

September 6, 1953

Cable from Ambassador Yuan Zhongxin, 'Minutes of Meeting between R.K. Nehru and Ambassador Yuan'

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Summary:

The Chinese ambassador to India reports that he and Nehru discussed Indian privileges in Tibet, the use of radios and guns by Indian commercial representatives in Tibet, and the issue of garrison relief.

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[...]

Minutes of Meeting between R.K. Nehru and Ambassador Yuan

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

R.K. Nehru had a meeting with me yesterday and the meeting minutes are as follows:

Regarding the settlement of the Tibet issue between Indian and China, R.K. Nehru already telegraphed our Premier Zhou on 1 September to illustrate the basic attitude of India. I was given a memorandum that provided further details about the foregoing attitudes and I was expected to forward such memorandum to our government (the full text of the memorandum to be transmitted otherwise). I had anticipated and been well prepared for this meeting. After a review of the memorandum, I briefly illustrated our proposals right away (in light of the principles conveyed by the Ministry recently) as follows:

1. China and India have witnessed friendly cooperation in all aspects in the last three years and that contributes to Asian and global peace. The Chinese government has always endeavored to strengthen the friendly relationships between the two countries. Based on the memorandum, I believe all pending issues can be settled properly through mutual negotiations on a mutually-respectful basis.

2. The Chinese government has reiterated its stance on the Tibet issue multiple times, i.e. the Indian privileges in Tibet are based on the unequal relationships between Britain and the former Chinese government and the present Indian government is not liable for such conditions. Our views on the present conditions are as follows:

(1) All privileges established on unequal historic relationships shall no longer exist;

(2) All issues can be properly settled through negotiations;

(3) Regarding some specific issues that the Indian government mentions:

- The issue of confiscation of the radio stations and guns carried by India's commercial representative. We did not interfere with their normal businesses. However, Chinese laws forbid the carriage of any radio station and gun. Therefore, the radio stations have been confiscated (I have introduced our methods to settle the radio station issue for the sake of bilateral relationships and replied to India's intention to dispatch its personnel to Ali District in light of the instructions dated the 28).

- Garrison relief. This is an issue relating to the sovereignty of China. We did not ask the Indian troops to withdraw from Tibet right away. However, our government never allows the relief of garrisons. Any Indian governmental officials that intend to enter China need to obtain our visa because this is an international practice. This is our compliance with international practices instead of our "unilateral actions" (as mentioned in India's memorandum) considering that "privileges no longer exist."

R.K. Nehru said:

1. India attaches great importance to the close relations between China and India because he believes that such relations are essential to Asian and even global peace.

However, he believes China's actions will lead to misunderstanding and hence cause more serious issues.

2. India recognizes the new conditions in Tibet. India has always wished to negotiate with China to adjust and even cancel India's traditional rights and practices in Tibet. India does not take an unequal stance on these issues. India and Tibet were historically interdependent on each other and Premier Zhou used to express his personal comments on such interdependence (as mentioned in the Memorandum). Unfortunately, the local Tibetan authority has taken some unilateral actions despite the Indian government's wishes to engage in negotiations in light of Premier Zhou's comments.

3. It is hard for the Indian commercial representatives in Tibet to perform their duties without such radio stations. The Indian troops cannot exist there for long if garrison relief is impossible. Therefore, it cannot be taken for granted that the Chinese government has not interfered with their businesses.

4. India hopes to have a general discussion with the Chinese government on all issues relating to Tibet instead of settling each and every issue separately.

5. He carefully asked me if my opinions represent the opinions of the Chinese government after receipt of the cable from R.K. Nehru. Such a cable was probably delivered on 2 September. I replied it was our recent opinions but the cable of R.K. Nehru might be delivered later than our opinions came into being. In the end, I reiterated our basic viewpoints, emphasizing that all issues could be settled through negotiations, and promising to forward the Memorandum to our government.

Please review the meeting minutes and your reply is earnestly anticipated.

Yuan [Zhongxin]
6 September [1953]