

The Shanghai Evening Post - Saturday April 23, 1949

The 20th century was extraordinary for China. The ancestral monarchy was abolished with the fall of the Qing Dynasty in 1911. The new Republic faced constant revolutions, foreign invasions, Japanese encroachment, a long civil war that ending in the Communist Revolution and continued civil strife, disasters, famines and bloody political infighting.

The most enduring and important of all these convulsions was the successful revolution of Mao Zedong's "popular" army which fought a long war against the "Nationalist" government riddled with corruption and blamed for massive economic mismanagement and chaos.

After three years of full-scale civil war, by January 1949, Beijing, the former imperial capital, fell to the communist forces without a fight. The demoralised and undisciplined nationalist troops

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FRONT PAGE, SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 1949

Nanking Abandoned; Red Agents Active

US Advises Evacuation

Nationalist General Retreat Said Started Along Yangtze Front; Nanking City Looted

Communist Column Drives Toward Wusih

Police Quit, Mobs Looters Overrun

War Clouds Darken

3rd Notice Issued Here By Cabot

were on the run. From then on, one after another, the important cities in the north fell into Communist hands. By April, the then capital Nanking, not far from the world famous commercial and economic centre of Shanghai, was sur-

rounded and finally fell. According to this newspaper, the city had long been infiltrated by communists who became extremely active and tried to organise a new administration when the government abandoned the city.

This is how Shanghai learned about the impending doom of the capital of China: "Unopposed capture of Nanking by the Communists appeared to be a matter of hours today as Nationalist troops, police and the government itself evacuated the capital and mobs immediately begun looting with no police in the streets. Troops and gendarmes began moving out of the city at 4 a.m. in trucks, motor cars and on horseback. Highways leading south were jammed. Train service was suspended around midnight. As far as could be learned, there was little standing in the path of the massed Red armies pouring in from both west and east and joining south of Nanking for a concentrated drive on Shanghai".

Among the confusion and the chaos, Shanghai itself was on a war footing, ready to be also evacuated soon.