

Shanghai, March 21st, 1938.

Dear Searle,

As intimated in my radio message to you on Saturday, copy of which I enclose herewith, your letter of March 14th arrived just an hour after I had sent off the manuscripts of my projected book by the "Maréchal Joffre." I held it up as long as I could but the "Maréchal Joffre" was the last boat by which I could rely upon catching the air mail which leaves Hongkong to-morrow. Your radio message requested me to delay dispatch "for additions now under way". This gave no hint of strong objections to the manuscript as it stood and I therefore sent it off, as it seemed advisable to let the publishers both in London and in New York look over the proposition, at least tentatively, as soon as possible. Gollancz had stressed the importance of the time element, fearing that if completion of the manuscript was delayed the effect of publication might be greatly lessened.

I greatly welcome the idea that someone from your group, and preferably yourself, should come down to Shanghai and go over the manuscript with me. I hope to hear soon that you are actually on your way.

I note that you people up there wish to "guard against any more of personalisation than is necessary". It is natural that you should feel that way but if the book is to be convincing it must include personal eye-witness accounts such as yours and Fitch's which will convince the man in the street that the atrocities really occurred. It will be difficult to convince him in any other way.

You suggest that my true purpose is "a demonstration of the cruelty and injury of such warfare to normal life" and that for that purpose the results of your economic inquiries should make a valuable addition. My main purpose is to expose the deliberate and inhuman cruelty of the Japanese in their treatment of individuals. The economic disruption is a serious aspect but incidental so far as the book, as I see it, is concerned. The basic evil that has to be tackled, it seems to me, is man's calculated inhumanity to man - not a survey of the economic effects of the war. Such a survey would be read only by people who would need little convincing anyway.

I am aware of the common prejudice against atrocity stories but, to my mind, that simply furnishes an additional reason for placing more emphasis on what you describe as "more sensational human injuries". Owing to the fact that the British, and I suppose the Germans, deliberately concocted atrocity stories during the Great War the average man has developed a sceptical attitude on the subject and it will be necessary to shock him into realization that such things have actually occurred in this case. The book must be shocking in the better sense of the word and here, I feel, the kind of balance which might be called for in a more academic treatment must be sacrificed for the sake of dramatic effect.

I have given much thought to the question of the Relief Committee's position and have sought so far as possible to draw fire away from them in the preface. I shall be glad to adopt your suggestion of explaining that I have been able to draw upon the Committee's correspondence by acquaintance with relief organizations in Shanghai. I would point out in this connection that it is unlikely that the book can appear before next June, by which time the situation in Nanking may be much more normal so far as foreigners are concerned and, secondly, that the Committee can always assert that the publication was arranged in Shanghai, which is a fact.

You say it will be "a terrible shock even to the Japanese on the Embassy Staff" and that you are "convinced that not one of them read more than a fraction of the whole correspondence". It seems to me that, particularly if they were so offhand about the



correspondence, they need to have a shock of this kind administered to them. And it is better that they should be angry than that they should be indifferent.

What I think you people ought to realize is that unless a determined stand is made there is not going to be much chance for humanitarian work or missionary endeavor in any Chinese territory under Japanese control. While I appreciate as fully as the detached spectator can hope to, the difficult position which you find yourselves in I do hope that you will decide to sacrifice what may appear to be expediency for the sake of the principle at stake. Almost wherever one looks in the world to-day, Britain and America included, it seems to me the tendency is for principle to be sacrificed for expediency and I cannot see that it is going to get the world anywhere. Indeed this seems to me to be at the root of the moral bankruptch which has asserted itself amongst statesmen of the world from 1937 onwards with the result that we are reaping the whirlwind which we see in Europe and elsewhere to-day.

Coming down to practical details about the book, as sent off on Friday it totalled some 116,000 words, which is about twice the length suggested by Gollancz. In deference to your suggestion that the scope should be made as wide as possible I included a whole lot of material about North China, the Yangtze cities and air bombing all over China. I now propose that if you people think it inadvisable to publish the documents given in Appendices D and E I should cable instructions to my representatives in London (Gull, Dixon of Edinburgh House and James Bone, London editor of the "Manchester Guardian") and New York (Earl Leaf, the Price brothers and George Fitch) instructing them to delete these parts, though, if you have no strong objections, I should like to retain the table and explanatory notes given in Appendix D.

In lieu thereof I propose that there should be added either a chapter or an appendix on the destruction of means of rehabilitation - e.g. removal of scrap iron from Shanghai and general destruction of factories - and also a chapter or appendix based on your new material.

I plan also to rewrite the preface incorporating your suggestions referred to earlier in this letter and also explaining why an apparently disproportionate treatment has been given to the Nanking angle. My explanation of this would be that the evidence here was more complete than anywhere else and it was therefore more advisable to treat it as a sort of case history and proceed from the specific to the general rather than vice-versa.

Herewith I am sending down the portion of the manuscript which you have not yet seen. I think if you put this together with the part already sent to you it will be apparent that the Nanking material has already been balanced to a considerable degree.

I dictated the foregoing under the impression that there would be a boat going up to Nanking tomorrow. Mrs. Bates has just informed me, however, that this is not the case and so I shall probably add a good many afterthoughts in a further letter.

Sincerely yours,