

December 12, 1962

**Minutes of Conversation between Chinese Deputy
Director of the Department of Soviet and European
Affairs Yu Zhan and Charge d’Affaires of the Soviet
Union Nikolai Mesyatsev on the Sino-Indian
Boundary Issue**

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Summary:

Yu Zhan and Nikolai Mesyatsev argued on Soviet responsibility in the stubbornness of India.

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Minutes of Conversation between Yu Zhan, Deputy Director of the Department of Soviet and European Affairs, and Nikolai Mesyatsev, Charge d'Affaires of the Soviet Union, on the Sino-Indian Boundary Issue

Time: 12 December 1962

Place: The Embassy of Czechoslovakia in China

Interpreter and Recorder: Li Debiao

On 12 December, at the party celebrating the nineteenth anniversary of the signing of the Soviet-Czechoslovakia Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Collaboration, Mesyatsev, Charge d'Affaires of the [Embassy of the] Soviet Union, invited Yu Zhan, Deputy Director of the Department of Soviet and European Affairs, to discuss the Sino-Indian boundary issue. The ambassadors of Hungary, Poland, and Mongolia, the Charge d'Affaires of [North] Korea, Luo-man-ning, Counselor of the Soviet Union, and Wen-ning, Counselor of [East] Germany, attended. The Czechoslovak Charge d'Affaires arrived later.

Deputy Director Yu introduced the current situation of the Sino-Indian boundary issue and explained our policies. Mesyatsev said that the "Sino-Indian boundary conflict is harmful to socialist countries, harmful to peace-loving countries, harmful to countries seeking a neutral stand, and is only beneficial to imperialism." Yu explained to them that China has made many concessions and, having restrained ourselves repeatedly, tried to settle the disputes through peaceful means. India still attacked us, so we were forced to fight back. Yu also cited Khrushchev's words because he said that if the Soviet Union were in China's position and under the same circumstances, it would take the same policy as China has (this was said in the presence of many people and Mesyatsev wore an unnatural expression after he heard it). Despite this, we still sought a peaceful solution. For this purpose, we took the initiative to cease fire and retreat. Mesyatsev proposed a toast to China for such a wise policy. After the toast, Yu cited examples to explain that Nehru was not implementing a policy of neutralism. Many Asian and African countries, especially Asian countries, now know that it is India, rather than China, to blame in the Sino-Indian boundary conflict.

Mesyatsev asked provocatively, "At the recent congress of fraternal parties, we all supported your wise policy (cease fire and retreat). Why did China not publicize this news in newspapers?"

Yu: "The issues at the recent congress of fraternal parties were rather complicated. Publishing would have created many troubles."

Mesyatsev: "Why?"

Yu: "You know it very well! It is better to not talk about such issues. It is unpleasant to talk about this."

Mesyatsev: "Why? I'm referring to the Sino-Indian boundary issue. At the congress of fraternal parties, the representatives of all fraternal parties supported your ceasefire declaration. This is very clear. Why is it complicated to publish this?"

Yu: "I suggested not talking about the Sino-Indian boundary issue because it is unpleasant."

Mesyatsev: Why?

Yu: Some people cannot tell right from wrong, some are accusing us, and some are neutral in form but actually for India. We feel sorry.

Mesyatsev: This issue is clear. Why are you saying so?

Yu: This issue is clear, but some people cannot tell right from wrong. Who is the invader, who is attacking, and who refuses to negotiate? Which parties denounced India's invasion? Of course there are some (Mesyatsev got a word in, such as [North] Korea). Yes, [North] Korea is included [among them]. But why are some other parties unwilling to denounce India?"

Mesyatsev: "Proper strategies should be taken with respect to neutral countries."

Yu: We have fundamental differences with you over this question. India is attacking socialist China with the support of imperialist United States, but you say India is a peaceful and neutral country. It is obvious that you are for India and against China."

Mesyatsev: "Comrade Yu Zhan, neither you nor I can make the same comment as what you just said."

Yu: "Personally, I can only make such a comment."

Mesyatsev: "We support you with respect to this issue."

Yu: "You supplied weapons to India. India used the planes and trucks supplied by you to transport the army to the front lines to attack us. This is what the whole world knows. We are very indignant about this."

Mesyatsev: "In total, we supplied several dozen planes for India, but this is not military aid."

Yu: "Quantity is not the problem. We do not care even if you supplied more [than this] to India. But your doing so is encouraging India politically. The Soviet Union should bear some of the responsibility for Nehru's stubbornness and his unwillingness to solve problems through peaceful means."

Mesyatsev: "We can talk about this issue when there are no people around. However, I want to explain that it will still take four to five years for India to complete the Mig Aircraft Factory with Soviet assistance. If the United States wanted to help India build factories, it may have moved complete sets of equipment and factories to India. Is the United States doing so for the benefit of socialism?"

Yu: "The United States is doing so because it is a capitalist country, while the Soviet Union is a socialist country. The problem is not about the years, but that India thinks it is supported by the Soviet Union and the United States."

Luo-maning, interrupting, "It is shameful that China educates the people in this way!"

Yu, "It is not us who are shameful. Those who are shameful are the ones who abandon a class stand, betray proletarian internationalism, and betray Leninism. This is the shame of Lenin's party!"

Mesyatsev, "Comrade Yu Zhan, please calm down. Please believe [me] that we will not betray proletarian internationalism or betray Leninism. We did not and will not."

Yu, "I hope so." (Then the Czechoslovak Charge d'Affaires invited everyone to the cinema and the conversation stopped.)

The Ambassadors of Poland and Mongolia and the Charge d'Affaires of [North] Korea all listened but did not talk. The Ambassador of Hungary babbled in support of Mesyatsev, but Yu ignored his words.

When they were seeing the movie, the Czechoslovak Charge d'Affaires said to Yu, "You used to speak highly of the Soviet Union. How can you compare it with the United States?"

Yu replied, "You did not hear me clearly. I said that the Soviet Union is a socialist country while the United States is a capitalist country." The Czechoslovak Charge d'Affaires kept silent.