

Y. M. C. A. Worker Writes of Conditions in China

With news dispatches being received daily, telling of the struggle going on in China for supremacy, a letter received recently by W. P. Walter, local Y. M. C. A. Secretary, from J. C. Clark, Y. M. C. A. worker at Shanghai, telling of some of the conditions that exist there is of unusual interest. Mr. Clark is well known to many Ashland people and his letter is as follows:

January 11, 1927.

Mr. Wm. P. Walter,
Boys Dept. Y. M. C. A.,
Ashland, Oregon,
U. S. A.

Dear Walter:

Did you ask if there is any news? Yes, sure there is lots of news! It is issued in quantity by each militarist and by the agents of some governments represented in China. It is usually flavored by the person or government that pays the salary of the writer. I receive many letters indicating that friends in America are getting plenty of news but do not trust it. I can only give you what I consider the best of what I hear.

The Southern Government which is the same as the Kwomintang party is trying to carry out the ideas of Sun Yat Sen, George Washington of China. The Southern army under the command of Chiang Kai Shek has made a most wonderful advance north from Canton and now controls most of the territory excepting Shanghai and vicinity south of the Yangtze River. They will probably be in control of Shanghai by the time you receive this.

Propaganda Department
They have in addition to the regular army organization a propaganda department that goes with or ahead of the soldiers teaching the people the philosophy of Sun Yat Sen and explaining how the Southern Government will improve things for the people when they get into power. I suppose this propaganda or educational department of the party has been as effective as the soldiers in this really remarkable advance of the last three months. The Southern soldiers think of themselves as crusaders and say that they are complet-

ing the 1911 revolution started by Sun Yat Sen but stopped by Yuan Shih Kai when he became president.

They are certainly a finer group of men and have better trained troops than we have seen except for the Christian General, Feng Yu-hsiang's army, which has now joined with them. They have well defined policies for everything they plan to do and are sticking pretty close to them in actual practice. That has won them the confidence of a vast majority of the people who now welcome them. They tax but do not seem to squeeze, they pay the shop keepers and farmers for what they take and do not as a rule loot or mistreat the common people, which is exactly the opposite of the policy pursued by the other soldiers. Of course there are excesses and mistakes but that has always been a part of revolutions and probably cannot be avoided. The South is definitely against militarism and most of the evils that now beset this country.

Have Two Wings
The South is one political party but they have two wings, a radical and a conservative, and the radical has a small but powerful group that are ultra radical-communists in fact. This group is led by a Russian named Borodin. I believe that most of the excesses and the opposition to Christianity and to foreigners is coming from that group. Both wings are very bitter toward Britain, feeling that she is trying to get a strangle hold on South and Central China. I suppose they feel about like our forefathers did in 1775, but for different causes. The British say they only want a chance to trade but the Chinese say they do not believe them and that their actions show a hunger for control.

In public meetings the Southern spokesmen are very frank in saying that they want to improve the condition of the farmers and the laborers and certainly all fair minded people must agree with them in that. We may disagree with them as to method but time alone will tell whether their methods are good or not. They cannot be worse than those of the past I suppose.

They organize many unions wherever they go. In Canton there are about 200 labor unions and in Hankow they have already organized 259. Many groups have to strike to get recognized and have their demands granted while others see it coming and grant the customary request without the strike.

Students Radical

The students are the most radical in their demands. It is not uncommon to have them demand that they have the right to dismiss teachers, have representatives at all faculty meetings, have the right to decide whether a student shall be dismissed or not, that no teachers be permitted to attend student meetings, etc. The idea is just to reverse the former practice and give students the power the faculty once had.

In some interior cities the South is taking a very antagonistic attitude toward the YMCA but many of the right wing are very friendly so it is hard to say what their attitude will be when things are more settled and peace time policies are fixed. The "Y" has some advantages over most Christian institutions in that it is a Chinese organization and is known to be such. Chinese who disagree with the party are more severely dealt with than foreigners. It is commonly reported that here at Shanghai they will build a competing city ten miles down the river and try to draw the people away from the settlement, of course, that is perfectly legitimate, and will win if the people can be persuaded to move out from under the foreign protection and I suspect many will if the plan is carried out. They plan to make the new city the terminal of the railroad, to build large docks for the ocean going vessels, in short they expect to build a rival city. They have just taken the British concession at Hankow and may do the same in other places.

No one seems to know what they will do about the so-called unequal treaties. The slogans Southern group say "fight the going the rounds among the British, co-operate with Russia and America, let Japan alone." British Consulate officials are trying to get all their nationals out of the interior. Some people of other nationalities are also coming to the coast and it is quite likely that such mission work will be closed for a time or even permanently. The Chinese pastors and teachers in Mission Schools say it is easy for you foreigners to pick and go if you do not like the government but we cannot run away from the government whether we like it or not so we must obey their regulations and if they will not permit the teaching of the Bible in the schools we must give it up for the time being and try to get it back when things are more settled than now.

People Revolution

This movement is now talked of as the "Peoples Revolution" and they want all the people to be in it and support it, that is the reason for their very strong propaganda or educational program and it is working. They want the Christians to come in also and it is very difficult for them to stay out or to go in for a part of the party is persecuting the Christians as a group because they are considered to be very favorable to the foreigners. It is also very hard for a Chinese whether he is a Christian or not to stay out of a revolution that the vast majority of the people are in favor of and that gives promise of great benefit to the country. Of course the patriotic thing and the logical thing is for all right thinking Chinese to get into the revolutionary party and help make it a success then in the years to come he will have a record that he is proud to tell his children about. This all assumes that this Kwomintang party is something quite different from the military factions that have been terrorizing the country for the last ten or a dozen years and from all I hear and can see it is in fact very different and bids fair to be permanent.

The Christian General has about 170,000 well trained men that will in all probability be in the scrap on the Southern side very early in the spring if not before and they are nearly all very earnest Christians and will not tolerate the anti-Christian activities of the left wing of the Kwomintang party.

How that will affect things when they connect up no one can say yet. The Anti-Christian group considers the "Y" as the best established Christian institution in the country and they

have decided to attack it hard this year. They recently decided to attack from within by having their workers join the "Y" and try to destroy it. In Nanchang where Ben Schmidt and Art Allen are the foreign secretaries and in Changsha where Ray Roberts and E. J. Rounds have been the associations are just now undergoing the severest persecution. Wuchang and Hankow are not far behind. The buildings are plastered with posters condemning the "Y" and the papers print columns of false reports about the "Y", its program and its workers. When secretaries go through the streets people call out to them in the most vulgar language and say "kill the foreign dog, etc." Such things are not easy to stand but the Canton "Y" stood it for about three years and now is in a very prosperous condition under the Southern Government. It is not yet time to give up or run away. It is time to back up the men in these cities as best we can till these difficult days are over.

Hardest Year

Dr. David Yui said recently that 1927 will probably be the most difficult year the association movement in China has ever faced. He also said 1927 may see the unification of China or it may see fighting worse than anything we have yet had.

Russia is giving great assistance to the Southern Government just as France helped the U. S. A. during the revolutionary war. They give money and munitions but they also furnish through Borodin the political advisor and Gallen the military advisor; many of the ideas that are enabling the South to capture and hold such large sections of country so rapidly. While these and other Russians are giving so much to

the Southern cause the North has several entire Russian battalions. I understand that 10,000 Russian soldiers are now traveling south toward Nanking to fight the South. Of course the "White Russians" are helping the North and the so-called "Red Russians" are with the South. I think it is not to be expected that the South will quickly turn "Red" because of the help Russia is giving anymore than they will quickly turn Christian because of the work of missionaries.

Engaged in Struggle

In China today one fourth of the human race is engaged in a colossal struggle to free itself from the shackles of traditions, customs and foreign relations that have been forming for forty centuries. It is a struggle the issue of which will vitally affect the entire population of our globe it must not be laughed at or ignored but studied, understood and the people sympathized with and helped in every possible way in this their hour of need. The fate of a few firms or a few individuals should not engross the attention of a nation so that they cannot see the issues being fought out here. For there is a real issue between the North and the South now. The South is trying to establish a democratic government for all of China while the North is trying to continue the old feudal form with all of its corruption, swarting of personality and ignoring of human

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