



A CHINESE ORPHAN begs for rice in the street

"Do you think there is any possibility of the two big political parties coming to terms?" we asked. "Is there any chance of a really united China emerging even in the fairly distant future?"

"Frankly, I very much doubt it," replied Dr. Dixon. "Of course, China was considerably unified by the war against Japan, but the two political systems are so much opposed that I can't see much likelihood that they will come together. It is going to take a very long time for China to get her house in order—and it is my opinion that what America has done in supplying arms to the Chinese Army is not going to help much."

#### Too Many Soldiers

We asked Dr. Dixon to elaborate. He said he thought that one of the main reasons why China was finding such difficulty in recuperating was that the country was still supporting such large armies. The military controlled most of the road transport, and were also using a considerable part of the rail services, for manoeuvring troops around the country. It was, of course, necessary to maintain some strong forces to keep law and order, and check banditry. Petty war lords did still exist; they might be Nationalist generals now, but they still more or less maintained their own armies. Chiang-Kai-Shek certainly had authority over them, but he did not have them completely under restraint.

"Chiang demands that the Communists should disarm, but the Communists are naturally reluctant to do so, fearing what may happen to themselves at the

Nationalists' hands. I think the militarist group in the Nationalist Party and some of the big businessmen seem to be rather keen on opening up civil war. And if it comes I think the Nationalists would eventually win—they have been so well equipped by the Americans. Of course the Communists, too, have received arms in the past, from the Russians, but that does not seem to be happening now. But the Communists have a small air force, and even parachute troops. When it comes to fighting, both sides are pretty ruthless towards one another."

We mentioned that James Bertram and some other writers on China had expressed the view that Chinese Communism was of a different vintage from Soviet Communism. Did Dr. Dixon support that?

"Yes, I think that is right," he said. "Communism in China seems to me to be mainly a kind of agrarian reform policy. They are Communists in faith, and they have great enthusiasms for their cause, but in practice they are conditioned by the fact that so many of their people are peasant farmers. They allow private property, for instance. In

fact, Chinese Communism follows more the pattern of Liberalism than anything else. Lack of graft in Communist areas has been a thing that has impressed all observers: they have stamped it out by the drastic method of shooting all offenders."

It was, however, true that none of the parties was democratic in the sense that



Spencer Digby photograph  
**DR. ALLAN DIXON**  
The Friends were good salesmen

they elected the people in control. "And yet potentially the Chinese are the best democrats in the world; they always talk things over—perhaps, in fact, they spend too long doing it."

#### "Civil War May Come"

Returning to the subject of relief, Dr. Dixon said that the supplies which UNRRA had been pouring in were sufficient to have made appreciable difference if they could have reached the places where they were most needed. He had not had personal experience of the real famine areas, such as that round Hunan, but he had the impression that farmers generally were worse off physically than the city dwellers. There were, of course, vast areas which had never seen the Japanese; there the diligent cultivation of the soil went on unchanged.

The greatest relief need in China, added Dr. Dixon, was trained personnel, especially those who could speak the language. There were plenty of Chinese who could speak English, but good interpreters were not easy to get.

Though he was afraid Civil War might come, it was not likely to come until UNRRA finally withdrew, because both sides wanted UNRRA help, and in the event of real civil war UNRRA could support neither side. There was, of course, civil war of a kind already, but officially there was peace.

From a long-term viewpoint, the most significant factor in China's future might be some great project like the suggested building of a dam over the upper reaches of the Yangtse. That could produce industrialism on a large scale and change the economic set-up of the country.

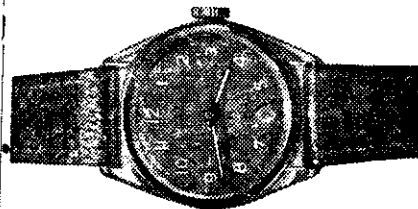
DR. DIXON seems to have kept his eyes and ears open while he was in China, for he was there only about ten months. He was one of a British Red Cross team sent out last September to Shanghai to help deal with the problem of European internees who were released from Japanese camps. From the start they were working in a Chinese hospital; and when the internees were dealt with they switched over to Chinese relief. Then he went to Hangkow where a hospital was opened up. On this project UNRRA, CNRRA (the Chinese branch of UNRRA), the British Red Cross, and members of the Friends' Ambulance Unit co-operated. At first they worked alongside the Japanese in the hospital and then took it over entirely. It was a very busy time: there were only three doctors in the hospital, but they dealt with an average of 100 out-patients a day, and had 70 in-patient beds as well. There was not much outside help, not enough nurses; they had to wash sheets, make beds, and indeed do almost everything themselves. There were always more patients than they could cope with. When the day's work was over, Dr. Dixon would start the generator and do the X-raying—just for relaxation, as he put it.

When the time came for the British Red Cross to withdraw (the International Red Cross is carrying on), Dr. Dixon thought he had better try to see something more of the world while he had the chance, before returning to England. New Zealand members of the Friends' Ambulance Unit with whom he had worked were such good salesmen for this country that he decided to come here for a stay, probably lasting about six months. While here he intends to practise his profession.

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