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兹逢佛天欢喜之节，正回都复国之时，寰宇腾欢，得未曾有。本会同人佥谋有以庆祝胜利，谨请王骧陆居士略说仁王护国般若经旨，以明护国因缘之胜。	The joyous Buddhist festival falls just as the capital has been recovered and the nation restored. The whole world rejoices as never before. The members of this association have unanimously planned a celebration of the victory and respectfully invited lay practitioner Wang Xianglu to give a brief exposition of the essential meaning of the Sutra of the Benevolent Kings' Prajñā for the Protection of the State, thereby clarifying the excellence of the causes and conditions for protecting the nation.
回忆民国十八年秋，大愚师尊曾传授仁王护国法仪式，指定于十九年先在汉口修法，其余次第举行，冀挽浩劫。乃以各方误会，未能如法，师为太息。从此国家多故，祸乱相循，以至于今。各大都会，灾祸之惨，无过于汉口者。	In the autumn of the eighteenth year of the Republic of China (1929), our revered teacher Master Dayu transmitted the ritual of the Benevolent Kings' Dharma for Protecting the State. He directed that the practice first be performed in Hankou in the following year, and then conducted elsewhere in sequence, in hopes of averting the vast calamity. Yet because of misunderstandings in various quarters, it could not be carried out according to the Dharma, and the Master sighed deeply over this. Thereafter the nation suffered repeated troubles, calamity following disorder, down to the present day. Among all the great cities, none has suffered disasters more grievous than Hankou.
先遭大水，后逢轰炸，可见众生业力，佛亦无可如何也。兹者万事更新，百端待举。护国因缘，在正人心。非依般若，将何所资敬祝世界和平国运昌隆、一切众生同成佛道、先烈忠魂永离恶趣者?	It was first struck by great floods and later by bombardment. This shows the force of sentient beings' karma: even the Buddha can do nothing about it. Now all things are being renewed, and much work remains to be done. The causes and conditions for protecting the nation lie in rectifying people's minds. Without relying on prajñā, by what means can we respectfully pray for world peace, national prosperity, the attainment of Buddhahood by all sentient beings, and the eternal release of the loyal spirits of the fallen martyrs from the lower realms?
天津上海印心精舍同人谨志。	Respectfully recorded by the members of the Mind-Seal Viharas of Tianjin and Shanghai.

《仁王经》者，佛为三界帝释人王国主所说之护国法也。故不付比丘等四众。此护国法者，有因地果地二门。因地重自修，果地赖法施。凡身为一国之主，因缘定非偶然。不仁者不能护持其国。徒有仁心而无般若智慧，亦不能护持其国。必仁智兼备，威德足孚，引导人民，咸归正道，其国自安如磐石矣。	The Sūtra of the Benevolent Kings is the Dharma for protecting the nation taught by the Buddha for Indra of the three realms, human kings, and rulers of states. Therefore, it was not entrusted to the fourfold assembly of bhikṣus and others. This Dharma for protecting the nation has two approaches: the causal stage and the fruition stage. At the causal stage, emphasis is placed on one's own cultivation; at the fruition stage, one relies on offering the Dharma to others. Anyone who becomes the ruler of a nation does not do so by chance. One who lacks benevolence cannot uphold and protect a nation. Yet one who has only a benevolent heart, without the wisdom of prajñā, likewise cannot uphold and protect a nation. One must possess both benevolence and wisdom, with authority and virtue sufficient to inspire trust, guiding the people so that all return to the right path. Then the nation will naturally be as secure as a rock.
国有大小，王亦不同，亦福德智慧之不同也。佛言必具何种德行者，方堪居于何种王位。如最高之四禅大梵天王，为三界主，其人必具十地菩萨之功行。下至此世界为转轮圣王，亦必具初地菩萨之威德。即小至数百里之小国王，亦必具三贤位，乃能少分化诸众生也。	Nations differ in size, and kings likewise differ, according to differences in merit, virtue, and wisdom. The Buddha said that only those endowed with particular virtues are fit to occupy corresponding royal stations. Thus, the Great Brahmā King of the highest fourth dhyāna, ruler of the three realms, must possess the conduct and accomplishments of a tenth-bhūmi bodhisattva. Descending to the wheel-turning sage king of this world, one must still possess the majesty and virtue of a first-bhūmi bodhisattva. Even the ruler of a small country only several hundred li across must possess the three worthy stages before being able to transform sentient beings even to a limited extent.
一国之主，莫不欲爱护其国者。佛不待波斯匿王之请，而先告以因地护国之法。护国以道为资，故先言如何护佛果，及护十地行，畅演金刚般若义谛，更说五忍法，表十四忍位之次第。	No ruler of a nation fails to wish to cherish and protect it. Without waiting for King Prasenajit to request it, the Buddha first taught the Dharma of protecting the nation at the causal stage. Protecting the nation relies upon the Way; therefore, he first explained how to protect Buddhahood and how to protect the practices of the ten bhūmis. He expounded at length the ultimate truth of vajra prajñā and further taught the Dharma of the five

	forbearances, setting forth the sequence of the fourteen stages of forbearance.
一伏忍（三位）。习种性（修十住忍），性种性（十行忍），道种性（十回向忍）。此为三贤位，尚得退转。	1. The forbearance of subduing [afflictions] (three stages): the stage of disposition formed through practice (cultivating the forbearance of the ten abidings), the stage of innate disposition (the forbearance of the ten practices), and the stage of disposition for the Way (the forbearance of the ten dedications). These are the three worthy stages, at which regression remains possible.
二信忍（三位）。初地欢喜忍（化四天下），二地离垢忍（忉利天王），三地发光忍（夜摩天王），初地起为登地。	2. The forbearance of faith (three stages): the forbearance of joy at the first bhūmi (guiding beings in the four continents), the forbearance of freedom from defilement at the second bhūmi (king of Trāyastriṃśa Heaven), and the forbearance of radiant light at the third bhūmi (king of Yāma Heaven). Attainment of the first bhūmi marks entry into the bodhisattva grounds.
三顺忍（三位）。四地焰慧忍（兜率天），五地难胜忍（化乐天），六地现前忍（他化天）。	3. The forbearance of accord (three stages): the forbearance of blazing wisdom at the fourth bhūmi (Tuṣita Heaven), the forbearance of difficult conquest at the fifth bhūmi (Nirmāṇarati Heaven), and the forbearance of manifestation at the sixth bhūmi (Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven).
四无生忍（三位）。七地远行忍（初禅王），八地不动忍（二禅王），九地善慧忍（三禅王）。	4. The forbearance of non-arising (three stages): the forbearance of far-going at the seventh bhūmi (king of the first dhyāna), the forbearance of immovability at the eighth bhūmi (king of the second dhyāna), and the forbearance of excellent wisdom at the ninth bhūmi (king of the third dhyāna).
五寂灭忍（二位）。十地法云忍（四禅大梵天王），佛地又名正觉忍（常遍法界）。	5. The forbearance of quiescent extinction (two stages): the forbearance of Dharma-cloud at the tenth bhūmi (the Great Brahmā King of the fourth dhyāna), and the stage of Buddhahood, also called the forbearance of perfect awakening (ever pervading the dharma realm).
以上共十四忍位，由初发心至佛地，乃必经之阶段。初地起为不退位，至三地为能空境，四至六地为能空心，七至九地能空其余习，至十地上与佛齐，下与菩萨等。般若义味深邃，固非语言文字可尽。即语言文字，亦非万亿偈不可。此在自修自证，且无定法，兹从略。	These fourteen stages of forbearance are the necessary stages from the first resolve to attain awakening through to Buddhahood. Non-retrogression begins at the first bhūmi; through the third bhūmi one can empty objects; from the fourth

	through the sixth bhūmi one can empty mind; from the seventh through the ninth bhūmi one can empty the remaining habitual tendencies. At the tenth bhūmi, one is equal to the Buddha above and equal to bodhisattvas below. The meaning of prajñā is so profound that words can never convey it fully. Any attempt to set it out in words would take countless verses. This belongs to personal cultivation and realization, and there is no fixed Dharma; therefore, it is only briefly outlined here.
佛再说果地护国之法。言国土乱时，先起灾难，后来贼扰。即如过去帝释，尚被顶生王，倾军侵扰，欲灭帝释。帝释依过去诸佛所教，敷百高座，请法师，说般若经，顶生即退，天众安乐。	The Buddha then taught the Dharma of protecting the nation at the fruition stage. He said that when a land is in disorder, calamities arise first, followed later by marauding enemies. For example, in the past even Indra was invaded by King Mūrdhaja, who mobilized his army against him and sought to destroy him. Indra followed the teachings of the Buddhas of the past: he set up one hundred lofty seats, invited Dharma teachers to expound the Prajñā Sūtra, and King Mūrdhaja then withdrew. The celestial assembly was peaceful and joyful.
又昔天罗国王班足，因信外道师，令取千王头以祭天神。最后有一小王，名曰普明。求一日礼敬三宝而就死，班足许可。王乃敷百高座，请法师讲般若波罗密多偈，大旨谓“世界一切，无不生灭。	Again, in former times King Banzu of Tianluo, having placed faith in a non-Buddhist teacher, ordered the heads of a thousand kings to be taken as an offering to celestial deities. The last was a small king named Puming. He asked for one day in which to pay reverence to the Three Jewels before dying, and Banzu granted permission. The king then set up one hundred lofty seats and invited Dharma teachers to explain verses of the Prajñāpāramitā, whose general meaning was: “Everything in the world is subject to arising and ceasing.
即须弥山大海水，梵王帝释，一切众生，均随劫火而磨灭无余。况我幻身，我身且灭，国于何有。是以生老病死，喜乐悲欢，均自作受。须知三界无安，盛衰如电，有为不实，一切皆空。	Even Mount Sumeru, the waters of the great ocean, Brahmā, Indra, and all sentient beings are utterly consumed in the fire at the end of the kalpa. How much more so this illusory body of mine: if my body itself is to perish, where can a nation be found? Thus birth, aging, sickness, death, joy, pleasure, sorrow, and gladness are all consequences of one’s own actions, experienced firsthand. One must know that the three realms offer no security; rise and decline are like lightning; conditioned things are unreal; all is empty.

徒因业识茫茫，无明爱缚，不久业尽识还，身即无主。应知国土，幻化亦然。”此偈辞意深严，无不感动。后班足王闻此偈语，亦即悔过，自承为外道邪师所误，释诸王返国，以国付弟而亦出家。故未来诸国，欲护国者，亦应如此依法解化云。	It is only because karmic consciousness is so vast and obscure, and because of the bonds of ignorance and attachment, that, before long, when karma is exhausted and consciousness returns, the body has no master. One should know that nations and lands are likewise illusory transformations.” The wording and meaning of these verses are profound and solemn, and all were moved. Later, when King Banzu heard these verses, he immediately repented, acknowledging that he had been misled by an erroneous non-Buddhist teacher. He released the kings and sent them back to their countries, entrusted his own country to his younger brother, and himself left home. Therefore, in future, rulers of nations who wish to protect their countries should likewise transform and guide others according to the Dharma in this way.
于是波斯匿王等更白佛言，如是甚深无量般若波罗密多，又将如何觉解，为人演说耶？佛言必依止于师，当如佛而供养之。彼法师者，或僧尼或男女居士。其人从初习忍修至金刚定前，共十三观门，即至十地止，皆为法师。	Then King Prasenajit and the others addressed the Buddha again: “How should this profound and immeasurable Prajñāpāramitā be understood and explained for others?” The Buddha said, “One must rely upon a teacher and make offerings to that teacher as one would to the Buddha. Such Dharma teachers may be monastics or laymen and laywomen. Those who cultivate from the initial forbearance of habitual tendencies up to before vajra samādhi, through the thirteen gates of contemplation, and as far as the tenth bhūmi, are all Dharma teachers.”
而位位果德不同，要皆名为伏一切烦恼者。即能教人以生灭心，得无生灭。此心即灭，即无明灭。又在金刚定前，所有知见，尚不得名为佛知见也。诸大菩萨必依此受持解脱后，方堪往十方刹土，利乐有情，通达实相，如我无异。若言越此法门而得成佛者，是魔所说云。	Although the fruition and virtues at each stage differ, all are called those who subdue all afflictions. They can teach people to attain the unborn and unceasing through the mind of arising and ceasing. When this mind ceases, ignorance ceases. Moreover, before vajra samādhi, all views and understandings cannot yet be called the Buddha’s knowledge and view. Only after great bodhisattvas have relied on this, upheld it, and attained liberation are they fit to go to the lands of the ten directions, benefiting and bringing joy to sentient beings, penetrating the true reality, no different from me. If anyone says that Buddhahood can be attained apart from this Dharma gate, that is the speech of Māra.”

佛再告波斯匿王言，我灭度后，法欲灭时，一切众生，造恶业故，其诸国土，种种灾起。约有七难：一者日月失度，日色靡定，或薄蚀，或重轮多轮。二者星辰失度，彗星尽现。三者笼火鬼火，人火天火，焚烧万物。	The Buddha further told King Prasenajit and the others: “After I enter parinirvāṇa, when the Dharma is about to perish, because all sentient beings create evil karma, various disasters will arise in their lands. In outline, there are seven calamities: first, the sun and moon deviate from their proper courses, the sun’s appearance varies erratically, eclipses occur, or multiple suns and moons appear. Second, the stars deviate from their proper courses, and comets appear everywhere. Third, fires of dragons, ghosts, humans, and devas burn up all things.
四者时节变易，寒暑失常，夏霜冬雷，大水为灾。五者暴风时兴，拔树走石。六者天地亢阳，五谷不登。七者四方来侵，兵戈竞起，国土不安，百姓丧亡，于是地震天灾，邪怪百出。	Fourth, the seasons change: cold and heat become abnormal, frost falls in summer, thunder sounds in winter, and great floods become disasters. Fifth, violent winds arise from time to time, uprooting trees and hurling stones. Sixth, heaven and earth are parched by drought, and the five grains do not ripen. Seventh, invaders come from all directions, wars erupt on all sides, the land is unsettled, and the people perish. Then earthquakes and natural disasters occur, and strange malign phenomena arise in abundance.
其所以如此者，皆由人民作恶，戾气所感而致：第一不孝父母。第二不敬师长。第三轻慢僧尼，远离善道。第四上下不合，政治不良，不行正法，因此圣贤退隐或不生其国，所谓小人道长，而灾难竞起矣。何也，王及人民，其福已尽而恶报至也。	The reason for all this is that people commit evil deeds, and these calamities are brought about by the evils they evoke: first, they are not filial to their parents; second, they do not respect teachers and elders; third, they slight and disdain monastics and turn away from the wholesome path; fourth, those above and below are not in harmony, government is poor, and the true Dharma is not practiced. Therefore, sages and worthies withdraw into seclusion or are not born in that country. As it is said, the way of petty people flourishes, and disasters follow one upon another. Why is this so? The blessings of rulers and people alike have been exhausted, and evil retribution has arrived.”
佛言所谓般若波罗密多法者，妙用无尽，能成佛智，能使菩萨解脱，能治理国家，能使一切人民离诸苦恼，能制伏毒龙恶神，能令降甘露雨润泽大地，智慧如日月朗照大千。	The Buddha said, “The Dharma called Prajñāpāramitā has inexhaustible wondrous functions. It can bring about the wisdom of Buddhahood, enable bodhisattvas to attain liberation, govern a nation, cause all people to leave behind every suffering and affliction, subdue poisonous dragons and evil spirits, bring down

	sweet dew-like rain to moisten the earth, and make wisdom shine over the great thousandfold world like the sun and moon.”
故当以此经恭敬供养，宝函盛饰，所获福利，不可言喻。后世国王，如有建立正法、护持三宝者，我当令五方菩萨，往护其国：东方金刚手菩萨，即普贤大士；南方金刚宝菩萨；西方金刚利菩萨，即文殊大士；北方金刚药叉菩萨；中方金刚波罗密多菩萨。各各领其眷属，放各色光，来护其国，当立形象而供养之。	Therefore, this sūtra should be venerated and enshrined in an ornate jeweled case; the blessings and benefits gained thereby are beyond words. If kings of later generations establish the true Dharma and uphold the Three Jewels, I shall cause the bodhisattvas of the five directions to protect their countries: in the east, Vajrapāṇi Bodhisattva, namely Samantabhadra; in the south, Vajraratna Bodhisattva; in the west, Vajratīkṣṇa Bodhisattva, namely Mañjuśrī; in the north, Vajrayakṣa Bodhisattva; and in the center, Vajrapāramitā Bodhisattva. Each will lead his retinue, emit lights of various colors, and come to protect that country. Their images should be established and offerings made to them.”
尔时金刚手菩萨等，即从座起，顶礼佛足而白佛言：我等本愿，承佛神力，若十方国土，有受持此经之处，我等于一念顷，即往守护。令无灾难，及刀兵疾疫。并有陀罗尼加持拥护，以法威力，常令国界永无众难。即说陀罗尼曰（其咒甚长可持心咒如下）：	At that time Vajrapāṇi Bodhisattva and the others rose from their seats, bowed their heads at the Buddha’s feet, and said to the Buddha: “By our original vows and through the Buddha’s spiritual power, wherever in the lands of the ten directions this sūtra is received and upheld, we shall go there in the instant it takes for a thought to arise to guard and protect it, ensuring freedom from calamities, warfare, and epidemics. We also uphold and protect it through the empowerment of dhāraṇī; through the power and majesty of the Dharma, we shall always ensure that the realm of that nation is forever free from all calamities.” They then proclaimed a dhāraṇī, saying (the mantra is very long; its heart mantra may be recited as follows):
阿啰乃喀啰乃 阿啰那喀啰乃 姆哈卜啰几尚怕啰密达 司哇哈	A-luo-nai-ka-luo-nai, A-luo-na-ka-luo-nai, Mu-ha-bu-luo-ji-shang-pa-luo-mi-da, si-wa-ha.
佛最后告波斯匿等言，此经名为《仁王护国般若波罗密多经》，付诸国王守护流传，令我四部弟子，解其义理，广为众说。	Finally, the Buddha told King Prasenajit and the others: “This sūtra is called the Sutra of the Benevolent Kings’ Prajñāpāramitā for the Protection of the State. Entrust it to the kings of all nations for protection and transmission. Let my disciples of the fourfold assembly understand its principles and explain it widely to others.”

但当正法灭时，国王大臣，即破灭佛教，明作制法，不令善信男女，出家修道非理役使，大小僧统，与兵奴无异。复有恶比丘，自身破坏佛制，交接有势施主，贪求名利。	“But when the true Dharma is about to perish, kings and ministers will destroy Buddhism. They will openly enact regulations preventing faithful men and women from leaving home to cultivate the Way, and will subject them to unjust forced labor; monastic administrators of every rank will be no different from military slaves. There will also be corrupt bhikṣus who themselves violate the Buddha’s regulations, associate with powerful donors, and greedily seek fame and profit.
并于国王前，自说佛门过患，作破法因缘，其王不辨，信受其语，横立制法，不依佛戒。当知尔时，不久法灭。于是人民渐恶，福寿日减，无复孝子，六亲不和，灾害竞起。国以破灭，此皆身作受报，非佛法咎也。	“Moreover, before the king they will themselves speak of the faults and troubles of the Buddhist community, thereby creating causes and conditions for destroying the Dharma. The king, unable to discern the truth, will believe and accept their words, arbitrarily establish regulations, and fail to follow the Buddha’s precepts. Know that at such a time the Dharma will soon perish. The people will then gradually become evil, their blessings and life spans will diminish day by day, filial children will no longer exist, families will fall into discord, and disasters will follow one after another. The nation will be ruined. All this is retribution received through one’s own actions; it is not the fault of the Buddha-Dharma.”
十六国王等，闻佛说法已，各各发心，受持佛语，不制四部出家修行，当如佛教。于是一切天众人众阿修罗等，皆大欢喜，信受奉行。	The sixteen kings and the others, having heard the Buddha teach the Dharma, each aroused the resolve and received and upheld the Buddha’s words. They would refrain from imposing restrictions on renunciation and practice among the fourfold assembly, but would act in accordance with the Buddha’s teaching. Thereupon all the devas, humans, asuras, and others rejoiced greatly, faithfully accepted the teaching, and put it into practice.
此《仁王经》之大略也。佛说此经，在说摩诃般若，金刚般若。天王问般若，及大品般若诸经之后，要知般若无有定义，归于寂灭，无一经不同此性体。论其妙用，穿衣吃饭，一举一动，何一处不是般若。	This is a general outline of the Sutra of the Benevolent Kings. The Buddha taught this sūtra after teaching the Mahāprajñā, Diamond Prajñā, Prajñā Requested by the Heavenly King, and the Great Prajñā sūtras. One should know that prajñā has no fixed definition and returns to quiescent extinction; there is not a single sūtra whose essential nature differs from this. As for its wondrous function, in putting on clothes, eating

	meals, and every movement and action, what place is not prajñā?
即修身齐家治国平天下，又何一事能离般若。般若者，见性后能起有主宰之幻心妙用也。但在未有佛出世之时，各国岂无仁王？虽未具甚深般若智，要亦有无上福慧，故能统治其众。	Likewise, in cultivating oneself, regulating the family, governing the nation, and bringing peace to the world, what undertaking can be apart from prajñā? Prajñā is the wondrous functioning of the illusory mind that, after seeing one's true nature, can act with mastery. Yet before a Buddha appeared in the world, did the various nations lack benevolent kings? Although they did not possess profound prajñā, they nevertheless had unsurpassed blessings and wisdom, and thus could govern their peoples.
即耶回各教中，亦自有其仁爱世智与夫正义之国主，以护其国。惟有独夫，专一己之私欲，不顾万民之疾苦，其国必亡。所谓专欲难成，众怒难犯。能悟此理，即是般若。	Even among the various Christian and Muslim religions, there are benevolent and wise rulers, as well as rulers of justice, who protect their countries. But if there is a tyrant who pursues only his own selfish desires and disregards the suffering of the people, his country will surely perish. As the saying goes, selfish desires are hard to fulfill, and the anger of the masses cannot be affronted. To understand this principle is prajñā.
至于此经大旨，言在王位者，宜仁慈爱民，通达般若，以护其国。在佛教四众，宜守护正法，切勿贪图名利，变更佛制。在民众方面，宜各孝敬父母，礼敬师长，尊崇佛教。如是上下一心，努力建设，以护其国，自得天龙护持。	As for the main purport of this sūtra: those in positions of rulership should be compassionate and love the people, understand prajñā, and thereby protect their country. The fourfold Buddhist assembly should safeguard the true Dharma and never covet fame and profit or alter the regulations established by the Buddha. The people, for their part, should each be filial to their parents, respectful toward their teachers and elders, and revere Buddhism. When rulers and people are thus united in purpose and strive to build their country, they will naturally receive the protection of devas and nāgas.
如有国难，即可转危为安，转败为胜矣。故知佛力不可思议，即众生之力亦不可思议。国有仁王，其人民之福德，岂可量哉。际此国土重光，开始建设，前途远远，苦难正多，一切未可乐观。	Should the nation encounter calamity, it can then turn danger into safety and defeat into victory. Thus we know that the power of the Buddha is inconceivable, and that the power of sentient beings is likewise inconceivable. When a country has a benevolent king, how can the blessings and virtues of its people be measured? Now that our country has been restored and reconstruction has

	begun, the road ahead is long, hardships are many, and there is as yet no cause for optimism.
望我国人，毋骄毋怠，力图振作，上以报佛恩与仁王之恩，下以忏悔自身夙业。须知世界既已和平，虽无人祸，尚有天灾。惟此经妙用，为无尽藏耳。略说竟。	I hope that our people will guard against pride and complacency and strive to renew their efforts. May they repay the kindness of the Buddha and the benevolent king and repent of their own past deeds. You should know that although the world is now at peace and there are no man-made calamities, natural disasters still remain. The wondrous function of this sūtra alone is an inexhaustible treasury. This brief explanation is now concluded.
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