

For Chairman Mao [Zedong]!

Cable in regards to the question of sending home ethnic Korean officers and soldiers stationed in the Huazhong [Central China] Military Region.

Please give instructions.

Nie Rongzhen

December 29, 1949

Cable:

"According to the most recent statistics, there are around 16,000 ethnic Koreans on duty in various troops of the People's Liberation Army. Aside from ethnic Koreans dispersed throughout PLA divisions, there are also four battalions, twenty-seven companies, and nine platoons composed of ethnic Koreans.

On active duty, there are: two divisional, five regimental, eighty-seven battalion, 598 company, 400 platoon, and 1,900 squad commanders of Korean descent.

Within the ranks of the PLA they all are receiving training and education and, under the guidance of their Chinese comrades, have made much progress. From our military, many of these soldiers have gained experience in carrying out operations, establishing armed forces, and launching political work. We feel most of them are fit to be cadres. After our army moved to South China, however, there was rioting among some of the ethnic Koreans; they demanded to be sent home [to Korea]. Nevertheless, the majority of these men continued to follow orders and unwaveringly pushed southward. At present the war is almost over. In the interests of the Korean people we should send these trained cadres back to Korea (those wishing to stay may stay).

Would the Central Committee please discuss and relay to the Korean Workers' Party as to if they may or may not be sent home at this time. If the answer is affirmative, we will assemble them into one standard division or four or five standard regiments and, after a brief period of training, will send them home.

Please give instructions.

Lin Biao

Deng Zihui

Tan Zhen."

25 December 1949