British Military Intelligence on China, and the Boxer Rising: *c*. 1880-1930

Remarkable Series of Secret Gazetteers of the Provinces of China, Confidential Print and Intelligence Reports

Editor: A.J. Farrington, Former Deputy Director Oriental & India Office Collections (OIOC, now part of the Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections), British Library, London

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British Military Intelligence on China, and the Boxer Rising: *c*. 1880-1930

Introduction

British India's – and by extension the India Office in London's – interest in and expertise on its great neighbour China was not merely the result of the process of British territorial expansion in South Asia which eventually produced a common border extending from Sinkiang to Yunnan. It had its precusor in the commercial activities of the English East India Company.

The prize of trade to China was only achieved slowly. Beginning with a trading post on Ming-supporting Taiwan in 1672, the EIC was able to make its peace with the new Q'ing rulers after the island was conquered, and in the 1680s and 1690s was permitted to make regular voyages to Amoy, Chusan and Canton.

In the early 1700s the Q'ing limited the European trading companies to Canton, where an elaborate system of control and supervision through officially-appointed 'Hong' merchants was established. The EIC, blessed with a freer commercial structure than its rivals, plus existing contacts into the Chinese merchant community, emerged as the main European player in trade to China. The eighteenth century saw the rise of tea as the new 'wonder commodity' which financed the EIC's rise to pan-Asian dominance. The early nineteenth century saw the vicious illegal traffic in opium, largely originating in British India, which brought so much misery to China.

The EIC ceased to be a trading organisation in 1834 and was replaced by dozens of separate British companies. But the Hong trading system still applied at Canton, a clear recipe for trouble. The First China War (Opium War) of 1840-42 was fought because of Chinese action against the British opium network at Canton, but its underlying purpose was to force China to abandon the 'Canton system' and open up to foreign trade. British India provided the manpower for the war, drawn from the EIC's Bengal and Madras Armies and its Bombay Marine. Hong Kong was ceded to the British Crown and five ports were declared open – Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai.

The Second China War of 1857-60, in which the British were allied with the French, was similarly powered from British India. The British brought to North China 41 warships, 143 transports and 10,500 troops. The allies entered Peking, the Summer Palace was destroyed as a 'reprisal' for breaking a flag of truce, and the Q'ing emperor was forced to a treaty settlement which had the effect of opening the whole of China to Western interests.

The present collection covers the period up to and beyond the third British military expedition against China in 1900, when British India again played the leading rôle. It is largely a reflection of the strategic planning process within British India (and to a lesser extent in London) for future operations.

Military Intelligence

A small intelligence branch was formed within the Quarter Master General's Department at Army Headquarters, India, in 1878. Post-1860 diplomatic representation in China meant that the branch could attach small numbers of officers to the British Embassy in Peking as language students – two were selected annually to undertake a two year course of study and residence in China, followed by a fierce oral and written examination. Its components included:

> "The examiner reads English sentences aloud and the candidate gives them orally in Chinese.
> Passages from the Chinese press are read aloud by a Chinese and the candidate gives them orally in English.
> Conversation on military and general subjects with a Chinese.
> English sentences on military subjects are laid before the candidate, who translates them into Chinese, writing them down in the Chinese character. Dictionary not allowed.
> Written translation of official documents and passages from Chinese military textbooks, without the aid of a dictionary."

Successful students went on to form a cadre of language ability and local knowledge back at Army Headquarters or at various postings in China – for instance, British consulates in the western provinces bordering Tibet and Burma were staffed from British India.

The wide-ranging reforms of the Army in India Committee of 1912-13 established an Intelligence Section (M.O.3) within the Military Operations Directorate of the General Staff. China was covered by one of four sub-sections and was manned by two staff officers with shared clerical support.

The Quarter Master General's Branch and the General Staff, India, were responsible for a stream of gazetteers, route books, military reports and similar compilations. Their purpose, of course, was not to facilitate academic research but to provide essential information for any future military operations against China. But based as they are on first-hand experience, they now have great historical value as a source for conditions in late Q'ing China.

All the works were classified Secret, Confidential or For Official Use Only, and were subject to strict rules of custody. It was also ordered that when a new edition of a particular work appeared all previous editions had to be destroyed. As a result these works survive in very few locations. The collection in the India Office Records at the British Library, now made available by IDC Publishers, is unique in its breadth and accessibility.

Provenance and historical background

The various secret and confidential works are located in two internal 'reference libraries' which accumulated within the Military Department (L/MIL/17) and the Political & Secret Department (L/P&S/20) at the India Office in London. Items were received upon publication and were kept/disposed of according to the custody rules laid down by the originator.

Papers relating to the 1900 Expedition were received from India by the Military Department registry and were given reference numbers within its annual file sequences. They were eventually brought together as a series of files designated Military Collection 402, from which a selection of intelligence-slanted material has now been made.

All the India Office departments were subsumed within the Commonwealth Relations Office (subsequently the Foreign & Commonwealth Office) after Independence in 1947. In 1982 the Foreign & Commonwealth Office transferred the administration of the India Office Library & Records to the British Library, where it now forms one part of the Library's Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections (specifically, the former Oriental & India Office Collections (OIOC)).

Organisation of the print

For the present publication the material has been arranged in two groups:

BIC – 1	Gazetteers, reports and routes 1884-1930
BIC – 2	China Expedition 1900-1903

Group BIC-1 begins with 'general' works and is then arranged roughly alphabetically and chronologically by place-name. The provinces etc of Q'ing China which are covered are indicated on the map below.

Group BIC-2 contains both publications and Government of India papers on intelligence aspects of the international intervention against the Boxers, including a long run of printed correspondence.

Within these groups **the following information is provided for each item**:

- fiche number(s)
- title, author/issuing body, publication details, pagination etc
- OIOC reference number
- original India Office reference (for BIC-2)

A.J.Farrington
Former Deputy Director Oriental & India Office Collections (OIOC, now part of the Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections), The British Library

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE ON CHINA, BIC – 1

GAZETTEERS, REPORTS & ROUTES 1884 – 1930

Fiche 1-21
A handbook of China proper.
London: Intelligence Division, Naval Staff, Admiralty, 1917-1919.
3 vols 19cm Confidential
Vol.I General.
507p map (1918)
Vol.II Kiangsu.
640p 17 illus 18 plans (Jun 1917)
Vol.III Kwangtung.
768p 37 illus 22 plans 8 maps (1919)
L/MIL/17/20/1-3

Fiche 22
Observations on N.E. China as a recruiting-ground for transport and on the Chinese as foreign levies, transport attendants, hospital bearers and labourers.
Lt F.E.Younghusband & Lt-Col Mark Sever Bell
Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department in India, July 1886
Simla: Government Central Branch Press, 1886
8p 24cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/271

Fiche 22
Notes on the Chinese army and the Shanghai arsenal.
By Lieutenant F.E.Younghusband, 1st King's Dragoon Guards
Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department in India
Simla: Government Central Branch Press, 1887
9p 24cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/287

Fiche 22
Notes on the coast defence of China, the construction of Chinese railways &c. &c.
Drawn up by Lieutenant F.E.Younghusband, King's Dragoon Guards
Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department in India
Simla: Government Central Branch Press, 1887
9p 24cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/269

Fiche 22-24
Military report on the manufacture and importation of arms and munitions of war in the Chinese Empire.
Compiled in the Intelligence Branch, North China Command, September 1904
Printed by Field Printing Section, 1st Sappers and Miners [Tientsin, Dec 1904]. Provisional edition
[87]p 3 photographs 13 plans map 24cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/185

Fiche 24
Communal government in China.
Memorandum prepared by H.B.M. Consular Agent at Pagoda in collaboration with the Naval Intelligence Officer on the China Station
London: Intelligence Department, Admiralty, November 1909
[2],56p For the information of officers of H.M.Service only
L/P&S/20/106

Fiche 24-28
Military report on the province of Che-kiang, China.
By Captain F.Rennick, 40th Punjab Infantry
Compiled for the Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1903
viii,161p 25cm Confidential
<u>and</u>
Military report … Chapter 4 – Defences.
iii,21p 6 sketches map 25cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/180

Fiche 28-52

Fiche 28-41
China: being a military report on the north-eastern portions of the provinces of Chih-li and Shan-tung; Nanking and its approaches; Canton and its approaches &c. &c., together with an account of the Chinese civil, naval and military administrations &c. &c., and a narrative of the wars between Great Britain and China.
Prepared in the Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department in India

Fiche 41-55
By Major Mark S.Bell, V.C., Royal Engineers, Assistant Quarter Master General
Vol.I Simla: Government Central Branch Press, 1884
xi,425p illus map on 5 sheets 25cm Confidential
Vol.II Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India, 1884
viii,440p illus 3 plates (nos.9,17 & 25) 25cm Secret
Vol.III Simla: Government Central Branch Press, 1884
32 plates (nos.1-8,10-16,18-24,24A-C & 26-33) 25cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/D28/1-3

Fiche 41-42
Short military report on the province of Chi-li.
Compiled in the Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department, Simla
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1900
i,19p 5 maps 24cm Confidential
<u>and</u>
Supplement: I – A short note on the operations of the Allied Forces in Chi-li in 1860.
II – The operations of the British cavalry in Chi-li during August and September 1860.
8p map 24cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/196

Fiche 42-43
Report on country round Peking, etc.
By Captain N.W.H.Du Boulay, Royal Artillery, and Lieutenant M.Ray, The Hong-Kong Regiment
Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1894
i,19p 26 maps & sketches 33cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/18

Fiche 43-44
Short military report on the defences of Canton river and city, together with a note on the best methods of approach.
Compiled in the Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department, Simla
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1900
i,34p 3 maps 24cm Secret
L/P&S/20/111

Fiche 44-47
Military report on the province of Fu-kien, China.
By Captain E.H.Cole, 11th Bengal Lancers
Issued by the Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department
Simla: Printed at the Government Monotype Office, 1905
iii,168p map plan 24cm Confidential
<u>with</u>
Military report … Chapter IV. Defences.
21p illus Secret
<u>and</u>
Chapter IV. Defences. Sketches.
Nos 1-12 & 14-19 Secret
L/P&S/20/216

Fiche 47-49
Military report on Hong Kong.
General Staff, War Office, 1930
London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1930
Vol.I General information.
82p 2 maps 19cm For official use only
Vol.II Routes.
51p map 19cm For official use only
L/MIL/17/20/3/1-2

Fiche 49-52
A short report on the province of Hun-Nan.
By Captain A.W.S.Wingate, 14th Bengal Lancers
Compiled in the Intelligence Branch of the Quarter-Master-General's Department, Simla
Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India, 1900
iv,125p 7 photographs 7 maps & plans 25cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/179

Fiche 52-55
Military report on the province of Kiang-Si, China.
[Major F.Rennick, 40th Pathans]
Brought out by the Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department in India
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1905
ii,150p 24cm Confidential
and
Military report … Chapter IV. Fortresses.
Simla: 1904
16p 3 sketches 24cm Secret
L/P&S/20/151

Fiche 55-59
Military report on the province of Kiang-Su, China.
By Captain F.Tweddell, 28th Punjab Infantry
Published by Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department in India
Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India, 1902
ii,124p 24cm Confidential
and
Military report on Kiang-Su province. Maps. Nos 1-6.
10 sheets in slipcase
L/P&S/20/158
L/P&S/20/159

Fiche 59-60
Strategic and tactical notes on the province of Chiang-Su (Northern and Southern).
General Staff, War Office, 1910
London: Feb 1910
ii,63p plate 6 maps 19cm Secret
L/MIL/17/20/2

Fiche 60
Kiaochow and Weihaiwei.
Intelligence Department, Naval Staff, Admiralty
London: [Hodder & Stoughton], Jun 1919
15p 22cm For official use only
L/MIL/17/20/5

Fiche 60-61
Military report and general information concerning the dependency of Wei-Hai-Wei.
Compiled in the Intelligence Division, War Office, 1904, by Major F.C.Turner, Northumberland Fusiliers
London: [Eyre & Spottiswoode], Apr 1904
i,38p map 24cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/177-4

Fiche 61-62
Military report on the Chinese provinces of Kuang-tung and Kuang-si.
By Captain M.R.E.Ray, 77th (D.C.O.) Rajputs
Intelligence Branch, Office of the Quarter Master General in India
Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India, 1900
ii,73,3p map 25cm Secret
L/P&S/20/D113

Fiche 62-63
A short report on the province of Kuei-Chou.
Compiled in the Intelligence Branch of the Quarter Master General's Department, Simla, by Captain A.W.S.Wingate, 14th Bengal Lancers
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1900
iii,58p 4 maps 24cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/165

Fiche 63-64
Short military report on Shanghai.
By Lieutenant-Colonel G.F.Browne, Military Attaché at Peking, with additions up to 1899
Prepared in the Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department, Simla
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1900
i,12p 2 maps 25cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/177-2

Fiche 64
Notes on Shanghai.
London: War Office, Sep 1928
37p 2 maps 25cm For official use only
L/MIL/17/20/6

Fiche 64-92

Fiche 64-66
Military report on the province of Shan-Hsi
Compiled by Major A.W.S.Wingate, 14th Bengal Lancers, D.A.Q.M.G. for Intelligence, China Field Force
Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department
Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India, 1903
vi,84p 6 maps 24cm Confidential
with
Account of Pu-Chou-Fu.
Captain C.G.W.Hunter, R.E., 1901
Simla: May 1903
2p
L/P&S/20/154

Fiche 66-70
Military report on the provinces of Shansi and Kensu (Shen-Kan).
Captain W.L.Campbell, R.G.A.
Compiled in the Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department, Simla
Simla: Printed at the Government Monotype Press, 1905
v,297p 9 plans & sketches 25cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/156

Fiche 70-73
Military report on Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan), 1929.
General Staff, India
Calcutta: Government of India Press, 1929
iv,308p 6 maps & plans 18cm Confidential
with
Erratum, Oct 1930. 2p
L/P&S/20/A118/2

Fiche 73-77
Routes in Sinkiang.
General Staff, India, 1926
Simla: Government of India Press, 1926
2,xiv,278,74p map 18cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/A118/1

Fiche 77-78

Corrections to routes in Sinkiang. First series, 1927.
General Staff, India
Simla: Government of India Press, 1927
19p 18cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/A118/3

Fiche 78-79

Corrections to routes in Sinkiang. Second series, 1928.
General Staff, India
Simla: Government of India Press, 1929
44p 18cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/A118/4

Fiche 79-88

Military report on the province of Ssü-Ch'uan, China.
Compiled by Lieutenant-Colonel C.C.Manifold, I.M.S., and Captain C.G.W.Hunter, R.E., in the Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department in India
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1903
ii,414p 9 maps 24cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/157

Fiche 88-90

Short military report on the Yang-Tze, its defences, treaty ports, and adjacent provinces.
Compiled in the Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department in India
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1900
iii,69p 12 maps & plans 24cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/177-1

Fiche 90-92

Hand-book of Yunnan.
Compiled under the orders of the Quartermaster-General in India, in the Intelligence Branch
By Captain H.Bower, D.A.Q.M.G., I.B., and Captain F.C.Colomb, Staff Captain, I.B.
Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India, 1895
[3],63,[1],133p map 33cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/96

Fiche 92-94

Gazetteer of the province of Yun-nan.
General Staff, India, 1913
Simla: Printed at the Government Monotype Press, 1913
[1],173p 21 maps & sketches 18cm Confidential
L/MIL/17/20/9

Fiche 94-96

Military report on western Yünnan, 1895.
By Captain H.R.Davies, Oxfordshire L.I., Staff Captain, Intelligence Branch
Rangoon: Printed by the Superintendent, Government Printing, Burma, October 1895
[146]p 12 maps & plans 33cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/93

Fiche 96-101

Military report on Yün-nan. Parts I [report] & II [gazetteer].
Compiled in the Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department, Simla, by Captain L.D.Fraser, R.G.A., F.R.G.S.
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1902
v,90,x,259p 31 maps & plans 25cm Confidential
with
Corrections, by Captain E.R.B.Murray, 29th Burma Infantry.
Simla, 1902
12p
and
Military report on Yunnan. Revised Chapter IX.
Simla, 1909
12p
L/P&S/20/178

Fiche 101-110

Military report on Yün-nan. Part III. Route book.
Compiled in the Intelligence Branch, Quarter-Master-General's Department, Simla. By Captain L.D.Fraser, R.G.A., F.R.G.S.
Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India, 1901
xii,378,x p map 25cm Confidential
with
Supplement No.1. [n.d.] 7p
Supplement No.2, March 1905. i,18p map
L/P&S/20/3

Fiche 110-111

Military report on the province of Yün-nan.
General Staff, India
Simla: Printed at the Government Monotype Press, 1913
ii,100p illus map 18cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/D193

Fiche 94-126

Fiche 111-115

Report on the part of Yünnan between the Bhamo frontier and the Salween.
By Captain H.R.Davies, Oxfordshire Light Infantry, Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department
Rangoon: Printed by the Superintendent, Government Printing, Burma, September 1894
[160]p 12 maps & plans 33cm Confidential
with
List of corrections and additions … 1895.
3p
L/P&S/20/94

Fiche 115-123

Routes in Yün-nan.
General Staff, India
Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, India, 1919
viii,781p map 18cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/D134/1

Fiche 123

Additions to routes in Yün-nan, 1919. 1st series, 1920.
General Staff, India
Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, India, 1920
51p 18cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/D134/2

Fiche 123-125

Corrections and additions to routes in Yün-nan, 1919. Second series, 1925.
General Staff, India
Delhi: Government of India Press, 1925
ii,64p 18cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/D134/3

Fiche 125-126

A short account of a journey in Yün-nan. From 8th February to 8th April 1899.
By Captain A.W.S.Wingate, 14th Bengal Lancers. Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1900
iii,29p 17 photographs 2 maps 24cm Confidential
L/P&S/20/65

Fiche 126-127

Field notes on Yün-nan.
General Staff, India, 1913
Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, India, 1914
viii,117p 18 illus map 14cm For official use only
L/P&S/20/D194

Fiche 128-168 (1-41)

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE ON CHINA, BIC – 2

CHINA EXPEDITION 1900 – 1903

Fiche 128-134 (1-7)

Official account of the military operations in China, 1900-1901.
Compiled by Major E.W.M.Norie, Middlesex Regiment
Intelligence Department, War Office, Sep 1903
London: [Eyre & Spottiswoode], 1903
viii,521p 15 maps & plans 24cm Confidential
L/MIL/17/20/12

Fiche 134 (7)

Amalgamated scheme for the despatch of an expeditionary force to China.
Adjutant General's Department, Jun 1901
Simla: Government Central Press, Jul 1901
41p 33cm Confidential
L/MIL/17/20/13

Fiche 134-135 (7-8)

Report on the engineer operations of the British Contingent, China Field Force. July to October 1900
<u>and</u>
1900-1901.
Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, India, 1901
24p 10 plans
46p 10 plans 33cm Confidential
L/MIL/7/16774 Mil Coll 402 File 108

Fiche 135-136 (8-9)

Miscellaneous reports regarding the China Expeditionary Force (Foreign contingents).
[Colonel J.M.Grierson, R.A., & Captain B.T.Pell]
Intelligence Branch, Quarter Master General's Department
Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1901
69p 33cm Confidential
L/MIL/17/20/14

Fiche 136 (9)

Note on the organization of an Indian Railways Corps.
By Lieut.-Col. C.A.R.Browne, R.E., Director of Railways, China Force
Tientsin: Printed at the "China Times" Press, 1902
6p 33cm
L/MIL/17/2015

Fiche 136-137 (9-10)

China Expedition 1900: memoranda by War Office Intelligence Division, Jul-Aug 1900
ff.32 typescript Secret
<u>includes</u>
'Operations against Peking,' 26 Jul
'Memorandum on course affairs may take in Pekin,' 10 Aug
Position summaries, 14 & 15 Aug
L/MIL/7/16713 Mil Coll 402 File 48

Fiche 137-168 (10-41)

China Expedition 1900. Printed correspondence.
Mobilisation tables, Jun-Aug 1900
20 tabs
Section A [Personnel]
Nos 1-337, Jun 1900-Apr 1902
[62]p
Section B. Field Operations
Nos 1-590 & 611-718, Jun 1900-Dec 1902
[335]p
Section B. Field Operations (Confidential), Jun 1900-Dec 1902
[70]p
Section C [Transport]
Nos 1-178, Jun 1900-Jun 1902
[70]p
Section D [Ordnance-Commissariat]
Nos 1-1471, Jun 1900-Sep 1902
[684]p
Section F. Pay & Allowances
Nos 1-299, Jun 1900-Feb 1902
[177]p
Section F (ii). Accounts
Nos 1-324, Jun 1900-Aug 1902
[152]p

Fiche 168-185 (41-58)
Section M. Marine
Nos 1-622, Jun 1900-Jul 1902
[243]p
Section M-W. Military Works
Nos 1-191, Jun 1900-Sep 1902
[111]p 21 plans &c
Telegrams
40 issues, 12 Jun 1900-24 Mar 1903
with separate monthly indexes Jun 1900-May 1902
[450]p
L/MIL/7/16707 Mil Coll 402 File 42

Fiche 168 (41)

China Expedition 1900. Divisional Staff diary, forwarded by Lt-Gen Alfred Gaselee, commanding the force.
4 parts, covering 3 Jul-23 Aug 1900
ff.35 typescript Secret
L/MIL//7/16740 Mil Coll 402 File 74

Fiche 168-185 (41-58)

China Expedition 1900. Weekly/periodic intelligence diaries, compiled in the Intelligence Branch, China Field Force HQ, Tientsin, and forwarded direct to the India Office by Maj-Gen O'Moore Creagh, commanding the British Contingent.
65 issues, with related correspondence, covering 19 Aug 1901-16 Feb 1903
ff.815 typescript Secret
L/MIL//7/16772 Mil Coll 402 File 106

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- Numbers 1 through 185 run through both series, BIC-1 and BIC 2;
- In addition, each set has an individual numbering system

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  communal government 24
  Kiaochow and Weihaiwei 60
arms manufacture & imports 21-24
army 22

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