

August 21, 1955

Cable from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, 'America's Probing of Us and Our Talking Points'

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Summary:

The Chinese Foreign Ministry claims that the US wants to test China's bottom-line regarding the release of US citizens in China.

Credits:

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Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

[To] Ambassador Wang [Bingnan]:

Your report on the ninth meeting, the speech of the US side, and your telegram dated 10:45 p.m., 20 August [1955], have all been received.

1. The US side made several attempts to probe our intentions at the ninth talk and proposed a private meeting. Its purpose is to sound us out: How many people can we release now and when can we release all US nationals? The US side has made many attempts to ask us to release more and earlier. In a private meeting, the US representative might ask us to propose a secret deadline for reviewing [the cases of] all US nationals. As for Agenda II and general issues in Sino-American relations, the US side might raise them in passing during the private meeting.

2. We could not make any further concessions on the issue of US nationals. Thus, in the private meeting you may speak softly but remain firm in your position. If the US side uses a threatening tone, you should refute his argument. You should take the initiative to point out that Chinese nationals still experience restrictions when returning to their country of origin and the Jiang Jieshi clique is flagrantly threatening our students. We are unsatisfied with this situation.

3. As to possible issues which might come up during the meeting, you may follow these main points:

(1) Regarding the number of people: You may tell the other party that all US nationals without unfinished cases can leave. We are reviewing all US nationals with unfinished civil and criminal cases. After we complete a review, the person at issue may leave. After the two sides reach an accord on the agreed announcement, we will be able to inform the US side of the results of the cases reviewed. We expect a large number.

(2) Regarding time: You should tell the US side that it is impossible to set a time limit in advance. The cases of US nationals have been reviewed on a case by case basis. We have been reviewing these cases in a timely fashion, but it depends on the conduct of each convict and the improvement in Sino-American relations. Those US nationals with criminal cases may be released before their sentences expire if they behave well. We believe that the release of some US convicts will have a positive effect on others, who would follow suit in order to be freed earlier. With the implementation of the third party representation and the improvement in Sino-American relations, we believe it would produce more favorable results regarding this issue. (Should the US side ask that since 38 US nationals left China for the US in the past year after their cases were reviewed, does that mean that the remaining forty-one US nationals would be able to leave in less than a year? You may tell him that the situations in two time periods are not comparable should the relations between the two countries improve).

(3) The issue of improvement of relations between the two countries: At the last meeting, the US side claimed that there was nothing more favorable for the improvement of relations between the two countries than releasing all US nationals. That is the main reason the US to agree to the talks. Regarding this, we must emphasize the importance of mutual efforts for improving relations between the two countries. To resolve the issue of the return of Chinese nationals is as important as that of US nationals. The convening of the Sino-American talks demonstrates improvement in relations between the two countries. But it is also important to see the evolution of the talks and the further development and implementation of an agreed announcement. Should the US side propose general issues in improving relations between the two countries, we must stress the importance of mutual efforts for improving relations. [We] may indicate that the Chinese side is willing to make its effort.

(4) Regarding the formulations of the agreed announcement: It is unlikely that the other party would propose this in a private meeting. Should he raise the matter, we may say that we have taken into consideration the other side's position in proposing the first item in our amendment. Both sides could interpret this based on their own stands. If necessary, you may say we are not insisting on inserting the wording, "and declare that it has adopted, and continue to adopt appropriate measures." It means that the first item in our amendment is categorical. If the other side doesn't ask, don't raise this matter prematurely. Don't agree to any additions or revisions.

(5) Should the US side raise the issue of adjourning the talks, as advocated by some in the United States, we must indicate that the US side could decide on its own whether it wants to adjourn the talks or not. But we believe that [adjourning] would not aid in resolving issues and improving relations between the two sides. Should the US side pose the issue of US domestic media accusing us of holding US nationals as hostages, we should reiterate our previous position on this issue. Additionally, we should point out that it is true that some in the US are unwilling to see the relaxation of international tension and the improvement of Sino-American relations. It is obvious that these people fabricate the so-called hostage accusation. The Chinese side has never proposed to use US nationals in China for an exchange purpose. The hostage accusation is groundless. On the contrary, the Chinese people are indignant of the plight of Chinese nationals in the United States. We ask the other side to give due attention to the Chinese media.

(6) On the issue of Chinese nationals in the US: Recently US propaganda has emphasized that only about forty Chinese nationals want to leave [for China] and the US has already lifted all restrictions. The US side has no integrated file of Chinese nationals and knows very little about their condition. At the talks, the US asked us to present concrete cases of Chinese nationals being prevented from leaving so as to shirk its responsibility. Should the US side continue with this kind of argument, we must point out that Chinese nationals are still experiencing difficulties in leaving the US and are being threatened by the Jiang Jieshi clique. Additionally, we should ask how the US, without an integrated file, could possibly know that there are only forty Chinese nationals who wish to return. These Chinese nationals are in the US and the US side must provide us with their documents.

(7) Should the US side probe our opinions on Agenda II, we should say, after entering Agenda II, all parties have the right to propose issues for discussion. This would be conducive to the free exchange of ideas. We believe that the discussion on Agenda II will further contribute to the improvement of relations between the two countries.

1. In order to better prepare for the tenth talk, you should ask the other side to switch the next meeting from the originally agreed date of 22 August to the 23rd.

Foreign Ministry

6:00 p.m., 21 August [1955]