From a telegram by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, I.V. Stalin, to Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, V.M. Molotov, 23 October 1946

CIPHER TEXT

To Comrade MOLOTOV

In line with our conversation in Gagra I called Bulganin[[1]](#footnote-1) and Vasilevsky[[2]](#footnote-2) and discussed with them the issue of cutting down the number of our troops abroad. We decided that our troops may be cut down by 280 000 people. Of these, 200 000 are located in Germany. This means that we shall have 250 000 troops in Germany, and not 450 000. Other dismissed troops will be in Romania, Port Arthur and Korea. The relevant resolution has already been adopted by the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR[[3]](#footnote-3).

[…]

Sochi DRUZHKOV.

[RSASPH, f. 17, inv., 167, file 72, p. 130]

Keywords: post-war USSR

1. Bulganin, Nikolai Aleksandrovich (1895 – 1975) – Soviet statesman and Party figure, Marshal of the Soviet Union, Deputy Chairman of the Soviet of People’s Commissars of the USSR (1938 – 1944), Chairman of the State Bank of the USSR (1938 – 1940, 1940 – 1945), Deputy People’s Commissar for Defence of the USSR (1944 – 1946), First Deputy Minister for the Armed Forces of the USSR (1946 – 1947), Deputy, later First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR (1947 – 1955), Minister for the Armed Forces of the USSR (1947 – 1949), Minister of Defence of the USSR (1953 – 1955), Chairman of the Council of Ministers (1955 – 1958). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Vasilyevskii, Aleksandr Mikhailovich (1895 – 1977) – Soviet military leader, Marshal of the Soviet Union, Head of the General Staff (1942 – 1945), Commander of the Third Belorussian Front (1945), Commander-in-Chief of Soviet Forces in the Far East (1945), Head of the General Staff, Deputy, later First Deputy Minister for the Armed Forces of the USSR (1946 – 1948), Minister for the Armed Forces of the USSR (1949 – 1953), First Deputy Minister of Defence of the USSR (1953 – 1956). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The reduction in Soviet military contingents abroad was carried out with the aim of increasing the diplomatic pressure on the Western Allies, first and foremost on Great Britain, to keep significant military contingents in Europe, the Near-East and South-East Asia. (See Satlin’s telegram to Molotov of 2 November 1946). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)