

Copy

Harbin, Manchuria  
July 20, 1934

Mr. Arthur Garrels,  
Consul General  
American Consulate,  
Tojo, Japan.

Dear Mr. Garrels,

In looking at my letter to you, I find that it is as far back as June 26th that I wrote you last. A number of things have happened since that time and while most of them are of no consequence, I can give you a brief account of the incidents ~~leading~~ leading up to our arrival in Harbin.

After I wrote to you I saw Hayakawa of the SMR and other officials who inquired if and when I was going to wire you about the matter of approaching the Japanese Foreign Office. The insistence that I should wire became so noticeable that I gave no direct answer about the method, and was very glad that I had written you instead. I expected the answer which came, though I did ~~not~~ have an idea that the answer might be given the Japanese for the Kwantung Government, that we were in Japan for the purposes of collecting grasses. In the meantime I had ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ arranged a further schedule with Dr. Sato which went into some detail as to region to be investigated.

On July 7, Mr. Takata of the Kwantung Bureau of Information and Propaganda came to Dairen with Dr. Sato. He said that information had been received from their Foreign Office about our activities and that it would soon be permissible to continue. The information which he had had come by way of Hsingkin, and was involved somewhat with a similar request on the part of a Professor Roerich. After that there ensued two or three meetings in which I was quizzed quite extensively about the connection to none of which they seemed to get any satisfactory answer. There seemed to be no objection to our going, and in fact, they opened up with a good deal of information about the Hailar region, the bandits the police, and the government in general. I had still to make further depositions to the police about our arms and ammunition, give photographs, sign papers before a notary. But their patience was exhausted at last and we were allowed to leave Dairen last Sunday.

May I say that throughout all of the month in Dairen that Mr. Vincent was most helpful and useful, where his judgement permitted him to act, and where his advice availed when action was impossible.

My first approach in Hsingking was to the Japanese Embassy, where I presented a letter given me by the SMR to Mr. Tsurumi, one of the Secretaries. It was merely for the purpose of stating in the briefest way the purpose of our trip with all of which he was informed in detail in advance. From there I went to the Manchukuo Government Office and saw Mr. Kawasaki, Director of Information and Publicity. Here again I rehearsed the story. Mr. Kawasaki has lived fifteen years in America and speaks our language much better than the average Japanese and seems to have a greater comprehension than most of them. He brought out his field and inquired somewhat into the Roerich affair, and the reason why we were included in it. The whole tenor of his remarks was so like the discussion in Dairen, that there could be no reasonable doubt that the discussion in both cases had been prompted from a single source. In this case, however, there was a letter from Mr. Coville saying that we were coming for a purpose and that he understood that a Mr. Roerich was included in the party also; which on its part was enough to get permission. Mr. Kawasaki told me that there would be no trouble, that we were at liberty to go where we could under the circumstances and that they were glad to help us. While the interview got on well enough so far as the essentials of the business was concerned, I could see that he was satisfied with the outcome, and there appeared to be a possibility that something more could be learned on my part. He was staying at the Yamato Hotel, as I found out at lunch time and I left word for him in the late afternoon that if he could spare the time, I would like to see him there for a few minutes. He sent up word about 5.30 that he would see me.

I began by saying that in the meeting that morning I had not explained fully enough, perhaps, the inclusion of Dr. Sato of the Kwantung Government in the party as well as Mr. Takata who wishes to go with us, as his duty to write books about Manchukuo required a little first hand information on the layout of the country, that the expedition was organized on my part wholly for scien-



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tific study and that the SMR evidently thought some good would come of it for them to have Sr. Sato associated in the work. He said that it was not our work or activities that were giving him any concern.

There has been a growing suspicion that everything was not just right soon after Professor Roerich landed in Manchoukuo. There was an organized propaganda in all papers about him, all the Russian papers in Harbin carried long interviews in which a great deal seems to have been said. Then he came to Hsinking to make the presentation to the Emperor of the Banner of Peace and the Order of Merit. On arrival in Hsinking the Professor distributed hand-bills to all comers giving in some details the more commonplace contributions to culture which he had made, with some inconspicuous details of his life. The hand-bill carried his picture and pictures of one or more of his paintings. There were interviews with the press. After a suitable interval the Professor returned to Harbin.

In the meantime the Professor had engaged a Japanese Secretary and Interpreter. While the engagement was nominal enough the Japanese is out of Mr. Kawasaki's office. During the next week or two the Japanese secret police brought in the details of the Roerich activities in Harbin, the White Russian cliques which were enlisting his support, and the general trend of the press interviews. Mr. Kawasaki gave orders through the Japanese secretary that the publicity business would have to cease for his own good, as there was no telling what would come of it. Because of all of this activity up here my progress was being delayed until they could get further information about me and my affairs and had I no connection with the Roerich name I would have had no trouble at any point and would have been in the field long ago.

I asked Mr. Kawasaki if it would be possible to secure a copy of the hand-bill. I explained that my government would be interested to know something of this, and that I had a personal interest in it in case we were mentioned in connection with the expedition. He said he would give me one if there were any to spare, and I should call at his office in the morning to receive it. That ended the discussion for the afternoon.

The next morning I called for the hand bill. There was no extra copy but he would have copies types for me, which would have the text but not the photographs. As it would take a little time, he would deliver them to me ~~and~~ later in the day. He then showed me a small photograph of the Banner of Peace and the Order of Merit. I asked him what the symbolism meant which he did not seem to know. I asked if it was easy to get an interview with the Emperor; not that I wanted one; but just as a matter of customary procedure in the business of government in Manchukuo. He said not but in this case a man turned up with a reputation and large announcements, with a name in Who's Who and they thought that probably he deserved the honor. In addition, he professed to be pro-Japanese. On further questioning on my part he intimated that both the Japanese Foreign Office and the Manchukuo Government had been taken in, but that now it had gone so far that there was nothing to be done about it.

I am enclosing a copy of the hand bill which was given to me by Mr. Kawasaki and which he certified to be a copy taken from his files.

The trip from Hsinking was delayed somewhat because of the flood, so that the wires I sent saying that I would arrive were not believed and no reservations were made, as had long been promised. However I saw the younger Mr. Roerich yesterday morning. They have been a little impatient at my nonarrival and are ready to start as soon as I can get ready. They have arranged everything. He got for me a permit from the government to go into the Salar region and had left it at the Consulate, where I could call for it. Although the Professor is the leader of the expedition, I have had no word from him nor have I seen him; nor do I know that an interview will be granted me before the start. On calling at the Consulate I found that Mr. Coville had obtained the permits for us to go, and had obtained them for the Roerich's as well. Do down to the present they have moment I have yet to discover the most minute contribution which they have made to the expedition, except to hold us back for the better part of six weeks, perhaps to lose us the season entirely, and put us and the government to considerable expense and irritation.

Throughout all of this I do not recall that I have given a positive answer at any time and "Yes" has practically dropped out of my vocabulary in dealing with the Japanese. From your letter I see that you regard it as a ticklish situation. I do not think it needs to be so regarded any longer, for the Japanese are under no further illusions about any members of the party, and I will not be asking



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for any help beyond this point. I do not intend to get out from under the feet of the Japanese army at Hailar, though the main part of the expedition will visit the White Russian summer resort in that region. The Japanese secretary who speaks no English and is no help to me, is supplemented by several servants to go along, according to Mr. Roerich, but so far have made no move in that direction. But there may be plenty of time before the railroad is completed permitting the baggage to arrive.

0 If there appear to be any points which I have not sufficiently explained I will be glad to do so. The information from Mr. Kawasaki was very straightforward, and I think I have given the gist of it here. The reason he gave it may be because he wanted me to pass it on; or it may be the reaction of a person who being taken in, wants to explain it the best he can. At any rate he gave the copy of the hand-bill as a contribution, and I think his reactions genuine enough.

+ 0 As this probably falls far short of the kind of letter you expect to receive in the State Department, I trust you will make some suitable disposal of it.

With kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

MG Macmillan