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Expanded Historical Context

Japanese Presence in China

A detailed examination of the lives of the informants needs to be placed in historical context. The events in North China, specifically those relating to Shantung Province where the school was located and the establishment of the Japanese in this region, are the focus of this review.

A continued Japanese presence in China began at the end of the nineteenth Century. In the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, Japan invaded Shantung and Manchuria in its dispute with China over the control of Korea. Following its decisive victory, Japan received the most-favored-nation status that had been extended to Britain, France and the United States in 1843-44. Japan's new status and the opening of four more ports to trade, created an "imperialist scramble" on the part of Britain, Germany, Russia, France and Japan to partition China into "spheres of influence." Germany, "taking advantage of the murder in Shantung of two German Roman Catholic missionaries," seized Tsingtao, forcibly leased territory in Kiaochow, and was assured railway and mining rights in Shantung Province. [1]

In 1899 in the Shantung Province, flood and famine combined with local unrest against the German and foreign presence to create an uprising which culminated in the Boxer Rebellion. National feelings were strong against missionaries, particularly Catholics, who were seen as foreign agents after an imperial rescript gave Bishops privilege to seek interviews and rank with viceroys and governors, and to have certain civil jurisdiction over their converts. The climax came in Peking in 1900 when missionaries, Chinese Christians and foreign diplomats were besieged in the legation quarter of Peking for forty-five days until relieved by an international expedition. [2]

Because they were scattered throughout China, rather than concentrated in the port cities, missionaries received the brunt of the hostilities. Approximately one hundred and eighty-seven Protestant missionaries were killed during the Rebellion. "Of these, slightly more than a third were under the China Inland Mission and its associated societies." Though twenty-one were CIM children, the Chefoo School was spared any bloodshed. In keeping with their total reliance on God to provide, the mission that suffered the most loss refused not only to "enter any claim against the Chinese government, but to refrain from accepting compensation even if offered. [3]

The years after the Boxer Rebellion were fruitful and saw expansion of the missionary movement and the establishment of Western education in China. Even the disorder of the Revolution of 1911 and the establishment of the Republic did not interfere substantially with mission work or the security of the Westerner. "Both Manchus and revolutionists were eager not to offend the foreigner for fear that the Western powers would support their opponents." [4] This protected status would soon come to an end.

During World War One, while the rest of the foreign powers were busy fighting each other, Japan presented its twenty-one demands to China. Divided into five sections, the first two sections of the twenty-one demands called for recognition of Japanese rights in Shantung, Mongolia and Manchuria. Japan declared war on Germany in August of 1914 and by November had seized Germany's holdings in Shantung. After the First World War, Shantung Province was assigned to Japan by the Treaty of Versailles in which China had no say and therefore refused to sign. However, the Washington conference of 1922 made Japan restore its holdings in Shantung to China. Japan acquiesced, but still maintained a presence in the Province. Despite the return of Shantung Province to China's control, China was still obligated to the extraterritoriality of the Western powers. This Western presence contributed to continued unrest among Chinese student and political groups. [5]

After the First World War, Western prestige and power in China had changed. No longer could the Western powers jointly impose their will on China. The groundwork had been laid for domestic forces to emerge. By the mid-Twenties, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the Kuomintang Nationalist Party (KMT), led by Sun Yat-sen, were functioning. As the Chinese political parties developed, agitation increased against the foreign presence, especially that of the British and the Japanese. With the rise of Chinese nationalism, anti-imperialist and anti-Christian demonstrations grew. These uprisings peaked in 1927, but by then many of the missionaries, as advised by their consuls, had evacuated interior China for the port cities, or had left China altogether.

Although the persecution was not as drastic as that of the Boxer Rebellion, it was more widespread and the prospect for a semblance of peace seemed remote. One reason restoration of order seemed unobtainable was due, in part, to the continued

unrest between the KMT and the CCP. By 1928 the KMT had formed a national government in Nanking. However, warlordism, a continued Communist presence in the rural areas and the KMT's own factions prevented true unification of China.[6] The rise of Chiang Kai-shek as the leader of the KMT and his anti-Communist movement eventually split the party after much bloodshed, most notably in Nanking and Shanghai. Chiang then established a government in Nanking.

While Chiang pursued the Communists, Japan sent troops into Shantung. Japan justified its action as protecting Japanese lives and property from the strong anti-Japanese and anti-imperialist feelings of the Chinese, which often erupted into strikes and protests. The clash of Japanese and nationalist forces only intensified anti-Japanese sentiments, especially as Japan reoccupied part of Shantung. Acting out of its own sense of "manifest destiny," Japan seized Manchuria in 1931. The Japanese considered China a "backward and disorganized nation, victimized by the Western powers," [7] and felt they had a duty to dominate East Asia. That domination included Manchuria with its relatively unpopulated territory, which could easily be settled by Japan.

China sought help from the League of Nations to oust Japan, but no significant enforceable action was taken. Japan resigned from the League, the clashes continued, and Manchuria became Manchuko. By 1933, Japan and China signed a truce that left Japan in control of the area north of the Great Wall. Intent on wiping out the Communists, but knowing that his troops were inferior to Japan's, Chiang Kai-shek adopted a policy of "first internal pacification, then external resistance," to buy time to prepare his army and to rout the Communist threat to his power. This policy, however, did not endear Chiang to his own people. "While the Chinese disliked the Kuomingtang, they hated the Japanese more.... In a paradoxical way, therefore, the Japanese threat may have been a significant reason why Chiang Kai-shek's regime survived the period 1931 1934." [8] Any further revolutionary upheaval would only have invited increased aggression from Japan.

In the early 1930's, Shantung province went through a civil war between two warlords. After the civil war, Han Fu-chu, the winner, "apparently reached an understanding with the Japanese that he would remain neutral if the Japanese attacked Peiping, Tientsin or other areas in North China. In return, the Japanese agreed to spare Shantung." [9] On July 7, 1937, after provocation by both sides, war broke out between Japan and China when Japan came south and attacked at the Marco Polo Bridge and then occupied Peking, Tientsin, Shanghai, and by December of 1937, Nanking.

Chiang's Nationalist government fled to Chungking, which was not under Japanese occupation. Chiang Kai-shek's strategy of trading territory for time meant that he accepted the loss of large areas of North and Central China. By 1938, the Chinese defended positions in the hills and mountains where the motorized Japanese

army could not easily penetrate. The Japanese countered by occupying the coastal areas and causing economic strangulation for the interior. So the lines between the two combatants remained essentially in a stalemate battle of attrition until mid-1944. And, by 1940, Japan sought imperial expansion into other areas. [10]

Formation of Weihsien Internment Camp

While the Chefoo group was interned in Temple Hill, the rest of the Westerners in North China were increasingly restricted to their houses or settlement areas until large scale internment could be accomplished. Washington received word of the impending internment through a telegram reading: "Japanese Consulates in North China to inform all enemy nationals in North China that they are to be sent for concentration to Weihsien, Shantung. This is to take place about the middle of March." A later telegram confirms the impending internment but adds that "those assembled at Chefoo will remain there." Chefoo in this case referred to Temple Hill, which was located in Chefoo. [11]

Of the larger camps in China, Weihsien was one of the most adequate. Prior to becoming an internment camp, Weihsien had been a large American Presbyterian Mission school, seminary and hospital two miles east of Weihsien city. In 1943 Weihsien, with compound space of 200 yards by 150, became the internment camp for 1,700 people from the regions of Peking, Tientsin, Tsingtao, and Chefoo. After the transfer of the Catholics, and "the repatriation of a majority of the Americans and Canadians at Weihsien, there remained about 1,400 internees.... There were 202 United States, 1,093 British, 42 Belgians, 28 Dutch, and 58 other nationals them, of whom 358 were children." [12]

Confined to an area about the size of five large city blocks, surrounded by a high brick wall, living space was at a premium. Families, which were the majority of the internee population, were housed in former Chinese student moms which were 12'6" x 8'11". Each room, suitable for two persons, now had to hold three and sometimes four people. Single men and women lived in groups of ten to fifteen in the classrooms and offices of the school buildings. Nine buildings, including the hospital, were used as dormitories. The internees also had use of a church, a tennis court, a small playing field for softball, baseball and field hockey, and a basketball court which was also used for volleyball. When the Chefoo group first arrived, they were housed in the moms if they were families, but most were placed in the dormitories. [13]

The first group to be interned at Weihsien was from Tsingtao. They had been interned in the Iltis-Hydro Hotel in Tsingtao since October 27, 1942. They left Tsingtao and arrived in Weihsien on the same day, March 20, 1943. The Peking and Tientsin American and British nationals were informed on March 12, 1943 that in two

weeks they would be interned in Weihsien as well. Because the groups from these two areas were rather large, 780 from Tientsin and 485 from Peking, the two groups were divided into sections of approximately 200, with their departure days staggered. They would arrive in Weihsien one day after their departure. [14]

The groups began departing on March 22, 1943. When the Tsingtao group arrived in Weihsien,

> "… no kitchens were operating and nothing was organized, nor had any other group arrived. We had to start things going, especially in the kitchen. In fact, the Japanese admitted they were not quite ready for us, and sanitary conditions, we soon learned, gave all too much emphasis to their admission. Morning roll call ensued; otherwise the guards left us much to ourselves." [15]

By March 31, 1943, the last group had arrived at Weihsien, or "Courtyard of the Happy Way," the name by which the mission had been known. The camp internees were informed that by April 2, a permanent committee with nine chairmen must be set up. The nine committees were discipline, education, employment, engineering and repairs, finance, food supplies, general affairs, medical affairs, and quarters. It was also decided to divide the camp into the four groups represented, the fourth group being the nearly 500 Catholic fathers, brothers and sisters. Each group was then told to select one representative to serve for each committee. By the end of May a general election was held for committee members, most of whom retained their positions. [16]

The Japanese garrison at Weihsien camp consisted of a Commandant, his staff of five, and then thirty to forty Japanese Consular Police. There were very few incidents between the Japanese and the internees, who were given practical autonomy in the direction of their affairs. "The average internee saw little of the Japanese Camp Commandant or his staff, who left the running of the camp almost entirely in the hands of the Committee, to whom he issued orders and from whom he received requests and complaints." [17]

Internment Camps in China

In general, the civilian internment camps in China were humanely run, with cold weather, overcrowding, and scarcity of food toward the end of the war being the major concerns. The internees were expected to maintain the camps and did the central cooking themselves. There was no forced labor and each camp was expected to form nine committees to represent the internees' needs to the Japanese, to handle internal affairs and to run the whole camp. Many of the camps were also allowed to have recreational activities such as concerts, dances and theater, as well as religious services and educational studies. Medical treatment was generally good

because some of the internees were medical missionaries. Also, the Red Cross and the Swiss Consul at times supplied the camps with medicine and money. It is believed that the camps in China were more humane because they were under the supervision of the various Japanese consular offices rather than under the Imperial Japanese Army. [18]

Education at Weihsien

Of special interest is the formation of schools in Weihsien prior to the arrival of the Chefoo group. All of the information is derived from Sokobin's November 11, 1943 report. The head of the Education Committee was a Britisher who had previously been with the Tientsin Grammar School. The committee organized the children into groups.

At the pre-school and kindergarten age there were approximately ninety students who were then divided into age appropriate groupings from three to six years old.

On the elementary level, two schools evolved. The American School derived from the Peking American School with its teachers, and the British School was made up of teachers from the Tientsin Grammar School. The two schools went from grades one through eight or the comparable forms on the British side, and had between them one hundred students and sixteen teachers. At the high school level, a British and an American school also existed following the respective systems. There were approximately fifteen teachers for the seventy-five students in the secondary schools.

Adult education also thrived. "Amongst the Catholic Fathers, the educationalists from the Peking universities and the language students, we had some of the finest intellects in North China, and lectures and talks were given on every imaginable subject." Ninety teachers taught more than 700 students in 25 subjects which included art, botany, ornithology, physics, chemistry, English, Chinese, French, German, Spanish, Russian, Japanese, Latin, Greek, philosophy, psychology, theology, commercial subjects, vocal and theoretical music, and higher mathematics. [19]

Clandestine Activities

The black market had been most effectively run by the Catholic Fathers in order to provide eggs and other necessities for the mothers with young children. Once the Fathers were transferred to Peking, other groups and individuals established contacts with the Chinese over the camp wall for the provision of goods. Eventually an electrified, barbed- wired fence was erected which slowed, but did not stop, the marketeering. Another priest, De Jaegher, devised various means for

making contacts and relaying messages outside the camp. Primarily he relied on the Chinese coolies who came in the camp each day to clean out the cesspools, or on the postman who made weekly visits to the camp. De Jaegher joined internee Laurance Tipton in devising a plan to escape from the camp. [20]

Over time the two men began collecting maps and information about the location of Communist, Japanese, Nationalist and guerrilla forces. This information was supplied through the cesspool coolies. It took a year to gather information and make plans to escape. By the spring of 1944 the camp committee had been in contact with a Nationalist military, or "Chungking," unit. The commander of the unit proposed to rescue the internees but only if they could arrange for their consuls to send planes to remove them from the area. The committee replied that such an operation would not be practical due to the large number of women, children, aged and sick. Tipton and De Jaegher then sought and established contact with guerrilla troops under the direction of Commander Wang. [21]

On the Friday night of June 9, 1944, two men escaped from Weihsien, Laurance Tipton and Arthur Hummel. As much as De Jaegher wanted to go, he was begged not to by one of his superiors in the camp who feared reprisals against innocent people in camp. So Hummel went in De Jaegher's place. The men were not reported as missing until the next day's roll call. "The nine men who shared their bachelor dormitory were arrested, placed in the church building for ten days and subjected to prolonged interrogation." Roll call was now held both morning and evening, and food supplies took a further cutback. [22]

The most drastic reprisal for the escape was that the remaining internees had to change their living quarters. The bachelors who lived in the top floor of the hospital were moved into block 23 where the Chefoo students had been. The students were moved to the top floor of the hospital where they now had a view over the wall. The staff of Chefoo was reluctant to move as it meant moving almost all of the children. But one of the teachers, Marjorie Broomhall, reminded them, "Don't let us dig in our heels and refuse; every move so far had turned out to be God's way of providing some better thing for us." So the move was efficiently carried out in a few hours and the new accommodations, "with the girls on one floor and the boys above, . . . [made] a united family again under the same roof." [23]

About three months after the escape, De Jaegher received word from Tipton and Hummel through the coolies. From this connection, coded messages were relayed as to the progress of the war. The fact that "two men had got away and were now free and able to get word to us and receive news from us made our incarceration less binding and onerous." Tipton and Hummel had aligned themselves with the guerrilla Commander Wang, and established radio contact with Chungking. From there, their reports were sent on to Washington urging the supplying of Commander Wang with ammunition to safeguard the Allied nationals in Weihsien. [24]

Tipton and Hummel were also able to smuggle four crates of medicines, dropped by an American B-24, to Mr. Egger, the Swiss Consul at Tsingtao. Mr. Egger then had a list of all the drugs that could be purchased in Tsingtao typed out, but with spaces of four lines between each item. He took this list to the office of Japanese consular police for seals of approval. Once that was obtained, he typed in the names of the other medicines from the four crates in the blank spaces. The guards at Weihsien allowed the medicines to come into the camp because the list had the official Japanese consular seal. [25]

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3 Latourette, 517; Broomhall, 257. ↑

4 Latourette, 609. ↑

5 Schiroknauer, Stokesbury. ↑

6 Parks M. Coble, *Facing Japan* (Boston: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1991); Hookham; Latourette; Schirokauer. ↑

7. Coble, 18. ↑

8 Ibid., 241; Ibid., quoting Lloyd E. Eastman, 35. ↑

9 Ibid., 130. ↑

10. Lloyd E. Eastman, *Seeds of Destruction* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1984); Stokesbury. ↑

11 Vincent, Letter from American Embassy, Chungking to Secretary of State, March 11, 1943, RG 389, be 1240, "Camp Reports China, NA; T. J. Harrison, "American Interests - China, Letter from Bern, to Secretary of State, March 26, 1943, RG 389 "Camp Reports China, NA. ↑

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13 Egger, "Report of American Interests - China, Transmission Camp Report No. 2, Weihsien Camp, March 9, 1944, RG 389, box 2140, "China," NA; Cotton, 9 ↑

14 Sokobin, Internment of Americans and Allied Nationals at Weihsien, Nov. 11, 1943, RG 389, box 2140, "Camp Reports China, NA. ↑

15 Nathan E. Walton, "Internee Journal," China's Millions, 52, 1944, 25-28. ↑

16 Gilkey; Sokobin, Internment of Americans and Allied Nationals at Weihsien, Nov.11, 1943, RG 389, box 2140, "Camp Reports China, NA. ↑

17 Tipton, 77. ↑

18 Waterford; Gilkey. ↑

[19]Tipton, 77; Sokobin, Internment of Americans and Allied Nationals at Weihsien, Nov. 11, 1943, RG 389, box 2140, "Camp Reports China, NA, 21. ↑

20 Tipton; De Jaegher & Kuhn, 255-256. ↑

[21]De Jaegher & Kuhn, 257; Tipton, 97. ↑

[22]De Jaegher & Kuhn, 259; Cliff, 90; Michell, A Boy's War, 99. ↑

[23]Martin, (1992), 52; Judd, (1954), 4. ↑

[24]De Jaegher & Kuhn, 261; Hurley, Paraphrase of telegram from American Embassy Chungking to Secretary of State, May 26, 1945, RG 389, box 2140, "China", NA, 2. ↑

(25) Gilkey, 61. ↑