

1949

Speeches/Documents

Title: On the outrages by British warships statement by the spokesman of the general headquarters of the Chinese people's liberation army

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Description:.

[This statement was drafted by Comrade Mao Tse-tung for the spokesman of the General Headquarters of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. It expressed the solemn stand of the Chinese people who fear no threats and resolutely oppose imperialist aggression; it also set forth the foreign policy of the new China which was soon to be established.]

We denounce the preposterous statement of the warmonger Churchill. [2] In the British House of Commons on April 26, Churchill demanded that the British government should send two aircraft carriers to the Far East for "effective power of retaliation". What are you "retaliating" for, Mr. Churchill? British warships together with Kuomintang warships intruded into the defence area of the Chinese People's Liberation Army and fired on the People's Liberation Army, causing no less than 252 casualties among our loyal and gallant fighters. Since the British have trespassed on Chinese territory and committed so great a crime, the People's Liberation Army has good reason to demand that the British government admit its wrongdoing, apologize and make compensation. Isn't this what you should do, instead of dispatching forces to China to "retaliate" against the Chinese People's Liberation Army? Prime Minister Attlee's statement is also wrong. [3] Britain, he said, has the right to send her warships into China's Yangtse River. The Yangtse is an inland waterway of China. What right have you British to send in your warships? You have no such right. The Chinese people will defend their territory and sovereignty and absolutely will not permit encroachment by foreign governments. Attlee said that the People's Liberation Army "would be prepared to allow the ship [the *Amethyst*] to proceed to Nanking but only on condition that she should assist the People's Liberation Army to cross the Yangtse". Attlee lied. The People's Liberation Army gave no permission to the *Amethyst* to proceed to Nanking. The People's Liberation Army does not want the armed forces of any foreign country to help it cross the Yangtse or to do anything else. On the contrary, the People's Liberation Army demands that Britain, the United States and France quickly withdraw their armed forces -- their warships, military aircraft and marines stationed in the Yangtse and Whangpoo Rivers and other parts of China -- from China's territorial inland waters, seas, land and air and that they refrain from helping the enemy of the Chinese people to wage civil war. The Chinese People's Revolutionary Military Commission and the People's Government have so far not established diplomatic relations with any foreign government. The Chinese People's Revolutionary Military Commission and the People's Government will protect those foreign nationals in China who are engaged in legitimate

pursuits. They are willing to consider the establishment of diplomatic relations with foreign countries; such relations must be based on equality, mutual benefit, mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and, first of all, on no help being given to the Kuomintang reactionaries. They will tolerate no act of intimidation by any foreign government. A foreign government which wishes to consider establishing diplomatic relations with us must sever relations with the remnant Kuomintang forces and withdraw its armed forces from China. Attlee complained that the Communist Party of China, having no diplomatic relations with foreign countries, was unwilling to have contacts with the old diplomatic personnel of foreign governments (consuls recognized by the Kuomintang). Such complaints are groundless. In the past few years, the governments of the United States, Britain, Canada, etc. have helped the Kuomintang to oppose us. Can Mr. Attlee have forgotten this? Can it also be that Mr. Attlee does not know which country gave the Kuomintang the *Chungking*,^[4] the heavy cruiser which was recently sunk?

NOTES

1. On April 20-21 1949, while the People's Liberation Army was fighting its way across the Yangtse, the *Amethyst* and three other British warships intruded into the river, an inland waterway of China, and, together with Kuomintang warships, fired on our army, causing 252 casualties. The People's Liberation Army returned the fire; the *Amethyst* was disabled and forced to anchor near Chinkiang; the other three British warships escaped. The British authorities requested that the *Amethyst* should be allowed to leave, and its captain, acting on the orders of Brind, Commander-in-Chief of the British Far Eastern Fleet, conducted negotiations with the representative of our army. During these negotiations, the British side consistently prevaricated and refused to admit its criminal acts of aggression. While the negotiations were continuing, on the night of July 30, the *Amethyst* forced her way alongside a passenger ship, the *Liberated Chiangling*, which was going downstream off Chinkiang, and escaped by using that ship as a shield. When our army signalled a warning to the *Amethyst* to stop, she opened fire, collided with and sank a number of junks and escaped from the Yangtse River.

2. On April 26, 1949, speaking in the British House of Commons, Churchill, the chieftain of the British Conservative Party, slandered as an "atrocious outrage" the action taken by the Chinese People's Liberation Army in counter-attacking the British warships which had fired on our army, and demanded that the British government "get in Chinese waters one aircraft carrier, if not two, capable of . . . effective power of retaliation".

3. On April 26, 1949, British Prime Minister Attlee declared in the House of Commons that British naval vessels had been within their rights in going up the Yangtse on their "peaceful missions", because they had the permission of the Kuomintang government of China. At the same time, when speaking about the negotiations which the British representative was holding with the representative of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, Attlee lied, saying that the Chinese People's Liberation Army "would be prepared to allow the ship [the *Amethyst*] to proceed to Nanking but only on condition that she should assist the People's Liberation Army to cross the Yangtse".

4. It was the British government which in February 1948 gave the Kuomintang the heavy cruiser *Chungking*, the largest cruiser in the Kuomintang navy. On February 25, 1949, the officers and men of the cruiser revolted, renounced their allegiance to the reactionary Kuomintang government and joined the Chinese People's Navy. On March 19 the U.S. imperialists and the Kuomintang bandits sent heavy bombers and sank the *Chungking* off Hulutao, in Liaotung Gulf in northeastern China.