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, 2 October 1945

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Top Secret

NOT IN ORDER

On 1 October I visited Kerr, who, on behalf of Bevin, offered the following terms of the agreement with the Soviet delegation:

1. The British Government is sending to the Balkans (Romania and Bulgaria) a new person, and if he comes back with favourable information, then the British government will recognize the governments of Romania and Bulgaria.

2. The UK Government recognises the governments of Austria and Hungary.

3. France is allowed to join the Council of Ministers with full voting rights (meaning peace treaties).

4. The signing of the four protocols, "as it was decided" (this fraudulent wording means that under the relevant Protocols there will be five, four, three and two signatures from ministers. This is with aim of bypassing the question of annulling decisions during meetings with the attendance of Ministers who have not signed the peace treaties).

5. Deputies should continue their work (underhandedly inserted, in order for all five deputies to participate in the course of the proceeding of the peace treaties).

6. When the Council agrees to treaties, recommend to the governments to convene a conference in accordance with paragraph 2/4/2 of the Berlin agreement[[1]](#footnote-1). (This refers, according to the previous term, to pushing through France's participation in these conferences).

7. The Council will adopt a new procedure in the light of the above and the decision of 11 September[[2]](#footnote-2) will be changed accordingly. (Meaning: the 11 September decision will be formally annulled, while France is being essentially invited to continue to participate in the proceeding of the peace treaties).

8. The question of the transfer of the Greek Dodecanese islands should be resolved.

I pointed out which points (above all, point 3) of the eight contradict the Berlin decisions, and are therefore unacceptable to us.

Then Bevin arrived and again applied pressure in the same spirit.

Of course, we could not come to an agreement.

In the evening, at the suggestion of Byrnes and Bevin, all three of us met. Again, then there was pressure on me to agree not to annul the 11 September ‘decision’. I strongly rejected this extortion, which upset our partners, especially Bevin.

Finally, late in the evening a meeting of the five Ministers was held, and again Bevin, Bidault, and Byrnes put pressure on me on the necessity to maintain the 11 September ‘decision’. The meeting was in vain. October 2 is the scheduled date for the next meeting, and when they want to torture me again with their extortions so that I agree to the preservation of the said ‘decision’.

My assumption is that Byrnes and Bevin want to wreck the Council’s work on 2 October and shoulder the blame for the failure on the Soviet delegation. Otherwise, it is impossible to understand why in the last several days they have adopted such an uncompromising stance against our legitimate proposal to eliminate the 11 September ‘decision’, which has not even yet been approved and signed off by the Council, and therefore is not a decision, but only a preliminary agreement (i.e. a draft decision). If they go ahead with this hostile outburst against the Soviet Union, then we have every reason to say that they are violating the Berlin agreement between the Three Powers, and nail them to the whipping post as someone who goes back on their word.

What can be done to mitigate this acute conflict that has arisen?

I do not see such a possibility in their present hostile line of conduct, which is incompatible with an honest implementation of the agreement between the Heads of the Three Powers. Byrnes and Bevin would arrange for our consent with an announcement of the decision to convene the forthcoming conferences on peace treaties with France’s participation and on the Balkan peace treaties, among others. I consider this as unacceptable, without the obligation on the part of Britain and the United States to recognise the Romanian and the Bulgarian governments sooner rather than later after the general elections in these countries. I rejected France's participation in these peace treaties (besides Italy[[3]](#footnote-3)), because it did not declare war on Romania and Bulgaria, and have your confirmation on this question.

So, we must be prepared for an open anti-Soviet protests by our "valued allies". A response to this will be necessary and will depend on the nature of the attack.

Please confirm.

2.X.45 MOLOTOV

[RSASPH, f.558, inv.11, f.770, p.73]

Keywords: inter-allied relations, the Balkans

1. This is the ability of the Council of Foreign Ministers to call an official conference ‘of states with the greatest interest in the resolution of any given issue that the British and Americans tried to use to widen participation in the Council. See: Berlinskaia konferentsiia. S. 449. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This is the agreement of Molotov, given on 11 September, to the participation of France and China in the discussions of (but not in the voting on) all issues at sessions of the Council of Foreign Ministers, including of the peace treaties with all satellite nations. At Stalin’s behest, Molotov then abandoned this agreement. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. In accordance with the Potsdam accords, only countries that had been at war and had signed the surrender terms with the corresponding German satellite nation had the right to participate in the resolution of issues relating to the peace treaties with that country; by this formula France was admitted only to discussion of the treaty with Italy, and China to discussion of the treaty with Japan. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)