

January 04, 1956
Abstract of Conversation between Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai and Pakistani Ambassador to China Sultanuddin Ahmad

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Summary:

Zhou Enlai and Sultanuddin Ahmed discussed the Kashmir issue and the consequences of the Soviet stance. China also expressed its disapproval with Pakistani involvement in the Manila Treaty, the Baghdad Pact and Islamabad's military agreement with the US.

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Contents:

- English Translation

Abstract of Conversation: Premier Zhou Enlai and Pakistani Ambassador Sultanuddin Ahmad [illegible handwritten note crossed out]

Time: 4 January, 1956

Place: Zhongnanhai, Beijing

Ambassador [Sultanuddin] Ahmad said he was very grateful to the People's Republic of China for taking a neutral stand on the matter of Soviet leaders visiting Kashmir. The Pakistani government is glad that China's newspapers have not issued any comments [illegible handwritten note crossed out].

He said that Pakistan has nothing it wants to say regarding what Soviet leaders said in India and Burma about colonialism. However, [the Soviet leaders] said that Kashmir is a part of India and that the Kashmir issue has already been decided by the people of Kashmir; this runs counter to the interests of the people of Pakistan and Kashmir, and it is disadvantageous for Indo-Pakistani relations and for Asian unity and peace in this region.

He said that on 6 November of last year [1955], the Pakistani government held a multi-party congress that unanimously passed a resolution to directly negotiate on and resolve the Kashmir issue with India. But the Soviet leaders' words make things difficult for the Pakistani government in terms of the effectiveness of this resolution. On 26 February 1955, in India's Parliament, Premier [Jawaharlal] Nehru said that although Kashmir's parliament has already made a decision on the matter of merging with India, this matter cannot be decided by India in a one-sided fashion; India and Pakistan must sit down together and make a decision. Favorable views toward direct Indo-Pakistani negotiations had been growing in India, but suffered a setback due to the words of the Soviet leaders.

He said he had not received any government directives, but that as a representative of the Pakistani government it was his duty to come in person and informally tell Premier Zhou [Enlai] of these circumstances, because Premier Zhou sincerely wishes India and Pakistan to be friendly.

Premier Zhou said as regards the Kashmir issue, this time our newspapers have not yet made any comments and just reported the Soviet leaders' speeches. This is not to say that our viewpoint differs in any way from that of the Soviet Union; it is to urge forward Indo-Pakistani unity in resolving the Kashmir issue. We have a few basic viewpoints on Indo-Pakistani relations and the Kashmir issue that we would like to straightforwardly discuss with the ambassador for a moment.

Premier Zhou said Pakistan, India, and China have all suffered the painful catastrophe of Western colonial rule. This kind of catastrophe is characterized, in political terms, by splits. We Easterners can sympathize with and understand each other; this is the spirit of the [1955] Bandung Conference. This is the Western colonial policy of "divide and conquer." Religion is definitely a dividing line between India and Pakistan, but this should not cause the nation to split apart. We respect all kinds of religious beliefs, but we cannot let Western colonialism use religion to split us apart. India and Pakistan's separation into two nations was a result of British colonialist policies. This [split] was entirely man-made and it was very unfortunate. Western colonial nations have done this in other regions; for example, they are now creating disputes in the region of Palestine. [They] always want to split up Eastern nations; for example, Holland still occupies Indonesia's Western New Guinea, Portugal still occupies India's Goa and China's Macau, Britain still occupies Hong Kong, and the United States still occupies Taiwan. Western nations are also trying in every possible way to keep Korea and Vietnam from unifying. In Southeast Asia, Western nations dragged three nations into joining the Manila Pact; in the Middle and Near East they also organized the Baghdad Pact to split Arab nations in two. This illustrates Western colonialism's policy of "divide and conquer." We have suffered from this kind of policy for hundreds of years, and it is not over yet.

During the course of the Bandung Conference, [I] spoke with Mr. [Chaudhry Muhammad]

Ali, the former premier of Pakistan, about several matters:

First, regarding Pakistan's participation in the Manila Pact, we are very displeased. But for friendship's sake, we have not made an issue of mentioning Pakistan by name for disapproval in the newspapers. However, we are adamantly opposed to the Manila Pact. Mr. Ali said that Pakistan participated in the Manila Pact for the sake of defense. We asked, to defend against whom? Mr. Ali said it was to defend against India. We said, we are very willing to see Pakistan grow great and powerful, but there is no reason to participate in the Manila Pact to grow great and powerful. Pakistan and India are twin brothers; [they] should not be hostile to each other. The Manila Pact is obviously for the purpose of invasion. Mr. Ali made a promise, saying, if the United States launches a war of invasion, Pakistan will definitely not participate. We publicly announced this promise at a conference attended by representatives from 29 nations. Mr. Ali happily acknowledged this point at the conference.

Second, Pakistan's signing of a military agreement with Turkey and Iraq has caused division [among] Arab nations. Mr. Ali said that this agreement was to defend against the Soviet Union. We said that, first of all, doing this stirred up hostility toward the Soviet Union, and, moreover, the Soviet Union is in no way an invader nation. Later Iran and Britain joined in this agreement, and it became the current Baghdad Pact. The Baghdad Pact is intended to surround the Soviet Union; how can the Soviet Union not grow more vigilant?

The Manila Pact is governed by the United States. The Baghdad Pact is governed by Britain, and of course the United States is behind Britain. Pakistan is in a very awkward position in Asia after joining these two pacts; it is very disadvantageous to be controlled and pinned down like this by Western nations.

Third, regarding Pakistan's signing of a military agreement with the United States, we have on two occasions delivered notes to Pakistan expressing disapproval. This agreement is not only disadvantageous to Pakistan; it is also troubling to us. The United States not only wants to make use of Pakistan's (illegible) sow discord in Indo-Pakistani relations, it will also surround and attack China with Pakistan as a military base. Mr. Ali also said that this agreement was to get arms from the United States to defend against India; Pakistan would not supply the United States with a military base, nor would [it] invade China. We said that we still have doubts. [Whenever] the United States signs a pact with any nation, it gets special privileges. Mr. Ali again promised, if the United States launches a war of invasion, Pakistan will not participate. We said that our doubts and vigilance can in no way be dispelled.

The fourth issue is one we raised with Pakistan's former ambassador, [N.M.] Raza, was the Kashmir issue. First of all, we believe that war should not be used to resolve this issue. Secondly, the Kashmir issue should be decided by the people of Kashmir themselves, and admit no interference from outside forces. To have the United Nations supervise is, in reality, to have the United States interfere. The United States will say some nice-sounding things to Pakistan, but what it's focused on are colonialist interests. Bringing the United States into Kashmir is troubling to us. Third, Pakistan and India should consult on and resolve the Kashmir issue themselves. What the Soviet leaders said has not in any way called off consultations for resolution between Pakistan and India.

Zhou Enlai went on to say that now we Eastern nations really should be getting on peacefully with each other. As far as China is concerned, it still has unresolved border issues with many nations; if [we] let all of these problems get worse, there would be quarrelling every day, and we would not have the energy to carry out construction. These issues, with the exception of Taiwan, have all been handed down by history. We have plenty of time to resolve [them] gradually through consultation. Even on this issue of Taiwan, which is already confirmed by China's sovereignty, we still strive for negotiation and resolution. [Handwritten: The Second World War already decided the Taiwan issue; Taiwan was already returned to China. The Korean War [illegible], the United States suddenly [illegible] Taiwan.]

The Kashmir issue can be resolved if [one] acts according to the will of the people of Kashmir and proceeds through consultations; there is no need for such tension. If Kashmir's people express a willingness to join with India, and consequently there are people who support this will of theirs, then do not view this as unfriendliness toward Pakistan. The most important thing is not to be used by others to wage war and create conflicts.

Ambassador Ahmad said that the Indo-Pakistani split is partially due to the policy of "divide and conquer." But the more deep-seated reason is the difference between Indian and Pakistani people in terms of religion and views.

Premier Zhou said that China also has different religions and different ethnicities, but we are still unified, and furthermore we have rallied together with them.

Ambassador Ahmad said it is different with India and Pakistan. After India gained independence, Hindus and Muslims massacred each other. [Handwritten: Gandhi once called upon Hindus to rally together with Muslims, but for this he sacrificed his life.] If it weren't for Nehru's government, India and Pakistan might long since have gone to war.

Premier Zhou said it is precisely due to this that the two nations of India and Pakistan should try and rally together politically and not be subject to outside interference. The two nations' politicians must play a leadership role.

Ambassador Ahmad said if Pakistan could resolve the dispute with India, the advantages for Pakistan in the future would be even greater than for India. So, last year Pakistan's multi-party congress decided to negotiate directly with India. But if the leaders of the two nations can't reach a conclusion, other people must persuade them to reach some kind of resolution. This is why [we] need United Nations supervision.

Premier Zhou said that danger will come of this.

Ambassador Ahmad said he agreed that this carried some risk. It was precisely due to this that Pakistan's former premier, Ali, in his first talk with Premier Nehru, agreed to appoint some small European nations and Asian nations to supervise. Pakistan is not particularly fond of United Nations supervision. [Ahmad] felt that some results could be achieved through consultations, but that in the end there would still be differences. Why can't we find some people and some nations in Asia to mediate? If we can't actually find any, this is a disgrace for Asia. Pakistan does not want outsiders to make the decision; the Kashmir issue must be resolved by the people of Kashmir. If Kashmir's people express a willingness to join with India, or to keep their freedom, Pakistan will have nothing to say about it.

Premier Zhou said [that] if the people of Kashmir express a willingness to join with India, why press to separate them from India?

Ambassador Ahmad said Pakistan does not want to do this at all, nor does it condone doing this. But in Kashmir there are thousands upon thousands of people who refuse to merge with India; they are now fleeing over to the Pakistani side. In the part occupied by India, there are also people demanding a referendum. In New Delhi there is also an organization that favors a referendum, called the Kashmir Democratic Union. Its vice-chairman and secretary are both Hindus. Pakistan will strive to resolve the problem through direct negotiations with India. But if the two nations are unsuccessful, Asia's leaders should not confine this matter to one only between India and Pakistan; they must come forward and point out who is wrong and who is right, and require the two sides to accept a decision made by Asia's senior politicians.

Premier Zhou said, as for the more detailed and more complex circumstances, [we] can only express an opinion following research. If we have contact with India, India will also bring up another side of the truth. As long as the two nations of India and Pakistan rally together, in a

friendly atmosphere, the two nations' disputes will be gradually resolved. The Kashmir issue must be decided by the people of Kashmir. Our position is to support this principle.

Premier Zhou said the Pakistani government has not given the ambassador directives; today I am also airing personal opinions. I think Pakistan should, based on the desire the ambassador has just expressed, stand among the ranks of the Asian nations. Pakistan is currently in a very disadvantageous position among the Asian nations. In line with the spirit of the Bandung Conference, we hope Pakistan will improve its current situation.

Ambassador Ahmad said there was another point he would like to mention. He did have doubts about Pakistan's participation in the Baghdad Pact. If after today his doubts were borne out, he would come again in person to talk with Premier Zhou.

Premier Zhou said, if we foster good relations, it is not only advantageous to the people of our two nations; it is also advantageous for Asian and world peace. It is beneficial for us to exchange views.

Ambassador Ahmad said he agreed Pakistan should view itself more as an Asian nation; the Pakistani government has realized this. Pakistan has only peaceful intentions; otherwise it would not agree to switch from United Nations supervision to supervision by small European nations and Asian nations.

Premier Zhou said that just now we were talking about the Manila Pact [and] the Baghdad Pact; the Pakistani-American military agreements have put Pakistan in an awkward position—this is something we have continuously pointed out.

Ambassador Ahmad said he could feel that the concern Premier Zhou expressed was not only for China's interests, it was also for Pakistan's interests. Pakistan also knows that in accepting American military aid [it] may be subjected to American influence, so it pays frequent attention to preventing this. After China, India and other friendly nations expressed opposition to the US-Pakistani agreement, Pakistan made the entire text of the agreement public, showing that the agreement contained no secrets, much less the possibility of the United States getting a military base in Pakistan.

Premier Zhou said by using American weapons, Pakistan has become constricted; this is certain. In Thailand and Japan one can see that American military aid and [American] special privilege always come together.

Ambassador Ahmad said he wished to declare [something]: Pakistan does not at all belong to the Western bloc. He admitted that in joining the aforementioned pacts, Pakistan did have difficulties in terms of carrying out its own policies, but to date Pakistan has been carrying out its own policies; the United States has not gotten special privileges at all.

Premier Zhou said [that] we hope that Pakistan will stand in the ranks of Asian nations [and] not join in the Manila Pact and Baghdad Pact, or, even having joined in, will broaden these pacts to a peace pact with all Asian and African nations; it could also include the Pacific region. If Pakistan could do this, it will have done a great thing.

Ambassador Ahmad said, [I'm] afraid this is not very likely. But Pakistan is willing to advance together with other Asian nations.

Premier Zhou said [that] breaking free of these pacts is a difficult problem for Pakistan, but this difficult problem does have to be resolved.

Ambassador Ahmad said [that] when the opportunity comes, Pakistan does hope to break free.