

30 November 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD:

Subj: 24th Meeting with Chinese in Paris on November 29, 1971

As instructed in the message brought by the courier on the morning of Nov 29, I requested an appointment on the phone talking to TSAO at 10:30 a. m. He said that he could not answer right away as the Ambassador was not available, but he would call me back later.

He did so while I was talking to General Haig on the phone. He suggested meeting the following day and I indicated that one matter I had to discuss with them involved a certain urgency. (The release of the supplementary details on the Presidents trip, but I did not mention them over the phone.) He then consulted the Ambassador and proposed 5:00 p. m. on Monday, 29 November 1971. I at once accepted and went on foot to the Chinese Embassy in Neuilly after leaving my car at a safe distance.

I was received at the garden gate by Wei, wearing a Mao jacket and with a red metal badge on his left breast with Mao's profile on it. At the door TSAO was waiting. He was in Western clothes (coat and tie) but he also wore a Mao badge over his handkerchief pocket. I was escorted to the Red Room and as usual the Ambassador appeared within minutes. Exchange of "Ni Haos", etc.

I then apologized for asking to see him the same day and explained your oral message concerning our desire to release the additional details regarding the President's trip seven hours earlier and in Washington rather than on the West Coast as we had previously indicated because the press of congressional business required the President to remain in Washington rather than on the West Coast.

Ambassador Huang Chen said that he saw no problem in this at all. The Chinese had agreed to our release of these supplementary details on Nov 30 and the hour at which we did it was really up to us. They did not intend to make a simultaneous announcement but if anyone asked them whether our release was true or not, they would confirm it.

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I then said that the written message I had was quite long. Did he want me to read it all in French and have WEI translate it or would giving it to TSAO and having him translate it later for the Ambassador be better. He said that I would sum up the contents in French and WEI would translate it and then he would see TSAO's detailed translation from the English original.

I read him the paragraph about the further preliminary group headed by General Haig going to China and this did not seem to be a problem to him. He said that he would forward this to Peking. He asked whether I would be in this group and I said that I did not believe that this would be the case. He said that he was aware of the meeting between Dr. Kissinger and Ambassador Huang Hua in New York "to discuss United Nations Affairs". Some emphasis on the last phrase.

I then read the essentials of the steps we had taken. I did, however, read the communications satellite paragraph to him in French verbatim. He said that this was a technical matter. He would have a paper for me at 11:30 a. m. on Nov 30 that might answer some of these matters and he asked if I could be there. I replied that I would, of course, be there.

I then read the various steps the President and Dr. Kissinger had taken on the Indo-Pakistan crisis. He nodded at each one saying, "I know". I would gather that the Pakistanis had dept him informed. (At least I hope that is his source rather than a capability to read our mail.) He said that these were positive steps and asked what I thought of the Indians. I replied jokingly that, "the non-violent are often dangerous." He laughed and said, "I share your opinion of the Indians." He did, however, seem very pleased with the recital of our actions.

I then read him the paragraph concerning our talks with the Soviets regarding the prevention of incidents at sea. He did not appear very interested. Perhaps he was, but, if so, he did not show it.

He made a number of complimentary personal remarks and could not have been more pleasant.

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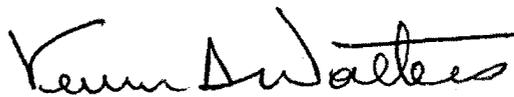
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I then said that I would be going to the United States at the end of the week and would be gone a week or ten days. He asked, "Are you going to the Azores meeting?" I said that I did not know. There was perhaps a fifty percent chance. He grinned and replied that he would place the probability higher than that.

He then said that he would be looking forward to seeing me the following morning at 11:30. He walked me to the door of the building. The Ambassador was, as always, in a Mao jacket, but on several previous occasions he had worn no Mao badge. On this occasion, like his two subordinates, he was wearing one.

All of the foregoing was washed down with gallons of jasmine tea and, thank God, only preserved apples and unsalted peanuts from Shansi.

As I left the building a great Mao portrait still smiled inscrutably down from the lobby of the Embassy. WEI saw me to the gate and I left.

  
VERNON A. WALTERS  
Major General, USA

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