

# Taiping Rebellion JCC: Taiping Heavenly Kingdom Cabinet

Chair: Will Madigan

Vice Chair: Suzy Avakian

Backroom Staff: Liam Nelson



Hello Delegates

I am Will Madigan, co-chair of LYMUN's JCC Taiping Rebellion and Secretary General of LTMUN. Outside of MUN, I am heavily involved in other clubs and activities at my school. I am the Editor-in-chief of Tabulae, our school's yearbook production class and club. I am also a leader and theater member of LT's Operation Snowball, a club that runs a biannual retreat meant to promote mental health, openness, and general community. Finally, I also participate in my school's Math Team and Scholastic Bowl teams. Besides school activities, I recently became an Eagle Scout; I completed my Eagle Scout project of cleaning and organizing a local animal shelter. I also serve as president of my church youth group.

Chairing this committee is truly a dream come true, as I love highlighting obscure or lesser-known (but still important) pieces of history. For the JCC, one side will be comprised of the Taiping government and other associated rebel groups and the other will be the Imperial government and allies. Please feel free to collaborate with the other side through crisis notes, however, try to remain in the realm of believability with your crisis arcs. When researching and discussing these topics, I understand that pieces of information on individual characters may be limited, so feel free to fill in what you think would best fit your character's motives and goals. Overall, please have fun, and it's fine to take some creative liberty. I hope that all of you learn something new and gain a better understanding of the period. Friendly reminder that the submission of a position paper is required for award eligibility. Position papers can be emailed by 11:59 pm on February 28 or handed in at the beginning of the committee printed out. If you have any questions about the committee or conference, do not hesitate to reach out to me, my email is [mad512136@d204.lths.net](mailto:mad512136@d204.lths.net).

Sincerely  
Your Chair, Will Madigan

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# Position List

## Taiping Heavenly Kingdom Cabinet

1. Hong Xiuquan (Heavenly King)
2. Hong Xuanijao
3. Yang Xiuqing (East King)
4. Feng Yunshan (South King)
5. Xiao Chaogui (West King)
6. Wei Changhui (North King)
7. Shi Dakai (Wing/Yi King)
8. Li Xiucheng (Loyal King)
9. Lai Wenguang (King of Zun)
10. Qin Rigang (King of Yen)
11. Hong Rengan (Shield King)
12. Chen Yucheng (Ying Prince)
13. Li Shixian (King of Shi)
14. Zhang Lexing (Lord of the Alliance/Nian Rebels)
15. Su Sanniang (Nian Rebels)
16. Qiu Ersao (Red Turban Rebels)
17. Chen Qingzhen (Small Swords Society)

## Qing Dynasty Cabinet

1. Emperor Wezong of Qing
2. Empress Dowager Cixi
3. Empress Dowager Ci'an
4. Zeng Guofan
5. Sengge Rinchen
6. Guanwen
7. Li Hongzhang
8. Luo Bingzhang
9. Jirhangga
10. Zuo Zongtang
11. Zhang Guoliang
12. He Chun
13. Xiang Rong
14. Frederick Townsend Ward (United States of America)
15. Auguste Protet (France)
16. Napoleon III (France)
17. Charles George Gordon (United Kingdom)

# Crisis Information/Background

Hello, delegates!

My name is Liam Nelson, and I will be running backroom and responding to your crisis notes throughout committee. I've been a part of LTMUN for three years, and currently serve as director of crisis committees. Outside of Model UN, I captain the LT scholastic bowl team, play golf and soccer, and am involved in LT Theatre as both an actor and pit musician. As an experienced crisis delegate, I know that crisis, and JCCs in particular, have little standardization, often leaving delegates confused about exactly what crisis note/crisis update procedure will look like. Thus, I wanted to take this opportunity to give an outline of what backroom will look like in our committee.

## **Crisis Notes**

Crisis notes are an integral part of this committee, and the quality and quantity of your crisis notes will certainly factor into awards decisions. Here are some guidelines for crisis notes that all delegates should follow in order to keep committee flowing smoothly :

- **THIS COMMITTEE WILL BE TECH!** Although other committees will not be using email for crisis communications, this one will be. All crisis notes should be sent in an email chain with the subject line reading "Character's Name - Committee" to the email provided at the start of committee (me).
- Please, please, please do not send another crisis note until you receive a response for your most recent one! Any delegate who sends a lot of crisis notes at once will have to wait a very long time for responses.

- As for content, I will be looking for detailed notes which slowly build up to a large action, rather than notes that attempt to perform important actions without setting them up first.
- Although big events like assassinations or revolutions are possible later in the day, I want to ask each delegate to please consider feasibility when deciding what to include in their crisis notes.

### **Crisis Updates**

- Crisis updates will be an integral part of this committee, helping to move along debate and inform delegates of the changing situation in China.
- Delegates with crisis arcs which follow the guidelines above can expect to see their crisis notes affect committee through crisis updates.

If anyone has any questions regarding crisis and what I'm looking for, you can email me at [liam.nelsoniv@gmail.com](mailto:liam.nelsoniv@gmail.com). Best of luck preparing, and I can't wait to see what y'all come up with!

Sincerely,

Liam Nelson





the superior British forces won, eventually capturing Nanjing. In the subsequent Treaty of Nanjing, China ceded Hong Kong, several ports (including Shanghai), and other privileges to the British. This conflict began the “Century of Humiliation” for China,

characterized by foreign intervention, subjugation, and struggle for the Qing government.

Adding to the burden caused by the First Opium War, China also experienced natural disasters, famine, and other examples of foreign intervention. This further weakened the Qing government and its hold on the regional authorities and governments. Resulting from this was an increase in banditry and small-scale warfare and the increased prevalence and dominance of local clans in Southern China. Adding to this, China experienced several economic crises, as the population boomed (doubling between 1766 and 1833) and the amount of land cultivated remained stagnant. Reacting to this and the numerous problems it faced, the Qing government opted to raise taxes, leading to rents rising and many other issues.

Beyond external issues, the Qing government also faced many internal problems as well. Corruption ran rampant within the government, specifically with the filling of government positions. Nepotism was widely followed, with many unqualified individuals acquiring important positions in national and local government due to familial connections. Additionally, patronage was also heavily utilized, with higher government officials appointing those loyal to those to lower positions. This often led to many illicit activities being unregulated, as the government

took a blind eye to the crimes of their supporters. Finally, in combination with embezzlement and bribery, to support the dire economic state many government positions were auctioned off to cover the growing expenses. The result of all these actions was an ineffectual government and widespread distrust by the general public.

# Establishment of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom

The roots of the rebellion, however, are traced to Hong Xiuquan. In 1837, after failing to become a government official for a third time, he experienced a multi-day delirium which included seeing an old man with a golden beard who gave Hong a sword to eradicate the evil demons and bad spirits that overran the world and a younger, middle-aged man who helped me carry out this objective. Still, it was not until 1843 that Hong re-examined this vision. After

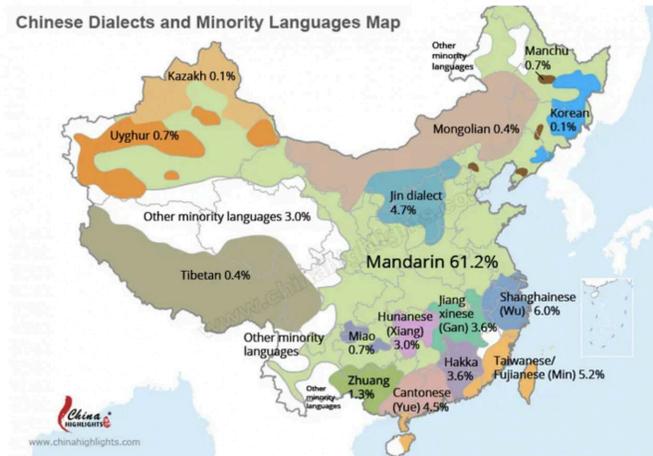


reading a book on the basics of Christianity, Hong believed that during this vision he had been transported to Heaven and the old man had been God with the younger man being Jesus Christ. This realization prompted his conversion to Christianity.

Taking on the objective of spreading Christianity and his vision, he forwarded his ideas to his friends and family. Among these friends was Feng Yunshan, who accompanied him on his mission trip to the province of Guangxi. Following this trip, Feng established the God Worshippers' Society (Baishangdi Hui), an organization devoted to the teaching of Hong Xiquan.

Hong continued his journey and studied Christianity further in 1847 in Guangzhou. Here, Hong solidified many of the tenets of his teaching. He emphasized the wrathful God of the Old Testament, demanding worship and obedience, ignoring the New Testament's teaching of kindness and forgiveness. He also vilified the practices of gambling, smoking, and other "evil activities." He also labeled much of the culture present in China as evil or demonic in origin. Beyond this, he preached equality between men and women and also ideas of equal distribution of land. Important to note, Hong was ethnically Hakka, a southern population group, as opposed to Manchu, which was a northern ethnic minority that ruled the Qing government.

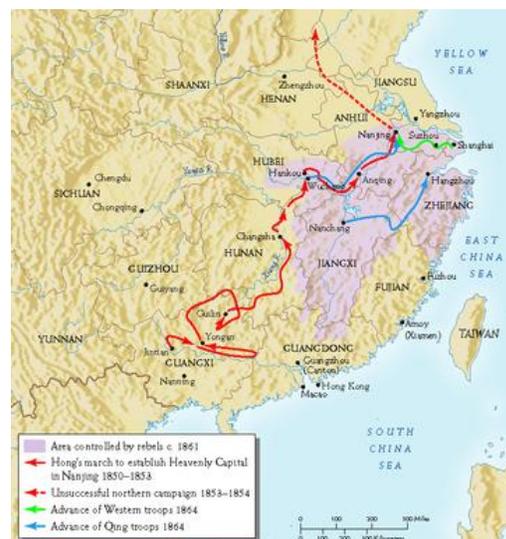
Following this experience, he rejoined Feng and the God Worshippers, accepting the role of leading the new group. Due to the problems the Qing government was facing, many of those who lived in the Chinese countryside experienced horrible conditions, leading to



anti-Qing sentiment. Hoping to utilize this sentiment, Hong and Feng plotted to rebel against the government, beginning in July of 1850. The rebellion gradually grew throughout the remainder of the year and on Jan. 1st, 1851, Hong proclaimed a new dynasty—the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (Taiping Tianguo). Hong also assumed the role and title of Heavenly King (Tianwang).

# The Taiping Rebellion

Following Hong's establishment of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom and his assumption of the title of Heavenly King, the Taipings continued their advances, pressing north into the Yangtze River valley. During this campaign, many of the towns they entered joined them willingly, growing their ranks from a couple thousand to more than a million. This growth was primarily due to the weakness of the Qing government, especially in the south, the attractability of Hong's movement to the hungry peasants due to its policy of communal property sharing, and a large amount of propaganda.

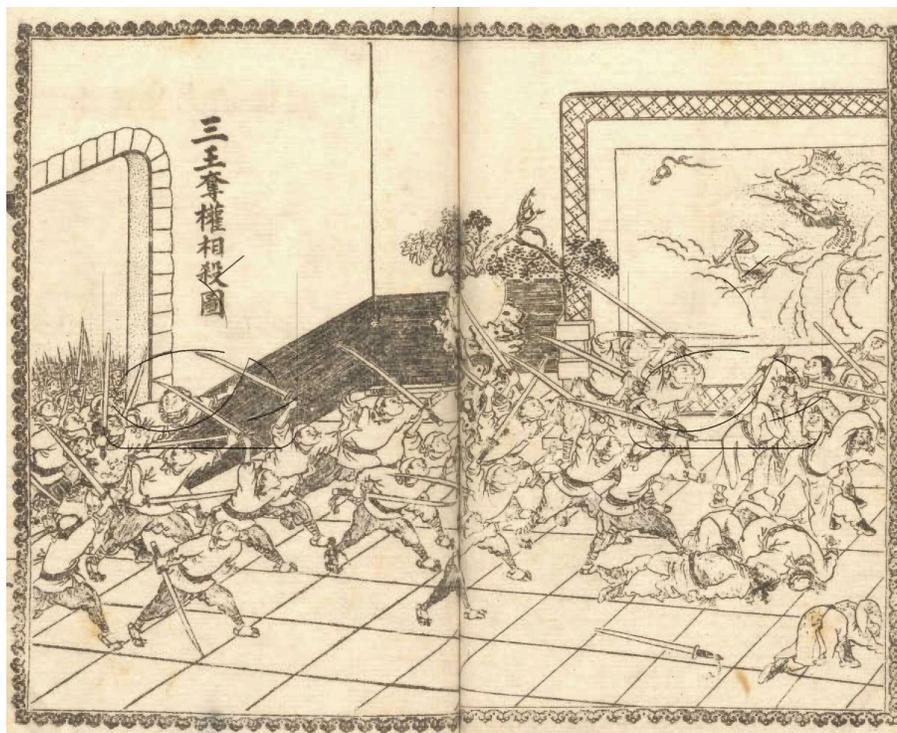


Under the new government, Hong established a hierarchy of multiple kings, each corresponding to a cardinal direction: East King (Yang Xiuqing), South King (Feng Yunshan), West King (Xiao Chaogui), and North King (Wei Changhui). Later, other kings were added such as the Wing/Yi King (Shi Dakai) as well as princes and other royalty titles. These kings served as the primary hierarchy of the new Taiping government, however, they often fought leading to great instability.

Following many smaller movements, the Taiping's advances continued, eventually taking the city of Nanjing on March 10, 1853. The city was renamed to Tianjingg, meaning Heavenly Capital, with this becoming the base of operation for the Taiping Government. Yet, they continued further northward, with Hong Xiquan and Yang Xiuqing now aiming to capture the capital city of Beijing. This expedition failed, but the Taipings won greatly in other places, solidifying the movement.

## Tianjingg Incident, Shanghai, and Defeat

In 1856, the rebel government was shocked by the Tianjingg Incident, leading to the death of multiple high-level officials. Specifically, Yang Xiquing (East King) became the defacto military advisor to Hong Xiquan and claimed that like Hong, he too could communicate with God. He abused this supposed power as evidenced by his demotion of Shi Dakai from Wing/Yi King and ordered flogging of him. This culminated with his request for the title “Lord of Ten Thousand Years” which would place him above Hong Xiquan, Hong subsequently labeled this as treason and had Wei Changhui (North King) and Qin Ragang (King of Yen) murder Yang’s family and followers. Following this bloodshed, Shi Dakai arrived and blamed Wei for the events that transpired. This led to Wei calling Shi a traitor, who then fled as Wei and Qin killed Shi’s



family as well. Finally, to end the instability and infighting, Hong Xiquan had Wei and Qi both executed for their plot to kill Shi. In the end, Yang, Wei, and Qin were killed and Hong’s trust in his government officials was shaken, leading to him only relying on his family for military strategy.

Following Tianjing, the Taiping government tried to continue to expand, eventually attempting to take Shanghai. In this assault, the commanders of the Taiping military allowed foreigners into the city believing them not to be a threat, instead hoping to trade. However, the foreigners established militias such as the “Ever-Victorious Army” led by Frederick Townsend Ward and Charles George Gordon which kicked the Taiping out of Shanghai. This was a watershed moment in the conflict, as the Taiping were on the defensive for the rest of the war following Shanghai. Furthermore, finally alienated by Hong’s radical anti-Confucius principles, many left the cause, instead joining Zeng Guofan.

In 1862, Zeng surrounded Nanjing, the Taiping capital, and began a siege. After two years, Hong Xiquan committed suicide, leaving control to his 15-year-old son in charge. A month later Nanjing fell and the official rebellion was over. However, sporadic resistance to the imperial government continued until 1868.

## Start/Flow of Committee

Committee is set to start on January 11th, 1851 - the day Hong Xiquan formally declared himself Heavenly King. The Qing government still remains weak, with several rebellions across China chief among them the Taiping and Nian Rebellions. The battleground is set in the province of Guangxi. The God-Worshipping Society has converted ~10,000-30,000 and has quickly divided them into military formations with marshalls, divisional marshalls, brigade marshalls, infantry chiefs, majors, company leaders, and soldiers. In opposition, the Qing imperial army in Guangxi remains divided with around 30,000 troops, mainly occupied with the Tiandihui's rebellion in the region, allowing the rebels relative freedom to grow their ranks and plan.



To start the war, Qing troops moved to surround one of Hong Xiuquan's residences and eradicate the rebels within. However, reinforcements arrived and alleviated those inside. Soon after, the Qing again attacked, this time on Jintian proper. Yet rebels had anticipated the attack, they ambushed the troops five miles out, defeating them. This is the start of committee, with one brief skirmish being won by the rebels. Jintian, Guangxi, and China at large are still undecided.

Throughout the day and both committee sessions, we will continue the war as dictated by the flow of committee, so not everything represented by history may come to pass (so don't worry if your character dies early in real life). Instead, some events may take precedence over others due to the directives or crisis notes passed in both committee rooms. Additionally, the outcome of the committee is irrelevant to the actual ending of the war, either side may win or a mutual peace may occur. However, please do utilize actual history as a guideline for what may happen.

# Timeline

**Hong Xiuquan Born** — 1814

**Hong Xiuquan's Vision** — 1837

**First Opium War** — 1839-1842

**Hong Xiuquan's conversion to Christianity** — 1843

**Feng Yunshan established *God Worshipping Society*** — 1844

**Hong Xiuquan joins *God Worshipping Society*** — 1847

**Start of Rebellion (*Jintian Uprising*)** — December 1850/January 1851

**Capture of Nanjing and Solidification of Rebellion** — March 1853

**Tianjing Incident** — September/October 1856

**Assault on Shanghai** — 1860

**Nanjing Surrounded** — 1862

**Hong Xiuquan Commits Suicide** — June 1864

**Nanjing Falls** — July 1864

**Sporadic Resistance Ends** — 1868

## Topic A: Growing the Rebellion

The Qing government is fractured and weakened, but that doesn't mean there will not be resistance. In the province of Guangxi alone, the base of the Taiping Rebellion cause, they outnumber the Taiping nearly 3 to 1, with around 30,000 soldiers to 10,000 soldiers. To overcome this and other hurdles the Taiping Rebellion must grow in size, however, how (and if) that happens is up to the actions of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom Cabinet.

To grow the Taiping Rebellion must leverage its benefits and the weaknesses of the imperial government. There is widespread distrust of the imperial government due to the financial and political difficulties they have faced, especially in rural regions, but how will the Taiping government utilize this opportunity? The Taiping government will need to disseminate information about the cause to grow their ranks, but do so in a way that is secret enough not to get caught by the Qing government.

Additionally, beyond the confines of the Taiping Rebellion, other rebellions are occurring in other parts of China.



The Nian Rebellion was

an insurrection against the Qing government in northern China, lasting from 1851 to 1868.

Unlike the Taiping Rebellion, the Nian Rebellion was unfocused and had no clear goals or objectives. Many of the rebels were solely trying to survive as many were poor farmers who were desperate due to Qing financial problems and the 1851 Yellow River Flood. This led to

many of the rebels plundering villages or other rebel causes, especially those better off. The Red Turban Rebellion was a rebellion of Tiandihui members in Guangdong. Alternatively, the Small Swords Society was comprised of Tiandihui and other groups that occupied Shanghai, rebelling against the Qing government. The rebellion also spread elsewhere, particularly to the Guangdong and Fujian provinces. Due to their location, this rebellion had the unique position of being in contact with American, British, and French forces, although the first two remained neutral and the last on the side of the Qing. A later rebellion was the Red Turban Rebellion (1854-1856), which revolted in Conghua and was also heavily influenced and comprised of Tiangihui members. Regardless of which rebellion, the Taiping cabinet must decide if and who they wish to reach and ally with or who to fight against.

Another important distinction is the region of the Taiping Rebellion. The Taiping forces currently only occupy Guangxi, with that even being contentious. The cabinet must decide what provinces or cities are less defended or most likely to join the Taiping cause. Additionally, within northern China the Qing government retains a tighter hold on the local clans and governments, so the question of northward expansion is also unanswered. Lastly, this cabinet must also consider its battle tactics. As a small army, who should they attack? What tactics should be utilized, ambushes, guerilla tactics, etc.? Where should the base of operations be located? All of these questions must be answered in order for the rebellion to succeed.

Overall, while the Rebellion is quickly growing, it is still small in the grand scheme of China. This cabinet must decide the next steps of the rebellion, how to attract new members, who to ally with, how to avoid Qing resistance, and what other provinces they should attack

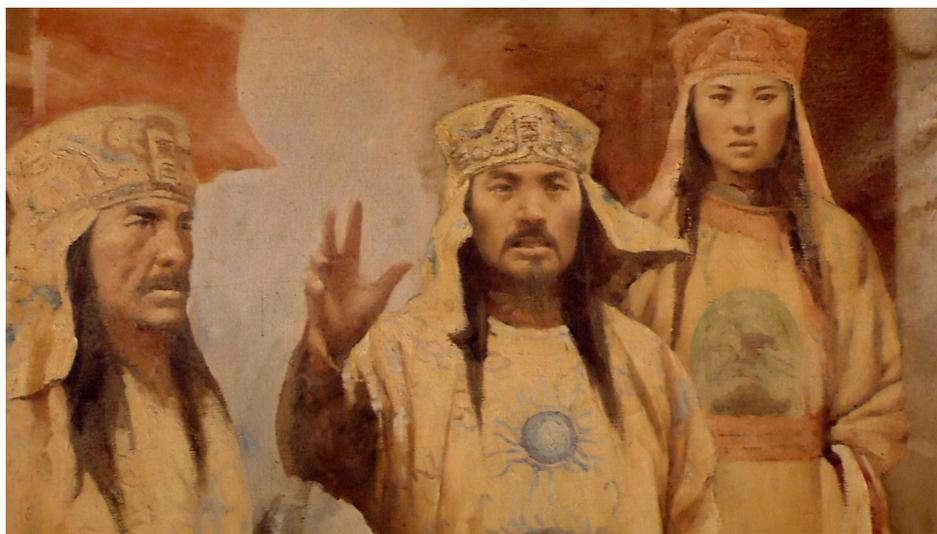
## Questions to Consider

- How should the Taiping Rebellion grow its ranks?
- Who are likely candidates for joining the cause?
- How should the Taiping Rebellion disseminate information without being caught?
- What tactics should the Taiping rebellion utilize?
- What should the base of operations be?
- What is the next target?
- What (if any) other rebellions should the Taiping ally with?
- How should the Taiping deal with foreign involvement?
  - Should they ask for help?
  - Should they discourage any involvement in the issue, on either side?
- How can casualties be minimized?
- What is your specific person's stake in this conflict?
- How does your character play into this? What are their personal powers?
- What does your character aim to accomplish in this conflict, either for the rebellion or personally?

## Topic B: Establishing Order within Government and Society

Beyond facing external pressures from the Qing government and other rebel groups, the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom faces many internal challenges. Like the Qing government itself, the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom is unstable and only has a weak grasp on the territory it holds. This cabinet must rectify this issue and establish order within the Kingdom in order for it to last.

Although the Taiping has set up a strict military hierarchy with multiple levels, the administrative side of the government remains in chaos. The general state of China is still one of economic ruin and social unrest, as natural and financial disasters rack the nation. Many of the citizens have switched to support the Taiping against the Qing but in order to maintain their support, actual change must be enacted.



The main issue of importance is political hierarchy. As a fledgling nation, the Heavenly Kingdom still remains divided, with competing factions within hoping to achieve personal gains. The only unifying force is anger against the Qing and

Hong Xiuquan himself. To solve this issue this cabinet must put aside personal motives and work together to form a functional government. A clear chain of command and a process for creating and executing solutions must be created and maintained. The specifics of how local and regional

governments, such as clans, fit into this structure is to be decided by this committee. The Qing government fell susceptible to rebellion in part due to its weak hold on many portions of China, but conversely, enforcing too high standards may cause turmoil and bad feelings towards the Taiping government. Within this political structure this cabinet will also have to account for the dealings of foreign nations. Cities like Shanghai already have significant presence from France, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and other nations. This cabinet will need to establish how foreign entities are dealt with, during and after the Rebellion. However, beyond simply administrative issues, this new government must tackle the many pressing social issues.

Specifically, China is facing many issues regarding food security. Between flooding in some areas and famine in others, food is a scarcity in many regions of China. The cabinet must decide an appropriate approach to rectify this problem, ensuring that both its citizens and its military are well fed and able to properly work. Solutions may range from government sponsored re-allocation of food to construction of agricultural facilities, but any action should be taken with caution to prevent any further strain on the already weakened food supply.

Lastly, the Taiping Rebellion is just one of many within China. This cabinet will need to examine how other rebel groups should be treated by the Taiping government. Will the Taiping government try to support other rebel movements, or will it try to suppress any? Additionally, this government needs to put in place preventative measures that will help suppress the nearly guaranteed resistance to Taiping rule in certain regions of China. How will this government punish those rebelling and reward those loyal to the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom? This issue is especially important regarding the many different military leaders within the cabinet itself. Competing ideas will emerge but this cabinet needs to compromise and reduce tensions within this new nation.

## Questions to Consider

- How should the Taiping government be set up?
- Where should the capital be located?
- What are the most pressing issues for the new government?
- What (if any) other rebellions should the Taiping ally with?
  - How should the government react to rebellions within its own borders?
- How should the Taiping deal with foreign involvement?
- What is your specific person's stake in this issue?
- How does your character play into this? What are their personal powers?
- What does your character aim to accomplish? What role in the new government would they want?

## Position Descriptions

IMPORTANT: Many of these positions lack information, so please utilize the information found here and your own research to provide a jumping-off point, but feel free to take additional liberties and add your own touch to the character. Additionally, many of the events described in these descriptions have not occurred yet, but use them as a template for later action or to better understand their goals. **Regardless of the actual start of their service to the Taiping Rebellion, all positions are assumed to be already part of the rebellion.**

Position	Position Information
Hong Xiuquan (Tianwang/Heavenly King)	As the leader of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, he believed himself to be the brother of Jesus Christ and the son of God. He had visions of heaven that led to his conversion to Christianity, the establishment of God Worshipper's Society, and eventual rebellion. After the Tianjing Incident, his confidence in his advisors was shaken, leading to him only trusting his family.
Hong Xuan Jiao (Yang Yun Jiao)	As a leader and general of the Taiping military, she led women into battle and trained in martial arts. She is the adopted sister of Yang Xiuqing and the wife of Xiao Chaogui (West King). As the wife of a Taiping King, she is also referred to as a "little sister" of Hong Xiquan.
Yang Xiuqing (East King)	As Minister of State and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, Yang led the advance to Nanjing in 1853. Beyond his official role, he claimed to be a mouthpiece of God, which he utilized to gain more power, taking over for Hong Xiquan when he returned to religious matters. He also established a large spy system on members of the Taiping Rebellion, which he utilized to reveal traitors and legitimize his ability to speak to god.
Feng Yunshan (South King)	As one of Hong Xiquan's earliest followers, he established the God Worshipper's Society, which later evolved into the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. He was a key leader for the early portion of the rebellion, acting as a right-hand to Hong Xiquan.
Xiao Chaogui (West King)	Xiao was the husband of Hong XuanJiao and a "sworn brother" to Hong Xiquan. He assumed leadership of the God Worshipper's Society, wherein he claimed he saw Jesus. After this vision, he claimed to continue to channel the voice of Jesu including calls to convert China to Christianity, end the Manchu

	rule of China, and destroy the corrupt government. He also acted as Commander in Chief of Taiping's Front Army Corps, capturing the city of Yongan.
Wei Changhui (North King)	Wei was very wealthy, owning land and a pawnshop before the rebellion. As such, he leveraged his position to ensure his town of Jiantin was safe for the God Worshippers Society. During the rebellion, he was a principal general who coordinated the defense of the Nanjing region and managed the Taiping food supplies.
Shi Dakai (Wing/Yi King)	A skilled strategist, he was made commander by 19. He was beloved by the people for his gentle rule and fair administration. He leveraged this position to convince people to join the rebellion. Later he abandoned the rebellion due to the Tianjing Incident, taking many of the Taiping followers with him.
Li Xiucheng (Loyal King)	Li was a commander for the Taipings and was given the title of Loyal King for refusing to kill Hong Xiuquan after a bribe from a Qing officer. He played a key role in the final moments of the rebellion as together with Chen Yucheng, they led the defense against the Qing siege on Nanjing.
Lai Wenguang (King of Zun)	Lai played a key role in uniting many of the northern Chinese to fight against the Qing government, a region where the Taiping cause was generally weaker. He also became the leader of the Eastern Nian Army later in the war.
Qin Rigang (King of Yen)	As a military leader of the Taiping Rebellion, he rose through the ranks and eventually became the fourth most senior military official (below Yang Xiuqing, Wei Changhui, and Shi Dakai).
Hong Rengan (Shield King)	Hong Rengan was a distant cousin of Hong Xiuquan and in the early years of the war, he fled to Hong Kong where he worked as a translator and was part of the first Chinese newspaper in Hong Kong (the <i>Chinese Serial</i> ). He later returned to Nanjing after the Tianjing Incident due to Hong Xiuquan's distrust of the family. There, he was given the second-highest position of power. For the purposes of committee, he will have remained in Nanjing and hold a high position of authority (although not as second in command) but will retain his connections to printing and an educated mindset.
Chen Yucheng (Ying Prince)	As a soldier, he participated in the March to the Yangtze under the Taiping military. Although 15 at the age of enlistment, he quickly rose through the ranks and was promoted to general in 1856 after the Tianjing Incident. Between 1856 and 1858, he

	conducted a number of successful military operations west of Nanjing. Together with Li Xiucheng, they defended against the Qing in the siege of Nanjing.
Li Shixian (King of Shi)	Li was a cousin of Li Xiucheng and was primarily fighting on the Eastern Front of the war. During the later portions of the war, he occupied all of the rich Zhejiang Province. He also invited Wei Yan, a famous scholar loyal to the Qing, to live with him, where he received advice and wisdom.
Zhang Lexing (Lord of the Alliance, Nian Rebels)	Zhang was a guerilla leader in the Nian Rebellion, a rebellion in the north of China, concurrent with the Taiping Rebellion. He came from a wealthy family involved in salt smuggling. He also claimed a mandate from heaven for his right to lead and later joined forces with the Taipings as the “Commander of the Northern Expedition.”
Su Sanniang (Nian Rebels)	Originally a part of the Nian Rebels alongside Zhang Lexing, Su was a leader of a band of outlaws (~2000 people) who she later brought to the Taiping side. During the Taiping Rebellion, she became the leader of the female battalions alongside Qiu Ersao.
Qiu Ersao (Red Turban Rebels)	Due to her husband’s opium addiction, she supported her family economically. In 1849, tired of corruption and abuse by the Qing authorities, she joined the Red Turban Rebels, which were a collection of rebel Tiandihui in Guangdong. She helped lead the female battalions alongside Su Sanniang and was a fiery and passionate speaker.
Chen Qingzhen (Small Swords Society)	Chen was a Singaporean-born merchant with British citizenship and the original leader of the Small Swords Society, a military organization within Shanghai active between 1840 and 1855. The Small Swords Society was comprised of Tiandihui, similar to the Red Turban Rebellion. The group seized Xiamen, Tong’an, Zhangzhou, and Zhangpu but were eventually forced to leave, instead taking Huizhou in Guangzhou. The group was then ideologically split between the Guangzhou and Shanghai factions.

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