

FOREWORD

This is a short book relating to an incident that occurred on the Yangtze River of China, 20th, 21st April 1949 where four Royal Navy Ships were by order sent on suicide missions. On these ships H.M.S. Amethyst, Consort, London and Black Swan, servicemen serving on board three of the ships were killed, on all four of the ships servicemen were wounded, this happened at a time when Great Britain was at peace, but it was an incident that took us to the brink of a third world war.

Since, April of 1949 the incident has taken on the term Yangtze Incident, helped along by a book publication and film by that title, the film production, Yangtze Incident has been described as an epic production, and every so often television viewers are subjected to a re-run, of that alleged epic film.

It is indeed "Epic" in portraying and distorting the truth of a historical event that took Great Britain as a nation at a time of peace to the brink of a Third World War.

Neither the book nor the film comes anywhere near to the truth of the overall Yangtze Incident as it was, and how the incident came about, the Yangtze Incident is a story that has yet to be told, it's a frightening story that has been covered up by Government deceit and deception that is an on going saga to this day.

To day in this present time questions are being asked as to the legality of committing British Service Personnel to war in Iraq, this at a time when the very large question mark hangs over the Yangtze Incident. This short story will provide an insight into the truth of the Yangtze Incident, that fifty-three years of British Government deceit and deception has covered up.

In providing documented evidence within this book such as I have it can be seen that fifty-three years on, since the time of the Yangtze Incident that brought us to the brink of a third world war, there still exists at Government Ministerial level those who would rely upon the deceit and deception of the past. They are the malignant cancers of war and conflict; they are the grim reapers by political intrigue.

THE YANGTZE INCIDENT (1949)

Much has been written about that termed the Yangtze Incident of 1949. Within the House of Commons there exists columns of Hansard Papers relative to the incident.

There is the book "The Yangtze Incident, by Lawrence Earl, published 1952" only four years after the incident. Mr Earl's story is more or less a story about one of the ships involved in the Yangtze Incident (H.M.S. Amethyst).

This was followed in 1957 by that which some would have us believe to be an epic film under the title of The Yangtze Incident, directed by Michael Anderson, in which Richard Todd, played the starring role. The same film has other titles such as, Battle Hell, Escape of the Amethyst, Their Greatest Glory.

Now in this computer age with all the search engines that are available, you only have to type in Yangtze Incident, or Britain's Small Wars, and there you have a few pages where some individual is more or less reiterating what has already been stated and some have gone to the extent of producing what they would have as a photographic story of the Yangtze Incident.

The full and true Story of the Yangtze Incident has never been told but it is a story that has to be told, it is not a story about one ship the H.M.S. Amethyst, and its amazing escape from the Yangtze River, Its not a story about four British Royal Navy Ships, as in fact there were five ships involved, H.M.S. Consort, H.M.A.S. Shoalhaven, H.M.S. Amethyst, H.M.S. London and H.M.S. Blackswan.

By the very fact that I have mentioned H.M.A.S. Shoalhaven, this will have some in high office cringing, good, as it may well be constructive to the present day government and to the Admiralty whilst being destructive to the deceit and deception that has been allowed to exist for the past fifty odd years relative to the Yangtze Incident.

In 1945 a treaty known as the Warsaw Treaty was drawn up and signed by Great Britain, the U.S. of A, and U.S.S.R., the treaty was in effect to none intervention into the internal affairs of China. In 1949 the internal affairs within China, were that China was split with two warring parties, the warring parties were the forces of Mao Tse Tung of The Peoples Liberation or Republic Army, and Chiang Kai-Shek, the Nationalist with his Army. These known facts even to the simplest of minds tell you that there are two authorities in China.

To endorse the fact of two separate authorities these two separate authorities or warring forces were in the early part of 1949 holding peace talks in Peking, when the peace talks between the two broke down, Mao Tse Tung, with his Peoples Liberation Army massing on the North bank of the River Yangtze, issued demands on the Nationalist government that included unconditional Surrender.

If the Nationalists did not meet those demands then the crossing of the Yangtze River would take place on 17th April 1949. The threat by The Peoples Liberation Army was not carried out on the 17th April, 1945 but on the 17th of April, 1949 it was announced by The Peoples Liberation Army, that the 20th April, 1949 was the last day for their ultimatum to be accepted, should it not be accepted, then on the 21st April, 1949 the C.C.P., Peoples Liberation Army would cross the Yangtze River.

What is the importance of the dates shown?. The answer is a simple one, they provide the facts to peace talks, and the break down of peace talks, they endorse the fact that there were two existing authorities within China, and the Yangtze River was a known war zone. At this juncture the Moscow Treaty or Declaration of 1945 has also to be remembered (None Intervention into Chinas Internal Affairs).

H.M.S. Consort, a "C" class destroyer built on the river Clyde, and belonging to the British Royal Navy, was guard ship to and for the British Embassy at Nanking on the Yangtze River she had been there for some time and her relief was long over due and her stores were depleted. The relief ship was H.M.A.S. Shoalhaven, which was at Shanghai and should have relieved the Consort on 16th April 1949 the relief did not take place. The Shoalhaven was stood down. You are not told that in the book or film about the Yangtze Incident.

At the British Embassy in Nanking the British Ambassador was Sir Ralph Stevenson, he had a counterpart out there on the Far East Station, in the form of the Australian Ambassador a prudent individual to say the least. He obviously was aware of the uncertain conditions that existed and by reading the signals knew the area to be a civil war zone fraught with danger. A situation that was exempt from intervention.

Signals were sent to the Admiralty and the Shoalhaven was stood down and H.M.S. Amethyst was thereafter selected to take the Shoalhaven's place, and recalled from sea to do so. In the book, Yangtze Incident by Lawrence Earl, there is a reference to H.M.S. Amethyst beginning her journey up the Yangtze River at 9 a.m., on the 20th April 1949 and doing so with full clearance from the then Government of China. That statement is then followed by a further statement to the effect " Even to-day it is not clear why the Amethyst was fired upon. Then you have the question by the author, "Was the "first salvo" a deliberate, sneering affront to Britain and the Royal Navy?"

H.M.S. Amethyst, did not begin her journey up the Yangtze River on the 20th April 1949 the Amethyst begun her journey on the 19th of April 1949 and in beginning her journey on that date she did not have clearance or consent from the Nationalist Government in China, clearance or consent came from the Nationalist after the Amethyst had begun her journey on the 19th of April 1949. The Amethyst on reaching Kiang Yin, on the 19th April 1949 was ordered by signal from a Nationalist Gun Boat, to drop anchor and darken ship, as the Nationalists had forbidden the movements of ships on the Yangtze after dark.

So what you now have is Amethyst, at anchor in close proximity to the Nationalists gunboats at Kiang Yin, on the night prior to the date for ending the ultimatum issued by the C.C.P, to the Nationalists. Are we to believe that the event was not noticed or monitored by the P.L.A. on the not to distant North shore of the Yangtze River? What must have been the thoughts of the P.L.A, as one thing is certain they had not been notified of Amethyst's intention or movement?

H.M.S. Amethyst, at dawn on the morning of 20th April weighed anchor and began making her way up river, about an hour into her journey because of fog and treacherous currents, at the insistence of the Chinese pilot the Amethyst, dropped anchor. The Amethyst was completely enshrouded in fog neither the North or South bank of the river was visible to the naked eye so this can well be a situation of vice versa between the ship and shore. Radar would have played a part in this situation so far as the Amethyst was concerned, as radar would have pointed out the shorelines of both banks of the river as well as the movement of the large flat bottomed vessels ploughing their trade on the river, those vessels would appear as mere blips on the radar screen.

Now whether the P.L.A. were monitoring the movements of Amethyst, by means of radar that is not within my knowledge I merely refer to the use of radar for supposition and speculative purposes that has by others been put forward in writing about the Yangtze Incident.

It is recorded that at approximately 7.30 am. On the morning of 20th April 1949 the fog dispersed and Amethyst again got under way and was soon travelling at a speed of eleven knots. At 8.30 am, she reached a point on the river where she would be passing a heavily manned P.L.A. battery position. On approach to this position the order was given for speed to be increased to sixteen knots making manoeuvre ability and response quicker. The bow wave would be noticeably higher and wake would be greater. It was at this time that a salvo fired from the North side of the river passed over and also fell around Amethyst causing no damage to the ship. The immediate reaction to this event onboard Amethyst came in the form of three orders from Lieutenant Commander Skinner, on the bridge of Amethyst, the first order was to the wheelhouse "Full Ahead Both Engines" the second order "Union Jacks to be unfurled down the sides of the ship" and "Director, get on target". Amethyst is now travelling at full speed and no further shots or salvos from the P.L.A. Batteries were fired at, over, or around her at that time or location.

Was that first salvo from the P.L.A. Batteries warring shots of the fashion (stop and state your business)? Was it when Union Jacks were unfurled Amethyst was given some respite? Or was it because the last order of "Director get on target" was not carried out, Amethysts armament remaining fore and aft? By the very fact that the order of "Director, get on target" being given Amethysts ships company was in the "Stand Too" position (a warship at readiness with armament manned and armed.

When the order, "Director, get on target" was given by Lieutenant Commander Skinner, the immediate response should have resulted in the traversing and elevation of Amethysts armament being directed towards the source from which the salvo came that went over and around the ship.

However as that order was not carried out, it is Lawrence Earl, in his book the Yangtze Incident, 1952 edition who provides an excuse to the order not being carried out and does so in this manner now being Quoted Because it is difficult, if not impossible, to engage a target which has not yet been located this order was not carried out. The communist batteries here were completely hidden in low scrub. In this preliminary bombardment (of which no account appeared in the press at the time) no one was hurt; no damage was done. The communist guns stopped firing after about twelve rounds. Perhaps by then the gunners had recognised the unfurled Union Jacks. * Unquote. The next paragraph begins with the following two sentences. (Amethysts guns were unloaded. They had not been fired.)

Here you have a formulated opinion as to why in Mr Earl's terms, (The Communists guns stopped firing and the layman terms he attributes to the naval term and order of "Stand Down from Action stations" Amethysts armament unloaded. Mr Earl, can also be seen here to point out that no account of this preliminary bombardment appeared in the press which he emphasises by the use of brackets. Obviously Mr Earl's research prior to writing his book included the interviewing some members of the Amethysts ships company for their version of the events leading up to and resulting in and from the Yangtze Incident, which of course can be gleamed from the preface of his book Yangtze Incident.

(Ah, the currying of favour to all who lightened Mr Earl's way that led to the publication of his book. In particular the Department of Naval Information of the Admiralty was most helpful and co-operative in getting the necessary permission and in lighting my way, states Mr Earl in his preface.

If the preface of Mr Earls book has to be accepted as Fair Comment then it is also entitled to fair retort and here I digress for a moment to provide Fair Retort. "The Yangtze Incident, written by Mr Lawrence Earl, was written at a time prior to the release of official documentation relating to the Yangtze Incident his story revolves round the traumatic experience of one ship and its ships company that became involved in conflict during peace time. Mr Earl's Claim is that his book is primarily the result of interviewing many members of the Amethyst's ships company after the action was over. In so doing he states within the preface of his book "It is, I think, none the less factual because of that" he goes on to state "In all, I spoke to no fewer than thirty-six officers and men whose duties had scattered them through all parts of the ship. I checked and cross-checked their stories, not because I doubted any of them, but because, in the heat of the action, with shells bursting inward, with disaster close at hand, with excitement at boiling-point and fear never far away, details are apt to go unnoticed by some and scraps of information to be forgotten forever. I talked to these men who were there, to many of them for several hours each, and to some for periods of up to four days; and they dug deep into their memories and made the telling of this story possible." Well it may well be, that Mr Earl, in interviewing those men from the Amethyst he caused them to dig deep into their memories it is however regretful that he did not hoist by the same petard, which is obvious when, the statement made by Prime Minister Clement Attlee, within

The House of Commons 26th April 1949 is considered for its terms. Earls, interest in the Yangtze Incident was not in the men from the ships company of Amethyst, but merely in the stories that he could extract from them that would provide him with revenue at their expense. If I am wrong no doubt someone will want to correct me, in the meantime I claim Fair retort.

Now to continue. Amethysts respite from the shore batteries of the P.L.A. must have been of great relief to the ships company especially to the sixteen inexperienced boy seamen that made up part of the complement consisting of one hundred and eighty-three in total, made up from officers, chief petty officers, petty officers, leading hands, and other lower deck ratings of all branches that made up that ships company, to state that the ships company of H.M.S. Amethyst was a youngish one, that should be considered as an understatement, it is a statement to be found within Mr Earl's book, made without the provision of age.

Recorded events will show that respite from the batteries of the P.L.A. was for the Amethyst short lived as Amethyst at 9.20 a.m., on approaching an area on the Yangtze known as San-Chiang-Ying had to pass the P.L.A. Battery that was stationed there on that point of land also on approach in this area was Rose Island which Amethyst would pass Port side on in order to reach the twisting channel that lay ahead. It was at this juncture in time as Amethyst, was passing the P.L.A. Battery that a shell fired from a P.L.A. Battery passed over Amethyst. With this event the order was again given "Full ahead both" seconds later the ships bridge took a hit this was followed by a hit on the Wheelhouse.

In the wheelhouse at that time were the following ratings, Leading Seaman Leslie Frank, Chief Petty Officer, Rosslyn Nicholls, (as coxswain, on the wheel) and Ordinary Seaman, Reginald Wright, so what you have here is Frank, a leading seaman with twenty four year service in the Navy, on duty working to order, the Starboard telegraph sending messages to the ships engine-room department responsible for the functioning of the Starboard engine. The similar duty for the Port engine is the responsibility of Ordinary Seaman, Reginald Wright, but the overall duty in respect to command and response is the inherent duty of the person on the wheel, in this situation that duty fell upon Chief Petty Officer, Coxswain, Rosslyn Nicholls.

It is obvious from Mr Earl's book that prior to writing it he had an extensive interview with Leading Seaman, Leslie Frank, regarding the hit on the wheelhouse. Here it should be remembered that before the wheelhouse was hit the order of "Full ahead both engines" had been signalled via the telegraph to the engine room so the ships speed was gradually increasing to "full speed" which from a technical point of view Amethyst would be travelling at a rivet popping speed of twenty eight knots within at least two minutes of that order reaching the engine room. "A second later Frank, in the wheelhouse, heard a shattering explosion right upon him. Someone screamed. As Frank felt a swift blow on his back and fell to the floor he saw Nicholls fall to one side, dragging the wheel to port with him. This first hit as it happened sealed Amethysts fate. Frank was dazed. He scrambled to his feet a moment later, wondering what had hit the ship. Nicholls was groaning. He had been seriously hit through the right thigh, and he had a bad gash on his forehead. Frank pulled Nicholls' hand from the wheel and turned the wheel back amidships, hoping to get Amethyst back on to the course Nicholls had been steering. Wheelhouse to bridge! He shouted up the voice pipe. Wheelhouse to bridge! But there was no reply" "As soon as the shell had hit the wheelhouse Weston hurried to the Bridge. He passed through the wheelhouse on his way. (I saw various bodies lying about,) he reported later. "There were gasps and groans. I was in a hurry." (Weston was gunnery officer as well as first Lieutenant). Let me point out here that as a result of the publication of the book Yangtze Incident, a film by the same title was produced both were and are garbage.

If we accept what Earl states in the preface of his book, which I again quote from I checked and cross checked their stories, not because I doubted any of them, but because, in the heat of action, with shells bursting inward, with disaster close at hand, with excitement at boiling point and fear never far away, details are apt to go unnoticed by some and scraps of conversation to be forgotten forever. * Unquote.

In relating to Franks experience in the wheelhouse Franks received a swift blow to his back and fell to the floor he saw Nicholls fall to one side dragging the wheel to port with him. The imputation here is defamatory the imputation being that Nicholls upon being wounded and holding onto the wheel was dragging the ship off course that drag could not have been more than a half turn on that wheel an almost negative movement a movement yes but an almost negative one. Unless allowed to persist and go uncorrected while travelling at speed. "Frank was dazed. He scrambled to his feet a moment later, wondering what had hit the ship. Nicholls was groaning. He had been seriously hit through his right thigh and he had a bad gash on his forehead. Frank pulled Nicholls' hand from the wheel and turned the wheel back amidships, hoping to get Amethyst back on the course that Nicholls had been steering. There you have Earl's account of Frank's statement as to what transpired the alleged statement of a Leading Seaman with twenty-four years of service in the Royal Navy.

Earl in relating to Franks experience of what happened, what he saw and what he done, all of which if we accept and believe it as we are being asked to by the terms within the preface then why is there no mention in Franks alleged statement used by Earl in his book relating to Weston passing through the wheelhouse seeing bodies and hearing moans and groans. Did Weston the ships First Lieutenant not notice that there was no one at the wheel of Amethyst steaming at full speed ahead was his hurry to get to the Bridge more important than the wheel being manned and course checked. Earl provides the excuse for Weston, "He was in a hurry"

Back to Leading Seaman Frank and his reported part and actions by Mr Earl if we accept those actions we are by fact condemning Frank as being an incompetent Leading Seaman who by his actions caused the grounding of the Amethyst, Earl in his story reports "Frank pulled Nicholls' hand from the wheel and turned the wheel back amidships hoping to get Amethyst back on to the course Nicholls had been steering". That statement is a condemnation of Frank's ability as a Leading Seaman with twenty years service in the Navy, by putting the wheel amidships hoping to get Amethyst back on the course that Nicholls' was steering. Franks by his action of putting the wheel amidships only, was in fact setting an incorrect course as a true course, if momentary variation existed.

Lets for the moment take the crap within Earls book a stage further without me actually quoting from his book Earl has it that when Franks set the wheel amidships in hoping to correct the ships course he noticed that the gyro compass was not functioning so he began yelling "Wheelhouse to Bridge" with no response Frank's took a course on the magnetic compass and put the ship steady on it then made his way up and onto the Bridge. From the Bridge, to Frank's shocked horror he saw that Amethyst was heading straight for the bank on Rose Island which loomed pretty close. Franks slid down the ladder from the Bridge, into the Wheelhouse and pushed the wheel over to starboard.

There is no point of taking the attempts of preventing the Amethyst from grounding as they failed she ran aground a sitting duck to the P.L.A. Guns.

In this position and situation a Flash Signal was sent out from the Amethyst, the descriptive meaning of a Flash Signal when explained means a signal that supersedes all other transmissions, the signal sent was (Under Heavy Fire. AM AGROUND. LARGE NUMBER OF CASUALTIES.)

That signal was transmitted at twenty minutes to ten on the morning of 20th April 1949 at a time when Amethyst is aground on Rose Island also transmitted was the navigational position showing where the ship was aground the latter turned out to be wrong.

From Amethyst's position at 9.20 am the order being given "Full Ahead Both Engines" then being hit on the Bridge and Wheelhouse, until the time of grounding on Rose Island from where she transmitted the signal "Under heavy fire. Am aground. Large number of casualties" at 9.40 am, amounted to twenty minutes.

When H. M.S. Consort, at Nanking, picked up that flash signal the response was immediate. The British Embassy at Nanking was informed the British Ambassador Sir Ralph Stevenson stationed at Nanking immediately sent dispatches to the C.C.P. Headquarters requesting an immediate cease-fire.

H.M.S. Consort was ordered to the rescue of Amethyst.

Here an analysis to the above paragraph is necessary and will arm the readers with knowledge and insight into matters concerning the Yangtze Incident.

(1) When Sir Ralph Stevenson, the British Ambassador stationed at Nanking, dispatched messages to the C.C.P requesting an immediate cease-fire to the C.C.P. Peoples Liberation Army's bombardment of Amethyst, he done so recognising the C.C.P. and its army as an authority. He done so as the Sovereign and States diplomat stationed at Nanking. Key dates of modern China are capable of showing that the C.C.P. - Chinese Communist

Party was established 1921 and in 1946 the C.C.P. created the P.L.A. "Peoples Liberation Army" these key dates show that the C.C.P. with its created P.L.A. is a constituted authority, one recognised by the British Ambassador at Nanking at the time of the Yangtze Incident.

(2) Consort was ordered to the rescue of Amethyst, H.M.S. Consort stationed at Nanking was stationed there as guard ship to the British Embassy and nationals out there, there were no other warships at Nanking therefore by ordering Consort to the assistance of Amethyst the British Embassy, Ambassador his staff and British nationals were left unprotected.

While these procedures and preparations were being put in place Amethyst was at the mercy of the P.L.A. batteries and gunner's ratings were being killed and wounded the order was given to abandon ship, that decision was changed. It was decided to land those wounded, with others assisting in the evacuation while at the same time keeping the equivalent of a steaming crew on board. H.M.S. Consort in reaching Amethyst made three valiant efforts to take Amethyst in tow.

To this day the overall valour and seamanship that went into those three efforts has never been fully recognised. As a result of the damage and casualties that was inflicted upon H.M.S. Consort, she had to retire from the action. Ten of her ships company were dead and a great many wounded for some of the wounded their Naval careers ended. That night 20th April 1949 H.M.S. Consort tied up alongside of H.M.S. London, while the some of the wounded were being transferred on to the London for medical attention engineers from the London were assisting in repairs to the Consort that would provide passage to Shanghai. When it became known that the London and Black Swan were going to attempt rescuing the Amethyst, almost to a man Consorts Ships Company those not wounded were volunteering to take part in the rescue their request were refused as it was necessary to get the ship to Shanghai.

From Mr Earls book Yangtze Incident 1952 edition from page 50 and 51 the following I now quote* "Perhaps Consort will be back to give us a hand after dark", Hett offered tentatively. His skin was smooth and pink; his mouth was small and sensitive; and he looked very young and school boyish. He was unaware that Consort, in her valiant but unsuccessful attempt at knocking out the Communist battery, had suffered serious damage, and had nine of her crew killed and three wounded. He did not know that, with her wheelhouse badly hit, it was necessary for her to steer from aft, a difficult operation in the twisting and forceful current of the Yangtze. "Perhaps," Weston said. He felt very tired. * Unquote.

Hett, "Perhaps Consort will be back to give us a hand after dark". The supposition and picture painting of Mr Earl, as to what was running through Weston's mind before answering Hett, with the one syllable, "Perhaps".

It is essential here that I have to again return to Mr Earl's book, in particular the Preface to quote the first sentence therein. I Quote* Since I was not in Amethyst when she sailed up the Yangtze that April day in 1949 this book is primarily the result of interviewing many members of the ships company after the action was over. * Unquote.

"Many members of the Amethysts ships company" Here I am left wondering if in interviewing many members of Amethysts ships company did that include any of those who were present at the Ceremonial Burial of one member of Amethysts ships company ten from the Consort and twelve from the London within Hung Joa, Cemetery, Shanghai, 24th April 1949 as the result of attempts at rescuing Amethyst, as there is no mention of that event in his book. Painting a picture using the power of words is one thing but to delude via supposition and innuendo claiming that by the double-checking of the statements made in interviews you are presenting facts, then that is deception.

I have briefly related to the fact that Consort while along side of H.M.S. London received some assistance in repairing damage that was inflicted during her attempts at rescuing the Amethyst, repairs that were essential in order to provide safe passage to Shanghai, also mentioned is the fact that some from Consort's ships company who had been wounded were transferred to the London for medical attention. Lets now pick up the story from there and in so doing I am doing so with a vengeance for several reasons that will become clear.

When H.M.S. Consort arrived at Shanghai, Dr Wedderburn treated eight-one of Consorts Ships Company for wounds. Who is Dr Wedderburn? Dr Wedderburn, was a doctor who in the company who in the company of a pilot in a Sunderland flying boat flew over the Yangtze and witnessed Consorts approach and efforts in attempting to rescue the Amethyst, in witnessing such Dr Wedderburn, later wrote it down in explicit detail as both he and the pilot at the time both were of the opinion it was beyond belief it may well be that Dr Wedderburn, read Earl's book and in so doing was prompted into his writing of the book "Lotus Garden" I have personally read the eye witness account of what both the doctor and pilot witnessed. From what can only be described as a bird's eye view of the action taken by H.M.S. Consort, her approach at speed, her devastating fire power that knocked out the P.L.A. Battery's during her three attempts to take Amethyst in tow, the hits she was taking while putting in such an effort but what they were witnessing with unbelief was that there was no one to be seen on the upper decks of the Amethyst.

From Mr Earl's book Yangtze Incident at page 52 I Quote *At about half-past ten Weston instructed Petty Officer Henry Freeman and Frank to get a wire ready astern Amethyst so that they would be ready to be towed off by Consort when she came. Frank and Freeman went aft to the starboard side of the quarterdeck and uncovered the hawser wheel. Small arms fire was whistling around them like jet-propelled wasps, and ricocheting off steel bulkheads with suddenly angrier, higher pitched whines. The two grabbed at the end of the wire and crawled along the quarterdeck, pulling the wire with the. They fastened it in place, but by the time they were finished the small arms fire was intolerably heavy. They made a quick, scurrying dash for the protected space between the depth-charge racks. *Unquote

Earl goes on to explain how both men came to realise that they were not in a protected space and again had to make a scurrying dash to safety elsewhere.

Two things can be derived at from what Earl, relates (1) the towing position was an extremely dangerous and exposed position that small arms fire was being concentrated upon. (2) That both Freeman and Frank were brave men when the overall consideration of the preparation of rigging and setting a tow line under such conditions must have amounted to.

Also by and from that account there is the further certainty when again all is considered, and that is, death was an immanent factor waiting for anyone being sent to pick up and secure the tow under such conditions.

With Consort enroute great hopes were being placed on her ability to alleviate Amethyst's problems and rescue the ship from its existing situation. H.M.S. Consort with its motto Loyal and Steadfast was not about to let what must have been the hopes of those on Amethyst down. Whilst enroute at a speed that has never been equalled on the Yangtze preparations were being made in rigging up the towing gear in order to take the Amethyst in tow, preparations were being made for the transference of steering from the tiller flat a position in the aft of the ship almost immediately below Y-gun on the stern of the ship. These preparations in respect to the steering of the ship were in the event of the wheelhouse, being knocked out or damaged. Now as it just so happened the wheelhouse on Consort took a direct hit on the wheelhouse in the early part of the action so manoeuvrability was dependent on communications to the tiller flat steering position that lay almost directly below Y-gun as previously stated add to this the fact that this position lies between the ships prop-shafts where they connect to her twin screws (propellers).

Through the deafening crescendo of the 4.5 Y-gun going off every few seconds, the whine from the prop shafts, the vibration and rumble while manoeuvring either in the forward or reverse positions the effort was being continued to rescue Amethyst

By this time it must be pretty obvious that in order to even attempt a rescue in such a situation was the priority would be, to silencing of the guns of the opposition that were determined to prevent such an objective, one thing was certain it was not a case of slowly manoeuvring into position putting a line aboard the grounded ship taking up the strain and pulling her from the mud. No, before manoeuvring into position the P.L.A. batteries had to be silenced so on those three attempts by Consort she was continually silencing the shore batteries and positions of the P.L.A. all the while being hit time after time, fires were breaking out all over the ship the damage control parties were constantly on the move and hard pressed, their work cut out for them, armament was being destroyed by the accuracy of the P.L.A. gunners. Ratings were being killed, others wounded some of the wounded who were carried to the ward-room that had been set up as a location where wounded could be taken for medical attention, there, some received further wounds as a result of shells passing through that location. How close did Consort come to rescuing Amethyst? "Close enough but there was no one there to pick up the tow" the reason being no doubt because of the exposed position and procedure required, in such an attempt death would have been imminent. Amethyst was aground with no firepower and the equivalent of a steaming crew left on board.

If the hopes of rescue by those on board Amethyst were dashed then those same hopes of rescuing the Amethyst for those of Consorts Ships Company were also dashed and heartfelt considering the cost of what went into that rescue attempt.

The hopes of those onboard in respect to being rescued were again raised on learning that the County Class Cruiser, H.M.S. London would be coming to Amethysts rescue. On the morning of 21st April 1949 the date set for the invasion and invading forces of the C.C.P in crossing the Yangtze in force on the upper reaches of the Yangtze at points that were above and below where the Amethyst was aground H.M.S. London accompanied by H.M.S. Black Swan, were ordered up river to rescue the Amethyst.

Both of those ships got to within twenty miles of Amethyst before having to retire because of the damage that was inflicted upon them in the war zone of the Yangtze by the guns of the P.L.A. invasion forces.

LUNACY

The incident involving Amethyst and the subsequent involvement of Consort, took place on the 20th of April 1949. This was the same date ending the C.C.P. ultimatum as was issued upon the Nationalists. Gathered along the North shore on the upper reaches of the Yangtze on that date there were more than one million troops of the Peoples Liberation Army, poised and ready for the crossing of the Yangtze. This was not a war game being played out in some club or establishment with Generals sitting around participating in a game. In monitoring Chinas internal affairs, the Generals so to speak of or coin a phrase, including the Admirals on the Far East Station, by their expertise would be providing their own individual Governments and war departments with up to date news on the volatile situation that existed on that station because of and in particular to Britain, because of its commerce and invested interests within China. Or were they in conflict with the Government having some sort of ill informed idea that they should be left in control of matters on the Far East Station as one thing is certain whoever was responsible for ordering the Amethyst up river that person or authority ordered that ship on a suicide mission.

Now, as it happens, one of Britain's invested interests in China at that time was in protecting the Opium trade that existed between Britain under the auspicious of Nationalist Government within China a trade that the C.C.P. as an authority within China were determined to put a stop to and in 1946 created the Peoples Liberation Army to assist in stamping out that trade.

In 1949 rationing of food and clothing was still in existence in Great Britain the economy was at low ebb as the country was recovering from the costs of world war two. In 1945 with the defeat of Japan, China was liberated from the Japanese occupation of China and restored to the Chinese. In December of 1945 with China being liberated a treaty was drawn up and became known as the Moscow Declaration, which I have already referred to for its terms therein and the importance of the same, just as I have pointed to some Key Dates In Modern China, these I will now update, 1921 The Chinese Communist Party (C.C.P.) is established; Mao Zeroing (1893-1976) is one of the party Organizers. 1924 Soviet aid and advisors to G.M.D's Whampoa Military Academy train GMD/CCP leadership for national unification, headed by Chiang Kai-shek. 1934-1935 at the time known as the Long March, Mao becomes prim leader of the CCP. 1946-1949 CCP creates the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA). Civil War ensues. With CCP victory, Chiang and GMD forces flee to Taiwan. With this update you now have the established facts by date to the existence of an authority within China known as the CCP. The purpose of providing this date will become reasonably clear in reading the following.

Within the House of Commons on the 26th April 1949 Prime Minister, Mr Clement Attlee, two days after the five ships companies from H.M.S. Consort, Amethyst, London, Black Swan and H.M.A.S. Shoalhaven, among others were burying some of the dead from the Yangtze Incident, at Hung Joa Cemetery in Shanghai made a statement concerning the Yangtze Incident.

Attlee's Statement to the House of Commons 26th April 1949. I quote* "It has been repeatedly stated in this House that our policy has been governed by the Moscow Declaration of December 1945, in which the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union declared a policy of none-intervention in China's internal affairs.

In view of the considerable British interests in China and of the presence of large British Communities, His Majesty's Government decided some months ago that His Majesty's Consular Officers in China should remain at their posts and this was announced to the House by the Foreign Secretary on 9th December. We are not alone in our decision to remain at Nanking. Other powers represented there with the exception of the Soviet Union, reached the same decision, and there has since been full consultation between the members of the Diplomatic Corps at Nanking.

In the disturbed conditions, which have prevailed in recent months, warships of various Powers have been at Shanghai and Nanking so that in the event of a breakdown of law and order as a result of the hostilities they would be able to assist in the evacuation of their nationals. When the Chinese Government decided to move to Canton, it is true that a warning was issued about warships in the Yangtze.

Nevertheless, it is a fact that since that time the movement of our war ships in the Yangtze have taken place with the full knowledge and consent of the National Government of China. I want to make the point therefore that when the incident took place to which I am about to refer, HMS AMETHYST was proceeding on her lawful occasions and that there was no other properly constituted authority to whom His Majesty's Government were under an obligation to notify her movements even had they been in a position to do so." Unquote. The part played by H.M.S. Consort is also covered in the public statement.

I Quote * "Thus early on Tuesday, 19th April, the frigate HMS AMETHYST (Lieutenant - Commander Skinner) sailed from Shanghai for Nanking, wearing the White Ensign and the Union Jack painted on her hull. When AMETHYST had reached a point on the Yangtze River some 60 miles from Nanking, at about nine o'clock in the morning on the 20th, she came under heavy fire from batteries on the North bank, suffered considerable damage and casualties and eventually grounded on Rose Island. After this the captain decided to land sixty of her crew, including her wounded, who got ashore by swimming or in sampans, being shelled and machine-gunned as they did so; we know that a large proportion have, with Chinese help arrived at Shanghai.

Vice-Admiral Madden, the Flag Officer, second in command, Far East Station, ordered the destroyer HMS CONSORT (Commander Robertson) from Nanking to go to AMETHYST's assistance, and the frigate BLACK SWAN (Captain Jay) from Shanghai to Kiang Yin, 40 miles down river from the AMETHYST. CONSORT reached AMETHYST at about three in the afternoon and was immediately heavily engaged. She found the fire too hot to approach AMETHYST and therefore passed her at speed down river. She turned two miles below and again closed with AMETHYST to take her in tow. But again she came under such heavy fire that she was obliged to abandon the attempt, although she answered the shore batteries with her full armament and signalled that she had silenced most of the opposition. Half an hour later her signals ceased, though in fact she was making a second attempt to take AMETHYST in tow, having turned down stream again. This attempt also failed and she sustained further damage and casualties during which her steering was effected. She therefore had to continue down stream out of the firing area." * Unquote.

Within that statement where Attlee relates "In view of the considerable British interest in china" he does not relate specifically to what those considerable British interests were. Well, the considerable British interests were in extracting reserves that could be found within China such as ivory among other things and paying for those commodities not in currency such as pounds shillings and pence but in the form of opium.

In his statement Attlee points to a great folly, the foolish act of His Majesty's Government and he does this in pointing to a decision reached by the Government, which was announced by the Foreign Secretary 9th December 1948. He, Attlee then goes on to point out more or less emphasising "We are not alone in the decision to remain at Nanking". Then he follows up on that rhetoric with an endorsement, "Other powers represented there, with the exception of the Soviet Union, reached the same decision and there has since been full consultation between members of the Diplomatic Corps at Nanking".

There is no explanation as to why the Soviet Union exempted from the decision to remain at Nanking there is no mention of the fact there were consultations between the British and Australian Powers represented there in Nanking that brought about the decision to have the Australian war ship H.M.A.S. Shoalhaven stood down from the duty of relieving H.M.S. Consort. In having the Shoal haven stood down the Australian Powers were exempting them from the lunacy of sending a war ship into the internal and territorial waters of a nation involved in civil war and in particular into what amounted to be the war zone without having taken the necessary and required precautions for safe passage.

I believe it would be fair to state that Prime Minister, Clement Attlee's, statement to the House of Commons 26th April 1949 is a monumental and a historical document that has to be relied upon for its terms, there can be no way of altering its structure, as such with the passage of time should credible evidence become available which points to that statement showing it to have been formed and presented by deceit and deception in order to delude, then regardless of the passage of time reparation has to be found to the wrongful acts and omissions caused prior to the making of that statement and what has resulted and flowed from it.

From Clement Attlee's, Public statement to The House of Commons I Quote* I want to make the therefore that when the incident took place which I am about to refer, HMS AMETHYST was proceeding on her lawful occasions and that there was no other properly constituted authority to whom His Majesty's Government were under an obligation to notify her movements even had they been in a position to do so. *Unquote.

Can fact establish the wrongful acts and omission within that part of the statement just quoted? I say that it can and is by what so far has been pointed out but what I cannot understand to a degree is, why it was not challenged and set right by the political legislators who were within the House of Commons on the 26th April 1949 listening to that statement being made, (men of straw) perhaps. And there was also the fanatics and lunatics, one fanatic if not a lunatic was on the opposition benches of the House of Commons, the leader of the opposition Winston Churchill, warmonger, his approach to the situation was that aircraft carriers should be sent in and the P.L.A. bombed.

Now by that recorded fact and the fact that Churchill's demands were rejected that was the second escape we had from what could have amounted to a third world war, not an opinion, but certainty.

At this present time of writing and relating to matters concerning conflict namely the Yangtze Incident that happened in peace time Britain 1949. Fifty-four years on in peacetime Britain has again become involved in Conflict this time Iraq. Via the news media there are the reports and discussions as to the legalities of that conflict, and there is now a divide within the United Nations with the large question mark over the legalities of Britain siding with the U.S.A in sending troops to Iraq without full consent and upon agreement of the United Nations.

If in the event that the United Nations do decide that the British Government were wrong in committing a wrongful act by sending troops into Iraq without the full consent and by agreement of the United Nations then the realisation of that will be brought home to Prime Minister, Blair, and this present day Government.

Returning to the Yangtze Incident and in particular to Clement Attlee's, Statement for a moment. In that statement there is no mention of who gave the order that sent the Amethyst on its journey up the Yangtze.

Admiralty records to this day are capable of showing the ages of those on that ship and when they joined the ship and what those records establish is the fact that the ship had not been "Shaken Down" the term meaning lacking in experience not proficient unsettled, the shaking down of a ship comes about by becoming familiar with the ship what is required so that the ship is in a state of readiness at all times and in all events.

Earl in his book Yangtze Incident at page 16 "She had left Shanghai that morning, carrying a youngish crew, including sixteen boy-seamen fresh both to the ship and the Far East Station." Now concerning the matter of the Shoalhaven being stood down and no reference given, or provided, in Attlee's statement to the House of Commons.

The prerogative of standing down a ship belongs to the Admiralty; the Admiralty on the Far East Station at that time was in the form of Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir E.J. Patrick Brind. and, Flag Officer Second-in-Command, Vice-Admiral A.C.G. Madden. With them rested the decision with regard to the request to have the Shoal- haven stood down from its delegated duty that being, the relief of Consort, there had to be discussions and considerations in order to come to the decision of standing that ship down. Was it because of the danger that existed, was it from fear of a backlash from Australia that would come about should anything untoward happen to the ship and ship's company on refusing to meet the request of standing down the Shoalhaven, or was it that the Australians, made it known that if the Shoalhaven was not stood down Australia would break off relations with Britain. (Or was it an advantageous fluke).

Earl's book Yangtze Incident at page fourteen. Quote* Even to-day it is not clear why Amethyst was fired upon. Was the first salvo a deliberate, sneering affront to Britain and the Royal Navy? Or, as Amethyst's First Lieutenant, Geoffrey Weston, believes, did the Communist gunners mistake the frigate's up river movement for the double betrayal and attempted escape of a Chinese Nationalist warship which had previously agreed, for a price, to remain at the near-by river-port of Kiang Yin and fight on the Communist side. *Unquote.

In Attlee's statement to the House of Commons it was stated, "HMS AMETHYST was proceeding on her lawful occasions and that there was no other constituted authority to whom His Majesty's Government were under an obligation to notify her movements even had they been in a position to do so"

There was an authority that could have and should have been contacted whether by right or in courtesy to ensure safe passage, because of those wrongful acts attempts by the means of deceit and deception have been the order of the day to cover up the true story of the Yangtze Incident.

LEADING TO THE TRUTH

Within China from 1946 there was a power struggle between the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalists. In 1946 the C.C.P created the Peoples Liberation Army. The political power struggle escalated into what became a Civil War, a Civil War in which there could be no intervention by Britain, the Soviet Union or the U.S.A. intervention was prevented by the Moscow Treaty of December 1945 with the guidelines and policy therein (Non intervention into the internal affairs within China).

Because of that treaty and its policy all three nations became embroiled in a cold war with all that that entails, monitoring the affairs within China and spying on each other, all having their own vested interests in China.

By the time of April 1949 the C.C.P. Peoples Liberation Army had advanced south across China. Stopping on the North shore of the Yangtze. In retreat the Kuomintang forces or armies of the Nationalist leader and general Chiang Kai-shek, left behind munitions, which were picked up by the advancing P.L.A.

I have already related to the peace talks between the two authorities the break down of those talks and the ultimatums issued along with the dates issued for the final assault or invasion-taking place.

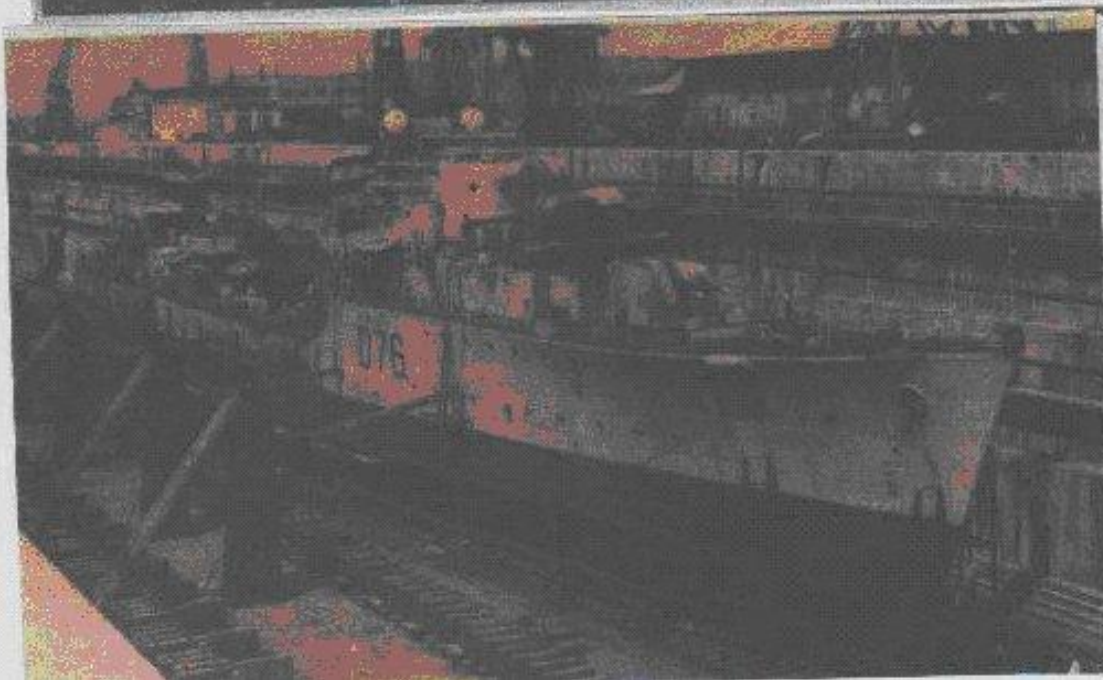
Anyone today can obtain from the M.O.D. the official form numbers that lead to the documented report of all four ships Amethyst, Consort, London and Black Swan, those damage reports provide the evidence to the damage and munitions that caused that damage.

In the reporting of the incident the news media were at pains to find out by asking what was the type and origin of the munitions that caused the damage to the four ships, they were prevented from obtaining that information under the term official secrets. If the news media reporters were provided, unofficially, with that information it certainly was not made public, no doubt under the blanket of official secrets.

Lawrence Earls, book Yangtze Incident and the subsequent film Yangtze Incident, with its various tittles are about to be seen as flukes, just as the Amethyst great escape and Consorts escape were on the 20th April 1949 by the same fluke on the 21st April 1949 the London and Black Swan became victims of the fluke, but the greatest fluke of it all is by fluke a third world was prevented.

The P.L.A. in picking up the munitions left behind by the retreating Kuomintang army of the Nationalists, hadn't the knowledge as to the fuse settings on the U.S.A. munitions, had that knowledge been available to the P.L.A. gunners, and in using those munitions with full potential Amethyst in the first instance would have been atomised before having had a chance to transmit the flash signal "UNDER HEAVY FIRE. AM AGROUND. LARGE NUMBER OF CASUALTIES.

Being produced here is a newspaper clipping showing H.M.S. Consort, arriving at Hon Kong for repairs following the Yangtze Incident. Below that is H.M.S. Consort, in dry dock at Singapore undergoing repairs to the damage, she suffered 20th April 1949 on the Yangtze River While attempting to rescue H.M.S. Amethyst.



This is a copy of a report prepared for the ADMIRALTY-HMS Consort
20th April 1949.

Section I-NARRATIVE OF EVENTS.

A copy of the Report of Proceedings, H.M.S. CONSORTS 74/47/1 of the
26th April 1949.

SECTION II- CAUSE, NATURE AND EXTENT OF DAMAGE.

The ship was hit by the following 68 projectiles.

105 m.m.	5 in number.
75 m.m.	12 in number.
37 m.m.	37 in number.
Small arms	14 in number.

All hits were above the waterline and a considerable number of the projectiles passed right through the ship before bursting. Details are only given for the more serious hits. The 37 m.m. shells in particular caused a lot of damage by cutting electric cables, and, as practically all of them hit the bridge superstructure affected the control of the ship to a marked degree.

Part 1.

105 m.m. H.E. with ballistic cap.
1000 yards on the port beam.
Below gun. Projectile penetrated ships side and burst after it had travelled about six feet.
Detonation complete. With the exception of the Ballistic Cap, no splinters found larger than two inches long.
Hole in ships side about six inches in diameter, and large ragged hole in internal bulkheads about two feet square.
Caused a small fire which was rapidly extinguished.

Part 2.

105 m.m. H.E.
1000 yards on the starboard beam. Right forward in the forepeak.
Burst on impact. Complete detonation. No fragments found more than two inches long.
Jagged hole in side plating about eighteen inches square.

Part 3.

105 m.m. H.E.
900 yards on the port beam. On the port oiling bollard.
Burst on impact. Detonation complete. No splinters found, no holes more than two inches long.
Splinters caused damage within a radius of ten feet.
Crew of the port Oerlikon were wounded by splinters.
Splinters also damaged the cables and bulkheads in Captains cabin.

Part 4.

105 m.m. H.E.
1500 yards on the port beam.
On the stern of whaler abreast the funnel. The shell apparently burst on the stern of the whaler. Detonation complete. No splinters found, but the funnel had holes about one inch square.
Splinters also damaged the oil tank for the port single Bofors.
Port single Bofor only usable by hand pump.

Part 5.

Part 5.

75 m.m. Armour piercing.
1000 yards on port beam.
Amidships under bridge structure.
Through bathroom, across port passage, into Transmitting Station through pedestal of the Admiralty Fire Control Clock and burst in the Tailboy. Distance 12 feet.
Detonation complete, fragments of base various sizes. Head of shell remained in one piece.
Serious damage to Transmitting Station equipment. Round holes some five inches in diameter through ships side and two internal bulk heads. Considerable damage to electric cables.
Guns had to revert to Local Control.

Part 6.

75 m.m. Armour piercing.
1000 yards on port beam. Amidships under the bridge structure.
Through heads, across port passage, into W/T Office to burst in far corner. Distance 12 feet.
Detonation complete. Head of shell remained in one piece.
Round holes about five inches in diameter through ships side.
Splinters cut electric cables and smashed W/T equipment.
Emergency W/T set aft brought into use.

Part 7.

75 m.m. Armour piercing.
1000 yards on port beam.
Amidships under bridge structure.
Through store, along cross passage, into 293 office to burst against starboard side.
Detonation complete. Head of shell remained complete.
Round holes about five inches in diameter through ships side.
Splinters cut electric cables, 293 out of action.

Part 8.

75 m.m. Armour piercing.
1000 yards on port beam.
Amidships under bridge structure.
Through Engineers Workshop, across the passage, into Gyro Room to burst against the bulkhead. Distance 10 feet.
Detonation complete, head of shell remained complete.
Hole about five inches in diameter in ships side, and two internal doors.
Splinters cut electric cables and pierced bulkheads.
Gyro out of action.

Part 9.

75 m.m. Armour piercing.
900 yards on the starboard quarter.
Through the Plot, into the Wheelhouse.
Detonation complete. No fragments.
Small holes in bulkheads. Shell killed the Coxswain and wrecked the steering gear in the Wheelhouse.
Many electric cables cut.
Ship had to be steered from Tiller Flat.
The plotting table and bulkhead instruments in the Plot were wrecked by this and other projectiles.

Part 10.

75 m.m. Armour Piercing.
900 yards on the port beam.
Amdships under B gun.
Through canteen into Boy's messdeck where it burst.
Distance 12 feet.
Detonation complete. Fragments of base all small.
Head of shell remained in one piece.
Round holes about five inches in diameter through ships side
and internal bulkheads. A dent about one inch deep in deck plate
where bursts occurred.
A little damage to woodwork.
Caused casualties to forward supply party.
Burst occurred in a box of Oerlikon ammunition, some of which
exploded and caused a small fire.
It is surprising that so little of the ammunition exploded.

Part 11.

37 m.m. Anti tank.
1000 yards on the starboard beam.
On the barrel of A gun.
The projectile hit just above the centre line of the barrel.
No detonation. Solid projectile.
Hole in gun barrel about six inches long by an inch and a half.
A gun out of action.
The easy piercing of the barrel is an indication of the very high
velocity of this projectile.

Part 12.

37 m.m. Anti-tank.
900 yards on the starboard beam.
B gun shield.
The projectile cut a guard rail stanchion, passed through the
gun shield, through the trainer and smashed the hand power clutch.
No detonation. Solid projectile.
B gun temporarily out of action.

Part 13.

37 m.m. Anti tank.
900 yards fine on the starboard quarter.
On the Director support.
Projectile penetrated the Director Support, ricocheted around in
the support.
No detonation. Solid projectile.
Hole about one foot long by two inches wide in Director Support.
Projectile cut the Director Training and Firing circuits so all
guns had to revert to Gunlayers Firing.

SECTION III-DAMAGE CONTROL.

As soon as the ship got under way the following damage control
organisation was put into effect.
All x/y and z openings were closed.
Engine Room personnel not on watch went to Damage Control Station.
The forward 20 ton pump and gear room fire and bilge pump were on
the fire main which was isolated amidships.
Ships fresh water tanks full. The forward group of oil fuel tanks

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Amidships under B gun.
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No detonation. Solid projectile.
B gun temporarily out of action.

Part 13.

37 m.m. Anti tank.
900 yards fine on the starboard quarter.
On the Director support.
Projectile penetrated the Director Support, ricocheted around in
the support.
No detonation. Solid projectile.
Hole about one foot long by two inches wide in Director Support.
Projectile cut the Director Training and Firing circuits so all
guns had to revert to Gunlayers Firing.

SECTION III-DAMAGE CONTROL.

As soon as the ship got under way the following damage control
organisation was put into effect.
All X, Y and Z openings were closed.
Engine Room personnel not on watch went to Damage Control Station.
The forward 20 ton pump and gear room fire and bilge pump were on
the fire main which was isolated amidships.
Ships fresh water tanks full. The forward group of oil fuel tanks

all full and about 20 stowed aft. Fires occurred on the forward mess deck and in the pistol room. All extinguished by using Ruswif and Foamite.

There was no shortage of damage control equipment.

Emergency lighting proved adequate. Automatic emergency lanterns were invaluable. Hand lamps and torches used extensively.

The fire control and ships broadcasting systems were out of use. Cables cut by projectiles.

When steering gear and telegraphs were damaged orders to the Engine Room were passed by telephone from the bridge. This was done by using the Telephone Control Box on the bridge. Caused congestion due to heavy usage.

Highlights the need for direct telephones between bridge and engine room and between both boiler rooms.

The standard of telephone communications was good.

Damage control parties did a great deal of work on ammunition supply; the need was aggravated by the present reduced complement.

SECTION IV-MACHINERY.

Main feed check valve on number two boiler jammed shut (not due damage). Boiler was fed through auxiliary feed pump discharge and feed check valve and bypassing feed heater. As the auxiliary feed check valve is smaller than the main, a maximum of six sprayers at 140 lbs/psi was the maximum forcing rate achieved by the boiler.

As rapid manoeuvring was expected both main feed pumps were run continuously. It is recommended that future designs have two feed heaters so that each feed pumps can feed one boiler through one feed heater.

SECTION V. SHIPWRIGHT DEPARTMENT.

The ship sustained sixteen hits near the water line. The ones closest to the water line were temporarily plugged with canvas and wedges during a lull in the action. On anchoring HMS LONDON made repairs by welding. Materials were adequate for the limited damage of this nature that was sustained.

SECTION VI. GUN ARMAMENT.

The barrel of A gun was hit by a 37 m.m. anti-tank shell which went clean through it thus putting the gun out of action. B gun mounting was hit by a 37 m.m. anti-tank shell which smashed the hand power clutch lever on the trainers side. Fortunately this jammed in the HAND position so the mounting was usable.

The barrel of the port single Bofors was hit by a splinter from a 105 m.m. shell but this was not discovered until some days later, the gun having continued to fire.

The Admiralty Fire Control Clock was hit by a 75 m.m. shell which had passed through the ships side and two internal bulkheads. This went through the table and burst in the Taliboy beyond, thus the fire control system was wrecked.

SECTION VII TORPEDO ARMAMENT.

No damage sustained to the Torpedo Tubes or Depth Charge Throwers. Starboard torpedo sight on bridge damaged. Depth Charge Firing Clock in ACK hit by SHRAPNEL. Out of action.

SECTION VIII-Electrical.

31a. Both turbo generators running and on load.

No 3 Turbo feeding the forward switchboard.

No 4 Turbo feeding the after switchboard.

No 5 Diesel generator under repair.

Numbers 1 and 2 Diesel generators had been run up and warmed up, but lack of personnel to stand by and W/K.

All low power circuits were complete with main battery floating on complete wire circuits. All gun driving motors and metadyne systems were in use and functioning correctly.

Heating and Ventilation circuits were isolated except for Eng Rm fans.

Both steering motors running and supplied direct from their respective turbo generators.

No damage was sustained by the high power main runs or machines. No damage to the low power generators or the AC alternators for fire control services.

One shell passed through the H.P. six inch lath starter, completely wrecked same. The shell struck the gyro room bulkhead and exploded and wrecked the gyro follow up system. Shrapnel did further damage to cabling. The gyro compass supports were distorted and the cover of the gyro cracked. The same explosion also damaged the four adjacent low power distribution panels.

The change over switch fitted for load distribution of number 2 diesel generator supplies was damaged and cables to same.

Shrapnel also damaged the cables to the auto change over switch for H.P. supplies to L.F. services. The cables from for'd switch board for the port 20 inch signal projector also damaged.

The shell that passed through the CO's cabin did a lot of damage to a wide range of cables, compass repeater and various amplifier circuits. Shrapnel from same shell wrecked the A.R.L. table in the plot, also a wide range of instruments wrecked in the plot.

The P.P.I. was wrecked, all instruments from navigation to fire control all out of action.

On the bridge the damage included the navigation circuits, and armament broadcast system equipment.

The for'd magazine had damage to cable for magazine lights, and magazine light switches damaged.

Two shells entered the after P.O.'s mess, port side. Severed all main cables running aft, port side. Including the supply to the port steering motor, the supply to the after 20 ton hull and fire pump and the after metadyne compartments.

In the T.S. the lower half of A.F.C.C. wrecked. The Tailboy also wrecked.

The starter for the engine room port side supply was also hit by shrapnel.

In the forward section of the ship numerous cables were all hit by shrapnel. Fire control and lighting circuits.

SECTION VIII. Electrical.

Seagoing efficiency reduced by ten percent. Fighting efficiency by eighty percent.

When the port steering motor failed. Alternative switching tried. The after damage control party found the damage to cables in the after P.O.'s mess. The quickest way to restore supply was to run

out the emergency supply cables from for'd to the emergency start panel. This was a well exercised evolution in the ship.

Temporary lighting circuits were rigged as required in the ship. & fitting of emergency lights in the Wardroom prior to the action & which were available when all lights failed.

The Surgeon Lieutenant worked by a hand torch and later by the yard arm groups fitted inside of ten minutes.

All reports of electrical damage was investigated, sometimes it was realised that little could be done.

The damage APT WAS CARRIED OUT WELL AND IN GOOD TIME.

The echo sounder was restored to service. Five breaks repaired in echo sounding system. The master switch for navigation lights was by passed to restore navigation lights.

The armament broadcast system was restored to eighty percent and the gun firing and check fire circuits for three of the 4.5's made operational, as were the 4.5's in local power.

SECTION IX - Wireless. V/S. Radar. R.C.M. and Y.

The main W/T Office manned and emergency set ready for use aft. The shell that struck the W/T Office caused considerable damage. The emergency set aft was rigged prior to the action. Using a portable whip aerial, this set was manned to maintain communication with Singapore W/T Station. Action casualties prevented intelligent use of action spares in the ship.

Visual Signalling.

Communication ratings were at action stations on the bridge and flag deck. All equipment was in working order.

Communications with B&H S. AMETHYST were established using the 20" Signalling Projector and continued with the aldis lamp, using the portable battery.

Signal projectors put out of action by failure of power supplies. The voice pipe from bridge to W/T Office was blocked by splinter damage.

RADAR.

It was understood that radar would be of no use under the circumstances. The 293 was in the warmed up state. Types 275 and 293.

The 275 office had two direct hits. Supply cables severed, instrument damage severe. 293 wrecked.

The 291 radar made operational for navigational purposes at short range.

Asdic-Echo Sounder -Hydrophone Equipment.

Type 144Q. 147F. S/S type 758N.

No damage to equipments or structural damage. Extensive damage in the vicinity of J.B.1. under the Wheelhouse.

SECTION XII- Supply Department.

All storerooms were unlocked before going into action. No special feeding arrangements were made or required.

SECTION XIII - MEDICAL.

Information to complete this section not available at the time of making this report.

There you have the Damage Report of H.M.S. Consort

INSIGHT
21st April 1949

The photograph of H.M.S. Consort, undergoing repairs in dry dock at Singapore, when coupled to the damage report, provides an insight that allows you to form an opinion to some extent of what it must have been like to have been involved in that conflict. It does not however paint the picture of the blood and guts, the dead and wounded the action and actions taken the valour and seamanship, the valour above and beyond the call of duty, matters to this day that have gone unrecognised, under the heading of deceit and deception.

When H.M.S. Consort, on the 20th April 1949 tied up alongside of H.M.S. London, the London was fully operational and as such was able to transmit to the Admiralty reports on Consorts damage and condition. H.M.S. London's ships company with Consort along side were getting a gruesome insight into the damage and carnage flowing from a rescue attempt of Amethyst, what must have been the mixed emotions and thoughts of H.M.S. London's ships company on viewing that.

There can be no doubt about the British Ambassador, on learning of Amethysts flash signal "UNDER HEAVY FIRE. AM AGROUND. LARGE NUMBER OF CASUALTIES." He the British Ambassador sent dispatches to the C.C.P. Headquarters requesting an immediate cease-fire, a fact recorded but we are still unaware as to what the response was to those dispatches, being dispatches, the dispatches were not being sent via electrical transmission utilities, so the dispatches would have taken some time, but during that interim period, H.M.S. Consort was ordered to Amethysts assistance, in going to her assistance, she was, fired upon by the P.L.A. now in view of dispatches having been sent was Consort, seen as a betrayal.?

It was not the British Ambassador who ordered Consort to the rescue of Amethyst; it was the Admiralty on the Far East Station.

On the 21st April 1949 H.M.S. London, a County Class Cruiser a ship with a seventeen feet draught, in the company of H.M.S. Black Swan was ordered up the Yangtze to attempt the rescue of Amethyst as stated previously they got to within twenty miles of Amethyst, before having to retire. Both of those ships were ordered into a war zone on a date known to be the invasion date of Chinas Civil War.

To this date we are being asked to accept that Amethyst was going about her Lawful occasions on 20th April, as was the London and Black Swan on The 21st April 1949.

Since the time of that incident and up until the present time in this year 2003 there has never been a Judicial or Public Enquiry into the overall Yangtze Incident in order to ascertain the legalities or illegalities of that incident. Fifty- four years on and into the present, the Government of today is attempting to avoid a Judicial or Public inquiry into the legalities of the right or wrongs of having gone to war in Iraq.

In my opinion I believe that there should be Judicial Inquiries into both the Yangtze Incident of 1949 and the present day legalities of the war in Iraq, two incidents of conflict in peacetime that British Service Personnel have been committed to by perhaps wrongful acts or omissions of the Government. If there are no judicial inquiries then as I see it the Government is seen to be above the law and not accountable to the law.

Prior to the Yangtze Incident of 1949 the Labour Party was responsible for bringing about what must be one of the most important Legal Statutes of Law Reform ever witnessed, I am of course referring to the Crown Proceedings Act of 31st July 1947.

In bringing about that Act, the Government removed the maxim "Rex None Pecare Potest" (The King Can Do No Wrong) in removing that maxim the Government removed the Crowns traditional immunity from liability bringing the Crown, on to a par with that of a subject in libel actions. In removing the maxim this meant that the Crown its Offices, Ministers and Servants could no longer rely upon a defence of Crown immunity from or for their wrongful acts and omissions.

There has been no test case so far as I am aware, ever having been presented within a Court of Law challenging the legality of the Yangtze Incident. I believe there is a case to be answered in respect to the Yangtze Incident. I also believe there is a case to be answered in respect to the legality of war in Iraq and my argument is that being a part of the U.N. that is where commitment should have been made by the agreement of the U.N.

If the Government of 1949 had nothing to hide and the government of today has nothing to hide then what excuse can there be for not initiating a Judicial Inquiry, could it be because there might just be a mass entitlement of compensation that has something to do with it.

AT NANKING

On page 32 of Earl's book Yangtze Incident, he introduces Lieutenant-Commander J.S. Kerans, into that book in the fashion "One of several involved in the relaying of that first message from Amethyst to the Ambassador was the Embassy's Assistant Naval Attaché, John Simon Kerans. His rank was that of lieutenant commander. At the time he had no idea how vitally important the Amethyst affair would become to him."

Kerans, wrote the foreword to Mr Earls book from that foreword I now quote the last paragraph from it, I Quote* Most of us who took parting the action which has become known as the Yangtze Incident of 1949 are now separated and will go our devious ways, whether in civilian life or in the Service. I wish all my comrades the best of luck in the future. It was both an honour and a pleasure to serve with them. *Unquote.

When Kerans, wrote that foreword, with insight, he deliberately composed that last paragraph carefully selecting his words placing great emphases on and in them.

(Now separated and will go our devious way), When H.M.S. Consort was ordered to the rescue of the Amethyst the British Embassy there was without direct communication with London, England. H.M.S. Consort was in fact the listening post between London and the Embassy at Nanking. Lieutenant Commander Kerans was the Embassy's Naval Attaché and through him went all incoming and outgoing signals. Kerans was in fact by his position London's spy, monitoring the day to day situation as it was, it fell to him keep London informed of all events including that of others involved in the cold war that existed between Britain the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union. What was the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union up to That was the real importance of having a ship stationed at Nanking the ship was not spying it was being used as a tool its ears the communication system.

When the C.C.P's Peoples Liberation Army crossed the Yangtze River in its final assault against the Nationalists, no further harm came to the Amethyst other than that she was being held hostage. But out of disaster arose a golden opportunity, a Royal Navy ship in the territorial waters of China with enough know how on board to repair its communication system, (A spy within the victors camp) Kerans was ordered in to take charge of the ship and to become involved in negotiations concerning the ship.

One of the first signals that Kerans received on the Amethyst came from no lesser an authority than Vice Admiral, Madden, acting Commander-in-Chief, the signal arrived in the form of an order "THE SAFTY OF YOUR SHIP'S COMPANY BEING NOW THE FIRST CONSIDERATION YOU ARE NOW TO PREPARE TO EVACUATE FROM THE SHIP AND SINK. REPORT WHEN YOU WILL BE READY. ACNOWLEDGE"

Here you have Kern's who has just arrived on board being ordered to prepare the ships evacuation and sink the ship, it is obvious that, there was a countermand of that order since the evacuation and sinking did not transpire. But the fact remains that a signal with that order was sent to the ship by no lesser an authority than that of Vice Admiral, Madden, while acting as Commander-in-Chief on the Far East Station.

Consider the order in the first instance for its terms, "THE SAFTY OF YOUR SHIPS COMPANY BEING NOW THE FIRST CONSIDERATION" (1) Where was Maddens considerations of ships company's in respect to H.M.S. Consort, London and Black Swan. (2) Where was his consideration for Amethysts ships Company when it came to the sinking and abandoning of a ship in the middle of a war zone and completely surrounded by the advancing troops of the P.L.A. had that order been implemented? (3) What was his consideration in getting those ratings out of such a situation had the order been activated.

Here is the one thing that is certain, Amethyst had to be blown up or escape she could not be left on the Yangtze as material evidence to interference in China's Internal Affairs the Amethyst as a hostage was the C.C.P's proof to the world pointing directly to Britain and the U.S.A. interfering in Chinas Internal affairs, and in breach of the Moscow Declaration of December 1945.

In Great Britain a great deal was made of and about Amethysts escape from the Yangtze, and the seamanship and valour of those on the ship has to be applauded. I personally applaud the valour and seamanship of the event especially in considering the fact that their effort was successfully achieved, they survived, but what has never been taken into account is what would have resulted had the ship and those on board been destroyed in their effort of escaping, would that have been put down to the recklessness of Kerans, or the Admiralty on the Far East Station. Just an other unanswered question, the reason being, the authorities both in London and the Far East Station new of Kerans and his intention to escape from the Yangtze, signals were sent to the Admiralty on the Far East Station from London, ordering that there must be no attempt made by Amethyst to escape because of ensuing talks between London and China, at that time China was under the control of the C.C.P. that order within that signal was not made known to Kerans, who was in the process of activating Amethysts escape.

Some recorded facts from meetings between Lieutenant Commander, Kerans, and Colonel Kang, of the P.L.A on the dates 20th 23rd June 1949 at the village of Ma Chan Shaw, are note worthy because of the points as were raised, Colonel Kang, put it to Kerans through an interpreter, "If the British side will acknowledge that they invaded Chinese waters without the authority of the Chinese Peoples Liberation an early solution to the proceeding of H.M.S. Amethyst down the river may be found. Talks on the question of guilt and such other matters could then continue after Amethyst has gone" "Does Admiral Brind admit the British ships were guilty of entering the river?"

Kerans replied, "I recognise that Amethyst entered the Chinese national river and the Chinese People's Liberation Army frontier-zone without the especial permission of the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army."

Colonel Kang, "The reason I have to use the word 'invade' is because Amethyst invaded Chinese sovereignty, and the matter of sovereignty is the principle consideration. If we study the use of the word in its full context it may help to bring our views together."

Kerans, in reply, "You cannot use that word." "It means we are at war, and we are not. We are a friendly nation, and always have been."

Colonel Kang, "I suggest we leave this until a later meeting." Kerans, "I insist, that the discussion continue." Colonel Kang, "Very well. If Admiral Brind can admit the guilt of the British we can discuss the subject of compensation after Amethyst has gone." "I wish you good luck on the journey down-river."

Here you have Kerans freely admitting, "I recognise that Amethyst entered the Chinese national river and the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army frontier-zone without the especial permission of the Chinese Peoples Liberation." By that statement he provides proof to the world that Attlee, in public statement to the House of Commons 26th April 1949 lied to the House and the Nation. By Kerans, statement it is proved that the Amethyst was not going about her lawful occasions as 'especial' permission had not been sought from the Peoples Liberation Army. Kern's is also seen here to have seized upon the context or implication of the word 'invade' used by Colonel Kang, in so doing Kern's states, "You cannot use that word." And goes on to explain, "It means we are at war, and we are not. We are a friendly nation, and always have been."

The word invade has of course several meanings that can be attached to it but it was being used explicitly by Colonel Kiang, in its proper context because of the topic being discussed and cant be seen to be otherwise, "to encroach on (rights, esp. privacy)." By the very nature of the terms within the Moscow Treaty of December 1945 "Non Intervention Into The Internal Affairs Within China" who ever it was that ordered the Amethyst into the Yangtze River, regardless of purpose, that was an encroachment of Chinese sovereignty protected by the Moscow Treaty of December 1945.

When Kern's during those talks stated, "We are a friendly nation, and always have been" It is a great pity that he was not challenged on that statement and assumption by way of an old adage (God Protect me from my friend's, as, my enemy's I know).

ALPHA	Under heavy fire. Am aground. Large Number of casualties.
OMEGA	Have rejoined the fleet. Am South of Woo-Sung. No damage or casualties. God Save The King.

There you have the two signals that for the past fifty-four years have the attribute of being famous. In truth they are attributes to Infamy. Infamy covered up by deceit and deception. The deceit and deception that has gone unchallenged for forty-three years.

Prior to Amethysts escape, what I have shown is that amicable discussions were taking place for the purpose of securing Amethyst's release, discussions that would have on agreement provided safe passage. I have pointed to the discussions that took place between Kern's and Colonel Kang, and I have related to the signal sent from London to the Admiralty, Far East Station with the order that Amethyst, must not attempt to escape, an order that was not sent to Amethyst by the Admiralty on the Far East Station.

From: Lawrence Earls, book, Yangtze Incident at page 180. I Quote* Kerans had very recently received word, through a channel that cannot, even now, be revealed, that if he made a decision to try a break out he would have the full approval of the Commander-in Chief, Far East Station; and, by the still same secret source, he had been informed that he had political clearance from London. *Unquote.

Two years ago in March 2001. I attended an ex-serviceman's outing, there I was introduced to an elderly ex R.N, serviceman who had read a news report of a letter that I had received from Prime Minister, Tony Blair, concerning the graves of some of those left behind as a result of the Yangtze Incident. After being introduced to him he pointed to the ships crest on my blazer badge and said, "I can tell you more about that ship than you probably know." Well, with a prolific statement like that, I wanted an explanation to it.

Having satisfied his curiosity on the matter of the graves and my correspondence with the Prime Minister concerning the graves from the Yangtze Incident, my newly found ex-serviceman friend produce a note book and wrote down the name of an author and book suggesting that I should read the book, when I mentioned that I had read that particular book (Hostage on the Yangtze) after an explanation of why he was recommending that book and the further suggestion that I should read it again he explained his statement in the first instance, "I can tell you more about that ship than you probably know" in the following fashion.

"During the second world war I was a Telegraph's, stationed in Singapore where I narrowly missed capture by the Japanese, the ships Crest on my Blazer is that of the Riffles which fought its way out of Singapore. In 1949 as a Telegraph's in the Naval Attaché's Headquarters, in London, it was to some extent as if I was reliving my experiences on the Malacca Straits, Singapore, by what was occurring on the Yangtze River between Nanking and Shanghai in China. The Malacca Straits being a barrier between Malay and Singapore was similar to the barrier of the Yangtze, at the time of the big push by the Japanese in world war two and the Chinese Communists in 1949.

In May of 1949 H.M.S. Consort was the last Royal Navy ship to be stationed at Nanking she relieved H.M.C.S. Crescent, our listening post's stationed there for the purpose of transmissions, from that station came learning of American war equipment being landed from ships at Formosa, the connotations of a Nationalist second front with U.S.A. involvement or support.

When the Yangtze Incident occurred on the 20th of April 1949 involving H.M.S. Amethyst and your ship Consort, shock waves reached and rocked London, then on the 23rd of April a transmission from Shanghai, at a time when arrangement's were being put in place for the Ceremonial Burial there, the significance of what was found on board H.M.S. Consort that day sent shock waves through out the Admiralty and the diplomatic core in London, an un-exploded shell was found on top of H.M.S. Consorts number one boiler, great care had to be taken in removing the shell, on inspection it was found to be of U.S.A. origin and unstable. The shell had penetrated the ships hull and came to land on top of the number one boiler, had it exploded in coming into contact with the boiler that would have resulted in Consort sinking with a broken back, on deliberation of the location where that shell was found and up until the time of it being found H.M.S. Consort was the equivalent of a mine primed and ready to explode. To my astonishment, and this lives and remains with me to this day, in the damage report for H.M.S. Consort prepared for the admiralty and sent to London the reported finding of the shell on the number one boiler was omitted."

On pages 19 to 26 you have that being termed a copy of a report prepared for the Admiralty- M.M.S. Consort 20th April 1949 within that report there is no mention of the shell type of shell or its origins the question is why was it omitted, the answer is because it was of U.S.A. origin, coming in via the back door of Formosa for the Nationalists, some of those munitions were then left behind in fleeing retreat of the Nationalist only to be picked up by the Peoples Liberation Army.

Kearn's was the person who relayed the information regarding Formosa being the back door supply route, it was he who was ordered to take command of the Amethyst with options blow the bloody thing up or get it out of there, Kerans succeeded in his mission and sent the signal (Have rejoined the fleet. Am South of Woo-Sung. No damage or casualties. God save the King) in sending that infamous signal, astern of him, God had his work cut out for him, looking over the carnage left in the wake of Amethyst, the ship Kiang Ling Liberation was on fire and sinking a large Junk was split in two where does that come into the equation?

Reference has been made here to the book "Hostage on the Yangtze written by the author Malcolm Murrfett. I.S.B.N 0870212893" the story took shape in the first instance as a thesis of Naval event the Yangtze Incident, due to the amount of research to produce the theses a book came to life and it provides an insight into the Yangtze Incident, that in this country Britain, Government departments would prefer to keep under lock and key and in my opinion that is why, Malcolm Murrfett in his book concludes, with the question, "Why".

Well I have pointed to why the incident occurred; now I will point to another why. Why has the British Government since 1949 failed to sue the U.S.A. for their part in the killing and wounding of British Servicemen and the damage to Royal Navy Ships?

When that question is being considered matters that should be taken into the equation are; when the Peoples Liberation Army of China, made its final push, that push stopped at what is known as the New Territories, an area only a few miles distant from the British Colony, of Hong Kong. From there the P.L.A. were in a position to flatten Hong Kong that did not happen. The Nationalist army with its leader had fled to Formosa.

Lawrence Earl's, book, Yangtze Incident begins with the (why). Malcolm Murrfett's, book, Hostage on the Yangtze, ends with the question (why), and in writing as I am here I am asking the question, (why) in the big push by the P.L.A. did the Civil war within China stop at the New Territories only some few miles distant from the British Colony, of Hong Kong. The answer to the question is, that Mao Tse Tung, of the C.C.P. and Peoples Liberation Army of China, (read into the master plan) and defeated Britain, the U.S.A. and the Chinese Nationalists. The British Colony of Hong Kong was the hub of commerce with its banking systems in China, Moa Tse Tung, in victory now controlled China, so commerce within China came under his remit. Had, Moa Tes Tung, invaded Hong Kong, or destroyed it, that would have provided Britain and the U.S.A. with the excuse to launch a full scale war against Communist China in the hope of establishing a regime that the P.L.A. had put paid to, that plan was in progress with U.S.A. military equipment already in Formosa, and Chiang Kai-Shek with his remnants of his Kuomintang armies were in Formosa, Formosa being the Second front. A second front that was put paid to because Moa Tse Tung did not fall into the trap of China being taken over by any foreign powers.



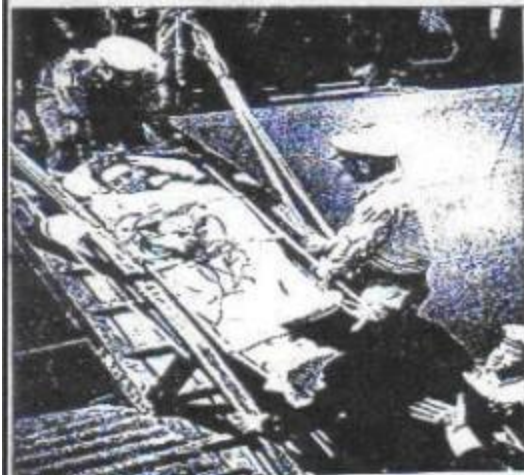
This photograph shows H.M.S. Consort in dry-dock at Singapore, undergoing repairs to the damage sustained 20th April 1949 on the Yangtze River, after having made three valiant efforts to rescue the Amethyst. It is noticeable from this photo that, A- gun has been repaired and a new B-gun is being fitted; there is a new Wheelhouse, Bridge, and Range-finders. Aft of the funnel wreckage is still visible.

The necessary equipment and expertise for repairing H.M.S. Consort had to be shipped out from Britain to Singapore, as the damage inflicted upon the ship was to such an extent, the ship would never have made the journey to Britain for the necessary repairs required.

H.M.S. Consort is seen here coming into Shanghai. Wounded rating being assisted from the ship, and the dead being carried past a guard of sailors and U.S Marines. This was at a time when the ship was the equivalent of an un-exploded mine with an un-exploded shell of U.S.A. origin lying on top of the number one boiler.



A guard of U.S. marines and sailors stand Consort are carried ashore. Left: A was helped ashore on arrival at Shanghai. 201 Green of H.M.S. Consort is carried down The bodies of those killed in H.M.S. Lench



A news cutting from 1949 reporting H.M.S. Consorts arrival at Hong Kong the terms within the news cutting are noteworthy.

In producing the photographs of H.M.S. Consort this allows an insight to some extent of what it must have been like to have been on board H.M.S. Consort during one hundred minutes of the ships life span of ten years on the Far East Station, one hundred minutes from the time of receiving the signal from the Amethyst, in the first instance (Under heavy fire. Am aground. Large number of Casualties).

Within Earl's, book at page 43 to 49 Chapter Six, HERE COMES "CONSORT" summed up what you have is "She came .She Saw .She left" why was that account, more or less for what it amounted to never challenged by those who's time was taken up by Earl, in obtaining statements to compile his book.

Here I would draw attention, for a moment, to the last paragraph of the news item that I have produced here, headed "H.M.S. Consort back from River Duel" on page (37) I Quote* "The wounded on the sloop which was grounded by the same Red artillery fire, could be seen on the quarter deck. We made three runs to get through the barrage to reach her. But when it became futile, we left, he said." * Unquote.

The officer who made that statement was at the time unaware that what he sighted and thought to be wounded lying on the quarter deck of the sloop Amethyst, that was the bodies of the dead with the exception of one. One who upon Consorts three attempts at rescue kept raising his arm in cheering Consorts efforts, A copy of his personal admission and thanks to Consorts 1949 Ships Company for their efforts in attempting to rescue his ship and those still on board is recorded.

Because of Earl's book and subsequent film Yangtze Incident that, in reality was about one ship the Amethyst this has distorted the nation's view of the Incident and Royal Navy History. On the web, there is a Royal Navy Profile site; in the history section there is no mention of the Yangtze Incident or the ships involved.

In pointing out these matters I will attempt to provide an even clearer picture of H.M.S. Consorts involvement in the Yangtze Incident, soon by way of a documentary it will be made even clearer by re-enactment, but in the meantime read into what it was like on board H.M.S. Consort.

H.M.S. TELEST
at Alacort Anchorage.

9th May, 1949

Sir,

I have the honour to submit a brief summary of the action that H.M.S. CONSORT fought with the Chinese Communists in the Yangtze on the 20th April, 1949.

On that day H.M.S. CONSORT was at Hankow awaiting relief by H.M.S. TELEST. We were due to be relieved at about 1130, when at 1000 we received a signal to proceed forthwith to the assistance of H.M.S. TELEST who was aground and under heavy fire roughly half-way between Hankow and Shanghai.

Taking what action possible in the short time I -

- (i) Filled all baths and wash basins with cold water.
- (ii) Placed emergency dressing chests in the Seamen's forward bathroom, the Seamen's after bathroom and in the Wardroom.
- (iii) Emergency field dressings throughout the ship and to all officers.
- (iv) Stripped the Wardroom, installed a steriliser and prepared it to deal with all casualties.
- (v) Spent several minutes lecturing to gun crew on control of hemorrhage, etc.

There is absolutely no doubt whatsoever that the Communists opened fire on us first, and this occurred about half an hour before meeting TELEST. This burst was principally .303 and machine gun. There were no casualties and the firing ceased after a broadside from us.

Half an hour later we sighted H.M.S. TELEST aground on the South Bank, we were doing thirty knots at the time. At this moment we came under very heavy fire from the North Bank, principally anti-tank armour piercing shells, 75 mm. and 105 mm. It was at this point that casualties started to come in. The first batch was six all very severely wounded and bleeding vigorously. From this time onwards I saw very little of the Ship's movements, but I knew we came upstream "slow ahead" three times attempting to get somewhere near H.M.S. TELEST.

Very early during the action we had a shell through the Wardroom which exploded, fortunately damaging no one present. About twenty minutes later I was attending to a Petty Officer whose femoral artery had gone. I had finished suturing it and just left him to get to another casualty under the table when the second shell came through very low. This put all the lights out when it exploded and blew the above Petty Officer's knee off. I saw this in the flash. At this time I was crawling round to casualties pulling my surgical outfit with me. After that explosion there was no trace of my instruments whatsoever apart from a pair of scissors a Bard Parker knife and a Spencer Wells.

More and more casualties were brought in to me and I had to work for about twenty minutes with a torch before emergency lighting could be rigged. I will say the Electrical branch did it as soon as they were able.

The Medical Director General of the Navy,
Queen Anne's Mansions,
St James's Park,
LONDON S.W. 1.

/ I ...

CONFIDENTIAL

I concentrated principally on controlling hemorrhage at once in all casualties, removing surface shrapnel where possible, cleaning the wounds and applying field dressings, these proved most useful as there was absolutely no time for bandages, etc.

I amputated one foot and one hand with the aid of the above remaining instruments and an open razor which proved most useful.

A further shell exploded in the Wardroom later but again, fortunately, did not damage the patients.

At one stage the Captain thought of attempting to land us on to AMETHYST but later changed his mind as we were unable to get close enough to her, and also our rate of casualties was so high.

During the action I had several occasions to dash aft, to the bridge, and wheelhouse. In the latter, a direct hit blew off the Coxswain's leg and he died immediately with little or no hemorrhage. The Quartermaster then took over but in a matter of seconds he was hit and just couldn't carry on, and was brought to me. I immediately ran down to the wheelhouse when they told me of the Coxswain, he was dead alright. The steering was smashed and I could see we were heading for the bank. I shouted to the bridge but gathered they appreciated the fact as we went full astern and the after steering position was manned.

The W/T office received a shell which exploded inside killing two outright and a third died later from severe blast effects. Later the T.S. office received a direct hit killing two instantaneously. In the small cross passage beneath the Captain's day cabin three men were killed when a large shell exploded there. I saw all these cases, where, of course, nothing could be done.

We withdrew from the action roughly two and a half hours after it commenced, and sailed about thirty miles downstream to a safe anchorage for the night and to rendezvous with H.M.S. BLACK SWAN and later H.M.S. LONDON.

At about 2000, BLACK SWAN met us and I managed to obtain some plasma from her for two of the more severely shocked cases. Her Medical Officer and that of SHORLIVEN, who was on board her, came across to help me give some more individual attention to the cases - by this time we had thirty-one wounded in the Wardroom.

An hour later H.M.S. LONDON appeared and we went alongside her. Her Senior Medical Officer came across to see me and after consultation took two of my worst burn cases across to his sick bay and one case of traumatic amputation of arm. The latter died shortly afterwards on board H.M.S. LONDON.

I remained up throughout the night with my casualties. They all appeared comfortable and some managed to get a little sleep.

Next morning we sailed for Shanghai where we went alongside, and, thanks to the excellent organization of our capture by the Americans, I got my casualties up to the Country Hospital immediately. There they were sorted out and we operated on those requiring immediate work. Here I should like to record the excellent work performed by the senior Surgeon, Mr Hanson and his assistant Mr Wedderburn.

In the afternoon I met a train bringing fifty-eight AMETHYST ratings up. These included four walking wounded. They had either swam ashore or got ashore by sampans. They told me that many more had set out, when the Communists opened fire on them whilst in the water with heavy shells, not machine gun fire, killing many and many drowned who found the current too strong.

Later that day, H.M.S. LONDON returned with her casualties. I met her more serious ones who were taken to a prepared ward in the American Naval Headquarters where two American Doctors and I worked on them most of the night. The following morning they were removed to the U.S. Hospital Ship REPOSE.

The following evening I met the train, possibly the last from Nanking, which brought the wounded from H.M.S. MERTON under the direction of Lieutenant-Commander Pachard, U.S.N. They were taken to the same place where we attended them prior to their removal to the REPOSE the following morning.

We had a funeral service in Shanghai and there buried our dead, and those of H.M.S. LONDON.

During my brief stay in Shanghai we had a few of the larger holes in the hull patched to enable us to make a reasonably safe passage to Hong Kong.

Fourteen of my casualties went from the Country Hospital to REPOSE and the remaining fifteen I took down to Hong Kong in the Ship. They were all later transferred to the Royal Naval Hospital at Hong Kong. Those in REPOSE were transferred when she came down.

Altogether we had thirty-nine casualties and ten killed in CONSOFT. Some details are given below.

I spent four days in Hong Kong where I was ordered on forty-eight hours leave. I was then brought up to H.M.S. CRESCENT to join H.M.S. BELFAST at Alacrity Anchorage.

I shall now include a list of the killed and casualties in H.M.S. CONSOFT:-

KILLED

1. ACKHURST, J.C. D/JX 146838, Radio Elect. (W/T)

Instantaneous death outside the W/T Office.

2. GIFFORD, R.C. D/KX 134757, Sto. Mech.

Instantaneous death in passage beneath Captain's Cabin.

3. GUNNEY, L.J. D/JX 126456, O.P.O.

Killed in wheelhouse, left leg blown off. Died of shock.

4. HUTTON, C.W.D. D/JX 660081, A.B.

Killed in T.S. Instantaneous.

5. IREDALE, D. D/JX 660921 Ord. Isl.

Wounded in W/T office. Died of severe blast injury to lungs. Intra Thoracic Haemorrhage. He had 2 pints plasma.

6. JENKINSON, S. D/SSX 840980 Ord. Ser.

Wounded on 'B' Gun. Had complete maceration of right buttock and hip joint - joint fragmented in the wound. Haemorrhage controlled. Had 3 pints plasma but died of shock after eight hours.

7. MOER, E. D/JX 150473.

Transverse wound left side of face. Shell in the T.B. Government center block. Wound to S.I.S. HEDON at request of S.I.S., L.L.S. HEDON. Wound on arrival.

8. HEDON, J. D/JX 161233. L.S.

Killed instantaneously in the T.B.

9. TILLY, C.V. D/JX 852094

Severe wound left side. Shell of shell. Wound to side.

10. TONK, J. D/JX 841233. L.S.

Killed instantaneously - completely disappeared - in passage towards the Captain's deck.

WOUNDS

1. ATTENCE, G.A. D/JX 77433. L.S.

Shrapnel wound right foot. Government center. Large piece of shrapnel removed.

2. ADER, L. D/JX 501237. L.S.

Severe laceration of face and both arms. Wound to S.I.S. LOMAX on remembrance.

3. DUBB, R.F. D/JX 777947. L.S. S.I.S.

Shrapnel wound of arm. Occurred on arrival. The shrapnel was embedded against the lower part of the radius. This was removed under local anesthetic by enlarging the wound slightly. The wound was partially closed with seven stitches.

4. HEDON, J.C. D/JX 802901. Electrician.

Shrapnel lodged in right leg. Wound to side. This was removed.

5. DUBB, C.H. D/JX 841233. S.I.S.

Two shrapnel wounds of back. Both removed.

6. KEVIN, P. D/JX 152154. Leading Seaman.

Shrapnel wound left leg. ? ? ? ? ?

7. DUBB, R.H. D/JX 841233. Day 1st Class.

Deep shrapnel wound left forearm. Shrapnel in close relation to radial artery and median nerve. - as there was very little discomfort it was left for later removal. This may have been removed by now.

8. COX, R.F. D/JX 150470. L.S. S.I.S.

Shrapnel wound of right foot. ? ? ? ? ? Still in hospital and no further details known.

9. CHAMBERS, W. D/KX 96140 Ldg. Ssg.

Multiple shrapnel wounds. No details available.

10. CORNELL, Petty Officer.

Shrapnel wounds left side of chin. Shrapnel removed. Wound closed with two stitches.

11. DONALDSON, A.N. D/X 60870 T.O. C. L.

Shrapnel wound with place beneath right costal margin. Under investigation for possible liver damage.

12. DUFFIN, L.E. D/SSX 660904.

Shrapnel wound of Right Forearm. Shrapnel is buried in the Right radius. No attempt was made to remove this on the spot. Radial and posterior interosseous nerves were intact. One suture was put in, laceration and posterior plaster slab applied. May now have been removed.

13. DAVIES, L. D/KX 166214 Ssg. Mech.

Severe burns face and arms. Transferred to H.M.S. HAZARD.

14. FLANNAGAN, F.J. D/SSX 770996 Ssg. Mech.

Severe direct wounds of both feet. Right foot amputated on board. Left foot amputated in Country Hospital, Shanghai.

15. FORD, S.F. D/SSX 847508 Cnd. Ssg.

Large shrapnel wound of left anterior axillary fold. Fragment was removed, debridement performed, wound closed with rubber drain.

16. FLEET, W.H. D/SSX 769252 Able Seaman.

Complained of bilateral complete deafness. Appeared to be completely deaf in the left ear and slightly in the right. No evidence of injury to either tympanic membrane. There was slight improvement in the left ear after the first 2 days. Right ear showed air and bone conduction much reduced. Left ear showed no air conduction and only slight bone conduction.

17. GREENING, H. D/JX 127695 Petty Officer.

Severe shrapnel wound right groin. Right knee joint exposed after shell exploded in waistcoat. Knee now satisfactory, will require plastic surgery later.

18. HOLSTON, T. D/JX 271396 Ldg. Signaller.

Shrapnel wound leg.

19. HUGHES

Minor cuts to left index finger. Soon discharged.

20. MORRIS

Shrapnel wound left wrist. Shell shrapnel removed from forearm.

CONFIDENTIAL

21. ROSE, S.D. D/IX 74082 31. 31st Nov. 1944.

Severe shrapnel wound left wrist. Shrapnel removed from left hand.
Stump treated and X-ray taken.

22. RICHMOND

Abrasions and lacerations of left forearm. No large pieces of shrapnel found - dressings applied.

23. ROBERTSON, I.C. Commander, R.N.

Shrapnel and wood splinter wounds left thigh left leg and left elbow. Large wound in left thigh opened and enlarged, splinters and shrapnel removed. Wound closed and drained. Numerous small fragments of shrapnel in left leg, few superficial ones removed.

24. TOOTILL, W. D/IX 760562 Able Seaman.

Multiple shrapnel wounds of left leg and left foot. None in vital positions in ankle joint so were left. In situ, they were too numerous and small to warrant removal. Leg put up on splint. Injuries occurred in warehouse.

25. TSUI KOO,

Chinese Newsmen. Shrapnel wounds left arm.

26. WILLIAMS, W. D/IX 128344. Able Seaman.

Shrapnel wound left forearm. Split fracture proximal end of left ulna which did not extend into the elbow joint. Fragment of shrapnel removed from left forearm. Arm put in plaster with windows over the two wounds. Wounds were dressed daily.

The three remaining cases were JAPANESE men who I took on board in Shanghai.

1. DAVIES

Conjunctivitis and powder burns left side of face. Wounds cleaned up. Argylol drops and boric eye baths to left eye.

2. LUTTER, A. D/IX 849956 Boy.

Shrapnel wound of left buttock. Fragment removed by enlarging wound, debridement performed. Wound closed and drain inserted.

3. MURPHY

Shrapnel wounds of left and right forearm.
A large piece was embedded in the left ulna near the elbow and another piece near the lower $\frac{1}{2}$ of the left radius. A further piece was near the right ulna - this was removed with considerable difficulty, drain inserted down to lodgement and wound closed.

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- 7 -

All cases received morphine when seen first and later 300,000 units Penicillin.

Many of the above cases may have had further operative treatment in the Royal Naval Hospital, Hong Kong but I have been unable to follow them up due to being taken back to HEBEST so quickly.

A great handicap in my opinion was not having any nonject morphine tubes on board as my work would have been greatly eased if we had had some to distribute to officers. I believe this was also the case in HEBEST.

I should like to record the wonderful behaviour of the casualties during and after the action. As it was my first action I was deeply impressed. I felt privileged to serve under such a fine Commanding Officer as Commander L.C. Robertson, D.S.C., R.N., in whom I had the greatest confidence and who did everything in his power for me.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Spl. Mark S. BENTLEY
SURGEON RECUENANT, R.N.

What I have just shown is part of a historical event in Royal Navy History, conflict in a time of peace, documented history stored in government offices gathering dust.

Why is this not documented on the Royal Navy Profile, web site? The answer is a simple enough one it is because of the blundering that can be attributed to the Yangtze Incident. On that web site there is mention of the Falklands War, was there not some blundering there which could have been prevented, from lessons learned via truth from the Yangtze Incident, instead of the learning from the brain washing film Yangtze Incident that distorted the truth, that is what the so called epic film was all about, creating a vision, deluding the gullible.

Since the year 2000 two documentary producers were corresponding with me both were

interested in producing a documentary covering the Yangtze Incident, one because of cut backs in funding fell from the frame, so to speak of, the other when it came to light wanted to produce his documentary along the theme of the part played in the Yangtze Incident by the Amethyst, up until the time of him mentioning that, I had been pointing him in the direction of where his researchers could and would be provided with a wealth of information, however upon stating that the theme and main thrust of the documentary was going to be on Amethyst's part in the Yangtze Incident, what really annoyed me was when he made mention of Simon the cat's part, how it had been awarded the Dickin Medal, the animal equivalent of a Victoria Cross and how the medal had been sold at auction in 1993 at the price of £23,000 my reaction was immediate, politely, I told him to "Fuck Off".

On the 12 January 1991 a news item in the Daily Telegraph news paper headed "Whitehall farce as graves vanish" caused a great deal of anguish by what was being reported, the report was on some furious buck-passing within Whitehall as to what department was responsible for graves of those from the Yangtze Incident, buried in Shanghai. Allegations were to the effect that the Chinese, "bulldozed the graves to make way for a public school". This was the news being reported in January of 1991 and here some ten years later a documentary producer's interest is focused on news from 1993 relating to the price that Simon the cat's Dickin Medal brought at auction.

Only recently there was news media coverage concerning a Yangtze Incident medal that was issued to one of the ratings from the Amethyst, in dire straits he pawned or sold the medal, an Australian on holiday in Britain, saw the medal and purchased it. The Australian, searched and found the recipient, the medal was valued at Eighty pounds, the medal was returned to the recipient by the Australian. (I wonder was the Australian in anyway familiar with the Shoal Havens part in the Yangtze Incident).

On the subject of medals as awards, when I joined H.M.S. Consort and was regaled in the ships history and events in my learning I asked the question in regard to what awards were presented to the ratings for their deeds and valour "The Battle Honours" to me at that time some of the stories amounted to Valour above and beyond the call of duty. Today I know those stories to be true, having met up with many who were involved in the Yangtze Incident, their stories are not for me to write about but they should be told.

(The awards were put into and drawn from a hat.)

The Yangtze Incident ended the lives and careers of many serving in the Royal Navy during peacetime, the Civil War in China should never have touched them but it did and it affected lives in all manner and fashion, fifty-three years on and the Yangtze Incident is still effecting lives whether British or Chinese and the Chinese have to be taken into the equation because as a result of the Yangtze Incident a great many Chinese were also killed and wounded. No one should ever be kidded into believing that the Amethyst was going about her lawful occasions, Amethyst would have been going about her Lawful occasions, if by merely courtesy, both the Nationalist's and the C.C.P. had been contacted in order to secure safe passage way, what was there to hide if measures were merely being put in place to evacuate British nationals.

The truth of it is that the filth of politics and the gratifications of political desires were in conflict, a cold war existed and sides were being taken in breach of the 1945 Moscow Treaty, with its terms of none intervention into Chinas internal affairs. Why were questions being asked by the news media? Such as can be seen in the news cutting on page (37) just below "Firing Point Blank" "Shell's collected in the destroyer were of three types-37 mm., 75 mm, and 150 mm (He declined to specify whether they are Russian or American Products) the officer who declined to answer that question declined by route of the official secrets act, which he was bound by.

In regard to awards I cannot say exactly who it may have been or what department had the responsibility for awards but one thing that is certain is that all recommendations for rewards never came to light, acts of valour above and beyond the call of duty were not recognised and

this came about by way of the recommendations being drawn from a hat, as they were, so an order from some source was responsible for that action to be taken, and taken it was.

I can relate to three instances that occurred on board H.M.S. Consort where valour occurred that was well above and beyond the call of duty, but by the fact that selection for awards was via the hat those three recommendations were not pulled from the hat.

In London, in November of 1949 some of those involved in the Yangtze Incident received recognition for their services from His Majesty the King, then on the 22nd December 1949 a "SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY" was posted on H.M.S. Consorts, notice board in Singapore while, still in dry-dock. It was indeed a "SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY" from Admiral, Patrick Brind, Far East Station as when read into he is not, telling how the action was, he is dictating how its to be seen and accepted as such. Why did he not send that special order of the day to the Hunt Class Destroyer, H.M.S. Mendip? Well, it could be that no one told him that's where H.M.S. Consorts, Captain and Ships Company were, perhaps he hadn't been made aware that the Admiralty had taken back the Hunt Class Destroyer, Mendip, having been on loan to the Chinese Nationalists, and, on finding it to be in a filthy and stinking condition decided to put Consorts Captain, and Ships Company on board the ship with orders to clean the ship up and bring it up to Royal Navy standards while patrolling Malay and Borneo at a time when Consort was in dry-dock at Singapore undergoing repairs.

SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

H.M.S. CONSORT

On 20th April, 1949, H.M.S. "Consort" was ordered to proceed from Nanking to assist H.M.S. "Amethyst", then lying partially disabled and aground in the Yangtse Kiang after being shelled by guns of the Chinese People's Liberation Army.

When approaching H.M.S. "Amethyst", H.M.S. "Consort" came under heavy fire from shore batteries and was unable to stop close to her. She therefore passed on down river, stopped, and engaged the Communist batteries. H.M.S. "Consort" then closed H.M.S. "Amethyst", but again came under heavy and accurate fire. Although gallantly handled and well fought, H.M.S. "Consort" received such serious damage and casualties that her Commanding Officer, when within half a mile of H.M.S. "Amethyst", decided to withdraw to avoid his ship becoming completely disabled.

Throughout the entire period under fire, the bearing and conduct of all on board were in accordance with the highest traditions of the Service. In addition to those who have already received recognition for their services from His Majesty the King, the names of the following officers and men of H.M.S. "Consort" have been brought particularly to my notice, and I commend them for their courage and devotion to duty.

Similar "Special Orders of the Day" have been issued for H.M.S. "London", "Black Swan" and "Amethyst".

Mr. Wallace N. D. Branch, Senior Commissioned Electrical Officer, R.N.

Surgeon Lieutenant Mark Bentley, R.N.

Lieutenant (E) Richard B. Davidson, R.N.

William K. Hutchings, D/JX 144680, Yeoman of Signals

Lieutenant Harold Birks, D.S.C., R.N.

William E. Palmer, D/KX 86569, Chief Petty Officer Stoker Mechanic

Lieutenant Basil C. Hutchinson, R.N.

Lieutenant Jack I. Considine, R.N.

Walter Williams, D/JX 128344, Able Seaman

Mr. George D. S. Cannell, Commissioned Gunner (T.A.S.), R.N.

Lieutenant William R. D. Robson, R.N.

Far East Station.
22nd December, 1949.

Admiral,
Commander-in-Chief.

The signature of the Commander in Chief on that documents dated 22nd December 1945 some eight months from the time of the incident was indeed an order. It's an order of the day that ties him into the deceit and deception of what went on and into the Yangtze Incident, and that is established by the terms within the second paragraph of his order of the day in relating to Amethyst, and the action taken by Consort.

THE LISTENING PRIME MINISTER!

In 1991 in Scarborough I met up with ex-servicemen from the 8th Destroyer Flotilla and Squadron Association, Far East 1945-59 the ships represented there were H.M.S. Cossack, Constance, Consort, Contest, Cockade, Comus, Comet, Concord and Charity.

One of the topics of conversation among us was the news item of January 1991 the desecration of the Yangtze Incident graves at Hung Joa, Cemetery, Shanghai.

Here I am quoting from a news item in the Daily Telegraph 12/01/1991 that was headed, "Whitehall farce as graves vanish" I Quote* the Yangtze Incident. In July 1949 as every schoolboy used to know, HMS Amethyst was trapped on the Yangtze river during a mission to assist the British community in Nanking. After a moonlight dash for freedom, 23 of those killed were buried near Shanghai. *Unquote.

The implication here is that there was twenty-three killed on the Amethyst, during its moonlight dash to freedom in July and those killed were buried near Shanghai. The Telegraph got that wrong. Quoting continued, * Today, however, it seems that the Chinese have bulldozed the graves to make way for a public school. Sadly, no one can get much sense from whichever part of Whitehall is responsible for the cemetery. "We've been told by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission that that it's not their responsibility because the men were killed after the Second World War," says the Amethyst Association, chairman Bill Smith, a 21 year old petty officer on board at the time. "People have been in touch with the M.O.D. and even the military attaché in Peking, but there has been no response. We are planning to visit China in 1992 but obviously, the trip would be too distressing for some if the reports are true." *Unquote. The item more or less concludes with excuses of one sort or another.

At that time in Scarborough what I voiced to some, was my interest in how it was that the Amethyst, had seemingly been chosen for a comment on the matter of the graves as the news item was wrong in relating to the ratings who were killed, the time of being killed, and buried in Shanghai, and I explained, in this fashion.

"By the time of Amethysts Escape from the Yangtze, Shanghai was under the control of the C.C.P. and the Peoples Liberation Army, during Amethysts escape no ratings on board were killed. However on the 24th April 1949 one of the wounded from Amethyst on 20th April who died from his wounds, was among those who reached Shanghai having travelled overland from where the ship was grounded in the first instance and Amethysts Captain, who died from his wounds, was at the behest of his family committed to the sea from H.M.S. Consort, while on route to Hong Kong from Shanghai". I also pointed out that it should be the Government's Property Services Agency who should be dealing with the matter graves regardless of that agency's comment that had also been published, ("I'm afraid we cannot find the file") a typical comment in most matters relating to the Yangtze Incident.

Someone, I cant remember who it was but someone mentioned, along the lines, that the Amethyst association would get to the bottom of it, meaning the desecration of the graves.

I rounded on that guy because of his comment and I spoiled his weekend as I told him that before any of that mob or contingent (Reference to the Amethysts People) done anything they should consider correcting the shit of their comments that led to the publication of a book and film on the incident in which no vote of thanks was accorded to three other ships company's. Also stated in that dressing down by me were quite a few unpublished facts about the Amethyst in the Yangtze. In the news item regarding the graves reported in the Daily Telegraph 12/02/1991 the following can be found, I Quote* People have been in touch with the M.O.D. and even the military attaché in Peking, but there has been no response. We are planning to visit China in 1992 but, obviously, the trip would be too distressing for some if the reports are true" *Unquote. There you have the Amethyst Associations, spokesman's statement. From that statement there is the glimmer of

information that there is a trip out to Shanghai, being arranged a trip that would be too distressing for some if the reports on the graves were true. Well that's a fair enough comment and it's a worthy gesture by the Amethyst Association, as the trip would establish whether or not the allegations made were true or false. In the mean time the allegations of the graves being bulldozed to make way for a school is the cause of great concern to the loved ones of those who were left behind. "The last action heroes of the Amethyst" are arranging to establish truth.

Another side of the coin is the defamatory part of the allegations as if the graves have not, been bulldozed to make way for a public school, then the Chinese have been defamed, and the loved ones of those left behind have been caused unnecessary anxiety, suffering and mental torture.

This was at a time when the Conservative Government was in power. A government who did nothing about it, however a delegation from the H.M.S. Amethyst Association did go out to Shanghai and on their return spread the gospel according to the Amethyst Association, that the graves had been bulldozed over and the remnants of a factory now stood in the place of the graves so what we have is a school in the first instance being reported and on investigation by the Amethyst Association there is a derelict factory building.

This was a crushing blow to the loved ones of those who were left behind. When I learned of this report I was not prepared to accept it for reasons best known to myself. The reasons best known to myself were that I was in correspondence with a girl in the Far East who was researching cemeteries. Her research was into the graves from the Boxer Rebellion and strange though it may seem the cemetery she was researching at that time was none other than Hung Joa cemetery in Shanghai, also known as Hong Qiao cemetery. Her research at that time was extended to the Foreigners Tomb at Song Quing Lings Mausoleum as her information was that some graves from Hung Joa cemetery had been moved to that area, graves from the Boxer Rebellion. Government blocks marked those graves and only the initials of the deceased were on them as such she would need the names of those from the Yangtze Incident for comparison. Also within my knowledge was the fact that in March of 1999 H.M.S. Boxer visited China and during that visit Admiral Sir Michael Boyce in the Company of a Chinese Admiral laid a wreath on the waters of the Yangtze in memory those who died in the Yangtze Incident. A very noble gesture, but on learning of the gesture, in my mind I questioned it because only those Killed on board the Amethyst were committed to the waters of the Yangtze and it was people from the Amethyst who provided the news supportive of the defamatory allegations that the graves of those buried in Hung Joa

Cemetery had indeed been bulldozed and a derelict factory could be seen to be where the graves once were. In the first instance via a news report the allegation are that the graves were bulldozed to make way for a Public School then on a visitation by Amethyst people their findings is a derelict factory.

All of this was contrary to the information that I was receiving from my sources, sources in China and Australia for by the Internet. So, I decided that it was time to take this matter to the highest authority, the highest authority being Prime Minister, Tony Blair, (The listening prime minister). At the time of Mr Blair visiting Edinburgh, with a placard I lobbied him. Mr Blair sent his personal and private advisor, Ms Angie Hunter, out to interview me. Ms Hunter on hearing what I had to say suggested that I write to her and she would place the letter before the Prime Minister. She wrote the address that I should address the letter to on the placard that I was carrying at the time. She was as good as her word and placed my letter before the Prime Minister.

On the next four pages you can read the Prime Ministers reply to my letter of 3rd September 2000 for its terms therein.



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

25 September 2000

THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Mr. Leitch,

Thank you for your letter of 3 September regarding the graves of the twenty three Royal Navy personnel killed in the Yangtze Incident of 1949. I am sorry that I was not able to speak to you personally while I was in Edinburgh.

As you will know, the shelling of HMS AMETHYST, HMS CONSORT, HMS LONDON and HMS BLACK SWAN over the period 20/21 April 1949 caused the deaths of forty five Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel. Twenty two of those killed were buried at sea or, more precisely, committed to the waters of the River Yangtze itself. The remaining twenty three (one from the AMETHYST, all ten from CONSORT and twelve from LONDON) were buried in the Hung Jao (Hong Qiao) cemetery in the outskirts of Shanghai on 23 April 1949. The cemetery was a Christian one, and contained the graves of civilians as well as Service personnel who had died over the years on the China Station.

Shanghai fell to the Communist forces a few days after the funerals. No British diplomatic representation remained in the city and, in these circumstances, it is unlikely that any proper provision could have been made for the care and maintenance of the graves.

In 1991, the British Consul General in Shanghai attempted to discover what had happened to the graves. He was informed that, during the Cultural Revolution, the Hung Jao cemetery had been destroyed and the site redeveloped. A consular official inspected the area and confirmed that the site was now occupied by a factory building, dating from the late 1960s or early 1970s, and that virtually nothing remained of the original cemetery. The only visible sign that the cemetery had once existed was that the facade of some nearby shops was typical of the style of entrance formerly used in Chinese cemeteries.

We have not been able to determine exactly when the Hung Jao cemetery was destroyed, but it is known that a great number of cemeteries were obliterated during the Cultural Revolution. Given the circumstances of the time, I am afraid that it is unlikely that, even if we had known about the destruction of the cemetery, anything could have been done to prevent it. I understand that members of the AMETHYST Association gave some thought to complaining to the Chinese authorities about the destruction of the cemetery; ultimately, however, it was recognised that there was little to be gained by doing this as the deed itself could not be undone.

In present-day Shanghai, the only cemetery known to the British Consulate is the Foreigners Tomb Area which lies in the grounds on Song Qing Ling's Mausoleum on Hong Qiao Road. A member of the Consulate visited the Tomb Area on 11 September this year and spoke to staff. Apparently some of the graves from the old cemetery had been moved to the Song Qing Ling mausoleum. The original headstones were not moved but some names were transcribed on to "Government Issue Blocks". No dates were included and, in some cases, only initials were recorded. The marker stones are arranged in

'blocks' surrounded by hedging, making them difficult to read. There are also several 'blocks' that do not contain marker stones; these areas apparently contain unmarked graves whose original headstones had either been destroyed or were unreadable when the bodies had been moved. The Consulate is aware that there are alleged to be British Military personnel buried in the Foreigners Tomb Area, but it is extremely difficult to identify how many and who they are - and, of course, there is no guarantee that any of them are fatalities from the Yangtze Incident. Mausoleum staff were, however, able to confirm that there are no known plans to build anywhere within the grounds and, therefore, no plans to disturb the Tomb Area.

In the absence of firm evidence to the contrary, we probably have to assume the worst case, namely that the graves of those killed on 20/21 April 1949 were lost with the destruction of the original cemetery. The loss of the cemetery does not however mean that the men who gave their lives go unremembered. In 1993, the AMETHYST and LONDON Associations, in consultation with the BLACK SWAN and CONSORT Associations, arranged for a new memorial to all the men who lost their lives to be placed in St. Nicholas' Church at HMS DRAKE. A further memorial, a Book of Remembrance, was placed in St. Anne's church in Portsmouth Naval Base in 1994. Also, as you mention in your letter, as a result of the combined efforts of the four ships Associations, a memorial plaque was placed in the garden of the Ambassador's Residence at the British Embassy in Peking. This plaque which, in addition to the names of the naval personnel who died, lists the names of the locally engaged Chinese and the river pilots who were killed in this action, was dedicated in 1994 in the presence of representatives of the ships Associations. Finally, you may wish to know that in March last year, the First Sea Lord Admiral

Sir Michael Boyce, in the course of an official visit to China and accompanied by a senior Chinese Admiral, laid a wreath on the waters of the Yangtze in memory of those who died.

I realise that the content of my letter must inevitably be a disappointment to you. However I hope that you, your comrades in the four ships Associations and, indeed, the families of those lost during the Yangtze incident can take comfort from the fact that, as the memorials and last year's ceremony showed, their sacrifice has not been forgotten.

Yours sincerely
Tony Blair

Mr William Leitch

Note the terms on page three of that letter, "In the absence of firm evidence to the contrary we probably have to assume the worst case, namely that the graves of those killed on the 20/21 April 1949 were lost with the destruction of the original cemetery."

Now note again, the first paragraph on page two, for its terms, without me quoting it, as Mr Blair, in providing the information within that paragraph is relying on 1991 information, information from the time of a Conservative Government and in the absence of evidence to the contrary, we have

to assume the worst case.

When the news of that letter was made known, sections of the news media had various headlines had story's like, (Blow to veterans as Blair admits hunt for Yangtze Graves is over) well I don't see any admission by Blair, in his letter admitting that the hunt for the grave was over, what I do see is that he is relying on 1991 information on the graves and in doing so covers himself by an assumption that it is over unless there is firm evidence to the contrary of the 1991 information that he was relying on.

I replied to the Prime Ministers letter using the same channel of communication in the first instance; however I did not provide him with the overall information that I had, which was contrary too and in conflict with the 1991 information that he was relying upon. Within the terms of page two of the Prime Ministers letter there was the sentence in the first paragraph that read, "The only visible sign that the cemetery had once existed was that the façade of some near by shops was typical of the style of entrance formally used in Chinese cemeteries."

The implication or derivatives, from the full paragraph, and that sentence being, (the area of the cemetery has been visited and this is an eyewitness account of the area visited for the purpose of establishing facts leading to truth in an investigation).

Also within the Prime Ministers letter he made the admission, that, Sir Michael Boyce, in the course of his official visit to China and accompanied by a senior Chinese Admiral, laid a wreath on the waters of the Yangtze in memory of those who died. Here you have the restoration of Honour and Dignity to those who perished in conflict. Well I don't take comfort from that charade; no doubt this was a gracious gesture on the part of both Admiral's to the memory of those who perished on both sides at the time of the Yangtze Incident, but its not a matter to be seized upon to comfort the bereaved, loved ones and shipmates, of those left behind and laid to rest in Shanghai, when the defamatory allegations of their graves come into the equation.

As stated I replied to the Prime ministers letter of 25th September 2000 in replying my letter was dated 7th October 2000 the reply to that communication is dated 14th November 2000 and comes from the Dr Lewis Moonie, M.P., of the Ministry of Defence. The terms and contents of DR Moonie's letter are as follows.



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

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Mr W Leitch
8 Kenmore Avenue
Deans
Livingston
EH54 8NE

D/US of S/LM 4015/00/Y

14th November 2000

Dear Mr. Leitch,

Thank you for your letter of 7 October to Ms Anji Hunter, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

The first point that I would make, however, relates to the phrase used by Commander Kerans "our devious ways", which has obviously given you cause for some concern. The current use of the word "devious" to denote underhand or deceitful is, in fact, the least significant meaning of the word. Applied as it is here, to a route or course of action, it means nothing more than "following an erratic course, rambling, roving" (Oxford English Dictionary), which is quite appropriate when applied to a group of people whose lives all interwove at one significant moment but who, perhaps, had little else in common but that unique bond and who would no doubt later go their separate ways.

All the official Admiralty documents relating to the Yangtse Incident are held by the Public Record Office at Kew and a list of those consulted is attached. That said, it was made perfectly clear by the then Prime Minister, Mr Clement Attlee, in a statement to the House of Commons on 26 April 1949 that far from being, as you suggest, "in danger of sparking a third World War", the ships involved were lawfully present. His statement read as follows:

"It has been repeatedly stated in this House that our policy has been governed by the Moscow Declaration of December 1945, in which the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union declared a policy of non-intervention in China's internal affairs. In view of the considerable British interests in China and of the presence of large

Private Office



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



British communities, His Majesty's Government decided some months ago that His Majesty's Ambassador and His Majesty's Consular Officers in China should remain at their posts and this was announced to the House by the Foreign Secretary on 9th December. We are not alone in the decision to remain at Nanking. Other Powers represented there, with the exception of the Soviet Union, reached the same decision, and there has since been full consultation between the members of the Diplomatic Corps at Nanking.

In the disturbed conditions which have prevailed in recent months, warships of various Powers have been at Shanghai and Nanking so that in the event of a breakdown of law and order as the result of hostilities they would be able to assist in the evacuation of their nationals. When the Chinese Government decided to move to Canton, it is true that a warning was issued about warships in the Yangtse. Nevertheless, it is a fact that since that time the movements of our warships in the Yangtse have taken place with the full knowledge and consent of the National Government of China. I want to make the point therefore that when the incident took place to which I am about to refer, HMS AMETHYST was proceeding on her lawful occasions and that there was no other properly constituted authority to whom His Majesty's Government were under an obligation to notify her movements even had they been in a position to do so."

The part played by HMS CONSORT is also covered in the public statement:

"Thus early on Tuesday, 19th April, the frigate HMS AMETHYST (Lieutenant-Commander Skinner) sailed from Shanghai for Nanking, wearing the White Ensign and the Union Jack and with the Union Jack painted on her hull. When AMETHYST had reached a point on the Yangtse River some 60 miles from Nanking, at about nine o'clock in the morning on the 20th, Chinese time, she came under heavy fire from batteries on the north bank, suffered considerable damage and casualties and eventually grounded on Rose Island. After this the Captain decided to land about sixty of her crew, including her wounded, who got ashore by swimming or in sampans, being shelled and machine-gunned as they did so; we know that a large proportion have, with Chinese help, arrived at Shanghai.





Vice-Admiral Madden, the Flag Officer, second in command, Far Eastern Station, ordered the destroyer HMS CONSORT (Commander Robertson) from Nanking to go to AMETHYST's assistance, and the frigate HMS BLACK SWAN (Captain Jay) from Shanghai to Kiang Yin, 40 miles down river from the AMETHYST. CONSORT reached AMETHYST at about three in the afternoon and was immediately heavily engaged. She found the fire too hot to approach AMETHYST and therefore passed her at speed down river. She turned two miles below and again closed AMETHYST to take her in tow. But again she came under such heavy fire that she was obliged to abandon the attempt, although she answered the shore batteries with her full armament and signalled that she had silenced most of the opposition. Half an hour later her signals ceased, though in fact she was making a second attempt to take AMETHYST in tow, having turned downstream again. This attempt also failed and she sustained further damage and casualties during which her steering was affected. She therefore had to continue downstream out of the firing area."

With regard to the Honours and Awards for HMS CONSORT, the recommendations for those approved by HM the King are also attached (and taken from ADM 116/5690. No one (from any of the ships involved) was recognised as meeting the most arduous and exacting standards required for the award of a Victoria Cross.

I am unable to comment on the existence or otherwise of photographs of the damage of HMS CONSORT, except to say that, in general, photographs of damage to HM Ships were taken for circulation to, and the general information of, the Directorate of Naval Construction and not to satisfy the media.

Best wishes
Dr Lewis Moonie

DR LEWIS MOONIE MP



HONOURS AND AWARDS TO MEMBERS OF HMS CONSORT DURING THE YANGTSE INCIDENT

DSO

Commander I G Robertson

Commander ROBERTSON fought his ship with great gallantry when endeavouring to assist HMS AMETHYST after she had been disabled by the shore batteries of the Chinese People's Liberation Army in the Yangtse River on 20th April, 1949.

His resolute leadership and undaunted courage under heavy fire at point blank range was an inspiration to his ship's company who conducted themselves in the best traditions of the Royal Navy throughout the long action of that afternoon.

DSM

Leading Stoker Mechanic T A Johnson, D/KX 98914

For gallantry, courage and outstanding devotion to duty. When more than half the forward repair party was killed and wounded, he took charge of the remainder, putting out a serious fire which occurred about a minute later.

Chief Petty Officer H W Robinson, GM, D/JX 133428

For gallantry, dauntless courage, leadership and outstanding devotion to duty under fire. He showed an exceptionally offensive spirit, and set a splendid example to the guns' crews and supply parties. With unfailing energy and dauntless courage, he went wherever trouble occurred, keeping the guns in action despite frequent damage and casualties to the armament and the men.

Mention in Dispatches

Lieutenant W H Bonner, RN

For outstanding skill and efficiency, leadership and courage.

As gun control officer he was responsible for the high state of efficiency of the armament and the men who worked it. From the director he controlled some accurate and intensive shooting, and when director circuits were out he organised the after groups of guns in group control and kept them in action, scoring a direct hit on at least one enemy emplacement.

Ordinary Seaman J V Bennett-Bound, D/JX 818261

For courage and outstanding devotion to duty.

He was one of the three survivors of 'A' gun's crew, when it was hit. He immediately went to the one 4.5" gun remaining in action at that time, and by his courage and cheerfulness set a splendid example.

Able Seaman A McKee, D/JX 423392

For courage and outstanding devotion to duty.

Owing to shortage of men, he was Acting Leading Hand of the Gunner's party, as well as layer of a Bofors gun, and when ready use ammunition was expended, he had to leave his gun to assist the supply parties. With unfailing energy he was in three different places at once, setting a splendid example of courage, energy and devotion to duty.

Acting Leading Telegraphist R K J Miller, C/JX 371938

For great courage and outstanding devotion to duty.

He was in the W/T office when it was hit, the operator of watch and Petty Officer Telegraphist were killed, the other Leading Telegraphist was seriously wounded, but he immediately proceeded to get the emergency set working, and succeeded in broadcasting the ship's call sign so that it was heard at Singapore.

the men were killed after the Second World War," says the Amethyst Association chairman, Bill Smith, a 21-year-old petty officer on board at the time. "People have been in touch with the MoD and even the military attache in Peking, but there has been no response. We are planning to visit China in 1992 but, obviously, the trip would be too distressing for some if the reports are true." The MoD is quick to point the finger at the Government's Property Services Agency. "It's certainly not us," retorts the PSA. "It's the MoD. We are responsible for 30,000 graves around the world, but not these." Much paper-shuffling later, the PSA finally admits that it is indeed responsible but has bad news. "I'm afraid we cannot find the file," says a spokesman. Association members fear that Whitehall's inactivity runs deeper. They suspect that the concern of our Hong Kong-conscious mandarins to avoid upsetting their Mandarin counterparts may have something to do with it.

From: David Parker

Date: Tuesday, June 25, 2002 09:09:25

To: [williamleitch](#)

Cc: John Worledge; Peter Francis; [kim.clark@clarke](#)

Subject: Yangtze Incident Graves

Dear Mr Leitch

Please refer to your e-mail regarding the Yangtze incident graves in Hung-jao Cemetery Shanghai.

I appreciate your concern regarding these graves but the Commission's responsibilities do not extend beyond December 1947 and therefore it cannot take responsibility for the Yangtze Incident Graves. After this date responsibility for service graves rests with the Commissions individual member governments which in this case is the UK Ministry of Defence.

I can assure you that this is not a device to avoid responsibility, the Commission does in fact have a responsibility for 70 Commonwealth war dead buried in 15 cemeteries in China including 9 in Hung-jao. In the 1950's it became impossible to arrange maintenance and it was eventually decided to commemorate them on the Sai Wan Memorial in Hong Kong. The reports we have since received indicate that construction work has taken place on the site and that a number of foreign graves were transferred to Wanguo Cemetery. An inspection by a British Embassy official was however unable to locate the graves.

If it did prove possible for the war graves, for which the Commission has a responsibility, to be found marked and maintained the Commission would give serious consideration to their reinstatement.

I shall copy this correspondence to our office responsible for war graves in China and to the Ministry of Defence.

Yours sincerely

On the next page I am showing part of a news cutting from a news report dated 12/01/91 which relates to the buck passing of which department was responsible for the graves at Hung Joa cemetery, Shanghai. Below the news cutting, being produced is a copy of an E mail that I received concerning the graves; it would seem that the buck passing is an ongoing saga.

FIRM EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY

From Mr Blair's letter to me dated 25th September 2000 last paragraph page one "Shanghai fell to the Communist forces a few days after the funerals. No British diplomatic representation remained in the city and, in these circumstances; it is unlikely that any proper provisions could have been made for the care and maintenance of the graves." Page two first paragraph, "In 1991 the British Consulate General in Shanghai attempted to discover what had happened to the graves. He was informed that during the Cultural Revolution, the Hung Joa cemetery had been destroyed and redeveloped." From the same paragraph, "The only visible sign that the cemetery had once existed was that the façade of some near by shops was typical of the style of entrance formerly used in Chinese cemeteries."

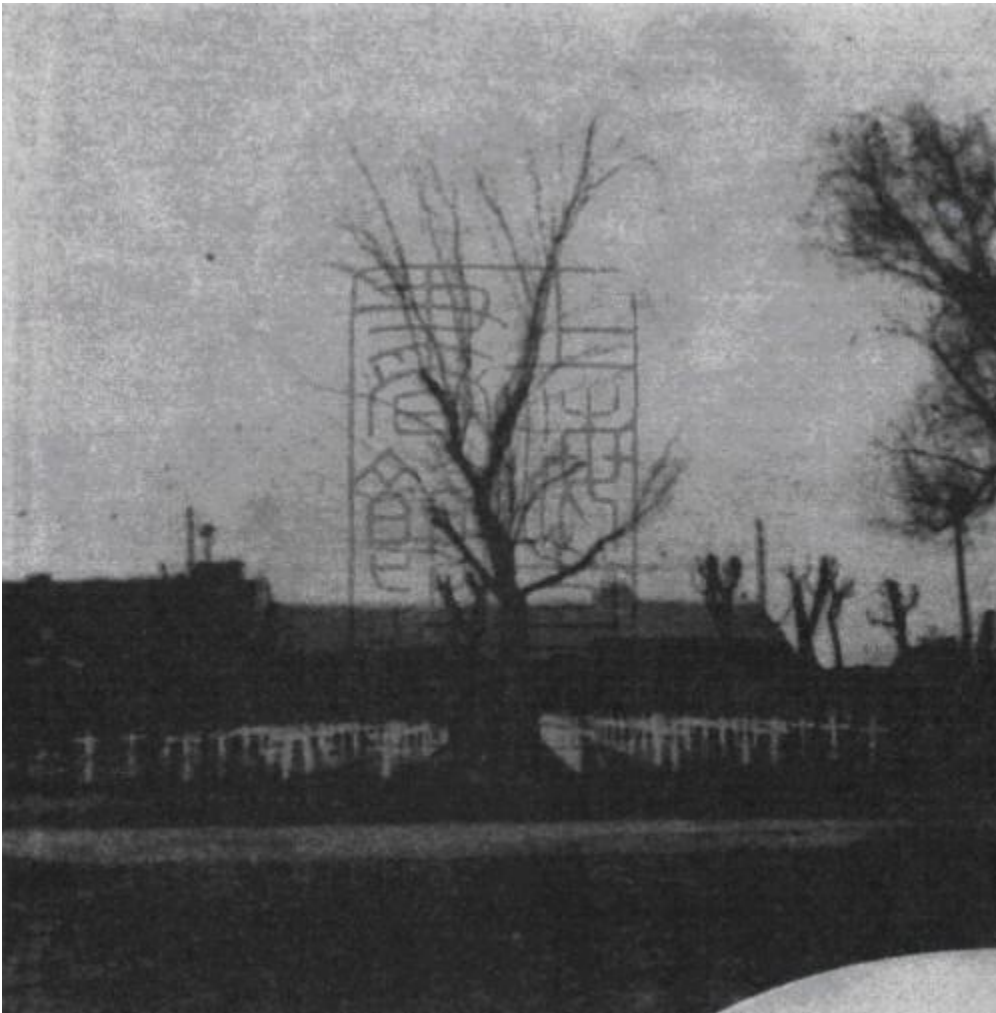
Firm Evidence To The Contrary!

(See below Map Section of Shanghai 1999)

Hung Joa and Hong Qiao are in fact one and the same.



This below shows the Christian section within Hung Joa cemetery that contained the graves of civilians as well as Service personnel who died or were killed over on the China Station, it included some from the time of the Boxer Rebellion.



The photographs below were taken at Hung Joa cemetery in Shanghai at the time of the Ceremonial Burial of ten ratings from H.M.S. Consort, twelve from H.M.S. London, one from H.M.S. Amethyst, and a Chinese, Yangtze River, ships pilot.

24th April 1949



On this page are the names of those who were laid to rest within Hung Joa cemetery, Shanghai, 24th April 1949. (Note it is a copy of an official Admiralty document.)



LAY OUT OF GRAVES IN HUNGJAO CEMETERY, SHANGHAI,
OF THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE YANGTZE,
ENLARGEMENT, April, 1949.

	<u>Front Row</u>	<u>Back Row</u>	
DOC TINTALAI	H. 259	H. 289	A.B. ROPER
G. WINTER	H. 258	H. 288	J.H. ARKELL
G.V. TREAY	H. 257	H. 287	W.J. PULLIN
C. HUTTON	H. 256	H. 286	S.O. JONES
S. JENKINSON	H. 255	H. 285	A.W. ELLWOOD
T. MOIR	H. 254	H. 284	P.J. STOWERS
J. FORBIN	H. 253	H. 283	H. SHELTON
R. GIFFORD	H. 252	H. 282	J.P. FOLEY
D. IREDALE	H. 251	H. 281	S.W. WALSINGHAM
M.J. GURNEY	H. 250	H. 280	J.C. LANE
J.C. AKHURST	H. 249	H. 279	E.G.W. HARRISON
A. MORTON	H. 248	H. 278	L.H.V. JARVIS

This is a photograph of the Yangtze Incident graves as they were in Hung Joa cemetery in the early 1950s from this photograph it can be seen that each grave is marked with an Admiralty Headstone, yet according to the Prime Ministers letter to me dated 25th September 2000 "Shanghai fell to the Communist forces a few days after the funerals. No British diplomatic representation remained in the city and in these circumstances; it is unlikely that any proper provisions could be made for the care and maintenance of the graves."



This photograph shows the graves from a different angle, other graves with their Headstones can be seen in the photo, note the shapes and sizes of the various Headstones for a future reference.



This photos below shows a walled area within Pan-Yu, or Fan-Yu Park, that was at one time a part of Hung Joa cemetery it shows the area in its derelict and overgrown condition, in the top photo under magnification there is a resemblance to a foundation it is part of a plot with broken Headstones from the time of the Boxer Rebellion.



Here you have the road that runs parallel with Hung Joa, or Hong Qiao, cemetery notice that to the left of the photo that part of the wall painted white that is part of the wall that surrounded the original Hung Joa cemetery.



Here you have that paragraph from the Prime Ministers letter dated 25th Sept. 2000.

In 1991, the British Consul General in Shanghai attempted to discover what had happened to the graves. He was informed that, during the Cultural Revolution, the Hung Jao cemetery had been destroyed and the site redeveloped. A consular official inspected the area and confirmed that the site was now occupied by a factory building, dating from the late 1960s or early 1970s, and that virtually nothing remained of the original cemetery. The only visible sign that the cemetery had once existed was that the facade of some nearby shops was typical of the style of entrance formerly used in Chinese cemeteries.

It kind of looks like someone has since 1991 moved the shops and put back the cemetery walls back! Its either that or the British consular official in 1991 was blind or a liar.

This photograph shows the entrance to Pan Yu Park, this was the entrance the Hung Joa cemetery, where you see the red coloured area behind the gate and within the park, that is the centre piece of the park, above and beyond the centre piece there is a green area rising away from the centre piece, that area came into being from the dumping of soil in Hung Joa cemetery at the time of the Cultural Revolution. Later when cultivated it was termed the High Land, it is also referred to by locals as the old Pan-Yu cemetery, Pan-Yu in Chinese meaning, (good friends). The building to the left within the gates is in direct line with that area within the park known as the Highland Land.



From this photo and angle the structure in the back ground is the location of the entrance to Hung Joa cemetery and now known as Pan-Yu Park.

This photograph depicts an area running off or from the High Land within the park; this area is known as the Grass Lands. The stones that can be seen here are not part of a path way and there is no explanation as to why the stones are laid out in the fashion they are.

However many of the stones bear a close resemblance to Admiralty Headstones and on a count of the stones they number twenty one in total. Many elderly locals living in Shanghai refer to this area and the High Land as the old Pan-Yu cemetery.

The elderly locals remember Hung Joa cemetery and how it fell into a derelict condition, how part of the cemetery was used for dumping soil from the defence tunnels that were being dug prior to

the Cultural Revolution. How the area was thereafter cultivated and taken over becoming Pan-Yu Park.



The photograph below is one taken of the path that was developed on the High Land an area within the park that now covers that part of Hung Joa cemetery where the soil from trench tunnel digging was dumped. In the photo a seat is clearly visible and in front of the seat there is a stone close to the bottom of the picture and if looked at closely or put under magnification it bears a strong resemblance to an Admiralty Headstone lying face down.



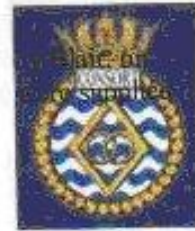
This is a view from a point on the High Land looking down and over the centrepiece of the park



Here you have a further view of the Park that was developed from the derelict Hung Joa cemetery, the sign on the left of the photo is written in English and provides a clue to where the development of the park came from a sports lottery.



Here you have a copy of the letter that I sent to the Prime Minister copies of the letter along with the relevant information and photographs were also sent to several Members of Parliament.



Unto The Right Honourable Tony Blair, P.M., 14th July 2002

Hung Jao (Hong Qiao) Cemetery

Prime Minister. Sir, my correspondence to you 3rd September, 2000 and your reply to the same 25th September 2000 this related to the graves of those left behind from the Yangtze Incident 20/21 April 1949. Now, I must inform you that you have been deviously and grievously mislead in matters concerning the Hung Jao (Hong Qiao) Cemetery.

From your letter of 25 September 2000. I Quote* In the absence of firm evidence to the contrary, we have to assume the worst case, namely that the graves of those killed on 20/21 April 1949 were lost in the destruction of the original cemetery. * Unquote.

If you check out the information that is within the terms of your letter to me, some of that information came about in 1991 at the time of the conservative government being in power, within the Daily Telegraph – 12/01/1991 there is a single paragraph (Whitehall farce as graves vanish) it is a note worthy item considering all related within that one single paragraph. That news item will show you that at that time the information was to the effect that the graves were bulldozed to make way for a school and the item goes on to show the paper shuffling by inter departmental offices as to which office was or is responsible for the graves within Hung Jao (Hong Qiao) Cemetery.

Being enclosed is photographic evidence to the effect showing Hung-Jao Cemetery, as it was in the mid 1950s then its derelict and overgrown condition in 1999 so in a time space of some forty years the cemetery had gone unattended.

Well the Cemetery is no longer a cemetery as such it is now a part of Pan Yu Greenfield's or Park, at no time were the graves of our service personnel bulldozed over to make way for a school or factory, our service personnel who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of this country and were buried within Hung Jao Cemetery were never removed from their last resting place. Their graves although unmarked are a part of Pan Yu Park or Greenfield's, Par Yu, translated means good friends.

It is in my opinion it is unlikely that the Chinese Authorities would consent to having the are within the Park restored to the condition of the 1950s but I do believe that consent would be given for a monument to be erected within the Park as a joint and consecutive effort by both nations honouring with dignity those from both sides who perished in conflict.

There is also a matter that has to be addressed and that is what's to be done about those responsible for the misinformation that has stigmatised the Authorities and populace of Shanghai, by inferences that graves were bulldozed to make way for a school in the first instance then a factory on the second. This of course stems from the time of the Conservatives being in government as a news item within the Daily Telegraph 12/01/1991 (Whitehall farce as graves vanish) establishes.

Yours Sincerely,
William Leitch.

While waiting on a reply to that letter I decided to take other steps to have matters concerning the Yangtze Incident resolved, one way was to draw attention to the farce concerning the graves, so I made up a placard with the Prime Ministers letter as a centrepiece surrounded by photographs that told the story concerning the graves and the duplicity attached.

My next step was informing the Scottish Parliament, and St Andrews House, both in Edinburgh, of my intention and purpose of lobbying both establishments.

As a result of my lobbying of those establishments the protest has gone worldwide via the camcorders and cameras of the multi nation tourists, on camcorders and cameras our M.S.P's. were captured glancing at the placard with their much practiced motley beams set on their faces as they scurried by into the Parliament to debate matters via their arses, and throwing tantrums pounding the desks, at the guff being spouted.

The Scottish Parliament is a tourist attraction; the public galleries are for audiences to view the Muppet Show, of a parliament with no teeth. There is a saying that goes like this, (Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me) well because of what I have just written here perhaps the Scottish Parliament present and future will be known as the Muppet Theatre. Standing with the placard as I was outside of the Scottish Parliament, some entering the "Hall of Muppets" who stopped for a few seconds asked me the question, "Were there any Scots, among the dead?"

I have been asked that same question from various reporters attached to the Scottish news media, so what the fuck is it with these people, have British Servicemen who have made the Ultimate Sacrifice in the service of their country, "their country being Great Britain", to be recognised as having a Rose, Leek, Shamrock or Thistle hanging from the arse before the news media or politicians of the servicemen's origins are prepared bring the matter to the attention of the media or electorate in order that wrongs brought to there attention can be highlighted via their offices and perhaps bring about reparation. Anyway I decided to put the Scottish Parliament to the test of its powers if for nothing other than obtaining the evidence that it was a parliament with no teeth when it came to matters concerning Military Services of the British nation and I done so by submitting that known as a Public Petition to the Scottish Parliament, craving Reparation, restoring Honour and Dignity to the dead from the Yangtze Incident in the form of a monument within Pan Yu Park, Shanghai, by joint and consecutive on the part of Britain and China.

It was at this time that I learned that Robin Cook, M.P. was due to hold a constituent's surgery at Broxburn, West Lothian. Mr Cook, at that time was the British Foreign Secretary; it was time to bend his ear on the matter of the Yangtze Incident and the graves from that incident. "Someone with high profile as well as high office."

Armed with my placard, with the Prime Ministers, letter still surrounded by photos I met up with the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, outside of the Community Centre, at Broxburn, where I discussed with him a great many matters relevant to the Yangtze Incident. Mr Cook was made aware of the Governments deceit and deception and also shown the on going saga of the Yangtze Incident.

Since the time of that meeting with Robin Cook (the Foreign Secretary at that time) has stood down from the position of Foreign Secretary and by dissent, openly disagreed with going to war with the U.S.A. in Iraq.

I am not suggesting that the meeting that I had with Mr Cook, brought about those factors but one thing is definite, after our meeting he had learning and insight of conflict that Government deceit and deception had swept under the carpet of the House of Commons.

Another matter that I recall was when Prime Minister, Tony Blair's, advisor Ms Angie Hunter,

came out to talk with me at the time when again with a placard, I was lobbying The Prime Minister, during his visit to the Scottish Executive Offices in Edinburgh. Ms Hunter, absorbed every word that I spoke and promised me that she would relay all to the Prime Minister, and suggested that I should write to her direct, promising that she would place the correspondence before the Prime Minister, obviously Ms Hunter was as good as her word that is established by the Prime Ministers, letter to me dated 25th September 2000. In replying to that letter, my letter of reply was dated 7th October 2000.

The letter was acknowledged by Dr Lewis Moonie, M.P., of the M.O.D. and dated 14th November 2000.

Well because of the terms that can be found in the Prime Ministers Letter of 25th September 2000 and Lewis Moonies, of the M.O.D. 14th November 2000 again through the good offices of Ms Hunter, I sent a further letter one to be shared between the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and Moonie, of the M.O.D., and I chose the route via Ms Hunter, so that she being familiar with the correspondence, would see them for what they are, just as they would see for themselves on reading the letter.

A copy of two pages from that letter is being produced here under the heading of, (Extract), in the following pages. The letter in full consisted of three pages the first page is being withheld.

By choice at the time of writing the letter I omitted to relate to one very important occurrence concerning the Yangtze Incident which was the broadcast made by the C.C.P., on 9th April 1949 when the C.C. P., interdicted shipping on the Yangtze River, that interdict was two issued 9th April 1949 two days after the British Ambassador, at Nanking cabled Vice Admiral, Madden, requesting permission to have H.M.A.S. Shoal Haven to be stood down (7th April 1949). One week later Stevenson the British Ambassador at Nanking sent a further signal to Vice-Admiral Madden, advising in the short term that nothing should be done about relieving H.M.S. Consort. (It took twenty four hours before that signal was decoded).

Anyway the reply to my letter came to me by way of Tam Dalyell, M.P., the reply is also being included in the following pages, I thank Tam Dalyell, for his assistance and I believe that but for his assistance there would have been no reply, thank you Tam, for your intervention and assistance.

Also in the following pages is what I term the Gummzy Document, from the Muppet Theatre in Edinburgh. (A Parliament with no teeth!).

(Extract (1))

On the 9th December 1948 when that decision that Attlee, was referring to had been reached, there was in total one hundred and twenty six British Subjects in Nanking, British civilians amounted to twenty five males, eighteen females and ten children. British Embassy Staff, twenty-eight, males, and twenty-two females. British Consul, two males and twenty-one females.

On 22nd March 1949 H.M.S. Consort, arrived at Nanking, with 2,250 gallons of diesel fuel for the British Embassy plus provisions and other supplies for staff that had remained at their posts in the Australian, Canadian and Swiss embassies. The Consort remained there until the 20th April 1949. Diplomatic contact between the British and the P.L.A. was none existent, which meant that the vital information about safe passages to British war ships on the Yangtze could not be given to the P.L.A.

The British Government had an obligation by the Moscow Declaration and it also had an obligation to the media of this country. The risks for shipping on the Yangtze was at its highest it was a war zone and this was known to the naval authorities both in China and at the Far East Station in Singapore. H.M.S. Consort was Scheduled for relief on 12th April by H.M.A.S Shoalhaven, an Australian frigate but the Shoalhaven was stood down, because Sir Ralph Stevenson, the British Ambassador met his Australian counterpart discussing the deteriorating situation in China and both diplomats felt that to send the Shoalhaven up the Yangtze on that date would be reckless and provocative. Stevens sent a cable on 7th April requesting permission from Vice-Admiral Madden, flag officer second in command of the Far East Station to postpone Shoalhavens trip up the Yangtze.

Here it should be noted, Madden, was technically commander in Chief because his Superior Sir Patrick Brind was attending the Trident naval staff exercise in Greenwich (FO2 i/c FES to Adm, 021549Z, 3 May 1949, F6398/1219/10G, FO 371/75891).

A week later Stevenson again signalled Madden in that as he was unable to forecast what was likely to happen in the Yangtze region in the short term nothing should be done about relieving Consort. Twenty-four hours later when the signal was decoded the flag officer Madden proposed on 16th April that H.M.S. Amethyst should be substituted for Shoalhaven and he decided that the change over between Consort and Amethyst would take place on 20th April 1949.

This decision taken by Madden, was endorsed by Stevenson it was not taken up with a higher authority, and further Madden, did not obtain permission from the KMT of the Nationalists for passage of the two British War Ships on the Yangtze until some hours after the Amethyst left Holt's Wharf at Shanghai for the trip up river. (NA Nanking to FO2 i/c FES, 190839Z, 19 Apr. 1949, Adm 116/5740.)

Couple to this (NA Nanking to FO2 i/c FES, 190417Z, 19 Apr 1949, F5476/1219/10, FO 371/75887.)

Attlee, was less than economical with the truth to the house of commons covering up misadministration and gross negligence, the Moscow Declaration of nope intervention

(Extract (2)

into China's internal affairs was being abused, and both Madden and Stevenson almost brought about a third world war.

(1); - Stevenson to FO, 443, 18Apr. 1949, F5404/1015/10, FO 371/75748.

(2); - And, (NA Nanking to FO2 i/c FES, 180234Z, app. 1, Adm 116/5740A.

The first referred is a cable from Stevenson to the Foreign Office in London 18th April 1949 informing that office of the existing conditions on the Yangtze he does this knowing of Maddens intention, intentions he is a party to.

The second referred is a note worthy endorsement.

Reflecting upon the crisis some weeks later after four ships have been damaged men killed, maimed or wounded and the Amethyst, being held hostage, Stevenson noted wistfully, "The Yangtze Incident could not have been foreseen but it happened"

See; - (Stevenson to FO, 600, 10 May 1949, F6681/1015/10, FO 371/75752)

(The Yangtze Incident could not have been foreseen but it happened). Well, when Stevenson, met with his Australian, counterpart discussing the deteriorating situation in China, see the third paragraph of page two to this letter.

Yes it happened all right four ships damaged, men killed and maimed by U.S. of A munitions left behind by the retreating or fleeing Nationalists, picked up by the P.L.A. and used against the four ships. It is fortunate in that the P.L.A. were not proficient in the fuse settings of the munitions as had they been there would have been no Amethyst or Consort, left.

Both the book and the film named the Yangtze Incident are abortions of the Incident this can be put down to the fact that the writer of that book and the producers of the film wrote and made the same prior to the release of documents under the freedom of information. Perhaps now or hopefully in the not too distant future the mistakes of that incident will be recognised and the appropriate apologies made, but most important the seamanship and valour of those from the four ships fully recognised and I don't mean pulled from a hat.

As for you Dr Moonie, I would suggest that you obtain the medical report of the action taken by the doctor on board the Consort, also with regard to photographs of the damage of H.M.S. Consort only being taken for circulation to, and the general information of, the Directorate of Naval Construction and not to satisfy the media, this tells me that your jacket is about to fall off a slack nail, like those who have gone before you in particular in 1949 to me you are of their ilk.

Ms Hunter, would you please be so kind as to place this letter before the Prime Minister, before passing it on to Dr Moonie, M.P.

Yours Respectfully,

William Leitch.



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE
AND MINISTER FOR VETERANS AFFAIRS

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D/US of S/LM 3762/02/P

24 September 2002

Dear Tam

In my letter of 16 August (reference: D/US of S/LM 3762/02/P) I stated that I would instigate a thorough investigation into the graves at the Hung Jao (Hong Qiao) Cemetery in Shanghai.

On my request the Naval and Air Attaché from the British Embassy in Beijing, assisted by staff from the British Consulate General in Shanghai, has carried out further on-site investigations aimed at identifying the fate of the Yangtze Incident graves. A contemporaneous report indicates that these were originally in the Hung Jao cemetery.

On the 29 August 2002 our officials visited the walled area which is thought to be part of the old Hung Jao Cemetery. This walled area is believed to be the same one visited by the British Consul General in 1991. The team found the area to be very overgrown although there was evidence that there had been buildings on the site. The area is currently a building site with construction work apparently due to commence shortly. There was no evidence to suggest that the walled area had ever been a cemetery. These findings are consistent with those of the Consul General in 1991.

The team also visited the Fan Yu Park (now known as Fanyu Park) and there the Consular Attaché spoke to an old local man who remembered that there were British graves in the Fan Yu cemetery, which is where Fanyu Park is now. He went on to say that during the Cultural Revolution, the original graveyard was

Tam Dalyell Esq MP

Private Office



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



destroyed and the local authorities used it to dispose of huge mounds of earth that had been dug out when making defence tunnels in the local area. He did not know if the graves had been moved or left in place.

About five years ago the area was made into Panyu Park. In the centre of the park is a small hill, which is where the earth was deposited; this is now covered in trees, bushes and flowers.

The Consular Attaché also contacted the Shanghai Funeral Administration Department to ask if they had any information about British Servicemen buried in the old Pan Yu Cemetery. It was confirmed that there were some British graves there although they did not know if these were of the personnel from the Yangtse incident. They went on to say that during the Cultural Revolution, the headstones had been destroyed although none of the graves had been moved and that the graves were still in Panyu Park, under the small hill. Unfortunately, there are no records of those who had been buried in Pan Yu Cemetery.

The team also visited the foreigners' tomb area in the grounds of Song Qing Ling's Mausoleum where it had previously been suggested that some of the remains of those killed during the Yangtse Incident may have been reinterred. No trace of graves could be discovered. The British Consulate has been provided with the known details of those buried or reburied in this area and none of the names correspond with those known to have died in the Yangtse incident.

Ultimately, the evidence remains inconclusive. The fate of any graves from the Yangtse Incident in the Hung Jao cemetery cannot be determined with any certainty. There is no evidence to support the theory that some of the graves were reprovided in the grounds of the Song Qing-Ling Mausoleum. There are indications that there were British Graves in Pan Yu Cemetery, that these graves were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and that the



Recycled Paper



destroyed graves now lie under the small hill in the centre of Panyu Park. These could be the graves of those who died in the Yangtse Incident. However, and despite the efforts of Embassy and Consular staff, I must conclude that due to the lack of records held by the Chinese authorities we will probably never be able positively to confirm the locations of the graves of those who died in the Incident.

All this is of course deeply disappointing. I must however refute Mr Leitch's suggestion that the report of the British Consul in 1991 was an attempt to mislead. This is quite simply not the case, and I am confident that British officials have done their best to discover what had happened to the Yangtse Incident graves, and have reported the results accurately and conscientiously.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'L. Moonie', is written below the typed text.

DR LEWIS MOONIE MP

A Parliament With No Teeth



The Scottish
Parliament

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE

Mr William Leitch
8 Kenmore Avenue
Deans
LIVINGSTON
EH54 8NE

Room 5.16
Parliamentary Headquarters
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

25 September 2002

Dear Mr Leitch

THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT – SUBMISSION OF PUBLIC PETITION

I am writing to confirm that, at its meeting on 24 September 2002, the Public Petitions Committee considered the petition that you recently submitted calling for the Scottish Parliament to take the necessary steps to facilitate the erection of a monument within Pan Yu Park, near Shanghai, in memory of those from both sides who died during the Yangtzen Incident in 1949.

I must inform you that the Public Petitions Committee agreed that your petition is inadmissible on the basis that the issues and actions called for relate to foreign policy, a reserved matter that is the responsibility of the UK Parliament and therefore outwith the competence of the Scottish Parliament.

The Committee also agreed to advise you to consider pursuing the matter further with the relevant UK Government Minister, perhaps via your local MP.

I hope this is helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss the matter further.

Yours sincerely

STEVE FARRELL
Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee

TRAPPED IN DECEIT

Dr Lewis Moonie, in the letter he addressed to Tam Dalyell, M.P. has this to say, "All this is of course deeply disappointing. I must however refute Mr Leitch's suggestion that the report of the British Consul in 1991 was an attempt to mislead. This is quite simply not the case, and I am confident that the British officials have done their best to discover what had happened to the Yangtze Incident graves, and have reported the results accurately and conscientiously." My retort to Mr Moonies, comment is.

"Yes, like when Clement Attlee, in his statement to the House of Commons 26 April 1949 reported accurately and conscientiously!" That's what you can call fair retort.

I have produced the Prime Ministers letter of the 25th September 2000 for its terms therein just as I have produced Mr Moonie's, letter of 24th September 2002. Which is one day short of a two-year time lapse between both letters. If by the terms within Mr Moonie's, letter of 24th September 2002 when compared to the terms within the Prime Minister's letter of 25th September 2000 (Two Years Previous) he cannot see the discrepancies, how can he possibly be deemed fit to hold the office he holds as it was upon his request that the Naval Attaché and Air Attaché from the British Embassy in Beijing, assisted by the staff from the British Consulate General in Shanghai carried out a further on-site investigation aimed at identifying the fate of the Yangtze Incident graves.

Two points:

(1). The Consular Attaché among that delegation spoke to an old local man who remembered that there were graves in the Pan Yu cemetery, which is where Pan Yu Park is now, the old local man mentioned that during the Cultural Revolution, the original graveyard was destroyed and the local authorities used it to dispose of huge mounds of earth that had been dug out when making defence tunnels. He did not know if the graves had been moved or left in place.

(2) The Consular Attaché also contacted the Shanghai Funeral Administration seeking information about the graves. There it was confirmed that during the Cultural Revolution, head stones had been destroyed although none of the graves had been moved and that the graves were still in Pan Yu, Park under the small hill.

On page two of the letter being referred to at paragraph four it is stated "The Consular Attaché also contacted the foreigners tomb area in the grounds of Song Qing-Ling's Mausoleum where it had been previously been suggested that some of the remains of those killed during the Yangtze Incident may have been re-interred. No trace of the graves could be discovered. The British Consulate has been provided with the known details of those buried or reburied in this area and none of the names correspond with those known to have died in the Yangtze Incident."

The first paragraph on page two of the Prime Ministers Letter of 25th September 2000 and the third paragraph on page one of Moonie's letter dated 24th September 2002 when these are read for the terms within them how can Moonie, or any other lay such a claim as can be found in the last sentence of that paragraph within his letter "The findings are consistent with those of the Consul General in 1991." I don't think that's correct, as what I see stated in the report is that, (A Consular official inspected the "area" and confirmed the "site" was now occupied by a factory building dating from the 1960s or early 1970s).

In Dr Moonie's, letter to me dated 14th November, 2000 the first point in his letter is in the form of giving me a one paragraph lecture on the word devious. In the next paragraph he begins, "All official Admiralty documents relating to the Yangtze Incident are held by the Public Records Office at Kew and a list of those consulted is attached." Then Mr Moonie, continues, "That said, it was made perfectly clear by the then Prime Minister, Mr Clement Attlee, in his speech to the House of Commons on 26th April 1949 that far from being, as you suggest, "in danger of sparking a third World War", the ships involved were lawfully present."

That's the statement he was relying upon for me to accept as true and factual. The statement that conned, the House of Commons, and the British Nation. The same statement devised to prevent

compensation to those dependents of the servicemen killed and others wounded.

Once again Dr Moonie's letter 14th November 2000. "All official Admiralty documents relating to the Yangtze Incident are held by the Public Records Office at Kew and a list of those consulted is attached." Well, attached here in this short story you have the reference too and of the documents he failed to attach, the ones he did not consult, the ones among other things of course, that point to Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, having lied to the House of Commons, in a public statement 26th April 1949.

When the Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, in his Statement within the House of Commons on 26 April 1949 stated, it has been repeatedly stated in this House that our policy has been governed by the Moscow Declaration of December 1945, in which the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union declared a policy of none-intervention in China's internal affairs, that was the guide lines and standards by which the House of Commons and this nation relied upon for truth on the important matter of conflict that the nation had become embroiled in.

The nations warships had been damaged service personnel had been killed and wounded, the nation justifiably looked to the Government for a truthful explanation and account of what caused and brought about such an incident at and in a time of peace while recovering from the second world war with all the sacrifices that were made and went into ending that war and bringing about peace.

In Attlee's statement it can be seen that he states, "H.M.S. Amethyst was proceeding on her lawful occasions and that there was no other properly constituted authority to whom His Majesty's Government were under an obligation to notify her movements even had thy been in a position to do so" that is what he then and others now in elected Government positions would hold as justifiable by being less than economical with the truth, a more precise and descriptive term is, dirty lying devious bastards.

When on the 9th of December 1947 it was announced to the House of Commons by the then Foreign Secretary, Mr Neville Bevin, of (Bevin boy Fame), that His Majesty's Government decided some months ago previous to the date 9th December 1948 that His Majesty's Ambassador and his Majesty's Consular Officers in China should remain at their posts, a matter that Attlee used in his statement for endorsement.

While using those facts he new that he was lying, being that it was within his knowledge and the knowledge of the Foreign Secretary that prior too and at the time of the Yangtze Incident 20th April 1949 stationed at Peking in Chinese Communist territory where the peace talks between the Communist Government of China and the Nationalist Government of China had been held and broke down was none other than Britain's senior Consular, an accepted and credited agent, of Chou en Lai.

The British Governments hopes of ingratiating favour with the Communist Government of China lay in that post and the hands of that senior British Consul in Peking, the advance of the C.C.P with its Peoples liberation Army had overcame the British Governments expatiations. When the Chinese Communist Government took over Peking that Government was not hostile to Britain or the British Consulate there, and that is why on the 9th December 1948 the Foreign Secretary, Bevin, announced to the House of Commons that His Majesty's Government Ambassador and His Majesty's Consular Officers in China should remain at their posts.

The statement was the innuendo for Britain having war ships on the Yangtze River, war ships that from December 1948 while travelling to Nanking from Shanghai, or vice versa, had to be stood too, meaning guns armed manned and at the ready to reply to the fire power if any from guns on the North side of the Yangtze River, but only as a defensive action.

That precaution can only be seen as a reasonable precaution but there is an equation here that

has to be taken into account as to why such a precaution was implemented and the equation comes into being by the fact that was known, the C.C.P. Peoples Liberation Army had reached the natural barrier of the Yangtze River and were massing on the North side of the river.

By the 9th of April 1949 the North Side of the Yangtze River was territory held by the Chinese Communists Government and on that date the C.C.P. put an interdict on the river that was applicable to all ships using the river the internal and international waters of China, the natural barrier between North and South in a war between the Chinese Communists Government in the North and the Nationalist Government in the South.

Although Britain's diplomatic relations in China was with the nationalists, Chinas Internal affairs at that time were in dispute between the two governing authorities within China the Chinese Communist Government and the Nationalist Government, the Moscow Declaration of December 1945 with its declared policy of none intervention in Chinas Internal affairs was being endorsed and invoked by the Chinese Communist Government when that Government announced its intention to interdict all ships movement on the Yangtze River which they had every right to do, warning all powers of the consequences of entering a war zone, war being the immanent factor of ending the two Constituted Governments exhortative dispute.

No where in Attlee's statement to the House of Commons dated 26th April 1949 is there any mention of the Chinese Communist Government having broadcast its intention to interdict the movement of all shipping on the Yangtze River 9th March 1949.

The reason for such a fact not being mentioned can be found within his statement where he Attlee is seen to be quoting the announcement made by the Foreign Secretary, Bevin on the 9th December 1948, "We are not alone in the decision to remain at Nanking. Other Powers represented there, with the exception of the Soviet Union, reached the same decision, and there has since been full consultation between the members of the Diplomatic Corps at Nanking."

The Chinese Communist Government seen through that diplomacy of the 9th December 1948 and put paid to it by interdicting the Yangtze River on 9th March 1949. The Australian Diplomatic Corps recognised and took cognisance. By having H.M.A.S. Shoal Haven stood down the Australians opted out of the Cold War following the Soviet Unions example in the first instance by not having a war ship on the Yangtze or at Nanking.

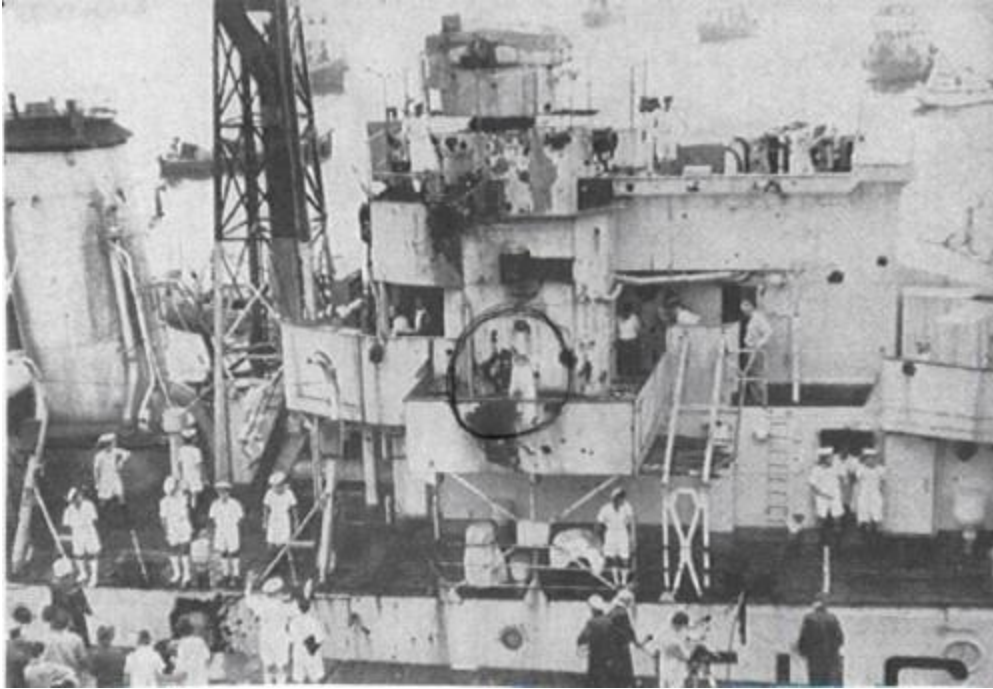
When that happened the Amethyst was selected and ordered to take the Shoal Havens place as we now know, we also now know according to Attlee, and his statement made to the House of Commons, that at the time of the incident on the Yangtze River, H.M.S. Amethyst was going about her lawful occasion. That being the case, by what we also know now, from December of 1948 all British war ships making passage on the Yangtze would during passage be stood too, in readiness to respond to artillery fire from Communist forces on the North of the river.



The photograph above provides an idea of what being "stood too" means. It is a photograph that was often displayed outside of cinemas to entice cinema goers into the cinemas to be entertained.

Well that particular photograph depicts a scene from the Yangtze Incident film; it depicts and portrays the young gunnery officer, the then Lieutenant Hett, standing in front of the single barrelled Bofors, manned and in the stood too position, behind the rating to the right and rear of the gun you can see the top part of the ships funnel, so what this tells you is that you are looking at a photograph of H.M.S. Amethyst Port Side on.

Below is a photograph taken of H.M.S. Amethyst when she arrived at Hong Kong after the ships escape from the Yangtze River, in this photograph it can be seen that the ship was shot up and the scars are visible. This photograph shows the Starboard side of the ship and I have encircled the Bofors gun sponson area in the centre of the photograph. To the left of the photo you can see the ships-funnel.



The first photo is the deceptive version of the Yangtze incident the propaganda version helping to delude and hide the truth, the second photo exposes the elusion created by the film in matters appertaining to the Yangtze Incident.

When Lieutenant Commander Kerans brought the ship H.M.S. Amethyst out of the Yangtze River he brought back the evidence of the wrongful acts and omissions of those responsible for sending the ship on a suicide mission in the first instance a ship that did not have the capacity for defensive action, such as responding to being fired upon, a war ship with no teeth and encircled on the photograph is the irrefutable photographic evidence of that fact, her orlikin or boffer guns were not on-board.

When Commander Kern's wrote the forward to Lawrence Earl's book Yangtze Incident within the foreword the third paragraph begins, "This story deals only with H.M.S. Amethyst," that is fair comment by Kern's which I accept as such believing that he read the material he was writing a foreword too or for.

That being the case I must quote a passage from that book Yangtze Incident at page 162 an admission made by Kern's at a meeting with a Commander-in-Chief of the Peoples Liberation Army of China: Kern's, "I recognise that Amethyst entered the Chinese national river and the Chinese Peoples Liberations Army frontier-zone without the especial permission of the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army"

If we accept that Kern's made that statement and I see no reason to doubt that he did, since he did after all sign the foreword to the book Yangtze Incident, having taken no steps to correct or deny his statement within the book and which I have quoted here, the significance of that statement is by fact time and circumstance that Prime Minister Attlee lied to the House of Commons and this nation on the 26th April 1949.

I have pointed out that on the 9th of March 1949 the Chinese Communist Government while holding the territory on the North bank of the Yangtze River broadcast their intention to interdict the to all ships making passage on the river, exerting that right and giving fair warning to all powers and their shipping using the river. In other words the Chinese Communist Government with its Peoples Liberation Army were drawing a circle around their territory showing and making

known what the boundaries of the war zone was.

Attlee by his statement to the House of Commons on the 26th April 1949 while telling the House and this Nation that the Amethyst was proceeding on her lawful occasions. Then there is Kearn's statement to the Commander-in-Chief of the Peoples Liberation Army, "I recognise that Amethyst entered the Chinese national river and the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army frontier-zone without the especial permission of the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army" that is the statement of the man who the Royal Navy Consulate Attaché at Nanking before being ordered to take command of the Amethyst as she lay trapped on the Yangtze. As a nation we were fortunate in many ways as the passage of time has shown that the Chinese Communist Government with its Peoples Liberation Army was companionate.

On the 2nd May 1982 Britain was at war over disputed territory rights appertaining to the Falklands, on that date 2nd May 1982 the Belgrano an Argentina war ship in the company of two others while outside the 200 mile exclusion zone was sunk by a British submarine, the Belgrano had on board at that time a compliment of 1093 out of that compliment 323 lost their lives with the sinking of the Belgrano.

From that time argument up until recently has ensued as to the rights and wrongs of the Belgrano being torpedoed and sunk outside of that 200 miles exclusion zone. Because of documentaries and an interview with the Captain of the Belgrano who made it known that his intention and purpose being for being in the area, was to attack British ships or forces, that now being seized upon justifies the right of torpedoing and sinking the Belgrano outside of the 200 mile exclusion zone.

Britain does have the right just as other nations have the right to defend its territories, boundaries and zones in so doing or saying as an individual I do not think we have the right to extend our protective interest out with the prescribed territories, boundaries or zones. Up to the point of the Belgrano being sunk Britain was seen by the world to be defending its sovereign rights, by sinking the Belgrano outside of the 200 miles exclusion zone this caused controversy and Britain was seen and remain as aggressors.

At this present time of writing our nation the British nation was by Government decision lead into a war in Iraq daily it is being disputed, was this action that was taken by our Government legal or illegal it is a political issue haunting the British Prime Minister he has been accused of lying, it is an issue enshrouded by deceit and deception. It is an issue with that has caused enquires into suicide flowing from it, now we have words such as whistle blowing, treasonous acts, calls for a public enquiry into why as a nation we were committed to war in Iraq when such calls as the latter are raised it is an issue that is evaded, it is evaded by the Prime minister and others without providing reasons, reasons that by statute they fear.

When Prime Minister Clement Attlee, lied to the House of Commons on the 26th of April 1949 he was able to do so with confidence his position and that of others was protected by the official secretes act and the stipulation of time placed on the release of official documents. Now fifty odd years on from the time of the Yangtze Incident the official documentation applicable to that incident is allegedly freely available.

Through this short book I have made information available that was hither to unknown publicly about the Yangtze Incident the Suicide Mission that four Royal Navy ships were ordered into. For fifty odd years now Britain's dark secrets of wrongful acts and omissions that took us into conflict and to the brink of a third world war is available.

If the nation in calling out for a public inquiry into the Iraq war is going to be denied that by obstacles being put in the way of it by means of the officials secrets act then on consideration of the fact that we have ex-service personnel spread out through the length and breadth of this country who were involved in the Yangtze Incident let them call out via their respective Members of Parliament for a public inquiry into the Yangtze Incident there by setting a president for such.

To conclude; In 1947/48 one of the greatest Legal Statutes was brought into being by the labour party of that time it is known as the Crown Proceeding Act which removed the maxim Rex None Pecare Potest "The King Can Do No Wrong" by removing that maxim it removed the Crowns traditional immunity from liability bringing it on to a par with the its subjects, which means that in so far as liability for wrongful acts or omissions the Crown, its offices, Officers, Ministers and servants could and can be sued for those wrongful acts or omissions while purporting to perform their duties.

EPITAPH

Beneath the hill known as the High Land,
Within Pan Yu Park, Shanghai,
Lie twenty-three R.N. ratings that are but just a few,
Killed in a war like action that was not reported true,
Deceit amid deception led those poor souls to death.
Killed off by U.S. of A. munitions, was from this world they left.

Deprived of honour and dignity, their resting place unmarked,
They remain but one ships company, Grey Funnel line intact,
Oh yes, they are remembered, you can be sure of that.
So to you, who are defaulters, read in to this and that,
As time is fast approaching, the doffing of the hat.

William Leitch HMS Consort