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MY FUNDAMENTAL IDEA AND FORWARD AIM
CONCERNING SINO-JAPANESE RELATIONS
(Wang Ching Wei)

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Late President Sun once told us, "The success of the Chinese Revolution rests upon Japan's understanding." The meaning of these words is very important. Japan is the foremost power in the East and has made substantial progress in economic, military and cultural fields. By looking back at the state of affairs of the past several decades, it is no exaggeration to say that without Japan there wouldn't be an East Asia and although China lags behind in everything, she has the largest land area in East Asia, a huge population and an extremely long history. If China should become a thriving power, Japan will infallibly pay attention to what influence China's becoming a power will have on Japan and whether it will be advantageous or harmful to her. If it is advantageous to her, Japan will naturally hope for China to become powerful and to be on good terms with her. On the contrary, if it is harmful to Japan, she will destroy China's incentive to become powerful and recognize her as an enemy. For rising China to make the powerful Japan her enemy is really as ruinous as to strike a rock with an egg and China will inevitably be defeated.

For this reason, if we want success of our revolution, we must necessarily let Japan know that the success of China's Revolution will be advantageous to her. This is not chicanery but sincerity. How can it be made advantageous to Japan? Let the military and diplomatic policies of Japan and China coincide and then if an economic collaboration based on the principle of reciprocity and equality is formulated, China's power will be advantageous and harmless to Japan. To do so absolutely does not harm the sovereignty of China, for it does not injure the sovereignty of a country to unite with another country for their common interests. Nor is it harmful to the due rights and interests of a third power, for our union aims at mutual existence and expansion and does not intend to reject those rights and interests of the third power.

In 1924 (the 13th year of Taisho) when President Sun (Sun Yat Sen) personally laid down the fundamental principles at Canton for establishing the Nationalist Government, he furthered the Sino-Japanese relations based on the aforementioned policy. After his death in 1925, I fostered his wish and supported the Nationalist Government and defended the aforementioned policy. Being very careful I never changed it in the least. However, in 1928 the situation changed and the Tsinan Incident occurred as an omen of a serious turn in their relations. Of course, it is better to be friends than to be enemies. At this time China should have tried patiently to the utmost to bring about a cordial understanding between the countries for Sino-Japanese relations was about to take a favorable turn. Unhappily the Nationalist Government at that time failed to take measures, and the Sino-Japanese relations worsened and finally the Incident on September 18th occurred.

I am in no way seeking to criticize the supporters of the then Nationalist Government. I am a private Nationalist and I am a person affiliated with the Government. Therefore I must naturally bear part of the responsibility for this error. What I want to inform the readers is that I was then a political refugee wandering abroad, because an order for my arrest was issued by the Nationalist Government. On January 28, 1932 I returned to Nanking and took office as President of the Administrative Yuan and later when I held an additional post as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, I advocated the principle of "resistance on one hand, negotiation on the other", and redressed the public opinion of that time of "opposition against direct negotiations" and concluded the Armistice Agreements of Shanghai and Tangku. My intention then was to secure local and temporary stability and then at the end establish a wholesome everlasting peace still based respectively on my belief that it's better to be friends than enemies. During a period of four years, my opinion finally ended without being realized. However I do not blame others for my failure but only regret when I look back at my inability and the results contrary to my expectation. There is only one tone of argument which I have constantly opposed. That is the opinion of the so-called war advocates at the time. I ask you tentatively if China which is barely awakening now, fights with powerful Japan, how will the war result? Is it not as thoughtless as child's play for a nation?

At first I thought Chiang Kai-shek would have similar aims with me. Especially when I read his "Address to the people" which he issued after his resignation as the President of the Nationalist Government in December 1931. I believed him to be of the same opinion and made up my mind to cooperate with Chiang in all sincerity, but four years later I came to realize that I could not agree with him. On November 1, 1935, after a serious illness, I got wounded in three spots and as it became impossible to keep my health, was obliged to live abroad for a whole year in 1936. When I returned hurriedly on account of the outbreak of the Sian Incident, the situation was undergoing a grave change. At that time I firmly believed that mopping up of Communism should have never been stopped, for the Communist party thinks only of the Comintern and neglects their country China. They received secret orders from the Comintern and abandoned their policy of "class strife" and hoisted up a new policy of "resistance to Japan".

Taking advantage of the racial consciousness in recent China, the Party is inciting the Sino-Japanese War. Therefore we should never be caught by such trickery.

The readers will agree if they look back to that time that my entire policy of expression then was stressed in this one point. After the outbreak of the Marco Polo Bridge Incident I did not have from the outset the means to check the Sino-Japanese war, but I have always sought to divert it and also thought it necessary to suppress and expose the conspiracy of the Communist Party. Ultimately I left Chungking on December 18 and announced a peace proposal on the 29th of that month.

In my peace proposal I consented to the statement of the Konoye Cabinet of Japan. Why did I consent? Because based on my usual consistent belief I am of the opinion that it's better to be friends than enemies.

One and a half years of war has fully shown Japan's national strength and China's racial consciousness. Japan has already announced her having no intention of aggression and friendly asked China to form a friendly collaboration for a mutual objective. Any why doesn't China shake hands with Japan? How touching and delightful it would be if Japan and China who cried with regret after quarreling were like brothers and became friends again. If Chiang had been clever enough to realize the arrival of a new turn in the Sino-Japanese relations and had resolutely approved the Statement, the way to peace between the countries' would have been made at once. Then if he had negotiated on the various concrete conditions and had arranged to receive those benefits mutually based on the so-called three fundamental principles, the foundation of an everlasting peace in the East would have been established and thereafter mutual existence and expansion would also have been realized step by step. Unhappily, instead of approving it Chiang opposed Japan's proposal with a repudiating and extremely oppressing attitude and utilizing coercive he opposed all the peace proposals of the nation and the Party. It is indeed regretful that as a result half a year was spent in vain and the general situation gradually changed from bad to worse, finally leaving no means of adjustment. The three principles, good neighborhood, joint anti-Comintern and economic cooperation, were for the first time clarified several years ago in Konoye's Statement. But Japan had previously proposed their principles, that is on November 20, 1935, when the Japanese Ambassador ARIYOSHI had an interview with Chiang he proposed to make these three principles the basis of improving the Sino-Japanese relations and Chiang expressed his approval and that he had no counter-proposal. Later, however, he suddenly retracted his previous remarks and found the following excuses:

Firstly, since he was then the Chairman of the National Military Council and not the President of the Administrative Yuan, that discussion cannot be accepted. Secondly, it was not an official talk, for he then talked in his private capacity. Thirdly, he consented to discuss the three principles but did not endorse the principles themselves. Fourthly, when he said that he had no counter-proposal, he meant merely execution of the three principles but not his unconditional approval to the principles. As a result, in 1936 the year long negotiation between China and Japan were obliged to come to a deadlock which afterward caused the outbreak of the conflict of the two countries in 1937. After reading the proceedings of that diplomatic conference, I couldn't help but sigh in remorse. Since I already mentioned in my text "To cite an Illustration" That Japan's proposed peace conditions at the time when German Ambassador Trautmann tried to arbitrate the Incident from December 1937 to January 1938, were no more than these three fundamental principles, I won't repeat it here.

Konoye's Statement attempts a systematic description of Japan's heretofore consistent opinion and adds clear explanations to each point that our country is anxious about. For example, in regards to the joint anti-Comintern since China is considering as to whether or not Japan will be able to interfere in China's military and home affairs through this Pact, Japan announces that the Sino-Japanese Anti-Comintern Pact should be concluded in the same spirit as the Italian German Japanese Anti-Comintern Pact. Concerning economic cooperation, as we fear the arrival of political complications Japan announces that she will respect the sovereignty and administrative independence of China and that she has no

intention to attain economical monopoly in China and further more that she will not ask China to restrict the rights of third powers. Since there exists such a cordial and clear statement as this, the practice of these three fundamental principles will never do harm to China's freedom and independence. Moreover, the main object of the so-called joint defense against Comintern and economic aggression of Communism. That responsibility is very important. It goes without saying that since Japan longs for China to bear part of this responsibility, she recognizes the fact that only entire freedom and independence will enable China to share this weighty responsibility. In that case isn't our approving this Statement for the sake of a far reaching policy in the East and not snatching temporary peace. Therefore, why need we close the door and take a repudiating attitude towards this Statement.

The propaganda under the control of Chiang is inclined to remark that Japan is actually seeking to destroy China with all her might and that the so-called three fundamental principles are no more than a kind of pretext. Such propaganda is erroneous. First, if Japan intends to destroy China all she has to do is merely continue military operations with all her strength and there is no need to establish a pretext. Secondly as I mentioned before, several years have already elapsed since these three principles were first proposed and since the Konoye Statement these principles were more definitely established as the national policy and public opinion is already solidly backing it. For what reason can this be called a pretext? Thirdly, if between China and Japan there lacks an objective of their joint effort, a conflict of interests will occur and result in incompatible interests. On the contrary, if there is an object of joint effort, no conflict will occur as their interests become compatible. Looking from the viewpoint of such an important relation, how can we call this a pretext? Fourthly, it was because of our falling in a kind of circular reasoning that we failed to better the Sino-Japanese relations and caused it to change daily from bad to worse. For instance, Japan ascribes the Incident of September 18, to China's Anti-Japanese movements while China attributes her Anti-Japanism to Japan's aggression and Japan maintains that she will improve the relations if China abandons her policy of discrimination against foreign nations. Such remarks demand and reproaches the other party and will only worsen the situation more and more. If the two countries accept an aim of their joint effort and at the same time undertake it and then if one demands or censures another only after doing so to herself, its progress is sure to be rapid and success easy. In such a way, we can liquidate the past entanglement between China and Japan and restore the present devastation of war. Furthermore we can take the first step on the road to co-existence and mutual expansion in the future.

Why then do they refuse the peace proposals and emphasize the continuance of resistance? We must be aware of the fact that from the beginning of our resistance, both our military forces and the people had already demonstrated that our full national consciousness cannot be worn down. However, on the other hand, we must be aware of the fact that this national consciousness is being entirely utilized by the Communist Party. It is a matter of course to the Communist Party to utilize national consciousness and to exterminate a race and ruin a state under the pretense of defending that national consciousness. For the Communists do not fundamentally know the existence of the so-called race or

state but only know how to receive orders from the Comintern and victimize China. Therefore the greater the victimized area and the greater the number of people preyed upon and the longer the victimized time becomes the more they'll like it. In such a way everything in China will be preyed upon and Japan will also be unable to exempt herself from incurring substantial losses. To the Comintern it is really killing two birds with one stone. It goes without saying that they want to capture Chiang and make him a puppet and revenge to their hearts content Chiang's hate for Communism since 1927. After taking full vengeance, they will naturally return to Russia without any feeling of regret. For this reason, they earnestly preach resistance to the end though we have been given several chances to restore peace. Therefore, China will be permanently unable to attain peace and will forever be compelled to be a scape-goat of the Comintern. In short the crime of those who are utilized by the Communist Party is above the stout hearted persons. There are loyal and brave troops and citizens now but even then the best they can perform is some deeds of patriotism like Nieh Shi-cheng's. We can never avert the imminent doom. We may be able to save the situation to a certain extent if we learn to act like Liu Yun-i and Chung Chih-tung who made secure South East China and also Li Hung chang who bravely entered Peking at the risk of his life and successfully concluded peace negotiations under the bayonets of eight allied forces.

I see two roads opened before our eyes today. One way is to follow Chiang and continue resistance. However, Chiang's present military strength will be insufficient not only to resist Japan but also to suppress the Communist Party. Moreover, in his present state of mind, even though he desires to, Chiang is unable to refrain from pursuing the Communist Party. Consequently this will only lead to our state and people becoming victims of the Communists. The other way is to sever relations with Chiang and to explain further and practice further the dying wish of the late President Sun and furthermore to endeavour to be a friend instead of an enemy of Japan based on the fundamental principles of "better to become friends than to become enemies". The first step will restore peace between China and Japan and the second step will establish peace in the East. Of these two paths the former will lead our country to ruin and exterminate our race and the latter will restore China and East Asia. I am determined to advance toward the road which will lead to the restoration of China and the East. I am determined to unite with my fellow thinkers and sympathizing officers of every faction and party of the country and non-faction and non-party and proceed hand in hand with them towards this goal.