

## ON SINO-JAPANESE COLLABORATION

*The following is an exchange between Dr. Sun Yat-sen and Japanese journalists at a Press Interview aboard the "Shanghai Maru" at Kobe, Japan on November 24, 1924.*

*Japanese Journalist:* What are the reasons for your present visit to Japan?

*Dr. Sun Yat-sen:* Originally, I planned to go direct to Tientsin from Shanghai. But I could not get a steamer reservation as all cabins have been booked for the next fortnight. Furthermore, the train service between Shanghai and Peking was also disrupted. I have to come to Japan in order to proceed to Peking. This is my first reason for visiting Japan. Secondly, Japan is a place that I have visited before and where I have many friends. I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to see my old friends. As now that I have arrived in your country, many of your people have come to welcome me in the sincere desire of hearing what I have to say, I wish to take this opportunity openly to speak out my heart, and hope that you will convey what I have to say to your people.

We Chinese wish to join hands with the Japanese people in order that the situation in East Asia may be secured by the joint resources of the two peoples. There are many ways leading to co-operation. The question is, what practical and proper method shall be adopted in order to attain this co-operation? I hope you will consider this, and give me your opinions. Also, I hope you will inform me of the feeling of the Japanese people toward the Chinese.

*Director of the China Section of the Tokyo "Asahi":* What I have to say today does not represent the views of all those present and must be taken only as my personal opinion. I believe that the views of the Japanese people in general are practically identical. Firstly, that in order to stabilize the situation in East Asia, it is necessary that the Chinese and Japanese peoples join together in a common effort and fully co-operate with one another. The success will follow as a matter of course. There will only be failure if the two peoples split. Both peoples will suffer. This, I believe, is an important point. As to ways of joining the two peoples, the first necessity is that they co-operate. However, since each people has its hopes and each has its grievances and, furthermore, since too high hopes result in too wide a scope for divergencies, the result is that both are experiencing difficulties. Both wish to co-operate, but neither can carry out its wish.

In this connection I must say that the Japanese and Chinese peoples must mutually understand each other. Mutual understanding is the way to co-operation. About 1919, many Japanese expressed the hope that China would have peace and be unified, and were of the opinion that the Chinese and Japanese peoples should co-operate. At the same time, many other Japanese thought this to be a weakness on the part of Japan. But now, everyone understands that the two peoples must have closer relations and cooperate. You have been away from Japan for a long time, and your present visit must have enabled you to see a big difference in the attitude of the Japanese toward China. Although your present visit will be a short one, you will certainly get this impression.

Secondly, lately the Japanese have entertained more or less identical views concerning China. The Japanese usually entertain too hasty hopes in regard to China. Such hastiness has its merits as well as demerits. The latest Japanese hope is that China

will be unified as soon as possible, readjust her internal affairs and develop her industries. The present *coup* in China tells us that the power of the militarists in Peking has been overthrown and that the politics of today are different from those of yesterday. We also know that Marshal Tuan Chi-jui will listen to the will of the people, and will co-operate with you (Dr. Sun) in the administration of the affairs of the State. We Japanese believe that China is still in chaos, but at the same time trust that China has a hopeful future because of Marshal Tuan Chi-jui's willingness to listen to the people's popular will and to co-operate with you (Dr. Sun). This is the mind of the majority of the Japanese people, although I have expressed it as my own view.

*Dr. Sun Yat-sen:* Unification is the hope of the whole of the Chinese people. The people will prosper if China is unified, otherwise they will suffer. The Japanese will also suffer indirectly, because they will not be able to trade in China. We Chinese believe in the sincerity of the Japanese wish to see China unified. However, China's unification has not been a purely domestic problem for her. Since she started her revolution, disorder has occurred continuously. The reason why China has not been able to achieve unity is not because of the Chinese themselves but because of foreigners. Why has China not been able to have unity? It is entirely because of the foreigners. The existence of the Unequal Treaties between China and the foreign Powers has enabled foreigners to enjoy special privileges in China. Of late, they have not only enjoyed special privileges from such treaties but have misapplied and abused those privileges in stirring up disorders in China, thinking of their own selfish interests without any regard to conscience and justice. There are many such foreigners in China. Each one considers himself an emperor. He may utilize a militarist or a group of men to carry out what he dictates. Under such circumstances foreigners are not only taking advantage of these Unequal Treaties but also have abused them. Their Governments and those who advocate justice probably do not know what their nationals are doing in China. This ignorance on the part of the Home Governments has led them to leave their nationals to act as they please, thus entailing great suffering on the part of the Chinese.

*Japanese Journalist:* By listening to your statement today and by reading accounts of your interviews with the press before leaving Shanghai, we have come to understand your ideas. You think civil wars in China have been caused by foreigners, and foreign Powers have been able to create civil wars because of the Unequal Treaties. However, the Unequal Treaties all have their history and basis. They were either signed as a result of foreign loan contracts or because of special reparations. In short, they were all signed in return for certain privileges. We Japanese also wish that China could abolish these Treaties, but all of them have a historical background. What method would you adopt to secure their abrogation? From the point of view of the layman, their abrogation seems impossible, for all of them are concerned with the making good of privileges obtained. If you want to abrogate them the foreign Powers will reclaim all privileges they have given. Otherwise, there is no way to abolish them. What method will be used if you insist on abrogating them?

*Dr. Sun Yat-sen:* The Governments and their nationals long ago knew that these Unequal Treaties were unfair and, bothered by their conscience; some have suggested revision or

abrogation. For instance, in 1902, after China was severely beaten during the Boxer Rebellion, Britain concluded the Mackay Treaty by which she agreed to the modification of extraterritorial rights and the return of the maritime customs and the settlements and concessions to the control of China. This showed that foreigners with a clear conscience were fair in their views. The recent Washington Conference also expressed the need of loosening the bonds of those Treaties which put China under restraint. It is clear that all those who are bothered by their conscience entertain just ideas and are sincere in their hope for genuine peace in the world. To, do away with the quarrels among foreign Powers in China over rights and privileges, it is all the more important that such Treaties should be abrogated. The only difficulty in this connection is that foreigners abroad do not fully understand the inequality of these Treaties, and that foreigners in China claim they cannot make their living without them. With these Treaties, they can lead a life of luxury and ease; without them, they would have to exert themselves to obtain a living. For this reason, such foreigners have taken the Treaties as a means of protection and have taken advantage of them to start trouble in China to prevent her being unified, for a unified China may successfully approach the foreign Powers for the abrogation of the treaties, resulting in the end of their life of luxury and ease in China.

People in foreign countries who have a sense of justice are certainly in favor of the abrogation of the Unequal Treaties. Only those foreigners who reside in China as officials, secret agents, adventurers, and privileged traders want to maintain them in order that their living may be maintained, and in consequence create trouble by means of those Treaties.

The key to the question whether such Treaties can be abolished lies in the hands of no others but the Japanese people. If they are sympathetic, the Treaties can be immediately abolished; if they are not, then nothing can be done for the time being. Japan suffered the same thing thirty years ago. It seems to me that if the Japanese are sympathetic and do not wish to see others experience the same suffering as they themselves have suffered, they will certainly give assistance to China in her efforts to abrogate these Treaties. With Japanese support, the abrogation of these Treaties would be easy.

In the minds of short-sighted Japanese, the abrogation of Unequal Treaties by China would mean the loss to Japan of her acquired rights and privileges. Chinese tariff autonomy would, for instance, cause an immediate damage to Japanese trade. But such damage is negligible if the long view is taken. Japan would secure the friendship of the Chinese people, if she helped China to abolish the Unequal Treaties. The benefit thus resulting to Japan would be immense and unlimited. It is true that after China has abrogated the Treaties she would raise the tariffs, to the immediate disadvantage of Japan. But Japanese assistance to China in the abolition of the Unequal Treaties would secure the genuine gratitude of the Chinese, which would result in co-operation between China and Japan. They could conclude mutual-assistance treaties, such as an economic *bloc* and joint-defense pacts. If China and Japan were really to become Allies, Japan would receive benefits a hundred-fold, even a thousand-fold, her present privileges. With this possibility in sight, I do not see why the Japanese could not forfeit their present privileges, which are quite insignificant by comparison. You have come to welcome me, and I wish to advise you to sacrifice the small privileges of the present in return for the far greater privileges of the future.