

X - 78 - 59. Unidentified news clip dated December 8, 1943. "Our
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Our Pacific Relations

A considerable number of Annistonians who attended the meeting of the Rotary Club and the Exchange Club Tuesday noon and night were given considerable food for thought with respect to our relations in the Pacific after this global war has been fought to a finish. Miss Agnes Smedley, who probably knows the Chinese of all classes as well as any other American, posed some of the problems of that great country and in the evening address the Rev. Gifford Gordon, a native Australian, spoke feelingly with respect to the Good Neighbor part the United States always has played in the Far East, with particular regard to our relations with the people of his native land.

The Chinese are fighting for a better world, according to Miss Smedley; and with the experience and the educational training they are receiving as a result of the war, the masses of the people will be in position to demand and to work for a higher standard of living hereafter than they have ever enjoyed before. Illiteracy has been reduced from 60 to 70 per cent in the Chinese armies, said Miss Smedley, and it is her firm conviction that the Chinese people will never be willing to go back to the economic inequalities that existed before the Japanese invasion.

The educational work that is being carried on in the Chinese armies is worthy of consideration by our own authorities. War correspondents tell us, for instance, that our fighting men, by and large, are not nearly as alert to the issues involved in the war as are the British, who also have taken their schools to the front, as it were. Appreciating this fact, it was proposed some time ago to set up an organization to stimulate discussion within the ranks of our own troops. Herbert Agar, noted author and editor, was to have direction of this work, although little has been heard of it recently.

Be that as it may, the boys are coming back from the front with broader visions and with a more pronounced consciousness of their stake in America than they have ever had before. The same will be true with respect to their own countries of the armies of the rest of the world and the statesman who cannot comprehend the implications of this tremendous fact is blind indeed. The status quo ante just will not be good enough, and unless we continue to go forward toward the building of a better world we shall be faced in the years to come with a more explosive world situation than that with which we are grappling today.

Uncle Sam will come out of this war as the greatest power in the Pacific Ocean. That fact imposes obligations. It means that we cannot afford to lose the friendship of the peoples "down under" about whom the Rev. Mr. Gordon spoke so glowingly to the Exchangeites, and neither can we overlook the vast potentialities for both good and evil that are inherent in the rebirth of China. Nothing short of a sincere application to all peoples of the world of the principles of the Atlantic Charter will suffice.