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INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR NANKING SAFETY ZONE

5 Ninghai Road

December 15th, 1937.

Mr. Tokuyasu Fukuda,
Attache to the Japanese Embassy,
Nanking.

Dear Sir:

The International Committee for Nanking Safety Zone is very much perplexed by the problem of soldiers who have thrown away their arms. From the beginning the Committee strove to have this Zone entirely free of Chinese soldiers and up to the afternoon of Monday, December 13th, had achieved considerable success in this respect. At that time several hundred soldiers approached or entered the Zone through the northern boundary and appealed to us for help. The Committee plainly told the soldiers that it could not protect them. But we told them that if they abandoned their arms and all resistance to the Japanese, we thought the Japanese would give them merciful treatment.

In the confusion and haste of that evening, the Committee was unable to keep the disarmed soldiers separate from civilians, particularly because some of the soldiers had abandoned their military clothing.

The Committee fully recognizes that identified soldiers are lawful prisoners of war. But in dealing with these disarmed soldiers, the Committee hopes that the Japanese Army will use every precaution not to involve civilians. The Committee further hopes that the Japanese Army will in accordance with the recognized laws of war regarding prisoners and for reasons of humanity exercise mercy toward these former soldiers. They might be used to good advantage as laborers and would be glad to return to civilian life if possible.

Most respectfully yours,

John H. D. Rabe

John H. D. Rabe, Chairman.