

October 28, 1969

**Telegram Number 2142-08, 'Conversation with the
Deputy-Minister of Foreign Affairs (Europe)'**

Citation:

"Telegram Number 2142-08, 'Conversation with the Deputy-Minister of Foreign Affairs (Europe)'", October 28, 1969, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France. Obtained by Enrico Fardella and translated by Garret Martin. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/116456>

Summary:

Luo Guibo is curious about developments in West German-Soviet relations and the Conference on European Security, while Etienne Manac'h inquires about China's appointment of ambassadors to Europe.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

Original Language:

French

Contents:

Translation - English

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Beijing, 28th October 1969
Received..... at 12h31

Telegram Number 2142-48

Forwarded via the Department to: London 1061-68 - Moscow 1121-27 - Washington 1202-08

Conversation with the Deputy-Minister of Foreign Affairs (Europe)

I am referring to my telegram number 2136-41

The meeting with Luo Guibo, which first addressed European problems, confirms a clear renewal of interest on the part of China for our continent, and in particular the recent political evolution in West Germany. The Chinese Deputy-Minister was curious to hear about how we envisaged the development of Bonn's policy towards the USSR and a country like Poland. Would this lead to a recognition of the Oder-Neisse border? It seemed to him in any case that the Soviet Union was in a hurry to improve its relations with West Germany and, even though Berlin is an important problem, he noted with a critical tone that Moscow was now silent on this subject and was even trying to bury this question.

M. Luo Guibo was particularly interested in the preparation of the conference on European security. There again he thought that the USSR seemed in a hurry. What was our position on this subject?

I reminded my interlocutor of the content of the oral communication that we had made last July on this subject to the Soviet government and the Eastern European states, as well as the wording of Franco-Soviet communiqué in October. This conference could only be successful if it was well prepared and if, beforehand, a serious détente could be guaranteed between the participating states. That would require giving up the policy of 'bloc' and that certain powers, such as the USSR, not play the role of the spokesman of a system that limits the sovereignty of some states. It would also require respecting the independence of states.

M. Luo Guibo gave a nuanced approval for this position. But he immediately raised the question of whether or not the Soviet Union would admit the presence of the United States to this conference. America had always intervened in European affairs. There again, like in Asia, it would not agree to take its distances. It seemed likely to him that Moscow, because of its desire to cooperate with the United States, would not oppose its participation.

In any case, he added, Moscow's haste in pushing for the European security conference and making contacts with West Germany derived from a very clear strategy: the Soviet Union was only making concessions in Europe to ensure a calm situation on the continent, and so thus to have a free hand to confront Communist China. China saw this policy as a dangerous development. The forthcoming opening of Soviet-American negotiations on the limitations of strategic arms could only be explained by these same motivations, and amounted to new evidence of the collusion between the two superpowers.

I asked the Minister if China, whose preoccupations with Europe were becoming clearer, was planning to soon nominate Ambassadors. He immediately replied that this was certainly the case, that China was examining the question but was

proceeding methodically, taking into account the process of normalization with each country.

Signed Etienne Manac'h