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The Forgotten Occupation: Peking, 1900–1901

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A GENERATION TROUBLED BY THE Vietnam War has grown accustomed to expect the worst when Americans come into contact with Asians. The occupation of Peking by the U.S. Army (August 1900–May 1901) was one of those situations rich in potential for conflict and abuse of power. The army came to China as part of an international force assembled to put down the Boxer movement and protect foreign interests. It arrived unprepared for the occupation duties it assumed as a consequence of intervention. The army carried with it no experts on China. The only obvious sources of guidance were the American missionary sinologues and their English-speaking Chinese followers. Both were in a bitter and vengeful mood after a summer of suffering. The arriving American troops, dispatched from the Philippines, were no better disposed toward the Chinese. They shared the contemporary American image of the Chinese as a backward and contemptible people. By the time they had reached the China coast in July 1900, it was alive with tales of terrible atrocities suffered by foreign missionaries

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and Chinese converts and with rumors that the besieged legations had fallen and all within massacred.

Difficulties encountered on the way to Peking proved that fighting Chinese could be as dispiriting as “pacifying” Filipinos. At Tientsin, the Americans suffered heavy losses when the Chinese failed to live up to their reputation for military cowardice. The subsequent march from Tientsin to Peking was gruellingly hot and dusty, and the only major engagement ended with shells from supporting allied artillery raining down on the advancing Americans. They reached Peking haggard and too late to claim the honor of lifting the siege. In a last try for glory they set out to “liberate” the imperial palace, only to be called back after distressing losses. The troops openly grumbled, but now Peking lay at their feet.¹

Contemporary official judgments of the occupation army have a self-serving and defensive ring which heightens rather than assuages suspicion about what followed. For example, American Minister E. H. Conger observed in 1901 that “the history of the whole [Boxer] movement, *when correctly written*, will I am sure give the largest measure of praise to the American soldiers who took part in the China Relief Expedition.”² One looks in vain in the secondary literature to dispel or confirm these suspicions about the occupation. But a recent examination of neglected sources—the papers of the occupation force itself³ together with contemporary Chinese ac-

¹On the march to Peking, see Fred R. Brown, *History of the Ninth U.S. Infantry, 1799–1909* (Chicago, 1909), 452–498; A. Henry Savage Landor, *China and the Allies* (New York, 1901), II, 194–211. On the spirit of revenge in Peking and Tientsin, see Frederick Palmer, “With the Peking Relief Column,” *The Century Magazine*, LXI (1900), 307; Capt. William Crozier, “Some Observations on the Peking Relief Expedition,” *North American Review*, CLXXII (1901), 237; U.S. War Dept., *Annual Reports of the War Department for . . . 1901* (Washington, D.C., 1901), I, 478. A pamphlet, *The American Troops in Peking* (Shanghai, 1901), by “an American soldier” offers a view from the ranks.

²Conger to Chaffee, March 4, 1901 (emphasis added), in National Archives Record Group 94 (General Correspondence of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1890–1917), file 329412, box 2184 (hereafter cited RG 94). See also Root address at Canton, Ohio, Oct. 24, 1903, in his *The Military and Colonial Policy of the United States*, edited by Robert Bacon and James Brown Scott, (Cambridge, Mass., 1916), 19–21, 23–24, 95.

³The papers of the China Relief Expedition have gathered dust in the National Archives, seemingly undisturbed by any systematic examination. They are in Record Group 395 (Records of the United States Army Overseas Operations and Commands, 1898–1942) in files 896–973 (hereafter cited RG 395/file no.).

counts⁴—reveals that Conger was surprisingly close to the truth. The occupation ran with remarkable smoothness—thanks in large measure to the willingness of Chinese to collaborate with Americans.

The Peking occupation evolved within the confines of a modest U.S. China policy. The Boxer crisis had caught the William McKinley administration at a bad time. The army, quickly demobilized after the war with Spain, already had its hands full with recently acquired territory. The situation in occupied Cuba and Puerto Rico seemed stable for the moment, but in the Philippines American forces were still battling against widespread and stubborn resistance. At home McKinley faced a presidential election in November with anti-imperialist critics still sharply attacking involvement in the Philippines. Entanglement in China would add to the administration's military and electoral problems. But the pressure of interest groups—not to mention the vague, timeworn, yet compelling ideas of national honor, prestige, and destiny—made a do-nothing policy unpalatable if not unthinkable. The Chinese threatened the lives of American diplomats in Peking and Tientsin in what was generally regarded in the United States as a barbaric assault on international comity and law. The lives of missionaries were also endangered. Throughout the 1890s missionaries with operations in the interior of China had elicited broad promises from Washington to protect them against xenophobic attacks of precisely the sort the Boxers had launched in North China. Finally, the China market seemed in peril, as commercial groups were quick to point out. McKinley needed no prompting to realize that if the United States did not join in the expedition as a restraining force, the other powers might finally carry out the long discussed partition of China or at least further extend those spheres of influence considered

⁴The chief Chinese sources are collected in Chien Po-tsan *et al.*, comps., *I-ho-t'uan* (4 vols., Shanghai, 1951) (hereafter cited as IHT); Chung-kuo k'o-hsüeh yüan li-shih yen-chiu so ti-san so, comp., *Keng-tzu chi-shih* (Peking, 1959), copy located in the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London (hereafter cited as KTCS); and Kuo-chia tang-an chü Ming-Ch'ing tang-an kuan, comp., *I-ho-t'uan tang-an shih-liao* (2 vols., Peking, 1959) (hereafter cited as IHTTASL).

inimical to American commercial development.⁵

McKinley's decision to join the other powers in sending troops to North China meant more for the army than just hard marching and fighting. The army would have a role to play in the delicate period of diplomatic maneuvering that would follow a successful intervention. McKinley would then seek to implement his policy of shoring up the Ch'ing dynasty, in hopes of restoring stability to China and fending off foreign encroachments harmful to American interests. By its mere presence in China, the army would amplify the voice of American diplomats in the post-Boxer settlement. And in its operations, the army could contribute to reestablishing order in North China and paving the way for the return of the Chinese government. In framing his specific instructions for the army, McKinley looked to the Cuban occupation as an appropriate and successful model. By mid-1900 he had reason for satisfaction with the methods first applied a year and a half earlier in Cuba. They were proving effective in insuring long term political influence with a minimum of short term military strain or risk. In December 1898 McKinley had set the guidelines in instructions to his commander in Cuba. He was to cultivate the elite and thereby minimize the possibility of resistance. Cuban collaborators would lighten the administrative burdens of the Americans. At the same time, the Americans should win the affection of the masses—by attending to their sufferings, by encouraging municipal reform, and by restraining the troops as well as incoming American carpetbaggers.⁶

McKinley looked to Cuba not only for policy inspiration but also for a commander to implement that policy. He turned aside applications from several senior officers and gave the task to Lieutenant General Adna Chaffee, a bluff, conscientious career soldier. Chaffee had begun his career in the ranks during the Civil War, fought in Cuba during the Spanish-American War, and stayed on as the chief of staff to the first American military governor. However, rivalries within the

⁵This summary draws from Marilyn Young's and Thomas McCormick's accounts of China policy and from Margaret Leech's, H. Wayne Morgan's, and Charles Olcott's histories of the McKinley administration.

⁶David Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898–1902* (Madison, Wisc., 1963), 55–56.

Cuban command and the appointment of a new military governor in December 1899 placed both Chaffee and Major General James H. Wilson, a provincial governor, in an uncomfortable position.⁷ By transferring Chaffee to China with Wilson as his second in command, McKinley not only sorted out a tangled personnel problem in Cuba but insured that the China command would have a first hand familiarity with the methods he wanted followed there. The President's orders to Chaffee gave first priority to relief of the legations, but they also stressed the army's general task of protecting American interests wherever the Chinese government could not. In doing so Chaffee was to maintain popular good will and take care to restrain his troops. He was to punish "sternly" and "severely" any looting or other violations of noncombatant rights. Wherever possible he was to work with friendly Chinese officials. Li Hung-chang, long the mainstay of China's foreign policy but of late in disfavor at court, was singled out for Chaffee's special attention.⁸

Once in China, Chaffee enjoyed the freedom to carry out his government's instructions. The relief expedition and the occupation that followed were cooperative international efforts in only the most tenuous sense. Each national force took its orders from its home government. The armies like the countries they represented—Japan, Britain, Germany, Italy, Austria, as well as the United States—were divided by preexisting international rivalries and by the newer issues raised by the Boxer crisis, such as partition (posed most sharply by Russia in Manchuria), punitive military expeditions, punishment of pro-Boxer officials, and the size of the indemnity to be imposed on China. In order to achieve the necessary minimum of coordination during the march on Peking, commanders had gone as far as to assemble for conferences. This conference method continued into the period of occupation, with the German commander, Count

⁷William H. Carter, *The Life of Lieutenant General Chaffee* (Chicago, 1917); Herman Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood* (New York, 1931), I, 302–303; and Healy, *The United States in Cuba*, 59, 100, 135–136, 146–147.

⁸U.S. War Dept., Adjutant General's Office, *Correspondence relating to the War with Spain . . . and the China Relief Expedition* (2 vols., Washington, D.C., 1902), I, 414, 420, 431, 434, 462; and Corbin to Chaffee, July 21, 1900, in Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (cited hereafter as Roosevelt Papers).

Alfred von Waldersee, presiding as the nominal head of the foreign military force in North China. But the reality was that the commanders exercised considerable independence within their respective zones of control, both within Peking and in the countryside. The occupation thus took as many different paths as there were occupation forces.

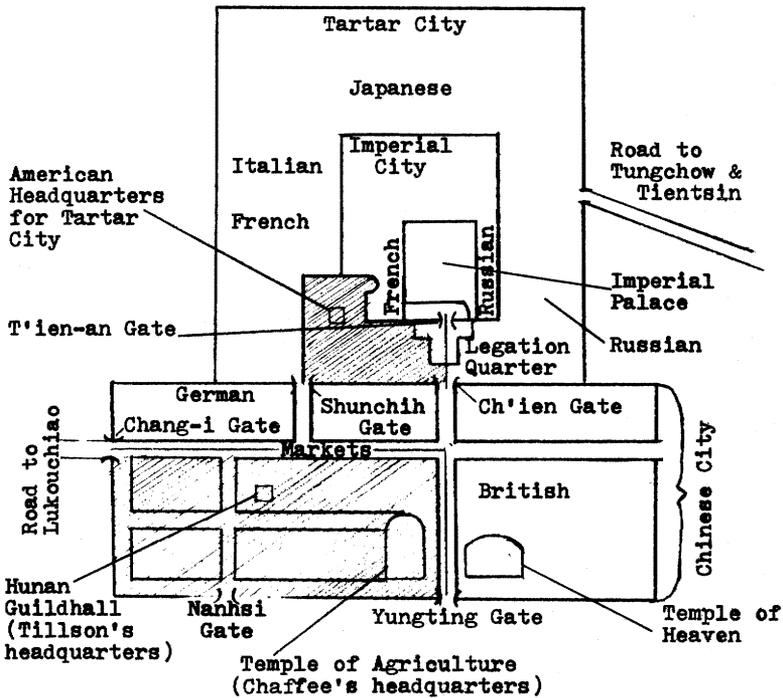
On August 17, 1900, three days after the allied forces had entered Peking, the first American patrols set out toward the areas they were to occupy for the next nine months. The largest area, about three and one-third square miles, was in the south of the capital, in a section known as the Chinese City.⁹ The Chinese City itself was divided into American, British, and German zones of roughly equal size. From a distance it presented a low silhouette, formed by single story buildings set off here and there by small plots of tilled land, graveyards, and rainwater pools. In normal times it had about forty to fifty thousand inhabitants and two thousand business houses.¹⁰

A summer of anarchy and violence had transformed this quarter. Early in June, Boxers began to move in freely from the countryside and to roam the streets chanting “burn, burn, burn; kill, kill, kill” as they searched for foreigners or any Chinese tainted by foreign contacts. Later, a fire in the heart of the Chinese City destroyed much of the business district and over three thousand homes, with considerable loss of life. An alarmed population closed the shops and bolted the gates. Many fled. In vain local officials begged for troops to restore order and for imperial intervention to restrain the Boxers. With

⁹The army simultaneously occupied a portion of the Tartar City in Peking (indicated on the map) and held it until May 1901. It also controlled a section of Tientsin after its capture in July but soon transferred jurisdiction to the newly established, foreign-run municipal government. Although the evidence, especially in Chinese, on these American occupied areas is not as full as in the case for the Chinese City (examined here in detail), the general pattern of collaboration appears to have been roughly similar in each case.

¹⁰In addition to scattered details in Chinese diaries and memoirs, the following offer insight on life in Peking in mid-1900: George Lynch, *The War of Civilizations* (London, 1901), 19–20, 47; Wilbur J. Chamberlin, *Ordered to China* (London, 1904), 80; Arthur H. Smith, *China in Convulsion* (2 vols., New York, 1901), II, 570; Chow Ziang Yien, “The Population of the City of Peking,” *Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, I (1916), 121–123; R. P. Tenney, *Daily Consular and Trade Reports*, July 13, 1911; report in U.S. Dept. of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1893*, 230; *Pekin Shi* (Tokyo, 1908), 47; U.S. War Dept., *Annual Reports, 1901*, I, 478; and Sidney D. Gamble, *Peking: A Social Survey* (New York, 1921), 94–95, 272, 412–413, 486.

OCCUPIED PEKING, 1900 - 1901
 (American zones indicated by shading)



the Chinese City in anarchy the poor began to plunder. "Elder brother, oh elder brother, for you to grab a watch and me a clock would be so nice; oh elder brother, forget good manners at once while I steal some wheat and you some rice." Finally, in mid-August the simultaneous flight of the court and the arrival of the allied army set off yet another wave of violence.¹¹

As the American occupiers moved down one of the several broad, dirt thoroughfares of the quarter, they saw everywhere the signs of the summer's destruction—charred houses, corpses littering the roadside, and stores pillaged and bare. Only

¹¹IHTTASL, I, 126-129, 149-151, 196-197; Tung K'ang, *Shu-po yung-t'an* (Shanghai, 1930), chap. 4.43b; Wu Yung, *Keng-tzu hsi-shou ts'ung-t'an* (1928), chap. 2.35 (on Boxer mobs); KTCS, p. 111 (looters' verse); Chang Chi-ch'ien *et al.*, "I-ho-t'uan tsai Pei-ching ti chan-tou," in Chung-kuo k'o-hsüeh yüan Shan-tung fen-yüan li-shih yen-chiu so, comp., *I-ho-t'uan yüan-tung liu-shih chou-nien chi-nien lun-wen chi* (Peking, 1961), 111-119; Stanley F. Wright, *Hart and the Chinese Customs* (Belfast, 1950), 737.

foreign looters, a few adventuresome or desperately hungry Chinese, and scavenging dogs and pigs broke the hush. Many of the homes that lined the narrow, meandering alleys were empty—the inhabitants having fled into the countryside or hidden themselves nearby. Others contained figures cowering in terror or sitting in calm resignation. In yet others those first Americans confronted grisly tableaux of family suicides precipitated by fear of falling into the clutches of the foreigners.

As his troops moved into their zone of occupation, Chaffee had to find intermediaries who might assist him in creating order among the populace. American missionaries had the requisite knowledge of the people and their language.¹² But Chaffee soon discovered that those who had not left for home at once already had their hands full reestablishing missions and attending to their decimated and scattered Chinese followers. The only qualified Americans available to Chaffee were the son of the missionary president of Peking University and, for a brief time, William Pethick, an aide of Li Hung-chang's and sometime interpreter for the Tientsin consulate.

Chaffee thus had in the main to look to Chinese collaborators to help him in carrying out his occupation duties. First, he chose a corps of translators and interpreters from among an ample body of English-speaking Chinese. Some were instructors or students from the Chinese government language school (the T'ung-wen kuan), but the bulk were Christians trained at the missionary-run Peking University. The latter were especially easy to enlist because service with the army assured them protection, a modicum of power, ten times their normal salary as teachers or mission workers, and a chance at handsome bribes from those wanting favors and protection.¹³ But these Chinese Christians possessed limitations as collaborators. They were generally poor outsiders of low social status; they came from the country or other parts of Peking which were histori-

¹²George F. Seward to Root, Sept. 5, 1900, Seward Papers, New York Historical Society; James H. Wilson to Gilbert Reid, Sept. 14, 1900, Wilson Papers, Library of Congress; and Henry D. Northrop, *Chinese Horrors and the Persecution of the Christians* (Philadelphia, 1900), 393.

¹³Isaac Taylor Headland, *China Heroes* (New York, 1902), 137, 224–226, 240–242, 245; and A. H. Smith, "The Transformation of Peking," *Outlook*, LXVIII (May 18, 1901), 161. See Smith, *China in Convulsion*, II, 518, on local hostility to foreign missions.

cally hostile to foreign missions. They lacked the knowledge and influence to serve Chaffee effectively as intermediaries.

Chaffee needed help from Chinese with greater prestige and authority, not only in administering the Chinese community but also in securing its willing cooperation. From the start Chaffee's proceedings were designed to inspire confidence and win that help. To restore order he sent out security patrols night and day, threatened summary execution for Chinese looters, kept a tight rein on his own men, and extended his protection to Chinese property within the U.S. zone (identified by some six thousand small American flags distributed by his command). In mid-September he ordered an end to the practice of impressing Chinese labor, and in time he arranged for the exclusion from his zone of foreign troops who often abused Chinese or clashed with his own men. Chaffee also worked to avert a possible winter shortage of food and fuel. His public proclamations urged the Chinese to resume their normal occupations and promised a fair price for those supplying produce to his army. He also sought to revive trade with the countryside by putting it on a more secure footing.¹⁴

Moreover, nothing Chaffee had done suggested that he intended any threat to imperial interests or to the social and political order. He seemed intent from the Chinese perspective on playing the part of a local magistrate, attending principally to security but also to welfare, justice, and taxes. Potential collaborators, for their part, saw that they could play the influential, behind-the-scenes role of the local gentry, whose knowledge of local conditions and ability to speak to and for local interests were essential to the new magistrate.¹⁵ Indeed, by collaborating, prominent Chinese in the American zone might succeed in limiting foreign encroachment on imperial authority and the further diminution of imperial prestige; such service

¹⁴Proclamations of Aug. 18 and 19, 1900 in RG 395/913; RG 395/898, vol. I, 62; KTCS, 178, 198, 228; Chamberlin, *Ordered to China*, 118; A. S. Daggett, *America in the China Relief Expedition* (Kansas City, 1903), 130–131; U.S. War Dept., *Annual Reports of the War Department . . . 1900* (Washington, D.C., 1900), 92–93; *ibid.*, *Annual Reports*, 1901, I, 447, 482, 526–527; and Carter, *Life*, 214.

¹⁵Ch'u Tung-tsu, *Local Government in China Under the Ch'ing* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), 15–18, 130–168; Hsiao Kung-ch'üan, *Rural China: Imperial Control in the Nineteenth Century* (Seattle, 1960); Chüzō Ichiko, "The Role of the Gentry: An Hypothesis," in Mary C. Wright, ed., *China in Revolution* (New Haven, 1968), 297–298.

might earn them official merit. For the unscrupulous there was always the prospect of personal aggrandizement. Finally, for the Chinese elite, self-conscious of their high social and political standing, collaboration was a way to displace partially the influence over the Americans already gained by their inferiors, namely the government trained Chinese interpreters and Chinese converts.

Any potential collaborator must weigh apparent short term advantages against the long term risks of being judged a traitor. In the Chinese experience the dilemma was a familiar one, most acutely posed by the fall of dynasties at the hands of foreign invaders. Resistance was a hard choice to make. It could express itself in withdrawal into political passivity and personal obscurity, in defiant non-cooperation leading possibly to arrest, torture, and execution, or in the simple and decisive path of suicide. The wailing of wife and children fearful for the future, the desire to maintain family wealth and rank, the prospect of making a richly rewarded contribution to the establishment of a new dynasty, or the obligation to protect the common people from misrule were all potent arguments for taking the alternative path of accommodation to a new political order. But if the old order somehow rallied and turned vindictive, the collaborator's good name, his rank, his property, and perhaps even his life would be in jeopardy. And always waiting in ultimate judgment was the orthodox historian with his stern regard for righteous and loyal conduct in an official.¹⁶

In the summer of 1900 those officials who chose not to flee with the court or commit suicide had to grapple with this old dilemma. However, late in August the court helped resolve the issue by endorsing Li Hung-chang's call for an end to military resistance and empowering him and Prince Ch'ing, the cautious head of the foreign office, to open peace talks. At the

¹⁶Igor de Rachewiltz, "Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai (1189-1243): Buddhist Idealist and Confucian Statesman," in Arthur F. Wright and Denis Twitchett, eds., *Confucian Personalities* (Palo Alto, Calif., 1962); Frederick W. Mote, "Confucian Eremitism in the Yüan Period," in Wright, ed., *The Confucian Persuasion* (Palo Alto, Calif., 1960); Frederic Wakeman, Jr., *Strangers at the Gate: Social Disorder in South China, 1839-1861* (Berkeley, 1966), 48-51, 161-163; Arthur Waley, *The Opium War Through Chinese Eyes* (Palo Alto, Calif., 1968), 160, 168, 190-243; and Wakeman, "The Shun Interregnum of 1644," in Jonathan Spence and John E. Wills, Jr., eds., *From Ming to Ch'ing: Conquest, Region and Continuity in Seventeenth-Century China* (New Haven, 1979), 39-87.

same time the court underlined its policy shift by appointing a number of ranking officials to cooperate with the allies in managing affairs in the occupied capital.¹⁷ Politically prominent local residents could now with clearer consciences accommodate themselves to American rule.

In late August and early September five minor officials from the Peking bureaucracy came forward in an extra-official capacity. They had stayed in the city, even after the court's flight, because the presence of Boxers and foreign forces in the countryside made it too risky to try to reach ancestral homes in distant provinces. But the city, familiar as it was, also held its perils. At least two had already suffered at the hands of the Boxers. Now all faced continuing daily violence and the spectre of cold and hunger. Well into the fall they worried over Boxer bands reportedly still operating in the countryside, the court's uncertain fate, the repeatedly delayed arrival of Li Hung-chang, the punitive demands of the foreign powers, and the safety and whereabouts of relatives and friends.¹⁸ One step toward piecing back together their shattered world was to work with the Americans. The court had made it possible. Chafee's behavior made it attractive. And the belief, widespread among Chinese interested in foreign affairs, that the United States was one of the least threatening of the powers gave further encouragement.

The first and most prominent of the collaborators was Tseng K'uang-luan, the youngest son of the pioneering diplomat Tseng Chi-tse and grandson of the illustrious general and statesman Tseng Kuo-fan. Then aged twenty-six, he was a senior vice-president in the censorate and bore the inherited title of marquis. He had foreign friends and a proficient command of English, which he had learned as a child from the wife of the British missionary, Timothy Richard. During the summer the Boxers had destroyed the family home in the legation quarter and killed a brother and several servants. In late August Tseng moved his dependents into the American quarter. Perhaps on Tseng's suggestion, his new temporary residence, the Hunan guildhall, became the American administrative

¹⁷IHTTASL, I, 259, 445–446, 475, 505–507.

¹⁸Diaries in IHT and KTCS reveal the preoccupations of this group.

headquarters for the Chinese City. Tseng came well recommended by old timers in the capital and Chaffee accepted him as "a reliable man of standing." For two months Tseng served as a valued troubleshooter. He handled cases against Chinese looters, intervened in behalf of residents troubled by foreign troops, and untangled the misunderstandings that daily arose between American rulers and Chinese subjects. For example, Buddhist monks on one occasion called on Tseng for aid when American troops entered their monastery with the apparent intention of burning it down. It was only after he arrived and consulted both parties that it became clear that the fire was intended not to burn the monastery but to make bread in the monastery oven. Early in November Chaffee lost Tseng's services. He left Peking for his home in Hunan with a large party of family and dependents travelling under a U.S. army escort.¹⁹

Tseng's departure did not leave Chaffee bereft of support from influential Chinese. Indeed, Chaffee had already established a working relationship with a group of notable residents who claimed to speak for the local people and gentry. The four most prominent men held posts in the middle level of Peking's imperial bureaucracy. The most active was Yün Yü-ting, a thirty-seven year old from the adjacent province of Hopei, who had served in Peking since 1889. At the time of the Boxer crisis he had been working in the Hanlin, Peking's official center of higher learning. Huang Ssu-yung, a colleague of Yün's (though some twenty-seven years his senior), was also a long time Peking resident. His native place was the city of Nanking, far to the south. Two officials from the Board of Punishments, Tung K'ang and Ch'iao Shu-nan, rounded out this local leadership. Ch'iao was a fifty-year old Szechuanese. Tung, who came from Kiangsu, was then in his early thirties, the youngest of the group. Tung alone does not appear to have been an established resident of Peking. In the fall he had travelled from Shensi, where he had handled judicial affairs, to Peking where he

¹⁹*Tseng-shih ssu-hsiu tsu-p'u* (preface 1900; Taipei reprint, 1967), 10.84b; Li En-han, *Tseng Chi-tse ti wai-chiao* (Taipei, 1966), 299; Timothy Richard, *Forty-Five Years in China* (New York, 1916), 209; RG 395/898, vol. 1, 22; RG 395/906, Box 2 (Tillson to AG, Nov. 12, 1900); Wu Yung, *The Flight of an Empress*, trans. Ida Pruitt (New Haven, 1936), 12; KTCS, 182, 189.

hoped for rapid advancement in the depleted metropolitan bureaucracy.²⁰

With the possible exception of Tung, each of these men had previously associated with foreigners or embraced the cause of reform. Both Yün and Ch'iao had been involved in the ill-fated reform movement of 1898. Huang had spent enough time with foreigners to learn something of their language and earn himself a dubious reputation among xenophobes; indeed, the Boxers had imprisoned him during the summer on charges of being a Christian. No doubt all three were relieved to see an end, in August, to the personally perilous period of militancy at court and within the city, for officials with backgrounds similar to their own had been executed.

The arrival of the Americans posed new problems, which the local collaborators sought to meet by organizing a public office for assistance and security (*hsieh-hsün kung-so*). Run with the assistance of four subordinate figures, who held expectant ranks which conferred some social prestige but not substantial political authority,²¹ the public office handled lawsuits, collected taxes, offered translation services, and otherwise lent support to the Chinese community. Although the office never received formal recognition from the Americans, the men who organized and ran it came to serve as a bridge between the occupiers and the occupied. At first the group's major concern was to help restore order. They submitted a petition in the latter part of August endorsing Chaffee's policy of summary execution for Chinese looters and asking for greater vigilance against the "bad elements" who joined with foreign soldiers in forcing their

²⁰Three of these four men had the *chin-shih*, the highest degree awarded under the system of state examinations. Yün was a *chin-shih* of 1889, Huang of 1880, and Tung of 1894. Ch'iao held the next highest degree, the *chü-jen* (1876). On Yün, see Chia I-chun, *Chung-Hua min-kuo ming-jen chuan* (Peiping, 1932), II, 41-42, and Ch'en Nai-ch'ien, comp., *Ch'ing-tai pei-chuan-wen t'ung-chien* (Peking, 1959), 254. On Huang, see Yang Chia-lo, *Min-kuo ming-jen t'u-chien* ([Nanking], 1937), entry in vol. 3, chap. 16; A Ying [pseud., Ch'ien Hsing-ts'un], comp., *Keng-tzu shih-pien wen-hsüeh chi*, II, 1137; *Gendai Shina jimmeikan* (Tokyo, 1916), 520. On Ch'iao, see Ch'en Nai-ch'ien, *Ch'ing-tai pei-chuan-wen*, 250; and Ma Ch'i-ch'ang, *Pao-jun hsüan wen-chi* (Peking, 1923), chap. 16.3b-5a. On Tung, see his *Shu-po yung-t'an*, chap. 4.44b; Boorman, *Biographical Dictionary*, III, 240; Yang Chia-lo, *Min-kuo ming-jen*, entry in vol. 3; *Gendai Shina jimmeikan*, 70.

²¹Names and ranks indicated in H. G. Squeirs to Hay, May 2, 1901, Minister to China: Despatches, Dept. of State, National Archives Record Group 59 (hereafter cited as MCD).

way into private homes. At the same time, they asked for an end to the house-to-house search for arms on the ground that it made the people anxious. (Within the month Chaffee had complied.) Finally, the group made its own contribution to security by organizing and paying for a Chinese police force to patrol along with American troops.²²

By September they could draw some satisfaction from the knowledge that at least a small part of their world was knitting itself back together. Order returned to the American section; shops reopened; and jobs became plentiful as the city rebuilt. The markets received increasing amounts of produce from the countryside. The harvest had been good, and both Chinese and foreign authorities worked to ensure that some food reached the city. Prices of staples began to fall, and by the end of the year the retail price of wheat was approaching its normal seasonal level. Chinese from other, less fortunate parts of the city, particularly from the ill-governed German zone directly to the north, began to move into the American quarter in such numbers that a housing shortage developed. To express their gratitude, the local collaborators paid a courtesy call on the Americans and publicly offered praise for enlightened government.²³

Meanwhile, Chaffee was beginning to show the familiar symptoms of China fever; he was becoming more fascinated with his country's stake in China's future and sensitive to the opportunities open to the army in safeguarding it. The first symptom was his changing attitude toward the withdrawal of American troops. Chaffee had about four thousand men under his command. This was less than half the number originally estimated as necessary to reach Peking and help restore order. Even so, Chaffee had begun calling for their early withdrawal not long after his arrival in Peking. He argued that the "terrible suffering" already experienced by the population in and around Peking would become worse if an international force of thirty

²²Petition, received Aug. 27, 1900, in RG 395/906; IHTTASL, II, 799–800.

²³Chamberlin, *Ordered to China*, p. 118; Headland, *China Heroes*, 150; T'ien-pei Meng and Sidney D. Gamble, "Prices, Wages and the Standard of Living in Peking, 1900–1924," *Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, special supplement (July 1926), 11–12, 100; IHTTASL, II, 799–800; IHT, II, 460; U.S. War Department, *Annual Reports, 1901*, I, 487–488.

thousand stayed on through the winter, consuming already scarce food supplies and holding at a distance the Chinese authorities best able to ensure stability. However, soon after the McKinley administration had concurred with him in early September, Chaffee changed his mind in favor of continued occupation. The food situation in the Chinese capital had unexpectedly improved and the first prominent Chinese officials had begun to arrive. His troops were needed to promote American interests in the potentially protracted and complicated negotiations that lay ahead and to serve as a counterpoise to the continuing influx of troops from other nations. Chaffee was not alone in these views. Minister Conger warned Washington that the planned evacuation was “a great mistake.” McKinley’s special commissioner to China, W. W. Rockhill, American missionaries in Peking, who had under their care some twelve hundred converts, and mission boards at home all agreed. This combination of military, diplomatic, and missionary pressure persuaded McKinley to keep a military presence in place in Peking at least into the following spring. Still, McKinley insisted—over Chaffee’s protest—on the transfer of roughly half of the China force back to the Philippines. By late October only about 1,900 American troops were left to spend the winter in North China.²⁴

As Chaffee’s China fever waxed through the late fall and early winter, he became preoccupied with acquiring military bases that would demarcate and safeguard an American sphere of influence in North China. He regarded a *piéd à terre* there as an essential precaution as much against the likely prospect of a long term struggle among the powers over China as against a renewed spasm of internal violence. An American concession in Tientsin, for example, aside from stimulating the development

²⁴U.S. War Dept., Adjutant General’s Office, *Correspondence*, I, 415, 417, 423, 461, 462, 476, 482, 484; RG 395/897 (Aug. 29 and Sept. 26, 1900); and Roosevelt Papers, series I (Sept. 4, 9, 12, 19, and 25, 1900). For views of the diplomats and the missionaries, see U.S. Dept. of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1900*, p. 195; *Foreign Relations, 1901, Appendix*, p. 34; Rockhill to Hay, Sept. 2, 1900, MCD; W. A. P. Martin, *The Siege in Peking* (New York, 1900), 183; and Porter to Judson Smith, Oct. 4 and 10, 1900, in American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Letters and Papers of the Board, Houghton Library, Harvard University, North China Missions, vols. 23 and 28 respectively (hereafter cited as ABC, vol. no.). See also Richard D. Challener, *Admirals, Generals, and American Foreign Policy, 1898–1914* (Princeton, N.J., 1973), 205; and Marilyn B. Young, *The Rhetoric of Empire: American China Policy, 1895–1901* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), 179–187.

of American commerce, would serve the army as a staging area and supply base for inland expeditions. For an interior base Chaffee's choice was the Temple of Agriculture, a 275 acre cypress-covered compound in the southern section of Peking where the Emperor normally paid a visit each spring to turn the soil and invoke a good harvest. In those topsy-turvy times it was serving as Chaffee's Peking headquarters. Anxious to forestall some other power from acquiring the site, Chaffee appealed to Conger for support for prompt action. This time Conger proved at best a reluctant ally. Washington was even cooler to the plan, reminding him that taking a sphere of influence ran counter to the essential tenets of China policy, including the need to bolster the imperial government and restrain the other powers.²⁵

While Chaffee was sorting out policy issues with Washington, the occupation entered a second phase. In early September Chaffee temporarily handed over responsibilities in Peking to Major General Wilson, his second in command, who had just arrived from Cuba. American forces had already reestablished security and order, and, with Chaffee already campaigning to extend the occupation, Wilson had a chance to formulate a more ambitious local program. As in Cuba, where he had prided himself on giving the "natives" good government, so too in Peking he would demonstrate graphically the progressive and benevolent nature of American influence. Wilson implemented programs of relief, justice, and public health,²⁶ the success of which depended in large measure on the continuing cooperation of local Chinese. To Capt. John Tillson, a junior officer charged with implementing Wilson's program, fell the duties of liaison. As a result of his efforts Tillson became the American in Peking best known to Chinese either personally or by reputation.

Tillson, working with Yün Yü-ting and the other local collaborators, turned first to the pressing need for relief. The winter

²⁵U.S. War Department, Adjutant General's Office, *Correspondence*, I, 493; Chaffee to Corbin, Dec. 7 [?], 1900, Henry C. Corbin Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress; U.S. Dept. of State, *Foreign Relations, 1901*, 49, 51–52; and Conger to Hay, Dec. 7, 1900, MCD.

²⁶James H. Wilson, *China* (3rd ed., New York, 1901), v–viii, 390; Wilson, *Under the Old Flag* (2 vols., New York, 1912), II, 524–525; Daggett, *America*, 131; and David Healy, *U.S. Expansionism: The Imperialist Urge in the 1890s* (Madison, Wis., 1970), chap. 4 for a sketch of Wilson.

promised fearsome suffering unless some action was taken. Both fuel for heating and food would be scarce. The destitute in the American zone, which even in normal times may have run around ten per cent, were far more numerous now and still growing. The first step taken by Tillson and Yün to reduce demands on scarce resources was to join the Chinese Red Cross in evacuating hardpressed officials and merchants who hailed from other provinces and wished to return home. For the remaining homeless and hungry the Chinese resorted to traditional methods of relief that also satisfied the American requirements. When in the recent past, flood or drought had caused popular distress in the Peking area, the city government or gentry had established shelters and charity kitchens. In the fall of 1900 these familiar institutions reappeared under the formal aegis of the Americans and the effective superintendence of the collaborators. Tillson and the collaborators also reached a working agreement on the administration of justice. American authorities were to take up disputes involving foreigners. The Chinese collaborators on the other hand would attend to purely Chinese cases and thereby maintain Chinese judicial practices and privileges against American interference.²⁷

The Chinese bore, one way or another, much of the cost for these and other administrative measures. Initially local notables dipped into their own purses to pay the Chinese police force which was raised locally to supplement U.S. army patrols. Later they instituted and began collecting a house tax, probably to meet this and other expenses incurred by the public office for assistance and security. (This new tax eventually precipitated a falling out between Tillson and Yün either because Yün had failed to keep Tillson sufficiently informed or because—according to contemporary rumors—Tillson suspected Yün of speculation.) The Chinese government also made an involuntary contribution early in the occupation in the form of food supplies seized by U.S. troops and utilized in the relief program.²⁸

²⁷RG 395/898, vol. 1, p. 267; RG 395/906, Box 2 (Tillson report, Nov. 12, 1900); IHT, I, 231, II, 528; Tso Shun-sheng, comp., *Chung-kuo chin-pai-nien shih tzu-liao hsiü-pien* (Taipei, 1966), pp. 442–461; Ch'ü Hsüan-ying, *Pei-p'ing shih-piao ch'ang-pien* (n.p., preface 1932).

²⁸IHT, II, 517; Carter, *Life*, 216.

The occupation took a uniquely American twist when it began to emphasize municipal reform. But even here—where the local collaborators were asked to tread a largely unfamiliar road—they seem to have gone along. Tillson emphasized improved sanitation with results that impressed visiting Americans. “Though naturally filthy, [the Chinese] are forced to be clean. They sweep the streets. Their houses are inspected and they must keep them clean, too. They have had to dig sinks and do everything else that the laws of sanitation demand. They are pleasant and respectful. . . .” Army doctors drew up sanitary regulations, superintended their enforcement, and offered inoculations against epidemic diseases. Tillson saw to the establishment of public privies in order to put an end to unhealthful and unseemly practices along the roadside and tried to put a stop to public spitting. Early in 1901 he gave a special concession to a Chinese company to travel about the American quarter cleaning up long neglected home privies, and he welcomed the opening of a public dispensary located on one of the main thoroughfares that was run by three Shansi men with some modern medical training. Tillson also indulged his reformist impulses by repairing long neglected public roads, requiring home owners to maintain adjacent alleys and to supply lighting at night for police and public convenience, and establishing a school for children. He closed gambling houses and opium dens. And although he left the local brothels open, he did force medical attention on their three to four hundred inmates—primarily, it is safe to assume, to safeguard the health of visiting foreigners.²⁹

The American occupation entered its third phase in November as imperial authorities set to work regaining control in the city and diminishing the influence of local collaborators. The court had by late August, nearly two weeks after its flight, designated the officials who were to take charge in the capital. Li Hung-chang and Prince Ch’ing, the highest ranking of these, dealt with the major policy issues and left the chief responsibility for administration of the capital to two lower ranking officials serving as governor and vice governor of

²⁹IHT, I, 103; KTCS, 227–229; Wilson, *Under the Old Flag*, 525. Quote from Chamberlin, *Ordered to China*, 129.

Peking prefecture. The governor was Ch'en Kuei-lung. He had stayed in the capital through the dangerous summer months and in late September was advanced from vice governor to governor after his superior lost his life because of his support of the Boxers. The new vice governor was Ch'en Pi. He was to emerge as the most outspoken critic of collaboration in the American sector.

Ch'en Pi was a native of Fouchow and a *chin-shih* of 1877. In 1900, in his forty-eighth year, he already had behind him over twenty years of government service, some of it in Peking. Early that year Ch'en (as censor) had assumed charge of administration in the northern portion of Peking, and there he doggedly remained through the summer, trying to keep order but finally siding with the Boxers. He condoned the burning of Chinese Christians who obstinately refused to recant their foreign allegiance. Although he ran the risk of denunciation for complicity once the foreigners arrived, Ch'en stayed on into the fall; indeed, he may have been the anonymous censor who then bitterly denounced to Prince Ch'ing the support given the Americans by Yün Yü-ting and his associates. When, later in the fall, Ch'en received his promotion to the post of vice governor, he continued to demonstrate a jealous regard for imperial control and a cordial dislike for Chinese Christians.³⁰

Both Ch'en Pi and Ch'en Kuei-lung recognized collaboration as a necessary evil. Collaborators could minimize foreign contacts with the people until the imperial government reestablished its sway. And they could calm popular anxieties after the summer's alarms and add an element of stability through the political uncertainties of what might be a prolonged Allied occupation. But however necessary, collaboration remained an evil to be watched carefully and eradicated at the earliest

³⁰On Ch'en Kuei-lung, see his *Meng-chiao-liang tsa-chi* (preface 1925, Hongkong reprint, 1969), esp. chap. 1 and *passim*. Sketches of Ch'en Pi in his *Wang-yen t'ang tsou-kao* (Taipei reprint, 1968), pp. 9–10, 13; Yeh Kung-ch'o, *Hsia-an hui-kao* (1946 rev. ed., Taipei reprint, 1973), pt. 2, 508–509; Ch'en Yen, comp., *Min-hou hsien chih* (preface 1933, Taipei reprint, 1966), chap. 69.41–42. Ch'en's incriminating references to burning Christians were omitted from his published works but appeared subsequently in IHTTASL, I, 206. Rumors circulating in Peking during the occupation linked Ch'en to the Boxers. John K. Fairbank *et al.*, eds., *The I. G. in Peking: Letters of Robert Hart* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), II, 1373, 1376. Censor to Prince Ch'ing in Tso Shun-sheng, *Chung-kuo chin-pai-nien*, 452; other critics of collaboration are in IHTTASL, II, 904–905, and IHT, II, 469.

opportunity. To Ch'en Pi this evil seemed singularly evident in the American quarter of the Chinese City. His vague but ominous reports alluded to the questionable activities of bad gentry, local bullies, Chinese Christians, and instructors and students from the government language school. Some were profiting from gentry-established organizations, while others were taking the foreigners' pay and forgetting their obligations to the dynasty.³¹

To displace local collaborators and set the municipal government back in early operation, the two Ch'ens would themselves have to collaborate with the occupying powers. Backed by Prince Ch'ing, they directly approached the allied commanders in late November and asked for greater participation in city affairs. But this first effort at obtaining foreign sanction for their reassertation of imperial interests misfired. Early the next month the allies granted them only an occasional consultative role in the newly reorganized city council.³²

Thereafter the two Ch'ens depended on piecemeal efforts to regain control and curb the collaborators in the American zone. Ironically, they did so by taking over and building from foundations which the collaborators themselves had already assisted the Americans in laying. Ch'en Pi moved first to rebuild the city's police force. Late in the fall he consulted with Prince Ch'ing on recruiting a core of two hundred men to share patrol duties with foreign forces. By the spring he had imperial authorization to raise a 1,000 man force. Rather than start from scratch, Ch'en took over the already existing forces that had sprung up in the American zone and perhaps in other parts of the city as well. Tillson continued to work with the Chinese police. Gradually he ceased taking his problems—for example, the tendency of the men literally to fall asleep on the job—to the local collaborators; instead he saw the new sponsor, Ch'en Pi. Moreover, as early as December Ch'en began to take charge of relief efforts, including the shelters and soup kitchens already operating in the American zone.³³ In January the city

³¹Ch'en Kuei-lung, *Yung-an shang-shu tsou-i* (Taipei reprint, 1969), chap. 1.11; Ch'en Pi, *Wang-yen t'ang*, 141–142, 157–158, 169.

³²City council meeting minutes in RG 395/920.

³³RG 395/898, vol. 2, 28–30; IHTTASL, II, 904–905, 941–943; Ch'en Pi, *Wang-yen t'ang*, 153–156; KTCS, 216; Ch'en Kuei-lung, *Yung-an shang-shu*, chap. 1.14b, 18a.

government took its last major step—the creation of Chinese courts and jails. A formal agreement gave Chaffee the power to appoint the judges and to review and reduce court sentences; the Board of Punishments received the right to send a representative to supervise the courts. Chaffee proceeded to appoint, perhaps unwittingly, an official from the Board as judge in at least one of the courts, which no doubt pleased Chinese officials in the city.³⁴ At the same time, Ch'en Pi also indirectly came to enjoy the advantages of imperial funding. To underwrite some of the major costs of foreign rule (chiefly Chinese police and sanitation), the Board of Revenue during this period paid out a monthly subsidy drawn from the central government's treasury directly to the United States and the other allies. In the American zone the Board was for all practical purposes financing programs, at a cost of \$3,500 per month, that were already coming under effective imperial control, and thereby enhancing imperial influence over local affairs.³⁵

Collaborators in the American zone appear to have yielded quietly before the claims of the municipal government. Yet one incident in March highlighted their divergent preoccupations. Current rumors of an early American departure had evoked considerable local concern, particularly over a German takeover. The local collaborators appealed to the Americans to stay on and presented them with the silk umbrella, the traditional token of popular esteem for a good magistrate. On March 28, several thousand representatives of the Chinese City gathered before the Hunan guildhall, where Yün Yü-ting, Huang Ssuyung, and others associated with them from the beginning of the occupation presented petitions in the name of 13,000

³⁴Those same officials were less pleased by Chaffee's consistent refusal to approve court imposed death sentences. They blamed his leniency for the crime wave that began in the American zone later in the month. They demanded use of the death penalty as a deterrent, while anxious local inhabitants asked for increased night time protection against thieves. Tillson agreed to add one mounted patrol at night, but Chaffee remained adamant until a particularly brutal murder in April convinced him to authorize the first execution. On the recovery of imperial control, see U.S. War Dept., *Annual Reports, 1901*, I, 527–529; RG 395/906, Box 4 (Robertson report, Jan. 11, 1901); IHTTASL, II, 904–905; KTCS, 227; Alfred von Walderssee, *A Field-Marshal's Memoirs*, trans. Frederic Whyte, (London, 1924), 253; Carter, *Life*, 215–216; and Pai Tseng-ch'ö, *Keng-hsin t'i-lao pi-chi* (n.p., 1901; Taipei reprint, 1977).

³⁵RG 395/920 and 906, Box 6 (reports of April 30, 1901).

gentry, merchants, bannermen, and common people. They expressed fears of disorder should the Americans leave. Following this demonstration, Prince Ch'ing and Li Hung-chang confidentially asked the Americans to stay on, even if only as nominal occupiers while the Chinese government took over the real responsibility for running the zone.³⁶

These public demonstrations in behalf of the Americans raised symbolic and substantive issues about collaboration. Did these ostentatious displays imply any disloyalty to the dynasty or indifference to its prestige? And were the local collaborators justified in deciding on this political initiative without first consulting city officials? In private and after the fact, the local collaborators worried over these issues, particularly their failure to consult Ch'en Pi in advance. Thereafter they made a concerted effort to appease him. Yün sought to cast off any doubt about his loyalty by submitting a memorial which earnestly pleaded for the court's early return. And once the American withdrawal became a certainty, he and his associates may have been behind Tillson's nomination of Ch'en Pi as "mayor" to take over the American zone in the Chinese City after the departure.³⁷

The motives that led Yün and his associates to collaborate are important to understand yet difficult to pin down with exactitude. Yün's biographer paints him as a patriot dedicated to the protection of sovereign rights. Much of what we know about his behavior during the occupation supports this view. In the period of chaos and danger following Peking's fall to the foreigners, Yün ran personal risks consulting with other officials on ways to restore order in the city and to prepare for the arrival of Prince Ch'ing and Li Hung-chang.³⁸

The reasons for Ch'en's opposition to collaboration are perhaps more easily identified. Ch'en frequently made the familiar call for the exercise of imperial authority in order to restrain local wrongdoing. The available evidence suggests that

³⁶KTCS, 234; U.S. War Dept., *Annual Reports, 1901*, I, 492–495; Rockhill to Chaffee, April 10, 1901, RG 94 329412; Rockhill to Hay, April 15, 1901 (on Prince Ch'ing and Li's appeal); and Squeirs to Hay, May 2, 1901 (enclosing petition), MCD.

³⁷KTCS, 235, 237; IHTTASL, II, 1025–1026; and RG 395/898, vol. 2, 53.

³⁸KTCS, 182, 193; Chia I-chun, *Chung-Hua min-kuo*, 41.

there were indeed good grounds for suspecting at least some of the collaborators, although his attack on Yün may have been undeserved. While the local notables could draw upon personal resources and influence to carry them safely through the time of troubles, those less fortunate in many cases may have been driven to extortion, bribery, and influence peddling simply to keep body and soul together. And while men of prominence and prestige were restrained by the knowledge that they might ultimately be called upon to account for excesses or abuses during the period of occupation, others—such as Christians and interpreters—enjoyed a protective obscurity enhanced by the fact that they were not locals and could leave the area and even Peking once the occupation was over.

Yet for Ch'en, the most important contradiction was probably not imperial-local but rather Chinese-foreign. His priorities can be deduced from the ease, perhaps even the cheer, with which he had gone along with the summer's outburst against foreign influence in China and from the force of his warnings to the court about Chinese traitors whom he then feared were at work in Peking. And although imperial policy later shifted to cooperation with the powers, the foreign presence still remained Ch'en's chief concern when he sought to reconstruct imperial authority in the city.

Patriotism may thus have motivated both the collaborator and the enemy of collaboration. Yün's and Ch'en's conceptions of patriotism diverged, but the court had the good sense to recognize that one complemented the other. In the short run, it could countenance, even encourage, local collaboration so that, in the long run, Chinese authority could be restored in the city. The promotion of Yün a full rank in the Hanlin midway through the occupation was almost certainly a reward for past efforts and an encouragement for him to continue to play a responsible collaborationist role in the immediate future. Prince Ch'ing and Li Hung-chang's endorsement of local pleas for a delayed American withdrawal also reflected at least limited imperial support for local collaborators.

But the primary concern of Li and Prince Ch'ing, and undoubtedly the exiled court itself, was Ch'en Kuei-lung and

Ch'en Pi's effort to restore imperial authority. Prince Ch'ing and Li steadily backed this goal, blocked attempts at transferring both Ch'ens out of the city, and finally—once Peking was fully restored to Chinese jurisdiction—saw to it that Ch'en Pi succeeded Ch'en Kuei-lung as governor of Peking prefecture when the latter was promoted to a higher office. The new appointment insured not only continuity but a consolidation of imperial control.³⁹

In general, the enemies of collaboration fared better over the long run than the collaborators. Demonstrations of loyalty and ability by those who successfully fought collaboration won imperial preferment, just as the suspicions incurred by officials who collaborated almost certainly hindered their careers. Ch'en Kuei-lung climbed to the highest provincial post in the last years of the dynasty. Ch'en Pi reached ministerial rank after successfully breaking new ground in education, commerce, industry, and public works as governor of Peking prefecture. On the other side, Yün Yü-ting's career remained confined to the Hanlin, leaving unfulfilled whatever larger ambitions he may have had. Huang Ssu-yung, who had worked closely with Yün, lost his post in the Hanlin around the time Ch'en Pi entered on his duties as governor. Although the evidence is by no means conclusive, it is both tempting and plausible to attribute Huang's dismissal to Ch'en's growing influence. Even Tseng K'uang-luan, who had limited his involvement with the Americans to the first months of the occupation, appears not to have advanced beyond the post of censor that he had held in 1900. Finally, some of the Christians and government linguists may have come to regret their involvement with the Americans. Ch'en Pi had earlier expressed his resolve to discipline the disloyal once foreign protection was withdrawn and urged that evidence be assembled for a day of reckoning with those that had "used their authority to intimidate and knew no scruples." Fragmentary evidence suggests that as governor Ch'en held to his resolve.⁴⁰

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 42; Ch'en Kuei-lung, *Yung-an shang-shu*, chap. 1.24a; Ch'en Yen, comp., *Min-hou hsiên chih*, chap. 69.41b; and Ch'en Pi, *Wang-yen t'ang*, 179–181.

⁴⁰ Yün and Huang were subsequently to fade from sight politically. After several years of further service in Peking, Huang retired to his home in Nanking; he restricted his

In May 1901 the American role in the occupation of Peking ended as Chaffee marched his troops out of the city. Although the forces of other nations stayed on through the summer, Washington had resolved as early as February on a May withdrawal regardless of the decisions of other powers. Chaffee's diplomatic colleague, W. W. Rockhill, had protested that a May departure was premature as long as negotiations in Peking continued, but American troops left on schedule, with Chaffee proceeding to the Philippines to take up a more important command. As the Americans marched out of their quarter of the Chinese City, the Germans and English marched in, assuming control with none of the turmoil feared by the Chinese. In September the Chinese government finally regained formal control after the departure of the last of the allied occupation forces.⁴¹

Through collaboration Americans and Chinese in Peking had found their way out of a potentially difficult situation. The American military authorities had done well, for they had possessed the power to do ill and had ample possibilities of misinterpreting a people whose ways were profoundly unfamiliar. They had worked with local collaborators to restore order and provide administration and then later acquiesced in a revived municipal authority—all without serious incident. The historical obscurity of the occupation is in one sense a tribute to the military's success at avoiding any of the embarrassing controversy that McKinley had cautioned against. Indeed, the Chinese were themselves quick to acknowledge the reasonableness and restraint of the American army in Peking.

activities to local affairs and scholarly interests until his death in 1913. Yün refused further government service after the fall of the dynasty, although he seems to have continued to live in the capital until his death in 1918. Tung K'ang, the youngest of the group active in the American sector, channelled his energies into legal scholarship, on which his reputation came to rest. Roughly four decades after the American occupation, Tung demonstrated how history could repeat itself when he collaborated with the Japanese administration of Peking. On the fate of collaborators and the enemies of collaboration, see citations in footnotes 20 and 30 and also Ch'en Pi, *Wang-yen t'ang*, 157–158, 230; RG 395/898, vol. 2, 211.

⁴¹Chaffee to Corbin, Feb. 25, 1901, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, series I; Root to Chaffee, Feb. 26, 1901, Corbin Papers; Rockhill to Hay, March 19 and April 15, 1901, MCD; Rockhill to Chaffee, April 10, 1901, RG 94.

Only the Japanese occasionally received higher marks while the behavior of the Germans, Russians, and sometimes the British were condemned by contemporary Chinese and foreign observers.⁴²

By contrast, Chaffee's command faced a more difficult situation in its operations in the countryside outside Peking, in the zone southeast of the capital that had been allocated to American patrols. Bands of Boxers, demoralized Chinese soldiery, Chinese Christians who were backed by foreign missionaries and sometimes by foreign troops, and foreign adventurers and deserters who frequently operated in league with Chinese bandits or converts were all in this southeast zone. They raised constant havoc and made this outlying area insecure into the spring of 1901.

Chaffee was limited in his means of dealing with the problem. In August 1900 and again in December, Washington had forbidden "offensive" operations once American life and property had been secured. In any case, Chaffee's force was too small to engage in "rural pacification" and at the same time maintain garrisons at Peking, Tientsin, and strategic points in between. But even more troops and wider latitude in using them might well have compounded, not lessened, Chaffee's difficulties in the countryside—as the behavior of American patrols during the first months of the occupation suggests. Edgy and vindictive, those patrols had burned down houses on small provocation, shot recklessly at Chinese, and attacked Chinese army units without warning.

Central to Chaffee's difficulties was the lack of a mechanism of collaboration comparable to the one that worked so effectively in the city. Many local notables had fled the countryside for safety, and those who remained behind had no chance to work out a stable collaborative relationship with the transient foreign patrols. Chinese officials could not return with the force necessary to fill this political vacuum because the allies

⁴²KTCS, 44, 213–214; Tung K'ang, *Shu-po yung-t'an*, chap. 4.44b; Carter, *Life*, 220 (view of Li Hung-chang) and 234 (view of Wu T'ing-fang); IHTTASL, II, 674–675; IHT, I, 101, 208, 231, 280, II, 458, 465. For a recent, brief account of the conduct of the allied forces, see Wang Shu-huai, "Ch'üan-luan ch'i-chien lien-chün ti ch'i'ang-lüeh," *Ssu yü yen*, vol. 7, no. 3 (Sept. 15, 1969), 160–169.

would not allow Chinese troops to approach Peking. This absence of influential collaborators, either local or imperial, left Chaffee's patrols singularly dependent on the missionaries and their converts for intelligence information, interpreters, guides, and a general orientation to the local situation. Chaffee's nearly exclusive dependence on this group of intermediaries meant the army's activities in the countryside tended to serve their interests. Patrols thus not only chased down Boxers and seized their supplies but also protected converts, escorted missionaries collecting indemnities, and in general offered impressive evidence of the foreign military support Chinese Christians enjoyed at least for the moment.

By late November Chaffee had learned enough about the abuses that stemmed from even "defensive" patrolling to curtail sharply further operations. At any rate, Peking was by then secure from attack and further intensive patrolling had no military justification. At the same time, he deplored the continuing practice of the German, French, and British commands, of sending out large expeditions which perpetuated disorder and delayed a return to normal conditions. Finally, Chaffee took an early and genuine dislike to "missionary looting" that was no doubt strengthened by fear that his own command might be implicated in the public controversy at home over this unsavory practice. Chaffee began to resist the despatch of patrols at the request of missionaries and, when on occasion he gave into pressure from Minister Conger, he had his men keep a close watch on the proceedings of the missionaries being escorted. The missionaries in Peking complained about insufficient military support, but Chaffee stoutly maintained his stand through the latter months of the occupation.⁴³

⁴³U.S. War Dept., *Annual Reports, 1900*, 125, 138–140, and *Annual Reports, 1901*, pp. 442–454, 485, 495–497; U.S. War Dept., Adjutant General's Office, *Correspondence*, I, 460, 474, 476, 492, 495, 496; U.S. Dept. of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1900*, p. 190; Wilson, *Under the Old Flag*, 527–531; RG 395/898, vol. 1, 17, 780, 846, 862, 869, 870; vol. 2, 50, 191; RG 395/906; Box 2 (Guiney report of Oct. 14, 1900 and Tillson letter of Nov. 26, 1900), Box 3 (enclosure in Conger letter of Dec. 24, 1900), Box 4 (enclosure in Squeirs letter of March 11, 1901), Box 5 (Karnes report of March 20, 1901); Guiney report of Feb. 9, 1901, RG 94; Ament to Judson Smith, Nov. 13 and Dec. 27, 1900 and July 13, 1901, ABC, vol. 25. On the controversy over

Chaffee had conducted his occupation, particularly in the city, without major blemish. But in the process he had learned nothing constructive about China. He and his associates seem to have known little about their Chinese collaborators and had no appreciation for their finesse in dealing with the Americans under adverse circumstances and little regard for their skill and resourcefulness in putting back together the pieces of Chinese authority. Instead, from the start, Chaffee and other Americans in Peking bemoaned the failure of the Chinese government to rebuild its authority in the capital at the very time the Chinese were already doing precisely that, and right under their noses. As important an official as Ch'en Pi remained for them until the end simply "a former mandarin" and never a vice governor working vigorously and successfully at restoring imperial control.⁴⁴ Americans continued to suppose that they were dealing with an ineffectual bureaucracy, whereas in this case it demonstrated considerable vitality and resilience.

The occupation ended on an ironic note. Chaffee's own reflections on what he had learned from China were not derived from his own personal experience in dealing with the Chinese. Instead, they bore the stamp of the same China hands whose conception of the occupation had been diametrically opposed to Chaffee's actual handling of it. In the fall of 1900 missionaries and businessmen in China had advocated a punitive policy. Stunned by "this awful insurrection against foreign benevolence," they demanded punishment of Boxer sympathizers in the government and court, including the Empress Dowager herself. They also wanted thoroughgoing reform under foreign tutelage even if it meant that the Chinese had to "pass through the valley of tears and humiliation." They were certain that the Chinese would not resist firm and consistent demands, but any show of weakness, any tendency to treat

"missionary looting," see Young, *The Rhetoric of Empire*, 191–195; and Stuart C. Miller, "Ends and Means: Missionary Justification of Force in Nineteenth Century China," in John K. Fairbank, ed., *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1974), 274–280.

⁴⁴Quoted phrase in Chaffee to Rockhill, April 11, 1901, RG 395/898, vol. 2, 53. See also Conger to Hay, Sept. 16 and 27, 1900, U.S. Dept. of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1900*, 200, 204; Conger to Hay, Sept. 13, 1900, *ibid.*, Appendix, 34; Wilson, *Under the Old Flag*, 532.

these Asiatics “as though they were civilized human beings,” would tempt them to renewed resistance. “In the Philippines as here,” one missionary wrote from Peking, “kind treatment is taken for weakness, and to punish less than the circumstances call for only enhances the evil which you seek to cure.” Residents in the treaty ports agreed that any policy had to take into account the peculiarities of the Chinese character.⁴⁵

Although the China hands had failed to influence occupation policy in 1900, they now scored a small and belated triumph. In April 1901, after learning of his assignment to command the army in the Philippines, Chaffee wrote to Root:

While in North China, I have met many persons thoroughly acquainted with the Oriental character, and all declare that murder is almost a natural instinct with the Asiatic; who respects only the power of might, backed up by a tangible display of strength. Human life all over the East is cheap. One life more or less does not matter, and it is only the fear of prompt, immediate and unflinching punishment that holds the population in check. Let that fear be dissipated even for the shortest time and robbers, bandits and murderers abound, often banded together by certain ties of secret bondage. Such may be the present condition among a large part of the Philippine population.⁴⁶

With his arrival in the Philippines late in the spring of 1901, Chaffee brought full circle his own personal involvement with three major American occupations at the turn of the century. He soon discovered his new charges differed from the Cubans and the Chinese that he had governed earlier in one important respect—they resisted. Now better schooled in “Oriental ways,” Chaffee applied to the Philippines what he thought were the lessons of China: that even a benevolent policy required large doses of “the power of might” when applied to peoples who held life cheap.

⁴⁵Quotes from Chauncey Goodrich (Tientsin) to Judson Smith, Aug. 24, 1900, ABC, vol. 26; Henry D. Porter (Tientsin) to Smith, Sept. 8, 1900, ABC, vol. 28; and Ament (Peking) to Smith, Nov. 13, 1900, ABC, vol. 25. See also W. A. P. Martin's statement of Sept. 30, 1900, quoted in IHT, III, 229. On general treaty port opinion, see the careful and convincing summary by a newcomer J. B. Dyel(?) to Theodore Roosevelt, Sept. 11, 1900, in Roosevelt Papers, series I; as well as a statement by the American China Association (Shanghai), Sept. 3, 1900, in IHT, III, 241.

⁴⁶Chaffee to Root, April 16, 1901, Root Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, container 15.