

10 January, 1938.

American Embassy,

Nanking.

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 H. 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,