

Doc. No. 4039

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Ex # 329

Item No. 4.

German Embassy

Hankow, 28 Jan. 1938

No. 58
File 2722/1507/38
1 Enclosure
3 Copies

Foreign Office
Pol. VIII 639
In: 31 March 1938
2 Encl. 3 Copies

Content: Condition in Nanking after the capture by the Japanese.

Copy submitted to the Foreign Office
in Berlin.

The Embassy in Tokyo has received a copy of this report.

(signed) TRAUTMANN

/146185/

Appendix to Report No. 58 from the Embassy in Hankow of 28 January 1938.

--- File 2722/1507/38 ---

German Consulate General
Shanghai
N. 19 - File Po. 4L/38
1 Enclosure

Shanghai, 19 January 1938

Confidential

Copy submitted to the German Embassy
in Hankow.

(signed) M. FISHER

/146186/

Copy

John H. D. Rabe

Nanking, 14 January 1938
J. No. 979/Vo. 12

Shanghai directorate

Re: Letter from Mr. W. Maier of 3 January 1938.

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of your above communication which I obtained today through the mediation of the German Embassy. Your information of that time, that I should travel to Hankow, came too late. At the /time of/ arrival of your telegram the Germans were already on their way to Hankow with the "Kutwo". I furthermore felt that it was my duty not to forsake in an emergency our Chinese employees, Mr. Han and family, our fitters, etc., who had all fled to me in the Hong. As I reported to you at that time on your telegraphic inquiry, I took over the chairmanship of the International Committee for the Establishment of a Refugee Zone which was set up here, which became the last place of refuge for 200,000 Chinese non-combatants. The organization of this zone was not very easy, especially since we were unable to get a complete recognition of the zone from the Japanese, as high military personages (Chinese) with their staff continued to live in the zone till the last minute, i. e., until their flight from Nanking. Our real hardship, however, began only after the bombardment, i. e., after the capture of the city by the Japanese. The Japanese military authorities apparently lost the authority over their troops, who for weeks plundered the city after its capture, violated about 20,000 women and girls, slayed thousands of innocent civilians (among them 43 workers of the power plant) in a brutal manner (mass murder by machine gun fire was among the humanitarian methods of execution) and did not shy away from also entering into foreign homes. Of 60 German homes, about 40 were more or less robbed and four were completely burned down. Approximately one third of the city has been destroyed through fire by the Japanese. Cases of arson still occur. There is no store in the city which was not broken in or plundered. Corpses of shot and murdered people still lie around in the city, whose burial was not permitted to us. (We do not know why.) The corpse of a Chinese soldier, shackled to a bamboo bed lies about 50 meters from my house since December 13th. Various ponds in the zone contain up to fifty corpses of Chinese who had been shot, which we are not allowed to bury.

Thus far our Committee has been able to feed the 200,000 inhabitants of the city who have crowded into our zone, by setting up soup kitchens, establishing distributions stations for rice and flour, etc. An order from the Japanese has now come down to close our rice sale points, since the newly established autonomous government's committee wants to take over the care of the refugee camp and that the refugees will be forced to leave the zone and return to their old habitats. Since, as already mentioned, only a few houses are unscathed outside of the zone, the refugees do not know where to /go/, aside from the fact they are scared of the Japanese soldiers, who still at times roam the city murdering and burning. Our

Committee is now attempting to reach an understanding with the Japanese and with the new government which has been installed by them, in order to assure, at least, the feeding of the refugees. In addition we naturally have no objection if the Japanese, that is to say the new government, take over the work of our Committee, and the sooner the better! As soon as order is reestablished in the city and the permission to leave Nanking is given by the authorities, I will come there. All requests concerning this /matter/ have been refused until now.

Therewith, belatedly, request permission to stay here until the dissolution of the Zone Committee, since the weal and woe of many people actually depends upon /the fact/ that the few Europeans remain here. In my house and garden alone, 600 refugees of the poorest class have found a lodging since the night of December 12th, in order not to be molested or killed by the unruly Japanese military rabble. Most of the people live in straw huts in the garden and live on the daily rice ration which is given to them. Altogether our Committee supervises 25 refugee camps with about 70,000 refugees, of which 50,000 have to be fed by us, as they are entirely without means. You can hardly imagine the circumstances existing here. The bombardment extending for months and the final cannonading, which preceded the capture of the city, were compared to the distress which the Japanese Army created for us after the capture of Nanking. It is a riddle to all of us that we have gotten away safely and happily until now.

I request that /you/ do not publish this letter, since such a /thing/ could possibly have catastrophic consequences for our Committee.

With German greetings,

(signed) John Rabe

/146187-89/

Pol. VIII

Item No. 5

31 March 1938

German Embassy

Hankow, 16 February 1938

No. 113

File No. 2718/1955/38

I Enclosure

Strictly Confidential

3 Copies

Contents: Happenings in Nanking from 8 December 1937 to 13 January 1938.

Herewith I have the honor to present the copy of a secret report of a German eye witness concerning the happenings in Nanking during the period from 8 December 1937 to 13 January 1938 with the request to treat it as strictly confidential.

The secret report has been put at my disposal by General von FALKENHAUSEN.

(Signed) TRAUTMANN

To the Foreign Office
Berlin.

/146190/

Appendix to report No. 113 of the Embassy in Hankow of 10 February 1938.
-- File No. 2718/1955/38 --

Secret.

Report of a German eye witness concerning the happenings in Nanking from 8 December 1937 to 13 January 1938.

On 8 December 1937 the rest of the Europeans left the city of Nanking and went to the Jardines Hulk. Only a total of 22 Europeans remained in the city and, as the International Committee for Nanking took over the safety zone, prepared in the middle of November. Even though this safety zone was not officially recognized by the Japanese, it had still been respected in general until the capture of the city by the Japanese, only a few artillery shells fell into the safety zone and the losses during the fights were very small. On 8 December the Japanese had already reached CHILIMEN and the thunder of the cannons could be distinctly heard in the city. The 9th of December brought extraordinarily heavy airplane attacks during the whole day, but the attacks were aimed mainly against the Chinese positions outside the city, the gates and the troop concentrations in the southern part of the city.

On 10 December 1937 the Japanese made further progress and advanced directly up to city wall. M. G. and infantry shells exploded on the Chung

Shan Tung Lou and everywhere heavy destruction by aircraft bombs were to be seen. On the evening of the 10th the Purple Hill burned and on the morning of the 11th the Japanese had already set up some artillery on the Purple Hill and were firing on the city and the Chinese position from there. Sunday, 12th December, started very quietly. Japanese artillery no longer fired into the city, only few planes were to be seen. The Chinese anti-aircraft guns still shot as soon as a Japanese plane appeared low over the city. Toward noon the fight became again more vivid. The Japanese concentrated their artillery fire on the gates and the spots planned for a break through. During the whole afternoon Pukow was heavily bombed by Japanese planes to make a retreat impossible for the Chinese troops. During the bombardment /dabei/ nearly all English ships and also the Hulk were heavily damaged. Armed Japanese motorboats also appeared, but they kept mainly in the middle of the river.

In the afternoon the retreat of the Chinese troops slowly began /und zwar/ with the retreat of troops in the south of the city. The order for retreat had set the time for the begin of the retreat at 8 o'clock in the evening. Actually, the retreat started much earlier. By 5 o'clock in the afternoon the retreat took place in orderly groups and very quietly. After 5 o'clock in the afternoon the tempo became faster and slowly the order dissolved, till, towards midnight, the retreat deteriorated into regular rout. The retreat was made extremely difficult by the barricading of the Chang Men (the main gate for HSIKUAN). Only one wing of the gate was opened and even that was narrowed by a sand barricade so that trucks were just barely able to get through. Furthermore, a barricade was erected near the Railway Ministry which was barring half of the street side and which had already on 11 December lead to great interruptions of the traffic. In the afternoon hours of the 12 December Japanese planes shifted the field of their main activity already to the river. In the evening the Communications' Ministry started burning and illuminated the way of retreat, which, in the meantime, was nearly completely blocked.

Toward morning of 13 December the retreat slowed down, the Hsiakwan gate was closed and barricaded. Whatever still remained in the city was encompassed and there were still many who gathered together, probably the best ones, who had remained against the enemy to the last. Good troops with good equipment and still good discipline moved in individual groups towards the west into the mountains or searched for some other way out, but ready to fight. Partly these groups had to fight their way through Japanese groups three times before they could escape the encirclement. Others, however, throw away their arms, put on civilian clothes and hurried towards the safety zone.

In some parts the fight flared up once more, but this Chinese opposition was quickly broken down by the Japanese who made plentiful use of tanks. Towards noon of 13 December, it turned absolutely quiet in the city. The Chinese civilian population hid in the houses and shelters and waited for the Japanese who did not come. In the afternoon the Japanese brought their troops over to Pukow in order to continue the pursuit of the Chinese. Later it was found out that these troops detachments had been 24 hours late and that the Japanese had had the

intention of crossing over to Pukow on the evening of 12 December. The Japanese warships also did not arrive until in the afternoon of 13 December and directed their fire mainly against the railways and the roads of retreat. Late in the afternoon of 13 December the informant saw the first Japanese in the city. At first the Japanese behaved very correctly, and even to a certain degree obligingly. The International Committee at once took up connections with the Japanese and again tried to obtain recognition of the safety zone. It is true that this recognition was refused, but the Japanese troops which now advanced in a broad front as high as the Potsdamer Platz maintained a neutral attitude. In the afternoon of 13 December the Committee also took over the Waichiaopu, which was fitted out as a hospital. The conditions which reigned there were hopeless. The Chinese wounded had been left without care for two to three days, the entire nursing staff had fled; on the contrary all the rooms were full of weapons and ammunition, which were at once carried away by the Committee in order not to give the Japanese a pretext for actions against the wounded. The Chinese Red Cross, which was organized in the safety zone, was at once ready for cooperation and by evening it had been possible to remove most of the dirt and the dead from the hospital so that Japanese patrols, which searched the hospital in the night, had no reason to intervene.

On 14 December a complete change in the attitude of the Japanese troops took place. The Committee was prohibited from further aiding the Chinese wounded in the Waichiaopu hospital and from entering it. On 14 December the Japanese troops which were insufficiently provided due to the fast advance were let loose on the city and acted in a manner which is just indescribable for regular troops. They took all seizable stores of foodstuffs from the refugees, the woollen sleeping blankets, the clothes, the watches -- in short, everything which seemed worth taking with them. Not only resistance, but a dilatory or slow handing over was immediately answered by the bayonet and many, just because they did not comprehend the language, etc., became victims of this circumstance. Again and again this brutal military mob broke into the refugee zone and into the crowded houses, searching for articles which their predecessor had perhaps scorned to take with them. There was and still is no respect for foreign flags and when we sought to defend our servants or our property by an energetic appearance, we had to subject ourselves to threats and insults from the Japanese soldiers. It was no rare picture that a single Japanese soldier drove four coolies who had to carry his loot. This organized thieving and plundering lasted fourteen days and even today one is still unsafe from some groups, who, on any reason whatsoever go out to "requisition." A few food stores were broken into, and emptied during the retreat of the Chinese troops, and a few fires were also started. However, by far the greater part of the city was undamaged at the time of its capture.

The picture of the city has changed completely under Japanese rule. No day goes by without new cases of arson. It is now the turn of the Taiping Lou, the Chung Shan Tung Lou, Go Fu Lou, KioKiang Lou. The entire southern part of the city and Fudse Minv are completely plundered and burned down. Expressed in percentages, one could say that 30 to 40 per cent of the city has been burned down. The many discarded uniforms gave the Japanese the welcome occasion for the contention that many Chinese soldiers are staying in the refugee zone. Again and again they combed through the refugee camps but did not really give themselves the trouble of looking for the supposed soldiers, instead at first carried off at random all youths, without option and then all those who for some reason had come to their attention. Although no shot was ever fired on the Japanese by the Chinese in the city, the Japanese shot dead at least 5,000 men, mostly at the river, so that one could forgo the burial. Among the people who were shot were harmless workers of the city administration, electrical undertaking, and the water works. Until 26 December the corpses of 30 chained and shot coolies lay on the streets at the Communications Ministry. About 50 corpses lie in a pond not far from the Shansi Lou, in a temple/lia/ 20, and on 13 January 1938 20 corpses were still lying around at the end of the Kiangsue Lou.

Another sad chapter is the maltreatment and violating of many girls and women. Unnecessary barbarities and mutilations, even on small children, are not uncommon.

All Europeans were prohibited from leaving the city and activity in the city was allowed only with a Japanese police escort. However, a gentleman was able to ride to Tai Chia Shan on 28 December in order to buy foodstuffs. He had believed until now that the tribunal of the Japanese Army extends only to Nanking, the capital and center of the anti-Japanese movement, but he now found out that the ravaging was even worse on the flatlands. The Chinese Army had partly set fire to the villages and some farmsteads for military reasons on its retreat but the Japanese had systematically continued these incendiary fires. Many dead water buffalo, horses, mules lie on the fields and along side the highway. Maltreatment, violations, and shootings are everyday occurrences.

The population mostly fled into the hills and is hiding there. During a one-hour trip by automobile, the gentleman did not see any living human being, not even in the large villages. At the Thousand-Buddha Mountain a fugitives' camp of about 10,000 people has been formed. But here too the Japanese soldiers raged like savages. According to reports from Chinese the country from Shanghai to Wuhu is supposed to be in a similar condition. It cannot be imagined how the farmers are going to cultivate their fields this spring without tools, without water buffaloes which are vital for the rice cultivation, and without the security which is a prerequisite for the daily work in the fields, so that it has to be seriously considered that a famine will break out in the territory occupied by the Japanese.

On 1 January 1938 the provisional self-government was set up and officially proclaimed. On the old drum tower the five colored flag was hoisted and at the same time the Russian embassy went up in flames. The self-government was only established under great difficulties and even today it is not yet capable of governing. The Chinese have no confidence whatsoever and the Japanese on one hand consent to give support and again refuse it on the other hand. The well educated Chinese remain reserved and only to promote some cooperation did the Red Cross Society declare itself willing to cooperate.

The water supply of Nanking failed on 9 December and was completely restored by the Japanese on 7 January. The power city plant worked incessantly till the night of 12 December. The supply of light was also restored by the Japanese on 7 January. Both plants were as good as undamaged and it does not speak for the Japanese organization that it took so long till light and water supply were again working.

The food situation of the city is most difficult and a deterioration is to be feared rather than ~~an~~ improvement. The population is living off its reserves. Nobody has incomes and for a long time there is no prospect of productive activity.

On 12 December it was once more possible to bring 8,000 sacks of rice and 1,000 sacks of flour into the safety zone. All of this, however, has been almost consumed by now. In and around the town is about 100,000 sacks of rice and 40,000 sacks of flour. Everything is, however, confiscated by the Japanese army. In spite of repeated negotiations and promises which were often given no supplies were brought in so that it appears as if one would let things go as far as a famine in order to make the population still more submissive and especially to have a pretext to breakup the safety zone. Supply from Shanghai is dependent on the graciousness of the Japanese, who, however, up to 13 January have given no permission although food stuffs have been made ready in Shanghai. Today the safety zone is still hiding by far the greater part of Nanking's population within its borders.

The fateful days of Nanking have clearly shown two facts: (1) the failure of the control of the defense of the fort of Nanking; (2) the lack of discipline, atrocities, and criminal acts not of an individual but of an entire Army, namely the Japanese.

It seems like mockery, to see this bestial machinery appear as champion of Anti-communism and outwardly stand up loudly for the renovation and liberation of China, whereas only naked communism and the uprise of all evil and inferior elements can flourish in its tracks.

/ 146190-7 /

AFFIDAVIT

I hereby truthfully state the following facts of enemy atrocities which I personally witnessed:

The Japanese troops occupied Nan Hsiang, Kiangsu Province on October 10, 1937. They plundered and killed LI Chin Min, a merchant, and machine-gunned more than 200 other merchants to death.

The above statement contains facts free from falsehood. If the enemy atrocities stated above be eventually brought to trial in a court, I am willing to appear either as an accuser or as a witness and to undergo punishment for any malicious accusation or false testimony.

NAME: CHEN Ya Ching
SEAL: (yes)
SEX: male
AGE: 32
NATIVE PLACE: Ching Men District, Fupoh
OCCUPATION: wounded soldier
ADDRESS: Sha Pin Peh, Chungking

Before making the statement, the above named was told the meaning of signing an affidavit, and the punishment for malicious accusation and false testimony. After the statement was made, it was shown and read to him, and was acknowledged by him as correct.

INVESTIGATOR'S NAME: WU Chien Hsuan
SEAL: (yes)
SEX: male
AGE: 40
NATIVE PLACE: Hunan
OFFICIAL POSITION: Chief of the Police Station at Chung Erh Road, Chungking

DATE: 20 December 1944

Translated from Chinese by
Chinese Division, IPS