

February 24, 1960

**Cable from the Chinese Embassy in India, 'Soviet
Attaché in India Tells Us That Nehru Initiated
Discussion of Border Issue in Nehru-Khrushchev
Talks'**

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Summary:

The Chinese Embassy in India reports that it was Nehru who raised the Sino-Indian border dispute in discussions with Nikita Khrushchev.

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Soviet Attaché in India Tells Us That Nehru Initiated Discussion of Border Issue in Nehru-Khrushchev Talks

[To] The Foreign Ministry:

(1) Comrade Yefimov, the Soviet Union's cultural attaché to India, has traveled with Khrushchev to various places in India. At a press conference yesterday, speaking with Xinhua reporters about news reports on the mention of the Sino-Indian border issue during the Khrushchev-Nehru talks, he said the following:

Yefimov explained that this was not a discussion, but the first mention of the Sino-Indian border issue was made by Nehru, who expressed the hope that Khrushchev would understand India's position; Khrushchev said, "China and India are two brothers, and I believe the two of you have sufficient wisdom to resolve this issue. It is unsuitable for the third brother (the Soviet Union) to interfere." Nehru told Khrushchev he had already written to Premier Zhou an invitation to meet and Khrushchev said, "The major international issues [of today] are headed toward resolution; I hope that the Sino-Indian border issue can also be resolved."

Checked against Nehru's reply in Parliament on the 22nd, in which he said he had mentioned the Sino-Indian border issue to Khrushchev, "very briefly, in about six sentences," explaining India's position, it is possible that Yefimov's account of the situation is true.

Yefimov also said that Khrushchev would continue talks with Nehru on 1 March, after arriving in Calcutta from Indonesia; Indian newspapers have reports on this and say they expect Sino-Indian relations to be the main topic of discussion.

(2) The general opinion at yesterday's press conference was that Nehru does intend to meet with Premier Zhou for talks, because as far as Nehru is concerned there is no other way out. It is also rumored that in the Indian Cabinet, [Krishna] Menon and [Ashoke] Sen (Minister of Law) both support having talks, and that even the rightist [Morarji] Desai has expressed support, because they all feel there is nothing else to be done-but [they also think] that Sino-Indian relations cannot be restored to what they were in the past. Furthermore, the Vice-President and the majority of people in the Indian Foreign Ministry, including Secretary General [N.R.] Pillai and Secretary of External Affairs [Submial] Dutt, all advocate holding talks; even the Swatantra Party's Rajagopalachari outwardly welcomes talks. Today's Indian Express column does not oppose talks, but does oppose "surrender," and enthusiastically promotes using talks to gain time to strengthen the national defense.

(3) For several days running, the Indian side has been deliberately building up an atmosphere and momentum, attempting to shake off its passivity and isolation and, by doing so, pressure China into holding talks its way. The day before yesterday Nehru gave a speech in Parliament; yesterday, at the World Agricultural Exposition, he hurried over to visit our exhibition before it closed; he will also hold a press conference today and discuss the issue of the two countries' prime ministers having talks. Indian Foreign Ministry joint secretary K.L. Mehta recently took the initiative to tell our embassy's attaché that he is willing to come have drinks at our embassy or go to some other place for a casual discussion of issues. In this atmosphere the pacifist Sendela'er [sic] also arranged today to meet with Ambassador Pan [Zili].

[Chinese] Embassy in India
24 February [1960]