

CHINA'S General Chiang Issues TEN STYLE COMMANDMENTS For WOMEN



Chiang Kai-shek, Chinese generalissimo, who has found time amid cares of state to tell his nation's women what they may wear.

FROM his military headquarters at Nanchang, Chiang Kai-shek, Generalissimo of China, while desperately attempting to consolidate that part of the country remaining under his power, found time not long ago to set himself a new role—dictator of feminine fashion.

In between the hours he spends planning campaigns against Communists and bandits who swarm the rocky slopes and flat plains of Kiangsi, the general has snatched a few minutes in which to formulate a set of iron-clad rules governing matters which women the world over have always considered a question of personal prerogative.

But now the women of China are summarily told that there are 10 commandments which they must obey.

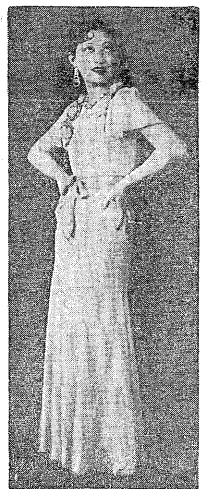
For Chiang, man of steel who has always worn the most severely plain uniforms and who has little patience with those who are concerned with fashion's whims; Chiang, China's Spartan who frowns upon the more luxurious amenities of living, who has never learned to dance or, much less, wished to; Chiang, arbitrator of women's dress, has decreed a list of do's and don'ts.

"No woman is allowed to wear tight clothes," he admonishes from his Kiangsi retreat. But fashion, on the other hand, has decided that gowns must be fitted closely and expertly, emphasizing the willowy slimmness which is the heritage of Chinese women.

AND these same Chinese women, the writer was once told by a Chinese girl born in New Orleans who, until she was twenty-one, never saw the land of her Cantonese ancestors, are much more particular about details prescribed by current fashions than are American women.

"Sleeves must not be too short, the minimum being down to the elbow," Chiang continues. But other dictators of the prevailing mode have indicated that for the smartly dressed, sleeves must be shorter than ever—only a little more than capes, but at the same time complying with that innate modesty of Chinese women

The young lady below would displease Chiang highly. Her sleeves are too short, her hair is too long, her skirt touches the floor—and she has been using cosmetics extensively.



which precludes their revealing neck and shoulders. "The length of women's gowns should be about the height of the ankle," states the third commandment. "You need another yard of material—skirts are longer than they were. In fact, to be cor-



This modernized Chinese gown won't suit Chiang. The collar is too high, and the sleeves are too short.

No tight clothes; no tight sleeves or bare legs; skirts must be shorter and collars lower; hair to be combed straight back. . . . These are from the new fashion rules which Chinese women are told they must obey

rect, they must barely miss brushing the floor as you walk," a Chinese stylist, on the contrary, will caution.

"The collar should not be too high. The distance between it and the neck must not be less than one inch and a half," pronounces Chiang.

And this would seem to provide additional fuel for the fires of controversy, for in all of the better dressmaking establishments in Shanghai catering to Chinese women, collars this season should extend to the tip of the ear. In other words, they should average about five inches in height. And, to the Chinese girl, the collar is an extremely important detail.

"The openings on both sides of the gown must not be higher than the knee," states the fifth commandment.

And again the generalissimo runs counter to prevailing trends, for a short stroll down Nanjing Road, Shanghai's busiest thoroughfare, a few minutes' sport in any fashionable cabaret will suffice to prove that silks are still this year (Copyright, 1935, by EveryWeek Magazine)

—ending anywhere between knee and hip.

"Stockings must be worn and legs must not be exposed," the general continues, heedless of those who have taken up the cult of the sun-tanned.

"All women must comb their hair backward and it should not be longer than their necks," he states, thus sounding the death knell to long locks impeccably

marcelled and permanent. And thus does he, a member of the revolutionary party which abolished the queue, symbol of servitude, endeavor to eliminate frivolous curls and intricate partings which contribute to the elaborate coiffure of so many ultra-modern Chinese women.

"Cosmetics should not be used in an unseemly fashion," says the eighth commandment.

"Clothing should be made of native cloth," states the ninth.

An endorsement of this motion toward a "Buy Chinese" campaign was seen weeks ago at Hangchow and Peiping where, in both cities, zealous young students pelted with mud and stones, and even acid, Chinese women who were gowned in silk, which to the patriots seemed to be suspiciously foreign in design and texture.

And no matter if it were, as the women claimed, a clever imitation on the part of an enterprising Chinese silk manufacturer, its foreign appearance was enough.

The tenth and final commandment is but a repetition of an official ban in 1911 on the part of the new revolutionary government.

"No feet are to be bound."

In a comparatively short period, the fashion of foot-binding has been completely ruled out. Mothers have ceased binding their daughters' feet while youths no longer make bound feet one of the qualifications of a wife, although twenty years ago no man of good class would have married a girl with natural feet, as they were then distinguished from "three-inch golden lotus."

Today, elderly women wear plaster extensions inside silken hose so that their bound feet may appear larger, while Chinese girls have become completely westernized insofar as high heels and smart trimmings can make them. No, there is little danger that the tenth commandment will be disobeyed.

But what of the other nine?

Will Chinese women, increasingly conscious of a new personal liberty and a new freedom in matters of divorce, inheritance and professions never before open to them, accept these rules?

There will be those who obey; implicitly the commands of a stern autocrat. Serious girl-students in universities will bear the dictate and heed. And in their painfully unadorned blue gowns, they will thrust their noses, guileless of powder, a bit higher in the air than their more frivolous sisters adroit in the art of make-up.

But what of the thousand of fashion devotees in the outskirts of China?

Cabaret girls, taxi-dancers, wealthy daughters in exclusive finishing schools and sophisticated catrons who spend hours adopting Paris trends to oriental traditions of dress?

If they do not obey? From the Nanchang field headquarters as yet have come no intimations as to the means of punishing those who infringe upon the dictator's ten commandments.