

A MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD.

From the All China Union of Chinese Chambers of Commerce.

On the night of September 18, 1931, Japanese troops stationed in various parts of China's Northeastern Provinces, acting in concert simultaneously occupied Shenyang (Mukden), Changchun, Yingkow, Koupangtsu, and other strategic positions.

This precipitate action filled the Chinese with amazement and must have proved equally astounding to people of other countries. There is every evidence that such aggression was premeditated, as the Japanese militarists, especially during the last few months, have been trying to find excuses to realize their inordinate ambition of establishing a political and military hegemony over China's Northeastern Provinces. The Wanpaoshan affair is a case in point—an incident created to foster ill-feeling among the Chinese against the Japanese. But the Chinese adhered strictly to a policy of non-resistance, and the affair failed to develop into the proportions desired by the Japanese. Shortly afterwards occurred the organized, wholesale massacre of Chinese residents in Korea of whom there were thousands. The greater portion of their property was destroyed, and hundreds of these residents either lost their lives or were seriously wounded. Such slaughter of innocent mankind was again perpetrated to provoke the keenest resentment against the Japanese, but once more the Chinese exemplified a great spirit of forbearance and the invidious designs of Japanese militarism fell through.

The most recent trap set by the Japanese militarists is the case of Captain Nakamura. It is alleged that he was killed by Chinese soldiers while travelling in Inner Mongolia. When asked for evidence, the Japanese replied that the alleged murder was secretly reported to them by some Chinese. When the names of such Chinese informers were demanded, the accusers retorted that they could not be revealed for fear of danger befalling them. And without further ado, the Japanese made preparations for open warfare. The Chinese, however, insisted that if a certain Captain Nakamura had been murdered, the case could be settled through the proper diplomatic channels, and accordingly three successive committees of enquiry were appointed by the Chinese Government. Once more peeved by the case developing into something wholly unanticipated, the Japanese militarists saw no way to the fulfilment of their plans other than that of direct military action, and hence the thunderbolt-like measures on the night of September 18. But some sort of an excuse being needed to justify their action, the Japanese militarists proclaimed that military steps were taken because Chinese troops had destroyed a part of the South Manchurian Railway! The excuse, however, is very puerile. For the Railway, since its occupation by the Japanese authorities, has always been under strict Japanese police and administrative control—a control extended to all so-called appurtenant property on both sides of the railway. No Chinese soldier has been permitted freely to traverse any part of this special area, and therefore no contact with the Railway has ever been possible, let alone any opportunity on the part of Chinese troops to destroy even the smallest fraction of such a Railway. It is therefore abundantly clear that the alleged pretext is a mere fabrication.

However that may be, as a result of this display of Japanese military force, all Chinese soldiers with whom the Japanese troops came into contact, were disarmed, and according to reliable information thus far available the ranking officials of the Liaoning Provincial Govern-