

This had reassured the authorities in Pao-t'ou and strengthened the position there of the expedition. At the same time came the news that FENG YÜ-HSIANG'S troops had moved further to the west.

RUSSIAN ANXIETY

From the Swedish Minister in Berlin, AF WIRSÉN, I heard that the Russian ambassador, KRESTINSKI, had expressed to him certain misgivings regarding the expedition, which he considered was altogether too big. Moscow was unable to understand its real intentions. This was but a first sign of that suspicion and ill-will that a few short years afterwards was to render impossible the execution of the German flying plans through Central Asia. Russia had obviously great influence in Sinkiang, which was our first major objective. We saw that we might expect new storm-clouds from this quarter. Never was a peaceful scientific expedition, of such importance from the point of view of international communications, forced to cope with such difficulties.

VISIT TO YANG YÜ-TING

On April 13th envoyé EWERLÖF and I paid a visit to YANG YÜ-TING, the chief of the general staff and a sympathetic, dignified and fine personality. Without any beating about the bush he said straight out: »It has been said that you are Bolsheviks or at least in alliance with the Bolsheviks. Marshal CHANG TSO-LIN and I have not credited this, especially as the Crown Prince of Sweden gave your expedition his strong support. I would now ask you to give your own account of the matter.» Envoyé EWERLÖF related his negotiations with WELLINGTON KOO and WANG YIN-T'AI, and I gave a detailed description of the origin, development and aims of the expedition. The general then replied as follows: »Now I am fully informed and the envoyé's guarantee of your staff's integrity is sufficient. For the present we need think only of the preliminary expedition. Everything is clear. You may set out when you like. I will see that everything is done to facilitate your enterprise. When conditions in China have returned to normal we will do our utmost to help you realize the second part of your plan, namely, the flying. You of course understand that in the middle of civil war it is necessary to observe the greatest caution, and we must think above all of the national defence. In normal conditions there can be no obstacles to the realization of this part of your plan. On your return we will have another conversation.»

I told him that as far as we were concerned we had thought only of flying over geographically interesting tracts and that strategical points had not the