

# NANKING'S SILENCE TERRIFIES SHANGHAI

## Appalling Casualties Among 300,000 Civilians Feared— No News, Say Japanese

### 18 AMERICANS IN CAPITAL

## Chiang Kai-shek Says Loss of City Strengthened China's Determination to Fight

Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

SHANGHAI, Wednesday, Dec. 15.

—Japanese Army, Embassy and Navy spokesmen mysteriously profess an utter lack of information regarding conditions in Nanking, although nearly two days have elapsed since the city was completely occupied, according to their claims.

The only information offered was that aviators reported yesterday that most of the city was still ablaze but that fighting had ceased. The spokesmen said they were unable to give out any information concerning the fate of the foreigners remaining in Nanking, the condition of embassy properties, the possible slaughter of civilians, the number of prisoners taken and the extent of property damage.

Pressed for an explanation of this lack of tidings from the captured city, the spokesmen said transmission was slow because the headquarters of General Iwane Matsui, the Japanese commander in the Shanghai-Nanking area, had been moved a considerable distance from Shanghai.

When reminded that several Japanese warships had arrived in Nanking Monday night, the navy spokesman insisted they had not sent any wireless reports to the flagship Izumo here.

This incredible blockade of detailed information regarding Japan's great victory is increasing Shanghai's fears that the 300,000 civilians remaining in Nanking probably suffered appalling calamities during the siege.

In another air raid at Nanchang yesterday the Japanese Navy spokesman said bombers had destroyed twenty-eight Chinese planes of forty seen grounded there at two airdromes. Most of the planes were new Soviet-made craft, the spokesman said. None went aloft to meet the raiders.

### No News of Eighteen Americans

SHANGHAI, Wednesday, Dec. 15 (AP).—The fate of eighteen Americans who remained in Nanking was in doubt as two days of silence passed after the Japanese occupied the abandoned capital. Fragmentary reports over disrupted communications channels told of tremendous casualties among Chinese troops and civilians in Nanking.

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek sent a message to the nation from "somewhere behind the Chinese lines" minimizing the importance of Japan's capture of Nanking.

"The chief significance of Nanking's fall," the generalissimo declared, "is the strengthening of China's determination to continue the campaign of resistance because, the seat of government having been moved elsewhere, Nanking no longer possesses political or military importance."

Japanese, however, appeared to view the capture of Nanking as destruction of Chiang Kai-shek's authority.

Chinese acknowledged that the Japanese had occupied Pukow, terminal city of the railroad to Tientsin and the last avenue of overland escape from Nanking. From Pukow, across the Yangtze River from Nanking, they said Chinese forces had withdrawn to Puchen, the next station, about one mile north.

The Japanese said they had no information of military operations beyond Nanking.

A new outbreak of fighting at Hohsien, upriver from Nanking, between retreating Chinese and Japanese advance forces again imperiled survivors of the United States gunboat Panay, which was bombed and sunk Sunday.