

COPY

(8)  
8 January 1937.

Officers of the Japanese Embassy,

Hanking.

Gentlemen:-

At about two o'clock this afternoon guards from the gate of our Middle School at Kan Ho Yen suddenly tied up and took away the young man Mr. Liu Wen-pin ( ), who has worked for our Han Min So as interpreter from Chinese into Japanese. Mr. Liu has a good record there so far as we know, and I therefore wished to find out what is the difficulty. Persons on the street told me that Mr. Liu was taken to No. 32 Hsiao Pen Ch'iao, opposite Hsiao T'ao Yuen (our Department of Agricultural Economics). I went there to inquire. The officer was very angry with me, although I merely came to ask a courteous question, and did not speak any word of complaint or discussion.

I was roughly handled by the officer and a soldier. The officer said he knew nothing about the matter. Soldiers also turned to strike the Chinese servant whom I had asked to show me where was the officer's room.

Certainly I have no wish to interfere in any military matter or political question. But if a useful worker in our organization is suddenly taken away under present conditions in Hanking, it must arouse grave fears for his life and at the same time make it very difficult for others to carry on necessary duties. I hope that the case will be investigated at once.

Yours respectfully.

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10 January, 1936

American Embassy,

Hanking.

Gentlemen:-

We beg leave to report to you a case of disorder affecting American property and an American citizen, which illustrates well the general lack of discipline among the troops and in particular the unsatisfactory quality and conduct of the military police in this district.

Mr. Charles E. Riggs of our staff was returning last evening at about 8:45 to his home at 23 Hankow Road. As he passed from the main street into the alley leading to the back gate of his house, a soldier drove him out of the alley with threats. Eventually by the showing of his keys Mr. Riggs convinced the soldier that he was going home, and was allowed to pass. Against the wall by 25 Hankow Road (also a University house) cowered a woman and a man, the latter of whom spoke incoherently to Mr. Riggs, giving the number "25". When the soldier noticed this speech, he approached with lowered rifle pointing at Mr. Riggs, Threatened him with bayonet,



and gave him a sudden push backward. Mr. Riggs went to his own house; and soon came out again, but saw nothing further.

This morning Mr. Riggs, at my request, made inquiries in number 25 Hankow Road, where he found the woman he had seen in the alley last night. She and others in the house gave a simple and clear statement that about 8:30 last night two military police climbed the fence and entered the house to search through its rooms for women, using flashlights. They compelled this woman and a man of her family to go into the alley, where one soldier held them while the other went across the street to search similarly.

After the entry of Mr. Riggs, the party went up Hankow Road looking for girls, and secured one about 9:15 in 13 P'ing Ts'ang Hsiang. After dismissing the man along the road, the two soldiers (military police) took the two women to a house on Tientsin Road opposite Hsiao T'ao Yuan (the University property formerly used for a Language School, now usually known as the Department of Agricultural Economics), where there were about 20 soldiers. This morning, while the soldiers were washing, the women found a chance to slip out. Both Mr. Riggs and the women clearly noticed the ordinary uniform with the armband worn by the military police. The women's description of the location, adjoining buildings, the gates, the type of house, permits only one identification; 32 Hsiao fen Ch'iao, which is the military police office for this immediate district. In order to check against possible error, Mr. Riggs found the second woman at 13 P'ing Ts'ang Hsiang; her account confirmed the other's without contradictions.

Let me add two pertinent considerations. Residents of this vicinity, foreign and Chinese, have made many complaints of the severity and the unreliability of the military police nearby. Also, private Chinese houses along Hankow Road report that they are visited frequently by military police looking for women.

We object seriously to irregular entry into American Property, and to wrongful abduction from an American house. More fundamentally, we cannot feel safe in this area so long as soldiers and military police act with arbitrary violence and in a disreputable manner. Conduct of the military police sent as guards to the University has also been disgraceful, and ineffective as to protection.

With thanks for your helpful attention,

Yours respectfully,

11 January, 1938

Officers of the Japanese Embassy,  
Nanking

Gentlemen:-

On 8 January I wrote to you concerning Mr. Liu Wen-pin ( ), interpreter for our Pan Min So in the University Middle School, who on that day was tied and taken away from his work by the military police. Yesterday evening Mr. Liu came to me in fear, saying that he had escaped from the military police after



severe treatment by them, and asking for shelter. I told him that he might sleep in my house last night, and this afternoon should consider some other arrangement for the future.

At three o'clock today a military policeman came to Mr. Riggs' house at 23 Hankow Road, and later to my house at 21 Hankow Road, when I was not present. The policeman took away Mr. Liu after tying him.

As we have often mentioned to you, we make no objection to search for criminals among refugees, if conducted in a regular manner, even though it is on American property. But this case is one of a useful member of the staff, whose record with us is excellent. The procedure has been highly irregular. No information has been given to us of evidence against Mr. Liu, or even of charges against him. The seizure in my house was carried out by one military policeman without authorization of permission so far as I know.

A copy of this letter is being taken immediately to the American Embassy, as a complaint against the procedure of the military police, and of unjustified interference with the conduct of a legitimate enterprise upon American property.

I trust that you will desire immediately to clear the record of the Japanese Army and its military police. Mr. Taketama of the Consular Police reported yesterday to the University Middle School that Mr. Liu had been released, and asked that the information be conveyed to me. Probably he will be able to solve this second problem promptly and safely. Any other solution will leave us with grave doubts as to the integrity of your military police operations, unless you have in your possession facts which should have been explained to us much earlier -- as to Mr. Liu.

Please convey to me a reply at your early convenience, by and means that is satisfactory to you.

Yours respectfully,

M. S. Bates

Chairman Emergency Committee,  
University of Nanking.

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University of Nanking  
Nanking.

13 January, 1938

American Embassy,  
Nanking.

Gentlemen:-

Unfortunately it is necessary for me to report to you two more cases of irregular and forcible entry upon American property. The first occurred on the morning of the 11th., but through an error the information did not reach me in time for completion of investigation



and check until yesterday. A cordon of military police surrounded and entered our Sericulture Building at 16 Chin Ying Chieh, and took away a refugee who was said to have connection with the looting or disputes over the looting of a small parcel of fur garments.

In some respects more reprehensible was the case of last night in the University Middle School, when a Japanese soldier climbed over the wall with a Chinese assistant. The soldier used his weapon to prevent any one from giving an alarm to the guard as he entered the East Building. There he fired twice within a classroom filled with refugees. He seized a girl and went out over the wall.

Aside from the abuse of search in the first instance, we are concerned chiefly with the lack of military discipline and the prevailing insecurity illustrated by the second case. Beginning a few days ago, military police have been stationed at the gate of the Middle School. But they appear to be much more interested in their armed demands for special food and comfort beyond all reason, than in serious efforts to protect the refugees. At night they are all asleep in comfortable beds which they require to be furnished to them.

With thanks for your attention

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14 January, 1938.

American Embassy,  
Nanking.

Dear Mr. Allison:-

Last night four Japanese came into a classroom of the Middle School. Full details of their conduct there are not available, because of the serious intimidation of responsible watchers. However, they carried off one girl. The Japanese were military policeman, at least part of them from the guard assigned to the Middle School gate. They made use of Chinese cloth shoes and in part of Chinese clothes.

This situation is most serious and disgraceful, and calls for fundamental remedy. If American property is to be entered daily by Japanese military for criminal purposes, regardless of law and protests, we have come to an end of decent relation. This would be called intolerable except that we have undergone it so long!

At the very least there should be action concerning the existing police, who obviously do not give protection. We have many reasons to distrust the district office at 32 Hsiao Fen Ch'iao, so close to the Middle School, and from which the guards are assigned.

Mrs. Liu Wen-pin has information that her husband was shot in 21 Shensi Road. I just now received this report, and am unable to say more as yet. Intimidation at the Middle School, and fear of vengeful retaliation, is now so great that it is difficult to get the full facts and for people to do their ordinary work.



The writing of this letter has been interrupted by half an hour taken to expel a military policeman (soldier with hsien ping armband from the Special Service Organ) from 19 Hsiaoow road, an American house flying the American flag and with American and Japanese proclamations upon the gate. The policeman entered over the wall, and had been there about one hour pawing over the ransacked personal property of University teachers and of Dr. Brady of the University Hospital. The house is about 250 yards from the district office mentioned above.

This morning we have secured an indirect report that the Kiangtanghaih Church was burned on the night of the 15th./16th., and the direct testimony of a servant of an American missionary who returned there on the morning of the 17th., that she saw some timbers still smoking and that part of an adjoining or supplementary roof fell in before her eyes. The servant worked for Miss Brothorst, who had lived on the property until summer. The first report was given to us by an old woman employee of the church, who left it intact on the morning of the 15th., after Japanese soldiers had entered the building several times. Two of them slept in it the night of the 14th., and two others began robbery and intimidation on the morning of the 15th.

Respectfully submitted,

M. S. Bates

15 January, 1938.

American Embassy,  
Nanking.

Dear Mr. Allison:-

Yesterday afternoon at 4:45 three Japanese military with yellow tabs on the collar insisted upon entrance to our group residence at 3 P'ing Ts'ang Hsiang, entered two motor cars, and asked for assistance or means to drive them away. Fortunately Mr. Riggs was nearby, and when summoned by servants he was gradually able to get rid of the soldiers. As usual, the soldiers showed no sign of respect for the American flag, the American proclamation, or the Japanese proclamation, all plainly visible at or on the main gate by which they entered.

Last night at six o'clock the guards from the main gate of the University were withdrawn and have not been replaced. We have no explanation or understanding of the procedure.

As yet I have no word of how the Middle School or other units fared last night.

I will appreciate a word through any of our group concerning the matters taken up yesterday and the fate of Liu Wen-pin.

Enclosed is Mr. McCallum's statement regarding the burning of the State Theatre. It is possible that we can still get something further from our German friends.

Yours truly,



-6-  
18 January, 1938

American Embassy,  
Hankow.

Dear Mr. Allison:-

This morning at 10:30 I inspected our compound known as Hsiao T'ao Yuan (S Hsiao Pen Ch'iao). I was surprised to find there, searching through the rooms at his pleasure, the same military policeman whom I asked to leave Dr. Brady's residence at 19 Hankow Road (as reported in my letter of 14 January, page 2). He left, albeit reluctantly, and I watched him enter his headquarters nearly opposite, at 32 Hsiao Pen Ch'iao, the office about which we have complained so many times. Reliable witnesses told me that on 16th. January two military policemen had also gone over the place thoroughly.

At 10:45 I found in the Middle School Compound a non-commissioned officer, who had walked all over the school area, ostensibly to look for laborers. Yesterday three common soldiers inspected the place thoroughly. The previous day, groups both of military policemen and of soldiers went about freely within the walls.

The case of Mr. Liu Wen-pin, which first arose on the 8th., and in its more acute form on the 11th., has met with no satisfactory handling on the part of the Japanese authorities, so far as I am aware. After you took up the matter, I did not wish to complicate matters, despite my original beginning and connections with Mr. Liu. But on the 16th. I was at the Embassy for a personal reason, and stepped into Mr. Taketama's office to inquire about Liu -- as Mr. Fukui had earlier suggested that this case was in Mr. Taketama's hands. The inquiry was apparently embarrassing, for reference back to Mr. Fukui and various sidelines were suggested. But finally after several minutes of consultation with different persons, Mr. Taketama said that he would come to see me "tomorrow" (nominally the 17th.). Nothing more has been seen or heard of him.

Respectfully submitted,

M. S. Bates