PART I

FROM JOHN RABE'S NANKING DIARY

CHAPTER I

How It Began

In 1931, after meeting no opposition worth the name, the Japanese army occupied Manchuria, China's northernmost region, and declared it to be the sovereign state of Manchukuo, though in reality it was totally under Japanese control; nor did it become any more independent once the former Chinese emperor P'u-Yi was placed on the throne. A few years later, the Japanese army advanced into other northern Chinese provinces. Early in June 1937, there was a skirmish in Peking with Chinese troops on an old marble bridge that foreigners called the Marco Polo Bridge—and at first no one attached any real importance to the encounter.

It marked, however, the beginning of Japanese aggression against China, the goal of which was to subjugate the entire land and its people. In terms of international law, both sides spoke only of an "incident," although the Japanese would go on to conquer Nanking, Hankow, and large parts of China. As a result, diplomatic relations were not broken. Even after Japanese troops had occupied Nanking and the Chinese government had long since retreated to Hankow, or later to Chungking, Japan's embassy continued to function in the old capital, if only at lower levels. The ambassador himself resided in Shanghai.

Summers in Nanking are unbearably hot. The city, along with Hankow and

Chungking, is called one of China's "three ovens." With the onset of the summer heat, John Rabe's wife, Dora, had departed for the coastal resort of Peitaiho, north of Tientsin. John Rabe joined her there at the end of August. He writes:

Chinwangtao had already been conquered by the Japanese by then, and with them came an unrelenting stream of troop trains heading for Tientsin, some equipped with antiaircraft artillery, which gave me pause for thought. Things looked much more serious than I had expected.

In Peitaiho, about an hour north of Chinwangtao, there was no evidence that Japanese occupation was now an accomplished fact, but there was a certain tension in the air that convinced me to book my return trip to Shanghai from Chinwangtao right away. I was told: "Booked full for two months." While I was still considering the quickest way to arrange to get back, we heard news that the Japanese had attacked Shanghai, so that for the moment a return trip via its harbor was out of the question.

Good advice was scarce. When word leaked through that Nanking was under attack by Japanese aircraft and had been heavily bombed, I realized that the situation was truly serious. My only option was to travel by boat from Tientsin via Cheefoo or Tsingtao and from there by train to Nanking via Tsinanfu. On 28 August 1937, I said good-bye to my wife in the dark of night.

On 7 September 1937, after an eleven-day journey that in peacetime would have taken forty hours, Rabe reached Nanking. Because he did not want his wife to share the risk of air raids, he had left her behind in the resort town of Peitaiho. She remained in the north for a few months and then later moved to Shanghai.

21 SEPTEMBER 1937

All the rich or better-off Chinese began some time ago to flee up the Yangtze to Hankow. In courtyards and gardens, in public squares and on the streets, people have feverishly been building dugouts, but otherwise everything remained calm until two days ago, when I received my baptism by fire during four air raids on Nanking.

Many Americans and Germans have departed as well. I've been seriously considering the matter from all sides these last few nights. It wasn't because I love adventure that I returned here from the safety of Peitaiho, but primarily to protect my property and to represent Siemens's interests. Of course the company can't—nor does it—expect me to get myself killed

here on its behalf. Besides, I haven't the least desire to put my life at risk for the sake of either the company's or my own property; but there is a question of morality here, and as a reputable Hamburg businessman, so far I haven't been able to side-step it.

Our Chinese servants and employees, about 30 people in all including immediate families, have eyes only for their "master." If I stay, they will loyally remain at their posts to the end. I saw the same thing happen before in the wars up north. If I run, then the company and my own house will not just be left deserted, but they will probably be plundered as well. Apart from that, and as unpleasant as that would be, I cannot bring myself for now to betray the trust these people have put in me. And it is touching to see how they believe in me, even the most useless people whom I would gladly have sent packing during peacetime. I gave Mr. Han, my assistant, an advance on his salary so that he could send his wife and two children to safety in Taianfu. He quite frankly admits: "Where you stay, I stay too. If you go, I go along!"

The rest of the poor servants, most of whom are actually from northern China, simply don't know where to go. I wanted to send off the women and children at least, offered their husbands money for the trip, but they don't know what to do. They want to go back home to the north, but there's war there, too; and so they would rather just huddle here around me.

Under such circumstances, can I, may I, cut and run? I don't think so. Anyone who has ever sat in a dugout and held a trembling Chinese child in each hand through the long hours of an air raid can understand what I feel.

Finally—subconsciously—there's a last, and the not least important, reason that makes my sticking it out here seem simply a matter of course. I am a member of the NSDAP, and temporarily even held the office of local deputy leader. When I pay business calls on the Chinese agencies and ministries who are our customers, I am constantly asked questions about Germany, about our party and government, and my answer always is:

> Yes indeed—
> We are soldiers of labor;
> We are a government of workers,
> We are friends of the working man,
> We do not leave workers—the poor—
> in the lurch when times are hard!

To be sure, as a National Socialist I was speaking only about German workers, not about the Chinese; but what would the Chinese think? Times are bit-

terly hard here in the country of my hosts, who have treated me well for three decades now. The rich are fleeing, the poor must remain behind. They don't know where to go. They don't have the means to flee. Aren't they in danger of being slaughtered in great numbers? Shouldn't one make an attempt to help them? Save a few at least? And even if it's only our own people, our employees?

And so we have put our filthy dugout, which the Chinese had excavated during my absence but that was already close to collapse, back in top-notch order.

I've equipped the dugout with my personal first-aid supplies, plus some from the apothecary in the school, which closed down some time ago. We plan to use vinegar compresses as face masks in the case of gas attack. I've also stored food and drink in baskets and thermos bottles.

22 SEPTEMBER

Once the long wail of the siren announced the end of the second attack, I went for a drive through the city. The Japanese had made a particular target of Kuomintang party headquarters, where the offices and studios of the central broadcasting station are also located.

My war diary begins as of this date.

DURING THE WORST of the bombing on 19 and 20 September, I sat with my Chinese in our homemade dugout, which is certainly not bombproof, but at least provides protection against shrapnel and bomb fragments. Out in the garden we've also spread a 20-by-10-foot piece of canvas with a swastika painted on it.

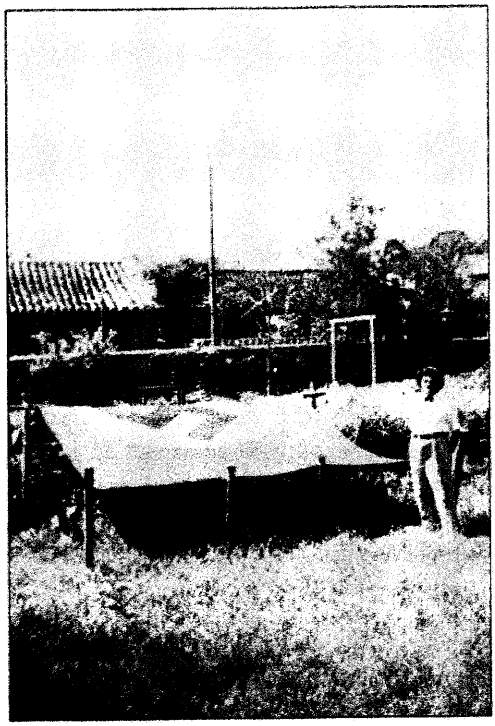
The government has set up a very good alarm system. About 20 to 30 minutes before an air raid, sirens start howling loudly, and by the time a certain shorter signal sounds the streets must be cleared. All traffic stops. Pedestrians crawl into dugouts that have been built alongside all the streets.

The final bomb intended for the Kuomintang party landed behind the buildings, making a direct hit on a dugout built into the clay of the city wall. Eight people were killed. One woman had been peering out of the dugout—her head was nowhere to be found. Only a ten-year-old girl miraculously survived, and she herself has no idea how. She could be seen running from group to group, telling her story. The area was cordoned off by the military. Sacrificial paper was burning beside the last coffin.

23 SEPTEMBER

Herr Scheel, the baker at Café Kiessling, had moved into the home of one of Hapro's[1] former employees in the new residential section, which was considered a particularly safe area until yesterday's attack badly stained its reputation, so that he has had to move again—I've been unable to find out where to. The worst part is that Scheel has closed his bakery. There is no more bread.

I just returned home with an order in the amount of 1,500 pounds sterling from the National Resource Commission. Not bad in the middle of a war, if only as a moral success. There's a very nice letter from the board of directors in Shanghai, expressing concern about my well-being and giving me permission to take any measure I consider appropriate for my personal safety, even to leave Nanking if necessary. Many thanks! The letter did me good.



Rabe in his garden with the swastika flag, which he hoped would deter Japanese bombers. It later became a makeshift tent for some of his Chinese refugees.

24 SEPTEMBER

In the long hours of crouching in the dugout during the recent bombardment, I turned on Radio Shanghai to take my mind off things with a little music, and they were playing Beethoven's Funeral March, then to make matters worse they announced to their listeners: "This music is kindly dedicated to you by the Shanghai Funeral Directors."

25 SEPTEMBER

According to an article in the *Ostasiatischer Lloyd,* Germany's ambassador, Dr. Trautmann, has made arrangements to provide for the safety of those Germans still remaining in Nanking. We're all very curious how he is going to manage this.

At a conference in the embassy yesterday he disclosed his plan, and it's not all that bad. He has chartered the *Kutwo,* an English steamship owned by the Jardines line, which is to transport those of us Germans not needed here farther up the Yangtze and so out of danger.

26 SEPTEMBER

Yesterday evening Mr. Chow, an engineer from Shanghai, arrived after spending 26 hours on the train. He has been ordered here by Mr. Tao of the Communications Ministry to repair the telephone system. Chow is one of our best people.

When I asked if his family was worried that something might happen to him on the trip, he answered—and a remarkable answer it is: "I told my wife, if I am killed you can expect nothing from Siemens and should go to my relatives in the north where you and the children can live from the yield of our little parcel of land there. I undertook this trip not only in the company's interest, but also, and above all, in the interests of my fatherland."

It reveals an attitude one generally doesn't credit the Chinese with having, but it is there, and it is gaining ground, especially in the lower and middle classes.

3 OCTOBER

It's said that people at the highest levels, especially Madame Chiang, have no great sympathy for Germany, because we have concluded a pact with

Japan against the Soviets and have refused to take part in the [Nine Power] Conference in Brussels, since we don't want to sit at the same table with the Soviets.

He who is not for us is against us, Madame Chiang is reported to have said. And what about the German advisors? Who introduced the flak battalions and antiaircraft artillery that the Chinese are so proud of today? German advisors! Who trained the troops fighting so bravely near Shanghai, while untrained soldiers in the north are simply fleeing? German advisors! Who are staying at their posts in Nanking? German advisors and businessmen! From our perspective here, my countrymen are staying on in the capital at a considerable sacrifice, something the Chinese here in their own country simply do not appreciate.

I was just at the bazaar and for 80 dollars bought four suitcases in which I want to pack the 16 books I've written. Chow, our Chinese engineer, who will be coming back from Hankow in about two weeks, wants to take them back with him to Shanghai. Perhaps they can be stored more safely there than here.

Medicine is in short supply. The Tien Sun Apothecary was badly damaged by the blast from the most recent bombs and is closed. Every bottle on its shelves was broken. And it was the only shop that still had six bottles of insulin. Why didn't I snap them up before the bombing began? Because I wanted to save money. What nonsense! We're always wiser in hindsight! I am going to try to get 20 to 30 vials shipped from Shanghai. Let's hope it works. Soon there won't be a single shop open in Nanking. I just managed to scare up two bottles each of ether and alcohol, plus a package of cotton wadding, at a wine shop.

Trucks are arriving daily now full of those not too severely wounded, but what a sorry sight they are. They're covered with filthy bandages and crusted with mud as if they have just come from the trenches. I'm glad we have Dr. Hirschberg with us here at least. His family is still here, too—they have returned, or perhaps they never left.

6 OCTOBER

Ambassador Trautmann was here for tea from 5 to 6 o'clock. We sat together for an hour and discussed the general situation. We are both in a rather pessimistic mood. The north is lost, and nothing will change that. The Chinese appear to regard Shanghai as the main theater of war because Shanghai protects Nanking. But for how long?

9 AND 10 OCTOBER

Rain, putting everyone in the best of moods. Sunday afternoon, just for a change of scenery, I went on board the *Kutwo* again for coffee. There were only a few visitors. Dr. Rosen from the embassy has now become a permanent guest on board. In his own way, the man impresses me. He frankly admits that he is frightened by the bombardments and is acting accordingly. Not everyone can be as candid as that. I don't love being shelled either; but I simply cannot bring myself to save my skin just yet.

13 OCTOBER

Scattered clouds and sunshine. The forecast for a very unsettling day. But it all took place at some distance. The alarm sounded at eight o'clock, but then was called off fifteen minutes later. At each alarm, a large number of poor neighbors—men, women, and children—all come running past my house, fleeing in the direction of Wutaishan Hill, where dugouts have been built into the slopes. What a wretched sight, I'm tired of just watching their torment, especially the women with little children in their arms. The crowd stormed past here three times today.

I'm experiencing some growth in my dugout, too. Mr. Sen and Mr. Fong, who both speak German, have been sent by their former branches to Nanking and are living close by, so that they take refuge here whenever the alarm sounds. Plus the two postmen who have always brought my mail are now among my permanent guests. I'll soon not know where to put all these people. I've made no appearance in the dugout the last few days. Herr Riebe, a Siemens engineer sent here from Shanghai, came home ill today—*dutzebuhau*.[2]

14 OCTOBER

Radiant sunshine at 7 a.m.—splendid weather for flying! Herr Riebe is doing better, thank God, it was only an upset stomach, and is happily returning to work today, that is, to the electricity works in Hsiakwan.[3]

Herr Riebe has never seen Sun Yat-sen's tomb, so I drive him out to see it. Good luck! The gates are surrounded by bamboo scaffolding draped with cloths. Even the old Ming grave is off limits. The entire memorial park

is filled with military trucks, all of them empty but ready to go, because in each one sits a dozing Chinese driver. Word is that the marshal is living somewhere near the Great Pagoda. No one has ever resided in the Chia Hung Chang, the actual presidential palace, which has been painted black from top to bottom. Looks awful!

There's a lot of talk about the Japanese using gas. An article in a local paper announced that the hospital here has determined that some Chinese soldiers who have been admitted are suffering from gas poisoning.

We're all very worried about the possibility of a gas attack, because Nanking's civilian population has not been issued gas masks. There have been some announcements about how you can protect yourself by soaking a cloth in vinegar or some other liquid and using it as a face mask, but that's all just a poor makeshift that would be absolutely useless in a real emergency.

17 OCTOBER (FROM A LETTER)

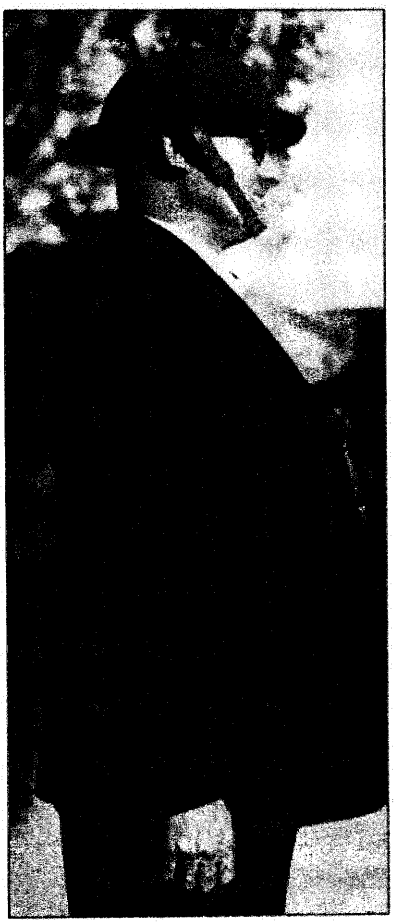
People want to be taken so "dreadfully seriously," and that's not my way. I just happen to have an unfortunate talent for tripping people up with my so-called humor at the oddest moments.

I don't mean to claim these are not serious times. They are serious; they are very serious and will probably get even worse. But how are you supposed to deal with all this dreadful seriousness? It seems to me by gathering up some last snatches of humor to defy fate's absurdities. Which is why my prayer each morning and evening goes: "Dear God, watch over my family and my good humor; I'll take care of the other incidentals myself."

You want to know, I'm sure, what we are still doing here and what our lives are like. Well, let's admit it: At such a time a man tries to behave decently and doesn't want to leave in the lurch the employees under his charge, or the rest of his servants and their families, but to stand by them in word and deed. It's the obvious thing to do really!

LATER

All the movie houses, most of the hotels, the majority of shops and apothecaries are closed. Impeccable order reigns in the streets. The military, the police, and civil defense do their duty modestly and correctly. Westerners—there aren't that many left, among the Germans maybe 12 women and 60



Rabe, with characteristic lack of pomposity, in plane-spotting gear

men—are not harassed, on the contrary! People show amazing goodwill toward those of us still staying on here as their guests.

People are scrambling for a spot in my dugout! I really don't know why. It simply has the reputation of being rock solid. When I built it I was figuring on 12 occupants at most. As things turned out once it was finished, I had badly miscalculated: There were 30 of us in all, and there we sat like sardines in a can.

Where do all these people come from? Very simple. Every "boy" has a wife, children, a father, mother, grandfather, and grandmother, and if he doesn't, then he adopts some. A very profitable business, might I add! In ad-

dition, my neighbor, a cobbler with whom I had been feuding before the war because he always calculated a 20 percent "squeeze" into the price of his boots, had to be included, along with his family, after it turned out that he was one of my boy's relatives. What could I do? I let them all in. I didn't want to lose face!

Someone had placed an office chair in the little cellar for me; all the others squatted on low benches. It was perfectly clear to me that I had to join the others in the dugout, at least when bombs were falling too close and making too much racket, and as I sat there, and saw how the women and children were reassured simply by my poor presence, I knew that I had done the right thing in deciding to return as quickly as possible from Peitaiho.

If I were to write that I was not afraid, I'd be lying. When the dugout began to do some respectable shaking, a feeling came over me, too, that said, "Damn—we'll be lucky to get out of here!" But fear is there to be conquered. A few cheerful words, a really rotten joke, grins all around—and the bombs had already lost much of their effect.

Women with nursing babies have priority in the dugout. They are allowed to take the seats in the middle; then come the women with bigger children, and then the men: an arrangement on which I always stubbornly insist, much to the amazement of the men.

Whenever there's an increase in the number of bombs landing too close, everyone just sits there in the dugout, silent, mouths open. Women and children get wads of cotton for their ears. As soon as things calm down a bit, one hero after the other emerges from the cellar to have a look around. And how the Chinese applaud happily whenever an enemy bomber takes a hit from antiaircraft fire and plunges to the earth in a beautiful fiery arc. Only the funny, inscrutable "Master" is behaving strangely again. He silently touches the brim of his hat and mutters, "Hush! Three men are dying!"

18 OCTOBER

Herr Riebe spent the whole time standing beside his turbines at the electricity works, the silly ass! But he had only just got the machines running today and didn't want to shut them down again. If the Japanese had really come any closer, he said, he would have taken cover of course. Yes indeed, my friend, if there's still time!

19 OCTOBER

The Japanese really mean business today! Alarm at 2 a.m., and by the time I was pulling on my other boot, bombs were already falling, setting the whole house shaking. Riebe, however, was not to be disturbed, but went right on sleeping as if nothing was happening. Just as I shouted, "Hey there, Riebe! Second alarm!" a couple more bombs exploded, and our friend Riebe calmly replied, "Yes, I hear."

Riebe did a fine piece of work in getting the power going again. Turbine II is running at full power (5,000 kW). He's working on turbine III now. All we have are our old Borsig boilers that have been in constant use since being delivered six years ago. We couldn't even get our renowned American boilers to fire up again.

We saw our Siemens searchlights shining again tonight. I had to establish some order while we were "boarding" the dugout. There's a fat, well-fed telegraph operator from the Transocean News Agency who always takes the best middle seats from the women and children. I was forced to set him straight a bit. And in the fervor of the moment I ended up in groundwater and got the seat of my pants soaked.

As of this morning a huge sign in German, Chinese, and English adorns the entrance to the dugout. It reads:

A Bulletin for My Guests and Members of My Household:

Anyone using my bomb shelter must obey the rule giving the safest seats, meaning those in the middle of the dugout, to women and children—whoever they may be. Men are to make do with other seats or stand. Anyone disobeying this instruction may not use the dugout in the future.

JOHN RABE Nanking, 19 October 37

The fat telegraph operator took the message very much to heart!

20 OCTOBER

Herr Hoth from the German embassy is lying in Kulou Hospital. On a hunting trip in a sampan on the Yangtze, the man behind him put a load of buckshot in his calves. He was not given first aid until they were on board an English warship. The things that can happen to a person in war! In the

calf of all places! I've been wondering whether I ought to award him the Order of the Garter for his ailing legs. I think I'll do it!

21 OCTOBER, 9:15 A.M.

I'm on my way to the electricity works, when the *ying bao*—the alarm—sounds. I barely make it home in the car, and find everything in an uproar. The German-speaking officials at Shanghai Com-Sav Bank have received word that the Japanese have been dropping gas bombs along the highway to Nanking. We have no gas masks, only primitive muslin face masks. I check to see if all my guests are outfitted with the things. The women just have handkerchiefs or little towels. I screw up my courage.

22 OCTOBER

Herr Woltemade arrives at 8 a.m. He got to Nanking at one this morning, but rented a room at the Metropol Hotel rather than disturb me. The drive from Shanghai to Nanking took 18 hours. He had entrusted himself to the Central China Express Company, which promised to get him here in eight hours. The allegedly German chauffeurs of this company, however, are in fact out-of-work Jews, who maybe don't know much about driving but are that much better at making money. The trip costs 75 dollars a person. One chauffeur's behavior has been offensive, and the embassy wants to remove the swastika flag from his car, since a Jew has no right to fly it.[4]

24 OCTOBER

Evening brings news on the radio that the Japanese are said to have broken through the Shanghai front at Tazang. If it's true, which we hope it isn't, we shall soon be cut off entirely from Shanghai.

Hurrah! A letter has just arrived from Otto[5] in Salem, dated 26 September: cheerful, without a care in the world. He's busy harvesting plums and apples and is delighted that Otto Rabe, laboring member of the service corps, is soon to become a soldier.

25 OCTOBER

Our wounded Herr Hoth was a good sport about receiving his "bulletproof Order of the Garter," that is, a white garter with an attached medal display-

ing two crossed rifles (from my little medal box) and the inscription *honi soit qui mal y pense.* I packaged it in a cigar box covered in blue silk and lined with white. It was a whopping success! Hoth almost laughed himself well again, and—what was not at all my intention—everyone says: Only Rabe could have come up with that!

26 OCTOBER

Herr Riebe has finished the job at the electricity works. He could have left for Changsha, but a telegram arrived from Shanghai: "Letter to follow—don't rush the work!" In all my twenty-seven years with Siemens, I have yet to receive such a lovely telegram.

27 OCTOBER

The Japanese breakthrough at Tazang has now been confirmed by the Chinese. They have now retreated to their so-called "Hindenburg Line."

Rabe's dugout in his garden. The sign reads: OFFICE HOURS: FROM 9:00 P.M. TO 11:00 P.M.

28 OCTOBER

Alarm at 9:10 a.m., but a false one. Otherwise an active business day that was quiet until evening when something happened after all: Tsao, my rascal of a cook, was supposed to serve bread and cheese for supper, but had none, got scolded, became angry, and gave notice as of the first. He lost the battle, but saved face. Let him go—I don't care! I won't weaken, I want my cheese!

29 OCTOBER

Dr. Lautenschlager has returned from Peitaiho by way of Shanghai and has brought me the insulin that Mutti bought for me in Tientsin.

In a moment of some reasonableness, I wrote the following verses and have inscribed them on my heart:

To whom it may concern

Now's the time and now's the season:
Damn it man, do use your reason!
Crouching at your dugout door
Is witless foolishness and more!
First because the bombs that drop
Are known to travel from up top,
And that shrapnel from on high
Is said to hurt the stander-by.
Once it booms and it's too late,
You tell yourself: Oh heck, I'll wait,
There's surely time enough to duck,
I only wanted one last look. . . .
Stuff and nonsense, Curly, think
A little faster, hero! Slink
Into your shelter there!
Reason calls you to beware!

6 NOVEMBER

Making my business rounds today, I came across some rather ugly news. A "*nitchevo*-mood" appears to be gradually spreading among the Chinese. Herr Riebe told me recently that the workers at the electricity works asked

him directly whether a man wouldn't be a lot better off if he became a Communist. And today a businessman told me in confidence that all educated Chinese believe that they ought to join the Bolsheviks.[6]

LATER

It's amazing to read how bravely the Chinese army—and remember, they're hirelings, because although Nanking declared a general draft, it was never set up of course—is fighting against well-disciplined Japanese troops in Shanghai. It's true that only the best Nanking troops, trained by German advisors, were sent to Shanghai. Two-thirds of them are said to have fallen in battle already; but what can the best troops do without adequate equipment. The modern Japanese army, outfitted with heavy artillery, countless tanks, and bombers, is simply vastly superior to the Chinese.

7 NOVEMBER

Meals of late leave something to be desired. Chang, our number-one houseboy, has taken a three-day vacation. He sent a substitute to fill in while he's gone, and to my inexpressible joy the man speaks classical, unadulterated Shanghai Pidgin English. The following conversation is taken from today's breakfast:

MASTER: Boy! Ham and eggs taste all same like fish—how fashion can do?
BOY: Chicken no can help, Master. Present time no got proper chow. Only got fish.
MASTER: But butter taste all same. You thinkee cow all same chow fish?
BOY: My no savee, Master. My wanshee ask him.

In English:

MASTER: Boy! The ham and fried eggs taste like fish. Why is that?
BOY: The chickens can't help it, Master. There's no regular feed for them, so they get only fish.
MASTER: But the butter tastes of fish, too. Do you think the cow's eating fish as well?
BOY: I don't know, Master. I'll have to ask it (i.e., the cow).

Well, I'm curious to know what the cow has to say! If the skillet were ever cleaned, maybe we'd get rid of that oily fishy taste. The entire population of my dugout is probably using just one skillet, meaning: mine.

Otherwise, no news.

8 NOVEMBER

I've been told that the Japanese have about 600 airplanes in Shanghai at present. If an air force that large attacks Nanking, it will achieve what it sets out to do.

Modern warfare is simply pandemonium on earth, and to think that what we're experiencing here in China is child's play compared to what a new world war would mean in Europe, from which heaven preserve us.

10 NOVEMBER

About nine Japanese airplanes are flying over the city. They've been under heavy fire, but without success. Except for Riebe, who's standing at the gate to the school and scanning the sky through my Zeiss binoculars (factor of 18), I ordered everybody into the dugout the moment the roofs of nearby houses started rattling under the rain of flak fragments. I'm always happy when we all come out of these thunderstorms unharmed. It's becoming increasingly difficult to get people to take cover in time. Since nothing has happened thus far, thank God, they've become careless and don't think they're in danger anymore, unless I go into a nice tirade now and then. Our dugout is getting terribly soggy. We're having trouble keeping groundwater out. It requires hours of bailing.

German military advisors returning from the Shanghai front report that a number of lightly wounded (Chinese) soldiers are no longer under military discipline and are marauding behind the front lines; if you travel at night you need a Mauser pistol in your hand.

11 NOVEMBER

The bombs were like a hailstorm. Suddenly a whoop of joy from outside. The flak batteries have made a hit. The dugout empties out in no time. Everybody wants to see. The bomber breaks in two and plummets in a swirl of flames and smoke. We see two men, of what was perhaps a five- or

seven-man crew, leap out of the fire and smoke. Without parachutes! Within 20 seconds there's nothing left of the proud bomber but debris and corpses.

12 NOVEMBER

A German woman, whose name I don't even know, called me on the telephone just now: "Ah, send your engineer at once! My sewing machine is broken!"

"My dear lady," I reply, "this is Siemens, not Singer."

"I know that," she says, "I've already tried Singer, but he's too stupid. Now I'm trying you. After all, it is an *electric* sewing machine!"

What am I supposed to do? I'll send Sung, our telephone installer, over tomorrow. Business seems to be improving.

The sewing-machine woman calls again: She would prefer that I send the engineer in the afternoon, please.

14 NOVEMBER

Splendid sunny Sunday, and no bombs! Han says the Japanese don't like to fly on Sunday. He doesn't know why, either, maybe they want to rest. That reminds me of Young, who used to be our comprador in Tientsin; he was

Rabe and an unidentified colleague watching Japanese aircraft overhead

so lazy that we made him keep a diary listing the customers he'd called on and what shops he'd entered. Every Sunday his entry read: "Today being Holy Sunday. All day no business can be done!"

Herr Riebe had hoped to leave for Hankow this morning, but the only places left on any of the Jardines steamers were in steerage. In his shoes I would have bought a seat in steerage and then I would have sat down in the 1st class salon and waited until the 1st officer provided me with suitable accommodations. The English always treat Europeans courteously.

15 NOVEMBER

A visit to the Communications Ministry convinced me that the government is about to retreat from Nanking. The corridors and offices there are full of trunks and boxes. They intend to move to Changsha on the upper Yangtze. I stop by the Railway Ministry and get one of the boys to tell me in confidence that they, too, will be packing tomorrow.

I have tea with the German ambassador and his wife, Frau Trautmann. There I meet General Speemann, who has just arrived from Tayuanfu. It appears that the *Kutwo* will first take the ladies and other valuables to Hankow, then return for the embassy staff and the rest of the Germans. The embassy has to leave the moment the Chinese government bolts, they say, because otherwise it would be left behind in enemy territory.

16 NOVEMBER

All day I have been firmly resolved to hold out here. But now I hear that Soochow is being badly plundered by defeated and retreating Chinese troops. That makes you stop and think. Besides which, people believe that Nanking will try to defend itself against the advancing Japanese, even if the city is shelled from the river by Japanese naval artillery.

On the other hand: What's to become of all the many Chinese clinging to my coattails? Mr. Han asked for another advance. He wanted to send his wife and children as soon as possible via Tsinanfu to Tsingtao, where he has friends. But now he hears that the route is no longer open. The Chinese have blown up one of the railroad bridges outside Tsinan in order to slow the Japanese advance. Meaning that the Japanese will soon be, or already are, on the Yellow River. And now Han, too, will probably have to send his family to Hankow. He's still waiting for another family of friends who are to join them. I hope he doesn't wait too long.

There is no point in pursuing any kind of project whatever. No one is available to talk business. Everybody's packing. But then so am I! I've already packed up the books I've written. And next come my suits, then the silver. How strange it all sounds! The few remaining items can be quickly thrown into a trunk, then you just paste an address on it. I'm going to withdraw money from the bank, since I've been advised I'll need cash. The banks will be closing, too, in any case.

17 NOVEMBER

There was heavy traffic on the main road all night: car after car, trucks, even tanks. All rumbling ponderously past. The government has begun its evacuation. Word is that Mr. Lin Sen, the president of the Chinese Republic, has already left. I'm worried about Han's family. They have to leave, as soon as possible.

Hundreds upon hundreds of rickshas piled high with baggage are on the road to Hsiakwan, their Chinese owners alongside, all trying to make it to safety on the few steamers still sailing upriver. Several columns of new recruits were a pathetic sight: all in more less ragged civvies, each with a bundle on his back and a rusty rifle in hand.

I have now also learned why the Japanese were able to advance so quickly of late. Outside Soochow about 5,000 soldiers of the Chang Hsueliang (the Northern Troops) refused to obey orders. They say Chiang Kai-shek himself took one of his crack regiments to Soochow and disarmed the whole mutinous bunch. The marshal doesn't have an easy time of it. A tip of the hat, just to the sheer energy! Now that the marshal has personally intervened, the Chinese front is said to be holding again. The Japanese have skirted around the "Hindenburg Line," however, so it's been lost, which also probably means the end of that lovely defense strategy drawn up by General von Falkenhausen.

18 NOVEMBER

There was no Nanking edition of the *China Press* today. The printers have probably all fled. Day and night a steady stream of rickshas, carts, wagons, cars, and trucks, all piled high with baggage, rolls out of the city, mostly in the direction of the river, since the vast throng is trying to flee upriver to Hankow and beyond. At the same time many regiments of new soldiers are arriving in the city from the north. It would appear, then, that the plan is

stubbornly to defend the city. Many of the soldiers look awfully wretched. Entire columns arrive without any footwear. They all march by in total silence, an endless mute procession of weary figures.

Yesterday I felt much the way Mutti felt recently when she was in Peking helping Gretel and Willi[7] pack up. I wandered from room to room trying to choose the things I wanted to pack and store on board the *Kutwo*. And as I did it came to me how very much our hearts hang on such things.

Every bag and trunk had to be brought down from the attic, and then we packed for a good part of the night. At 10 o'clock this morning the first six trunks were ready and could be sent down to the harbor in two *mashaws*,[8] at 5 dollars a piece. Our boy Tung took charge of transporting them. The launch is scheduled to leave the Chung Shang Mato wharf for the *Kutwo* at 11 o'clock.

This afternoon Herr Siegel from Kunst & Albers arrived with a truck and was able to fetch 3 more trunks, as well as 5 pieces of baggage that belong to Rilz the teacher and that were stored here with me when Rilz was transferred to Spalato.

When Tung our office boy had not returned by 7 in the evening, I drove out to Hsiakwan, pulling up just in time for the arrival of the launch that was scheduled for 11 this morning. When they started loading the baggage it turned into a general mess. To keep both baggage and boys from falling into the water I had to intervene with a loud shout of "Stop!" Result: a hell of a row with one of the boys, who assaulted me with the following response:

"*Shegoan*—out of my way! You have no say here. I am carrying the carpet of his excellency the ambassador, and it comes first!"

He didn't get any farther than that, because I simply shouted him down.

By 8 o'clock most of the 600 pieces of baggage that had been assembled on the pier were successfully loaded on the launch. After 20 minutes in the dark and by a driving rain, and after finally sorting out and delivering on board the various ladies with their babies and then the baggage, we were all swearing like sailors. Exhausted and drenched to the bone, I arrived home at 9, and then we went on packing and packing until after midnight, as much as the trunks could hold.

From the Diary of Horst Baerensprung[9] *(excerpt)*

"The fleeing army stealthily bore naught but its honor and the weapons of war"—those verses kept coming to my mind as I watched those end-

less columns in the rain. From a suburb of Nanking, I watched for almost seven hours as troops passed along the rutted muddy road. One company after the other. Even most of the officers were on foot, only a few rode drenched and matted Mongolian ponies. The rain whipped at them mercilessly, incessantly, and most soldiers carried umbrellas made of simple oilpaper. The clouds hung so low that you could almost grab hold of them. The Purple Mountain and Lion Hill, the hallmarks of Nanking, were lost in thick fog. The weather had a good side however: No air raids were to be expected.

The soldiers bore modern rifles on their shoulders, and hand grenades hung from their belts, but they had only straw sandals for their feet. No backpack, no coat, only thin summer uniforms despite the icy wind. Each man carried a rolled-up blanket or piece of canvas slung over his shoulder, that was all. What princes our soldiers were in contrast, each with his own backpack! A number of heavily laden coolies formed the baggage train. Everything was carried on bamboo poles. In lieu of a field kitchen, two coolies carried one huge kettle. Then came several mules with modern machine guns and quick-firing rifles, well-protected by canvas. As I looked at these carefully wrapped machine guns and then at those soldiers, who were soaked to the bone and—as you could see right off—had spent the night in some rain-drenched field, I was reminded of the motto that on the marshal's order has been engraved on every firearm, from simple rifles to howitzers: "Never forget, my son, that this weapon was bought with the sweat and blood of our people!" Most coolies will never earn as much in their whole life as one of the weapons they carry costs. There is no money for clothes, shoes, and other comforts, only for guns. Christ probably was thinking of times like these when he advised his disciples: "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." (Luke 22:36)