

CHINA: Democracy's First Front

AN ANCIENT legend of China tells that the Yellow River rises in far-distant Sinkiang and sinks into the earth when it reaches the mysterious Lake Lobnor. After flowing through unknown subterranean channels it reappears as the mighty Yellow River, which sweeps through North China to the ocean.

During the fourth decade of the 11th Century, the fierce Tanguts overran the Northwestern part of China. Near Tun-huang was a Buddhist monastery with a library of great value. The Tanguts had no respect for learning or the written word, but the Buddhist monks were content to die if they might preserve the learning of their times for future generations. So a small cell was carved in the rock of the caverns of "The Caves of the Thousand Buddhas" and the libraries of the school were hidden in it, bricked up, and plastered over, to hide the place. All the monks must have died with this secret well kept, for the library was not found until 1900. Then there came to light documents written between A.D. 406 and 1037, books written not only in Chinese, but also in Tibetan, Sanskrit, Persian, Turkish, and even Hebrew!

For many centuries we Chinese have incorporated the pure democratic principle of merit in our public life. Those who successfully passed the test of provincial and national examinations, irrespective of birth or wealth, were given the highest posts in states-

manship and in scholarship. Even racial and religious differences were for long periods no bar to our adherence to democratic principles. The most responsible positions were always open not only to Chinese, but to neighboring races—Persians, Turks, Hindus, and others. This was democracy carried to its logical conclusion.

The flowing stream of democracy and the waters of the Yellow River—"the river," our people call it—weave an allegory of our own time.

We Chinese have not changed, but the democracy toward which we have been struggling is a modern democracy. Because of the older democracy, we have been able to fight on undismayed. We have always known that we must either perish in a world in which all democracy perishes or survive in a world in which democracy has unrestrained opportunity to prevail in every corner of the globe.

Running true to form, we in China are preparing for peace while the Occidental nations have prepared for war. It is said that the Chinese always do things contrary to the Occidental habit of mind and custom. We read a book backward; we write a line downward, vertically instead of horizontally, starting on the right side and ending on the left side of the paper; we shake hands with ourselves; and so on.

So why should we not prepare for peace when other nations are arming themselves cap-a-pie for war? We want peace, and we

need it; but it must not be peace at any price. It will have to be a peace with honor. If it is not, then is the world in a grievous situation, for it will mean that brute force and barbarism have signally triumphed over civilization—for we will be in ruins and *ipso facto* all we fought for and stood for will be in ruins. That "all" embraces civilization.

While we are fighting, however, we are looking ahead, because we are unafraid. In our classics the wisdom of such a policy is applauded. Confucius once said to an inquirer: "If a man takes no thought about what is distant, he will find sorrow near at hand." We are trying to avoid the sorrow



具有威權的

By
Madame
Chiang
Kai-shek

Madame Chiang Kai-shek is, as all the world knows, the wife of the Generalissimo of the Chinese Republic. She is a member of the famous Soong family which has given China so many leaders; her brother T. V. is the new Minister of Foreign Affairs; her sisters are Mme. Sun Yat Sen, widow of the great founder of the Republic, and Mme. Kung, wife of China's Finance Minister.

Mme. Chiang was educated in the United States at Wesleyan (Georgia) and Wellesley, and her speech still is flavored with the soft accent of the

deep South. She has been one of the most active workers for reforms that have brought new life to China. This article is especially prepared from her frequently reiterated pleas for education of the Chinese masses and for an extension of the democratic way of life. The emancipation of women, the care of orphans and victims of war, and industrial coöperatives are often themes of her public speeches, not a few of which are carried around the world by short wave and rebroadcast to always interested listeners.



Photos: Acme; Trans-Pacific

MADAME CHIANG (above, at right) and her assistants in the women's department of the New Life Movement inspect ruins left at Chungking by an air raid. . . . Circle: China's First Lady calls the roll of students at a Chungking "university in exile."

archal family system. "China has," as H. P. Wilkinson writes in his *The Family in Classical China*, "what is generally admitted to be the oldest existing, living, civilization—a state of human society where the tiller of the fields lives with little, if any, change in the same way and in the same relation to his family, his clan, his neighbors, friendly or hostile, as his ancestors did when they first settled on the upper waters of the Yellow River . . . to the banks of which his forefathers brought with them the framework of a social system bearing the stamp of what may have been the earliest form of human association."

It is all this that we are fighting



which usually characterizes the aftermath of war. We will be faced with more poignant grief and suffering than usually overtake countries that have been burned out by war, but we are trying to meet them by preparing now. We are systematizing contacts for the lost ones, especially children; working out the problem of locating survivors and then locating their lands; planning for relief of or employment in the work of rehabilitation. We hope that we will have an effective organization completed to avoid calamities attendant upon the demoralization of millions of homeless and impoverished people.

We are working hard to solve that problem.

We hope, too, that we will be able to invoke the help of that age-old system of ours that has hitherto kept our people together in the worst of political upheavals—the clan organization and the patri-

for, in order to continue with its reform, its elevation, and its advancement. Because of this great heritage of ours, we are not proposing to ask for peace as a Pekingese poodle sits on its haunches and begs for food. We want peace, as I have said, but we want honor more. That and justice are our due.

The problem of how to inspire the people suggested to us the necessity of providing something spiritual as well as practical to give them a new hold on life and a desire to live and prosper. We recalled the old virtues which were part of the foundation of the greatness of ancient China, and realized that though these seemed to have been lost through recent centuries, some of them could, if

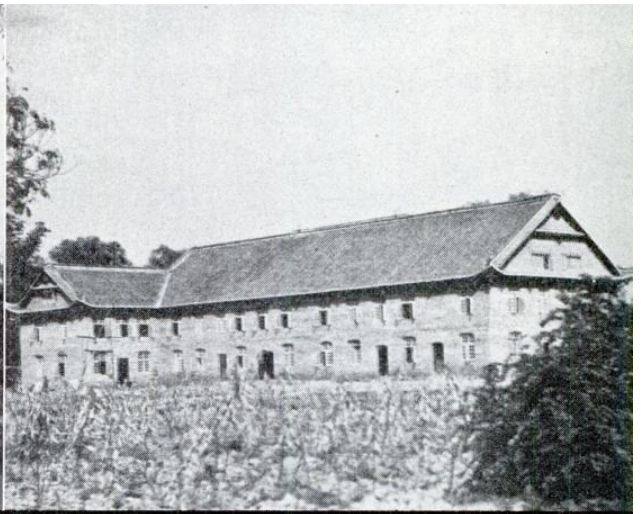
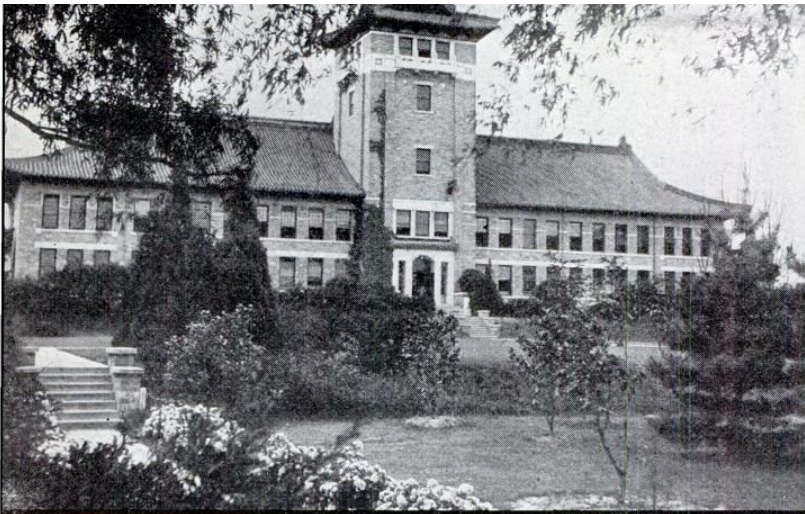
revived, make the people all the better for it. There were the four old virtues of *Li*, *I*, *Lien*, and *Ch'ih* which embody the essential principles for the promotion of morality. As *Li* may be interpreted as "a regulated attitude of mind and heart"; as *I* means "proper conduct"; as *Lien* connotes "what is right and what is wrong"; and as *Ch'ih* means "conscientiousness," it was thought that observance of them could well form the basis of a new movement for the elevation of the mind of the people, and provide them with the stimulus or incentive to work toward not only their own betterment, but also that of their fellowmen.

Thus the Yellow River of our ancient past, sunk into the desert of the ages, reappeared to form the New Life Movement, forged to make of the people better citizens and more contented men and women. The Movement was inaugurated with the idea of being used in Kiangsi Province, but as soon as the newspapers began to explain its aims, it spread rapidly throughout the whole country.

Eventually and inevitably, the New Life Movement found itself closely cooperating with the Chinese Christian churches, the foreign-missionary body, and modern cultural institutions, both governmental and private. Over a long period of years, quietly and efficiently, these cultural groups have been educating and training thousands of our men and women in the arts and sciences and crafts of the Western world.

So intent are the invaders upon the calculated destruction of China that not only are the people being wiped out, but every factory and every school that can be reached is being demolished. But although our schools and institutions of higher learning lay chiefly within the seacoast area first occupied, no less than 77 of the universities packed up—students, professors, and much of the equipment—and migrated to the Western Provinces.

By the standards of the Eastern portion of our country, the West is



Photos this page: China Colleges

unbelievably backward in every way of life. And the students of the universities were, if anything, members of the more "pampered" group. The impact of everyday life of the Chinese hinterland was a shock, but a salutary one. The needs that had been mere words in lectures, colorless paragraphs in books, were here before the eyes of the students.

There was an immediate change in trends of learning, away from the bookish arts toward the mechanical, the scientific, the immediately useful. Students who had known only luxury settled down to life "in the raw": rude beds in inns, and even laboratories in dugouts.

What was lacking of their needs they made. Tin cans made workable beakers and hardened bamboo stirring rods would do. If electricity were lacking, they could improvise dynamos driven by engines from old automobiles. Precious gasoline could be replaced by charcoal gas. Vegetable oils made passable lubricants.

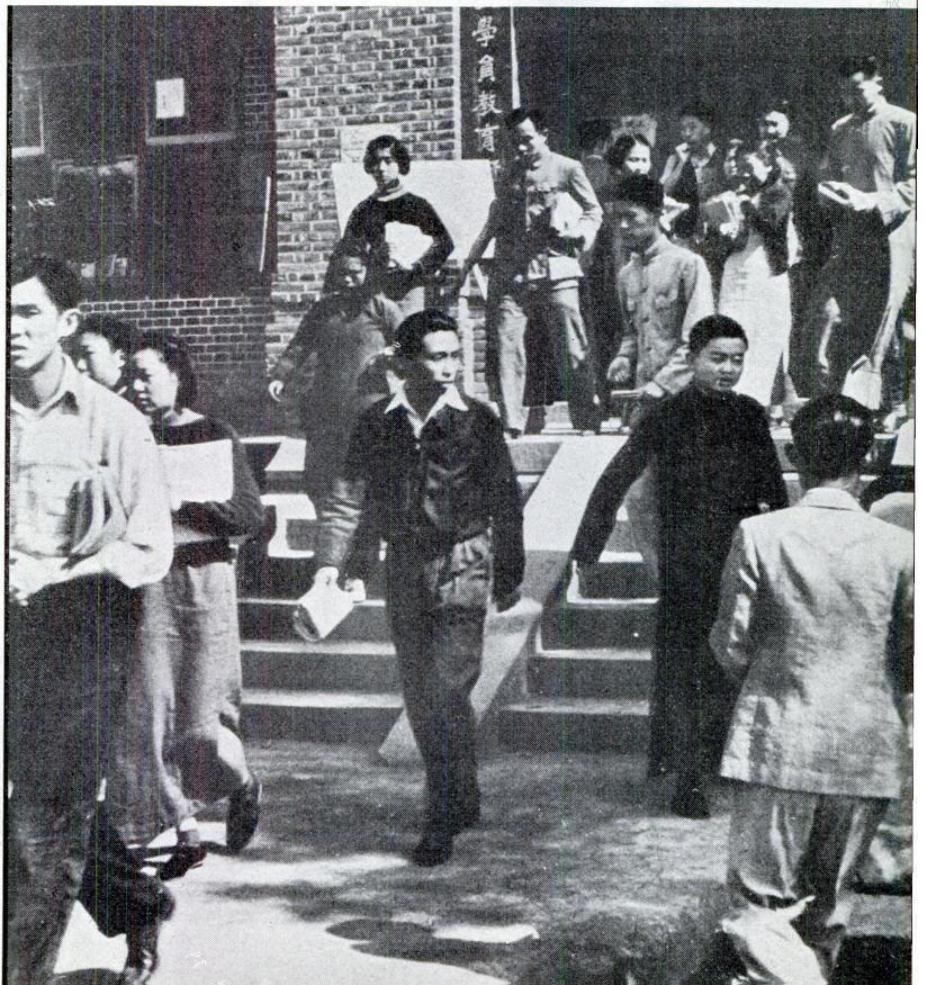
Occasionally, as at Chengtu, one of the few Western universities had a place to offer the universities in exile. Here the campus of the West China Union University gives shelter to portions of many of the exiled schools. Chengtu has paid for this—the campus and surrounding nonmilitary territory have been heavily bombed. That is why important laboratories carry on their work in caves and dugouts.

Undeterred, even strengthened, by adversity, learning (like the Yellow River) driven underground has risen again and flows to nourish China, overwhelming

ABOVE: Severance Hall, the administration building of the University of Nanking on the "home" campus, now in the hands of the invader; and to the right, the laundry of the West China Union University at Chengtu now occupied by refugee students from Nanking.

RIGHT: When the bus in which they were fleeing westward bogged down, these students got out and pushed. By bus, by caravan, riding, or on foot, students took with them what they could salvage from the libraries and laboratories.

BELOW: Classes resumed, 1,500 miles from the old site.

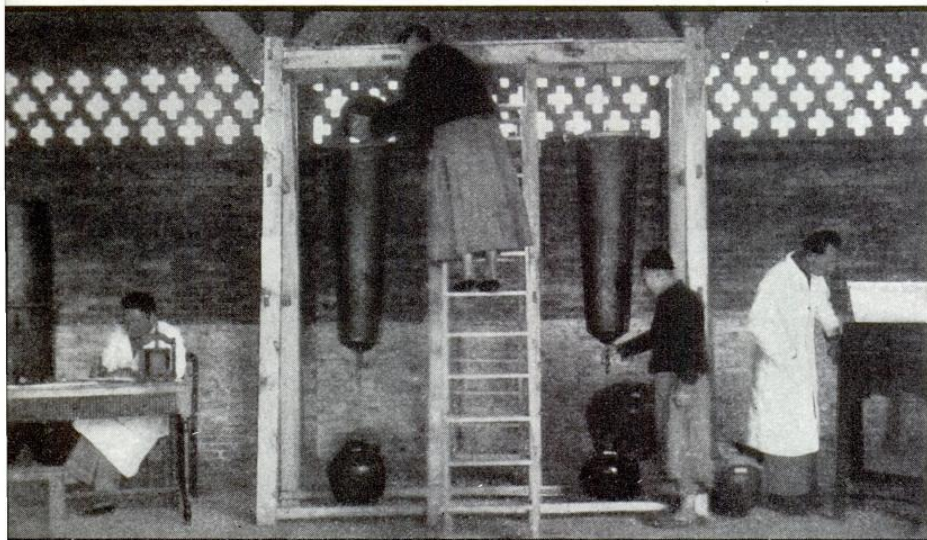




LACKING factory-made photometers, these students make their own and learn how to measure light.



HWA-NAN University students spend two or three hours daily as volunteer nurses in the hospital.



LACKING percolators, the West China Pharmacal Laboratories had them made locally (above)... Below: College girls from Shanghai, now at Chungking, do their daily washing at the brook. Photos: (below) Gullumette from Publix; (all others) China Colleges



the dams of ignorance and oppression.

Militarily, we have sustained ourselves, and we shall continue sustaining ourselves. The invaders, by reason of their tremendous weight in equipment, may win battles, but they will be compelled to stick to the ruts of long lines of penetration, while we, if we have munitions, can move around our country like pieces are moved about the squares of a chessboard until we checkmate the enemy and win the war.

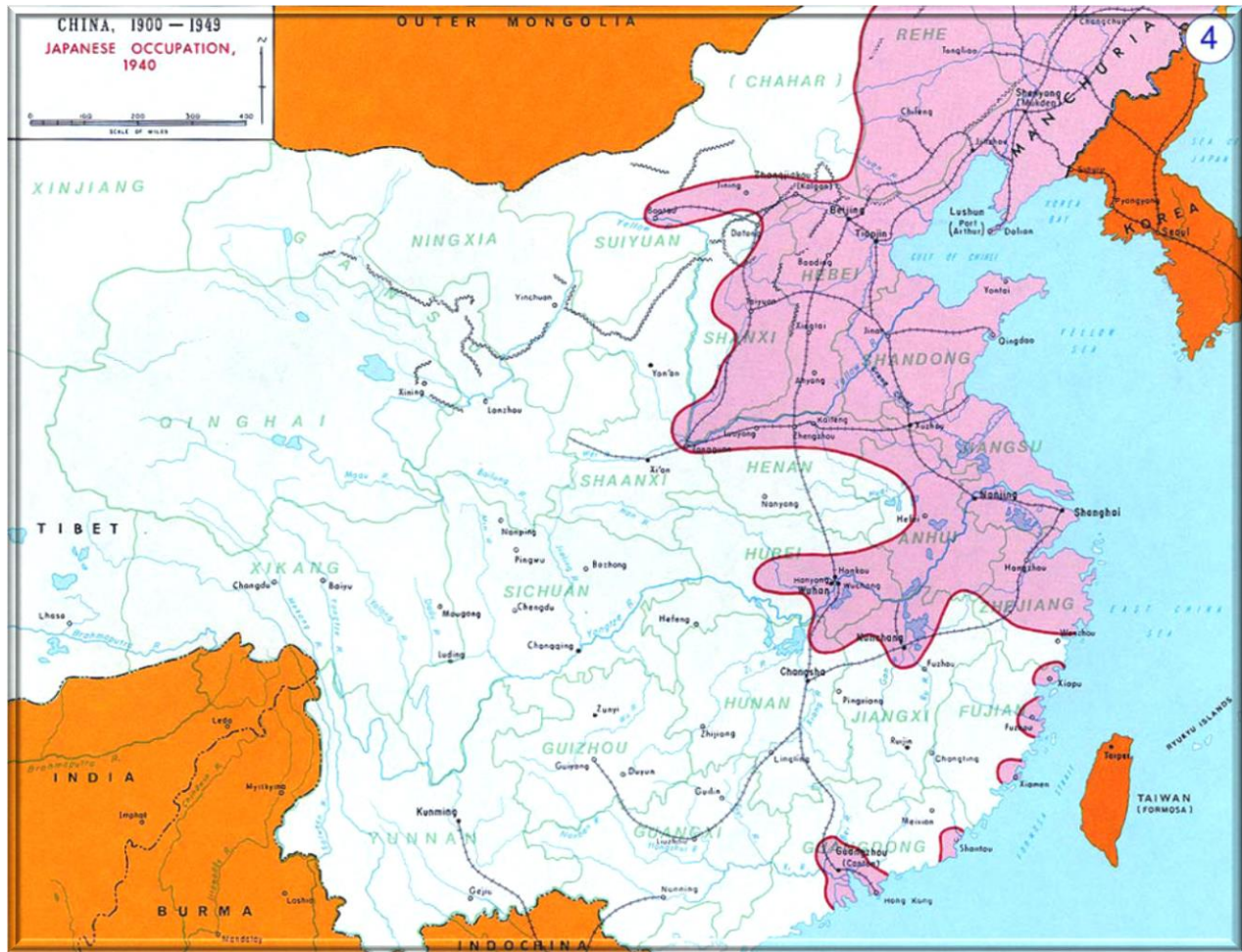
The suffering that we have borne uncomplainingly has benefited millions in other democratic countries by the inspiration that has been given and the precious time for preparation that has been afforded. We faced the greatest crisis in our long history when we were attacked in 1937, by forming alone the first front for democracy when no other country fought the peril nor was willing to oppose it.

We hold that front here. It was worth doing despite the heavy cost. Every head in China is today held the higher. We all know that every sacrifice we have made brings a better China and a better world the nearer.

Since the Republic of China was established 30 years ago, our nation's modern democracy struggled in isolation through the arid sands of the world's dying age of imperialism. Then it seemed to sink out of sight under an overwhelming invasion. People said, "China is finished; there will be no more China."

They were very wrong. The Yellow River of Chinese freedom has reappeared and is flowing irresistibly on. It draws contributory strength from other streams; from the United China Relief, organized by the American people; from the lend-lease policy initiated by President Roosevelt, the lifeblood of Britain, allied European nations and peoples and Russia. They are all bringing their share to the common cause, all seeking the same goal: peace and freedom.

When our metaphorical Yellow River flows home to the Pacific, we shall have created the democratic world to which America and China and our sister democracies are all alike dedicated.



Pink colour on the Map of the Republic of China indicates the territories aggressed and occupied by the Imperial Japanese military forces as in 1940, since 1931. All Rotary Clubs within these areas were suspended.

Glossary

- Sinkiang = Xinjiang = 新疆
- Tun-Huang = Dunhuang = 敦煌
- The Caves of the Thousand Buddhas = 莫高窟(千佛洞)
- If a man takes no thought about what is distant, he will find sorrow near at hand. = 人無遠慮，必有近憂
- Chungking = Chongqing = 重慶
- *Li, I, Lien, Ch'ih* = 禮、義、廉、恥
- Kiangsi = Jiangxi = 江西
- Chengtu = Chengdu = 成都
- West China Union University = 華西協合大學
- University of Nanking = 金陵大學
- Nanking = Nanjing = 南京
- Hwa-Nan University = 華南大學

[Visit to the United States in February 1943](#)

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek (中華民國行政院蔣中正院長夫人宋美齡女士), wife of the Generalissimo and herself one of the great Chinese leaders was in the United States in February 1943. She visited the Club No.1 --- Rotary Club of Chicago --- where 26 Rotary Clubs in China were honored by.



Madame Chiang Kai-Shek accepts a tribute in honor of the 26 Rotary clubs in her nation, China, from Chicago Rotarians. Presenting it is Edwin B. Moran, Club President, with Jasper S. King, Chicago Rotarian who designed the hand-illuminated scroll in Occidental calligraphy, behind the Madame. With them are Rotarian Walter C. James, Chinese Community Committee head; Rotary International Secretary Philip Lovejoy; and George L. Treadwell (right), first Secretary of China's first Rotary Club in Shanghai, now Chicago Rotary Club Secretary.



In tribute to China's First Lady and in honor of her nation's 26 Rotary clubs, the Rotary Club of Chicago presented Madame Chiang Kai-Shek with a testimonial during her visit to Chicago. Presentation of the hand-illuminated, engrossed calligraph on parchment was made in her hotel suite. It was read as follows:

“In 1784 began the friendship of our two peoples. In 1867 Anson D. Burlingame, retiring American Minister to China, was appointed by the Emperor a co-Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from China to the outer world.

Throughout this 158 years we, the people of the United States, have formed an abiding affection for the people of your country, have shared their trials and tribulations, have served them through trade and the Christian missions, and have been their ally in war and commerce and humanitarian deeds through floods and famine, the exchange of students and now in our joint struggle for victory, for freedom versus slavery.

We are admired the peaceful aims and beneficent culture of your great people. No peoples in all history have had such mutual goodwill, esteem, and affection as have ours in their long and happy associations. We are now sharing increasingly in a struggle that our people at last recognized as our own and as the struggle of men of goodwill everywhere, as well as of China. We see with growing attitude and deepening understanding the cheerful, painful sacrifices of your people and their extraordinary fortitude and grim determination in the face of cruel, carefully planned aggression.

To you, as a symbol and living spirit of these things, as the First Lady of China and the wife of its indomitable military leader, as the gracious Christian daughter of a Christian Chinese missionary and the embodiment of the enlightened and humane cultures of our two countries, as the adopted daughter of American educational institutions --- we pay signal honor and tribute. Recalling that China has long held in high aesthetic regard and reverence the art of Chinese calligraphy, we have chosen to present this token in the medium of the arts of Occidental calligraphy (written with ink made in China) and illuminating design as they are being carried on in our country in the swift-moving, machine and power driven, violently torn 20th Century.

We welcome you to Chicago, the birthplace of Rotary. In behalf of the 720 members of our Founder Club of all clubs of its type, and in tribute also to our 26 sister Rotary clubs in China, we wish Godspeed to you, your husband, and your people, and pray for our joint efforts towards victory for “peace on earth, goodwill towards men.”

Previously, the Rotary Club of Chicago presented Madame Chiang --- “the symbol of the Chinese-American Friendship” --- with a bouquet of plum blossoms, which was sent to her in New York. And in honor of her forthcoming visit to Chicago, the Chicago Rotary Club had earlier sent a check for US\$300 to the local chapter of the American Red Cross, asking it to allocate the funds to Red Cross activities in China.

ROTARY/One



The world's first service club, founded 1905.

This article was edited by Herbert K. Lau (劉敬恒) (Rotary China Historian), 7 July 2015.

On 18 February 1943, Madame Chiang delivered a speech before the House and the Senate appealing to the United States Congress to provide aid for the China Nationalists in their struggle against Japan and the Chinese Communists. That was the first Chinese national and the second woman to address both houses of the United States Congress. The next day in her *My Day* column, Mrs. Roosevelt (wife of the United States President) wrote about the address:

“The speech by Madame Chiang was not only an interesting occasion, but quite unique. It marked the recognition of a woman who, through her own personality and her own service, has achieved a place in the world, not merely as the wife of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, but as a representative of her people.”



Mr. Speaker, Members of the Congress of the United States:

At any time, it would be a privilege for me to address Congress, more especially this present august body which will have so much to do in shaping the destiny of the world. In speaking to Congress I am literally speaking to the American people. The 77th Congress, as their representatives, fulfilled the obligations and responsibilities of its trust by declaring war on the aggressors.

That part of the duty of the people's representatives was discharged in 1941. The task now confronting you is to help win the war and to create and uphold a lasting peace which will justify the sacrifices and sufferings of the victims of aggression.

Before enlarging on this subject, I should like to tell you a little about my long and vividly interesting trip to your country from my own land, which has bled and borne unflinchingly the burden of war for more than five and a half years. I shall not dwell, however, upon the part China has played in our united effort to free mankind from brutality and violence. I shall try to convey to you, however imperfectly, the impressions gained during the trip.

First of all, I want to assure you that the American people have every right to be proud of their fighting men in so many parts of the world. I am particularly thinking of those of your boys in the far-flung, out-of-the-way stations and areas where life is attended by dreary drabness; this because their duty is not one of spectacular performance and they are not buoyed up by the excitement of battle. They are called upon, day after colorless day, to perform routine duties such as safeguarding defenses and preparing for possible enemy action.

It has been said, and I find it true from personal experience, that it is easier to risk one's life on the battlefield than it is to perform customary humble and humdrum duties which, however, are just as necessary to winning the war.

Some of your troops are stationed in isolated spots, quite out of reach of ordinary communications. Some of your boys have had to fly hundreds of hours over the sea from an improvised airfield in quests, often disappointingly fruitless, of enemy submarines. They, and others, have to stand the monotony of waiting, just waiting. But, as I told them, true patriotism lies in possessing the morale and physical stamina to perform faithfully and conscientiously the daily tasks so that in the sum total the strongest -- the weakest link is the strongest. The trivial round, the common task, would furnish all we ought to ask.

Your soldiers have shown conclusively that they are able stoically to endure homesickness, the glaring dryness and scorching heat of the tropics, and keep themselves fit and in excellent fighting trim. They are amongst the unsung heroes of this war, and everything possible to lighten their tedium and buoy up their morale should be done. That sacred duty is yours.

The American Army is better fed than any army in the world. This does not mean, however, that they can live indefinitely on canned food without having the effects tell on them. These admittedly are but minor hardships of war, especially when we pause to consider that in many parts of the world starvation prevails. But peculiarly enough, oftentimes it is not the major problems of existence which irk a man's soul; it is rather the pin pricks, especially those incidental to a life of deadly sameness, with tempers frayed out and nervous systems torn to shreds.

The second impression of my trip is that America is not only the cauldron of democracy but the incubator of democratic principles. At some of the places I visited, I met the crews of your air bases. There, I found first generation Germans, Italians, Frenchmen, Poles, Czechoslovakians, and other nationals. Some of them had accents so thick, that if such a thing were possible, one could not cut them with a butter knife.

But there they were, all Americans, all devoted to the same ideals, all working for the same cause, and united by the same high purpose. No suspicion or rivalry existed between them. This increased my belief and faith that devotion to common principles eliminates differences in race and that identity of ideals is the strongest possible solvent of racial dissimilarities.

I have reached your country, therefore, with no misgivings, but with my belief that the American people are building and carrying out a true pattern of the nation conceived by your forebears, strengthened and confirmed.

You, as representatives of the American people, have before you the glorious opportunity of carrying on the pioneer work of your ancestors, beyond the frontiers of physical and geographical limitations. Their brawn and thews braved undauntedly almost unbelievable hardships to open up a new continent. The modern world lauds them for their vigor and intensity of purpose, and for their accomplishment.

You have today before you the immeasurably greater opportunity to implement these same ideals and to help bring about the liberation of man's spirit in every part of the world. In order to accomplish this purpose, we of the United Nations must now so prosecute the war that victory will be ours decisively and with all good speed.

Sun-Tzu, the well-known Chinese strategist, said: In order to win, "know thyself" and "[know] thy enemy." We have also the saying: "It takes little effort to watch the other fellow carry the load."

In spite of these teachings from a wise old past, which are shared by every nation, there has been a tendency to belittle the strength of our opponents. When Japan thrust total war on China in 1937, military experts of every nation did not give China even a ghost of a chance. But when Japan failed to bring China cringing to her knees as she vaunted, the world took solace in this phenomenon by declaring that they had overestimated Japan's military might.

Nevertheless, when the greedy flames of war inexorably spread in the Pacific following the perfidious attack on Pearl Harbor, Malaya, and lands in and around the China Sea, and one after another of these places fell, the pendulum swung to the other extreme. Doubts and fears lifted their ugly heads and the world began to think that the Japanese were Nietzschean Supermen -- superior in intellect and physical prowess, a belief which the Gobineaus and the Houston Chamberlains and their apt pupils, the Nazi racists, had propounded about the Nordics.

Again, now the prevailing opinion seems to consider the defeat of the Japanese as of relative unimportance and that Hitler is our first concern. This is not borne out by actual facts, nor is it to the interests of the United Nations as a whole to allow Japan to continue, not only as a vital potential threat but as a waiting sword of Damocles, ready -- but as a waiting sword of Damocles ready to des[cend] at a moment's notice.

Let us not forget that Japan in her occupied areas today has greater resources at her command than Germany.

Let us not forget that the longer Japan is left in undisputed possessions of these resources, the stronger she must become. Each passing day takes more toll in lives of both Americans and Chinese.

Let us not forget that the Japanese are an intransigent people.

Let us not forget that during the first four and a half years of total aggression China has borne Japan's sadistic fury unaided and alone.

The victories won by the United States Navy at Midway and the Coral Sea are doubtless steps in the right direction, they are merely steps in the right direction -- for the magnificent fight that was waged at Guadalcanal during the past six months attests to the fact that the defeat of the forces of evil, though long and arduous, will finally come to pass. For have we not on the side of righteousness and justice staunch allies in Great Britain, Russia, and other brave and indomitable peoples?

Meanwhile, the peril of the Japanese juggernaut remains. Japanese military might must be decimated as a fighting force before its threat to civilization is removed. When the 77th Congress declared war against Japan, Germany, and Italy, Congress, for the moment, had done its work. It now remains for you, the present representatives of the American people, to point the way to win the war, to help construct a world in which all peoples may henceforth live in harmony and peace.

May I not hope that it is the resolve of Congress to devote itself to the creation of the post-war world? To dedicate itself to the preparation for the brighter future that a stricken world so eagerly awaits?

We of this generation who are privileged to help make a better world for ourselves and for posterity should remember that, while we must not be visionary, we must have vision so that peace should not be punitive in spirit and should not be provincial or nationalistic or even continental in concept, but universal in scope and -- and humanitarian in action, for modern science has so annihilated distance that what affects one people must of necessity affect all other peoples.

The term "hands and feet" is often used in China to signify the relationship between brothers. Since international interdependence is now so universally recognized, can we not also say that all nations should become members of one corporate body?

The one hundred and sixty years of traditional friendship between our two great peoples, China and America, which has never been marred by misunderstandings, is unsurpassed in the annals of the world. I can also assure you that China is eager and ready to cooperate with you and other peoples to lay a true and lasting foundation for a sane and progressive world society which would make it impossible for any arrogant or predatory neighbor to plunge future generations into another orgy of blood.

In the past China has not computed the cost to her manpower in her fight against aggression, although she well realized that manpower is [the] real wealth of a nation; and it takes generations to grow it. She -- She has been soberly conscious of her responsibilities and has not concerned herself with privileges and gains which she might have obtained through compromise of principles; nor will she demean herself and all she holds dear to the practice of the market place.

We in China, like you, want a better world, not for ourselves alone, but for all mankind, and we must have it. It is not enough, however, to proclaim our idea[s] or even to be convinced that we have them. In order to preserve, uphold, and maintain them, there are times when we should throw all we cherish into our effort to fulfill these ideals even at the risk of failure.

The teachings drawn from our late leader, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, have given our people the fortitude to carry on. From five and a half years of experience, we in China are convinced that it is the better part of wisdom not to accept failure ignominiously, but to risk it gloriously.

We shall have faith, that, at the writing of peace, America and our other gallant Allies will not be obtunded by the mirage of contingent reasons of expediency.

Man's mettle is tested both in adversity and in success. Twice is this true of the soul of a nation.

