

**Foreign Minister Chou En-lai's
Statements at the Geneva
Conference**

Supplement to **"People's China"**

May 16, 1954

STATEMENT BY CHOU EN-LAI

April 28, 1954

Mr. Chairman, Messrs. Ministers and Delegates:

The Geneva Conference to which the people of the whole world have been looking forward has already begun its session. This conference should have for its aim the lessening of international tension and the consolidation of world peace. That is a task of great significance.

This is the first time that the Foreign Ministers of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the Republic of France, the People's Republic of China and other countries concerned have met together, at the same table, to examine and solve the most pressing problems of Asia. Our task is intricate. However, the convening of this conference signifies in itself the growing possibility of settling international disputes by the peaceful means of negotiation. The Delegation of the People's Republic of China hopes that all the delegates to this conference will make sincere efforts towards the fulfilment of this task.

The peoples of Asia, like the peoples of other parts of the world, love peace and freedom. The peoples of Asia suffered for a long time from oppression and enslavement. Their struggle for liberation from foreign imperialist oppression, for national independence and freedom, is a just struggle. This march of history is irresistible. However, influential groups in the United States, for the purpose of setting up their colonial rule in Asia, are stepping up their intervention against the national-liberation movement in Asia, scheming for the organization of aggressive blocs in Asia, and expanding the war in Asia. This policy of the United States runs counter to the aspirations of the Asian peoples and is the source of tension and trouble in Asia.

After a long and resolute struggle, the Chinese people put an end to the rule of imperialism and the Kuomintang, which was a scourge to them, and in accordance with their independent will, chose their own state system of people's democracy and

founded the People's Republic of China. The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China represents the will of all the Chinese people, and the policy it has pursued enjoys the unanimous support of the entire nation.

In less than five years, the People's Republic of China has recorded great achievements in the political, economic and cultural fields, without any parallel in Chinese history. The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China has achieved the unification of the nation and has carried out social reforms. It has succeeded in stabilizing its financial and monetary condition, and rehabilitating the national economy which had long been ravaged by war, and is steadily improving the material and cultural life of the people. At present, China is carrying through the plan of large-scale industrialization of the country. Democratic elections of all levels of government are being held throughout the country.

This is the first time in China's history that the Chinese people have become the real masters of their country. All nationalities throughout the country have united into a big family of nationalities with freedom and equality for all. The Chinese Government enthusiastically loved and supported by the people of all nationalities of the entire country is as solid as a rock. No force in the world can prevent the Chinese people from marching along the road of making China strong and prosperous. The victory of the Chinese people has radically changed the state of affairs in Asia. It inspires the peoples of Asia to struggle for their national independence and for their ultimate liberation from the imperialist yoke.

The Government of the People's Republic of China and the Chinese people consistently love peace and oppose war. We have never committed, and will never commit, aggression against any country. But we most emphatically shall not tolerate aggression against us by any country. We respect the right of all the nations to choose and preserve their

own way of life and their own state system without interference from outside. At the same time, we insist that the other countries treat us in the same way. We believe that, so long as all the nations of the world observe these principles and cherish the mutual desire for cooperation, nations of the world with different social systems can live together in peace.

It is generally known that after the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Government of the Soviet Union was the first to establish friendly diplomatic relations with the new China. Furthermore, China and the Soviet Union immediately concluded the Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance, which is an important factor in the preservation of peace in the Far East. Traditional firm friendship has long existed between the great peoples of China and the Soviet Union. From the very beginning the Soviet people have expressed enthusiastic sympathy with the glorious struggle of the Chinese people for national liberation. During the recent five years, China and the Soviet Union have established and have been successfully developing economic cooperation and cultural interchange between the two countries in accordance with the principle of equality and mutual assistance. The ever-increasing consolidation of Sino-Soviet friendship has played and is playing a mighty role in safeguarding and strengthening peace not only in the Far East but throughout the world as well.

The People's Republic of China has already been recognized by more than twenty countries with an aggregate population of over 1,000 million. However, some states, the United States first and foremost, still refuse to recognize the People's Republic of China and endeavour to ignore the right of the Chinese people to choose their own state system. Refusing to reconcile themselves to their defeat in China, they have been plotting all along to impose upon the Chinese people the power of the Kuomintang remnant clique, a clique long cast off by the over 500 million Chinese people. Up to now at various international conferences, they still forcibly plant elements of the Kuomintang remnant clique to pose as representatives of the Chinese people. The international status and rights of the People's Republic of China has been subjected to impermissible discrimination. The peaceful development and security of China are being constantly threatened. The extreme unreasonableness and extreme unfairness of this situation are very obvious. The continued existence of this situation obstructs the peaceful settlement of the pressing issues of the world, especially those of Asia, and aggravates the tension and uneasiness in international relations. It is clear that this situa-

tion should not prevail any longer. Our conference should mark the beginning of change in this situation.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, although the war in Korea has now terminated, peace in Korea has not yet been consolidated, the unification of Korea has not yet been realized, other problems relating to the Korean question still remain to be settled, and, moreover, war is still going on in Indo-China. The people of the whole world are displaying profound misgivings and anxiety about this situation and they hope that through this conference it will be possible to change this situation, namely, to bring about a peaceful settlement of the Korean question and to restore peace in Indo-China.

The present conference has already proceeded to discuss the peaceful settlement of the Korean question.

The People's Republic of China attaches great importance to the settlement of this question in the interest of consolidating peace in the Far East and in conformity with the national interests of the Korean people.

Korea is China's close neighbour. Just across the river, maintaining as it does all along with China the most intimate and friendly relations and sharing their weal and woe in common with China. The Chinese people could not but be concerned with Korea's peace and security. In June 1950, the United States launched its war of intervention against Korea and simultaneously occupied China's Taiwan. It then repeatedly bombed Northeast China and bombarded China's merchant shipping, thereby encroaching upon China's territorial air space and waters. Moreover, in defiance of the warnings of the Chinese people and world public opinion, the United States Government ordered its armed forces to cross the 38th Parallel in Korea on a large scale. These troops approached the Yalu and Tumen Rivers, thus endangering more seriously the security of China. Quite obviously, the United States was playing the old game of the Japanese militarists of occupying Korea to establish a base for further aggression against the Chinese mainland. In view of painful historical lessons and in consideration of the immediate vital interests involved, the Chinese people had their patience tried to breaking point and had no choice but to volunteer assistance to Korea, fighting aggression shoulder to shoulder with the Korean people, in defence of the security of their motherland. The Chinese people could not permit a situation in which Korea could be used once again as a springboard for aggression against China.

After the Korean People's Army and the Chinese People's Volunteers had driven back the armed forces of aggression and had reached the vicinity of the 38th Parallel, the Korean and Chinese peoples,

in conformity with their consistent stand for the peaceful settlement of the Korean question, quickly responded to the proposal of the Soviet Union made on June 23, 1951 at the United Nations for armistice negotiations in Korea. The United States Government used the so-called prisoner-of-war question as a pretext for dragging out the subsequent negotiations, thus preventing over a long period of time any agreement being reached in the Korean armistice negotiations. Nevertheless, the Korean and Chinese side made great efforts in this connection. As a result, an armistice was concluded in Korea to the immense relief of the peace-loving peoples of the world. In spite of this, the authorities of the United States and South Korea continued to put up obstacles in the way of the settlement of outstanding questions between the two sides. This has found its expression particularly in the fact that, before and after the armistice, the authorities of the United States and South Korea forcibly retained more than 48,000 Korean and Chinese captured personnel who were thus prevented from returning to their motherlands. The Government of the People's Republic of China in no way considers this question closed. The Delegation of the People's Republic of China holds that this conference should not bypass this question.

These are the facts. However, not all the participants in this conference reckon with these facts. As to the delegate of the Republic of Korea, he merely repeats that version of events in Korea started in 1950 which had long since been refuted by facts and unmasked. Juggling with facts, trying to slander the People's Republic of China and at the same time the great neighbour of the Chinese and Korean peoples—the Soviet Union, he has sought to whitewash the real culprits of the Korean war. But such methods cannot alter the indisputable fact that the steps taken by the Chinese people in order to voluntarily give aid to the Korean people in their fight against aggression and to safeguard the security of the People's Republic of China, are of a just nature. Such methods cannot write off the consistent efforts of the Chinese people and their government to settle peacefully the Korean question.

Since the Korean armistice, the flagrant violations of certain important terms of the Korean Armistice Agreement by the United States and the Republic of Korea offer additional evidence in this regard. Paragraph 60 of the Armistice Agreement explicitly provides that one of the questions for discussion at the Political Conference to be convened after the armistice is that of the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea. However, after the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement, the United States Government concluded with the Gov-

ernment of the Republic of Korea a so-called mutual defence treaty which grants the United States the right to station armed forces in South Korea. Furthermore, until recently, the Government of the Republic of Korea still makes much noise about "march to the north to unify Korea" and openly declared that on the expiration of 90 days after the present conference is convened, it will, together with the United States, withdraw from the Conference and will again resort to force to unify Korea. All this not only proves who it was that unleashed the war in the past and started aggression, but also demonstrates who is continuing to obstruct the peaceful settlement of the Korean question and attempting to disturb once again peace in Korea. But the Korean war has taught an important lesson, that is, any foreign intervention directed against a nation which has awakened is doomed to failure and any attempt to suppress with the means of foreign arms the struggle for freedom of the people of one's own country, is also doomed to failure.

The Delegation of the People's Republic of China fully supports the three-point proposal put forward by Foreign Minister Nam Il of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in respect to the restoration of the national unity of Korea and the holding of free all-Korean elections.

The Korean people, after their liberation from the enslavement under Japanese imperialism, have consistently aspired for the realization of Korea's independence and unity. The unification of Korea should be achieved through the holding of all-Korean general elections under conditions precluding all foreign intervention and pressure from any terroristic group, thus enabling all the Korean people to freely express their will in peaceful conditions.

Some people do not like this only correct solution, that is, the holding of general elections in Korea to form an all-Korean government and reunite Korea in a united, independent and democratic state. The Syngman Rhee government does not like it, according to yesterday's speech made by the delegate of the Republic of Korea. He obviously ignores the national interests of the Korean people, trying to make it appear that without foreign interference in the internal affairs of Korea, the Korean people could not solve their domestic problems, the holding of free all-Korean democratic elections included.

This view was most vividly expressed by the delegate of the Republic of Korea when he spoke of the foreign troops in Korea. He openly called for the staying of American troops in Korea. This fact alone shows how much such claims that the South Korean regime expresses the interests of the

people of Korea are worth. But the Chinese people are interested not only in this aspect of the problem, but more so in the fact that the presence of American troops in Korea directly affects the preservation of peace in Korea and the security of the People's Republic of China.

The peaceful unification of Korea is a matter for the Korean people themselves. Consequently, for the purpose of holding nation-wide free elections in Korea without outside interference, all foreign armed forces must first of all be withdrawn from Korea.

From the very first day of the Korean armistice negotiations, we have formally put forward the proposal for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea. Now that the hostilities in Korea are ended, there is still less excuse for any foreign forces to remain in Korea. Our proposal is obviously in full accord with the interests of the people of both North and South Korea and with those of the peoples of all the nations which took part in the Korean war. Since the armistice the peoples of all nations whose sons are stationed in Korea demand their early return to lead a peaceful life. All Korean people hope to lead a free life without foreign interference. They ask: Since there is no more fighting, why should foreign troops remain in our lands? It is our view that the questions raised by the people are fully justified and the demand of the people for the withdrawal of all foreign forces is completely legitimate.

The peaceful unification of Korea has a great bearing on the maintenance of peace and security in the Far East. The successful carrying out of the peaceful unification of Korea depends on the will of the respective states that are interested in the maintenance of peace in the Far East to take measures for ensuring the free and peaceful development of Korea without allowing foreign interference in the internal affairs of Korea.

From what has been said, we consider that the proposal made by Foreign Minister Nam Il, Head of the Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, is entirely fair and reasonable. We hope that all the participants in this conference will seriously consider this proposal which can form a basis for achieving an agreement on the peaceful settlement of the Korean problem.

Since the outbreak of the war in Korea, a territory belonging to China—Taiwan—has been occupied by the United States. This question is not yet settled. As is generally known, Taiwan is part of China's territory, and its occupation by anybody can in no case be tolerated. The United States occupation of Taiwan is an act seriously violating the integrity of territory and sovereignty of China.

Taiwan has already been turned into a base of the United States for conducting subversive activities and further aggression against the People's Republic of China. Japanese militarism which had committed aggression against nations of Asia for a long time is now being revived at an accelerated pace. This state of affairs is menacing with increasing seriousness the peace and security of the Far East and Asia.

The United States Government, as far back as during the period of the war in Korea, sought to create the so-called "Pacific Mutual Security System." Now it is further intervening in the Indo-China war and using it as a pretext to scheme for the organization of the so-called defence communities in the West Pacific and Southeast Asia. These blocs have actually aggressive purposes and are aimed at the establishment of a new colonial rule in Asia and preparation of a new world war.

We consider that the aggressive acts on the part of the United States should be stopped, that peace in Asia should be ensured, that the independence and sovereignty of the Asian nations should be respected, that the national rights and freedom of the Asian peoples should be safeguarded. We also hold that interference in the internal affairs of the Asian nations should be stopped, all foreign military bases in Asia be removed, foreign armed forces stationed in Asian countries be withdrawn, the revival of Japanese militarism be prevented and all economic blockades and restrictions be abolished.

The statement just made by Mr. John F. Dulles is contrary to these demands. His views are completely at variance with the interests of the Asian peoples. We absolutely cannot agree to his views. The Government of the People's Republic of China considers that the countries of Asia should consult among themselves with a view to seeking common measures to safeguard peace and security in Asia, by assuming obligations mutually and respectively.

The people of China, like all the peoples of Asia, are concerned not only about peace in Asia but also about peace in Europe and other parts of the world. The policy of reviving German militarism and splitting Europe into mutually hostile military blocs now menaces the peace and security of Europe and at the same time affects the situation outside Europe. It also aggravates tension and uneasiness in Asia. That is why we consider that in order to safeguard world peace it is necessary, through negotiation, first and foremost between the great powers, to put an end to the rearmament of Western Germany and to ensure security in Europe on the basis of joint efforts of all the European states, as proposed by the Soviet Union.

We also consider that the interests of peace demand the termination of the armaments race, the

reduction of armaments and armed forces, the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, the peoples of the whole world, especially the peoples of Asia, are following the progress of our conference with great concern. They all expect the conference to achieve positive results. Unfortunately some Asian states which express concern about peace in Asia, such

as India, Indonesia, Burma, etc. are unable to participate in our conference, which in no way can be considered as a positive aspect of this conference.

Allow me to express the hope that the delegates to this conference, guided by the interests of consolidating peace and security in Asia and in the whole world, will make joint efforts to find ways and means for solving the urgent problems listed on the agenda of the conference.

STATEMENT BY CHOU EN-LAI

May 3, 1954

Mr. Chairman and Fellow Delegates:

On April 27, Foreign Minister Nam Il of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea put forward at this conference a reasonable proposal which has had the support of the Delegations of the People's Republic of China and the U.S.S.R., but the delegates of the United States and certain other countries expressed themselves against Foreign Minister Nam Il's proposal, repeating as they did their untenable old arguments which have proved to be not conducive to the solution of the Korean problem. They endeavour to use as before the illegal resolutions of the United Nations for insisting on interfering in the internal affairs of Korea and preventing the Korean people from solving their own problems themselves. There are others at this conference who attempt to defend the United States' interference in the internal affairs of Korea and other Asian nations with the argument for the so-called policy of "open door and equal opportunities." As a matter of fact, such a policy has already been exposed by history, especially by Chinese history, as one of the means used by imperialism for carrying out its expansionist policy. Such a policy has long gone bankrupt in the eyes of the Asian peoples.

It is common knowledge that long before the outbreak of the Korean war, the United States had persistently sought to interfere in the domestic affairs of Korea by means of United Nations supervision of elections in Korea, in order to enable the American-backed Syngman Rhee regime to extend its rule over the whole of Korea.

In June 1950, the United States unleashed its war of armed intervention against Korea. Subsequent to this, the United States, taking advantage of the absence of the Soviet Union and of the fact that the People's Republic of China was deprived of the right to participate in the United Nations, manoeuvred an organ of the United Nations into unlawfully giving a retroactive approval to this act of aggression of the United States. Thus, the United Nations was placed in the position of a belligerent in the Korean war and consequently became disqualified to deal impartially with the Korean question.

Apart from that, the majority of the member nations of the United Nations, under United States domination, had repeatedly rejected the proposals made by the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, India and other countries for a peaceful settlement of the Korean question. In defiance of the warnings of China and impartial public opinion all over the world that United States forces must not cross the 38th Parallel, they had also approved the action of the United States for spreading the aggressive war against Korea and its plan for dominating the whole of Korea. Those member nations of the United Nations which followed the lead of the United States not only paid no heed to the accusations made by the People's Republic of China against the United States invasion and occupation of China's Taiwan, but went so far as to discredit the just action of the Chinese People's Volunteers in resisting aggression and aiding Korea and slander the People's Republic of China as aggressor. Up to now, the majority of the mem-

ber nations of the United Nations still keep quiet on the action of the United States in invading and occupying China's Taiwan and violating China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The People's Republic of China is still excluded from the United Nations, whereas elements of the Kuomintang remnant clique are still planted in the United Nations and at other international conferences to pose as the representatives of the Chinese people. All this has seriously impaired the prestige of the United Nations, and has deprived it of the moral authority to deal with the Korean question and other questions of Asia.

In the course of the Korean armistice negotiations, the United States dragged out the negotiations under the name of the United Nations. After the armistice was realized, the United States, again under the name of the United Nations, obstructed the convening of the Political Conference. These facts further prove that the United Nations is in no position to deal with the Korean question. That is why we are now holding this conference here for working out a peaceful settlement in Korea. This conference has nothing to do with the United Nations. The delegate of the United States, however, insists that the Korean people carry out the illegal resolutions of the United Nations and agree to United Nations supervision of elections in Korea. Is not all this utterly unreasonable? It should be clear to the United States delegate that since the United States could not impose its will on the Korean people by means of war, it cannot hope to achieve at the conference table what it failed to achieve on the battlefield. The United States delegate said that it was necessary to learn from the Korean war. Yet, facts prove that it is precisely the United States delegate himself that has not learned the lesson of the Korean war.

Foreign Minister Nam Il in his proposal demands the withdrawal of all foreign armed forces from Korea. But the United States delegate objects to the simultaneous withdrawal of all foreign armed forces from North and South Korea on the ground that the United States forces are different in character from the Chinese People's Volunteers. Certainly, they are different. But the difference lies in that the U.S. armed forces came to Korea for aggressive purposes, whereas the Chinese People's Volunteers came to Korea to fight aggression. In spite of this, we still advocate the simultaneous withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea. Could there be anything fairer than this? A second reason advanced by the U.S. delegate for not agreeing to the simultaneous withdrawal of all foreign forces is that the U.S. is too far away from Korea while China is too close to Korea. People cannot help asking: Since

the U.S. had found it possible to send its troops from several thousand miles away to Korea to commit aggression, why is it not possible now to withdraw its troops over the same distance? The U.S. delegate said further that the United States had experience with the withdrawal of troops from Korea and did not want that history to repeat itself. In this connection we feel it necessary to remind the U.S. delegate that it was the U.S. armed forces that had returned to Korea after their withdrawal, and that it was not until the United States had committed aggression against Korea and threatened the security of China that the Chinese People's Volunteers went to Korea to repel aggression in defence of the security of their motherland.

We consider that in order to enable the Korean people to solve their problems peacefully without foreign interference, an agreement should be reached among the states having armed forces in Korea for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea within a definite period of time.

It has been stated at this conference that after all foreign forces are withdrawn from Korea, Korea will not be able to maintain a state of peace. As a matter of fact, under the condition that the states concerned undertake the obligation not to interfere in the internal affairs of Korea and ensure its peaceful development, Korea will be able to develop along peaceful lines. Foreign Minister Nam Il has proposed that, in order to rule out the possibility of any recurrence of fighting in Korea, the appropriate states most interested in the preservation of peace in the Far East should undertake the above-mentioned obligation. The People's Republic of China fully endorses this proposal and is willing to join with other states concerned in ensuring the discharge of this obligation.

Today, Foreign Minister Nam Il, in further clarifying his proposal on the restoration of the national unity of Korea and the holding of free all-Korean elections, is entirely realistic in his approach to the problem and his remarks will contribute to our discussion. The Delegation of the People's Republic of China recommends once again that this proposal should serve as the basis for reaching an agreement at this conference.

The statement just made by Mr. Pyun Yung Tae was filled with slanderous ravings against the Governments and peoples of the People's Republic of China, the Soviet Union, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and other countries of People's Democracy. His ravings, like his disreputable ravings of the past, were uttered for the benefit of his master who wanted him to do so.

He was shameless to such an extent that he said his only complaint was not enough United States intervention in Korea, and hoped for more United States intervention. From this it is clear how much his entire statement is worth.

Mr. Chairman, I already pointed out in the session on April 28, that this conference cannot possibly bypass the question of war prisoners, which still remains an unsettled issue in the Korean armistice. If the United States Government had faithfully abided by the international conventions which the United States has entered into, the question of war prisoners would not have arisen, since the Geneva Convention explicitly stipulates that war prisoners shall be released and repatriated without delay after the cessation of hostilities. But in the Korean war the United States Government, in violation of the various provisions of the Geneva Convention calling for humanitarian treatment of war prisoners, conducted the war with savage and inhuman means, maltreated and persecuted Korean and Chinese captured personnel and persisted in its erroneous view which is in contradiction to the Geneva Convention in respect to the release and repatriation of war prisoners. As a result, the Korean armistice was delayed. However, the Korean and Chinese side made repeated efforts towards the conclusion of an armistice in Korea, and finally reached agreement with the other side on the question of war prisoners. Both sides agreed to ensure for every prisoner of war the opportunity of exercising his right to be repatriated. But only 10 days after the agreement on war prisoners was signed, the authorities of the Republic of Korea, with the connivance of the U.S., starting on June 18 and for several days thereafter, forcibly retained more than 27,000 Korean and Chinese captured personnel and impressed them into the army, thereby depriving them entirely of the opportunity of exercising their right to be repatriated. This action of the authorities of the United States and of the Republic of Korea in violation of the agreement on war prisoners had almost endangered the Korean armistice and met with widespread criticism and condemnation. General Mark Clark, Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command, stated on June 29, 1953, that "the United Nations Command is continuing its efforts to recover the prisoners of war who have escaped." But up to the present not a single man of the more than 27,000 prisoners of war who were forcibly retained and impressed into the army has been recovered.

After the Korean armistice, the authorities of the United States and the Republic of Korea used all means to obstruct the work of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission, which was presided over by an Indian representative. As a result, the

overwhelming majority of the Korean and Chinese captured personnel under the custody of the said Commission did not have any opportunity to exercise their right to be repatriated. Consequently, the said Commission did not fulfil the functions and responsibilities entrusted to it by the Terms of Reference for the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission of the Korean Armistice Agreement. On January 20 and 21, 1954, the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission handed over to the United States side the more than 21,000 Korean and Chinese captured personnel under its custody. The said Commission, however, pointed out in its final report of February 18, 1954, that "unless the two Commands agree on alternative procedures or courses of action in regard to the status and disposition of the prisoners of war, any unilateral action by any party concerned will not be in conformity with the said Terms of Reference." However, the United States side used force and threat of force to hand over these more than 21,000 Korean and Chinese captured personnel to the South Korean government and the Chiang Kai-shek remnant clique, which impressed these captured personnel into their respective armies.

The action of the authorities of the United States and of the Republic of Korea in forcibly retaining on two occasions over 48,000 Korean and Chinese captured personnel is a serious violation of the Geneva Convention and the Korean Armistice Agreement. In order to solve this problem in a reasonable manner, the Delegation of the People's Republic of China, after obtaining the consent of the Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, hereby proposes:

1. That measures be taken to ensure the return to their motherlands of those Korean and Chinese captured personnel who were forcibly retained in June 1953 and January 1954, and were impressed into the army.

2. That a commission, composed of representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the People's Republic of China, the Soviet Union, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea, be set up to assist in the carrying out of the measures for the repatriation of Korean and Chinese captured personnel as provided in the foregoing paragraph.

3. That, pending the handling of the prisoner-of-war question by the afore-mentioned commission, joint teams composed of representatives of the Red Cross Societies of the states concerned on the two sides to the Korean Armistice Agreement be formed and sent to the present locations of the war prisoners for inspection.

STATEMENT BY CHOU EN-LAI ON THE INDO-CHINA QUESTION

May 12, 1954

Mr. Chairman and Fellow Delegates:

The Geneva Conference has entered into discussions on the question of restoring peace in Indo-China. The important task before us is to bring about a cessation of hostilities and restore peace in Indo-China on the basis of recognizing the national rights of the Indo-Chinese peoples. What is required of recognizing the national rights of the Indo-Chinese peoples? It calls for the recognition of the full right of the peoples of Viet-Nam, Khmer and Pathet Lao to achieve their national independence, national unity and democratic liberties, and to live in peace in their respective motherlands.

As we are discussing here the Indo-China question, the conflagration of war is still raging in Indo-China. This war, which has been going on for eight years, has seriously disrupted the peaceful life of the Indo-Chinese peoples and at the same time has brought terrible afflictions upon the French people. Now that the United States Government has stepped up its intervention, there is the danger of this war being further extended, and thus posing an ever-increasing threat to the peace of Asia and the world.

The People's Republic of China cannot but pay close attention to the war now in progress in its neighbouring states and to the threatening extension of this war. It is the view of the Chinese people that since the Korean war has terminated, the Indo-Chinese war now should likewise be stopped.

As is generally known, the history of Indo-China for the past ninety years, like the history of many other Asian nations, is filled with long-drawn-out struggles against colonial rule.

Ever since France invaded Indo-China and established its colonial rule there ninety years ago, the Indo-Chinese peoples have incessantly waged the struggle of resistance. When the Japanese aggressors attacked Indo-China, the French colonial gov-

ernment did not put up any resistance and the royal family of Bao Dai collaborated with Japanese imperialism. At that time, only the League for the Independence of Viet-Nam, headed by Ho Chi Minh, leader of the people of Viet-Nam, and the organizations of the patriots of Khmer and Pathet Lao, were leading the Indo-Chinese peoples in fighting shoulder to shoulder with the armed forces of the allies.

The heroic Indo-Chinese peoples, through hard and bitter struggles, finally achieved liberation in 1945 from the occupation of Japanese imperialism. The people of Viet-Nam founded the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam. The peoples of Khmer and Pathet Lao also formed in succession their respective governments of resistance. However, the French colonialists, unwilling to reconcile themselves to their loss of Indo-China, again invaded Indo-China and took military actions on a large scale. Thus a war engulfing the whole of Indo-China broke out and has been going on up to the present.

It is clear from what has been said that the Indo-China war is a colonial war unleashed by the French colonialists in an attempt to enslave again the Indo-Chinese peoples, whereas the war of resistance waged by the Indo-Chinese peoples is a just war against colonial aggression and in defence of national independence.

Speaking of this war, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, Premier of India, said on April 24 of this year in the House of People of India: "The conflict in Indo-China is, in its origin and essential character, a movement of resistance to colonialism and attempts to deal with such resistance by traditional methods of suppression and divide and rule." However, Mr. Georges Bidault, Chief of the French Delegation, in his statement of May 8 at this conference disclaimed completely the responsibility of France for the Indo-China war. This is obviously a distortion of historical facts.

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This colonial war has been so unpopular that the French colonialists have not only failed to achieve the desired results, but have found themselves deeper and deeper in a dilemma. The United States Government, taking advantage of this situation, has intensified its intervention in the Indo-China war in an attempt to gradually take France's place in Indo-China. On the other hand, the Indo-Chinese peoples have steadily gained strength and become more powerful in their national-liberation struggle against French colonial aggression and United States intervention. This history of the eight-year Indo-China war has proved that a people who is fighting for the independence and freedom of their motherland is unconquerable. Any attempt to ignore or underrate the strength of the Indo-Chinese peoples or to deny the existence of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and the resistance governments of Khmer and Pathet Lao is doomed to failure.

The peoples of Indo-China love peace. From the very beginning of the war, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam has repeatedly proposed to the French Government that the Indo-China question be settled by the peaceful means of negotiation. However, the war factions in the ruling circles of France are unwilling to give up their discredited colonial policy of subjugating once again the Indo-Chinese peoples. They either are unwilling to stop the Indo-China war which has been condemned by the French people as a "dirty war," or deliberately put forward terms unacceptable to the opposite side in order to obstruct the termination of this war.

There can be no doubt that the broad masses of the French people hope to end the Indo-China war. It has become increasingly clear to them that the continuation of this colonial war has seriously impaired the national interests and international position of France. Many far-sighted French statesmen have also realized that there is no future for this colonial war, and have therefore advocated the termination of war and restoration of peace in Indo-China. Many French people are asking: If it has been possible to stop the war in Korea, why not in Indo-China? If the Americans themselves have accepted an armistice in Korea, why don't they let the French do the same in Indo-China?

The crux of the problem is that the American interventionists are afraid of peace. Having been compelled to stop fighting in Korea, they endeavour to keep up and aggravate international tension. To this end, the American interventionists have pursued the policy of further intervening in and spreading the Indo-China war. The war factions in the ruling circles of France have followed all along this policy of the United States.

It is generally known that as early as 1947, the United States engineered the movement to restore the royal family of Bao Dai in Viet-Nam. In 1950, simultaneously with the unleashing of its aggressive war on Korea and its invasion and occupation of China's Taiwan, the United States Government stepped up its military aid for the French in the Indo-China war in an attempt to play a direct part in this war. After the Korean armistice, the United States not only tried to infiltrate further into Indo-China through all possible channels, but went to the length of publicly sending its air force personnel for direct participation in the Indo-China war. The United States is now bearing about 70 per cent of France's total war expenditure in Indo-China. The American interventionists make no secret of their intentions of succeeding the French in carrying on the colonial war in Indo-China. They are courting the three so-called national governments in Indo-China and seeking to train directly the so-called national armies. This policy not only infringes upon the independence and liberty of the peoples of Indo-China, but is squeezing out France so that Indo-China would eventually be converted into a colony of the United States.

It is not difficult to see that the intensification and extension of the Indo-China war by the American interventionists is aimed at not only the seizure of Indo-China, but also the use of Indo-China as a base for aggression against the whole of Southeast Asia. Shortly before the opening of the Geneva Conference, the United States Secretary of State openly advocated the adoption of united action with regard to Indo-China and engineered the establishment of military blocs in Southeast Asia and the West Pacific. Much as this policy of the United States threatens the peace of Asia and has met with opposition from the peace-loving peoples of the whole world, and first of all, the peoples of Asia, the United States Government, only a few days ago, stated that conversations for the organization of a military bloc in Southeast Asia were actively proceeding and that such an organization was in process of formation. All this demonstrates that when discussions on the restoration of peace in Indo-China are underway in Geneva, the United States is still actively trying to draw other countries into its planned military adventure.

The United States has invariably manufactured pretexts for organizing military blocs and for extending war, alleging that all this is designed to "strengthen the national security of the United States" and to "defend the free world." As everybody knows, the United States is not an Asian state, and its security is not threatened by any Asian country, much less by the peoples of Indo-China who are striving for independence and freedom.

However, the United States Government has all along been scheming for the establishment of a chain of so-called defence blocs in the Far East, Southeast Asia, and the Middle and Near East. Any country of these areas is several thousand miles away from the borders of the United States. It is plain that the national security of the United States is in no way related with these areas. This makes it clear that the forming of these so-called defence blocs is not for defensive purposes, nor as alleged, in defence of freedom, but for the purpose of spreading the colonial war in Asia and establishing a new colonial empire so as to enslave the Asian peoples and drive them into fratricidal fighting in the interests of a handful of American monopoly capitalists, nor is all this designed to protect the interests of the Western allies of the United States. On the contrary, it is aimed at crowding out several decrepit rivals to enable the United States to take over. It need hardly be said that the activities of the United States for forming aggressive blocs in Asia are inseparable from its objectives of preparing a global war and establishing its domination over the whole world.

For the purpose of covering up the ambitions of extending the colonial war and establishing a colonial empire, certain elements in the ruling circles of the United States have of late concocted endless fictions about intervention of the People's Republic of China in the Indo-China war. With these fictions, they endeavour to deceive the Asian peoples. These fictions have no foundation whatsoever. The slander that the People's Republic of China is intervening in the Indo-China war is nothing but a smokescreen used by them to cover up United States intervention in the Indo-China war and the attempt of the United States to create splits among the Asian peoples.

It must further be pointed out that such activities of the United States for organizing aggressive blocs in Asia have nothing in common with the safeguarding of collective security in Asia. In fact, these activities are being carried on behind the backs of the Asian peoples and most of the Asian states. To organize certain Asian states into a bloc against other Asian states can only create and aggravate trouble and division in Asia. In essence, this scheme is designed to carry out the intrigue of "divide and rule" in Asia in order to bring the Asian peoples under the colonial yoke. Of course, it never had and will never have the consent of the Asian peoples and most of the Asian states.

It requires the joint efforts of the Asian states to safeguard the lasting peace and collective security in Asia. When discussing the Korean question on April 28, I said in my statement that "the countries

of Asia should consult among themselves with a view to seeking common measures to safeguard peace and security in Asia, by assuming obligations mutually and respectively."

The Government of the People's Republic of China considers that the Asian states should respect each other's independence and sovereignty instead of interfering in each other's internal affairs, should settle disputes among themselves by the peaceful means of negotiation instead of resorting to force or threats, and should establish and develop normal economic and cultural relations among themselves on the basis of equality and mutual benefit instead of permitting discrimination or restrictions. Only by so doing can the Asian states avert the unprecedented calamity arising out of the attempts of the new colonialists to use Asians to fight Asians; and only by so doing can they achieve peace and security.

The Chinese people have maintained for a long time a profound friendship with the Indo-Chinese peoples. In the last hundred years, subjected similarly to colonial aggression, the Chinese people and the Indo-Chinese peoples have sympathized with each other in their respective movements for national liberation. This is only natural. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam established formal diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. The governments of the two countries have also established normal economic and cultural relations under the principle of equality and mutual benefit. Such friendly relations are developing. The common desire of the Governments of the People's Republic of China and the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam is mutual respect for each other's independence and sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs and the safeguarding of peace in Asia and the world.

For the sake of safeguarding peace in Asia and the world, the Chinese people earnestly hope that the war can be stopped and peaceful life restored in Indo-China at an early date.

Not only the Chinese people but other Asian peoples as well are in favour of a peaceful settlement of the Indo-China question. The demand for the termination of war in Indo-China has been continuously voiced in India, Indonesia, Burma, Pakistan and other countries. The recent conference held in Colombo by the Prime Ministers of five Asian states has also expressed its concern about the restoration of peace in Indo-China.

The peoples of Europe and other continents are no less desirous of ending the fighting in Indo-China than are the peoples of Asia. Moreover, even among the American statesmen, not every one of them is

in favour of embarking upon military adventures in Indo-China or Southeast Asia.

In this connection, special reference should be made to the peace policy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Government of the Soviet Union and the Soviet people have insisted all along on a peaceful settlement of the Indo-China question and have consistently stood for the national rights of the Indo-Chinese peoples at various international conferences.

Mr. Chairman, the Indo-Chinese peoples have fought for nearly a century for the sacred cause of national liberation. In order to enable the Conference to have a better understanding of the aspirations of the people of Viet-Nam and other peoples of Indo-China, I would like to suggest that we read the declaration of independence issued by the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam on September 2, 1945. It may surprise some gentlemen that the declaration of independence of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam begins with the following sentences which paraphrase the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America of 1776: "All men are born equal. They are endowed by nature with certain inalienable rights among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The declaration of independence of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam then quotes the French declaration of the rights of man of 1791: "Men are born and remain free and equal in rights." The declaration of independence of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam then states: "A people who have courageously opposed the French domination for more than eighty years, a people who had courageously fought on the side of the allies against fascism during the past several years, this people should be free, this people should be independent." Gentlemen, can it be said that these demands of the Indo-Chinese peoples are excessive? I think that the governments of those countries which had issued the two great declarations of 1776 and 1791, should recognize that the peoples of Indo-China, like the peoples of the United States of America and France, must be fully entitled to the rights of independence, liberty and equality.

The Delegation of the People's Republic of China hopes that this conference will consider in a most serious manner the statement and proposals made on behalf of the Viet-Nameese people by Mr. Pham Van Dong, Head of the Delegation of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, with respect to the restoration of peace in Indo-China and the achievement of national independence, national unity and democratic liberties for Viet-Nam, Khmer and Pathet Lao. We are of the opinion that the

statement and proposals of the Delegation of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam truly express the will of the Indo-Chinese peoples to fight for peace, independence, unity and democracy as well as their legitimate demands. These proposals, in the view of the Chinese Delegation, have already opened the way for the peaceful settlement of the Indo-China question.

However, Mr. Georges Bidault, Chief of the French Delegation, in his statement of May 8 still maintained the attitude of a colonial ruler. He continued to ignore the existence of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, which the French Government had recognized, and the fact that the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam enjoys the support of the broad masses of the people of Viet-Nam. He refused participation by the representatives of the resistance governments of Khmer and Pathet Lao in this conference. He left aside the political basis for the restoration of peace in Indo-China, and acted like a victor, laying down unilateral terms for the cessation of hostilities and demanding their acceptance by the peoples of Indo-China. This line of action is unrealistic, unreasonable and inconsistent with the principle of negotiating with equal rights.

Mr. Chairman, now that we are assembled here to examine and study the ways of restoring peace in Indo-China, it is essential, in accordance with the existing situations in Indo-China and in Asia and on the basis of recognizing the national rights of the Indo-Chinese peoples, to seek terms that will be considered honourable, fair and reasonable by the two sides concerned and to take effective measures so as to achieve at an early date an armistice in Indo-China and restore peace there. If all the delegates to this conference are genuinely desirous of restoring peace in Indo-China, I believe that there exists the possibility of reaching agreement in this conference.

The Delegation of the People's Republic of China expresses its full support for the statement and proposals made by Mr. Pham Van Dong, Head of the Delegation of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, and holds that these proposals can serve as the basis for this conference to discuss the termination of war and the restoration of peace in Indo-China and to adopt appropriate resolutions thereupon.

These proposals, in our view, are consistent with the wishes of the Indo-Chinese peoples for peace, independence, unity and democracy, and are in the interests of peace for the French people and the peoples of other nations of the world.