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Madame Chiang, Kai-shek

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Madame Chiang Kai-shek's Address

Wuhan Missionary Prayer Meeting
Hankow, China

6th April 1938

It gives me great pleasure to be here with you this afternoon. Among you are many of my old friends and many whom I am meeting now for the first time. Whether new or old, I bring you all the greetings of the Generalissimo.

Bishop Roots has just now said something which has moved me deeply, not because he thinks that either my husband or I would be able to revolutionize Christianity, but because I see, as he portrays it, a vision of the Chinese Christian Church which can really enrich Christianity all over the world. I wish also to take this opportunity to thank all the well-wishers of China, all of you who have prayed for our country and our people in their distress. In passing I might mention that every month since the beginning of this war the Generalissimo and I have received hundreds of letters from Christians all over the world telling us that they are praying for us. I want to express our appreciation.

I am speaking to you this afternoon personally, and I want to bring a message from the Generalissimo. You may take it to be a personal tribute to your courage, your undaunted valor, and your self-sacrificing spirit in helping our people in this war. You all know what has happened in Shanghai, in Nanking, in Hangchow, in Wuhu and in other places in the fighting area. And you know how missionaries have succored the wounded, have helped our refugees, and have faced the bayonets, cannons and bombs, and the attacks upon women of the Japanese troops on our soil, and they have stood their ground. The Generalissimo and I feel that no words which we could speak could sufficiently express our debt of gratitude to the missionary body all over China who have been a help to the distressed and the best of friends to the hundreds of thousands of refugees. You may remember a few years ago it was quite the fashion to decry missionary efforts. There was even a commission sent from America to investigate mission work because there was a general feeling that missionary efforts had been a failure. There were also people who asked where were the successors of Livingstone, Morrison, and Young Allen. Is the missionary spirit dead? If we are really impartial and look around us at what has happened in the last nine months, I would say their successors are right here. Every one of the missionaries possesses the same valor and the same undaunted spirit that the missionaries of old had. I would go a step further. When we picture old Dr. Morrison in a sampan with his Chinese teacher, working under the heat of the tropic sun on the translation of the Bible into Chinese, while edicts had been issued by the Emperor for his arrest, we think of that as being very heroic. But when we think of what the missionaries have done during the last nine months, I would say that missionaries have not been one whit less heroic.

You have asked me to come to tell you how you can co-operate to help us in this national crisis. My answer is, "Continue your efforts in the same direction in which you have been working." What do I mean by this? One day one of the cabinet ministers in the Government, a man who is a non-Christian, remarked that he was studying the Bible. Someone asked him, "Are you a Christian?" "No," he replied, "but I see that the people in the country who are most self-sacrificing are the Christians; therefore, there must be something in Christianity." There was another high official who said that the spirit to defend our soil, to defend our fellow men, and to defend our women is exactly the same spirit which actuated Jesus Christ when he went to face the Cross in the Garden of Gethsemane. These are non-Christians, yet they feel that way. When I was last week at the front with the Generalissimo, I heard the story of a woman missionary at her station thirty miles away, alone in a village in a bandit infested region. She was the only foreigner in the district. Fifty miles from the place where I was, there was another woman carrying on alone in her station. Another story told of two women going up the Yellow River in a

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sampan. When they arrived at a certain place, they found the Chinese soldiers destroying all the available boats so that the Japanese could not cross the river. These missionaries willingly gave up their sampan to be demolished, one of them remaining to work with the people in that village. I could go on giving one after another of such instances.

One could make a long list of what missionaries have done in the past along educational, medical, social and agricultural lines. The best fruits we get in China are the Chefoo apples and grapes - the result of missionary efforts. Shantung peanuts, which run into millions of dollars worth of trade in China, are also the result of missionary effort. What do you call it? - cross-stitch? - yes, and fillet lace, Swatow drawn work, hair nets - who started all these industries? Missionaries. They have brought us both material and spiritual help.

Coming back to the war, it was the missionaries who foresaw the need of refugee zones which have saved hundreds of thousands of people, men, women and children. Here in Hankow you have started refugee camps, and your International Red Cross Committee has organized help for our wounded soldiers. In Kaifeng they have well organized plans for establishing a refugee zone whenever the need arises. From all over China come reports of work like this. It may be said - as Bishop Roots and Bishop Gilman have said this afternoon - that Christians, because they have not been faithful enough to the spirit and teachings of Christ, are responsible for the present war. But there is also this other side of the question. Those of you who are here now have done much for our people. We do appreciate it. But, noteworthy as your work has been, I want to add one thing. The most effective and worthwhile contribution you have made to my country is not so much in the work itself as in the spirit in which you have worked. Why do I say this? A few years ago our own Chinese people were very much against Christianity, and the Government promulgated a law whereby religion was forbidden to be made a required subject in any school. Many of you felt that policy to be unfair, and contrary to the principles of missionary effort. Many of your colleagues wrote to me and asked to have that law rescinded. Even if I could have had it rescinded, which I could not, I did not think it was wise to make a move in that direction, because unless a rule has the general consent of those ruled, that rule will only be obeyed in the letter and not in the spirit. But I sympathized with your point of view. My sister, Madame Kung, went one step further, and I agreed with her. We said not only should this law be amended, but all institutions of higher learning should have the Bible put into their course of study, so that our students could have a chance to find out what Christianity means, and also what other religions mean. There should be study of comparative religions in our schools. We can let Christianity stand on its own feet. We feel that Christianity has something to offer which no other religion has. Let it speak for itself.

I am very glad to tell you that those who criticized you and criticized Christianity in years past are the ones who are - what shall I say? - vociferously - articulate now in their praise of Christianity. You have won these men over by the work you have done and by the spirit in which you have done it. When the missionaries wrote to me, I said God works in mysterious and inscrutable ways, and let us pray that God's will may be made known to the Government and that action may be taken in God's good time. It gives me great pleasure to tell you that because our people and the Government have come to appreciate the results of your efforts and the spirit that underlies your work, the Generalissimo has now found it possible to have the law amended so that now the Bible can be taught in registered mission schools. You have all had a leading share in making this change in the law possible, because you have shown what true, practical Christianity means in its widest sense.

Associated Boards for Christian Colleges in China

One Hundred-fifty Fifth Avenue

New York, N. Y.

YENCHING COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

September 11, 1939

My dear Madame Chiang:

Last June when I went to my Wellesley reunion the traditional alumnae parade took place inside the new auditorium because it was too wet beneath the famous old oaks. Class after class passed over the stage displaying colorful costumes. At long last, the class of 1938 filed across, stopped in mid-stage, and spread out a purple banner that read "Our Honorary Member Is Madame Chiang Kai-shek". The audience rose en masse, and cheered to the echo.

I was especially moved, because I had gone to reunion to find out how much interest the alumnae had in China, and how that interest could best be put to constructive use. My father Henry W. Luce, has devoted his life to China, particularly to Yenching University; and my brother, Henry R. Luce, publisher of Time and Life, continues the family tradition by serving actively on the China Colleges Board. My father has for years been hoping that I would do something about the all too lethargic sister college relationship between Wellesley and Yenching. That is what I am now trying to do.

The situation to date is this: Twenty years ago Wellesley gave substantially to the Peking Y.W.C.A. When the Y.W.C.A. was forced to restrict its foreign work, Wellesley transferred its affections and its contributions to the Women's College of Yenching. Wellesley women who have served on the Yenching faculty include Ping Hsin, the poetess (Hsieh Wan-ying) and my own esteemed classmate Augusta Wagner. On the Wellesley campus, President Pendleton's abiding interest in Yenching has been warmly extended by President McAfee, Professors Seal Thompson, Sophie Hart, and various other faculty members, so that even today Wellesley's annual gift to Yenching amounts to \$3700.

But this is exclusively an undergraduate interest. When a Wellesley girl graduates she is allowed to forget all about the brave sister college that is guarding the flame of academic freedom not only for China but for the world.

We propose not to let her forget. To that end we have obtained the permission of the Alumnae Association and the enthusiastic cooperation of President McAfee to undertake a campaign among all Wellesley alumnae to remind them of their responsibility to their sister college. To get the ball rolling, we have secured from three alumnae (one of them is Miss Candace Stimson) promises of \$500 a year for five years. As a specific project we are naming the support of a professorship to be held by a Chinese woman in the Yenching Department of Public Affairs. In urging such support we plan to quote the praiseworthy Chinese government pronouncements urging Chinese students to complete their studies in preparation for subsequent patriotic service.

Madame Chiang

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September 11, 1939

At just this point a message from you would be of inestimable value. If you would write a few sentences addressed to your Fellow Alumnae, evaluating the importance at the present moment of continuing the work of educating China's leaders, no more effective appeal could possibly be made. We would send a facsimile of your letter to the entire alumnae body, attaching our specific proposals as outlined in this letter.

With this valued encouragement from you we aspire to add to the strength of Yenching, and hope thus to be of some assistance to you in your magnificent work of creating the new China.

Yours very sincerely,

Elizabeth Sue Moore
Mrs. Maurice T. Moore
Wellesley, 1924

Madame Chiang Kai-shek
Chungking
China

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Address by Madame Chiang Kai-shek
to the Forum on Current Problems

26 October 1939

Religion is the main pillar of civilization and without it there can be no international righteousness, no justice, no common decency and no guaranty of the honoring of the pledged word. There can presently be no confidence in treaties because as we know now, treaties uninfluenced by religious scruples are violated just as soon as they become irksome to unprincipled governments which are covetous and which contemplate irregularities in seeking possession and power.

Without religion no state can long endure. That should now be clear enough. If religious principles governed all treaty makers there would be no treaty breakers. If religious feeling beat in the hearts of would-be destroyers there would be no destruction.

If religious thoughts entered the minds of those who profit from the sales of munitions to international lawbreakers for subjugation of victims by aggression and there would be no aggression and there would be no victims.

We Chinese women and people are, however, victims - the original ones, in fact - of the resurrection of barbarism that has practically supplanted international treaties and codes and stained with shame this advanced period in our so-called civilization.

The very fact that this should be so in this year of grace, 1939, is a remarkably sad commentary upon modern ideas of upholding the worth of treaties whose humanitarian safeguards supposedly were characteristic of civilization.

But when religion and all that it implies returns to inspire and govern men in all their relations with their fellows it is certain that international decency of conduct will also return. It is certain, too, that jealousies, injustices, suspicions, antagonisms and war will quickly vanish and that right will prevail for the lasting good of humankind.

To restore peace that passeth all understanding in personal and world affairs, we women have a mighty task imposed upon us. The opportunity to do great good has been given us by their near breakdown of civilization, by this abominable prostration before the fetish of expediency, by this sight of millions of men marching to their doom, by this unparalleled orgy of selfish and wicked use of brute force to destroy humanity in a mad will-o'-the-wisp pursuit of personal power.

Throughout the ages the progress of civilization and the stability of society have been measurable by the amount of influence for good that women have exercised in their communities. It is a heritage that we women cannot ignore. It is one that we must uphold, one of which we must be worthy.

There is no standing still, no going backward. We can only go forward and we should do that in the spirit of the crusaders with their invincible cross ever before them.

Unless a radical change comes over the hearts and the minds of men, some of us, at least, will live to see civilization perish by the very means used so long and so ruthlessly to destroy China. There is only one thing that can prevent such

a disaster to humanity - it is religion; whose partial eclipse I lament.

When national consciousness and individual consciousness are developed through a belief in religion, when religion is accepted as the central pivot and motivating force of life and conduct, then the doom of civilization may be averted, but not until then.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE GENERALISSIMO

Chungking, Szechuan
China

2 November 1939

Dear Mrs. Moore,

I have been unable to acknowledge your letter of September 11 before this, because I have been away with the Generalissimo on inspection trips to the front.

The efforts you are making to mobilize the enduring consideration of our alumnae for the well-being of Yenching, and through Yenching for China, is a noble one.

Not only should the success of the scheme be of lasting and practical value to Yenching and the Chinese people, but it should be of spiritual value to all who assist. They are certain to benefit from the soul-satisfying knowledge that they are not only contributing to the expansion and dissemination of Wellesley character and tradition, but are assisting in the spread of enlightenment and western learning, with its ultimate benefits, in China.

The importance of spreading American culture in China is almost as important at this period of moral, material, and political upheaval, as it is that we must speed up as fast as possible the education of leaders capable of exercising influence for constructive good upon the people in this new time.

What I find hampers me most in the strenuous efforts that have to be made to organize our women for national service, is the scarcity of trained women leaders. The will and the spirit are there, but those qualities of leadership which are derived from competent training and useful practical experience are absent.

Whatever our Wellesley alumnae can do to assist the coming womanhood of China to acquire the training essential to leadership will be a contribution of which Wellesley can ever be proud, and in connection with which the Wellesley hall-mark will forever be ineradicable.

It should not be necessary for me to say how glad I should be to see the banner of Wellesley flying high in the breeze of a better China and a better world.

What is now happening in the world, as I implied in the broadcast I tried to make to America on October 26, shows very clearly that unless something is done to save justice and righteousness from being eliminated from national and international life, civilization as we know it will come to an end. Barbarism based on force, would then determine the fate of nations. Religious influences and the development of high character in men and women are the only means by which high civilized standards can be maintained. Here is where Wellesley can contribute so much to the making of good leaders.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ May-ling Soong Chiang
(Madame Chiang Kai-shek)

CONFIRMATION

December 26, 1940

(CABLE LETTER)

MADAME CHIANGKAISHEK

CHUNGKING (CHINA)

THANKS TO YOUR LETTER WELLESLEY ALUMNAE LAST YEAR CONTRIBUTED SEVEN THOUSAND
DOLLARS TO OUR SISTER COLLEGE YENCHING STOP WOULD DEEPLY APPRECIATE
IMMEDIATE CABLE FROM YOU TO BE REPRODUCED IN NINETEEN FORTY ONE APPEAL
EXPRESSING CONGRATULATION THANKS ENCOURAGEMENT CONTINUED EFFORT

ELISABETH LUCE MOORE ABCHICOL NEW YORK

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Cable received from Madame Chiang Kai-shek

GREATLY ENCOURAGED BY FINE BEGINNING WELLESLEY
ALUMNAE HAVE MADE IN SUPPORT OF YENCHING - MY
URGENT NEED IS FOR TRAINED LEADERS IN EVERY
FIELD - THEREFORE CONTINUED AND INCREASING HELP
FROM WELLESLEY TO CHINESE SISTER COLLEGE CONSTITUTES
IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO PRESENT WAR EMERGENCY AS
WELL AS FUTURE OF CHINESE DEMOCRACY - GREETINGS
AND GRATITUDE TO MY FELLOW ALUMNAE

MADAME CHIANG KAI-SHEK

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Paragraph from Madame Chiang Kai-shek's letter of March 28, 1941

In his letter to me, my brother stated that you would like me to endorse a program of permanent support toward Yenching College. I assure you that this proposal meets with my wholehearted sympathy and support, for Yenching stands high among the institutions in China contributing toward the training of women leaders. Any assistance and encouragement which America is able to give Yenching will indirectly result in the spreading of democratic thought and ideals which the Chinese nation as a whole is ready to receive and to support. "

Please thank our American friends who have been unfailing in their interest and sympathy for China's cause, and accept my appreciation.

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