

TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE

May 3, 1984

KLEIN: Dr. Chen—perhaps we can start by having you tell us where you were born and when you were born.

CHEN: Well—I was born in Foochow, in Fukien province, China, in 1902. You talk about modernization in China, 1902 was the year that the official imperial examinations were abandoned, and a school system brought in. That was the year. So, for those who study the school system—or, what shall we say—the first school system—modern schools in a system came in 1902.

KLEIN: You were born together, then.

CHEN: Yeah. You see, before that, there had been schools, neighborhood, Christian schools, translation schools and so on, but they were never coordinated into a system of schools, you see. The first system of modern schools, established in 1902, was imitated from the Japanese. And the Japanese had been influenced by the Germans, the German-Japanese model that was brought into China, the first system of schools, in 1902. And then it was ten years later, after the Republic was formed, that the American system was brought in, what we know of as 6-3-3. So I always think of 1902 as the beginning of modernization, from the side of education, from the aspect of education. It's rather an important date.

I was born there, and fortunately my parents were modern people. My father had for some years been a teacher in a missionary school. He taught English, of all things.

KLEIN: What was his name?

CHEN: Kenneth—Kenneth Chen. And actually—his Chinese name was Kai-cheng. He taught English. And he was so good. He taught English with better pronunciation and better grammar than I do today. Really!

KLEIN: How did he learn his English?

CHEN: From missionary teachers. He turned into a very good grammarian. My mother had taught in a missionary school for girls—so she learned English too. Not as much as my father. She never taught English. She taught other things. And so—I had parents who were quite in touch with the modern world—the modern system. That was an advantage for which I've always been grateful.

KLEIN: What was your mother's name?

CHEN: My mother's was—she also used—Bessie—and the Chinese name is Yu-ping. Because of that influence—we had a very good friend—American lady who never got married. She spent her

life in China--who was principal of the school where my mother was teaching. When I was born in the American lady Miss Chitterden said "Oh I know a name--a right name for him. That was the age of Theodore Roosevelt. So she said "Name him Teddy Theodore. So I have had the name of Theodore longer than any other name in my life. You know Chinese names often change and I've changed two or three times.

KLEIN: But not Theodore.

CHEN: Not Theodore. "Hsi-en I didn't use in the beginning. I didn't Hsi-en until I went to college. Some other Chinese name. Now you see my middle name is Hsi-en Theodore Hsi-en Chen. That was adopted after I went to college. Theodore has been my name all these years.

KLEIN: Did you parents speak primarily English at home?

CHEN: Oh no. They spoke only Chinese at home, all the time.

KLEIN: What did they call you, as a child?

CHEN: They called me Teddy.

KLEIN: Even when they were speaking Chinese?

CHEN: Oh yes. They all called me Teddy. And my Chinese friends they all called me sinicized pronunciations of Teddy. Oh they called me all kinds of things. "T'ai-tei, "T'o-tei, "T'e-tei. "Tei they could get but "T'e was difficult for them. They called me by all kinds of names but I knew they were calling me. They were all approximations of "Teddy. So I have had that name in my early years. My Chinese name was almost a transliteration of "Teddy. I graduated and my father thought that well better change. "Hsi means "gift, "en means "grace. "Theodore, he said was the "gift of God. Theodore. "Theo is "God, and "dore. "Theodore, he said is the "gift of God, and so he picked a Chinese name that connotes the idea of the "gift of God. And actually "Hsi-en is the "gift of grace, meaning "God's grace.

Now in my schooling I went to school in the missionary schools. They had a better program in English than in Chinese but I always had home tutors in Chinese. All throughout my formative years my teenage years-- All throughout what we call what here would be considered the first twelve years of schooling during all that time I had a tutor at home who taught nothing but Chinese classics to supplement what I was getting in the missionary schools.

KLEIN: The missionary school's classes were all taught in English then?

CHEN: Oh no. Only the English class. Oh they taught Chinese too. Most of the-- mathematics--all were in Chinese. But my father felt that because of the sciences and so on and so forth were in English and the American teachers would dominate the scene. My father felt that I should have a classical old Chinese education on the side to balance. All throughout that period I had a classical Chinese education.

KLEIN: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

CHEN: Yes—I had--still have two brothers and three sisters. They are living.

KLEIN: Are they living in China or the United States?

CHEN: One is living in the United States. There are two brothers and two sisters in China. Do you want to know what they do?

KLEIN: Sure.

CHEN: One of the brothers is an M.D. He graduated from--it used to be called the Rockefeller Hospital—Peking Union Medical College (P.U.M.C.). They always dubbed it "the Rockefeller Hospital. It's all from Rockefeller money. It was—no doubt—the best-equipped—most modern hospital in that part of the world. Taken over, now, by the government. P.U.M.C.--Peking Union Medical College--it was called. "Hsieh-ho; "union.

It was a regular westernized medical education—for which he paid a very heavy price during the Cultural Revolution. He was sent to the rural areas for five years. He was kept away from his medical practice for seven years, two years in solitary confinement. His family didn't even know where he was for the simple reason that he was considered too religious. He was a very religious man. They said—"All right. We will put you in a place where you can read your Bible. And that's all--they would not let him do anything. But now—after the Cultural Revolution—he is rehabilitated. And now in Foochow—only the high cadres and the officials get to see him. You see, The other people see these so-called "barefoot doctors. He takes care of only the V.I.P.'s. It's an ironical situation. But he is very well off now—today. Another brother graduated from college in biology—and he has been teaching biology and English. His English is good too. My brothers all speak very good English. And he still teaches. His son and daughter are both here, one of his sons and one of his daughters are here. My niece—his first daughter—graduated from U.S.C. in computer science at the end of the year. There are my two brothers. My two sisters there—one has been a school teacher and is now retired now. She's a very good science and mathematics teacher. That's what she studied in college, she never had the advantage of going abroad. Then the other sister had been a nurse, she's retired too—now. And then the other--count four of them there. One other sister—who is next to the youngest, she's older than my youngest brother. She's married here, she's a school teacher too—here in Los Angeles. So—that's my family.

KLEIN: Among the six children, where do you fall?

CHEN: Actually—there were eight. Two of them died—one after another—one summer—of an epidemic of bubonic plague. In China—during those years—every summer the two things people feared° cholera and bubonic plague. There was nothing anybody could do.

KLEIN: Did they die as children?

CHEN: They died as children. One was teenaged—the other was a very small baby.

KLEIN: Among the eight children, where do you fall?

CHEN: I was the oldest. So I have always taken care of them. In Chinese, you know, the eldest. . . I was the eldest, and I have always supported, after I graduated from college, I supported my family and helped the younger ones study and pay their tuition. That's part of the Chinese system.

KLEIN: Where in Foochow did you live? Was it on Nan-t'ai Island?

CHEN: In Foochow City, "ch'eng-li." How do you know Nan-t'ai?

KLEIN: Just by maps; I have never been there.

CHEN: The school where I taught, after graduating from college was in Nan-t'ai. It was called the Anglo-Chinese College.

KLEIN: Did you attend that school?

CHEN: No, I taught there. In China at that time, there were three major lines of educational work by missionaries. One was by the, at that time called the Congregationalist, and later on became the Church of Christ in China, the Congregationalist Church. Another was the Methodist, and one was the Anglican. They all rented their own elementary school/high school. And all their high schools were called "colleges, because they were the European system, British system. Their secondary school would go two years beyond our high school, our secondary schools, here. So they were called colleges. And mine was called Foochow College.

KLEIN: Was it Anglican?

CHEN: No, mine was Congregationalist. Foochow College. Then the missionaries felt there was in China a need of higher education. It would be foolish for all of them to establish colleges. So all of them got together and combined to establish Union College. And that became called Fukien Christian Union College. Later on, after they joined, they changed it to a university, with four colleges. So it became known as the Fukien Christian University. Now, it was Fukien Christian University that I attended. There, the students had come mostly from these three different high schools. Because the government schools, the public schools, had not taught enough English. In the university, at that time it was a college, practically all the work was done in English, except in those that were better taught in Chinese, basically, Chinese classics, strictly Chinese literature. They were taught in Chinese, of course. All the rest were mostly taught by American teachers. I studied English literature class under a Walsh. He was very hard. [Knock at door,

tape recorder turned off.]

KLEIN: Let's back up a little bit. Maybe you could tell me what Foochow was like, in general, to live in at that time.

CHEN: Foochow at that time had a population of about three hundred thousand. It was one of the treaty ports—the original treaty ports. The so-called "opening of China, after the Second Anglo-Chinese War. From the coast on. There was Swatow—Foochow—Ningpo—_____— and then up to the North. They were the original treaty ports. And so—Foochow had always been considered a center of missionary activity. I think—at that time—there probably were more mission schools in Foochow than in most other places. The Anglican Church—at that time—was staffed mostly by Britons—English.

KLEIN: St. Mark's, was it?

CHEN: No—it was Anglo-Chinese. No—excuse me—it was called Trinity—Trinity College. The Anglo-Chinese is Methodist. Trinity College—and they had their own system. We all came to this Fukien Christian College. We studied there. After studying for four years—I graduated—and went to teach in the Methodist high school. That was the Anglo-Chinese. I taught there for two years. After two years teaching there—in 1924—I came to this country. I went straight to Columbia. At that time—later on—we will go back and tell why—well—Columbia—at that time—was the rage in China. John Dewey had gone there—and so on. And among the people who came—the big leaders—the Chinese term is "liu hsueh sheng," returned students. Among the returned students—well—Hu Shih—and so on and so forth. Most of them were engaged in education—and the educational leaders in China—for the new education—were American-trained and—mostly—Columbia-trained. So I went straight to Columbia. At that time—we all came on ship—and had to take first class. Some of them had taken third class^o cheaper—and so on. They called it steerage. As soon as they landed—they were put in detention. And you never know when you get out. So—I took the "Empress of Asia, which was Canadian.

KLEIN: I think we are getting ahead of ourselves a little bit. At Foochow College—that you attended—you took English literature from a Mr. Walsh. Were there any other teachers that were of particular note?

CHEN: Well—the president was Edwin [Chester Jones. He was primarily chemistry. Then there was a man by the name of [Clarence Neff—who was here in Southern California for some time. He was a sociology man. Roderick Scott came later to U.S.C. and got his Ph.D. here at U.S.C.—but originally was from Erlim College. Erlim College is a Quaker College—in Iowa. There was quite a Quaker influence there. Roderick Scott and his wife—Mrs. Scott--she's now ninety-two—and we just went to see her the day before yesterday. Of course—I think she is very feeble now. She lives in a wheelchair—so we feel that we should-- I can't drive—I have to get people to drive to go out to see her. He passed away a few years ago. They were very active in China.

There was a man named Blakeney—who graduated from M.I.T. in mathematics and went out there to teach. He became president of a college somewhere in the South. [Clarence Neff was a sort of Congregationalist—but a very strong Quaker interest. During the First World War—he was in a difficult position because he was opposed to war, opposed to American participation in the war. The trouble was not over there, the trouble was between his mission board and him.

Anyway—you wanted the names of the people. These were some of the people.

KLEIN: They all taught at Foochow College.

CHEN: They all taught at Fukien. You were asking me for Foochow College→ the high school?

KLEIN: Yes.

CHEN: Oh, excuse me! No!

KLEIN: This was Fukien Christian University.

CHEN: This was F.C.U. You want the high school.

KLEIN: We can go back to there. There is not any particular order.

CHEN: Well→ my high school teachers are all gone now. There was Miss Wiley→ who was very strict. She taught English. In fact→ she taught arithmetic in English. And she would come and say→ "If you go out to buy a dozen eggs→ and the eggs were ten cents apiece→ how much did you pay? Then I would have to say→ "If I go out to buy a dozen eggs→ and the eggs cost ten cents apiece→ I would spend a dollar twenty cents. I would have to say all that.

KLEIN: You had to say the whole sentence.

CHEN: Oh→ yes. She was very strict. You always repeat the whole thing→ and then make a complete sentence. So actually→ we were studying English→ you see. Arithmetic was something incidental. Now→ you are talking about Foochow College. There is Miss Wiley. Then there was a Mr. Ray Gardener. Maybe he is still in Eagle Rock. He has retired now. He taught English→ too. There was a Newell→ who taught physics→ and I studied physics under him. All in English. Who else? There were quite a few of them. Most of the teachers were Americans. In that school→ there were no Britons→ no Englishmen. Only from Trinity. Then they came to the university→ and then it was there that I came into contact. Oh→ I had a terrible time with the British accent. Everything was in American→ and then they go "wha-wha-wha. "Where am I? I didn't know what I was doing.

KLEIN: You left Foochow College at the age of fifteen→ is that right?

CHEN: I left Foochow College→ completed secondary school→ by that time at the age of sixteen.

KLEIN: Was that a common age to leave?

CHEN: No→ that was early. I skipped a grade or two. Not quite sixteen. And I finished college at the age of nineteen→ just before I reached twenty. That summer→ when I graduated→ I was nineteen. So I went into teaching at the age of nineteen. The first time I made money→ and every month when I got my paycheck→ I took it home to give to my father→ and he decided what to give me for my board and my incidental expenses. The money belonged to him.

KLEIN: And when you went to school→ had you lived at home→ or at school?

CHEN: Well, when I was in high school, I lived at home. When I was in college, that was about eight miles outside on the river front. Eight miles is a long distance, so I lived in school. The Min River. I lived in school. Then, after, when I taught in Nan-t'ai, that was too far, too. So I lived in school at that time. And, so I say, I brought my paycheck home. My father gave me enough money to pay my board and for my incidentals. All the rest belonged to the family. Ever since then, I have been supporting, helping out my brothers, sisters, and my father, mother to day of their death.

Now, I have given you, I think, enough idea of the names of the Foochow College and the Fukien Christian University. I think that is enough.

KLEIN: You started at Fukien Christian University very soon after it formed.

CHEN: Oh, yes. It was formed about 1914, or something like that.

KLEIN: And besides the upper classes of the different schools, a lot of the faculty was drawn from the three?

CHEN: Well, with the exception of one or two persons, all the rest were Westerners, mostly Americans, then some British. The Anglo-Chinese College, Methodist, and the Foochow College, Congregationalist, would send Americans. Only the Trinity College was sending the Britons. So most of the teachers were Americans.

I had, also, one man, Kenneth Parker. Parker was a graduate-- Oh, by the way, I mentioned the word Gardiner, didn't I? Gardiner is a graduate of Pomona. Congregational, see? Pomona always had strong connections with Chinese education--the Chinese center in Pomona, at Claremont Graduate. There is actually a Pomona Chinese department over there. And for a long time, their president, for a number of years, had been the president of one of these thirteen union universities in China. "Union because it is interdenominational. No more division into Congregational, or--these things were forgotten. Just Christian.

KLEIN: You said the president of Pomona College . . .

CHEN: The president of Pomona College for a number of years until he retired.

KLEIN: What was his name?

CHEN: What is his name? I cannot think of it.

KLEIN: We can pick it up later. [Charles Keyser Edmunds, president of Canton Christian College--later Lingnan University]

CHEN: Oh, very easy, because he was the man who strengthened the China program in Pomona. Oh, I will come to the name later.

KLEIN: What sort of person was Roderick Scott? I know that later on, when he was dean of Fukien Christian, he was fairly influential upon you.

CHEN: I succeeded him as dean. Where did you read this Fukien Christian University? Did you get that book?

KLEIN: Yes.

CHEN: That was written by Roderick Scott, you see. The history. From the very beginning, he was a very active man. He was dean. In a small college, the dean was everything. He was registrar, he was dean. I was, too, when I followed him. Registrar, dean of men, dean of curriculum, dean of administration. Just Dean.

KLEIN: Took care of all the administrative details. And what did the president of the university do?

CHEN: Well, the president was more of the financial--

KLEIN: Fund-raising, and making sure that the thing ran.

CHEN: No, fund-raising is dealing with the board over here, the United Board. At first, it was the Congregational, the American Board. What church do you belong to?

KLEIN: From Baptist, originally.

CHEN: Baptist. Well, Shanghai College, later on Shanghai University, was by Baptists. Congregational was the American Board, Methodist was the Methodist Board, and the president had to keep in close touch with them, because, at that time, all of the support came from American sources, mission boards, different mission boards. Only two of the thirteen--well, I better say four, two were for women only--were single denomination. For example, Shanghai was Baptist, Soochow was Methodist. Soochow University was Methodist. There was Ginling College that was Methodist, and Hua-nan College. These are women's colleges. All the rest were interdenominational, of course, Protestant only. Presbyterian, China Inland Mission. All the major Protestant, and the Church of England, Episcopal. So that is the nature of these thirteen colleges. Later on, they were all joined in one, called the Chinese Christian Colleges Congress. If you have looked at this set of colleges, produced by the United Board, you have the basic facts there. I did not know you were able to get ahold of that. You have done a lot of homework. Very good. You are a very thorough person. I am more and more impressed by you after we are able to get along. You appear such a modest person, you do not talk much about yourself, but you are very thorough, very careful in your work.

Well, what else?

KLEIN: As for your teaching at the Anglo-Chinese College . . .

CHEN: I taught English only.

KLEIN: Did you begin teaching before you actually graduated?

CHEN: Before I graduated, Roderick Scott picked me up for his first assistant, teaching English. So I helped him. In China, teaching English is different from here. The English department is mostly literature, English literature. In China, English means grammar, making constructional sentences, making tenses agree, and that sort of thing. My father had been a grammarian, so I was pretty good in grammar. When I first came here, my colleagues commended me on my rather exact use of grammar, grammatical structure, and that sort of thing. Well, I was brought up that way. I was Scott's assistant. In the English class, everybody--the students--would hand in the compositions, essays, every week. The teacher would give a topic and you would write a topic, then the teacher would correct them and send them back to the student. The student would look them over, and then we would look them over again to see whether he understood the corrections or not. And I did most of that for Scott when I was in college.

So I had that experience, and after graduation, I went to this Anglo-Chinese College, and I began teaching English. At first, they had other Chinese teaching English, too, but most of the English classes were taught by Americans. There were several Americans teaching English. And usually, the Chinese would teach language, and then on the side, would teach geography, history, and that sort of thing. I was given, that first semester, that kind of combination. Evidently, I did fairly well, and the second semester, they gave me more classes. By the second year, I took charge of all the English classes. Three ladies who were my colleagues at Anglo-Chinese College are still here, teaching in Southern California. One is living in Riverside, one is in Pennsylvania, and the other is right here, up in Oregon.

KLEIN: Who was L. M. Heatherington?

CHEN: Oh, Heatherington. Heatherington is a very interesting person. His mother, evidently, had some means. Somehow, he used only one hand. The students all called him the "no-hand teacher, the "handless teacher. He was a very tempermental person, very easily got angry. If he did not like a student, he would hit the boy.

KLEIN: What did he teach?

CHEN: Well, he taught in English, of course. I forgot what he taught. I think he taught some athletics. He was in athletics. Oh, he got into trouble with students. His mother was with him. Later on, when I went in there as a teacher, we all called him "Heathy Heatherington. After I came to this country, I communicated with him quite often. Now, we have lost touch.

Another person that was very close to me was a man by the name of Al Willett. That is in high school, too, Foochow College. No, in Anglo-Chinese College, where I taught. A Methodist, too. He came back and became a Methodist minister. Al Willett was a bachelor, and nobody around, he was always close to these three girls that were teaching, these three ladies. He would say, "Join us. Don't you know how to enjoy female company? He was just fresh from college. And I said,

No→ I have never done that.

Well→ come in and sit down; Let's just have a good time.

Then→ when I came back→ his father owned a shoe store in Newark→ New Jersey. I used to go across the river to go to visit his father. Then he came back later and became a minister in New Jersey. We still hear from him once in a while. He drops in every once in a while to Southern California.

[Tape ends]

TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO

May 3, 1984

[The first twenty-three minutes of this side did not get recorded due to some technical problem. The conversation related to the May Fourth Movement in China and Dr. Chen's involvement in the student protests of the time.]

CHEN: . . . Yes→ they were very strong. [phone rings . . . all that effort→ if Dewey's influence had not been so great. Liberalism. They took his idea of how to think.

[phone rings→ tape recorder turned off]

KLEIN: Did Dewey's ideas→ in particular→ affect the way you approached education?

CHEN: I think so. My Columbia training was always important.

KLEIN: Was he a particular factor for you going to Columbia?

CHEN: No. At that time→ in the educational field→ all the top leaders in the field were from Columbia.

KLEIN: So it was the school rather than the person.

CHEN: And then→ above that→ there were more teachers. Science was not that hot at that time. So→ among the "returned students of those few years→ there were more in education than in any other field. Education and some in politics. A very few in economics.

[phone rings→ tape turned off]

KLEIN: Many of the people who→ in particular→ were emphasizing education in China→ were wanting to hold off on political activism during that period→ with the idea that education had to come first before agitation. Did you feel any of that tension yourself?

CHEN: No. Of course→ I had a very funny situation. My students at that time→ after I had graduated→ some of them were very hot-headed activists. I was with them all the time→ and I was helping to calm them down. And they accepted me because I had been through this whole struggle. So I had no trouble with them and I never felt that there was a confrontation.

Al Willett said--at Foochow→ there is a West Lake--"I want to go see West Lake."

I said, "Well, I can take you there."

"Well, would you mind if I bring a couple of girls along?"

"Well, if you have to, I will take them." So we went there.

Then→ the following week→ one of my students came to me and said→ "You went to West Lake→ didn't you?"

"Yes."

"Good thing so-and-so was there."

"Why?"

"They were waiting to jump on you. They did not want you to go around there and appear with the school authorities→ and that sort of thing. They are trying to suppress us. They were attacking teachers, and so on.

KLEIN: The government?

CHEN: The students, activists. And he was one of them.

And I said, "Who were they?"

"I don't want to give you his name→ but you almost got into very serious trouble."

Then→ just a week before I left to come to this country→ I was taking a shower at the Y.M.C.A.→ with my former student. And he said→ "I was the guy→ and stabbed a few people."

KLEIN: Literally "stabbed?"

CHEN: Stabbed. Oh→ yes. He said→ "But we decided to stop it→ so have a nice trip."

Four weeks after that, the dean--whose daughter now lives in Pasadena, retired--the dean of the Anglo-Chinese College said he had been threatened many times. At times, at night, he saw people hiding in the bushes.

KLEIN: Was this John Gowdy, by any chance?

CHEN: No, not John Gowdy. [phone rings] They would not touch Americans. A Chinese.

KLEIN: Do you remember his name?

CHEN: Yes, Mr. Wei, W. Wei. After the faculty meetings, we would every day go out and deal with the students. I offered, "I will walk you home. About a fifteen minute walk. "I don't mind, I will walk you home. If you get into any trouble, I don't think so. If I walk with you it is a little safer for me anyway."

One night, I did not know what he was doing, but he was stabbed. At seven o'clock in the morning, Havighurst (he was then in charge, Gowdy was in this country) came to see me and said, "We are calling an assembly at eight o'clock. At assembly, I was the official translator. Havighurst was speaking--any American speaking, I would be the translator--and he said he would announce this. Oh, that really hit me hard. "The one night I didn't take him home."

Later on I was told, "They knew you were protecting him, and they were waiting for a chance when you would slip. And you did not come that night. And they got him."

KLEIN: They stabbed him.

CHEN: Oh, yes. They did not hesitate. These people were the extreme activists. Of course, I personally was entirely opposed to that. I said, "I am with you if you present petitions, and ask for something. Even a one-day strike of classes, boycott classes. Of course. But not this sort of thing."

KLEIN: Were they attacking teachers mainly because they were authority figures?

CHEN: Yes.

KLEIN: Nothing, really, to do with what the teachers themselves believed. Kind of like the Cultural Revolution half a century later.

CHEN: Not quite, because they were acting, just a few people, on their own, no support behind them. Even the student body didn't approve of what they did. They were the most extreme. And I cannot say that they represent the students. Most of the students were against this. But, since you mentioned that, I think I should say that they were not representative of the students. Most of the students were very close to me, were opposed. But the reason I said that, in the form of your question about the antithesis, the confrontation, I personally was not so hurt by the cross-fire. [phone rings]

KLEIN: So you taught at the college for two years before deciding to go to Columbia. What in particular led you to that decision?

CHEN: Oh I had always said when I was a little kid "I am going to study in America. I do not know why. I wrote to all kinds of places and I got accepted. So I came.

[Tape ends]

TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE
May 11, 1984

KLEIN: We were just going to pick up where you left China on the "Empress of Asia, first class. Why again was it first class as opposed to steerage?

CHEN: Well the immigration problem was such that all Chinese--Orientals--were automatically sent from the steerage class to be sent for the temporary detention quarters and wait for processing. So students were advised if it is possible at all you should go in the first class. There were no problems. As first class passengers you could just get on and they take care of your immigration right away. This is U.S. Immigration.

So I went to Vancouver Victoria then Seattle. And from there on I went to New York on these old-fashioned Pullman cars, awful closed-in everything dark at night. I said "Goodness gracious; I don't see a thing."

KLEIN: What time of the year was it that you left?

CHEN: September 1924.

KLEIN: So you took the train from Seattle straight across to New York.

CHEN: And I was fortunate, I did not know where to live. A missionary friend met me and said "How are you?"

"Well I do not know how I feel. I do not want to stay long enough for my doctor's degree because I cannot stand this. Awful!"

KLEIN: This was New York.

CHEN: The whole experience the weather the train and so on and so forth. Oh I felt very bad.

"Well, do not make any decision now. We will just see."

But I was fortunate. He said "Well I do not know where you can live. I have looked around, apartments are quite expensive. Let's check into a hotel downtown. Prince George I think it was or something like that. We took a bus out and--Let's go to visit Columbia and see what happens. At Columbia "Well we will take a walk on Riverside Drive. I thought that was very pretty. Walking along he said "This is Grant's Tomb by the way. What's that big building? It is brand new. I never saw that before."

So they said "Well this is the new International House. Not quite ready yet. It will be ready in about two weeks when school begins. For foreign students. My first day in New York.

I said, "We do not want to check into a hotel, if possible."

"All right. Does not mind us a bit. You can go take the room and sleep."

So we went straight downtown on the bus took our luggage out and came back and stayed at the International House which was very nice. And so I was among the first residents of the International House 1924.

KLEIN: Before it officially opened.

CHEN: Before it opened. That was Rockefeller money you see. That in a way was very nice.

I went to register in Columbia Teachers College. This college had a brand new thing too that they never had before called the International Institute for Comparative Education of different countries, also supported by Rockefeller funds. So we all registered in that. And we said that was very good.

And one of the nicest things there--they had never tried it before, they could not take too many people, they took about twenty foreign students (German students French Italian--twenty people). There were only a few Chinese able to go. What they did was they wanted you to know America which is a good thing to do. So from New York we went to Boston, from Boston we took a ship boarded a ship in Boston and that took us all the way down to Newport Virginia--Hampton Grounds. It was nice to see the coastline, see the Statue of Liberty and so on. And from there on then we went by bus stopped in at little places all the way back to New York. And everywhere they had arranged for us to visit schools Rotary Clubs and various sorts of things.

One thing I always remember at Hampton we went to Tuskegee Institute. That was quite a novel experience.

Also a novel experience we went south of the Dixie Line. Gee this was something I could not understand. I remember I went in and I had never seen so many Negroes in my life. It just did not seem real to me. And when we came to a station a bus station it said--for drinking fountains and so on--"Colored, "White."

"Where do I go to drink? I asked the person who was accompanying us.

"Of course!"

And I said, "I am not white."

"But you don't want to go to `Colored.§ Oh↯ no; You had better go there."

That was the first experience of this segregation in the South that I had had.

KLEIN: Were you in the South↯ at that point↯ long enough to experience any reaction from local people?

CHEN: No. I did not live there↯ you see. That was my first real experience of what segregation meant in the South. And then the restrooms↯ all of the "Colored, "White. But the rest of it was very good that I got to know America. That was a good introduction. Then↯ of course↯ I went out and began to learn a good deal about America.

KLEIN: Were you feeling a little better about your stay there?

CHEN° Oh↯ yes. Then I had no problem after that.

[phone rings↯ tape recorder turned off]

KLEIN: Had anyone else in your family ever been abroad?

CHEN: No.

KLEIN: You were the first.

CHEN: I was the first.

KLEIN: Your parents had never gone abroad?

CHEN: No.

KLEIN: Did this tend to make you homesick?

CHEN: Oh↯ yes. I was very homesick↯ at first. There was always the cultural difference↯ and so forth. And people used to tease me and said↯ "Don't talk like that, that is not American. You read a book like that, you don't talk to people like that. They thought my English was too academic.

KLEIN: Too formal?

CHEN: Too formal. They said "You have to talk a regular way. Did you have an English teacher British?"

"Not exactly."

"That is something you have to iron out because it is not American."

But it did not take long. I got adjusted all right.

KLEIN: Did you find it comfortable being Chinese in New York in the mid- 20's? Did you have any problems?

CHEN: No. No great problems because in the neighborhood of Columbia there were a lot of foreign students Chinese students and living at the International House. Of course at the International Institute we had special programs to know America. I spent one whole day in the museum the Natural Museum. That was fantastic; But that was not America. For example we went to John D. Rockefeller. He invited a group of foreign students to go to his big place. But that was not America either.

KLEIN: Did you actually meet him?

CHEN: Oh yes. We actually met him. So we had a good introduction and actually the introduction served better to introduce you to the better side of American life. The other side the seamy side of American life had to come very slowly gradually when you well started to go around with other students. Not on these organized tours.

KLEIN: Why don't we talk, then, about your program at Columbia.

CHEN: Well I had chosen education because of John Dewey and all of that and of the first Chinese that came to study many of them were in education and I was interested in education. But then there was a very famous professor there Kandel--Jewish--Isaac [L. Kandel. Very eminent. [walks to shelf to get a book Even today this is still considered the first real-- Comparative Education. I think he's Jewish. Doesn't he sound like it "Kandel?"

KLEIN: I would think so.

CHEN: Very fine scholar. Very fine scholar.

KLEIN: Did you study directly with him, then?

CHEN: Oh yes. And there were few others. They had quite a group of people developing this field comparative education comparing school systems in different countries. And so that was the beginning of my interest. And when I came to U.S.C. I began teaching comparative education. That is how I began because at that time nobody was teaching comparative education.

Every year in the summer session U.S.C. got somebody from some other college to come and give courses in comparative education. Only in the summer. During the academic year no one could teach comparative education. So that was a field that I brought to this university and gradually worked into full-time in comparative education. That's what I taught. And of course I branched out into history philosophy of education. But my main interest has always been comparative education began at that time.

KLEIN: It seems that not only were Chinese students particularly drawn to Columbia in the 1920's but Columbia educators in the early 1920's at least kept making trips to China.

CHEN: Paul Monroe, an outstanding person.

KLEIN: Paul Monroe and John Dewey of course but also William H. McCall.

CHEN: Oh yes. William McCall the psychologist test man. I took a course with him. These were big names you see. They had been to China and so I said "This is the place for me. I want to stay here. There was a famous psychologist at that time Yale Thorndyke. I took a course with Thorndyke. Columbia had real big names in the field of education.

KLEIN: It was a masters program that you were on, is that right?

CHEN: Well I was on a masters program definitely leading to the doctoral. So after I had finished the masters requirements I went up. I took more courses seminars and so on.

KLEIN: So which if any of the professors at Columbia did you identify as your principle advisor? Is that how they worked?

CHEN: When I was there there was a dean a very old gentleman [Earl Russell. His son William Russell was in comparative education and he was my advisor. And later on he became dean and was dean for many many years until he retired. William Russell.

KLEIN: But you had taken courses with all the others.

CHEN: Oh yes. I took with John Dewey. After John Dewey was William H. Kilpatrick who was very well known at that time. I took more than one course with Kilpatrick in educational philosophy. I am in that field too. Of course I had the advantage that I had no problem using the library books. I read pretty easily and although my English was not colloquial enough to suit the college crowd yet I had no communications problem. And that helped. The professors liked what I wrote. My papers were very highly praised by the professors. I wrote very well but my speaking was not colloquial enough.

KLEIN: The years that you were at Columbia 1927 to 1929 were of particular importance in China. What kind of feelings did you have about being away from China when things such as the May Thirtieth Movement in 1925 and the Northern Expedition and the creation of the Nationalist government were taking place? Did you feel separated?

CHEN: Well, at that time, all Chinese students had only one thought--I would say "all; if there were a few exceptions, the exceptions merely proved the rule. Their thought was to go back to China. It was a question of when. Nobody thought of staying on. In the first place, there was no opportunity over here anyway. In the second place, they came with only one purpose^o to come and study, get your degree, and go back to China. We were all in that kind of a mood. I was determined to stay on until I finished my degree. I did not get my degree at Columbia, my PhD. In 192, the K.M.T., the Nationalist government, was established. Then there was a change from missionary management and control to native, Chinese. And there was a call for Chinese leadership. I got a call from my alma mater, Fukien Christian University^o "We have got to have you; asked me to go back to serve as dean. And I did. So, without getting my degree, I went to China in the summer of 1929.

KLEIN: So you were already well advanced toward your doctorate.

CHEN: Oh, yes. That is why, when I came over here, there was no problem at all. The School of Education welcomed me. When I went over there, I was dean, but I taught education too. I taught in the department of education over there, and I was chairman of the department of education, and dean of the liberal arts college. I was dean of the liberal arts college, in charge of curriculum of all departments, a small liberal arts college.

In fact, when I came out in 1937, with no intention of staying on, I was given sabbatical--one year, at most two years. The idea was that I was to pick up my degree and return. Of course, one way would be to go back to Columbia. But I wanted to go to some place where I could do a little teaching, and make my way, because by that time, I had married and I had two children. What I had saved, no more than a few hundred dollars of U.S. money, would not go very far. So I applied all kinds of places. I sent my vita many places. Then I got the appointment at Colorado, Greeley. Have you ever heard of Greeley? Greeley had a rather well-known college for teachers. And they made me a very nice offer to teach there and at the same time write my dissertation and get a degree there. So we accepted on that basis. My family came, I took my family, and we had a budget only for the first year. Then, after we had arrived here, all we had was--for a family of four--seventy dollars a month. That is all we had. And we managed to save two or three dollars every year. Of which thirty-five dollars went to rent. But we took the gamble.

So I had the appointment to go to Greeley. We came early in the summer. After I arrived, they said, "Well, there is a university here, why don't you take a look? So I came to U.S.C. to talk with the dean. The dean liked the conversation, evidently. It went very well. "Why don't you stay on here? You take some courses, start with the summer session."

KLEIN: This would have been Lester [Burton] Rogers?

CHEN: Lester Rogers. He liked what I said. "We would like to have you. He looked at my records, and he said, "Well, we accept all your credits from Columbia, and the main thing is just to choose your dissertation topic and work on it. Of course, we want you to attend a few seminars, so that you will fulfill the residential requirements. You have to have a residence requirement."

"Well, I have my family."

"How much are they offering you? So I told him that I had a regular stipend. "Well, if you stay here, we will give you everything they have offered you there. Right there!"

"That isn't a bad idea."

And then he went on. "Look, this money means more over here. You need heavy overcoats. You don't need to pay for fire, heating, all of that. Fukien is warm weather, something like here."

And I thought, "Well, that is a good idea."

So, the dean said, "You start in the summer. He wanted me to take his course in philosophy of education. And I did."

Then I took a course in comparative education, taught by a visiting professor from outside. And, of course, I did not have any problem with comparative education. I wrote, and the professor liked it so much, he asked me to read it to the class. And I did, and the professor told the dean, "Gee, you have somebody to teach comparative education. You don't need me next summer. The next summer, in fact, I began teaching comparative education. More than that, the dean, who taught philosophy of education, asked me to speak to the class and talk about Dewey. And I did."

And he said, "Well, you teach a class in philosophy of education. And I did. So, very easily, I got into teaching in the School of Education. And, when the degree was awarded, at that time the war had come on, no way of returning to China. So the offer came, "Why don't you stay on?"

At that time, I had very good classes, and students were very responsive. Had a good time.

KLEIN: We have skipped a little ahead. When you were called back from Columbia to Fukien Christian University, how urgent was the contact? Did they write a letter to you, or send a telegram?

CHEN: I think there were both.

KLEIN: They wanted to make sure you heard. What time of the year was it that you actually returned?

CHEN: I think it was July. School was starting in September.

KLEIN: As far as you believe, was it largely a result of political events that you had been called back?

CHEN: Well, indirectly. Up to that time, in all missionary schools and colleges, the administrative positions were all held by Western personnel. Now, under the Nationalists, there was a feeling that this was too much a cultural imperialism. So they wanted Chinese to take over. It was not a political appointment that I got. It was the drift of events, events were moving in that direction. And, of course, they were looking for people. Since I had graduated, my missionary teachers had known me, and said, "Well, here is a man who can come back and take the job."

KLEIN: The dean, up to that point, had been Roderick Scott.

CHEN: Roderick Scott. So I went in there the first semester and he and I were sort of doing it together. In title, he was still dean, but then, by the end of the semester, he pulled out altogether and just turned it over to me.

KLEIN: Did you share some of his responsibilities with some other people, at first? Fu Shang-lin?

CHEN: Well, no. Fu Shang-lin came at the same time I did. He was a sociology man. He got his doctor's degree in London. Now, he was only a professor, teacher. He had no administrative duties. I was the only person, next to the president.

KLEIN: And what about Wang Chih-hsin.

CHEN: Wang Chih-hsin was a Chinese professor. Very good man. He taught Chinese classics and Chinese literature, Chinese thought, those things. He was a very good man. He wrote a number of books.

KLEIN: The only reason I bring the names of Fu and Wang up is that Roderick Scott, in the book he wrote about the university, said that when he resigned, you, Fu Shang-lin, Wang Chih-hsin, and E. M. Stowe divided the responsibilities for the first semester, and then, after that, you became full dean.

CHEN: They did not really get into that. Theoretically, Fu Shang-lin was dean of students, Wang Chih-hsin was dean of admission. Then who was the other?

KLEIN: E. M. Stowe.

CHEN: E. M. Stowe. He just passed away a couple of years ago. He was--

KLEIN: --dean of personnel?

CHEN: Something like that. I do not know. I do not remember. It was such a short time, it was just over. So, actually, I was plunged into administration right away, and they expected it to be like that. So the three I do not think ever really functioned--

[phone rings, tape recorder turned off]

KLEIN: What were the relations between the students and the college administration when you first came back? What were they like?

CHEN: Well, at that time, the students, Nationalists, were beginning to be very very assertive. They were in a revolutionary mood, and so there was a good deal of problem keeping the students in the mood to concentrate on their studies. There were so many distractions. They wanted to go out and take part in propaganda, and in political campaigns, and that sort of thing. That problem became more acute later, far more acute later. Even by the time of 1930, they became very serious. And by 1931, the Manchurian, then the turmoil spread all over the colleges and the so-called political movement among the students, naturally rose to a very high peak during that time, in the early thirties. But it began under the K.M.T. The K.M.T. sort of felt they were revolutionary at that time, they liked the idea of revolution.

KLEIN: Were the issues that the students were particularly concerned with related more to anti-Japanese, or anti-imperialist movements, or internal social changes in China?

CHEN: That depends on the different periods. In 1927, the Kuomintang was just rising to power. There was a big campaign against cultural imperialism. And then there was an accusation that the missionary schools were really the channels of cultural imperialism, and the students had neglected the study of China, and whatever they studied was tainted by American viewpoint. The major faculty was Western. So, during that period, the students were very--I am not talking about this college or my arrival, I mean in China--all over China, students were involved in this movement called the "recovery of educational rights. In other words, take them back from the foreigners. Not necessarily make them government, but they have to be under Chinese. Then, quite gradually, they began a new organization by the former missionaries, they changed the name into "the Christian Colleges, "China Christian Colleges.

[goes to bookcase to get book I showed you this book, didn't I?

KLEIN: Yes.

CHEN: This will give you the best of that story. In the first couple of years--twenty-nine, thirty--the students were, in general, in a rebellious mood, but they were not especially involved in specific movements such as the May Fourth. That was specifically anti-Japanese. Or in twenty-seven, twenty-eight--which was against the Western cultural imperialism. Then, by 1931, after Manchuria, it was again very very strongly anti-Japanese. Also, during that period, gradually, the Communists were becoming more active. And so, some of the more radical students--in any student group there is a radical wing--tended to be more interested in the study of Marxism. Now, we had classes in Marxism, and so on. But I told the students--and I managed them very well--I said, "Now, I don't interfere at all with what you do outside of the campus, but I don't want political organizations on the campus, because then you get the college into trouble. You don't get the college into political trouble, we won't get you into political trouble. What they do for you is your affair, and what you do outside is your affair."

As a matter of fact, by that time, I was not only dean of studies, I was--what was it?--the dean of the faculty, I was Dean. All the disciplinary work was under me. So, a good deal of that

was dealing with the radical wing. Now, not all of them were Communists, but some of them were. And I knew who they were. In fact, I was also in charge of admissions. There were two or three who had come from high schools with record of their participation in Communist activities. Very brilliant students. I took them in, I admitted them with a very high degree of skepticism on the part of my colleagues.

"You took a student like that?"

"We'll try."

I had a long talk with them. "If you don't get me involved, I won't get you involved. I won't ask any questions of what you do outside."

KLEIN: Do you remember his name?

CHEN: Yes, but I do not want to tell you. He was in prison, and I do not know what happened to him. In fact, there are a number of students whom people thought very definitely were members of a cell on the campus. And I privately talked with them, "You can do anything outside, but not on the campus. And they accepted. We had a good arrangement. Even the president did not know who were the members of this group. I told the president, "I gave my word to these students. They told me who they were. They were open with me, I will be open with them. And we got along all right. I won't say very well, there was always a doubt, but we got along all right. Then, for a long period, politically, it was the anti-Japanese that was strongest, but underneath, there was now more and more the Communist problem became more acute.

KLEIN: You say it increased over time, but was there any alteration in Communist, or radical, involvement on the campus after Chiang Kai-shek's last encirclement and forcing-out of the Communists in the Southwest, starting them moving to the North? Did that have any influence at all on the university?

CHEN: Which year are you thinking of?

KLEIN: 1934, when Mao Tse-tung and so on were forced to go on the Long March.

CHEN: You are thinking of the Communists' Long March. Oh, yes; I had a very good friend among the women students, a very devoted girl. She went with the Long March. She left, and she never finished her college.

KLEIN: She had been enrolled.

CHEN: Yes. And she and I were very good friends. She majored in education, and she went.

[tape ends]

TAPE TWO, SIDE TWO
May 11, 1984

KLEIN: I was wondering whether it was harder to radicals--whether Communist or not--to maintain an involvement in universities after the Communist army had been forced to retreat to the North.

CHEN: No--but the Communists did get a good deal of sympathy by raising the anti-Japanese banner. At that time--from 193± on--Chiang Kai-shek began to temporize. He just felt we had to somehow make compromises--concessions--and so forth. And the students were very much opposed. And so the Communists very strongly for--"We raise the national flag against the Japanese. That went deep with the students, that went very deep with the students. That did not mean that the students were--really--following--choosing the Communist leadership--but they liked their slogans. And more and more--the students became very critical of the K.M.T. because of the continual concessions that they made to the Japanese. As you know--they first took Manchuria--the students said--"Fight! They organized. "We are willing to go to the frontlines. We will fight. And the Communists said--"Fight! They started--"You follow us. We will fight our way back to Manchuria. That went big. That early--Chiang Kai-shek became known as "the weak, because he was giving away land to Japanese. He decided not to fight in Manchuria. And when--later on--by 1933/34--there were many of these so-called "incidents. Every incident--the Japanese would increase the pressure--and Chiang made more concessions. The most serious concession he made was to agree to the autonomy of the Northern Provinces--as a special sphere of Japanese influence. That was very very properly criticized all over the country. The students went out on strikes--and so on and so forth. Then--all of that culminated in the Sian Incident. The Communists had gone up there--that way--and Chiang Kai-shek had asked Chang Hsueh-liang--Chang Tso-lin's son--Chang Hsueh-liang is still in Taiwan now, he was the so-called "Young Marshall; he was dancing in

the dance-halls in Peking on the evening of September 18th [1931]--

when the Japanese marched into Manchuria. So Chiang Kai-shek have

him--said--"Well--all right could fight your way back. So he was in

Sian at that time. There was no action at all in Sian--and the

Communists were coming in from the South. So Chiang Kai-shek went

up--and he thought he would get action--movement against the

Japanese, get the troops out there. And it was then that he

discovered that Chang Hsueh-liang had been negotiating with the

Communists. Then the story of the kidnapping and so on. It was then that Chou En-laI appeared and said "Well we can talk peace and decided to fight the _____. That was December 1936.

[phone rings tape recorder turned off]

KLEIN: I was wondering if there was any particular student reaction to the Sian Incident?

CHEN: Well that particular event was in general favorable to Chiang Kai-shek because the way he returned on that Christmas Day--we always were close to the students--and that day Christmas we were having a party--thirty or forty people having dinner in my home the dean's home. So when the news came over the radio the students forgot their dinner and they all went out celebrating.

KLEIN: Over the fact that the country was finally--

CHEN: That Chiang Kai-shek had come back because otherwise everything would be just complete turmoil. The Communists were not ready, Chou En-laI said that "We are not ready to take over the whole country. Somebody has got to hold on. Even later on even the Soviets at that time felt there was not much choice except to keep them in position hold the country together because the Japanese threat was more serious than anything else.

KLEIN: But were the students most happy that he was back or that he had agreed to unite with the Communists against the Japanese?

CHEN: No. I think they were happy he came back because they realized that

they had to have him.

Maybe we should go before that. In 1935--'34 to '35--after Chiang Kai-shek made his decision to concede the rights in Northern Provinces and allow them to be organized into an autonomous council headed by a pro-Japanese Chinese to whom the students did not care for at all. Student resentment was rising very high and they went on strike. 1935 and '36. By the winter of 1935 the resentment was so strong the students were on strike everywhere, my campus too. It was not Communists or anything, the Communists took advantage of that you can be sure of that; But the students really were patriotic, they just wanted to-- They were willing to go to battle against the Japanese. "Let's quit conceding!"

The capital was in Nanking at that time. The students lay on the railroad track from Shanghai to Nanking immobilized the whole area. They could not move at all by the end of 1935. So Chiang Kai-shek sent out word at that time. At that point he was the head of the Executive Yuan, at that time they did not use the term of "premier, or anything like that. Executive Yuan. So he sent word out to all the schools and said "If you students will get off the track and not stifle the economy then I will speak to the school board representatives, he was going to receive student representatives. So every school and every college was asked to elect two student representatives and a faculty advisor to go to Nanking. You can imagine how many people were involved. A cold winter in unheated

rooms in Nanking.

KLEIN: Who went from Fukien Christian?

CHEN: Fukien Christian had a student leader, also by the name of Chen, but unrelated to me. He went. I was the faculty representative. So I took my student--our student body only elected one to go, he was the head of the Student Union at that time. (They called it the Student Union.) He and I went from Foochow, and we stayed there for three days, meeting with Chiang Kai-shek. He was an amazing man, really. Every night there were small conferences, and every afternoon, we would meet Chiang Kai-shek. Here was this man, he would stand there talking for three hours, without stopping--for three days; For three hours a day, and he stood there just like that [stands up at attention], without motion. He would stand there and talk.

He said, "Well, _____ You go out and see military installations here. You have--"I forgot how many--"anti-aircraft guns. That is all we have. And there is a capital here, for the rest of the country, we do not even have it. They were aghast.

"And altogether, we have in the country something like two thousand planes, of all kinds--the whole country. And he gave a figure for the Japanese planes. "When they come over, there is no way of stopping them, there is no way of saving our cities. It just cannot be done. I would like to have ten years, and I could pledge to you, we would fight. If we do not have ten years, then give me five

years, we would still have a chance. But we will not fight the Japanese now--no chance. We would have to give up all this coast and all that. There is no chance."

That evidently moved the students. So the student representatives went back and were pacified in a considerable way. Not that they were happy, not that they were satisfied, but they were pacified.

He said, "I will agree with you that we should fight. Our enemy is bad. But at this moment we cannot do it. Then he also said, "Every time I move troops in southern China the Communist troops go in right away. And so my hands are tied. He explained that to the students.

So that was in 1935. In 1936 the students were quite active, they were convinced that Chiang Kai-shek was the person that should hold the rein at that time. I think that was more of realism than any worship of Chiang Kai-shek as a person or as a leader it was not that. It was just a realization that nobody could walk in and take his place at that time and had that power. I think it was more than anything else.

KLEIN: The Sian Incident was just about half a year then before you left.

You mentioned before that by the time you came back to the United States for the second time you were married and had two children.

How did you meet your wife?

CHEN: Oh, I met my wife when we were little kids. Our families-- We knew we were going to set an engagement. Then of course she went to

Peking, she went to Yenching University. She graduated from Yenching University. Later→ I came to this country. When I came to this country→ she was just in high school. No→ when I came to this country→ she had finished high school→ and went to Peking for college→ for undergraduate at Yenching University. At that time it was not called Yenching University→ but then later on it became known as Yenching University.

It was just when I returned to China that I went to Peking to see her. The following summer→ she finished her school year. She went to college to study→ and she had promised to come back to the girls' school from which she had graduated. She had taught there too.

KLEIN: What school was that?

CHEN: Wen-shan Girls' School.

KLEIN: That was in Foochow?

CHEN: That was in Foochow. She had made quite a record for herself→ because she served--you see→ every school had an administrative council at that time→ to take over from the Americans→ and she was on the administrative council. She played a leading role in the transfer from the American principalship to the Chinese. And then she went to Yenching University to complete her studies.

KLEIN: What did she study?

CHEN: Home economics, nutrition→ chemistry. After she served for one year to fulfill her-- You see→ she had gone with a loan from the school

to enable her to go back to finish college. She went to college when I was finishing college—back in 1920. But she only studied for two years—and she went back to teach—because she too had to borrow money for the first two years of study. And then she borrowed more money to go to finish her college. And the agreement was that she should come back to teach. If she would teach for two years—then she would be excused from paying back the loan. But if she could not—she should at least serve for one year and then pay for the second year of the loan. So she served one year before she got married—and then—of course—we paid for half of the loan. She was offered—even after we got married—they had problems in the school—she was offered the principalship. In fact—they tried to persuade her to let me come to the U.S. to get my degree--at that time—nobody thought there would be a long delay--and asked her to be principal. And she was tempted to do that. But then we decided that we would come together—and two little girls—two and four years old.

It took us months-- We did not make reservations at that time—because we did not know whether we could manage it or not—financially—until I could get the appointment at Greeley. Then we found we could manage. So that was how we came to this country.

Now—by that time—of course—the situation had changed. The Kuomintang regime was going down and down and down.

When I was in this country—during those eight years—I was full-

time professor of education. U.S.C. had Von KleinSmid. Von KleinSmid had a flair for international things, he was very active in that field° international forums and conferences¬ and that sort of thing. And he felt Asia was important. So he established a so-called Asian Foundation here. Then¬ there was a German by the name of Von Koeber. He was kind of a typical German scholar. He went into the study of mythology and religion¬ and that sort of thing. He came here to teach that sort of thing. Some of those were entirely his own personal fancy, symbols. But part of it was his old scholarship. And he did have a lot of old sinology.

KLEIN: Do you happen to know where he studied?

CHEN: I do not remember where he studied.

KLEIN: He would have been here before you arrived?

CHEN: Yes¬ he was already here. He taught only evening classes¬ for undergraduates. But he said¬ "Undergraduates are not interested in that sort of thing. He had practically no men¬ just three or four women every semester. Just three or four women¬ mostly old women. He would take a whole hour to teach one word. And he taught every semester. Oh¬ those women¬ they just really-- "Oh¬ that was wonderful! He taught until after the war broke out. He was not interested in language. The President said¬ "I want you to teach language. He would teach language¬ but he did the same thing to teach language. He never spoke a word of Chinese¬ never spoke a word of Japanese¬ but he taught Japanese and Chinese° Chinese I¬ Japanese

I. He taught them all. These old ladies just ate him up.

"Wonderful! They thought they all knew Chinese language now. One time → he came to me--I was teaching in the School of Education--and he said-- (Do you know the Chinese word for "swing? Ch'iu-ch'ien. Turn that off for a moment.©

[Tape recorder turned off → Chen shows the word in a dictionary.]

It was written down there → "I like ch'iu-ch'ien → you like ch'iu-ch'ien. That sort of thing. He told me → "Now → looking at the dictionary → they do not go together → the ch'iu and ch'ien. What could they mean? He came to me → Dr. Von Koeber. He at first just gave me one word. He said there were two words.

I said → "Well → what are the two words? I asked him to write them.

He said → "That's the two words. What does it mean? So I told him. He said → "My goodness gracious. I looked in the dictionary, I just could not put those two words together. Did not know what they meant."

Languages like that → Chinese language particularly → one character does not mean anything. He took them one character after another and put them together. He just did not know how to put them together.

And that is the way that Dr. Von KleinSmid said → "I think you should teach Chinese in the daytime."

One day → Robert Heimer called me--Robert Heimer was → at that time →

the educational director, he was professor of education, also dean of letters, arts, and science--said, "The president's idea is to organize an active department of Asian studies, with regular courses that will appeal to young students, undergraduate students. And he would like to have you head up that."

"I am full-time."

"You can be part-time education, part-time Asian studies."

"I am not prepared. I never thought I would teach Asian studies. My field is education."

"Well, I know they like you, but why don't you talk with the President."

So I went to see the old gentleman. You know, he was not a very popular man on the campus, because he was very stingy, a very stingy man. He had big ideas, but very stingy. And everything he controlled personally.

And he said, "Mr. Chen, let me tell you something. You are a good professor of education, but do you know, there are thousands of people just as good as you are and better than you are as professors of education. You may be a very good teacher at U.S.C., but you are not going to be known outside. But if you come into the Asian field and make yourself a scholar in that field, you will have a chance to become a national scholar."

I have often remembered that old gentleman's words. It was very

true→ you know.

So I said→ "All right. First I gave up part of my field. And for years→ ever since then→ I am known as professor of education and Asian studies. And that is how I am here. [laughter Weird combination→ but very gradually it began to build up. It took so much time→ so I practically gave up education→ excepting in the summer. The→ after a few years→ I even gave up the summers. And that is why→ after I gave up my administrative work over there→ Education claimed me back→ and said→ "You had better come back and continue what you were doing. That is why I am here→ in the School of Education. Because I have always kept that title→ professor of education. It was an interesting experience.

What helped me→ of course→ was that in 194± Pearl Harbor came. Even after 1937→ the Far East was far. I always said--I used to do a lot of public speaking--I have always felt that when the Americans think of the Far East→ they unconsciously draw out the "far and becomes "Fa-a-ar East. Not only Far East→ but it is the Fa-a-ar East. It is wa-a-ay out there→ somewhere nobody will go. But the Far East became very near after Pearl Harbor.

Then we had the Navy program. UCLA had the Army program. We began teaching language. That is what Dick Rudolph got his beginning in, he went to Boulder.

KLEIN: Before that→ when you first came→ what was the general state in Southern California of Asian studies in→ say→ 1937/38? Or 1940?

CHEN: UCLA had nothing.

KLEIN: They had one professor. Did you happen to know Kazuo Kawai? He taught East Asian history of some sort. When the war came he went back to serve as editor of the Japan Times.

CHEN: Oh, I remember now.

KLEIN: Did you have any contact with him at all?

CHEN: No. At that time I was not going into that field anyway. And UCLA did not begin until 1946 when Rudolph organized--

KLEIN: 1947.

CHEN: 1946 or '47. K'uo Pak-t'o at that time in the Spanish Department taught Foochow. I told you about that story didn't I?

KLEIN: No.

CHEN: I visited the president and he said "Why don't you make a plan." "All right I will make a plan. In the first place I feel the language is important if you want to study Asia seriously. Some language background is important. But to teach language to undergraduates you have to do two things. You not only have to know characters but in order to have simple conversation we have to teach language classes as real languages like you speak French or German, on the same level as foreign languages. Secondly American students have no interest in studying queer languages. We have to have courses that arouse their interest in the field as such. Then they will take an interest in the language. If I take over I would

like to organize a few courses which introduce China and introduce Japan. Let's concentrate on those areas→ instead of spreading over all areas."

So one of the courses I taught myself was called--for a long time--"Introduction to Chinese Life. In English→ I taught everything about China° customs→ traditions→ family, about China. Students liked them. And from there→ they took language classes. Then what helped was the Navy program° the V-k→ V-12→ V-10. They were V. They came in and they were assigned to these classes. They did very well.

KLEIN: They took some of their classes here.

CHEN: Yes→ they took classes here. We taught them→ and I still have these Navy boys come back to see me over the years. Two of them in Newport Beach. One of them went to Japan→ became a Japan enthusiast→ and one of them went to China. The two of them live in Newport Beach. They invited me out there, they live in Corona del Mar→ Newport Beach. One of them married a native boy. She was a girl in the night class. They are living in China. It is the first time they have had a chance to follow-up. Do you know Commander Rolfe? Do you know him→ Hammond Rolfe?

KLEIN: I know the name.

CHEN: Hammond Rolfe. Hammond was political attache to China. Hammond's wife came from Seattle to study with me. She got her degree in Asian

Studies.

KLEIN: She got the degree here?

CHEN: Oh yes. So you see our school developed that way. And pretty soon

I began to hire and-- Then after the war we had the National--

What does NDEA stand for?

KLEIN: National Defense Education Act.

CHEN: National Defense Education Act. That helped. So all of these things

put together helped me develop our-- In fact at one time the Asian

studies at U.S.C. was quite well-known in the country because it was

growing so fast. Dick Rudolph came over to see me a couple of times

to talk about how to organize. So that is how we got into Asian

studies and the grants that I was able to get supported the

department. I raised quite a bit of money for the Department of

Asian Studies.

[End of tape]

TAPE THREE, SIDE ONE

May 17, 1984

KLEIN: I thought we would start today by asking in what ways and to what

extent Asian studies at USC grew during World War II.

CHEN: Of course it was easy to say it grew because one course was

growth. I think I told you how I thought we ought to build up an

undergraduate clientele because I felt at that time--now of

course→ the situation is very different--very few students were ready for graduate work in Asian studies. We had some students→ but they were very few. So→ we started on the undergraduate level to build up a curriculum.

(phone rings→ tape recorder turned off)

I felt that→ at the undergraduate level→ it was important to develop a series of studies to introduce them to knowing China→ Japan→ the Far East. We were not paying much attention to India→ South Asia→ or even Southeast Asia. We were concentrating→ in light of our resources→ on what was know as the Far East.

KLEIN: During the war→ though→ was there more interest in Japan because the United States was fighting Japan→ or was it evenly distributed?

CHEN: I think it was evenly distributed→ because there was always the feeling→ at that time→ that American troops had to land in China→ because Japan was in China→ too. And that was very much in America→ the Army Language School and the Navy Language School→ and the programs in the different universities all included study of language for Navy students and Army students too→ because the thought was they would land in China→ on the coast→ the Pacific coast. So that helped the language→ but for the others→ girls had no intention of going to war at that time. The girls had to be introduced to these courses on culture→ customs. Too many still feel→ in America→ as you know→ the Far East is so far away→ as I said→ and there is this feeling of the mystical. "You cannot understand these people anyway→ the culture is

so different. Did you read that long article in the paper— this girl who is a Toyota—I think she is in Toyota— or one of these Japanese firms--she is out there as assistant manager— or something. She felt— well— this is as far as a woman can go in Japan— because of the cultural difference. Actually— it is not only that, it has been hard in America too. There are differences— but it is so easy to thing— "Oh— because that is the Far East, China and Japan are mystical. We have to get away from that— to know that there are— well— human emotions and human problems there that you find anywhere else— regardless of the cultural differences. But in approaching them— you have to realize there are cultural differences there— approaching the people. My point is— there is so much of that "you cannot understand them anyway. I think there are still people who feel that way. "They are so different— anyway."

With any individual difference— I often think of this° I was teaching a class— and a fly was buzzing around— and so I [phone rings was trying to catch the fly— and hit here [motions with his hand].

After the class— a student came over and said— "Oh— I learned something today. The way you tried to catch they fly. Is that the Chinese way? "How did I?"

"Well— you reached back that way— instead of hitting him in front."

"The fly was right back there. I did not realize I was doing that."

The next day in class I said "Now do not take every idiosyncrasy that I have as a generally Chinese idiosyncrasy. There is that tendency, take that one point and "Ah; He is different."

There is a case for the study of mythology for example which is rooted in culture religion and so on and so forth psychology. That is different. But this mystique this mysteriousness you have to get over that. Then they begin to study about China and so on Japan and Korea to some extent Indochina because that after all is so much within what I call the "chopstick civilization, the whole area that uses chopsticks because of the Chinese influence in Indochina. Now when you get to Cambodia Laos and so on it is entirely different as far as cultural tradition is concerned. That is why we found it easier in light of limited resources to concentrate on what is generally known as the Far East. Now of course these days the Far East has been combined with what is called the Pacific Basin which is geographically right but there is no unity culturally between say Polynesia and China Japan and Korea. China Japan and Korea culturally is a really united area, culturally speaking. And that is why I felt we did that and I think we were fairly successful. As I said I was able to get a good deal of money. After we had the undergraduate I felt well we have to

start even earlier. So I began to feel that we should go to the high schools to get people interested way over there. So I got Carnegie to give us money—a pretty good sum at that time—and we took about a dozen high schools—I do not know how many—but quite a few. About half of them introduced Chinese language classes—about half of the Japanese language classes.

KLEIN: About when would this have been?

CHEN: This was from 1953 on—fifty-two or fifty-three—I forget now.

KLEIN: In the time that I have been studying China—I have noticed that interest in East Asia increases whenever a president—for instance goes to China or other political events seem to bring East Asia to the front of the newspapers. I was wondering—when World War Two ended—with peace—did interest in Asian studies at USC drop off?

CHEN: No—our interest did not drop off, only missed the people sent to us by the Navy. (We had only the Navy, we did not have the Army.© We missed the Navy and—to that extent—we missed the numbers—but—I think that `World War Two had aroused interest in the Orient—in the Far East. As I told you—I still have my former students around here keep in touch with me. They are still keeping up their study of China and of Japan. That continued—and some of them came back to study. As a matter of fact—I think we grew in the post-War years. Those grants that I got all are grants that I got after the War.

KLEIN: Very soon after the War—you were called back once again to Fukien

Christian University. What brought that about?

CHEN: Practically all the Chinese colleges were moved inland— anticipating the Japanese occupation. Fukien Christian University also moved into the inland, not as far as West China. Those big ones from Shanghai and Peking— everyone moved into West China° Szechuan— Chengtu— Chungking. Those were the big centers during the War. These migrated to colleges and universities transplanted over there.

Fukien did not go that far in— but went further in from the coast— away from the coast. The coastal areas were completely occupied by the Japanese and much destruction. Now— our campus— for example— Fukien Christian University— was completely looted and ravaged— everything. Then also— there was a problem coming back. They said— "Well now— how do we start? Over there— in the unoccupied areas— the college was a college as long as there was a building and the name was there° laboratory in some form— not much to talk about. The whole question of rehabilitation and the refection of education after the War.

So they wrote to me— "Well— we desperately need you now. We are going to move back and we want you to come back and be president here— to find a direction."

So we came— and oh!— the buildings were all-- No glass was anywhere— boarded up. It was a beautiful campus— like a campus in the West. One of the most beautiful campuses— people say— anywhere. (Are there pictures in that book?© See— those buildings were

Westernized buildings.

So you see I had to deal with that then also more students now because they had come down from outside of Fukien. War had made a difference. That is the reason for my going. But I went with the very definite understanding that I was to return here. USC gave me a leave of absence. The president said "You will stay here. You go off if you want to but we hope you can come back after a year. We can extend it but let us say one year."

So I still had my appointment here and I arranged for only Asian studies to be carried on. I had a program all mapped out I had my substitutes all planned everything planned.

KLEIN: Who was taking over for you while you were gone?

CHEN: Well I had several people. I am just trying to answer a letter from one of the people who helped me when I was away a graduate student. One of them Norman Sun has been a number of years now at Temple University. In fact he went to Japan taught in Japan for a while but he is permanently on the staff at Temple University. Another one Ronald Hsia has been a rather successful teacher at the University of Hong Kong. That is the British one not the Chinese University. He has been at the University of Hong Kong in economics has done very well. He has written published has done well.

Another person that took over my courses was Dr. Samuel Leger who had a degree in sociology. He took the cultural courses and the

others did the language. After I came back, we began to look for sources of support. I got money, contracts all on my own, just one person. I went to the different high schools to talk to the people. The hardest thing is to convince the parents. One time, I got a girl at Manual Arts, who was of Chinese extraction, Chinese American. She was a very good science student. I asked her to come to Asian studies.

"All I ask, you have to take some foreign language. You can take Latin, but also take Chinese. I said the same thing for the Japanese students to take Japanese. It seemed to me it makes sense for you to study the language of the family.

The girl from Manual Arts did not come after all. I said, "What about a fellowship? I had the money. The girl wanted very much, but the parents were not willing. The mother called me. Oh, she was very angry. She said, "Do not interfere, because my daughter is headed for a promising scientific career. I do not want you to lure her away."

"I have no intention at all. She can major in anything you want, mathematics, chemistry, anything you want. But you have to have a foreign language to graduate, and I am just trying to get you interested."

I went over there to Northridge, where there was a very good teacher, a Japanese-American. She only took Japanese here, at U.S.C., undergraduate here. And I took her to teach Japanese. She

was scared stiff. She said, "How can I teach Japanese language? I do not know how to teach. And she teaches so well that she had students who wanted to go to Japan in the summer to learn more about Japan.

So those were the things that we did, and therefore the department grew. Then came the grants from the NDEA, that helped.

KLEIN: Before we get into all of those any deeper, I wanted to talk a little bit more about the year that you spent back in Foochow. Of course, the entire post-War period in China was very active, but as president of the university, once again you were back in the situation of dealing with student demonstrations and the political situation in China. What was the political situation at the university?

CHEN: Very chaotic. The K.M.T. government was not ready for a job of really post-War rehabilitation. I said, at that time, it required superhuman effort to put these colleges in shape. But we could not do even ordinary human effort because the political situation was such. People were, in the first place, they were disappointed, in the second place, they were disillusioned. You see, they had always, during the war, there was hope that "final victory is ours. "We were pushed back, we went back and back, but we are going to come back finally."

During all those war years situation, they suffered, they sacrificed, but there was this thing which unified the people. "We

will go back→ we will push out the enemy. We will regain the territory. And when they came back→ what did they have? They had the inflation→ they had chaos→ they had government that was not ready to start a program→ really→ of post-war rehabilitation. The relief that was brought in was hardly enough to relieve the poverty of the people. It was a bad situation.

KLEIN: What time of the year did you arrive?

CHEN: In the summer.

KLEIN: So→ at that point→ the Kuomintang and the Communists were still at least making a show of trying to maintain unity.

CHEN: At that time→ no more. No→ by that time→ you could not say there was any semblance of unity in the South China Sea area. Behind the lines→ the Communists were very good at organizing strikes. Most of the people who were engaged in strikes knew nothing about Communism, they were not interested in Communism either. But→ you see→ they were a good way to express our frustration. For example→ inflation was such→ I said--finally I decided I was going back--"I was trained to do some work in education. If there is an educational job to do→ I will stay to do the educational job. But I said to my students again and again-- They sat there and would not leave in our assembly hall→ until I would promise not to leave.

I said→ "I cannot promise that. I have a promise to go back to U.S.C. They would not let me go. I said→ "You people have to

realize that I have my commitment to go back."

They said→ "What do we have? We do not have anything to look forward to. And it was true.

KLEIN: When you had left Fukien Christian University in 1937→ you had intended to come back to China. During the war→ had China changed more→ or had you changed more?

CHEN: I would have to say both, I think both. The students→ the government→ the people. One day→ the governor invited me to go to his office→ and I did. He said→ "I do not do that with any other president. I just go ahead and act. But you are a different character. We want you to understand what we are doing→ and to help us if possible."

My answer to him was very clear. I said→ "I came here for an educational job. I do not know anything about politics→ and I have never taken part in politics as such. So do not get me involved in politics. I know my students. If you ask me about my students→ about they grades→ work→ and so on→ I can produce records→ show any records to you. If you ask me about the students§ outside activities→ I cannot help you with the question. I refuse to answer. They could not get me to.

So when they tried to suppress the strikes→ and so forth→ I said→ "If they go on strike on the campus→ it is my business→ but if they participate in strikes in the city→ that is not my business."

KLEIN: In May 1947, there were rice riots in Foochow and, despite the fact that you were not particularly involved in politics, you were apparently able to guarantee--

CHEN: I had to buy rice. I said, "I came here to try to do an educational job. What am I? I am a low-class business manager. I am trying to get enough rice to feed the students. I spend more time doing that than planning the curriculum. That is not my job. I do not know how to do it. I have never been trained to do this kind of work. I never served as business manager."

[Mrs. Chen opens door, with message.]

The government would have to sell rice at what is known as the "uninflated price. But there was only so much rice that they had, so you had to sit there at the government offices, trying to get what you wanted for the month. Every month you had to go through that. More than that, the students paid their board money to get to Fukien, a residential college. They all ate on the campus. They paid what we charged, but by the end of the month, the price of rice had gone up so much. I said, "We do not have money to pay. You see how it affected our work. And then it was my job to go into the government. I was able to get enough to keep us going. The students were very happy about that. But I said, "That is not what I am interested in. I do not like to do it. I do it now because I am here, but it is not something I want to stay here to do for any length of time. That is why I quit. I said I just could not do it. They had a big rally,

and finally at the end the declared "We will have a three day strike against the president returning to the United States. The Chinese are "huang yu. "We will persuade the president to stay."

So I told them at a mass meeting there "Even if I had some intention to stay this would have scared me so much I could not. That is not the way to do things. I said I was under an obligation. I could not have done it. In fact many people my friends persuaded "How can you walk away like this when people want you?"

In a way that was true but it was a good thing by hindsight. If I had I do not know whether I would be alive or not. There was no doubt about it at that time I was an American citizen--no I was not a citizen then yet, an American product schooled in America. Easily you see where could they find a better example of a jackey of imperialist America?

KLEIN: Very soon after the victory of the Communist Party in 1949 there was the Christian Manifestoes as it came to be called.

CHEN: "Three Self Movement."

KLEIN: And I noticed that among the people who had signed that was one representative from Fukien Christian T'ang Jen-mei. Did you know him?

CHEN: I have a letter from him right now. He has arranged for me to go to China in effect for three years, to go back to China for one year of teaching and lecturing. Still waiting for me.

[Gets up to get book, tape recorder turned off]

He was my student in education—then after he graduated—I asked him--that was before the war--to come back for graduate study. In my office he had a desk next to mine. Then I helped him to come to this country. He studied at the University of Pennsylvania—Chester. (Do you know where that is?© Chester is a sort of seminary. And he studied at the University of Pennsylvania and got his PhD degree. Now—he was always an activist—a very constructive activist—and he was a very good friend of the group that started the Three Self Movement. The leading person of that—Y.T. Wu—was with me at Columbia—at the same time. We had been friends for a long long time. Y.T. Wu—Yao-chung (tung)?

At that time—what I think happened—some of these people felt that would be the best way—they only way to keep some form of Christian influence in China—at least some movement. But we turned out just like the Catholics. The Catholics at first resisted—but the Catholics joined what they called the Catholic Patriotic Movement—as evidence that all the nation was united. And T'ang belonged to that group and he had been very active in China.

(What I had been looking for was this.© I told you I wrote my dissertation on the developing patterns of the curriculum in American colleges. That book—at that time—in this country aroused a good deal of interest—attention. !! The Journal of Higher Education“ published an editorial recommending my book as a reading must for all

people in higher education in America. Now that had nothing to do with China, I just made a study of liberal arts education in America. That was my interest. I introduced a course in higher education in the United States in the School of Education when I was full-time in the School of Education. Now T'ang translated that book--I did not know he was doing that--and sent me a copy of it and recently he said the book was still being used.

KLEIN: Still today?

CHEN: Still today. So he wanted me to go back to teach again. He said "This time I have a feeling that people now are ready for after the Cultural Revolution."

During that time T'ang Jen-meI continued to exercise his influence. Today he is retired but he still is active in the cause of the history of educational research writes to me often and asks my opinion on professional things on educational research and that sort of thing.

Say, you dig up a lot of names in your research!

KLEIN: There are a couple of others who signed the Manifesto that you might know. The president of the Anglo-Chinese College at the time Ch'en Chih-mei.

CHEN: Ch'en Chih-mei. He was called James Ding. I did not know these people had signed.

KLEIN: Had you know him?

CHEN: Oh yes—very well. I did not know that he had signed that certain document.

KLEIN: Ting Hsien-ch'ung, of Anglican Church in Foochow?

CHEN: Ting. I know him too. Oh, he was a _____.

KLEIN: Would you say that—at least judging from these three people—that the reason that they signed was that they were relatively favorable towards the--

CHEN: I am sure not. Not those three people.

KLEIN: The content of the Manifesto was what?

CHEN: Self-supporting—self control—self management—and--what was the other--self propagating (in other words—you propagate your own message).

KLEIN: In other words, but off the ties from abroad.

CHEN: That is right—just like the Catholics cut off from the Vatican—the Protestants were cut off from Western imperialism. Well—I think these people just took _____. From the standpoint of adjusting to the new conditions—this was one way to keep some form of official movement going. But I do not think it indicates any leaning toward communism or socialism as such.

KLEIN: This would be conjecture on your part—but if you had been convinced to stay—do you think you would have signed the Manifesto in the same spirit that you feel that they signed it?

CHEN: I probably would not—for one reason. For example—when I was dean—

even before the War→ when I was acting dean or after the war→ during the student movement→ I was under a lot of pressure to join the KMT.

And I told them to their face→ "If you think I will join you just to keep this job→ you are not thinking much of your membership. I told them that. They never bothered me again. And I felt in China→ the Chinese situation→ it was best for me not to be too closely tied in with any political party. And that is why I have never joined the Kuomintang. That is one thing the people in Taiwan felt that there was something holding back in the relationship. They feel very bad that→ with all my influence→ that I have refused. Finally they came around and said→ "Well→ we realize that in this situation→ under present conditions→ you are doing your job in Chinese-American cultural relations that is in harmony with what we are trying to do. They put it that way. But I would not join.

KLEIN: There was one other issue that took place during the year back in Foochow that I wanted to ask about. Very soon before you departed→ some twelve students at the university were arrested by the Kuomintang as Communists. What was behind this? Did you think they were Communists→ or were they?

CHEN: I think there were a number of the students who really were Communists. Nothing to prove it→ nothing to be sure. For example→ when I arrived→ one of the students who came to the harbor to meet me was the president of YMCA→ the campus YMCA. He told me→ on the way to the campus→ a very nice talk→ during the following months he was

in my home many times. We talked very freely. Never thought until the end that he belonged to a group. But on the campus he was a very nice boy. But there were a few very rowdy ones, a very few. Well, I had a long talk with them.

In May--May is a bad month in China. I have always said, from May First on--May Fourth, May Seventh, May Ninth, the Twenty-one Demands, May Thirtieth, and so on. May is a terrible month; It is a month for unrest anyway. May weather is bad. These people were restless. On June first, the Communists called, asked for, and got a good deal of response, they called it the "san pa" Three Strikes, strike by students, strike by workers, strike by _____. Complete stop. It was to come off on the first of June. And so, towards the end of May, suddenly, the government said--

[End of tape]