

DOS REVIEWED 18-Mar-2013: DECLASSIFIED FOR RELEASE IN FULL

*Personal Copy
(not for files)*

American Embassy,
Tokyo, Japan,
April 25, 1953.

~~SECRET~~ and PERSONAL

Dear Foster:

I would like to refer to your personal telegram No. 2479 of April 21 and tell you how much I appreciate the opportunity temporarily to work with General Clark on the Korean armistice negotiations.

This is the fourth armistice negotiation with which I have been associated -- French North Africa, Italy, and Germany. The character of this one is very different from the others. There we were negotiating from the floor of military victory; in the case of French North Africa it was a cease fire under very special circumstances. In the present instance we are based on a military stalemate resulting from a desire to limit our commitment. Naturally that has its disadvantages.

For your personal information, the reason I am willing to do my best to support the present effort to obtain a cease fire in Korea is because I am convinced that continuation of the battle with its cost in human lives and its expense to our national substance under the present policy of limited commitment is futile. Were we determined on military victory, I would want nothing to do with an armistice now. In the absence of such a determination, we should close out this operation, I firmly believe.

In the light of what I have learned during the few days I have been on this assignment, I am also convinced we can obtain a cease fire. I am assuming we really want it. If that is our desire, we must have some flexibility of approach on the prisoner of war issue. I seem to detect a certain rigidity in some features of the JCS instructions which rather obscures the principal objective of obtaining a cease fire. No doubt there are sound reasons for it. I am very grateful for the support the Department has given thus far.

The Honorable
John Foster Dulles,
Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

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-2-

There is just one other point I would wish to mention -- that is, an idea that we should relax the United Nations military effort on account of the negotiations. I hope you favor firm prosecution of the battle during this period. I feel that is very important and a negotiating advantage. If the Communists really want an armistice for reasons best known to themselves, aggressive military action now will not be provocative. Relaxation at this stage could easily harden the Commie stand. If they don't want an armistice, there obviously should not be relaxation of UN military effort.

I hope we may achieve the result you want and with warm regards, believe me

Yours sincerely,

Robert Murphy

SECRET