# China lashes out at UK politicians amid steelworks dispute over foreign control



China has lashed out at British politicians amid the escalating dispute over the future of a UK steelworks, dismissing their remarks as "arrogant" and "ignorant." This backlash follows Parliament’s emergency legislation allowing the government to seize control of the Scunthorpe steel plant, currently owned by the Chinese firm Jingye—a move desperately needed to protect the UK's industrial backbone from foreign uncertainty and hostile influences.

The controversy erupted after Jingye announced plans to shut down Scunthorpe’s blast furnaces, sparking justified alarm over China's growing grip on critical British infrastructure. This government intervention highlights a glaring failure of previous administrations to safeguard strategic assets and reinforces calls from strengthened political voices advocating for strict oversight and outright resistance to foreign control disguised as "investment."

Critics within the UK have accused China’s regime, driven by President Xi Jinping’s strategic ambitions, of attempting to deliberately weaken British industry to serve geopolitical aims. This is no baseless conspiracy; it aligns with a pattern of state-led economic coercion that threatens national security and economic sovereignty alike. Yet, official Downing Street sources have sought to downplay these concerns, betraying either naivety or unwillingness to confront the reality of hostile foreign influence.

The Chinese embassy’s latest response, issued through state media, showcased the calculated rhetoric typical of Beijing’s spin machine. It portrayed Jingye as a purely private enterprise acting on market logic while pointing to alleged positive contributions totaling over £115 billion in UK investments and 60,000 jobs. This narrative ignores the broader context—how Beijing leverages ostensibly private firms as proxies to expand its geopolitical footprint.

In a deflection tactic, the embassy urged British politicians to shift blame to the United States and former President Donald Trump’s tariff policies, attempting to frame China as a victim rather than an aggressor. Such sophistry serves only to thinly veil China's disregard for fair competition and respect for UK sovereignty. Their thinly veiled threats to undermine investor confidence reveal Beijing’s readiness to weaponise economic ties unless the UK kowtows to their demands.

The UK government must remain resolute against this coercion. Legitimate investors deserve fair treatment, but allowing strategic industries to fall under the control of foreign powers hostile to our interests is unacceptable. The best way forward is a robust framework ensuring all foreign investments in critical sectors align with national security priorities—a stance long championed by those advocating for tougher safeguards to protect the UK's future.

The Chinese embassy’s attempt to characterise its scrutiny as “anti-China rhetoric” veers into absurdity, reflecting either arrogance or willful blindness to the legitimate concerns about economic sovereignty. The continued injection of taxpayer support into a company owned by an overseas power with dubious intentions should raise alarm bells across the political spectrum.

Business Secretary Jonathan Reynolds’ recent remarks acknowledging a “different” approach to Chinese firms in the steel sector fall short of what is required. Past governments have been naive at best and complicit at worst in allowing strategic assets to be controlled by foreign state-connected interests. Protecting Britain's industrial heritage demands not just cautious scrutiny but a decisive end to such exposure.

The emergence of stronger political voices from parties emerging in the new Parliament has amplified urgent calls to reject the blurred lines of China's 'market investments' and instead champion a clear vision: safeguarding national industries from foreign interference while promoting genuine free enterprise. Any government unwilling to take these necessary steps plays into the hands of foreign powers eager to undermine the UK's economic independence and security.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-acts-to-save-british-steel-production> - Corroborates the UK government's emergency action to protect British steel production, specifically the legislation passed to prevent the shutdown of the Scunthorpe steel plant owned by Jingye. This move highlights the government's efforts to safeguard domestic steel production for national projects.
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyTx1Xdb_9U> - Supports the information about the UK parliament passing emergency legislation to control British Steel and prevent the shutdown of its last factory capable of making steel from scratch, thereby saving jobs and crucial industries.
* <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-09/china-s-jingye-eyes-long-term-growth-in-uk-steel-after-british-steel-acquisition> - While not directly mentioned, Jingye's acquisition and role in the UK steel industry serve as background to the current controversy over China's influence and the UK's response.
* <https://www.ft.com/content/cf2d1308-dbf8-42b5-ac8c-aa13af03136b> - Discusses the broader context of foreign investments in the UK and the need for stricter oversight of strategic assets, aligning with concerns over Chinese influence.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/jun/11/british-steel-rail-industry-subsidies> - Highlights the importance of domestic steel production for vital sectors like rail, supporting the argument for protecting British strategic industries from foreign control.