THE SCALPEL THE SWORD

TED ALLAN & SYDNEY GORDON

PREFACE

In comparison with the human world of past times, our world is highly complex. Because of its highly developed communications, events in every part of the globe and of human society are closely interconnected. There are no isolated disasters and there is no progress that does not help the progress of all.

This situation is reflected in the minds of men. The contents of men's minds have also become world-wide in scope and complexity. It is not enough for a man, seeking the welfare of his own people and country, to consider his domestic situation in relation to his immediate neighbors. World trends encompass every one of us, and it is by participating in them and contributing to them that we influence our own future. The highest task before men's minds today is to understand, to fight against the forces of regression and death, to strengthen and convert into reality the possibilities which our world offers, as no previous world has offered, for a fuller life for all men.

The hero in any age is one who carries out with a surpassing degree of devotion, determination, courage, and skill the main tasks with which his times challenge every man. Today these tasks are world-wide, and the contemporary hero — whether he works at home or in a foreign land — is a world hero, not only in historical retrospect but now.

Norman Bethune was such a hero. He lived, worked and fought in three countries — in Canada, which was his native land; in Spain, where forward-looking men of all nations flocked to fight in the first great people's resistance to the darkness of Nazism and fascism; and in China, where he helped our guerrilla armies to capture and build new bases of national freedom and democracy in

territory which the military fascists of Japan fondly hoped they had conquered, and where he helped us forge the mighty people's army which finally liberated all China. In a special sense he belongs to the peoples of these three countries. In a larger sense he belongs to all who fight against oppression of nations and of peoples.

Norman Bethune was a doctor, and he fought with and within his profession with the weapons he knew best. He was an expert and a pioneer in his own science — he kept his weapons sharp and fresh. And he devoted his great skill, consciously and consistently, to the vanguards of the struggle against fascism and imperialism. To him fascism was the disease holding a greater evil for mankind than any other, a plague that destroys minds and bodies by tens of millions, and by denying the value of man also denies the value of all the sciences which have arisen to minister to man's health, vigor and growth.

The value of the techniques Norman Bethune taught his Chinese students under Japanese gunfire was determined by the purpose for which they were used. Germany and Japan were countries of high technical development, but because they were led by enemies of human progress their science and their skills brought only misfortune to mankind. Fighters for the people have the duty of attaining the highest technical skill, because only in their hands can technique really serve man.

Dr. Bethune was the first medical man to bring blood banks to the battlefields, and his transfusions saved the lives of hundreds of fighters for the Spanish Republic. In China he launched and practiced the slogan, "Doctors! Go to the wounded! Do not wait for them to come to you." In an environment totally different, and far more backward than Spain, he organized a procedure of guerrilla medical service that saved tens of thousands of our best and bravest. His plans and practice were based not only on medical science and experience, but also on military and political study and experience on the fronts of the people's war. Bethune in Spain and China was a pioneer in the battlefield of medicine.

He understood thoroughly the conditions, strategy, tactics and terrain of the struggle, and he knew what could be expected of medical workers who were free men, fighting beside other free men for their homes and their future. The doctors, nurses and orderlies whom he trained learned to regard themselves not only as technical auxiliaries but as front-line soldiers, with tasks as responsible and important as those of the fighting branches.

These things Dr. Bethune accomplished amid conditions such as no medical man without a broad understanding of his tasks could possibly have coped with. He accomplished them in mountain villages in the most primitive parts of China, almost without any previous knowledge of the language, of the people among whom he worked, and without any strength in his own tuberculosis-ravaged body apart from his burning conviction and iron will.

His broad world understanding, the sources of power that he drew from it, were the things that give his work more universal meaning for our time than that of other medical heroes who labored against similar heart-breaking conditions, such as Father Damien or Dr. Grenfell in Labrador.

What killed Dr. Bethune? Dr. Bethune fell in the fight against fascism and reaction to which he had given his passion, skill and strength. The region in which he worked was not only blockaded by the Japanese enemy. It was blockaded also by Chiang Kai-shek's reactionary government which had always been ready to compromise victory rather than fight a people's war. The men whom Bethune fought for were adjudged unworthy not only of arms and ammunition but even of medical supplies to heal their wounded. They died of infections because they could not receive modern antidotes.

Bethune died of septicemia, the result of operating without rubber gloves and of having no sulfa drugs for treatment.

The International Peace Hospitals which Dr. Bethune founded now work under new conditions — China, at last, is free. But after Bethune died his appointed successor,

Dr. Kisch, who worked beside him in Spain, was prevented by Chiang Kai-shek's blockade from assuming his post. Dr. Kotnis of the Indian Medical Units, who finally took up the directorship of one of Dr. Bethune's hospitals and valiantly carried on his work, also died at his post — again because there were no drugs on hand to treat him. Dr. Bethune and Dr. Kotnis were two among many victims, who, were it not for the blockade, might still be living and fighting in the cause of the world's free peoples.

I am very happy to introduce the life of Dr. Norman Bethune to greater numbers of people than have hitherto been able to acquaint themselves with the life of this hero of our time, who symbolizes so nobly the common stake of all people in the fight for freedom. His life, death and heritage have been particularly close to me, not only because of the great services he performed in our people's war of national liberation, but also because of my own activity in the China Welfare League of which I am chairman. The League has been directed toward securing support for the Bethune Peace Hospital and Bethune Medical School network that carries on his work and his memory.

The new China will never forget Dr. Bethune. He was one of those who helped us become free. His work and his memory will remain with us forever.

SOONG CHING-LING (MADAME SUN YAT-SEN)

THE ENEMY—THOSE WHO MAKE THE WOUNDS

1

> For forty years I have devoted myself to the cause of the people's revolution with but one end in view: the elevation of China to a position of freedom and equality among the nations. My experiences during these forty years have convinced me that to attain this goal we must bring about an awakening for our own people and ally ourselves in a common struggle with those peoples of the world who treat us as equals.
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> —DR. SUN YAT-SEN, PRESIDENT OF THE CHINESE REPUBLIC IN HIS WILL, 1925.

On January 20, 1938, Bethune reached Hongkong, the British Crown Colony on the southern China coast. Three days later he flew to Hankow, seat of the National Government headed by Chiang Kai-shek. In Hankow he found himself in another world — the strange, backward, far-flung land of the oldest surviving nation on earth.

In the city where fantastic squalor surrounded dazzling opulence, where political bureaucracy stubbornly resisted the ferment of modern ideas, he interviewed lower government officials, inspected primitive army hospitals, and prepared for his journey to the north.

The initial impact of China was staggering. Here, among the swirling tides of war, nationalism, foreign imperialism, semifeudal reaction, communism, events shaking the foundations of Asia were unfolding. Their origins had to be traced through thousands of years of Chinese history, the rise of modern Europe, the rivalries of great powers, the dramatic upsurge of the Chinese people.

Civilization had come to China 5000 years ago. While Europe was still immersed in barbarism, China had already entered the period of feudalism. Her influence on Europe was indirect, but profound. From China, Europe received the printing press and gunpowder. China was then a Mecca for European traders, a legendary storehouse of treasure for envious eyes in the West. But three centuries before the first cracks were to appear in China's feudalism, the industrial revolution began to topple feudalism in Western Europe. The printed word helped spread the challenge to the old order. Once the capitalist was enthroned, his new order went in search of markets and raw materials. He used gunpowder to seize both on the undeveloped continents of Asia and Africa.

While Europe was forging swiftly ahead of Asia, China was suffering overland invasion, the despotic rule of the foreign Manchus, the indignities of foreign armies on her soil. But it was in the nineteenth century that Western imperialism subjected her to the bitterest humiliations.

It was the century of the "big grab." England seized Hongkong, forced China to grant her extraterritorial rights and brought opium into the country under the threat of bombarding the coast. Japan took over Korea and Taiwan.[1] France grabbed Indo-China. Germany helped herself to various mainland cities. Czarist Russia seized key ports in Manchuria. The United States, with its own frontier to develop, arrived on the scene as a "Johnny-come-lately." Finding itself in a special position it devised a special formula. It helped itself to the Philippines and pressed for "equal rights" with the other powers in China. It summed up its policy in the demand for an "open door," which to the Chinese people meant a policy of "me too."

While the imperialist powers profited through their privileged positions in the country, the people were borne down by universal poverty, disease, illiteracy and repression. But the feudal landlord class, which had tradi-

[1] Formosa.

tionally allied itself to the ruling dynasties, remained fat and corrupt. When the peasants revolted, they were always crushed by the alliance of their own feudal rulers and foreign armies. But as the Western powers kept cutting into China, more and more Chinese, especially students and intellectuals, came into contact with Western techniques, history and progressive thought.

In the first decade of the twentieth century the movement for national independence found its greatest spokesman, Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Now, too, a new factor entered the situation in the spread of nationalist ideas among the soldiers of the native army the Manchus had formed. In 1911 sections of the army revolted, the Manchu dynasty was overthrown, and the Chinese Republic was established under the presidency of Sun Yat-sen at Nanking.

At the beginning the change was little more than a change of outer trappings. The landlords and bureaucrats remained. Vast areas of the country were ruled by local war lords who opposed Sun and joined avidly in conspiracies with foreign powers against him. Dr. Sun still faced the problem of expelling imperialism, of unifying the country, establishing a truly national government, defeating the old feudal clique and introducing reforms overdue for centuries. The World War of 1914-1918 accelerated the process.

The defeat of Germany and Austro-Hungary removed them from the bloc of powers exercising their imperialist sway over China. After the October Revolution in Russia the new socialist state renounced all the Czarist privileges in the country and openly declared its sympathy with the colonial world's aspirations for full independence. Along with the weakening of the bloc of foreign powers holding China in their grip, two new elements now appeared inside the country to strengthen the national independence movement. In the special conditions of the war the first steps towards local manufacture had been taken. This had produced a native class of industrialists and a new working class. The industrialists, irked by the economic disabilities they suffered at the hands of outside powers

despoiling China's economy, desired a strong government that would protect their interests. The working class, though still small, was a cohesive element that made itself felt through compact organization, was strongly influenced by the Russian revolution, and gave birth to the Chinese Communist Party.

Around Sun there now grew a coalition, first, of workers and peasants, increasingly led by the Communists, and second, of the national *bourgeoisie* and Kuomintang party. The program of the coalition was expressed in Sun's Three People's Principles — national independence, democracy, improvement of the people's living conditions; and in his Three Great Policies — active anti-imperialism, co-operation with Soviet Russia, support of the workers' and peasants' movements.

When Sun Yat-sen died in 1925 conditions were ripe for putting an end to the "era of the war lords." At Canton an army of a new type had been created as a result of the co-operative efforts of the Communist and Kuomintang parties. Its officers were trained at the famous Whampoa Military Academy, of which Chiang Kai-shek was president and Communist Chou En-lai was dean. There now began what came to be known as the Northern Expedition, the march of the Kuomintang-Communist army against the war lords and the strongholds of foreign influence in other parts of the country.

The Expedition roused tremendous popular support among the people. By 1927 the coalition forces were at the gates of Shanghai, chief center of foreign influence. Between Canton and Shanghai the war lords were overthrown. Britain, France and the United States brought troops into the country, but found it prudent not to use them. Inside Shanghai itself the workers, led by Chou En-lai, who stole into the city in disguise, rose up in revolt against the local militarist bureaucrats and seized control before the army entered.

The last will and testament of Sun Yat-sen, it seemed, was on the road to fulfillment. But now the influential industrialists, yesterday's feudal landlords, took fright. In the new power of the people, demon-

strated so dramatically at Shanghai, and in the enthusiastic demand for social reform, they saw the possible eclipse of their own economic and political domination. At the suggestion of foreign representatives, and operating through the right wing of the Kuomintang, they quietly cast about for ways and means of halting the popular upsurge and effecting a compromise with the feudal elements and foreign interests that would guarantee their own privileged position. As their "strong man" they selected Chiang Kai-shek.

Now, without warning, Chiang turned on his working-class and peasant allies, ordered the physical extermination of the Communist party, had thousands of labor and peasant leaders put to death, disarmed and incarcerated left-wing troops, suppressed every vestige of liberal thought. Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles and Three Great Policies were discarded. The fight against the war lords was shelved. The first stage of the people's united effort to achieve a democratic, independent China was over, betrayed by the Kuomintang in an unparalleled bloodbath.

But it was only the first stage. Though badly mauled, the Communists and those who stood by them led their surviving troops to the province of Kiangsi, where they set up a revolutionary base.

In the special setting of semifeudal, semicolonial China, they were a proletarian party leading a peasants' agrarian revolt with an organized army.

Despite Japan's known blueprints for aggression against the Chinese mainland, Chiang raised loans in the United States and launched large-scale military action against the Kiangsi region. Thus began the second stage: the Ten-Year Civil War.

Taking advantage of the civil war, Japan jumped the gun on her imperialist rivals and moved into Manchuria, conquering the vast northern province in short order and setting up a puppet Manchu emperor. Chiang paid little attention. Without even bothering to break off diplomatic relations with Tokyo, he concerned himself soiely with wiping out the Kiangsi Communists.

In 1932 the Kiangsi Communists, staving off all Kuomintang efforts to suppress them, called upon Chiang to stop the Civil War, and urged the people to work for a united, national front against the Japanese aggressor. Chiang replied by sending another military expedition against the Communists. Many of Chiang's troops went over to the Communists, many others surrendered.

The appeals to Chiang Kai-shek for joint action against the Japanese were based on the thesis that "the greatest oppression suffered by China is national oppression." Therefore, "the Chinese national *bourgeoisie* can, in certain periods and to a certain extent, participate in the struggles against imperialism and the feudal war lords."[2] But Chiang rejected all appeals. From June 1932 to February 1933 he put half a million men into the field against Kiangsi. Again he was badly defeated. But in October 1933, when he used a million troops, he met with some initial successes. Differences in the Communist leadership had led to a reliance on defensive tactics alone. The struggle against this policy was led by Mao Tse-tung. Mao called for a more flexible strategy of mobile warfare. He also proposed a breath-taking move — transfer of the Communist armies to the northern province of Shensi, where they could better repel Chiang's attacks and take military action against the Japanese. Mao's policy finally prevailed.

Thus, in 1934, began the famous Long March, an epic trek on foot 8000 circuitous miles from Kiangsi to the province of Shensi. Thousands of troops died on the way. The rest were harried by Chiang's armies. But under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh, 30,000 hardened veterans in 1935 reached Shensi, where the local Communists had prepared the way for them. Here, with Yenan as their capital, they set up the first anti-Japanese base in China pledged to resist Japanese aggression.

Now that they had come close to the Japanese, Tokyo threatened Chiang with dire consequences unless the

[2] Mao Tse-tung.

Communists were suppressed. Chiang set up a special Pacification Headquarters at Sian and sent another expeditionary force against the new anti-Japanese base. But now the demand for an end to the Civil War and for the defense of China was sweeping the entire country. Not only did the soldiers of Chiang's expeditionary force refuse to fight, but its highest officers negotiated an unofficial truce with the Communists. Alarmed, Chiang went to Sian in person to repair the situation, only to be kidnapped by his own officers in the sensational "Sian Incident," when his life was saved by the diplomatic intervention of the very Communists he had sought to suppress.

Out of the "Sian Incident" came the agreement to end the Civil War and to join all the forces of the Chinese people in resistance to Japanese aggression. At Sian, Chiang at last faced the fact that soldiers and civilians alike would accept no other course. He submitted to popular demand and reached an agreement with the Communists to resist the Japanese. When the Japanese struck again in the summer of 1937, the Communist base had spread northwest from Shensi to Ninghsia and west to Kansu. By agreement with the Kuomintang the three provinces were recognized as an autonomous "special district" under the National Administration. The Red Army, now with about 80,000 troops, was renamed the 8th Route National Revolutionary Army, functioning with its own leaders under the National Military Council. Now the third stage had begun: the anti-Japanese war.

As the Japanese drove southwards into the provinces of Shansi, Hopei and Chahar, northeast of the new "special district," the 8th Route Army troops moved into the provinces to contact other Chinese units and to set up a new "military district" known as Chin-Cha-Chi in the Japanese rear. Now, no matter how precariously the revived coalition between the Communists and the Kuomintang might develop, a bulwark had been erected in the north against the invader.

It was for this area that Bethune left Hankow by train on February 22. His route lay across mountains, rivers, wild country, roadless valleys. Ten days after he left Hankow, newspaper correspondents cabled the American press that he had been caught and killed in the interior by the Japanese.

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While inquiries flew thick and fast between New York, Hankow and Yenan concerning his reported death, Bethune was playing cat and mouse with the Japanese armies coming down from the north.

One day out of Hankow he reached Chengchow, a railway center that had just been bombed. After sleeping overnight on a bench near the railway station he left the ruined city for Tungkwan, where he crossed the Yellow River on a junk and entrained again on the Tung Kou line that ran north into Shansi.

The train chugged slowly along the east bank of the Fen River and into the hollow between two mountain ranges. This was the beginning of China's strange loess country, the low, brownish-ocher mountains that continued for hundreds of miles, in terraces that rose one upon the other like gigantic, man-made staircases.

He passed numerous trains traveling down the line packed with refugees fleeing from the Japanese. On every southbound train they filled the coaches, sat precariously on the carriage roofs, swarmed over the engine, hung onto the steps and the couplings. They went by silently, with the same parched look as the fields about them, too weary to raise their eyes to the thousands of ducks that flew overhead in great, flapping clouds.

Several times, during the day, the train stopped at wayside stations where vendors sold hot millet soup, noodles, tea, fried hare, wheat rolls, steamed buns, hard-boiled eggs. After two days of travel they reached Linfen, only to find that they would have to turn back.

The Linfen station, as they pulled in, was jammed with civilians carrying all their possessions, and wounded

soldiers, arms, legs and heads wrapped in dusty, red-streaked bandages. The Japanese were a short distance from the city, they were coming on quickly, and the population was being evacuated. In the chaos that was spreading through the streets Bethune tried to locate the headquarters of the local Communist troops. But with the Japanese advancing, it had been moved — nobody seemed to know where. All trains, he discovered, were now heading southward only, with as many evacuees as they could carry.

At four in the afternoon the first wave of Japanese bombers came over. Bethune was caught at the station, among flatcars loaded with mules, rice and munitions. With hundreds of evacuees he sat out the bombardment in trenches that had been dug in the sand. A few hours later, with the fall of the city imminent and all hope of transportation beyond the city obviously impossible, he reluctantly agreed to make the two-day return trip to Tungkwan on the last train to leave.

He got his luggage aboard a boxcar filled with rice bags almost to the roof, climbed in and went to sleep as the train pulled out. At 3 a.m. he awoke to discover that his car had been uncoupled at a town called Goasi, twenty-five miles below Linfen, that he was stranded, and that the Japanese were coming down the railway line from Linfen.

But in the deserted town luck came his way in the person of an 8th Route Army officer, a Major Lee. The major examined the abandoned boxcar, decided the rice was too valuable a prize to be left for the Japanese, organized a corps of volunteer peasants to get it out of the menaced town, and calmly informed Bethune he could get him by mule cart to Yenan. In his diary Bethune recorded the rest of the journey:

February 28: It was as simple as that. To get to Yenan we would have to travel three hundred miles westward. On foot and by mule cart! It would mean crossing the river into Shensi. There would be two more rivers to cross once inside Shensi. (No bridges, of course!) Then

would come the range of mountains. But all of this didn't seem unusual to the soldiers of the 8th Route Army.

Waiting for final arrangements I wandered about the deserted town. For food I bought a quarter of a pig in the streets for $1.40. From up the line groups of ten and twenty wounded came straggling in by day and night. The enemy's guns could be heard clearly, but getting out ahead of the Japanese seemed old hat to Major Lee's men.

We left Goasi with a caravan of forty-two carts loaded with sacks of rice, each cart pulled by three mules. It was a fine, brilliant day. I walked ahead of the caravan, enjoying the clear, dry air. Many towns lay along the way, but because of the news of the advancing Japanese the inhabitants had closed their gates and we were forced to go round the walls in open country and pick up the road on the other side.

Our first brush with the enemy came in mid-afternoon, when we were only four hours out of Goasi. I was walking alongside the leading cart when I saw two bombers going south about two miles on our left. They spotted us at once. Forty-two carts stretched out over a quarter of a mile, with no anti-aircraft guns anywhere about and not a single Chinese pursuit plane in the entire province. We must have simply made their mouths water! We were sitting birds asking to be knocked off, and they proceeded to knock us off to the best of their ability. While one of them stayed high, the other swept over us at a height of about five hundred feet. Our military escort consisted of five men and five boys, armed with a total of five old rifles. With the drivers and our escort I left the carts and lay out on the bare ground. There wasn't a stone or tree to give protection.

As we watched, the first bomber came back, so low I could have hit him with a baseball, and bombed the lead section of the caravan — but missing by about fifty feet! He swept on to the rear carts, dropping another four bombs — this time with more effect. This time I could hear the outcry of the wounded.

Our casualties were four men wounded, fifteen mules killed, twelve mules disabled. Major Lee arranged immediate payment to the drivers for all the dead mules — one hundred Mexican dollars for each mule. This, I found, was the set policy of the 8th Route Army. Anything received from the people was paid for.

I treated the wounded and we cut the dead and disabled animals from the wrecked carts. We were now down to twenty carts, less than half the number we had set out with. We travelled all through a dark and overcast night, sleeping on top of the bags of rice, jarred to the bone on the uneven road.

March 1: At five a.m. we reached the bank of the River Fen again, where we found a village inn. We got four hours sleep on the inn's *k'angs* with their hard clay tops, rising at nine for a breakfast of sweet fermented rice water, heated, with an egg beaten up in it.

Opposite us on the far bank was the city of Kiangchow. The Japanese, we heard, were coming down the railway at a fast pace from Linfen. We were the rear of the rearguard! We and the walking wounded.

Japanese airplanes flew overhead all morning as we crossed over to Kiangchow. The river was about 200 yards wide at this point, muddy, waist-deep and fast.

Kiangchow lay atop a hill, and as I made my way up I could see two steeples of a Roman Catholic Church of the French style. I made for the Church. Except for some merchants and beggars the city was deserted. I found it interesting that these two classes were all that remained — the relatively wealthy and the beggared. The men of property awaited the coming of the Japanese with some fear and trembling, but their goods were more important than their fears. They preferred to stay with their property under the Japanese rather than take their chances on freedom with their countrymen. Typical the whole world over!

At the Church I found the usual mission compound, now filled with the families of church members seeking refuge. The staff included an apostolic missionary, a

Dutch priest and a French priest. They welcomed me cordially, opened a bottle of red wine, gave me a fragrant cigar, and offered me overnight lodging. We had some interesting conversation in a mixture of a lot of English and very little French.

They expected the Japanese to arrive in 36 hours. What, I asked, did they intend to do then? A shrug of the shoulder. But hadn't the Japanese been ruthless with Christians as well as Chinese? Did they expect the invader to respect the French flag on the Church spire? They agreed that there had been "unfortunate" atrocities, that some missionaries had already been killed, but they would stay with their parishioners. I admired their courage. When I bade them good-bye the next day, thanking them for their hospitality, one of them said: "I hope we meet again on earth. If not, then in heaven."

We started out at 1:30 p.m., after every bag of rice had been carried across the river on the backs of the porters. As we left Kiangchow the news was that the Japanese were twenty-five miles away, and their cavalry even closer. We were relieved to have the river between us and the enemy.

We covered sixty li (twenty miles) by evening, walking all the way, and spent the night at a little village called Chi-Shan.

March 2: We were off early. No soldiers were to be seen — only the walking wounded.

As I walked ahead of the two carts I saw a young lad up the line stopping to rest every once in a while. When I finally came abreast of him I noticed he was very short of breath. He was a mere child of seventeen. On the front of his faded blue jacket there was a great stain of blood, dark and old. I forced him to stop and examined him. He had been shot through the lung a week before, and had been left with a badly suppurating wound of the upper right anterior chest wall. There was no dressing. The bullet had gone through the lung and come out at the back. There was fluid in the pleural cavity up as high as the third rib in front. The heart was displaced three inches to the left. The boy had been walking in