

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador Ch'en Ch'u, Deputy Permanent  
Representative of the PRC to the UN  
Mrs. Shih  
Commander Jonathan T. Howe, NSC Staff

DATE & TIME: Saturday, June 10, 1972 - 4:00-4:45 p.m.

PLACE: New York City

The conversation began in a cordial atmosphere of relaxed conversation in which non-controversial issues were discussed. Commander Howe had gotten to know Ambassador Ch'en fairly well in the technical meetings and banquets during the October 1971 trip when the Ambassador represented the Ministry of Information in discussing press plans for the President's trip.

Ambassador Ch'en asked when Dr. Kissinger would be returning from Japan and noted that Dr. Kissinger was certainly having a busy schedule. He commented that it must be difficult to adjust to all the time zone changes. Commander Howe replied that Dr. Kissinger certainly had a most demanding travelling schedule, but that he was a man of tremendous capacity and endurance and was looking forward to returning to the PRC. Ambassador Ch'en asked if Winston Lord was also in Japan and noted that Mr. Lord, Commander Howe and Mr. Jenkins would be returning to China. Tea was served and the Ambassador asked if Commander Howe liked it. Commander Howe indicated that he did and that the Chinese has most generously given some to those who visited in October and February. The Ambassador indicated that if Commander Howe ever wanted any there was always plenty available at the Delegation. He also commented that there would be many more travels to the PRC.

On a more serious note, Ambassador Ch'en stated that the reason for asking someone to come up that day was because U.S. military planes had repeatedly intruded into Chinese air space. Using type written notes he pointed out that there had been a violation on June 4 which had been mentioned to Mr. Lord. The Chinese had protested the intrusion and had asked the U.S. side to take effective measures to prevent recurrences. Subsequently, there were three

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intrusions on the 9th of June. The first had occurred in Kwangsi Province with the planes coming from the direction of North Vietnam. The first two planes had intruded between 11:25 and 11:28 Peking time. The intrusions had occurred over many areas of Kwangsi Province. He paused and asked if Commander Howe knew the place and pointed out that it was northeast of an important pass. He commented that the penetration had been eight kilometers in depth.

Referring to the second incident he alleged that four planes had intruded over the same area during the times 11:30 and 11:33 hours and penetrated in an area 12 kilometers in width to three kilometers in depth. The third violation occurred when the same batch of aircraft intruded over another area northeast of Haiphong, near the border of the DRV. This had occurred between 11:30 and 11:37 hours and the planes had penetrated 30 kilometers in width and ten kilometers in depth. He stated that the Chinese side was lodging a protest against the repeated intrusions of U.S. planes while carrying out wanton bombing raids against the DRV and that they strongly demanded that the U.S. side take effective measures to stop the recurrences of similar intrusions.

In reply, Commander Howe stated that the U.S. side had taken the allegations of June 4 most seriously and was conducting a very thorough investigation with great earnestness. The U.S. side hoped to have the results of this investigation within the next day or two. He then stated that if these reports were confirmed they would be a violation of the procedures and precautions which the U.S. side had established to guard against inadvertent intrusions. The U.S. side would investigate these allegations with similar earnestness and thoroughness.

The Ambassador responded that he took note of the fact that the U.S. side was conducting an investigation and that it was not U.S. policy to violate the border. He asked that the U.S. side take serious measures to prevent recurrences. On June 4 there had been an intrusion; five days later there were now four intrusions. He reiterated the "strong demand" that the U.S. side take measures to prevent a recurrence, and handed Commander Howe a note which contained most of the points made orally (Tab A). Commander Howe read the note and indicated that the U.S. side took these charges with the utmost seriousness and they would be investigated immediately.

The Ambassador then indicated that his business was completed. Commander Howe remarked that General Haig had told him a report had been received

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from Stockholm where the Environmental Conference was being held, indicating that the Chinese representatives had made a strong statement with regard to U.S. policy. Commander Howe noted that the response by the U.S. representative there would be non-polemic and reasonable and would be measured and calm in tone. Ambassador Ch'en commented that it was necessary for the Chinese delegation to express views with regard to the bombing and mining of North Vietnam at this conference. He supposed the U.S. delegation would make a response and wondered if it had done so. Commander Howe repeated that he thought some mild statement would be made but indicated he did not know when this would occur.

The conversation then turned to lighter subjects concerning the U.S. and China and Dr. Kissinger's forthcoming trip. Of interest was the very clear indication that the Chinese were looking forward to the visit. They referred to arrangements for the "honored guests" on several occasions. Commander Howe noted that we hoped to have in the next day or two a complete list of the party, including aircraft crew and passport numbers, and to provide certain other technical information.

In spite of the serious discussion of the aircraft intrusions, the atmosphere was very warm and friendly. The Chinese were obviously looking forward to Dr. Kissinger's trip. Ambassador Ch'en apologized for asking Commander Howe to come to New York on a Saturday and hoped that it had not been too difficult a trip. Commander Howe explained that his office, like that of the Chinese, worked seven days a week and that it was nice to get out in the sunshine and always a pleasure to see them. Indicative of the courteous and pleasant atmosphere, Ambassador Ch'en offered a car to take Commander Howe to the airport but this was politely declined.

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Following the U.S. military planes' intrusion of China's airspace over Pinghsiang area, Kwangsi Province on June 4, U.S. military planes again intruded into China's Kwangsi Province from the direction of Viet Nam three times in succession on June 9:

The first batch of two planes intruded into the airspace over Ningming area at 11:25 - 11:28 hours (Peking time, the same hereafter) and penetrated 20 kilometres in width and 8 kilometres in depth; the second batch of four planes intruded into the airspace over Ningming area at 11:32 - 11:33 hours and penetrated 12 kilometres in width and 3 kilometres in depth; the same batch of planes intruded into the airspace over Tunghsing area at 11:37 - 11:39 hours and penetrated 30 kilometres in width and 10 kilometres in depth. The Chinese side once again lodges a protest with the U.S. side against the repeated intrusions into China's airspace by U.S. military planes while they are carrying out wanton bombing raids against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and strongly demands that the U.S. side immediately take effective measures to stop the recurrence of similar intrusions.