

CHAPTER 7

THE DIPLOMATS RETURN

6 JANUARY

HURRAH! The three officials from the American embassy, Mr. Allison, Mr. Espey, and Mr. McFadyen, arrived here today aboard the USS *Oahu* from Shanghai by way of Wuhu. They were already outside Nanking once before on 31 December, but were not allowed to land and so went on to Wuhu. Mr. Allison served previously as a diplomat in Tokyo and speaks Japanese.

We can now buy rice and flour from the Japanese military authorities: supplies that the Japanese have captured here. Despite the high price (one sack of rice costs 13 dollars Mex.), we decide to buy rice worth 50,000 dollars Mex. We also have to buy coal worth about 12,000 dollars Mex. The demand for rice, flour, and coal grows daily, since the supplies that the refugees brought with them into the Zone are almost used up.

Mr. Han does not agree with the purchase. He has heard from a rice dealer that the Chinese troops are about to retake Nanking. People claim to have heard the thunder of cannons southwest of the city. If Nanking is retaken, Han says, we'll have rice and flour for free. Unfortunately, I must disabuse him of any such hopes.

At around 10 o'clock a Japanese truck arrived and took about 15 employees from my Siemens Camp to be put to work at the electricity works in Hsiakwan. The coolies left only very reluctantly. Last time, despite all the promises of the Japanese, they were badly taken care of, if they were taken care of at all. Besides which, instead of being sent to the electricity works in Hsiakwan, some of them were put to work clearing trenches outside the city gates.

At 5 o'clock this afternoon, Mr. Fukuda paid me a visit to tell me that by decision of the military authorities our International Committee is to be dissolved and our supplies and moneys are to be taken over by the Autonomous Government Committee. I immediately protest any handing over of our assets and supplies. We have no objection to their taking over our work, but wish to point out that before the city is secure under the rule of law and order, the refugees cannot return to their former homes, which for the most part have been demolished and looted or burned down.

I at once call a meeting of the committee, in which my answer to Mr. Fukuda is discussed and a proposal prepared outlining how we envision the restoration of law and order. I have the feeling that the Autonomous Government hasn't the vaguest idea how to tackle these problems, even though they are being advised by the Japanese. All that interests them are our assets. Their claim is: "You received the money from the Chinese government, and so now it belongs to us!"

We are most decidedly of a different opinion and will leave no stone unturned in the defense of our opinion, for which we expect strong support from both the American and German embassies, although as yet we do not know what their viewpoints really are.

*From a Report of Ambassador Trautmann
to the Foreign Ministry*

Hankow, 6 January 1938

Re: Taking of Nanking, Plundering by Japanese troops

The activity of the International Committee, headed by Herr Rabe, an agent of Siemens, has received highest commendation from all sides. Minister Kung³² has asked me to express his particular thanks to Herr Rabe. I would like to reserve the right to request that Herr Rabe be awarded a decoration later.

TRAUTMANN

7 JANUARY

I presented Mr. Fukuda a letter in which the standpoint of the International Committee is clearly laid out. He told me that strict instructions have come from Tokyo stating that order absolutely must be restored in Nanking immediately. At the same time, however, all administrative tasks (including those of Mayor Rabe?) must be handled by the Autonomous Government Committee and not by us Westerners. "We Westerners" certainly have no objection there. We only hope the Autonomous Committee is up to the task.

I once again call Fukuda's attention to the danger to which we are all exposed as long as perhaps a thousand corpses are lying about the city unburied. These corpses have been partially eaten by dogs. At the same time, however, dog meat is being sold by the Chinese in the streets. For 26 days now, I have been asking for permission to have these bodies buried, but always to no avail. Fukuda promised to petition the military yet again to give the Red Swastika Society permission to bury the corpses.

During my absence this morning, at about 10 o'clock, a Japanese soldier broke into my servants' quarters. The women and girls ran screaming to my rooms, were pursued up to the attic by the soldier, when a Japanese officer and interpreter who happened to call upon me found them and ordered him out. The incident is a good measure of what sort of safety is to be found in European houses at present, 26 days after Nanking was taken.

Mr. Riggs brings me the following report from his inspection tour today: A woman is wandering the streets with glazed eyes. She is taken to the hospital, where they learn she is the sole survivor of a family of eighteen. Her 17 relatives have been shot and bayoneted. She lived near the South Gate. Another woman from the same area, who has been living in our camp along with her brother, lost her parents and three children, all of them shot by the Japanese. With what little she had left, she bought a coffin so she could at least bury her father. Hearing news of this, Japanese soldiers ripped the lid from the coffin and dumped the body onto the street. Chinese don't need to be buried, was their explanation.

8 JANUARY

Mr. Fukui brings me news that Dr. Rosen, Hürter, and Scharffenberg will be arriving tomorrow with two gentlemen from the British embassy. Dr.



Corpses left unburied were mauled and eaten by dogs.



The Japanese slaughtered children as indiscriminately as adults.

Rosen's and Hürter's houses are in good shape, as is the German embassy. All that was stolen at Dr. Rosen's were his automobile, a bicycle, and various bottles of liquor. I don't know how things look at the Englishmen's homes. Scharffenberg's house, which lies outside the Zone, has been badly looted. Scharffenberg will have to live at Hürter's. The unpleasant part is that neither of these houses has water or electricity. I wrote Fukui another letter to that effect. I've heard that the gentlemen from the American embassy are also without water or light. They're all freezing, sitting around a large fireplace at the embassy. It's beyond me why they don't simply demand that the Japanese provide water and power.

I've already received Fukui's assurance that the Japanese embassy will allow new automobiles to be brought from Japan for the gentlemen at our embassy, and presumably at other embassies as well, to replace the cars that were stolen.

The rumor has spread among the Chinese again today that Chinese soldiers are about to retake the city. In fact, the claim is that Chinese soldiers have already been spotted inside the city. The first result of this was that all the many little Japanese flags decorating the huts and houses inside the Zone vanished; even the Japanese armbands that all Chinese wear disappeared, and as Mills has just told me, a sizable group of refugees has come up with the idea of attacking the Japanese embassy.

The least insurrection on the part of any Chinese will be punished by death. We're happy that thus far our Zone has remained perfectly quiet and can only hope that we are spared such tragic events.

L A T E R

In a Japanese newspaper lent me by Dr. Bates, I found the following article:

The Tokyo Nichi Nichi of 17 December 1937

Returning Normalcy.

Chinese Merchants Prepare for Business:

Nanking, Dec. 15. With the city of Nanking having been cleared of the Chinese looters, an early return to normalcy is expected as the Chinese merchants, now back from the refugee zone, are busy preparing for re-opening their shops. Peace and order in the city is maintained by the Japanese Gendarmerie authorities, who posted guards at the important

Chinese government structures including the Executive and Legislative Yuans, the Finance Ministry, the Central Military Academy, and the Central Aviation School.

9 JANUARY

10 a.m.: discussion with Wang ("Jimmy"), a member of the Autonomous Government Committee, who tells us that a few days ago the Japanese were planning to close down our committee by force. But then they thought better of it. We're not allowed to sell any more rice to the refugees, however. We have no objection to that, if the Autonomous Government wants to take over the sale itself.

I visit the houses of Dr. Rosen and Hürter, and the German embassy, and find everything in order, but no electricity or water.

Kröger and Hatz arrive at our Zone headquarters at 11 o'clock and report that there's been a "small" execution that they were forced to witness. A Japanese officer and two soldiers drove a Chinese civilian out into one of the ponds on Shansi Road. When the man was standing hip-deep in the water, one of the soldiers made himself comfortable behind a nearby sand-bag barricade and kept firing until his victim sank into the pond.

Dr. Rosen, Hürter, and Scharffenberg have arrived on the English gun-boat *Cricket*, which also brought three officials of the British embassy, Consul Prideaux-Brune, Colonel Lovat-Fraser, and Mr. Walser, an air-force attaché, who, however, was not permitted to land, since the Japanese alleged that they had not been informed of his arrival.

Kröger, Hatz, and I went to the German embassy at 2 o'clock this afternoon and at about 3 the three German officials arrived, accompanied by Mr. Tanaka and Mr. Fukuda of the Japanese embassy, and we welcomed them with a bottle of champagne that Kröger had "commandeered" somewhere. Dr. Rosen was given a splendid Buick on loan from the Japanese to replace his stolen car, as well as a Ford for official use by the German embassy. Rosen swears that he will never give the two vehicles back. We join Scharffenberg on a visit to his house, which is in an indescribable state of disorder from having been looted. Among the many things that were dear to him, *Schalauje*³³ misses his top hat and 40 neckties. As soon as we get to take a vacation in Japan again, we'll keep an eye open to see if we can't catch someone wearing said items. The "shah" is quite cool and collected, by the way. I would have thought he'd fly into a rage, but he maintained the splendid composure acquired from 37 years in China!

This evening at 8 o'clock I had the three gentlemen from the German embassy, along with Kröger, for dinner and some of the wine Kröger rescued from Scharffenberg's, and was told stories of what had happened to the passengers aboard the Jardines *Hulk*, and the fates of the *Bee* and *Panay*.³⁴

Hürter read us a report that Rosen had sent to the Foreign Ministry in Berlin. Dr. Rosen says that we 22 foreigners who remained behind here in Nanking have behaved as bravely as the first Christians in Rome who were devoured by lions in the arena; but that these lions simply didn't like us and preferred Chinese flesh. When asked about his view of the Japanese, Rosen replied with a Turkish proverb—he was once part of the legation in Constantinople:³⁵ "As long as you're on the bridge with the billy goat, you have to say 'uncle!'"

As we were about to set down to dinner at 8, one of the buildings nearby burst into flames. The arrival of the diplomats does not seem to have stopped the Japanese soldiers from carrying out their campaign of arson!

10 JANUARY

Rosen brought me letters, from Mutti in Shanghai, from Gretel and Otto in Munich. And I also got a lovely book, "The Story of Tilman's Sons," two cervelat sausages, two packages of rye wafers, insulin, and two pounds of butter. With it all lying so prettily there around me, I felt like a soldier with his gifts from home.

9 A. M.

Kröger returns from a visit by Major Ishida with news that Japanese don't want to sell us the rice and flour they promised. They'll supply only the Autonomous Government Committee. In compliance with Japanese orders, we stopped selling rice this morning, to the great disappointment of the Chinese refugees, for whom the Autonomous Government Committee has thus far not set up a single outlet. The situation is getting critical.

Dr. Rosen visits us at our committee headquarters. The Japanese have asked him, just as they have asked me, to be somewhat cautious in his reports. He says he told them: I shall report that you have cut off our water and power.

4:00 P.M.

The Autonomous Government Committee has opened an outlet for rice inside the Zone, not far from our headquarters. So for now at least, the worst of the crisis is taken care of. Reverend Mills accompanies me on a visit to the American embassy to introduce me to Mr. Allison, who has promised to continue our work in regard to the protests that we have submitted daily to the Japanese embassy about the endless stream of crimes committed by the Japanese soldiery.

FROM THE FAMILY DIARY

I hear from Hürter that an argument broke out on board the *Kutwo* between P. and v. S. as a result of which P. challenged v. S. to a duel (pistols—30 paces). Since duels are illegal in Hong Kong, where they were headed, the duel is to take place in Germany. P. and v. S. are now each on board separate ships heading for home. All commentary superfluous! Here we are in peril of our own lives, trying to save human lives, and our fellow countrymen are playing games with theirs!

*Report from the Nanking Office of the German Embassy
(Rosen) to the Foreign Ministry*

15 January 1938

On 9 January, after an interruption of one month, the Nanking office was reopened upon our arrival here after a two-day journey without incident aboard the British gunboat *Cricket*.

According to reports of my German and American informants, when it became known that foreigner representatives were intent on returning to Nanking, feverish operations were begun to remove the corpses lying about the streets—in some places “like herrings”—of civilians, including women and children, slain in a campaign of pointless mass murder.

In a reign of terror lasting several weeks, including massive looting, the Japanese have turned the business section of the city, that is the area along Taiping Street and the entire section south of so-called Potsdamer Platz, into a heap of rubble, in the midst of which a few buildings whose exteriors appear somewhat less damaged are still standing. This arson,

organized by the Japanese military, is still going on to this day—a good month after the Japanese occupied the city—as is the abduction and rape of women and girls. In this respect, the Japanese army has erected a monument to its own shameful conduct.

Just within the so-called Safety Zone, which thanks to the Rabe committee has essentially been saved from destruction, there have been hundreds of cases of bestial rape, all incontrovertibly documented by Germans, Americans, and their Chinese coworkers. The file of letters that the committee has sent to the Japanese authorities contains a plethora of truly shocking material. As soon as time allows, I shall forward copies, with reference to this report. I would, however, like to note at this point that foreign nationals, and above all Herr Rabe and Herr Kröger, both functionaries of the NSDAP, as well as Herr Sperling, have caught Japanese soldiers in flagranti at such violations and have risked their own lives in scaring them away from their victims.

In many cases, members of Chinese families who attempted to resist these fiends were themselves killed or wounded. Even within the offices of the German embassy, the employee Chao was ordered at gunpoint to hand over any women present on the property. Having previously lived in Dairen, Chao can speak a little Japanese and was able to explain to the Japanese that this was the German embassy and there were no women present. The threats continued even after Chao had explained to them that this was the German embassy.

At the American Mission Hospital women are constantly being admitted, the most recent case occurring only yesterday, who have suffered grave bodily harm from rape committed by packs of men, with the subsequent infliction of bayonet and other wounds. One woman had her throat slit half-open, a wound so severe that Dr. Wilson himself is amazed that she is still alive. A pregnant woman was bayoneted in the belly, killing the unborn child. Many abused girls still in their childhood have likewise been admitted to the hospital, one of whom was violated 20 times in succession.

On 12 January, my English colleague, Consul Prideaux-Brune, the English military attaché Lovat-Fraser, and the English air-force attaché Commander Walser visited the house of Mr. Parsons of the British-American Tobacco Company and discovered there the body of a Chinese woman into whose vagina an entire golf club had been forced. There are documented cases in which accomplices have forced the husbands and fathers of victims to witness the violation of their domestic honor. In several instances, officers are known to be accessories, as was the case when Reverend Magee attempted to protect a group of Chinese Christians in the house of an absent German military advisor.

There is no evidence that any action has been taken—or if so, of what sort—by higher authorities against individual perpetrators, since the Japanese are silent about these matters and refuse to understand that a ruthless cauterizing of these offenses would accomplish more than all attempts to cover them up.

It is considered a self-evident matter of honor for the Japanese army to murder without further ado (indeed, there are thousands of such cases) every enemy soldier no longer actively engaged in combat, as well as any man judged to be such by some noncommissioned officer, whose decision cannot be appealed.

Given such a collapse of military discipline and order, it should therefore come as no surprise that no respect is shown the German flag. Thus various German buildings have been deliberately torched, others looted terribly, and almost all of them subjected to more or less minor theft. Given the cult status that the Japanese accord pictures of their emperor, it is perhaps especially remarkable that the looters did not shy from taking pictures of the Führer and Field Marshal General von Hindenburg.

I have left no doubt in the minds of the Japanese that we demand full restitution for all such losses, since there was no military necessity whatever for them and indeed some of them are the deliberate result of Japanese actions taken well after the occupation of the city, and likewise that I regard the term "consolation money" (*solatium*) favored by the Japanese as perhaps one that may sound better to them, but is in no way acceptable as an expression of partial payment.

ROSEN

11 JANUARY

I visit the British embassy, where I meet with Mr. Prideaux-Brune, Colonel Lovat-Fraser, Dr. Rosen, Mr. Allison, and Hürter. At our request, the gentlemen from all three embassies declare themselves willing to accept our daily reports listing the offenses of Japanese soldiers and to make use of them by forwarding them both to the Japanese embassy and their own governments. That takes a great weight off our committee. If from now on it's the embassies who are registering the protest, order will soon be restored.

The Japanese have cut off our rice supply today. At noon the transport of rice, which we had undertaken on behalf of the Autonomous Government Committee, was halted.

This afternoon, while I was still at the office, the Japanese police arrived to search our headquarters. They were allegedly looking for a bundle of old clothes that a refugee had stolen. The bundle had been taken away



This woman's head was half severed from her body by a sword blow. Another victim's skull was laid open by a bayonet.



Japanese soldiers waiting to take their turns in a makeshift brothel



from him several days ago and stored at our headquarters in Director Fitch's office. Every room in the building was unlocked this afternoon except Mr. Fitch's, which roused Japanese suspicion. Before they could break down the door, Kröger arrived, sent for a key, and promptly handed over the bundle.

The behavior of the Japanese police was truly mysterious. If they had peaceably asked to be allowed in, the bundle would have been handed over to them just as promptly. There was really no need to surround the entire grounds. Evidently they want to turn this matter I've just described into some kind of "incident," since the clothes were stolen from a Chinese refugee. And now I'll have to contact the embassy to find out precisely how I am to react to this police raid.

12 JANUARY

A month ago today Nanking fell into the hands of the Japanese. The body of that Chinese soldier shot while tied to a bamboo sofa is still lying out in the street not 50 yards from my house.

I visited the German, American, and English embassies and discussed the police search of our headquarters yesterday with Dr. Rosen, Mr. Allison, and Mr. Prideaux-Brune. All are agreed that the Japanese police are not permitted forcibly to enter a building belonging to a European without having first notified the embassy involved or having someone from that embassy with them.

In the meantime, all sales of rice have stopped. Not only can we not bring rice into the Zone, we are forbidden to bring coal in as well. The Japanese have had wall posters put up in the Zone, however, demanding that residents of the Zone return to their homes. The fact that their homes have been burned down or looted is not even considered.

I have come up with a plan for making friends with the Japanese. I shall try to dissolve the Zone Committee and found an International Relief Committee, on which the Japanese will also be represented.

Report from the Nanking Office of the German Embassy (Rosen) to the Foreign Ministry

Upon our entry in Nanking on 9 January, we were greeted by members of the Japanese embassy, by the captain of the gunboat, and by a cavalry Major Hungo from the staff of the garrison commandant. In his wel-

coming speech, which was translated for us, the latter used the unfortunate and less than tactful term "obedience" in describing our relationship to the occupying power. The English consul did not, of course, mention this tactlessness in his response, but assured the Japanese of our "cooperation." Then we were brought to the embassy by car, where our countrymen who had remained behind were waiting for us, Herr Rabe at their head. As I was getting into the car, Major Hungo said goodbye to me in German, and also questioned me as to why we had arrived together with the English. I ignored this new bit of tactlessness with a simple "Why not?"

On 13 January, while driving with Herr Kröger beyond the Chung Shan Gate in the area around the Sun Yat-sen mausoleum, we twice encountered officials from the Japanese embassy, accompanied by Major Hungo and other officers. They stopped me and claimed I had broken my word, inasmuch as I had sworn obedience to the Japanese army! Also, I had been told that I was not to drive outside the city under any circumstances.

In my response to these gentlemen, I pointed out that as a German official I could swear obedience to no other government than my own, and that indeed I had never done so. I added that despite repeated requests for a pass, I had received none and therefore considered myself fully justified in relying upon the flag of the Reich when driving my car outside the city, as I had done on previous occasions without incident. Major Hungo then expressed his amazement that I was "disobedient" in light of German-Japanese friendship based on the Anti-Comintern Pact. At the same time Mr. Hungo and the others pointed photographic equipment at me. Fukuda, the attaché, pulled out pen and paper and composed a confession of guilt that I was then supposed to sign!

I crossed out the words and noted briefly below that, as before, I am quite willing to offer the Japanese authorities my cooperation, but nothing else, and most certainly not my subordination. I defended my right to my own likeness by stating that I did not yet feel quite ready to be included in a book of mug shots. And in particular I objected to such an overextended application of the Anti-Comintern Pact. If anyone here had the right to question German-Japanese friendship, then surely it was we Germans, given the systematic bombardment of German officials on neutral ships and, above all, the Japanese military's repeated and flagrant failure to respect the German flag here in Nanking.

Since this incident, I have twice been visited by Consul General Okazaki, General Matsui's diplomatic advisor, and, after I had reported to him the previous tactlessness of Mr. Hungo, he expressed his regret over these incidents and others about which I also protested (e.g., the confiscation of a car from the grounds of the Italian embassy only three

days before). On that occasion I told Mr. Okazaki that I would be glad to have an opportunity at some point to speak to him about fundamental questions regarding the status of embassy officials in Nanking, adding that I could be content with treatment no worse than that shown to the members of the Japanese embassy in Berlin.

My only previous experience with this method of first constructing one-sided declarations of subservience and then trying to extort confessions of guilt was its use by the Japanese military mission in northern China; but it is in no way applicable for diplomatic representatives of another normal power, let alone against one on friendly terms with Japan.

During this conversation with Mr. Okazaki, which despite the ticklish subject matter took place in a calm and businesslike atmosphere, I established more precise agreements about our future cooperation. I can therefore only hope that with these unpleasant incidents behind us, the performance of my duties and indeed my personal presence will not be regarded by the military, as it thus far has been, as a disagreeable disturbance and an unwelcome surveillance of current conditions here.

There is no objective basis for restrictions on our freedom of movement, nor for foreigners' currently being prohibited from leaving Nanking itself, but rather these have their basis in the personality of Mr. Hungo, as well as in a desire to cover up atrocities. Nanking is a military base, pure and simple, a conclusion one can draw from the fact that the Japanese have brought along their geishas, whom they apparently view as essential.

The local population is only too glad to speak a candid word with Germans and bewail the fate of family members who have been dragged off. Knowing as I do, on the basis of my experience with the Japanese military in Manchuria, that all-too-easy compliance is regarded as a weakness, I would respectfully ask the Foreign Ministry energetically to support my endeavors.

ROSEN

*From a Private Letter of Chancellor Scharffenberg
to Legation Councilor Lautenschlager in Hankow*³⁶

... Upon our arrival and then later again as well over dinner at the Japanese embassy, Major Hungo, the son of a field marshal, a polished and sedate cavalry officer, asked him [Rosen] why we had arrived together with the English, and he took the question to be tactless, without ever inquiring why it was asked. I assume that Hungo had something special in mind for us Germans.

It is not Hungo who is tactless, but rather H. R. [Herr Rosen], who in

every meeting with the Japanese keeps harping, usually in an offensive tone, on the same old things: the bombardment of Nanking, the artillery shelling of the *Whangpu*, the dive bombings on 12 December, etc.

The second confrontation at the Sun Yat-sen mausoleum could have been avoided if he had listened to the advice of first engineer Ch. Kröger and driven back into the city after receiving his first warning from Japanese officials and Hungo at the Ming graves. Like a spoiled child, however, he angrily refused to do so and instead obstinately insisted that they drive to the golf course. Kröger gave in, unfortunately, although he knew that over dinner Hungo had politely but clearly stated that we were not allowed to leave the city without special permission.

And so a nasty encounter resulted, in which H. R., already furious because of the first warning, carried on like a raving maniac, recited his whole long list of sins committed by the Japanese army, navy, and air force, and attempted to assert his total freedom of movement, in particular his right to drive about without any gendarme along, to visit Lotus Lake, or to leave the city if he liked. Kröger was shocked.