

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

DECLASSIFIED
PA/HO, Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
Date: 6-30-05

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March 6, 1972

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting Between Ambassador Huang Hua
and Cdr. Jonathan T. Howe in New York City,
March 6, 1972 - 7:15-8:20 p.m.

During the meeting, which was conducted in a most cordial atmosphere, the Chinese UN Ambassador raised four subjects:

- The first concerned Chinese agreement to disclosure of the Paris channel on March 10.
- The second concerned Chinese agreement to invite Congressmen Hale Boggs and Gerald Ford to visit China. Their visit would occur after that of Senators Mansfield and Scott and invitations would be transmitted through the new Paris channel.
- The third concerned security of the Chinese UN Mission following the death of a member of their delegation whom they believe was poisoned. They expressed the hope that Dr. Kissinger would ask the New York Police Department to strengthen security measures for the Chinese Mission. This is not so much in terms of numbers but in the type of security measures provided in light of the poisoning incident. They also indicated that when a written report from the medical examiner is received, they will ask the police department to formally investigate the death. They expressed the hope that the police department would do its utmost in the investigation to determine the cause.
- The fourth matter concerned a problem associated with the purchase of a house for their UN Mission. They have found a place, a Motor Inn near Lincoln Square on West 66th Street, and are close to an agreement with the present owners on price.

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They have been told it would take about two months before they can move in after terms of purchase have been agreed upon. Their lawyer has told them that this period could be shortened and as they are most anxious to move as soon as possible, they wondered whether Dr. Kissinger could render assistance.

The following is a more detailed report on the meeting and these four topics:

At about 4:00 p.m. the Chinese had called to request a meeting. At 7:15 p.m. the Ambassador, accompanied by his interpreter Miss Shih, entered our special meeting place in New York City. After social amenities and small talk, the Ambassador indicated that our message of March 3 had been transmitted to their government and they had received a reply. The Ambassador indicated that he would leave a copy of the message from his government, and then slowly read the note at Tab A concerning disclosure of the Paris channel on March 10 and Chinese agreement to invite Congressmen Boggs and Ford to visit the PRC. In answer to a question concerning announcement of the invitation to the two Congressmen, the Ambassador indicated that it was his assumption that there would be no announcement of the invitations until they had been received in the Paris channel. He referred to the fact that the visit of the two Senate leaders had already been announced.

The Ambassador then raised two other concerns:

Security of Chinese Mission. In presenting his concerns about security, the Ambassador referred to a prepared text. He began by stating that Dr. Kissinger on a number of occasions had expressed concern about the security of the Chinese Mission in New York. The Chinese appreciated this very much. There had been one unfortunate incident which the Ambassador would like to mention. On the night of February 6-7 a staff member, Wang Hsi Tsanh, died in his room on the 14th floor of the Roosevelt Hotel. He was a young man, being only 26 years old.

The Ambassador then gave the following details concerning the death. On the night of February 6 at 11:30 p.m. Mr. Wang went to his room which he lived in by himself. At 9:00 a.m. on February 7 some of the Chinese personnel knocked on his door. When there was no reply, they entered his room and found him dead in his bed. They also found the blanket on the body and everything else in the room in order.

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They immediately informed the New York Police Department as well as Mrs. Loeb's Commission (apparently a UN or N. Y. group that helps take care of the missions). They also informed the lawyer and doctors of the Mission. The police called an ambulance and the doctors and lawyer soon arrived. After the examination by a doctor they ascertained that Mr. Wang was dead. The Chinese then sent the body to the New York Chief Medical Examiner for autopsy to determine the cause of the death.

Between 6:00 and 8:00 in the evening of February 7 the police sent people to the Roosevelt Hotel to inspect the surroundings. After their inspection the police expressed the opinion that it was not possible that the death was caused by outside causes because they hadn't found any sign of "outsiders." The police took away what was left in a tea cup and also the pillow case because it contained some blood spots and saliva.

On February 12 members of the Mission met Dr. Helpern and associates of the Chief Medical Examiner's Office. According to Dr. Helpern, the autopsy did not find any cause of death. The Chinese were informed that a toxicological examination was being carried out.

On February 18 some members of the Chinese Mission also met Dr. Helpern again. This time, according to chemical reports and toxicologic analysis, they reported finding in the blood, liver, and in the tea a large amount of nicotine, an amount large enough to cause death. The Chinese were told that additional examinations would be needed of Mr. Wang's brain, stomach, and urinary system. Dr. Helpern also told them that the tissues of the dead body indicated no abnormal phenomenon and that Mr. Wang had not died of natural diseases or physical causes but rather from chemicals, i. e. toxicosis.

The Ambassador then said that with regard to toxicosis, the medical examiners estimated there were two possible causes:

- The deceased could have injected himself, but they had found no holes in his body indicating injection.
- Another cause might be that it was done by "outsiders."

The Ambassador said that the Chinese had studied and analyzed the case and ruled out the possibility of self-injection of nicotine or the possibility

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of Mr. Wang himself taking the nicotine. He indicated that this was not possible because Mr. Wang seemed very lively and happy. He was not gloomy, upset or depressed. In addition, Mr. Wang seldom went out to shops or drugstores to buy things. He couldn't speak English and therefore always went out with his friends. The Ambassador stated, "We think he might not know such a thing as nicotine." For this reason they had ruled out the possibility of suicide.

The other possibility left, the Ambassador continued, was that someone had entered the room and put nicotine in the teacup and water Mr. Wang drank. He stated that they had asked Dr. Helpert to give them a written report of the chemical analysis so that they could inform the New York Police Department of the investigation and find out the reason. They wanted to find out what was behind all this and find out who was the murderer.

On February 25 some members of the Mission again contacted the Chief Medical Examiner's Office and Dr. Helpert told them they had found nicotine in the water of the thermos bottle that Mr. Wang had used but the nicotine in the thermos was not as "obvious" (clarified as not as concentrated) as was the nicotine in the tea cup. The medical examiners had also analyzed the stomach of the deceased but had found no nicotine. It was explained that any nicotine in the stomach had probably been rapidly absorbed. This, according to the Ambassador, was the result of the investigation up to February 25.

For the present he stated we are still waiting for the report of the Chief Medical Examiner's Office. When they have a written report, the Chinese will formally ask the New York Police Department to carry out an investigation and find out the cause. Since Dr. Kissinger had on many occasions asked about the safety of the Mission, they hoped that Dr. Kissinger would ask the New York Police Department to strengthen security measures for the Chinese Mission. The Ambassador added that when they have the written report, they will ask for an investigation. They hope that the police department will do its best to investigate and find the cause of the death. The Ambassador asked Commander Howe to convey this to Dr. Kissinger.

After expressing sympathy and indicating that Dr. Kissinger would do all that he could, Commander Howe asked if they were also concerned about the delay in receiving the written report of the Chief Medical

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Examiner. In reply the Ambassador stated that on February 25 Dr. Helpern had indicated that the report would be ready within two weeks. He said the Chinese would get in contact with Dr. Helpern at that time. He also remarked that Ambassador Phillips and Mrs. Loeb had expressed sympathy after the incident and that it had been greatly appreciated.

Location for Mission. The Ambassador then, speaking without notes, indicated that the President and Dr. Kissinger had expressed an interest in China in rendering assistance in helping the Chinese find a house. He stated that they had found a Motor Inn near Lincoln Square on West 66th Street. During the negotiations thus far they had come quite near in price but had not yet come to an agreement. They had entrusted their lawyer, Mr. Popper (this is phonetically correct, the Chinese were not certain of the exact spelling), to conduct the negotiations. They had also received active assistance from Mrs. Loeb's office. She had become involved because the Motor Inn has a mortgage for a long period -- over a decade. After talking to Mrs. Loeb and the Board of the insurance company, it was agreed to receive payment now with \$106,000 interest paid by the Chinese side. The Chinese had agreed to this condition. At the present time the two sides are negotiating on price and the lawyer representing the Chinese is negotiating with the "broker" of the owners of the Inn. The Ambassador expressed the hope that they would soon come to an agreement.

He then reiterated that when in China, both the President and Dr. Kissinger had expressed a desire to render assistance and this was greatly appreciated. The main concern now, he stated, was that after agreement was reached on price, it would take a long time to move in. They had been told it would take about two months. Mr. Popper had told the Chinese that the time period could be shortened and the Chinese hoped this was so. Their hope is that as soon as possible after agreement is reached they would be able to move in. The Ambassador then said, "We wonder whether Dr. Kissinger can render assistance in connection with this?" He added that because the Roosevelt Hotel is in one of the busiest areas of the city, it was difficult for them to concentrate on their work. Commander Howe replied that he would convey the message to Dr. Kissinger and he was sure that we would look into possible ways to facilitate more rapid Chinese possession.

The Ambassador said that this was all he had to convey but that he did wish to send his warm greetings to Dr. Kissinger. Commander Howe reciprocated.

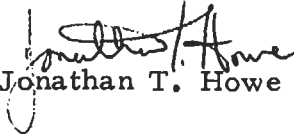
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While eating a light snack, the Ambassador commented that the communique had received extensive attention by the American people and by people abroad.

He noted in answer to a question that he didn't feel that more numbers of police were needed or superficial protection but that measures should be taken in other protective areas. He also commented that when they asked the New York Police Department to conduct an investigation, we should all be aware that it will probably cause an "uproar" in the press.


Jonathan T. Howe

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