.

Now we have secured for ourselves these opportunities.

3. Some of our achievements:

a) The Yugoslavs are invited to the Council on the issue of the border with Italy;

b) Greece did not get an opportunity to address the Council, though Damaskinos[[1]](#footnote-1) has long been residing in London;

c) The agenda included our questions about reparations from Germany and on the repatriation of Soviet citizens;

g) The British sent their suggestions about our projects regarding the peace treaties with the satellites, with no mention of the nature of the governments in those countries;

d) The creation of a joint secretariat (contrary to Britain’s unilateral proposal on this subject) matters to us, considering the future work of the Council of Ministers.

4. It is the Americans who set the tone among our partners. They agreed with the British on many issues. The French and the Chinese follow close behind them. There have been attempts to intimidate us, as though the four delegations themselves can resolve these problems. But nothing came of this, because without the USSR, they in fact cannot decide on anything. There will be bargaining and an intensive search for compromises.

5. Due to the fact that the discussion of a peace treaty with Italy at the Council of Ministers is coming to an end, please confirm or edit the following terms for our work in London in case we are confronted by our allies with an unacceptable position regarding the treaties with the satellites:

a) On the question of the Italian colonies, do change anything in the decision adopted by the Council: the question has been passed over to the deputies without sufficiently specific directives;

b) Postpone the issue of the Dodecanese Islands under the pretext put forward by us, that this question requires an examination (it is good in the sense that it is a blow to the present Greek government);

c) On the issue of the demilitarization of Sicily, Sardinia, Pantelleria and the Pelagie Islands remove our reservation (that we are still able to reconsider our agreement on this);

d) Reaffirm our position – to not object to the establishment of the union inspectorate in Italy, which is to oversee the implementation of restrictive measures on the military for a period until Italy’s acceptance into the United Nations; (such a proposal is contained in the Britain’s proposals for a peace treaty with satellites);

e) With regard to reparations, keep to our proposal on the establishment of solid figures in US dollars (in kind). In case of disagreement with the allies, refer the matter to deputies, following the report of the second session of the Council of Ministers;

f) On the Italian-Yugoslav border, we will obviously not agree. However, as this question is still under discussion, I will expand further on this issue in my writing.

I await your reply.

MOLOTOV

[RSASPH, f.558, inv.11, file 770, pp.37-38]

Keywords: Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece, inter-allied relations

1. Damaskinos (Damascene; born Dimitrios Papandreou) (1891 – 1949) – Archbishop of Athens and All Greece (1941 – 1949), Regent of Greece (1944 – 1946). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)