Telegram from the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, I.V. Stalin, to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, V.M. Molotov, 30 April 1946[[1]](#footnote-1)

TO MOLOTOV.

30.04.1946

We believe that in conversation with Byrnes you did not behave quite correctly. Byrnes attacked and you defended, whereas you had all the reasons to attack.

You did not pay attention to Byrnes’s accusation of USSR expansion. You have not offered due rebuff, moreover, you have not attacked the imperialistic tendencies of the USA and Britain.

You should have parried the blow and have told Byrnes that the USA kept establishing airbases everywhere (in Iceland, in Greece, Italy, Turkey, Iran, China and Indonesia). In the Pacific Ocean they have a considerable number of navy and airbases, to say nothing of China where the American army is located to this day, which is testimony to US expansion. Meanwhile the USSR does not have any similar bases anywhere. Therefore, Byrnes accused the USSR of expansion trying to shield and take away attention from the USA’s own imperialistic tendencies.

As for Iran, you should have told Byrnes that the USA have invented the problem of Iran and have created complications for the solution of the Iranian problem in order to shield the imperialistic inclinations of the USA and Britain.

You should have told Byrnes that the USSR has no armies in the member-states of the United Nations Organization, except Poland where the USSR has the armies to protect communications lines, just as Britain and the USA keep their armies for the same reason of communications protection in France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

It was necessary to seriously direct Byrnes’s attention to the fact that the USA absolutely illegally keep forces in Iceland, China etc., and Britain - in Greece, Indonesia, Denmark etc., while the USSR does nothing of the kind.

Thus accusing the USSR of expansion is malicious slander.

You should have told Byrnes that we would like to know for how long the USA will keep their armies in China and Britain in Egypt and what the relations are like between Britain and Egypt, the latter being a member of Security Council, and between the USA and China. We are also interested to learn about the attitude of Britain and the USA to India, which is the member of the United Nations Organization.

You should consider these instructions and at the next meeting with Byrnes or Bevin not to justify or defend yourself, but to remain accusatory and on attack against the imperialistic inclinations of the USA and Britain[[2]](#footnote-2).

As for the other issues of the meeting with Byrnes (the issue of Bulgaria, the agreement on demilitarization of Germany and Japan, about Austria, etc.), we believe your behavior was quite correct.

 INSTANCE

[RSASPH, f. 17, inv. 167, file 71, pp. 204-205]

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1. This telegram was sent in response to Molotov’s report of a conversation with Byrnes on 28 April (at the time of the Paris sessions of the Council of Foreign Ministers) in the course of which the Secretary of State in essence branded Soviet policy a politics of expansion (FRUS, 1946, II, p.146). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Molotov punctiliously fulfilled Stalin’s instructions in his next meeting with Byrnes on 5 May, stating that, among other things, ‘Byrnes shares the slanderous declarations of Churchill in his anti-Soviet speech in the USA’, but also that ‘in fact, it is not the USSR that strives towards expansion, but certain circles in the USA.’ As a result, the conversation passed in an extremely tense atmosphere. Cited in: SSSR i germanskii vopros. Т. 2. S. 475–479. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)