

December 7, 1949

Cable, Zhou Enlai to Wang Zhen

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Summary:

Zhou Enlai responds to two cables about the activities and whereabouts of George Fox-Holmes, Douglas Mackiernan, and John Hall Paxton.

Credits:

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Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Telegram on Dealing with Issues Related to the British and US Consuls[1]
(7 December 1949)

To Wang Zhen; to pass on to Chairman Burhan [Shahidi]:

I have read the telegram of 2 December and I agree with the policy that you have taken in regard to the former British consul. I expect you to pay strict attention to the actions of former British Consul General George Fox-Holmes, gather information, and report as necessary in order to handle the matter.

Zhou Enlai
7 December [1949]

[1] On 2 and 4 December 1949, Wang Zhen, Commander of the 1st Army in the Chinese People's Liberation Army's First Field Army, sent two telegrams in succession to Zhou Enlai, passing them on to Burhan Shahidi, chairman of the Provisional People's Government of Xinjiang. The telegram of 2 December stated: George Fox-Holmes, the consul general of the British consulate in Dihua [Editor's note: now Urumqi] is currently still in Dihua. The Provisional People's Government of Xinjiang has already notified Fox-Holmes via the provisional diplomatic office that, prior to the establishment of diplomatic relations between Britain and our country, we do not recognize his status as consul and can only treat him as an ordinary foreign resident. Having heard that this consul is still frequently carrying out secret activities and provocations concerning various ethnic peoples, our government is closely paying attention to his actions. Zhou Enlai in this telegram instructed Chen Hao, secretary-general of the Office of the Premier: "Tell Bingnan to consult with Huan Xiang."

The telegram of 4 December states: [John Hall] Paxton, US consul in Dihua, before the liberation of Xinjiang had, by cabled orders of his own government, departed by way of India, leaving only Vice-Consul [Douglas] Mackiernan in Dihua to look after matters. On 26 September, following the declaration of Xinjiang's liberation, Mackiernan suddenly left Dihua. The Provisional People's Government of Xinjiang and the provisional diplomatic office had no advance knowledge of his going. Nor did searching by cabling various districts and counties via the People's Government yield any results. Such unrestrained action, clearly, expresses an attitude of contempt concerning the sovereignty of our country's government. Zhou Enlai in this telegram instructed Chen Hao: "Tell Bingnan to consult with Ke Bainian over the previous telegram." Bingnan refers to Wang Bingnan, at that time director of the General Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the Central People's Government. Huan Xiang was appointed director of the West European and African Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the Central People's Government on 18 December 1949. Ke Bainian was appointed director of the American and Oceanic Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the Central People's Government on 18 December 1949.