Protocol of the Meeting of the Board of the Foreign Ministry of the USSR, 29 June 1950

SECRET

PROTOCOL №15

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY OF THE USSR

Members of the board that participated: Comrades Gromyko, Bogomolov, Zori, Lavrentev, Podtserob, Arutiunian, Golunsky, Pavlov, Sobolev, Strunnikov.

Apart from the members of the board, other officials of the Foreign Ministry participated (attachment №1, 2)

1. On the state of affairs in India and the policy of the Indian government

Speaker: Comrade Novikov

Participants: Comrades Bakhitov, Volkov, Miroshin

RESOLUTION:

Approve the draft resolution of the Committee, submitted by Comrades Zorin, Pavlov, Strunnikov, Novikov, and Bakhitov, with changes made during the Board meeting (attachment №3)

II. On the admission and submission of documents for the Department of South-East Asia

Speaker: Comrade Rezanov

Participants: Comrades Bakhitov, Miroshin, Zabrodin, Masliaev.

RESOLUTION:

Approve the draft resolution of the Committee with changes made during the Board meeting (attachment №4)

Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR

[Signature] (A. Gromyko)

Attachment №1

LIST

Ambassadors and Consuls of the USSR abroad, who participated at the Board meeting of the USSR Foreign Ministry on 29 June 1950 (during discussions of all issues)

1. NOVIKOV K.V. - USSR Ambassador in India
2. SILIN M.A. - USSR Ambassador in Czechoslovakia
3. NEMCHINA S.S. - USSR Ambassador in Siam
4. REZANOV G. F. - USSR Ambassador in Venezuela
5. TAVADZE I.K - USSR Ambassador in Syria and Lebanon

Attachment №2

LIST

Foreign Ministry cadre, who participated at the Board meeting of the USSR Foreign Ministry on 29 June 1950 (during discussions of the first issue).

1. SERGEEV M.G.
2. GRIBANOV M.G
3. KIRSANOV S.P.
4. ORLOV P.D.
5. KURDIUKOV I.F.
6. ZABRODIN E.G.
7. VALKOV V.A.
8. BAZAROV S.T.
9. BAKHITOV M.SH.
10. ROSHCHIN A.A.
11. MOLOCHKOV F.F.

RESOLUTION OF BOARD OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY OF THE USSR FROM 29 June 1950.

Having listened to and discussed the account of the Ambassador of the USSR in India, Comrade K.V. Novikov, about the situation in India, the Board remarks:

1. The account submitted by Comrade Novikov, along with the Embassy report for 1949 and several other Embassy documents, contains a number of unclear and incorrect statements regarding the analysis of the economic and political situation in India and the foreign policy of the Indian government. For example, the class analysis of the Indian government is unclear. Thus there is an incorrect attempt to view the Nehru government as an “obstacle to fascism in the country”, despite the fact that the government applies fascist methods to suppress progressive forces in the country and supports the Anglo-American bloc in its foreign policy.

In his analysis of the situation and the role of the Indian Communist Party, Comrade Novikov, incorrectly argues that there is no political force in the country that could channel people’s grievances in right direction, and thus he underestimates the role and the influence of the Communist Party and the mass democratic organizations connected to it.

The argument that “with India’s help British imperialism managed to suspend the expansion of national-liberation struggles in Southeast Asia” is also incorrect.

The account is unclear in its analysis of the policy of the Anglo-American bloc towards Indo-Pakistani disagreements. It generally characterizes Anglo-American policy as a strategy to “establish friendly Indo-Pakistani relations.”

2. The Embassy satisfactorily handled the task to organise the work of a diplomatic representative office in India. A large body of necessary reference material has been assembled. Annual reports for 1948 and 1949 have been submitted, and these contain a rather large pool of data on the internal and economic situation in India, on India’s foreign policy and its relations with the Anglo-American bloc, the Soviet Union, China, and the countries of Southeast Asia.

3. However, the practical side of the Embassy’s work has a number of significant deficiencies: the Embassy’s connections with state, social, and cultural figures are generally limited; in-country residence has not been used for a well-rounded, in-depth study of India; the diplomatic corps does not pay enough attention to studying the domestic and foreign policies of the Indian government.

4. The Embassy staff has not been adequately selected, in particular with regards to knowledge of English and local languages (of the whole diplomatic corps only four people are fluent in English; the others have either just completed two years of study or are still undergoing training to attain the basic level); Embassy cadre who studied local languages were only those who already knew English and who had already undergone preliminary training in local languages in Moscow.

5. The Department for Southeast Asia of the Foreign Ministry of the USSR has not undertaken any measures to improve the work of the Embassy. In particular, the departmental conclusions based on the Embassy report for 1948 and on Comrade Novikov’s information letter for 1949, have not been communicated to the heads of the Foreign Ministry of the USSR, which is unacceptable for an operational department.

Having considered the abovementioned points and the suggestions made by Comrade Novikov and the Southeast Asia Department, the Board of the Foreign Ministry DECLARES:

1. Oblige Comrade K.V. Novikov to take into account the abovementioned errors in the evaluation of the political situation in India and to improve Embassy work towards an all-encompassing and in-depth study of the country, its domestic and foreign policy, along with the policy of the United States and Britain and the Anglo-American contradictions in India. Oblige Comrade Novikov to ensure timely submission of information, notes, policy reports with conclusions and recommendations, with a special emphasis on Indo-Soviet relations.

2. Oblige Comrade K.V. Novikov to undertake measures to widen links to political and public figures in India, acting with necessary caution.

3. Organise training to improve the professional qualifications of the Embassy staff with a special focus on mastering local languages.

4. Oblige the Department for Southeast Asia to improve control over the activities of the Embassy and ensure that all the documents, coming in from the Embassy, are reported to the heads of the Foreign Ministry of the USSR with recommendations from the Department and in a timely fashion.

5. Deem necessary to widen cultural links of Soviet public organizations (Sovinformburo, Antifascist Youth Committee, Antifascist Women’s Committee, All-Union Peace Committee, the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and others) with progressive Indian organizations. Put this issue forward on the agenda of the CPSU Central Committee.

Also deem necessary to open permanent exhibitions and VOKS[[1]](#footnote-1) libraries in Bombay and Calcutta for the purpose of publishing a journal and information bulletins in the languages of the provinces Bombay and Calcutta.

6. In view of the expansion of Embassy activities, deem necessary the addition of one First Secretary, one Second Secretary, and one attaché to the Embassy staff. Order the Cadre Department of the Foreign Ministry of the USSR (Comrade Strunnikov) and the Finance Department (Comrade Grigorev) to prepare suggestions on this issue for the State Commission by 15July.

Order the Cadre Department to formulate suggestions for supplementing the current Embassy staff with additional cadre from the Foreign Ministry, who possess knowledge of English and local languages by 1 August.

[RSASPH, f.82, inv.2, fold. 1032, pp.58-64]

Keywords: India

1. All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries [↑](#footnote-ref-1)