

## **August 25, 1955**

### **Record of Conversation from Premier Zhou's Reception of Ambassador Raghavan**

#### **Citation:**

"Record of Conversation from Premier Zhou's Reception of Ambassador Raghavan", August 25, 1955, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 105-00061-06, 27-31. Translated by Jeffrey Wang. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114699>

#### **Summary:**

Zhou Enlai talked to Raghavan about two issues in the Sino-American talks: The release of American expatriates in China and the issue of Chinese expatriates in the US. Regarding the former, Zhou reaffirmed Chinese willingness to cooperate. According to him, there was no restriction and all American expatriates who apply would be able to return to the US. In the cases of Americans who violated Chinese law, however, it was necessary to proceed case by case and it was impossible to release them all at the same time as Washington demanded. On the second issue, the US admitted that they had placed limitations on the return of Chinese expatriates in the past. These restrictions had been lifted then but due to the number of Chinese expatriates and the pressure from Taipei, the problem could not be solved at once. Both countries agreed to let India act as a proxy for China and the UK act as a proxy for the US in this issue. Zhou and Raghavan went on to discuss some wording problems as well as the attitudes of both parties and the UK.

#### **Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

#### **Original Language:**

Chinese

#### **Contents:**

Translation - English

Zhang vice-minister has read this  
People's Republic of China Foreign Ministry Document  
Total copies produced: 46  
25 August 1955

To the Chairman [Mao Zedong], [Liu] Shaoqi, [Zhou] Enlai, Zhu De, Chen Yun, Peng Zhen, [Peng] Dehuai, [Dong] Biwu, [Lin] Boqu, Kang Sheng, [Zhang] Wentian, Lin Biao, [Deng] Xiaoping, Chen Yi, [Xi] Zhongxun, [Yang] Shangkun, [Wang] Jiaxiang, [Li] Kenong, [Luo] Ruiqing, Investigation, various vice ministers (2), assistants to minister (4), office (2), various departments, meeting, individual responsible for the room (send to commissioner)

(Top Secret)

Minutes of Conversation from the Meeting between Premier Zhou Ambassador  
Nedyam Raghavan  
(not proof read yet)

Time: 25 August 1955, 3:00 p.m.- 4:10 p.m.,  
Location: Zhongnanhai Area, Xi Hua Ting  
Our accompanying personnel: Minister's assistant Chen Jiakang, Pu Shouchang  
(Interpreter and [responsible for] documenting)  
Accompanying personnel from the Indian side: Counselor Singh

Premier Zhou said, regarding the general situation of the talks at Geneva, Ambassador Wang Bingnan and Envoy Ping Xuan have already notified the Indian main consul in Geneva. We believe, the Indian main consul has already reported to the Indian government in time, therefore it is not necessary to discuss in detail. Now [I] only want to talk a bit about the recent situation. At the moment, although we are still discussing the first meeting agenda, there are not many disputes [left]. The current dispute is circling around two issues; the first one is the issue of American expatriates in China; the second one is about China authorizing a third country, which is India, to handle the return of willing Chinese expatriates in the United States [to China]. The United States will not cease disputing on these two issues.

Regarding the first issue which is the issue of returning American expatriates in China [to the United States]; the Chinese government never had restrictions. Since liberation, one thousand five hundred American expatriates have already returned to their country; of which quite a few of them have violated the law but they received reduced sentences. Currently there are only eighty seven American expatriates in China; of which as long as they apply to return to their country and as long as their unfinished cases have closed, then they can all return to their own country.

Recently there have been American expatriates like that; we are preparing to notify the United States. There are some American expatriates who have not applied to return to their country, if they apply in the future, then we will not restrict [them]. There are also some American expatriates who are imprisoned because they violated the law; now we are currently examining their cases one by one. Some may be released early, but it is impossible to release them all at the same time, because they must be resolved one by one. The United States hopes that they can all be released at the same time. However, these American expatriates that violated the law are not the same as the American air force personnel that violated the law; most of [the American expatriates'] cases are civil criminal cases. The United States knows that releasing all of them at the same time is impossible; therefore they requested that we set a deadline for the release of all American expatriates that violated the law. This is also impossible. We told the American side, we will solve their problems as soon as

possible according to the performance of the American expatriates that violated the law and the improvement of relations between China and the United States. The United States knows that to resolve [this issue], this is the only way. At the conference dialogue, the American representative keeps saying that they respect China's sovereignty; that they will not intervene in China's judicial rights; and that they won't forcefully ask China to do this or that; however they are still tangling with this issue.

Regarding the second issue, which is the issue of authorizing a third country; the United States acknowledged that in the past they placed limitations on the return of Chinese expatriates to [China], but also said that the limitations have now been canceled already. Yet, Chinese expatriates still cannot return immediately, therefore the United States could not but agree to the method of China authorizing India to act as proxy and the United States has authorized the United Kingdom to act as [their] proxy. There are not many American expatriates in China, the issue [can be] easily resolved. China has many expatriates in the United States, the issue is complicated; and the restrictions on returning [to China] still have not been canceled. In addition there is also obstruction by the Chiang Kai-shek clan, therefore the United States could not but agree to the method of authorizing a third country to act as proxy. However during the wording of the agreement, the United States said that it should be the United States authorizing India to assist in the return of Chinese expatriates, this is very comical. It should be the United States agreeing to the authorizing of India [as a proxy on behalf of China] and China agreeing to the authorizing of the United Kingdom [as a proxy on behalf of the United States]. Currently this is merely an issue of wording, but the American side still continues to tangle. In the contents of the agreement, the United States cannot but acknowledge that India is acting as a proxy due to the request of China.

According to the discussion of ten meetings, the wording of the agreement is almost complete. At today's meeting, we will bring forth a revised draft; most of the wording is similar to what the United States brought forth and differs in only a few places. If the United States intends on reaching an agreement, then it can be done during today's meeting. Premier Zhou provided Ambassador Nedyam Raghavan with both the Chinese and English editions of the revised draft of the agreement statement that we will bring forth and asked him to forward it to the Indian government. [Premier Zhou] also stated that this agreement statement is currently not for public [release].

Premier Zhou then said what the United States wants to argue about is the wording regarding a deadline and authorizing a third country. The United States in the agreement statement that they provided used the wording of "rapid" in the first article about mutual notification. But actually this is to request us to provide a deadline at the conference. This is impossible. In a revised draft that we provided we changed "rapid" to "as soon as possible". In the second article about mutual notification, the original wording of the United States was China will authorize the United Kingdom and the United States will authorize India. We changed [the wording] to China agrees with authorizing the United Kingdom [as proxy] and the United States agrees with authorizing India [as proxy]. There are not many disputes left on wording; if an agreement is to be reached it can be reached today. However that estimation is impossible, because of the style of the United States [in conducting affairs]; and the United States even said that China is delaying. The truth is, China's position since the beginning has been just like what we said it is in our revised draft, it is still so. Initially we once used the method of mutual agreement to provide draft proposals, later the United States brought forth the method of mutual notification; we adopted that method. This method is convenient for the American representative to state for his country that the People's Republic of China has not been recognized; even though he is sitting with us for discussions.

Premier Zhou said that there is an issue that [he] wants to discuss with the Indian government. Mr. Pillai once expressed to Ambassador Yuan [the following], the Indian

government believes that the agreement should say that it is the Indian government not the Indian embassy that is being authorized [as proxy]; this will be convenient for the Indian government to specifically appoint embassies or consulates. Mr. Pillai said that the United States will be notified of the same point. In our revised draft, we have already made revisions according to the opinion of the Indian government; actually this is according to the revised wording from the United States, but in two places mentions of the Indian embassy could not be avoided. We have once mentioned to Mr. Menon when he came to Beijing regarding the matter of the Chinese government requesting the Indian government to act as proxy [for the Chinese government] in the United States; he has already reported to the Indian government. Actually, before that, we have already mentioned this matter. Regarding this matter, the agreement statement can only be like the revised draft.

However, our hope is that the Indian government appoints embassies or consulates rather than other organizations. The American side once disclosed they may possibly appoint the Red Cross, but since the current issue is not with releasing prisoners of war, it is more appropriate to have a third country's embassy or consulate as proxy. Premier Zhou asked Ambassador Nedyam Raghavan to forward this opinion to the Indian government. [Premier Zhou] also said that [he] is willing to know the opinion of the Indian government and whether or not the related wording in our revised draft is appropriate.

Premier Zhou also said that Mr. Menon once had two conversations with Ambassador Yuan and asked about the situation of the Geneva talks. Mr. Menon is concerned about the attitude of the United States at the conference, because the United States thinks that we can easily resolve issues, therefore they adopted a tough attitude. Our perception is also the same, but we have already told the American side our resolute attitude. The United States knows that our attitude is clear; it is impossible that they get whatever they want. Premier Zhou asked Ambassador Nedyam Raghavan to report this point to Prime Minister [Jawaharlal] Nehru and notify Mr. Menon. If the United Kingdom and the United States tried to inquire the attitude of the Chinese government from India, [then] Mr. Menon can tell them that according to the contents of his discussions in Beijing - what China said counts. Regarding the four American flight personnel and the [other] eleven American flight personnel, [when] China said that they will be released then they will be released; this is so even before the United States mentioned it. As for American expatriates with unfinished civil criminal cases, we are currently examining them one by one as according to their individual performance and improvements in the relations between China and the United States. We will deal with this as soon as possible. Regardless of whether this conference [will yield results] or not, our attitude is the same. Our attitude is forthright, and we can only act [in that manner]; we cannot disregard legal process within our country and give the United States whatever it wants. However on the other hand, China has tens of thousands of expatriates in the United States, it will take a long time to handle their issue. If this conference cannot reach an agreement, then the responsibility is with the United States. [We] have told American Ambassador Johnson the various points above. Premier Zhou asked Ambassador Nedyam Raghavan to convey the various points described above to the Indian government.

Nedyam Raghavan said, he will immediately convey [the above to the Indian government]. He said [R. N.] Kao will cross the border this month on the 25th and will reach Beijing on the 26th. He also said that he will convey the former to vice-minister Zhang; the Hong Kong government sent a memo of which the message seems to be more hopeful.

Premier Zhou said that, under the pressure of the United States, the British government does not dare to do anything. The United Kingdom which holds the chairmanship of the Inter-Parliamentary Union once invited us many times to join the Union; now that we decided to join, it did not pass after yesterday's intense

discussion in Helsinki. Countries that approve [of our joining] are Turkey, Lebanon, Switzerland and Sweden; countries that oppose are the United States and Thailand. Even in this kind of situation, the United Kingdom [which holds] the chairmanship did not dare to make a decision. Yesterday's discussion lasted until midnight, and the discussion will still continue today.