

WHEN CULTURES COLLIDE: HOW PRIMITIVE MASCULINITY AND CLASS
CONFLICT DERAILED THE PATRICK J. HURLEY
DIPLOMATIC MISSION TO CHINA, 1944-1945

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ABSTRACT

Historians often criticize Patrick J. Hurley for the failure of his diplomatic mission to China in 1944-1945. Instead of acting as an impartial mediator during the negotiations between the Guomindang (GMD) and Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Hurley aligned U.S. policy with the GMD's leader, Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek), who would come to lose the civil war against the Chinese Communists. Hurley's unique position to create foreign policy resulted in the implementation of what became the established long-term policy in China. This policy eventually alienated the CCP and led to the severing of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and China for decades.

Although historians have long since blamed Hurley's personality and lack of understanding for the mission's failure, no one has studied the role cultural influences had in shaping his attitudes and decisions. Hurley's perception of China's key actors and his own American colleagues, along with his subsequent behaviors, grew out of his life experiences, especially his cultural understandings of gender and class. Working-class men in the United States from the early-nineteenth to the early-twentieth century often fostered an aggressive

model of manhood that opposed the Victorian values of the middle and upper classes. Instead of valuing restraint and respectability, social norms which governed behavior in modern business offices and in respectable middle-class family life, these men valued the display of passion and physical assertiveness. Hurley was largely influenced by this form of masculinity, which has been labeled “primitive manhood.”

Constructions of gender and class can also be interconnected. Different socioeconomic classes often embrace varying ideals of proper gender roles. Hurley’s working-class origins and values would clash with the middle and upper-class backgrounds of the various State Department Foreign Service officers who counseled compromise with the CCP. His assimilation of these cultural constructs negatively affected his relationships with these diplomats and the CCP, resulting in his expulsion of all China experts who disagreed with his policy. No one was left to voice alternative viewpoints to Hurley’s successor, George Marshall, who ultimately continued Hurley’s misguided policy of upholding Jiang’s regime.

APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of College of Arts and Sciences, have examined a thesis titled “When Cultures Collide: How Primitive Masculinity and Class Conflict Derailed the Patrick J. Hurley Diplomatic Mission to China, 1944-1945,” presented by Kevin Ploth, a candidate for the Master of Arts degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACTiii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTSvii

ESSAY1

Introduction.....1

A Review of the Scholarly Literature on Sino-American Relations.....6

Gender and Class and Hurley’s Developing Years10

The Guomindang, the Communists, and the China Hands.....17

Hurley’s Arrives in China and Cleans House.....21

Hurley: He-Man Diplomacy27

Opposition Silenced, Hurley’s Policy Wins40

BIBLIOGRAPHY47

VITA.....50

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To my mother and father

Introduction

On February 28, 1945, the stakes were high for Foreign Service officers John Service, George Atcheson, Arthur Ringwalt, and Fulton Freeman. The group knew they could lose their jobs, but they also recognized they could no longer remain silent. Not with so much on the line. For months, the ambassador in China, General Patrick J. Hurley, had been feeding President Roosevelt and the State Department inaccurate information regarding China's internal political chaos and its deteriorating efforts to stave off Japan's ongoing military conquest. From the perspective of the Foreign Service's "China hands," the headstrong Hurley consistently acted out of passion and impulse rather than reason. He tyrannically silenced opposing viewpoints and failed to comprehend the damage he was inflicting on American foreign policy. But on this day, the "fool" was away in Washington. At long last, the Foreign Service officers could send their distress signal.

Between 1927 and 1937, China's Nationalist government, which was controlled by the Guomindang (GMD) political party, had been engaged in a civil war with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Following the Japanese military's march across the Marco Polo bridge from Manchuria into China in 1937, both sides formed a temporary alliance designated the "Second United Front" to resist the hated invader. This front proved to be little more than a façade, as clashes between GMD and CCP forces continued on a frequent basis. By 1944, the Chinese military situation appeared grim and GMD-CCP unity remained elusive. To make matters worse, the GMD leader, Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek), had become embroiled in a bitter dispute with the American commander of the China-Burma-India Theater, General Joseph Stilwell. For U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt, China's defeat could mean a prolonged Pacific War.

In an attempt to resolve the conflict between Stilwell and Jiang, Roosevelt ordered General Hurley to China in September 1944 to mediate between them. Within a month, however, Jiang demanded Stilwell be recalled and replaced, leaving Hurley without a directive. Hurley used the opportunity to pursue negotiations between the GMD and CCP, attempting to persuade them to unite their military forces and form a coalition government. Obstinate and temperamental, Hurley would prove to be unfit to act as diplomat and implementer of American foreign policy. He oversimplified complex problems, had a limited understanding of China's intricate cultural and political history, and made decisions based on inaccurate assumptions.

The longer Hurley's diplomatic mission continued, the more insulated and aggressive he became. He more than earned the many nicknames given him by Chinese leaders and his own American staff: Colonel Blimp, Big Wind, Paper Tiger, Little Whiskers, the Clown, and the Albatross.¹ Hurley inaccurately reported to Roosevelt and the State Department that negotiations were proceeding well, when in actuality, they were going nowhere. In fact, on February 19, 1945, reports surfaced that fighting had broken out yet again between GMD and CCP forces.² Hurley's only concrete accomplishment had been to more fully commit the prestige of the United States government to Jiang's regime, a dubious achievement given the GMD's lackluster military performance. Thus, while Hurley was away in Washington, the Foreign Service officers at the American embassy in Chongqing (the Nationalist government's wartime capital) decided to intervene.

¹ Russell D. Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley and American Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), 191-92; Michael Burleigh, *Small War, Faraway Places: Global Insurrection and the Making of the Modern World, 1945-1965* (New York: Penguin Group, 2013), 103; and Theodore H. White and Annalee Jacoby, *Thunder Out of China* (New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1946), 246.

² Lynne Joiner, *Honorable Survivor: Mao's China, McCarthy's American, and the Persecution of John S. Service* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2009), 120.

Although John Service drafted the February 28 memorandum, all of the embassy's political section officers agreed to take joint responsibility for its composition. A declaration at the bottom of the memorandum read, "This telegram has been drafted with the assistance and agreement of all the political officers of the staff of this embassy..."³ Indeed, George Acheson had authorized the cable's transmission to the State Department.⁴ They could no longer turn back. This memorandum titled, "The Situation in China," drew conclusions that were antithetical to Hurley's, namely that the United States consider providing the Communists with military assistance and pressure both the GMD and CCP to cooperate militarily and politically. After sending the memorandum, Service wrote his mother, "We may become heroes – or we may be hung."⁵

When Hurley learned of the telegram in Washington, he characteristically exploded. With fire in his eyes, he yelled, "I know who drafted that telegram: Service. I'll get that S.O.B. if it's the last thing I do."⁶ Hurley soon had his revenge. He demanded Service and Acheson be recalled, while Ringwalt and Freeman requested transfers. During an interview, Ringwalt explained, "Mr. Hurley was not very nice to us, and my tour of duty was up, and, so, [Fulton] Freeman -- one of our bright boys -- and I managed to get ourselves sent back to Washington."⁷ This would not be the last time these men fell victim to Hurley's wrath. After his mission's failure, Hurley charged that these men were Communist sympathizers who had

³ John S. Service, *Lost Chance in China: The World War II Despatches of John S. Service*, ed. Joseph W. Esherick (New York: Random House Inc., 1974), 358, 363.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 358.

⁵ John S. Service, "Letters to Grace Service, March 8, 1945," John Service Papers, Bancroft Library, quoted in Lynne Joiner, *Honorable Survivor: Mao's China, McCarthy's America, and the Persecution of John S. Service* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2009), 121.

⁶ E. J. Kahn, *The China Hands: America's Foreign Service Officers and What Befell Them* (New York: Viking Press, 1975), 153; John Service to Arthur Ringwalt, April 20, 1950, Subject File, John Stewart Service and Charles Edward Rhetts Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum; and Service, *Lost Chance in China*, 358.

⁷ Arthur R. Ringwalt, interview by Richard D. McKinzie, transcript, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, June 5, 1974, <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/ringwalt.htm>, 16.

intentionally sabotaged the mission. These allegations led to their investigation prior to and during the era of McCarthyism.⁸

Diplomatic historians have long since blamed Hurley's personality, poor decision-making, and lack of understanding for the mission's failure. No one, however, has studied the role cultural influences such as gender and class had in shaping his attitudes and behaviors.⁹ This study of Hurley, undertaken through the lens of culture, joins a growing body of scholarly literature that since the 1990s has shown how cultural constructions and cultural interactions have played a vital role in the making and implementation of U.S. foreign policy. Rather than ascribing Hurley's ham-handed negotiating efforts in China primarily to individual personality quirks, though the quirks abounded, it examines how Hurley's perception of China's key actors and his own American colleagues, along with his subsequent behaviors, grew out the General's life experiences, especially his cultural understandings of gender and class. This is a case study of how cultural factors can produce unexpected and undesirable policy outcomes.

This thesis examines Hurley primarily through the cultural lens of gender and how cultural constructions of masculinity shaped his attitudes and behaviors. Gender studies scholars in recent years have come to view gender as a fluid cultural construction or social norm that changes depending on time and place. From the early-nineteenth to the early-twentieth century, working-class men in the United States often fostered an aggressive model of manhood that opposed the Victorian values of the middle and upper classes. Instead of

⁸ Barbara W. Tuchman, "If Mao Had Come to Washington: An Essay in Alternatives," *Foreign Affairs* 51, no. 1 (October 1972): 59.

⁹ Warren I. Cohen, *America's Response to China: A History of Sino-American Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 159-61, 166; and Michael Schaller, *The United States and China in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 103-05, 107-08, 113-14.

valuing restraint and respectability, social norms which governed behavior in modern business offices and in respectable, middle-class family life, these men valued the display of passion and physical assertiveness.¹⁰ By the late-nineteenth century, this form of masculinity, which Gail Bederman has labeled “primitive manhood,” gradually gained greater currency among middle-class men. Historian Amy Greenberg explained how the nation’s rapid industrialization and urbanization generated societal fears that men were becoming excessively civilized, de-masculinized, and for a lack of a better word, soft. “Middle-class men,” she writes, were accordingly “encouraged to embrace their animal nature, to improve their physical strength, and to develop their martial virtues.” Their “nostalgia for the sacrifices of the Civil War generation also supported the contention that middle-class men...needed to reanimate their essential masculine virtues.”¹¹ Indeed, historian Kristin Hoganson argued that the crisis in American manhood intensified in light of the gathering momentum of the Women’s Suffrage Movement and contributed to the nation’s march to war against Spain in 1898.¹²

A son of Choctaw Indian Nation Territory in Oklahoma, Patrick J. Hurley imbibed many of these rough and ready attributes. According to E. Anthony Rotundo, these martial virtues of “primitive manhood” included “contempt of softness, surrender of private interest, obedience to command...courage, strength, endurance, duty principled sacrifice.”¹³ Although many of these traits are not necessarily undesirable, this study aims to demonstrate that some

¹⁰ Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 17; and E. A. Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 227.

¹¹ Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2005), 9.

¹² Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

¹³ Rotundo, *American Manhood*, 233-34.

aspects of “primitive manhood,” specifically those which encourage an aggressive and vengeful temperament, shaped Hurley’s worldview and proved detrimental to his delicate diplomatic mission in wartime China.

Constructions of gender and class are often interconnected. Different socioeconomic classes embrace different ideals of proper gender roles. Hurley’s working-class origins and values would clash with the middle and upper-class backgrounds of the various State Department Foreign Service officers. Hurley perceived them as elitist while they perceived him as simple-minded and crass. Hurley’s class identification can also be complex, and frankly, a bit of a mystery at times. As he ambitiously climbed the social ladder from poverty to extravagant wealth, he latched onto rich and powerful people, such as Herbert Hoover, Henry Stimson, Harry Sinclair, Douglas MacArthur, and Franklin Roosevelt.¹⁴ Hurley simultaneously embraced his working-class roots while fighting desperately to escape them, never noticing the dichotomy.

A Review of the Scholarly Literature on Sino-American Relations

This study also contributes to a longstanding historiographical debate on the “Lost Chance” Thesis. Following the outbreak of the Korean War, Cold War diplomatic historians like Herbert Feis and Tang Tsou lamented how the United States “lost” China and blamed the Roosevelt and Truman administrations for not fully supporting Jiang and the GMD.¹⁵ Then in the early 1970s, historians such as Joseph Esherick, Warren Cohen, Gabriel Kolko, and Barbara Tuchman developed the “Lost Chance” Thesis, which argued both administrations missed an opportunity to develop amicable relations with the CCP and

¹⁴ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 27.

¹⁵ Herbert Feis, *The China Tangle: The American Effort in China from Pearl Harbor to the Marshall Mission* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 428-30; and Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China: 1941-50* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 3-30.

prevent their alignment with the Soviet Union. These historians focused on the events between 1944-1950, including the Hurley Mission.¹⁶ They pointed out several overtures made by the CCP and its leader, Mao Zedong, to the United States and argued that CCP decision-making was influenced more by pragmatism than ideology. This meant the United States could have persuaded Mao toward alignment for pragmatic reasons, despite vast ideological differences.

In the 1980s, historians offered challenges to the “Lost Chance” thesis after China’s leader, Deng Xioping, opened China to economic liberalization and educational reform. This liberalization brought about the public release of important party documents for the first time. These documents exposed the close alignment that had existed between the CCP and Soviet Union since 1944 and provided new insight into the CCP’s relationship with the U.S.¹⁷ Using these documents, historians Steven Goldstein, Chen Jian, and Michael Sheng contended that ideology did in fact matter to Mao and the CCP, that the CCP always planned on a Sino-Soviet alignment, and that overtures made to the U.S. were tactical, not genuine.¹⁸ In the long term, the CCP would never have aligned with the U.S. This essentially destroyed the “Lost Chance” Thesis’s application to the Hurley Mission, as CCP overtures became mere facades used to obtain aid and weaken the GMD’s relationship with the U.S. The Hurley Mission was

¹⁶ Cohen, *America’s Response to China*, 156-61, 172; Joyce Kolko and Gabriel Kolko, *The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-1954* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1972), 249-50, 253, 260, 273; Service, *Lost Chance in China*; and Tuchman, “If Mao Had Come,” 44-48.

¹⁷ Warren I. Cohen, “Symposium: Rethinking the Lost Chance in China,” *Diplomatic History* 21, no. 1 (1997): 71-75; Chen Jian, *China’s Road to the Korean War: The Making of the Sino-American Confrontation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), ix., 5; and Schaller, *The United States and China*, 198-202.

¹⁸ Steven M. Goldstein, “Chinese Communist Policy Toward the United States: Opportunities and Constraints, 1944-1950,” in *Uncertain Years: Chinese-American Relations, 1947-1950*, ed. Dorothy Borg and Waldo Heinrichs (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 236-37, 242, 247-48; Chen Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 22-23, 33; Michael M. Sheng, *Battling Western Imperialism: Mao Stalin, and the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 3-7.

also destined to fail since Mao never planned on forming a coalition government and only used negotiations to prepare for civil war.

All but dead, the “Lost Chance” Thesis found new life in the late-1980s and early-1990s when Nancy Tucker and Thomas Christensen modified the argument and its focus.¹⁹ Concentrating on the period between 1948-1950, they claimed that although amicable relations between the U.S. and CCP would have been highly unlikely, the level of hostility could have been managed and a working relationship established that served each side’s self-interest in a peaceful, stable Asia. Christensen even goes so far as to argue that U.S. diplomatic recognition of the newly established People’s Republic of China in October 1949 would have kept the lines of communication open between Beijing and Washington and reduced the likelihood of a Sino-American confrontation in Korea late 1950.²⁰ John Service, the Foreign Service officer who clashed with Hurley, reached a similar conclusion back in 1971, but cited the Hurley Mission as the turning point. In his book, *The Amerasia Papers: Some Problems in the History of US-China Relations*, he observed, “The opportunities lost were to seek more realistic means of averting, or blunting, civil war and of preserving our relations with China, if not as the close friend and ally we once hoped for, at least on a basis better than bitter enmity.”²¹

This study agrees that 1944-1945 could have constituted a turning point in Sino-American relations had someone other than Hurley been ambassador at the time. A more qualified diplomat, such as Hurley’s predecessor, Ambassador Clarence Gauss, would have

¹⁹ Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries: Grand Strategy, Domestic Mobilization, and Sino-American Conflict, 1947-1958* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 139-40.

²⁰ Christensen, *Useful Adversaries*, 139-40; and Nancy B. Tucker, *Patterns in the Dust: Chinese-American Relations and the Recognition Controversy 1949-1950* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 58.

²¹ John S. Service, *The Amerasia Papers: Some Problems in the History of US-China Relations* (Berkeley: Center for Chinese Studies, 1971), 95.

likely adopted a more neutral posture in dealing with the CCP and GMD and set the course for a pragmatic Sino-American relationship. In stark contrast to Hurley, Gauss had expressed disenchantment with the Nationalist government and held both the U.S. embassy staff and Foreign Service officers in high regard. Another actor who would have likely effected a different outcome was the American commander in China, Joseph Stilwell. Stilwell also strongly disliked Jiang Jieshi and had a mutually respectful relationship with the Foreign Service officers attached to his staff. Furthermore, he was strongly in favor of arming the Communists prior to his recall. On the other hand, his replacement, General Albert Wedemeyer, greatly admired Jiang and appeased Hurley every step of the way.

Given the upheaval of war with Japan and civil war within China, American policy towards China was not clearly defined in 1944. Thus, Hurley was in a unique position to create and implement his own policy and make it the official position of the U.S. government. President Harry Truman's decision to send General George Marshall to China from December 1945 to January 1947 to make one last attempt to broker a CCP-GMD coalition government, presented Washington with its final chance to accommodate the rise of the CCP. While Marshall exhibited greater flexibility than Hurley, going so far as to temporarily cut off U.S. lend-lease supplies to China to bring Jiang to the negotiating table, Marshall, Truman, and Secretary of State James Byrnes had all previously agreed that if the Communists refused reasonable concessions, then the U.S. would restore military aid to Jiang and support a unitary GMD government.²² Conservative American critics of even modest efforts to reach out to the CCP, especially a rising anti-Communist lobby within the Republican Party, who would later become known as the infamous "China Lobby," proved to

²² Cohen, *America's Response to China*, 167; and Schaller, *The United States and China*, 114-15.

be more powerful once the war with Japan ended and restricted the Truman administration's room to maneuver.²³ When Jiang balked at sharing power, Truman and Marshall saw no option other than to tilt back to the GMD.

The moment of opportunity in fact arrived during the war years only to be squandered by Patrick Hurley. While a deep ideological antipathy toward communism no doubt drove Hurley to reject Mao's CCP and to underestimate Jiang's shortcomings as a national leader, notions of "primitive masculinity" made it difficult for the general to question his anti-Communist impulses. And when more experienced specialists in the Foreign Service counseled compromise with the CCP, Hurley not only questioned their political judgment, he dismissed them as upper-class busy bodies against whom he would stand manly and tall.

Gender and Class and Hurley's Developing Years

The story of how cultural constructions of manhood and class drove a wedge between the United States and China's Communist rebels is traceable to the Oklahoma countryside where a young Patrick Hurley grew up. Pat was born in 1883 in Oklahoma's Indian Territory. His father, Pierce, had migrated from Ireland in the 1870s and experienced a string of economic failures. Following an unsuccessful attempt to grow cotton, he was forced to move into Choctaw territory and become a tenant farmer. When farm tenancy did not work out, he opted to take a job working for a coal company.²⁴

By age eleven, young Pat was already working in the coal mines with his father as a trapper boy to keep food on the table. Hurley's biographer, Russell Buhite noted, "Frontier communities were comprised of a rough lot of men and mining towns contained some of the

²³ The "China Lobby" did not form until early 1949, and even then, the loose Conservative alliance held little influence. By the early 1950s, they managed to hold enough sway over public opinion to inhibit any potential overtures by Truman to the Chinese Communists. Tucker, *Patterns in the Dust*, 80-81.

²⁴ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 3-4.

roughest...”²⁵ Hurley’s childhood friend, Victor Locke, confirmed this analysis by claiming “no rougher people were to be found any where than those in the coal camps.”²⁶ It was during this developmental period an impressionable Pat learned about proper ideals of masculinity. Various accounts mention the boy’s many brawls with miners and neighborhood children.²⁷ In one altercation, he nearly killed a fellow miner after swinging an iron rod against his head.²⁸ By the early years of the twentieth century, elite, mainstream advocates of the “primitive manhood” ethos, like philosopher William James, argued that rough conditions, such as those that characterized the Oklahoma plains, were essential to forming proper manhood. In 1910, James in fact called for a “corps of youth” that “would work at physical labor, from *coal mining* [emphasis added] to road building with this ultimate purpose: ‘To get the childishness knocked out of them, and to come back into society with healthier sympathies and soberer ideas.’”²⁹

Stories of Hurley’s masculine rites of passage abound. As a child, he dreamed of becoming a prizefighter, which according to Bederman was one of the most celebrated institutions for displaying one’s manliness.³⁰ Though he never realized his boxing ring

²⁵ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 6.

²⁶ Statement by Major Victor Locke, Jr., June 30, 1941, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 1 (hereafter cited as 1941 Locke Statement).

²⁷ Grant Foreman Biography of Patrick J. Hurley in 1880s, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 4; Grant Foreman Chapters Regarding Early Days of Patrick J. Hurley in Muskogee, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 3 (hereafter cited as Foreman Chapters); Grant Foreman Manuscript Regarding Patrick J. Hurley, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 29 (hereafter cited as Foreman Manuscript); and Parker LaMoore, “From Coal Mine to Cabinet,” Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections (hereafter cited as LaMoore, “From Coal Mine to Cabinet”).

²⁸ Foreman Manuscript, 52-53.

²⁹ Rotundo, *American Manhood*, 234.

³⁰ Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 17; Foreman Manuscript, 29; Patrick Hurley to Alice Mackey, April 6, 1946, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections; and Patrick Hurley to Victor Locke Jr., April 21, 1937, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections. When one of Hurley’s friends named their child after him, he expressed that with such a name the child was destined to become a prize-fighter. Later in life, he would often refer back to prizefighting.

dreams, he found other outlets for his often violent and vengeful temperament. Around the age of twelve, an innocent Pat was beaten by a convenience store-keeper who had mistakenly accused him of stealing sugar. Although the store-keeper later apologized, the boy plotted his revenge. After the incident, young Pat rode up on a horse and whacked his enemy on the head with a homemade weapon. The store-keeper dropped to the ground, nearly dead. Defiant and proud, Pat unabashedly told his mother “he had no regrets; that he had tried to kill the store-keeper.”³¹

If living in the frontier and working the mines were not enough to teach the rebellious child what it meant to be a proper man, certainly growing up with a borderline abusive father was. Pierce was, according to an array of friends and acquaintances, an alcoholic with a violent temper and a “born rebel who liked to argue, ‘cuss,’ and fight and was not discriminating as to his opponent.”³² He has been described by biographers and acquaintances as “fiery,” “pugnacious,” and a “ne’er-do-well.”³³ Hurley’s sister, Alice, described her father as “a moody, brilliant sensitive, irritable, erratic man, with a violent and explosive temper...and, above all, a born rebel.”³⁴ He associated with the roughest men in the mines and enjoyed “the company of men as rough as he.”³⁵ When Hurley recounted his childhood with a friend, he proudly claimed to come from a “fighting family.”³⁶ Pierce

³¹ After hearing her son’s murderous intent, Hurley’s mother “burst into tears and endeavored to persuade him that killing his aggressor was not in his heart; but, moved by an implacable rebellious spirit, the Irish lad insisted that it was exactly what he had intended to do.” Foreman Manuscript, 27-29; and Don Lohbeck, *Patrick J. Hurley* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1956), 26.

³² Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 7; LaMoore, “From Coal Mine to Cabinet”; and Lohbeck, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 19-20.

³³ Foreman Chapters, 1.

³⁴ Alice Mackey to Grant Foreman, October 29, 1942, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 2 (hereafter cited as Mackey to Foreman, October 29, 1942). Pierce was short-tempered and turned to aggression at the slightest provocation.

³⁵ 1941 Locke Statement.

³⁶ Patrick Hurley to Alice Mackey, August 9, 1918, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections.

“encouraged his sons to be men in their own right and to demand an eye for an eye,” such as the time he scolded Pat for merely shooting over a boy’s head instead of killing him.³⁷ Since Hurley’s mother passed away when he was thirteen years old, these contentious men served as his primary role models. His sister later recalled that he had inherited many of their father’s traits.³⁸

Unlike his father, Hurley found a way to channel his fighting spirit through formal military service. When the Spanish-American War began in 1898, he traveled to Houston to enlist in Theodore Roosevelt’s “Rough Rider” unit but was caught attempting to falsify his age.³⁹ Hurley received his first military experience with the Indian Territorial Militia and Oklahoma National Guard in 1904 and 1914, respectively. The Territorial Militia consisted of a group of minute men who carried any available arms. Hurley was eventually appointed Captain of a company of about seventy men.⁴⁰ In 1917, he joined the regular army and worked in the Judge Advocate General’s Office as a clerk. Hurley was “crazy to go over seas [sic]” and be on the front lines where the action was.⁴¹ He wrote his sister, “I want to get to the field. Maybe I’ll dislike the trenches but I don’t care if I do. I want to hear the big guns rattle and feel the ardor of fray, if it doesn’t happen but once in my life.”⁴²

His wish was soon granted as he was transferred to France where he rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel and had the time of his life. “I am enjoying this game more than any thing [sic] I have ever done,” he wrote home cheerfully. “I know it is as natural for me to be a

³⁷ LaMoore, “From Coal Mine to Cabinet.”

³⁸ Mackey to Foreman, October 29, 1942, 4.

³⁹ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 9.

⁴⁰ Interview with Col. Clarence B. Douglas, July 24, 1941, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 1-2.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁴² Patrick Hurley to Alice Mackey, August 20, 1917, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections.

soldier as it was for ‘buck’ in Jack London’s ‘Call of the Wild’ to be a wolf.”⁴³ Throughout the war, Hurley sought to emulate “all the chivalry, all the valor...all the patriotism and all the glory of American manhood” that heroes like Francis Marion of Revolutionary War fame and contemporary Theodore Roosevelt epitomized.⁴⁴

To the newly decorated colonel, men like Roosevelt demonstrated the “fighting” and “manly” qualities that true men should embody.⁴⁵ It is no coincidence that Roosevelt stood in many ways as the personification of “primitive manhood,” as he pushed strongly for men to embrace their passion and “included anger, revenge, and ‘a readiness to suffer’ among the impulses...approved for manly use.”⁴⁶ Like Roosevelt, Hurley contended war was necessary to cultivate real men. In the midst of World War I, he proclaimed,

I am praying every day that the war will not be stopped until the Boche are whipped so they will stay whipped, and until our own dear country has acquired a soul. She is in a fair way to get a soul, but it hasn’t gone far enough yet. She hasn’t had a real soul since the days of Lincoln. This war if it lasts long enough will make strong, God loving men out of the hundreds of thousands of cigarette smoking, cocktail drinking, tango troling, fish walking, lounge lizards.⁴⁷

Throughout life, Hurley continued to define himself and those around him by their adherence to martial virtues such as chivalry, loyalty, duty, strength, and courage.⁴⁸ In a letter

⁴³ Patrick Hurley to Alice Mackey, May 13, 1918, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections. Interesting Hurley should reference the primitivist story, “The Call of the Wild,” and relate his experience to the story’s central character, “Buck,” since Buck is a dog that is forced to fight for survival by embracing his primitive and instinctual nature, eventually becoming the dominant animal in the wilderness.

⁴⁴ Patrick Hurley to Alice Mackey, March 5, 1918, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections.

⁴⁵ When Hurley learned his sister was having a child, he wrote, “I hope if it is a he it will be a He in the true sense. A Houston, a Marion, a Sheridan or a Roosevelt.” Patrick Hurley to Alice Mackey, n.d., Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections.

⁴⁶ Rotundo, *American Manhood*, 231. In 1895, Roosevelt argued, “This country needs a war...the men who have dared greatly in war...are those who deserve the best of their country.” Theodore Roosevelt, quoted in E. A. Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 235.

⁴⁷ Patrick Hurley to Alice Mackey, October 21, 1918, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections. “Boche” refers to a German soldier.

⁴⁸ Patrick Hurley, “1923 Speech,” Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 1; Patrick Hurley, “Crocker’s Iowa Brigade Speech Made at Toledo, Iowa,” September 26, 1917, Patrick J. Hurley

to his son, Hurley explained that the most appealing aspect of his character was his courage. He claimed, "Courage is the most attractive attribute a man can have."⁴⁹ In a speech to the Boy Scouts of America in 1929, he contended that the scouts gave boys a taste of army discipline, which included "a sense of responsibility and loyalty to duty" and "obedience to duly appointed superiors," both which were key to building a strong moral character.⁵⁰ This devotion to loyalty, duty, and courage, would follow Hurley to his China mission and play a considerable role in his perception of the State Department personnel, whom he would consider disloyal and cowardly.

Hurley would never have made his way to the presidential appointment to China without acquiring a modicum of wealth and political experience. Rural Oklahoma afforded Hurley only a semblance of an education. Yet prior to the outbreak of the Great War, he managed to acquire a B.A. from Indian University in Oklahoma and a law degree from National University. While the rigor of his education was limited, it proved sufficient to open a law practice in Tulsa, serve as lawyer for the Choctaw Nation, and to represent wealthy oil companies based in his home state.⁵¹ By 1929, he had accumulated over one million dollars

Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 1-10; Patrick Hurley, "Radio Address of Colonel Patrick J. Hurley, The Assistant Secretary of War, over Station WMAL," July 20, 1929, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 1; Patrick Hurley to Victor Locke, Jr., August 1, 1935, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections; and Lohbeck, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 135.

⁴⁹ Patrick Hurley to Willy, September 27, 1944, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections.

⁵⁰ Patrick Hurley, "Extracts from Address of Colonel Patrick J. Hurley, Assistant Secretary of War, at the Dinner Session of the National Council Meeting of the Boy Scouts of America at the Commodore Hotel, New York," May 13, 1929, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 3.

⁵¹ Hurley's childhood education was virtually nonexistent, and he fought vigorously to achieve the education he could, often working long, hard hours to pay for his own schooling. He never attended school in his first sixteen years. Although he managed to get his B.A. at Indian University, the school was not very intellectually stimulating and lacked the quality of education of other, more established universities. According to Buhite, "He completed grade school, high school, and college at Indian University, a rather primitive missionary academy, in a span of five years." Despite his impressive attempt to learn as much as possible, Hurley was nonetheless rarely exposed to the merits of philosophical questioning or alternative ways of thinking and value systems. As a result, he became very close-minded. Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 12, 309.

in wealth.⁵² Impressively, Hurley worked to escape the hardships of working-class life and rose to wealth and prominence; yet he identified strongest with his working-class and regional origins.

During the 1920s, Hurley became active in politics for the Republican Party. In 1928, he ran the preconvention campaign for presidential candidate Herbert Hoover in Oklahoma and in 1929 accepted appointment as Assistant Secretary of War. Later that year, Secretary of War James Good died and Hurley was promoted to Secretary of War.⁵³ It is difficult to pinpoint when exactly Hurley met Franklin Roosevelt, although it was likely during his tenure as Secretary of War or immediately after when he represented the Sinclair Oil Company. Sinclair, along with many other American oil companies, had been caught up in a dispute with the post-revolutionary Mexican government intent on nationalizing the country's oil industry. Representing Sinclair, Hurley petitioned for assistance from the U.S. State Department and according to his biographer, Don Lohbeck, consulted frequently with President Roosevelt.⁵⁴

This personal relationship resulted in Hurley's assignment on several military and diplomatic missions during World War II. In 1942, Hurley was promoted to the rank of brigadier general and traveled to the Southwest Pacific to bring supplies to General Douglas

⁵² Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 38.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 39-40, 43-45.

⁵⁴ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 82-99, 100-03; Foreman Chapters, 1; LaMoore, "From Coal Mine to Cabinet"; Lohbeck, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 74, 155; and Unknown to Thomas Andrews, May 16, 1934, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections. This was not the first time Hurley had played the role of negotiator. Following World War I, he was tasked with negotiating between the American Expeditionary Forces and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. When the American Third Army followed the Germans through Luxembourg, they treated the nation as enemy territory instead of neutral. Hurley successfully negotiated an agreement where the United States would treat them as neutral territory and "pay for the use of rolling stock, the upkeep of roads, rental for properties used for military purposes and for billets for American Troops." But neither of these experiences would adequately prepare him for negotiating between two parties with such a violent and complicated history as the Guomindang and Chinese Communists.

MacArthur in the Philippines. Roosevelt then instructed him to report on Russia's and the Middle East's military strength. In the summer of 1944, Roosevelt started looking for a new assignment for Hurley. Secretary of War Henry Stimson and Chief of Staff George Marshall suggested the general be sent to China where trouble was brewing.

The Guomindang, the Communists, and the China Hands

The China Patrick Hurley encountered in 1944 was, like turn-of-the-century Oklahoma, a rough and tumble place. But that was about as far as resemblances went. China had become caught up in a process of political and social tumult that had no American equivalent. Beginning with the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty in 1911, a dynasty widely condemned in China for its weakness in the face of European and American imperial demands for trading and political concessions, the country reeled from political instability that featured republicans, communists, and warlords locked in bitter struggle.⁵⁵ While the GMD and the CCP had briefly formed a "United Front" in the 1920s, Jiang severed the alliance with a bloody purge of Communists that began in 1927. A "Second United Front" formed in the second half of the 1930s in response to Japan's aggression, but it too fell short of achieving full unity.⁵⁶

By 1944, the "Second United Front" was falling apart. The GMD and CCP were essentially working separately and frequently fighting each other. In January 1941, a major battle broke out between GMD forces and the CCP's New Fourth Army, which made cooperation tenuous.⁵⁷ The CCP gained wide support of the peasants in the countryside and

⁵⁵ Cohen, *America's Response to China*, 76-77, 79-80.

⁵⁶ Cohen, *America's Response to China*, 106-09, 128-29, 139; and Schaller, *The United States and China*, 39-40, 43-44. Schaller notes that the GMD never actually controlled all of China. Many provinces were still ruled by warlords, and gentry still dominated rural life. Jiang manipulated the various factions and prevented them from consolidating enough strength to overthrow him. As a result of this tenuous hold on China, many GMD laws were not implemented, and Jiang avoided conflict as much as possible.

⁵⁷ Cohen, *America's Response to China*, 139; and Schaller, *The United States and China*, 60.

consolidated power in northern China and behind Japanese lines, making its headquarters in the city of Yan'an.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, the GMD relocated its government from Nanjing near the central coast further inland to the city of Chongqing, which became the government's provisional wartime capital. The government was losing popular support throughout China as well and gaining a scathing reputation for being corrupt.⁵⁹

Prior to General Hurley's arrival in China, the United States had backed the "United Front" against Japan by sending lend-lease supplies to the GMD's Nationalist government. Washington also dispatched General Joseph Stilwell to command the China-Burma-India Theater. Stilwell and the American ambassador in Chongqing, Clarence Gauss, had nonetheless become increasingly irritated with Jiang because of his unwillingness to fight the Japanese in Burma or integrate seasoned Communist troops into his army.⁶⁰ President Roosevelt sent Vice President Henry Wallace to China in June 1944 to investigate the problems between Jiang, Stilwell, and the Communists. This mission had two important outcomes. The first was that Jiang allowed a group of American diplomats, dubbed the United States Army Observer Group, to travel to the Communist headquarters in Yan'an. Prior to this, only a few journalists had been allowed to travel there.⁶¹ The second significant outcome was that Roosevelt responded to a request by Jiang to send a personal representative

⁵⁸ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 137-38.

⁵⁹ Wilbur J. Peterkin, *Inside China 1943-1945: An Eyewitness Account of America's Mission in Yanan* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1992), 115-16. Buhite also goes into detail about the GMD's corrupt practices, explaining that "Chiang often seemed more concerned about personal loyalty than for an officer's ability as a commander...and the various armies ignored directives from Chungking...commanders were then asked to raise their own supplies, which were then hoarded for future emergencies or sold. Local commanders...became virtual governors in districts under their control, where they collected taxes and made laws...opium running and other corrupt practices were rife. Conscription was by seizure, with the rich buying their way out." He concludes, "The wonder is that the Chinese army did not completely collapse of its own weight, entirely independent of any external threat posed by the Japanese and the Communists." Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 138.

⁶⁰ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 144-45; and Cohen, *America's Response to China*, 142.

⁶¹ Joiner, *Honorable Survivor*, 56-57.

to mediate between he and Stilwell, which led to the initial conception of the Hurley Mission.⁶²

The United States Army Observer Group, nicknamed, the “Dixie Mission,” was the brainchild of Foreign Service Officer John Paton Davies, who was political adviser to General Stilwell at the time.⁶³ The Dixie Mission, commanded by Colonel David Barrett, flew to Yan’an at the end of July and met with the Communist delegation, which included Mao. Foreign Service Officer John Service, who also advised Stilwell, joined the mission to study the CCP’s military strength and began writing reports extolling the CCP’s popular political base and military capabilities which he circulated to both U.S. officials and press.⁶⁴

It was a new practice to have Foreign Service officers attached to military commands like Stilwell’s and act as political advisers, as Service and fellow officer Davies did.⁶⁵ Foreign Service officers were typically assigned to embassies and reported to the embassy’s ambassador. Prior to his assignment to Stilwell, Service worked under Chongqing ambassador, Gauss. Working under Stilwell, however, gave Foreign Service officers like Service and Davies the authority to send reports to the State Department, embassy, military, and journalists without the approval of the ambassador. This arrangement would cause a great deal of friction between the Foreign Service officers and Hurley once he became ambassador. Hurley believed the Foreign Service officers were wrong to contradict his policy goals and became extremely frustrated by their ability to go over his head, viewing them as acts of disloyalty and insubordination.

⁶² Joiner, *Honorable Survivor*, 59.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁶⁴ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 63.

⁶⁵ State Department Employee Loyalty Investigation Excerpt, Subject File, John P. Davies Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, 2093 (hereafter cited as Loyalty Investigation Excerpt). During his testimony, Davies claimed that his detail to Stilwell was the first case where the military assigned a State Department official to a commanding officer’s staff.

Class and educational differences between Hurley and the Foreign Service officers also generated antagonism. A large percentage of Foreign Service diplomats had earned degrees at Ivy League schools, including Harvard, Princeton, and Yale, which gave the Service a reputation for being elitist.⁶⁶ And in contrast to Hurley, Service and Davies had known China their entire lives. Service was born in Chengdu, China to American missionary parents, who had moved to China in 1906 to set up the first YMCA in the region. The family enjoyed the luxury of servants, and his father was well respected among his work associates. Unlike Hurley, who had received little education until college, Service had already completed eight school grades by age eleven.⁶⁷ He then attended the Shanghai American School for his first three years and spent his senior year at a high school in Berkeley, California, graduated from Oberlin College, and passed the Foreign Service exam in 1933. Further advanced study in Chinese language, history, and culture helped him to become known in diplomatic circles as a “China hand,” that is, an official expert on China. During his years of assignments in China, Service developed many contacts among the American press, missions, business and diplomatic circles, and influential Chinese.⁶⁸

One of John Service’s closest friends growing up was John Davies, whose parents had also served as missionaries in China.⁶⁹ The family met the Services when they moved to Chengdu. Davies’s educational background in private schools in many ways mirrored

⁶⁶ Kahn, *The China Hands*, 39.

⁶⁷ Joiner, *Honorable Survivor*, 7, 9.

⁶⁸ Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, 1950, Part 2, Subject File, John Stewart Service and Charles Edward Rhetts Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, 1964. It was also during this time Service developed close relationships with Ambassador Gauss and the State Department’s Division of Chinese Affairs chief, John Carter Vincent, both of whom became critics of Hurley’s initiatives.

⁶⁹ Davies’s father was a minister who had been sent to China in 1906 by the American Baptists.

Service's, capped by graduation from Columbia University in New York City.⁷⁰ After passing the Foreign Service exam in 1931, Davies spent seven years in China at various embassies. Between 1933 and 1935, he went through the same Chinese studies course Service had taken.⁷¹

Thus, while the clashes that ensued between Davies and Service and Hurley arose over real differences in policy priorities and arguments over the chain of command, they would also be fueled by class and educational antagonisms that pitted well-groomed policy making elites against the rough-hewn, salt-of-the-earth Oklahoman.

Hurley's Arrives in China and Cleans House

Hurley arrived in China on September 6, 1944. He had been directed by Roosevelt "to promote harmonious relations between General Chiang and General Stilwell and to facilitate the latter's exercise of command over the Chinese armies placed under his direction."⁷² The following day, Hurley began working out the details of the command with Stilwell, Jiang, and Jiang's foreign minister, T.V. Soong. These talks proved fruitless. Meanwhile, the fighting with the Japanese in Burma intensified making Jiang's cooperation with U.S. commanders all the more urgent. On September 16, Roosevelt sent Jiang a chastising message, reprimanding him for not placing Stilwell in charge of his forces. Stilwell personally delivered the message out of spite.⁷³

⁷⁰ John P. Davies, *China Hand: An Autobiography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 10, 12.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 14-17, 20-21. Davies also mentioned that members of the Foreign Service "tended to regard it as an elite corps." It was this elite corps Hurley would come to despise. Davies, *China Hand*, 19; and Loyalty Review Board Transcripts, November 13-19, 1952, Subject File, John P. Davies Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, 2 (hereafter cited as Loyalty Review Board Transcripts).

⁷² United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1944, Volume VI, China* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1967), 250-51 (hereafter cited as U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1944*).

⁷³ Joiner, *Honorable Survivor*, 85; Service, *The Amerasia Papers*, 64; and U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1944*, 157-58.

At this interlude, Jiang either wittingly or unwittingly began working to divide the American diplomatic and military contingent. It turned out he had a willing accomplice in Hurley. On September 25, Jiang told the newly arrived American emissary he would place his forces under an American's command, but only if Stilwell was replaced.⁷⁴ Hurley sided with Jiang and suggested Roosevelt recall Stilwell. This would be the first of many instances where Hurley supported Jiang.⁷⁵ Stilwell was recalled on October 19 and replaced by General Albert C. Wedemeyer.

While not immediately apparent, Stilwell's recall undermined Service and Davies, the Dixie Mission, and embassy staff who had grown increasingly disenchanted with Jiang and willing to bring Communist forces more fully into the U.S.-China fold. In Stilwell, they had a close associate willing to stand up to the GMD.⁷⁶ In fact, less than a month prior to his recall, Stilwell planned on traveling to Yan'an to discuss arming the Communists and deploying them once he had seized control of the Chinese armies.⁷⁷ Wedemeyer, in contrast, greatly admired Jiang and worked to nurture a close personal relationship with the GMD leader,

⁷⁴ U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1944*, 167-70.

⁷⁵ Joiner, *Honorable Survivor*, 87; Tsou, *America's Failure in China*, 117; and U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1944*, 166-70.

⁷⁶ David D. Barrett, *Dixie Mission: The United States Army Observer Group in Yen-an, 1944* (Berkeley: Center for Chinese Studies, 1970), 42; Peterkin, *Inside China 1943-1945*, 117; Charles Romanus and Riley Sunderland, *Chapters Regarding China, 1945*, Chapter 3, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 4 (hereafter cited as Romanus and Sunderland Chapters); Joseph W. Stilwell, *The Stilwell Papers*, ed. Theodore H. White (New York: William Sloane Associates, Inc., 1948), 316-17, 321, 331; and Theodore H. White, *In Search of History* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1978), 175. During Service's and Davies's upcoming battles with Hurley, Stilwell may have been able to intervene on their behalf, given his personal relationship with them. He and Davies were particularly close and had worked together intermittently since 1934. Stilwell had also known Service for a long time and specifically requested his transfer to his staff. Davies, *China Hand*, 205; Lohbeck, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 263; and Loyalty Investigation Excerpt, 2093.

⁷⁷ Carolle J. Carter, *Mission to Yen-an: American Liaison with the Chinese Communists 1944-1947* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996), 116, 126-27. In his last report to the War Department, Stilwell appeared to be of a similar mindset to the Foreign Service officers, stating, "The Americans would have done well to avoid committing themselves unalterably to Chiang, and adopted a more realistic attitude of the Chiang regime. We could have gained much by exerting pressure on Chiang to cooperate and achieve national unity, and if he proved unable to do this, then in supporting those elements in China which gave promise of such developments." *The China White Paper: August 1949, Volume 1* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), 70.

even winning invitations to stay overnight in the latter's home.⁷⁸ Though Wedemeyer at times demonstrated respect for his Foreign Service aides, he also promised Hurley that he and his staff, including Service and Davies, would refrain from political reporting so long as Hurley stayed out of military matters.⁷⁹ This reduced the role of the Dixie Mission to "the status of collecting routine enemy intelligence and weather reporting."⁸⁰

Another great loss for the Foreign Service officers, perhaps the most significant of all, was Ambassador Gauss's resignation on November 1. Gauss had become incensed by his lack of involvement in the discussions between Jiang and Stilwell and quickly complained of Hurley's determination to usurp the embassy's authority. He was also thoroughly fed up with Jiang's refusal to work with the CCP.⁸¹ With the support of Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Gauss and Soong had been discussing the possibility of forming a war council which would include the CCP. These talks had been in development since July. When Gauss finally met with Jiang on September 15, Jiang quickly dismissed the idea.⁸² Service recalled the episode, stating that "what dominated his long private conversation with me...was the long and serious thought that he had devoted to developing his proposal to Chiang, his disappointment at the blunt, almost out-of-hand way it had been dismissed...and his deep discouragement about these implications for the future of China and American interests

⁷⁸ Barrett recalled a time when he and Wedemeyer spent the night at Jiang's house, and Jiang tucked Wedemeyer in bed. He observed that "Al was deeply affected. No man who could do a thing like that, he thought, could be a bad man." Kahn, *The China Hands*, 140.

⁷⁹ Lohbeck, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 342; and Albert C. Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!* (New York: Henry Holt, 1958), 306, 313.

⁸⁰ Peterkin, *Inside China 1943-1945*, 118; and Service, *The Amerasia Papers*, 90. Wedemeyer also replaced nearly all of Stilwell's staff. According to Service, the staff was replaced with a "new crew...with no China background." John S. Service, interview by Rosemary Levenson, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1977-1978, <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/service.htm>, 303.

⁸¹ Carter, *Mission to Yen-an*, 108.

⁸² Carter, *Mission to Yen-an*, 24-25, 109; and U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1944*, 573-74.

involved there.”⁸³ This was the final straw for Gauss, who then abruptly resigned. Roosevelt appointed Hurley to be the replacement.⁸⁴

Unfortunately for Service and Davies, this meant the deprivation of another ally. Gauss, like Stilwell, shared a close personal relationship with Service, stemming from their work together in the Chongqing embassy. Gauss even defended Service during his loyalty hearings, saying, ““He was outstanding. I don’t know of any officer in my whole thirty-nine years of service who impressed me more favorably than Jack Service.””⁸⁵ Although Gauss and Davies’s relationship was strained at times, Davies “respected and was fond of Gauss.”⁸⁶ He indicated Gauss had “an analytical, skeptical mind,” and that his “reporting on China, supported by an outstandingly able staff, was dispassionate, balanced, and, viewed in retrospect, perceptive.”⁸⁷ Gauss had also become disenchanted by Jiang and opposed to deep involvement in China’s internal politics.⁸⁸

Hurley had little patience for skeptical minds in his midst. As ambassador, he demanded loyalty and subservience. On assignment in Iran two years prior, he had complained arrogant

⁸³ Service, *The Amerasia Papers*, 74.

⁸⁴ Regarding Gauss’s resignation, Service recalled, “Then he told me that he was going to resign. After every presidential election each serving ambassador sends in a pro forma resignation. He wanted me to tell the Department that his was not intended to be pro forma, that he really meant that he wanted out. He’d had enough. I was to tell this to the highest person I had a chance to talk to in the Department.” John P. Davies, *Dragon by the Tail: American, British, Japanese, and Russian Encounters with China and One Another* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1972), 342-43; and Service, interview, 292-93.

⁸⁵ Kahn, *The China Hands*, 65.

⁸⁶ Davies, *Dragon by the Tail*, 342.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 164, 343.

⁸⁸ According to Hurley, Gauss contended that the Nationalist government would and should collapse, and that he “believed the National Government was corrupt, inefficient and incapable of rendering any real service to the United States either in the war or afterward.” Hurley listed Gauss among the “career men” in China who opposed the Nationalist Government and the policy he was attempting to implement, noting that his views were dangerously similar to Service’s. Service also claimed Gauss had warned Hurley prior to the GMD-CCP negotiations not to become too deeply involved in the mediation, to which Hurley replied he had the authority to do whatever he wanted. Patrick Hurley, “America’s Foreign Policy in China,” January 26, 1946, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 5, 9, 10 (hereafter cited as Hurley, “America’s Foreign Policy”); Patrick Hurley, “Statement of Honorable Patrick J. Hurley for *Life Magazine*,” January 11, 1945, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 45, 47 (hereafter cited as Hurley, “Statement for *Life Magazine*”); and Service, *The Amerasia Papers*, 103.

State Department officials had worked to undermine his effort to provide economic aid to the monarchical state and cultivate it as a model for U.S. backed democracy in the Middle East. Hurley found a State Department memorandum by Assistant Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Eugene Rostow which referred to his proposals as “hysterical messianic globaloney.” According to Acheson, Hurley confronted him in his office where he became “violently angry.”⁸⁹ Hurley had just experienced his first taste of the “stuffed-shirt diplomats in the State Department.”⁹⁰

In China, Hurley found himself in a unique position to create and implement his own interpretation of American foreign policy due to the lack of an explicit directive from Roosevelt or the State Department regarding GMD and CCP negotiations.⁹¹ Arthur Ringwalt, the embassy’s political section chief, recalled Hurley had told him that “he had arrived without any instructions whatever from Washington, and he said, ‘If I haven’t been given American policy, I shall make American policy.’”⁹² The State Department reacted slowly to

⁸⁹ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 130-31; Hurley, “Statement for *Life Magazine*,” 39; Lohbeck, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 228-29; Joseph H. Short, “Hurley Lacking in Understanding of Iran Lend-Lease, Acheson Says,” *The Baltimore Sun*, December 11, 1945, <http://www.newspapers.com/image/374245069>; and United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1943, the Near East and Africa, Volume IV* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1964), 420-26.

⁹⁰ Lohbeck, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 229. This episode likely contributed to Hurley’s premature prejudice towards the State Department and embassy staff during his China mission.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 280. Lohbeck asserts Hurley was given the directive orally prior to leaving Washington. While possible, there is no written record to support this claim. Also, Roosevelt’s written directive to Hurley pertained solely to Stilwell and Jiang, so it seems unlikely Roosevelt would have expressed an entirely different directive in person.

⁹² Ringwalt, interview, 10. Throughout the mission, Hurley contended American policy regarding China had been enumerated in Cordell Hull’s proposal to the Japanese ambassador prior to Pearl Harbor. One proposed point stated, “The Government of the United States and the Government of Japan will not support—militarily, politically, economically—any government or regime in China other than the National Government of the Republic of China with capital temporarily at Chungking.” When placed in its proper context, the Hull note can hardly be considered a definitive policy statement on China foreign policy. The specified point referred to Japan’s puppet governments in China, rather than the Chinese Communist Party. Furthermore, the political and military situation had drastically changed by November 1944, as the United States had become an active belligerent in the war, and the military situation in China required cooperation with the Chinese Communists. The Communists had also grown in strength while the Nationalist government weakened, which meant there was a serious need to reflect on American policy. United States Department of State, *Papers Relating to the*

Hurley's policy creation and implementation, largely because Hurley kept them in the dark during negotiations.⁹³ The Office of Far Eastern Affairs and Division of Chinese Affairs in the State Department would advocate a more flexible and neutral policy approach once negotiations had commenced, but to no avail.⁹⁴

Several incidents early in the mission suggested Hurley's relations with his embassy staff would be strained. His initial impression was that the embassy seemed "disorganized, dirty, inefficient, and sulky."⁹⁵ According to several sources, he spent little time there and instead required his staff come to his house, never developing any sort of personal relationship with them.⁹⁶ When he did decide to move into the official residence, he only gave his staff a few hours' notice to move out.⁹⁷ According to Hurley, George Atcheson explained that no unoccupied beds remained in the house, but if Hurley arranged for a bed,

Foreign Relations of the United States, Japan, 1931-1941, Volume II (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1943), 768-69.

⁹³ Service, *The Amerasia Papers*, 100.

⁹⁴ While initially State Department policy regarding the negotiations was hardly definitive, personnel in the Office of Far Eastern Affairs and Division of Chinese Affairs quickly disagreed with Hurley's degree of GMD support. Secretary of State Edward Stettinius cabled Hurley on December 20, asking for a summary of his reports on the situation in China. In his reply, Hurley provided the State Department with his conception of American policy, which included two goals, "to prevent the collapse of the national government" and "to sustain Chiang Kai-shek as President of the Republic and Generalissimo of the Armies." Roosevelt made no comment, while Stettinius provided no specific points of agreement or disagreement, simply responding that the entire analysis "strikes me as sound." Even Hurley recognized the guarded tone of the response, but nevertheless accepted it as implicit approval. He later acknowledged that the policy he proposed "was not contained in a directive to me. It was contained in a report by me to the Secretary of State and to the President and approved by them." However, he admitted there had been "no public announcement of the approval of the policy." Stettinius likely deferred to Hurley's judgment since he had only recently replaced Hull as Secretary of State and had little background knowledge about China. Even the Division of Chinese Affairs chose not to inform Hurley about its evaluation to avoid confrontation. Instead, the division's chief, Vincent, wrote Stettinius that the U.S. should "maintain sufficient flexibility in our attitude toward the political scene in China... in the unlikely event that Chiang... is ousted and to take immediate steps to support the elements most likely to carry on resistance..." By the time the State Department firmly enunciated its China policy, Hurley was already working toward his own vision. Feis, *The China Tangle*, 209; Hurley, "America's Foreign Policy," 7; Barbara G. Mulch, "A Chinese Puzzle: Patrick J. Hurley and the Foreign Service Officer Controversy" (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 1972), 65-66; Romanus and Sunderland Chapters, Chapter 5, 1; and U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1944*, 215, 744, 745, 750-51.

⁹⁵ Hurley, "Statement for *Life Magazine*," 62.

⁹⁶ White and Jacoby, *Thunder Out of China*, 247.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

the staff would welcome him. Hurley believed Acheson had “deliberately affronted him” and later demanded the house be handed over to him, explaining that “while I liked all the men I had reached that age where when I was at home I would like to be my own master and not have to entertain a multitude of people who lived with me. In addition to that I thought it would probably be better if I chose those whom I desired to live with me.”⁹⁸ Acheson responded by claiming that living conditions in Chongqing were such that the ambassador could not expect a house and that “they had a right to live in it.”⁹⁹ Hurley then secured a house for them and moved the staff out completely within nine weeks.¹⁰⁰

Hurley: He-Man Diplomacy

With Stilwell and Gauss out of the picture, the Dixie Mission and Foreign Service officers on a tight leash, and the State Department’s China policy non-existent, Hurley relished the opportunity to formulate policy. The substance of the negotiations between Hurley, Jiang, and Mao has been covered elsewhere and lies outside the scope of this project, however, Buhite has provided as succinct a summary as anyone.

Discussions with Communist leaders in Chungking proved that they were unwilling to commit their army to Chiang’s command without satisfactory guarantees...they wanted abolition of one-party rule and the formation of a coalition government, which the Generalissimo felt he could not permit...what the Communists desired was a full and meaningful participation in the government and freedom to continue as a party seeking support in all parts of China. Chiang could not agree, because he could only lose...the Communists wanted full recognition of the governments they had established, and supplies for their army. From the Generalissimo’s point of view, to grant such concessions was equally dangerous. His position was, therefore, that the Communists “surrender” their army by submitting it to Nationalist control; and this was equivalent to asking them to concede.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Hurley, “Statement for *Life* Magazine,” 62-63.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 63-64.

¹⁰¹ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 166.

Given these realities, Hurley had little chance of negotiating a coalition government. In fact, both the CCP and GMD used the negotiations to prepare for war.

For the duration of negotiations, Hurley mediated based on several assumptions. His first assumption was that part of his mission included supporting and sustaining Jiang.¹⁰² He also incorrectly assumed the CCP were not real Communists. Hurley had stopped in Moscow prior to going to China to verify that the Soviet Union would not aid the CCP. He met with Stalin's foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, who assured him the Soviet Union would not support the Chinese Communists, who "had no relation whatever to Communism." Hurley took the foreign minister at his word and resolutely believed the Soviet Union would never aid the CCP.¹⁰³ Furthermore, Hurley severely underestimated the CCP's strength for winning a civil war. Because of these assumptions, Hurley erroneously concluded he held leverage over the CCP.¹⁰⁴

The new ambassador also failed to comprehend the ideological gap between the GMD and CCP, believing they held similar objectives. Davies stated Hurley was "convinced that there were no fundamental ideological conflicts between the Reds and Chiang's regime—for both were, in his opinion, devoted to government by, for, and of the people..."¹⁰⁵ He regarded the CCP as nothing other than a group of agrarian reformers fighting for democracy, pursuing the same goal as the GMD.¹⁰⁶ The deep cultural, political, and historical divide between the two factions eluded him, as did the CCP's strong commitment to

¹⁰² Davies, *Dragon by the Tail*, 370; and U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1944*, 745.

¹⁰³ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 151-52; Davies, *Dragon by the Tail*, 370; and U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1944*, 253-56.

¹⁰⁴ Davies, *Dragon by the Tail*, 370; and United States Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1945, Volume VII, China* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1967), 432-33 (hereafter cited as U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1945*).

¹⁰⁵ Davies, *Dragon by the Tail*, 370.

¹⁰⁶ U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1945*, 211.

Communist ideological principles.¹⁰⁷ In addition to the cultural forces of gender and class, these assumptions guided Hurley's ideology and decision-making throughout the mission.

What other scholars have not observed about the Hurley Mission, however, is the way in which the ambassador's hard-charging, take-no-prisoner approach to diplomacy belied a deeply embedded sense of masculinity. In Chongqing, he not only established himself as the patriarch of the household, but also treated those of a lesser rank much as his own abusive father had treated him. Naysayers were called out, disparaged, and dismissed, as Hurley's relationship with John Davies would illustrate. The tension quickly became evident when the ambassador arrived in Yan'an to meet with the CCP delegation in November 1944. Davies, along with Dixie Mission Commander David Barrett, warned Hurley about the difficult demands the CCP would make and the unlikelihood of reaching an agreement. Davies noticed that "General Hurley appeared to be rather taken aback by these comments." The ambassador promptly told Davies "that he wished to conduct the negotiations with the Communists himself and it would be best were I to return promptly to Chungking."¹⁰⁸ Hurley had asserted his authority.

The Hurley-Davies problem did not end there.¹⁰⁹ Relations became particularly hostile after Davies visited Yan'an on December 15 with Barrett and Office of Strategic Services (OSS) agent, Willis Bird. Wedemeyer's chief of staff, Robert McClure, had ordered Barrett "to get the Communists' reaction to a new contingency plan to drop thousands of American

¹⁰⁷ Service, *The Amerasia Papers*, 84-85.

¹⁰⁸ Untitled Manuscript in 1942-1945 Folder, Chronological File, John P. Davies Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, 4.

¹⁰⁹ Davies was attached to General Wedemeyer as a political reporter, which meant he wrote reports about various activities regarding the military and political situation. This included Hurley's negotiations. Davies's reports were bleaker about the potential for the negotiations and often contradicted Hurley's. Hurley did not understand nor care that Davies did not work under him and had the authority to report opposing viewpoints. Davies, *Dragon by the Tail*, 380-82; and Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!*, 312.

paratroopers into north China.”¹¹⁰ Willis Bird, the new OSS deputy chief in China, explained the plan to the Communists, and promised “to provide training in the use of modern weapons, demolition explosives...plus equipment to outfit 25,000 Communist guerrillas.”¹¹¹ The prospect of obtaining American aid without negotiating with the GMD emboldened the CCP to reject Hurley and Jiang’s on-going proposals for CCP absorption into Jiang’s army. When Hurley found out, he accused Barret, Bird, Davies, and McClure of intentionally sabotaging him. Barrett wrote, “He took the stand we had tried to work behind his back against the interest of the National Government.”¹¹² Hurley then had Barrett’s promotion to brigadier general cancelled. Barrett would never again have an opportunity for the promotion.¹¹³ Wedemeyer, offended by Hurley’s accusations, maintained there was no reason to distrust the loyalty of his chief of staff and Foreign Service advisers.¹¹⁴ While it was true the secret OSS mission potentially undermined negotiations, it was indeed a far cry from sabotage. Moreover, the OSS and Dixie Mission’s Foreign Service officers worked outside the embassy and were not Hurley’s subordinates.¹¹⁵ Davies became guilty by association, even though his reasons for visiting Yan’an were entirely independent from Bird and Barrett’s.

By the year’s end, Hurley had become extremely frustrated with the deadlock of negotiations and looked outward for blame. Davies claimed that Soong frequently manipulated Hurley and attempted to breed distrust. On December 23, Davies wrote his wife, “Yesterday I had quite a blowup with the ambassador [Hurley]. He accused me of sneaking

¹¹⁰ Davies, *Dragon by the Tail*, 383; and Joiner, *Honorable Survivor*, 106.

¹¹¹ Joiner, *Honorable Survivor*, 107.

¹¹² Barrett, *Dixie Mission*, 76-77.

¹¹³ Barrett, *Dixie Mission*, 79, 91-92; and Joiner, *Honorable Survivor*, 108.

¹¹⁴ Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!*, 306.

¹¹⁵ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 181-82.

off to Yen-an on this last trip to wreck his negotiations. T.V. Soong had told him so. And apparently he accepted T.V.'s explanation. Who [Soong] had said that I had advised the Communists not to pay any attention to Hurley because he was an old fool. Very nice."¹¹⁶ Davies tried to convince Hurley of Soong's deception, but the ambassador responded in typical tough guy parlance that "he had a good mind to break my back."¹¹⁷ After the Yan'an trip, Hurley suggested Davies get himself transferred. Davies had in fact already sought transfer, but Hurley accelerated the process.¹¹⁸

The crescendo of Hurley's rage occurred as Davies was leaving for his new post at Moscow's embassy on January 9, 1945. Davies visited Wedemeyer and Hurley to say goodbye. After wishing the ambassador luck on the negotiations, he offered one final piece of advice. Davies "incautiously expressed the hope that he would not be caught in the tangles of Chinese intrigue should the negotiations fail."¹¹⁹ According to Davies, Hurley "became quite florid and puffy, shouting that he would break my back and other pleasantries. 'You want to pull the plug on Chiang Kai-shek,' he repeatedly bellowed."¹²⁰ Wedemeyer also presented a vivid account,

The Ambassador and Mr. Davies then launched into a very heated argument during which Hurley accused Davies of being a Communist and of failing to support the directive of his country in support of the Chinese Nationalists. Tears came to the eyes of Mr. Davies as he heatedly denied Hurley's accusations. Hurley said that he was going to have him kicked out of the State Department. Davies begged the Ambassador not to ruin his reputation and his career. I endeavored to calm them down...¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Davies, *Dragon by the Tail*, 385.

¹¹⁷ Loyalty Review Board Transcripts, 12.

¹¹⁸ Davies, *Dragon by the Tail*, 384-85.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 386.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 386.

¹²¹ Albert C. Wedemeyer to John Davies, February 7, 1945, Subject File, John Stewart Service and Charles Edward Rhetts Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum; and Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!*, 319. Wedemeyer later admitted to Davies his shock at Hurley's reaction and assured him Hurley no longer intended to have him fired.

Although Hurley left no record of his impression of the confrontation, it is reasonable to conclude he would have deemed Davies's crying and begging as shamefully effeminate, as these traits stood antithetical to the primitive masculinity ethos. The act of crying is often a ritual used to garner sympathy, which Hurley could only interpret as weakness. This would only provide further justification for replacing his weak and emotional staff.¹²²

Hurley's aggressive and vengeful nature are made quite clear by the examples of Barrett and Davies. Quite in line with "primitive manhood," Hurley willfully went out of his way to punish and enact vengeance.¹²³ Reflecting on their different upbringings and stations of class, Wedemeyer even observed that "his temperament was the reverse of my father's calm and reflective way of viewing the world. I was deeply grieved by Pat's hostility. I had already begun to understand his mercurial temperament."¹²⁴ Wedemeyer also acknowledged the accuracy of an account given by gossip journalist, Drew Pearson, about a conflict that erupted between Hurley and McClure.

At about the same time General McClure, Wedemeyer's Chief of Staff, encountered Hurley at a cocktail party and chided him for sending his telegram of protest without prior consultation. "You pup," roared the former cowpuncher from Oklahoma, "I've hit men for less than that." Fists went up...but before anything happened, friends intervened.¹²⁵

Always quick to blow his fuse and ready to respond to dissent with verbal and physical aggression, Hurley badly damaged his reputation within the embassy by these kinds of altercations and the stories spread throughout the close-knit group of Foreign Service officers.

¹²² Mary A. Heiss, "Real Men Don't Wear Pajamas: Anglo-American Cultural Perceptions of Mohammed Mossadeq and the Iranian Oil Nationalization Dispute," in *Empire and Revolution: The United States and the Third World since 1945*, ed. Peter L. Hahn and Mary Ann Heiss (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2001), 184, 188.

¹²³ Rotundo, *American Manhood*, 231.

¹²⁴ Wedemeyer, *Wedemeyer Reports!*, 312.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 317-18.

The first time John Service contacted Hurley was following Gauss's resignation. During this phone conversation, Service formed his initial impression of the ambassador, which was that he was,

A blowhard. A man that you can't talk to, that can't, wouldn't listen, and won't talk to a man who's been on the spot and knows something, [loudly, paraphrasing Hurley] "All you people seem to think I'm an ignoramus, that I've never had any experience...I've done a lot of negotiating. I've brought parties together. I did this in Mexico...I'm not a child," he said, shouting loudly.¹²⁶

Though hardly a transcript of the conversation, the account does shed light on the conflict brewing between Hurley and the Foreign Service officers. It suggests the new ambassador felt uncomfortable in this unfamiliar environment. Since arriving in China, Hurley had felt animosity toward the elitist State Department culture. Atcheson recalled that "General Hurley began his assignment in Chungking with a strong prejudice against the Dept. and the Foreign Service and especially officers who had served with his predecessor...I urged him to show confidence in them...It was however, a fixed idea with him that there were officers in the Foreign Service and American military officers who were in opposition to him."¹²⁷ Another Foreign Service officer working at the embassy, Phillip Sprouse, described a similar reception by Hurley during their first meeting, where he was "subjected to a forty-five-minute diatribe against, among others, Ambassador Gauss, John Carter Vincent, John Davies, and John Service—all of whom Sprouse held in high personal and professional esteem. 'I've

¹²⁶ Service, interview, 293. Service also recounted the story during an interview with Carolle Carter. In this account, Hurley barked, "I know they're gonna be tough to deal with, I know. People keep telling me and they don't realize I've had a lot of experience, they think I'm a child." Carter, *Mission to Yenan*, 130-31.

¹²⁷ U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1945*, 733. After his resignation, Hurley continually denounced the State Department. When asked during an interview how long the State Department had been inept, Hurley shrewdly responded, "I am only 62 years of age." Then after mentioning several well-respected military leaders, he asked, "Who in the career service in the State Department measures up to the capacity and leadership of the gentlemen whom I have just named in the other branch?" This resentment toward the State Department clearly went beyond the specific individuals he felt betrayed by. Answers to Questions Submitted to General Patrick J. Hurley, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 2-3; and Hurley, "Statement for *Life Magazine*," 40-41.

never gone through such an ordeal in my life,' Sprouse later commented. 'Hurley didn't know anything about me except that I was a China specialist, and that *per se* made me bad.'¹²⁸ The ambassador presumably felt threatened by the disparity in experience and education compared to his staff's, especially regarding China.

Hurley's conversation with Service also reveals that the Foreign Service officers bore some prejudices of their own. Service clearly did not think highly of him initially. Buhite notes that the Foreign Service officers viewed Hurley as intellectually shallow and "as a man 'of little capacity,' a 'loud talker,' a 'stuffed shirt,' a 'Colonel Blimp,' and as at least '50 percent bull.'"¹²⁹ They may have very well contributed to his estrangement by neither considering nor respecting his previous business, legal, and political experience.

Unfortunately for Hurley, his aggressive and defensive nature perpetuated and intensified the embassy staff's perception of him as an "ignoramus" and "blowhard." After the Davies incident, Service told the chief of Foreign Service personnel that Hurley's "attitude toward the Foreign Service, and particularly the circumstances that forced John Davies' recall" constituted a real problem.¹³⁰ The chief agreed, saying "he understood and knew about it...and that the State Department understood the situation and would be in effect behind me."¹³¹

After Stilwell's recall, Service had been sent to Washington to debrief the State Department on his mission to Yan'an. Before New Year's, Service received a phone call from the Division of Chinese Affairs chief, John Carter Vincent, who informed him, "Davies

¹²⁸ Kahn, *The China Hands*, 123.

¹²⁹ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 310.

¹³⁰ Service, interview, 301.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

has gotten in a row with Hurley. We've got to get him out. Will you go back?"¹³² Barrett, bitter from his encounters with Hurley, warned Service, "You're committing suicide. Don't go. Hurley will have your scalp."¹³³

When Service arrived at the Chongqing embassy on January 18, 1945 the atmosphere had changed. He met with Hurley, who warned that "if I interfered with him, he would break me."¹³⁴ When asked during an interview about the embassy's environment, Service replied, "Oh, certainly it was a very threatening atmosphere. The whole atmosphere in Chungking was threatening. The embassy staff was operating under very difficult conditions. Hurley had his own little separate embassy really in a sense. He was communicating not with the State Department but with the White House...Also, he was threatening the staff and preventing their reporting anything that was unfavorable."¹³⁵ Ringwalt insisted Hurley "did his best to punish us, being as impossible as he could be to us hoping we would quit."¹³⁶ In February, Service wrote Davies, "Things are worse than when you were here. Much worse. And everybody thinks we Americans are crazy. And George the A (George Acheson) is in tears, most of the time."¹³⁷

One memorandum from Acheson to Hurley clearly demonstrates the ambassador's hostility. On January 31, Acheson sent Hurley notes regarding a message he had drafted for the Secretary of State. Questioning some of Hurley's content, he wrote,

We would question the statement in the next to last paragraph of the telegram that there is opposition among our own *diplomatic* representatives. There is no one on the staff who believes we should by-pass the National Government in dealing with the Communists...The preamble is very damning to the staff. If I were in the Department I

¹³² Service, interview, 300.

¹³³ Ibid., 301.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 302.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 303.

¹³⁶ Ringwalt, interview, 16.

¹³⁷ Service, interview, 306a.

would imply from your comments that you feel that the staff is of little, if any, use and should be replaced.¹³⁸

Ringwalt also recalled numerous instances where Hurley created a hostile work environment. On one such occasion, he sent Hurley a report about the GMD using lend-lease supplies against the CCP. Hurley summoned both Ringwalt and Soong to his office. After Soong alleged the report was false, Hurley reprimanded Ringwalt.¹³⁹ Another time, after the ambassador read a report critical of the GMD, he yelled at Ringwalt and threatened to mete out some manly frontier justice, ““You mean to say you sent them *that?*”” He drew his pistol and continued, ““Why, I’ve *killed* a man for less than that.””¹⁴⁰ Embittered by Hurley, Ringwalt and Fulton Freeman, another China hand who had taken part in the February 28 memorandum, fled China and returned to Washington in August.¹⁴¹

The influence of gender in these many confrontations is apparent. Time and again, Hurley demonstrated his strength through aggressive and threatening behaviors, as opposed to the Foreign Service officers, who valued traditional Victorian values of self-restraint as an expression of inner-strength and proper masculinity.¹⁴² Despite Hurley’s constant abuse, these men controlled their impulses. Even as he endured Hurley’s lambasting in the Yan’an confrontation, Davies clearly sought to stay on the defensive and avoid conflict. Instead of challenging the ambassador with assertiveness, the diplomats opposed him with integrity, by protesting peacefully and respectably. Ideals and personalities clashed as frequently as opinions did.

¹³⁸ U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1945*, 190-91.

¹³⁹ Ringwalt, interview, 17-19; and Service, interview, 305.

¹⁴⁰ E. J. Kahn, *The China Hands*, 145.

¹⁴¹ Ringwalt, interview, 16.

¹⁴² Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 12-13, 17.

If Hurley resented the elitism of the Foreign Service and State Department, then why did he identify so closely with Jiang and Soong? It was a paradox he never noticed. On the one hand, the proud Oklahoman reveled in his working-class heritage and was a proud anti-intellectual, but on the other, he gravitated toward wealthy and prominent people, as can be seen by his relationships with Hoover, Roosevelt, and now Jiang and Soong.¹⁴³ Davies observed, “Hurley had an appetite for hobnobbing with the high and mighty...”¹⁴⁴ Conversely, Mao and the CCP were neither as wealthy nor prominent as Jiang. According to Barrett, when Hurley arrived in Yan’an, he was “wearing one of the most beautifully tailored uniforms I have ever seen...with enough ribbons on his chest to represent every war...except possibly Shay’s Rebellion.”¹⁴⁵ Hurley clearly sought to display his eminence and authority. The CCP delegation, by contrast, wore very plain uniforms, rode in a “beat-up” truck, and lived in “Spartan simplicity.”¹⁴⁶ These class differences may in part explain why Hurley aligned with Jiang and the Guomindang so early in the mission.

Hurley’s alignment with Jiang may also have been the result of the personal relationship they developed. Buhite mentions that Hurley and Jiang became close prior to the negotiations. “He liked the Generalissimo, trusted him, and Chiang reciprocated the feeling...They dined together frequently and spent long hours in discussion during the first month of the Hurley mission.”¹⁴⁷ Hurley may have also overestimated his ability to persuade Jiang to coordinate his own policies with those of the United States. Reflecting on their relationship, he wrote, “After many hours’ and weeks’ conversation with him, during which

¹⁴³ Barrett, *Dixie Mission*, 57; and White and Jacoby, *Thunder Out of China*, 249, 253

¹⁴⁴ Untitled Manuscript in Manuscript [memoirs] Folder, Subject File, John P. Davies Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, 10.

¹⁴⁵ Barrett, *Dixie Mission*, 56.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 56-57.

¹⁴⁷ Buhite, *Patrick J. Hurley*, 160-61.

time I spent considerable time at the Generalissimo's home in Wangchang...we came to understand each other. I am convinced that I won the complete confidence of the Generalissimo."¹⁴⁸

Hurley would also develop close ties with Soong as well as Jiang's wife, Soong Mei-ling (Madame Chiang Kai-shek). Even after his resignation, he continued affectionate correspondence with them.¹⁴⁹ For example, in one letter to Mei-ling, he fondly reminisced, "The fateful days and nights that I spent near to the Generalissimo gave me an opportunity to understand him. The charge that as a foreign Ambassador, I was too clearly a supporter of the Generalissimo does not disturb me."¹⁵⁰

The hostile conditions in the Chongqing embassy climaxed in the defiant telegram of February 28, 1945, sent while Wedemeyer and Hurley were visiting Washington for consultation.¹⁵¹ For these professional men of refinement, the maneuver seemed audacious and certain to alter the status quo. To Service's surprise, it was Acheson who suggested the ploy.¹⁵² "Acheson was a very traditional diplomat," Service later remembered, "One didn't expect him to suggest anything as bold and daring as this."¹⁵³ Service penned the first draft of "The Situation in China," which recommended weaker commitment to the GMD and stronger commitment to the CCP. He based the missive on a report by Foreign Service

¹⁴⁸ Hurley, "Statement for *Life* Magazine," 52.

¹⁴⁹ Patrick Hurley to Brigadier General Peter Pee, December 16, 1947, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections; Patrick Hurley to T.V. Soong, January 13, 1947, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections; Madame Chiang Kai-shek to Patrick Hurley, January 9, 1947, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections; Madame Chiang Kai-shek to Patrick Hurley, January 19, 1946, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections; and Madame Chiang Kai-shek to Patrick Hurley, January 28, 1946, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections.

¹⁵⁰ Patrick Hurley to Madame Chiang Kai-shek, March 12, 1946, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections.

¹⁵¹ Hurley sought a clear declaration of U.S. policy in China.

¹⁵² Service, interview, 306; and Service, *Lost Chance in China*, 358.

¹⁵³ Service, interview, 306.

Officer Raymond Ludden, who had recently returned from the war front in Northern China. Ringwalt, Freeman, and Acheson all joined in reviewing the draft and shaping its composition. To give the message more impact and demonstrate their solidarity, they jointly signed the message.¹⁵⁴

Although the message was received by the State Department and forwarded to Roosevelt along with a similar memorandum from the Office of Far Eastern Affairs, nothing changed. Joseph Ballantine, the director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs, requested that Acting Secretary Joseph Grew discuss both memorandums with Hurley. Grew then forwarded the embassy's memorandum to Roosevelt and stressed the importance of maintaining a flexible policy in China.¹⁵⁵ After learning of these policy recommendations, Hurley bickered with the Office of Far Eastern Affairs. Ballantine tried unsuccessfully to convince the ambassador to adopt an alternative foreign policy approach. Hurley, however, deemed the matter closed and viewed his staff as a problem to deal with rather than a group of experts, stating that while "army opposition to his policy had been eliminated by getting the die-hards transferred...it seemed to him that he still had to contend with the State Department career officers who were upholding each other..."¹⁵⁶ Furious, Hurley brought the dispute to Roosevelt, whose exact position remains unknown since no one else was present during their meeting. Nevertheless, the outcome became clear as Hurley continued as ambassador. Roosevelt had failed to heed the advice of the State Department and Chongqing embassy.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Ringwalt, interview, 23; and Service, interview, 306-07.

¹⁵⁵ U.S. Department of State, *FRUS*, 1945, 253-54.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 260-61.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 74-79, 93, 260-64, 349. Roosevelt trusted his personal representative and there is little doubt he would listen to Hurley. This was perhaps the most important victory for Hurley's policy, since the President has the final word on policy. Despite this episode, the Far Eastern Department hopelessly continued to push for its own vision of a flexible policy in China. Roosevelt's death in April only further sealed the fate of Hurley's policy, as Truman was severely distracted after being thrust into office at such a critical juncture of World War II. Neither Truman, Secretary of State Stettinius, nor Acting Secretary Grew paid much attention to Hurley or China.

Opposition Silenced, Hurley's Policy Wins

Hurley soon had his revenge on Service, who was suddenly recalled to Washington in April. Service later learned that Hurley had convinced Secretary of War Stimson to relieve him of duty in China.¹⁵⁸ Hurley also dismissed Acheson for his role in sending the underhanded memorandum.¹⁵⁹ No more brazen attempts were made once the February 28 telegram failed to generate a response. Stilwell and Gauss were gone. The Dixie Mission no longer made political reports. Davies, Service, and Acheson had all been transferred, while Ringwalt and Freeman jumped ship as soon as possible. Vincent and his colleagues in the Office of Far Eastern Affairs had also given up. In a memorandum to Grew, Deputy Director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs Edwin Stanton lamented that Hurley's

...antipathy has been confirmed by officers returning from Chungking, who have indicated the serious effect it has had upon their own morale and the morale of the other Foreign Service officers stationed at Chungking...In consequence, it is becoming increasingly difficult to persuade Foreign Service officers who have served under General Hurley to return to China...We have definite reason to believe that General Hurley has ordered that only political reports favorable to the Chinese National Government may be made to the Department...and it is apparent that we can no longer count on receiving factual and objective reports...¹⁶⁰

Hurley replaced the China hands with a Virginian banker named Walter Robertson and a Latin American specialist, neither of whom had any China background.¹⁶¹ He had finally achieved the full compliance and authority he had desired from the beginning. Davies bemoaned, "The voice of the Chungking Embassy was stifled and the murmured warnings of the senior China experts in the Department went unheeded. With the death of Roosevelt, only

Furthermore, Truman had little time or reason to question Roosevelt's previous appointments, making Hurley the default authority on China.

¹⁵⁸ Service, interview, 310.

¹⁵⁹ Kahn, *The China Hands*, 159.

¹⁶⁰ U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1945*, 349-50.

¹⁶¹ Kahn, *The China Hands*, 159-60; and Service, *The Amerasia Papers*, 91.

Hurley could define what the late President's mandate to him had been—and Truman raised no question on the matter.”¹⁶² Hurley proudly admitted he had “cleaned house in the Embassy” and had “received new men who would not override U.S. policy at their own sovereign pleasure.”¹⁶³

Hurley's negotiations officially continued intermittently for another five months, between his return to Chongqing in April and his second visit to Washington in September. While he was in the U.S. the second time, skirmishes broke out between the CCP and GMD. With reports of over fifteen thousand deaths, even the obstinate ambassador could hardly ignore the disastrous effect this had on current negotiations.¹⁶⁴ Frustrated by his entire China experience, he was finally ready to call it quits.

Hurley abruptly resigned on November 26. In his resignation letter to President Truman, he blamed the Foreign Service officers for the mission's failure, explaining,

The professional foreign service men sided with the Chinese Communist armed party and the imperialist bloc of nations whose policy it was to keep China divided against herself. Our professional diplomats continuously advised the Communists that my efforts in preventing the collapse of the National Government did not represent the policy of the United States. These same professionals openly advised the Communist armed party to decline unification of the Chinese Communist Army with the National Army unless the Chinese Communists were given control.¹⁶⁵

Hurley sought vengeance against Service and Davies by testifying in loyalty hearings before a Senate Foreign Relations Committee in December. During these hearings, he also attempted to smear the reputations of Acheson, Ringwalt, Freeman, and Vincent by outing them as disloyal saboteurs. He claimed they were all part of a hidden Communist conspiracy

¹⁶² Davies' Memoir Manuscript, Subject File, John P. Davies Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, 10.

¹⁶³ Romanus and Sunderland Chapters, Chapter 5, 14.

¹⁶⁴ Patrick Hurley to Major W. Commando McAfee, November 19, 1945, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections; and Patrick Hurley to Warren Grimes, October 31, 1945, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections.

¹⁶⁵ U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1945*, 723.

within the State Department.¹⁶⁶ Service and Davies referred to Hurley's testimony as "the Hurley-burley" where Hurley huffed and puffed, charging they had "sabotaged American foreign policy in China, sided with the Chinese Communists, sought to bring about the downfall of Chiang Kai-shek's government, and improperly communicated Government information to Chinese Communist Party officials."¹⁶⁷ As committed as the child who had bludgeoned the store-keeper all those years ago, Hurley demanded retribution from those who had wronged him.

The committee eventually ruled that Hurley's accusations were unfounded. However, Service and Davies would continue to face charges of disloyalty because of their China service. Service endured loyalty hearings nearly every year between 1945 and 1951 and was cleared each time until the Civil Service Loyalty Review Board ruled in December 1951 that there was "reasonable doubt" as to Service's loyalty. Because of the ruling, Secretary of State Dean Acheson fired Service, who was not reinstated until 1957.¹⁶⁸ Davies also faced nine investigations and although he was cleared of all charges by the Loyalty Board, Secretary of States John Foster Dulles fired him nonetheless in 1954.¹⁶⁹ During one hearing in 1950, Service opined, "It is interesting to note that a major portion of the charges which have been leveled against me stem directly or indirectly from these original charges made by General Hurley."¹⁷⁰ The reputation of these men was ruined during the prime of their careers largely

¹⁶⁶ Davies, *Dragon by the Tail*, 420; Joiner, *Honorable Survivor*, 205-06; and U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1945*, 740.

¹⁶⁷ Davies, *Dragon by the Tail*, 420; Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate, 1950, Part 1, Subject File, John Stewart Service and Charles Edward Rhetts Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, 1265 (hereafter cited as Subcommittee Hearings, 1950, Part 1); and John Service to Theodore White, April 25, 1950, Subject File, John Stewart Service and Charles Edward Rhetts Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum.

¹⁶⁸ Department of State for the Press, December 13, 1951, Subject File, John Stewart Service and Charles Edward Rhetts Papers, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum; and Service, *Lost Chance in China*, xviii-xx.

¹⁶⁹ Davies, *China Hand*, 4-5.

¹⁷⁰ Subcommittee Hearings, 1950, Part 1, 1267.

due to Hurley. Hurley also continued to present speeches denouncing these diplomats in the years that followed. An assessment of one such speech by an unknown author suggested, “The speech is unnecessarily defensive...No useful purpose is to be served by the rehashing of your private case against the career men, however righteous your case may be. That’s a dead duck.”¹⁷¹

The diplomatic mission immediately succeeding Hurley’s was the Marshall Mission. Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall became the Chongqing ambassador following Hurley’s resignation. Although Hurley was finally out of power, there remained little hope for a change in foreign policy. The embassy had almost entirely changed personnel. Furthermore, both President Truman and Secretary of State James Byrnes fully supported Hurley’s policy. Earlier in September, Truman had reassured Jiang “that there has been no change, nor is any change contemplated, in this government’s policy toward China.”¹⁷² On December 7, Byrnes made what was arguably the first public statement on American policy in China since the beginning of the war. “The phase of that policy upon which Ambassador Hurley has placed the greatest emphasis is our support of the national government of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek,” he began. Then, cementing what would become official policy for nearly three decades, he announced, “We formally recognize only the national Government.”¹⁷³ Furthermore, the U.S. would only support unification under the Nationalist Government. All recommendations for a true coalition government had been abandoned.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹ Critique of Patrick Hurley’s 1946 Speech before the Maryland Bar Association, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections, 1.

¹⁷² U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1945*, 569.

¹⁷³ United States Department of State, *The Department of State Bulletin, Volume XIII: Numbers 314-340* (Washington: Office of Public Communication, 1945), <http://archive.org/details/departmentofstat131945unit>, 930.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

Hurley revealed that Byrnes had publicly supported his policy and insisted the statement had been “based almost completely on my reports and recommendations to the State Department, and are opposed to the position taken throughout the period by the career men of the State Department.”¹⁷⁵ He alone had triumphantly “recommended all the changes necessary to reverse America’s existing policy in China.”¹⁷⁶ Hurley also stressed that Byrnes had misspoken when he stated that Hurley’s policy had been American policy all along. Rather, when he had arrived in China, Gauss and the “career men” had been pursuing an alternate policy, which was then rectified by Byrnes’s statement and Hurley’s own expulsion of China hands.¹⁷⁷ He boasted, “With the full support of the President of the United States we made a 180 degree change in the direction of American policy in China after August 1944.” Regarding Marshall’s mission, he declared, “There will not be any opportunity for the career men to say that the policy that he is following is not the policy of his government.”¹⁷⁸

Vincent, the new director of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs, drafted a new foreign policy statement for Truman and Marshall. It was surprisingly mild and in some respects contrary to the statements from earlier that year. Vincent no longer advocated a flexible approach. Instead, the memorandum called for the CCP to integrate their military forces into the GMD’s and clearly recognized the GMD as the only legitimate government.¹⁷⁹ It was clear by then which policy the President and Secretary of State would support. Moreover, Vincent needed to tread lightly to avoid investigation, since Hurley had publicly labeled him a Communist.

¹⁷⁵ Hurley, “Statement for *Life* Magazine,” 72; and Hurley to Walter Robertson, January 31, 1946, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections.

¹⁷⁶ Hurley, “America’s Foreign Policy,” 6.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

¹⁷⁸ Hurley to Fred Bartlett, December 17, 1945, Patrick J. Hurley Manuscript Collection, Western History Collections.

¹⁷⁹ U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1945*, 745-48.

This policy statement was edited by Marshall and Byrnes to support Jiang more definitively. The new policy stated that the GMD was “the only legal government in China” and declared that the U.S. would continue to provide the GMD with military supplies, with no mention of aiding any other factions.¹⁸⁰ During a meeting between Marshall, Truman, and Byrnes prior to Marshall’s departure to China, they agreed that if negotiations broke down, the U.S. would support Jiang.¹⁸¹ All advocates of a real alternative policy were either gone or silenced. Hurley’s policy had won.

Doubtless, Hurley benefitted from his primitive masculine identity throughout life. Those values were necessary for growing up in the tumultuous Southwest of Indian Territory. They aided him during rough times in the mines, as well as his rise through the military ranks and business world. These martial virtues, however, ill-prepared him for the nuances of diplomacy, which required a reciprocal, collaborative, and professional approach. Not only did the forces of primitive manhood leave Hurley unequipped to conduct negotiations effectively, they also crippled his relationship with the China hands, who could have steered him clear of the disastrous policy he was to implement. His consistent inability to compromise, fixation on securing complete dominance of authority, and instinctive tendency to respond to dissent with violence and retribution originated from lessons about proper gender roles he had learned from some of the roughest men frontier life offered. For an impressionable child conditioned in a merciless land of outlaws and ruffians, success could only be guaranteed through assured self-reliance and relentless tenacity.

¹⁸⁰ U.S. Department of State, *FRUS, 1945*, 770-72.

¹⁸¹ Larry I. Bland, ed., *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, vol. 5 (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2003), 384-86, 393-94.

This world which taught Hurley how to become a man vastly differed from the world the Foreign Service officers knew, where traditional Victorian values of self-restraint and integrity dominated both their educational and professional careers. To Hurley, these men could hardly be called men at all. They cowardly mocked him behind his back. They avoided direct confrontation. They even cried. In essence, these weak men lacked the proper courage and discipline that characterized true masculinity. Differences in class drove the wedge even further between the unruly general and refined diplomats, creating what became an unbridgeable gap. In Hurley's mind, "China expert" became indistinguishable from the snobbish elitism which permeated the State Department. These men had not fought tooth and nail to put food on the table or receive a proper education like Hurley had. So of course, his silver spoon colleagues failed to comprehend and appreciate his professional experience and accomplishments.

This schism between Hurley and his staff resulted in the official adoption of the ambassador's haphazard policy, as the China hands were replaced with submissive outsiders. In the ring of diplomacy, Hurley had pulled no punches. As the personification of proper masculinity, only he could be the last man standing. But victory rang hollow as he struck the final blow. To his utter dismay, the crowd did not cheer.

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