

July 31, 1955

Cable from the Foreign Ministry to Comrade Wang Bingnan, 'On the Text of Speech, Instructions, and Points of Attention at the Sino-American Talks'

Citation:

"Cable from the Foreign Ministry to Comrade Wang Bingnan, 'On the Text of Speech, Instructions, and Points of Attention at the Sino-American Talks'", July 31, 1955, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 111-00014-04, 25-27. Translated by Yafeng Xia.
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Summary:

Several instructions from the PRC Foreign Ministry on how to handle the negotiations as well as two attachments regarding the text of speech for the first meeting of the Sino-American talks and the issue of news release during the talks

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Top Secret

[To] Comrade [Wang] Bingnan:

You should have received the FM instructions dated 30 July. We are sending you the text of the speech for 1 August and instructions for its release to the press. Please follow the following points for attention:

1. Meeting personnel: It is reported that there are only two to three people on the US negotiation team. As for our side, the FM agrees with your opinion: a five-person team, including Li Huichuan, Lin Ping, Shen Ping, Qiu Yingjue, and you (If the US Consul General is not present, Shen Ping should also not be at the talks);
2. It has been decided that you will announce the release of eleven convicted US military personnel at 3:00 p.m. Geneva time, on 1 August;
3. When entering the meeting room and encountering a US representative, you may exchange a few words of greetings before taking your seat (You may also take the initiative to shake his hands). This will surely create a relaxing atmosphere from the very beginning;
4. When the meeting starts, try to speak first. If the other party wants to speak first, you should agree. But you should tell him that you have a piece of news to announce. Then read the first paragraph in the speech (Eleven convicted US military personnel were freed on 31 July and left Beijing the same day). After the other party speaks, you may continue with the rest of your text of speech;
5. If the other party makes no slanderous remarks in his speech and only asks you to clarify concrete points, you may say that you will respond after consultations. Thus, you will be able to return to the main topic of the meeting;
6. Regarding the meeting agenda, after reading the prepared speeches from the FM, you may engage the other party in a conversation. You don't have to read from a prepared text;
7. You should make good use of the recess. If the other party raises matters which need sufficient time for consultation, then you should request a brief recess. If it is an issue of great importance, which needs instructions from the FM, the meeting should be adjourned until the next day. In short, if you are good at utilizing this tool, you will be able to conduct the meeting in a calm and reliable fashion;
8. Generally, you will make use of the press release (for the day's text of content) rather than the press conference. If [you are] asked about the content of the meeting, you may give an objective briefing. You should ask the FM for instructions if you need to hold a press conference. Your speech upon arriving at Geneva was not approved by the FM beforehand. This is a mistake, which you should pay close attention to. After the first meeting, you should not hold a press conference. A press release will do. Comrade Li Huichuan will be responsible for liaison with media;

Please notify the Soviet Consul General and the Indian Consul General of the content of the day's meeting. Comrade Feng Xuan may be responsible for this. Sometimes you may personally take care of it. According to Comrade Huan Xiang's [Chinese Charge D'Affairs to London] report, Menon will arrive at Geneva and stay for a few days. You may brief him on the meeting and our general position. Don't rush to respond to his news and opinions. Report to the FM as soon as possible.

Foreign Ministry

31 July 1955

Attachments: The Text of Speech and the Issue of News Release

Attachment I: The Text of Speech for the First Meeting of Sino-American talks

[...]

Attachment II: The Issue of News Release during the Talks

[...]