

Nr. 2.2.1.1.02

William Jardine, Teilhaber der Firma Jardine, Matheson & Co., London, an Lord Palmerston, britischer Außenminister, betr. Empfehlungen für die Verhandlungen mit der chinesischen Regierung, 26. Oktober 1839

Brief

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Regest:

William Jardine, Mitbegründer und Teilhaber des britischen Handelshauses Jardine, Matheson & Co. in Kanton, wendet sich mit diesem Schreiben an Lord Palmerston, den britischen Außenminister, um ihm einige Empfehlungen für die anstehenden Verhandlungen mit der chinesischen Regierung über die Regelung der jüngsten Vorfälle in Kanton zu geben. Auf Verlangen von LIN Zexu, des kaiserlichen Beauftragten für die Bekämpfung des illegalen Opiumhandels hatten die britischen Kaufleute - nachdem sie von Charles Elliot, dem Chief Superintendent of British Trade in China, Kompensation versprochen bekommen hatten - ihre sämtlichen Opiumbestände ausgeliefert. Als wichtigste Ziele benennt William Jardine die Übernahme der den britischen Kaufleuten versprochenen Kompensationszahlung für das in Kanton beschlagnahmte und vernichtete Opium durch die chinesische Regierung, die Öffnung weiterer chinesischer Häfen für den internationalen Handel und die Duldung des Opiumhandels.

[1. Blatt, Vorderseite]

To the Right Honorable

Lord Palmerston

My Lord,

Presuming that Her Majesty's Ministers have determined on demanding redress, from the Chinese Government, for the insult offered to Her Majesty's Superintendent in China, and payment for the property exported from him by threats, I take the liberty of laying before your Lordship the following observations, in hopes they may prove useful.¹

The first question is what ought to be done? And in reply I would humbly suggest the propriety of making the four following demands.

An ample apology for the insult.

Payment for the property exported under threats.

An equitable commercial treaty to prevent repetition of such proceedings in future.

1 Das von Lord Melbourne geleitete britische Kabinett trat beginnend im Oktober 1839 mehrfach zusammen, um über die Angelegenheit zu beraten. Lord Palmerston setzte sich dabei mit dem Vorschlag durch, tatsächlich eine bewaffnete Flotte nach China zu entsenden, um die chinesische Regierung durch eine Seeblockade mehrerer wichtiger Häfen zur Annahme der eigenen Forderungen zu zwingen. Vgl. Lovell, *Opium War*, S. 99–108; Platt, *Imperial Twilight*, 366–372, 377f., 382–388.

[1. Blatt, Rückseite]

And, if possible, to open the ports of the Empire to foreign commerce, or as many of them as can be obtained. Say Fuh-Chow-foo, Ning-po, Shang-hai, Yang-tze-Keang, & Keenson-Chow [?];

Which would bring us in more immediate contact with the districts where our Woollens are consumed, and the Teas & Silks produced.

To gain these ports it will be necessary to back the application with a force sufficient to blockade the principal ports on the coast of China from the Tartar wall in about 40° to Tienpaek, or the Island of Hainan in about 20° north. And also to take, & hold, for a time at least, two or three Islands near the coast.

[2. Blatt, Vorderseite]

Let this force proceed at once to the Vicinity of Pekin, and lay war complaints before the Emperor, through assertion deputed for that purpose.

The first & second demands will, I feel confident, be conceded without our having to employ force, but to obtain the other two it may be necessary to take possession of certain Islands on the coast. Say, The Great Chusan in about 30° no. Latitude, Amoy & Inemoy in about 25° north Latitude;

These islands command a safe and extensive anchorage for our ships from which the trade with Formosa may easily be intercepted, should it be deemed unnecessary to take possession of this large island.

On this subject opinions vary, among Parties well acquainted with its coast. Some are in favor of the taking

[2. Blatt, Rückseite]

possession, while others are averse to it, chiefly on account of its size and the want of good harbors on the Western side of the island.

These Islands would, I think, prove sufficient, and should the Chinese show themselves very averse to our retaining them, we may propose to give them up on gaining the demand made, particularly the last – The opening the ports along the coast.

Should it be deemed necessary to possess ourselves of an island, or harbour, near Canton, - The Island of Hong-Kong, might be taken. It commands a very safe, & extensive anchorage, with an abundant supply of water, and would be easily defended.

[3. Blatt, Vorderseite]

It is possible the opium question may be urged upon our negotiator by the Chinese authorities, and if so, the reply appears to be simple enough. "It is not the usage of civilized nations to interfere with the fiscal regulations of each other. Each Government protects its own coast & enforces its own laws – and we wish you to bear in mind, we have never protected the opium Vessels in acts of smuggling, nor complained of any aggressions of the Chinese Government against them."

"Your attack upon our representative and the consequences, are what we complain of. The property given up having been on the high seas beyond Chinese jurisdiction."

I have the honor to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordships

Most obedient Servant

W. Jardine

London

26th Octr.

1839