

DR. WELLINGTON KOO'S BROADCAST

The following is the text of tonight's postscript to be given in the Home News at 9.15 by Dr. V.K. Wellington Koo, Chinese Ambassador in London:-

The dramatic existence of contemporary China has two aspects. One is her epic resistance against a mighty invader which has lasted nearly five years and evoked the admiration of the world. The other aspect is presented by her ceaseless effort in building up a modern State. Much has been said of her valiant struggle against an army equipped with the most powerful arms and sustained by a well developed war industry: but little has been told of her achievements in the various constructive spheres at the same time. It is the progress in her work of national reconstruction behind the fighting front which I wish to deal with tonight.

After the Chinese Government moved to Chungking as the war-time capital of China, an extensive programme of developing communications in Western China was at once put into execution. Within two years over 6,000 post offices were added, and 30,000 miles of telegraph lines were established. The enemy took away 20,000 miles of long-distance telephone lines, but Chinese engineers set to work at once with the result that today the facilities for telephone communication in Free China surpass the total mileage which existed in the whole country before the invasion.

New railways are being rapidly constructed and over 700 miles have already been opened to traffic. The experience of railway building in the throes of war has been at times heart-breaking. When the Japanese occupied North Indo-China, we were obliged to abandon the Nanning line which was to connect with the French railway from Haiphong, and which had just been completed. More recently again, the Yunnan-Burma Railway, in which great hopes were placed, had also to be suspended as a result of the war in Burma. But these misfortunes have not discouraged the Chinese people from redoubling their efforts to develop the means of transportation, and railway building continues in other parts of Free China.

Over 3,000 miles of motor roads have been completed and another 3,000 under construction. To supplement the facilities of road transportation, rivers and canals have been dredged and made navigable. New routes have been opened up for steamboats. Stream-lined junks have been constructed to increase water transport.

Nor is the limitless space of the sky overlooked in trying to solve the problem of communications. Numerous radio stations have been installed to link together distant cities and towns, and big air transports are employed to carry passengers and goods from place to place.

Even the time-honoured stage coach, so vividly described by Marco Polo has been revived and improved. Besides utilizing mechanical power and natural forces, human and animal energy has equally been pressed into service to help meet the ever-growing need of military and civilian transportation. Thus, the wheelbarrow, the bamboo pole, the pony of Mongolia, the camel of Kansu, the yak of Sikang and the mule of Yunnan are all playing their part as carrying agencies in war-time China.

The progress in industrial development during the past three years has been equally striking. In Western China which knew little of machine industry before the war, woodlands have been levelled and swamps reclaimed to make sites for manufacturing, metallurgical and power plants of all sorts.

Learning from her experience of indiscriminate bombing by the enemy, China has adopted the policy of decentralization in developing the interior. The different kinds of industries are now scattered widely in fifteen main areas with due consideration of easy access to markets and to the sources of supply of fuel, labour and raw materials. The production of electrical power has increased by 25% and the output of coal by over two million tons a year. And flour milling has improved by one million and a half bales. But rapid as the progress is, the new industrial development has only just begun, and it is certain that the tempo will continue to rise in the future.

The inauguration and rapid growth of Chinese industrial co-operatives is greatly helping to minister to the economic needs of the nation at war. For these establishments produce not only the daily requirements of the people but also weapons of war and other articles for the army, such as swords, bayonets, hand grenades, blankets, uniforms, boots, etc.

The success of the new movement will have a far-reaching effect upon the people. It creates for them, especially the sorely tried refugees, an interest in life, opens up an outlook in their future, and makes them conscious and proud of contributing something to the national purpose of resisting invasion and defending their common patrimony. Out of this new movement which is still in its infancy, there may be evolved among the Chinese people an economic democracy which will relieve them of fear from want and spare them the perils and perplexities of present-day rival ideologies.

As regards the development of education, it is noteworthy that, in spite of the ruthless invasion by Japan, the lamp of learning has been kept burning in China. The long and weary trek of thousands of students and the painful migration of scores of colleges and universities from the devastated regions along the coast to the interior provinces of Free China are now perhaps well-known to the outside world. Several groups of students travelled six months and covered 2,000 miles over towering mountains and treacherous waters before they reached the university of their choice which had moved its seat into the heart of Western China. One university originally situated at the mouth of the Yangtze River had to move six times before it was able to settle down in safety near the borders of Thibet.

The Chinese Government on its part has adopted the policy of encouraging students to continue their studies by extending every aid and assistance not only to needy students but also to the hard-pressed colleges and universities. Before the war there were only thirty-three establishments of higher learning in the interior. Today there are 102 in Free China. The aim of this policy is to train up an adequate number of specialists, technicians and administrators of whom there is an acute shortage throughout the country.

But with every three or four universities crowded in one place, the living conditions of teachers and students in the new circumstances must necessarily be hard. Most of them sleep on the floor or in beds made of plain boards, and built in tiers like those of the air-raid shelters in the underground stations of London. But their zeal for teaching or learning is in no way diminished. Besides pursuing their regular college activities, they organise themselves into groups and take up one phase or another of social welfare or war relief <sup>work</sup> in the districts which they live.

In this connection, I would like to mention the splendid work of thirteen Christian universities and colleges in China which, in the face of the most trying circumstances, have been carrying on bravely. The service rendered by these missionary institutions is valuable because their enrolment of students represents no less than 10% of the total number engaged at present in higher studies in China.

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But the biggest stride has been made in the field of mass education. It was realised at the outset of the conflict that to bring about total resistance to the invasion it was necessary to make the whole people of China into a body of intelligent citizens able to understand the meaning and purpose of her struggle. Accordingly, a five-year mass education plan to eliminate illiteracy was adopted in March 1940 and it was immediately carried into effect. This was a bold and ambitious measure as the number of people to be dealt with amounted to 165 million. The advocates of this programme, however, had reason for encouragement because by the end of the first two years of China's resistance over 46 million people had been taught to read. By establishing new schools and training new teachers every year, more rapid progress has since been achieved in educating the masses of China.

This beneficent effort is introduced even into enemy-occupied areas. Through the method of cooperative education by which itinerant teachers go from one home to another, the people in the villages and towns beyond the immediate surveillance of the occupying troops are able to enjoy the same advantage of mass education. Much of the effective work of Chinese guerrillas in the rear of the enemy lines has been done by the country folks who, after receiving such hurried instruction, have eagerly responded to the call for service.

Apart from these reforms and achievements, the life of the people in wartime China has undergone a radical transformation. The millions of refugees from distant provinces have brought with them their culture and ideas, and through their intermingling with the people of their new home in Western China, the barriers of provincialism and sectionalism have broken down and given place to the common consciousness of a united purpose in their joint struggle. The widespread introduction of group singing, the systematic holding of urban exhibitions, country fairs, and travelling theatrical performances have also helped to promote a general sentiment of solidarity and enthusiasm. None of the old-time apathy and stagnation is left, but everywhere one feels an ever-quickening tempo of the national pulse and sees signs of a new dynamic life. It is a China reawakened and rehabilitated. She is fervently devoted to the task of national reconstruction and inflexibly resolved to continue her fight for the cause of freedom and independence. Only in the light of this dual mission can the spirit and life of the present-day China be fully grasped.

All this augurs well not only for her own future but for the general cause of the United Nations. With her tremendous man-power and vast potential resources, China constitutes an important factor in the struggle against aggression. Every new accretion of strength and power on her part is an added asset to the collective might of the democratic front, for she will thus be able to make an even greater contribution to the common task of achieving complete victory and establishing a sound peace.

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