

## THE KUOMINTANG REACTIONARIES TURN FROM AN "APPEAL FOR PEACE" TO AN APPEAL FOR WAR

February 16, 1949

From the time the bandit Chiang Kai-shek launched his peace offensive on January 1, the heroes of the reactionary Kuomintang clique kept on repeating at great length their willingness to "shorten the duration of the war", "alleviate the sufferings of the people" and "treat the salvation of the people as the primary consideration". But early in February they suddenly began to play down their peace tune and strike up the old tune of "fighting the Communists to the bitter end". This has been especially so in the last few days. On February 13 the Propaganda Department of the Kuomintang Central Executive Committee issued a "Special Directive for Propaganda" to "all party headquarters and party papers" which stated:

Yeh Chien-ying has been spreading propaganda over our rear areas about the Chinese Communist Party's good faith in seeking peace, while condemning the Government's military moves as showing a lack of good faith in seeking peace. All our papers must emphatically refute this, directly and indirectly, in accordance with the following points.

The "Special Directive" gives quite a number of reasons why this "refutation" should be made:

Rather than surrender unconditionally, the Government should fight to the bitter end.

The eight terms Mao Tse-tung put forward in his January 14 statement would ruin the nation, and the Government should not have accepted them.

The Communist Party of China should bear the responsibility for wrecking peace. Instead, it has now drawn up a list of so-called war criminals which includes all the Government leaders and has even demanded that the Government first arrest them; this clearly shows how truculent and unreasonable the Communist Party is. Unless the Communist Party of China changes this behaviour, it will indeed be difficult to find a way to peace negotiations.

There is no more of the pathetic anxiety for peace negotiations of two weeks ago. There is no further mention of those famous phrases, "shorten the duration of the war", "alleviate the sufferings of the people" and "treat the salvation of the people as the primary consideration", phrases which gladdened the heart and spread everywhere. If the Communist Party of China is unwilling to change its "behaviour" and insists on the punishment of the war criminals, then peace talks will be impossible. Which, then, is the primary consideration -- the salvation of the people or the salvation of the war criminals? According to the "Special Directive for Propaganda" issued by these heroes of the Kuomintang, they prefer the latter. The Communist Party of China is still consulting the democratic parties and people's organizations about the list of war criminals, and opinions have now been received from several quarters. Judging by the opinions so far received, they all disapprove of the list put forward on December 25 last year by an authoritative person in the Communist Party of China. They consider that a list containing the names of only forty-three war criminals is too short; they consider that those to be held responsible for launching the counter-revolutionary war and butchering several million people should certainly not be limited to forty-three, but should be well over a hundred. For the time being, let us suppose that the number of war criminals will be set at well over a hundred. Then we should like to ask the heroes of the Kuomintang, why do you oppose

the punishment of war criminals? Aren't you willing to "shorten the duration of the war" and "alleviate the sufferings of the people"? If the war continues because of this opposition of yours, won't that be stalling for time and prolonging the disaster of war? "Stalling for time and prolonging the disaster of war" was the very accusation you made against the Communist Party of China in the statement issued in the name of the Nanking government spokesman on January 26, 1949; can it be that now you want to take it back, write it on a placard and hang it on yourselves as a badge of honour? You are men of infinite compassion and mercy, who profess to "treat the salvation of the people as the primary consideration". Then why do you suddenly change and treat the salvation of the war criminals as the primary consideration? According to the statistics of your government's Ministry of the Interior, the number of the Chinese people is not 450 million, but 475 million; compare that with 100 odd war criminals -- which number is bigger? You heroes have studied arithmetic; please do a careful sum in accordance with your arithmetic textbook and then draw your conclusion. If, without doing this sum, you hastily change your original formula of "treating the salvation of the people as the primary consideration" -- a good formula with which we agree and the people of the whole country agree -- into the formula of "treating the salvation of more than a hundred war criminals as the primary consideration", then be careful, for you certainly will not be able to maintain your ground. After having "appealed for peace" over several weeks, those individuals who have repeatedly mouthed the phrase, "treat the salvation of the people as the primary consideration", are no longer "appealing for peace" but are appealing for war. The reason the Kuomintang die-herds are in trouble is this: they have stubbornly opposed the people, ridden roughshod over them and thus have isolated themselves on the pinnacle of a pagoda; moreover, they will not repent, even unto death. All you broad masses of the people of the Yangtse valley and the south -- workers, peasants, intellectuals, urban petty bourgeoisie, national bourgeoisie, enlightened gentry and Kuomintang members with a conscience -- your attention, please! The days of the Kuomintang die-hards who have been riding roughshod over you are numbered. You and we are on the same side. The handful of die-herds will soon topple from their pinnacle, and a people's China will soon emerge.