

preliminary meeting proved that the members of the delegation were as well-informed in the matter as the ministers and the Chief of the General Staff, and that these gentlemen had not observed silence with their fellow-countrymen, though they had imposed absolute discretion upon me. I therefore considered myself at liberty, a couple of days after the meeting, to speak freely on the subject with Dr LI CHI, as he had shown the most interest in the flying plans. He replied with a smile that he was already cognizant of my desire to try and obtain a flying permit after the preliminary expedition, and that he was also aware that I had bound myself to silence on the subject.

8. Routes and possibilities for geological and archaeological finds. Here it was a matter of determining the roads we should travel and whether and how long we should stop at different points of geological or archaeological interest. At a later stage this question gave rise to many debates.

9. Staffs, especially the scientific staff, and the distribution of the scientists and other trained assistants. The delegates asked me to make a list of all the members of the expedition, stating their names, nationality, ages, the work they had previously been engaged in, whether they were professional soldiers, whether they had taken part in the war, and if so on what fronts. Everything was noted down with the most careful attention.

10. Transport; routes for the return journey with details of all alternatives. It appeared from the discussion of this point that it was feared that we might cross the Chinese frontier somewhere in the north or north-west, betaking ourselves to outer Mongolian, Russian or British-Indian territory, in order in this way to rob them of the collections. I endeavoured to reassure them by pointing out that I had given my word of honour that I should return to Peking without fail and whatever happened.

11. Any plans of publication and their approval by the proper Chinese authorities. For military reasons the meteorological journal was not to be published without their special permission. For the rest, the whole question of publication was to be settled by a later decision, and it looked as if they intended to deprive us of the right to print anything at all in Europe.

12. Time-limit for the scientific work undertaken by the party. I calculated that this preliminary expedition would take about one and a half years.

13. Any aeroplane flying planned. This question was answered in the negative, as no flying was to take place during the preliminary expedition.

14. Any detail information that was not included in this list.

During the whole of this cross-examination they were extremely polite and affable, and the keenness of their logic and their penetration were astonishing. Finally, they asked for my written replies to the 14 points. Professor ANDERSSON and I therefore drew up a thoroughly worked out list, which was to be submitted at a big general meeting a couple of days later.