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THE CHINESE SERVICE OF SUPPLY IN
DIRECT SUPPORT OF THE CHINESE ARMIES
6 MAY - 2 SEPTEMBER 1945
(THE CHINESE OFFENSIVE)
(Personal Experience of a Ration Purchasing Commissioner)

Type of operation described: PROCUREMENT AND DISTRIBUTION
OF RATIONS TO THE CHINESE ARMY AND RELATED MATTERS

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ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS COURSE NO I

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ORIENTATION

INTRODUCTION

This monograph covers the operations of the Chinese Service of Supply in direct support of the Chinese Armies 6 May - 2 September 1945 during the Chinese Offensive.

To orient the reader it will be necessary to discuss briefly the major events leading up to the establishment of this unique organization:

In July 1937 the Japanese Imperial Army launched an attack in North China with the underlying strategy of first seizing Manchuria and then all of the major productive provinces of China proper. (See Map A) For the next four years the Japanese, by a series of rapid attacks, were able to occupy the major ports of TIENTSIN, SHANGHAI, HANKOW, CANTON, and HONGKONG. This, coupled with the occupation of the fertile plains in the lower reaches of the YANGTZE and YELLOW Rivers and all lines of communication, completely cut off China from any outlets to the sea. (1)

By 1941 the Chinese Nationalists' Government under the leadership of Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek controlled only

(1) A-2, A-10

the provinces of SZECHUAN, YUNNAN, KANSU, SHENSI and strategic parts of KWANGSI and SHANSI. Her only remaining land link with the western world was a narrow road extending from KUNMING to BURMA, known as the BURMA ROAD. (2)

In 1942 the Japanese invaded BURMA and cut off this last land link. There followed a period of two years when China was totally dependent upon the famous "Over the Hump" flights for equipment and gasoline, so vitally necessary for her war effort. (3)

With the re-entry into BURMA by the Allies in 1944 and the final complete liberation of North BURMA by the combined efforts of the American, Chinese and British Armies in April 1945, (4) the BURMA ROAD in conjunction with the pipeline from CALCUTTA, INDIA, to KUNMING, CHINA, was opened. China was for the first time in the position to launch an offensive to secure the major port of CANTON and affect a link-up with the American forces from the Philippines.

GENERAL SITUATION

In October 1944, the CHINA-BURMA-INDIA theater was divided into two theaters: INDIA-BURMA, under Lieutenant General Daniel I. Sultan; and the CHINA theater under Lieutenant General Albert Wedemeyer. (5)

The situation in China at this time was at its lowest ebb. For seven years the Chinese Armies had been forced to trade "space for time". (6) The Chinese Armies, which

(2) A-2, A-10
(3) Personal knowledge
(4) Personal knowledge
(5) A-13
(6) A-9

consisted of 324 divisions, 60 odd brigades, and 89 so called guerrilla units, presented a formidable threat on paper. However, the average division strength consisted of 5,000 men. These troops were underfed, underpaid, and generally suffering from malnutrition. Their equipment was old and obsolete, and it was not unusual for them to enter battle with one rifle for every three men. Training, with the exception of American sponsored training centers, was nonexistent. (7)

The Officer Corps, as a whole, were job-holders whose commands were dependent on the whims of the CHUNGKING politicians. (8) Artillery, transport, and medical service were practically nonexistent.

Opposing this nondescript army were approximately 25 mediocre Japanese divisions whose morale was also at a low ebb. For the past year the Japanese had been fighting a holding action in China. The ever increasing power of the Allies in the Pacific Area, in conjunction with the constant harassment of their inland supply lanes from the homeland by the 14th Air Force, had made the Japanese position in China almost untenable. The Japanese Armies in China could expect no reinforcements, and in the minds of the soldiers, it was just a matter of time until they would be overwhelmed. (9)

It became increasingly apparent to the Allied High Command that the time was now ripe to launch an all-out

(7) Personal knowledge
(8) Personal knowledge
(9) A-14

offensive in China. The objectives were to secure the ports of CANTON, HANKOW, HONGKONG, and SHANGHAI, and thus effect a link-up of the Chinese and American forces; and to establish bases which could be used in the coming invasion of the Japanese homeland itself.

CHINA THEATER MISSION

In December 1944, it was quite evident that the mission of the China Theater was threefold: (10)

1. To keep China in the war at all costs,
2. To train, supply, and equip the Chinese Armies,
3. To launch an all-out offensive to regain bases on the China coast.

It was further realized by the China Theater Headquarters that these missions could not be accomplished with the present unwieldy organization of the Chinese Armies. Hence, permission was secured from Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek to form 39 divisions from the tremendous reservoir of troops at his command.

These divisions were to be known as the "Alpha Divisions" and were to receive priority from the Americans in training, supply, and equipment. (11)

The basic idea behind the formation of the "Alpha Divisions" was to give the Chinese Nationalists' Government a well equipped striking force that would enable them to initiate an early strong offensive.

(10) A-13

(11) A-11

In order to furnish the "Alpha Divisions" with continuous logistical support, the Chinese Service of Supply was established. (12)

NARRATION

The Chinese Service of Supply was reorganized on 8 January 1945. (See Chart 1) This reorganization was based on the concept of the American Service of Supply, with one major exception.

The missions were identical to the normal missions of Service of Supply units: namely, procuring, storing and distributing supplies. (13)

The command function of this organization was under the Chinese, with American personnel to act in the capacity of advisors. American personnel had the additional mission of training the Chinese in supply procedure.

As was stated previously, the organization of the Chinese Service of Supply was based on the American Service of Supply with one major exception: this being the Foods Department.

ORGANIZATION OF THE FOODS DEPARTMENT

The China Theater Headquarters clearly realized that the problem of procuring and issuing an adequate ration, unless solved, would furnish a major stumbling block in their plans to launch an early offensive. It had been proven in the BURMA Campaign to the satisfaction of all, that the Chinese soldier when adequately clothed and supplied with a normal ration, was more than the equal of the Japanese. (14)

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- (12) A-13
(13) Personal knowledge
(14) Personal knowledge

Rice is the staple diet of the Chinese; however, it was necessary to devise a minimum ration as a supplement. Therefore, a survey was made by the American Quartermaster Corps in conjunction with the American Medical Corps, and the following daily ration was established as the minimum for the needs of the Chinese soldier: 1 ounce of meat, 1 catty (15) of vegetables, 6 ounces of peanuts or soya beans, 2 catties of firewood, and 6 ounces of vegetable oil. (16)

Using this ration as a basis, the Joint Food Council established the Foods Department as an integral part of the Chinese Service of Supply. The mission of the Foods Department was to procure these rations on the "open market" and to distribute them to the Chinese troops of the "Alpha Divisions".

ORGANIZATION OF THE RATION PURCHASING COMMISSIONS

To accomplish this mission, Colonel C. F. Kearney, American head of the Foods Department, decided to place buying teams in the field, which were to be designated as Ration Purchasing Commissions. (See Map B) These Ration Purchasing Commissions were to be composed initially of the following personnel: one American officer with a Chinese officer as his counterpart to head the commission; three American officers with Chinese counterparts to form "buying teams"; one American non-commissioned officer as a bookkeeper; one American non-commissioned officer as chief of storage and distribution; and one American non

(15) One catty equals 1.1 pounds
(16) Personal knowledge

commissioned officer as chief of transportation. Each of these officers and non-commissioned officers was to be supplemented with the necessary Chinese officers and enlisted personnel as was deemed necessary. (17) In addition to the command group, there was to be attached one Chinese Labor Battalion, one Chinese Motor Transport Battalion and the necessary security personnel.

The lack of American personnel in China precluded the physical establishment of these Ration Purchasing Commissions, with the exception of RPC #1, located at KWELIYANG, until the end of April 1945. With the successful conclusion of the North BURMA Campaign, sufficient personnel were obtained from the famed American Mars Task Force to establish five of these commissions.

American officers and men assigned to these RPC's were to receive an intensive period of briefing as to Chinese customs, both civil and military; business methods and practices of the Chinese merchants; and the overall attitude of the Chinese commanders regarding the installation of this new system of ration procurement and distribution.

Prior to the establishment of the RPC's, liaison was to be effected with the Chinese officials and the American tactical advisors of the areas of future operation. It was felt that this action would facilitate the movement of the RPC's into the areas and give the American tactical advisors the opportunity to brief their respective Chinese commanders.

(17) Personal knowledge

The briefing and liaison activities were never accomplished. Instead, each RPC commissioner was given a copy of the supplemental ration to be obtained and issued daily. He was told that an initial bank account was established for his RPC in the Central Bank of China, (See Annex I) and then he was ordered to start operations. (18)

The lack of proper indoctrination was to work a definite hardship on American personnel assigned to the Ration Purchasing Commissions. (19) This fact is clearly exemplified by the following examples. All American officers initially were under the impression that with the advent of systematized issues of rations, the Chinese commanders would welcome the end of this responsibility. What was not realized at this time was that a new system was being installed that was completely contrary to all Chinese tradition. It was a custom for each Chinese division commander to receive an allotment based upon his troop strength. Since time immemorial, the Chinese commanders had been able to make up the difference between their low scale of pay by the padding of their troop strength. Consequently, it became an honorable device to submit troop strengths far in excess of actual strength. To the western world this practice seems dishonest, but it must be remembered that the average Chinese division commander received approximately the equivalent of 90 US dollars per month, and 50 catties of rice for a family allowance. (20) In addition, Chinese custom decreed that a general

(18) Personal knowledge
(19) Personal knowledge
(20) Personal knowledge

remained a general as long as he had the troops to command. In other words, if a division commander committed his unit in action and suffered heavy losses, and his unit fell to regimental strength, he then became a regimental commander. This sliding scale of command and supply was to become a formidable obstacle to the Americans who were trying to install the system of procuring and issuing rations. (21)

In addition to the Chinese officer corps, who furnished opposition to the new system, there was the problem of procurement. It must be remembered that approximately 200,000,000 people had been concentrated in the five remaining provinces of Free China for over seven years, and food had become a major problem. (22) In typical Chinese fashion, all rations that were a part of the proposed supplemental ration became concentrated in the hands of a few governmental agencies. These agencies, in turn, established offices under assumed names near the locations of the RPC's and proceeded to set up a monopoly. (23) The Chinese do not believe in selling merchandise when prices begin to rise, but continue to hoard until such time as they feel it can go no higher, and then sell. Patriotism is not an integral part of the Chinese character, due to the nefarious practices of the official class of Chinese who for hundreds of years have been able to reap tremendous profits by the manipulation of markets of all types. (24)

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- (21) Personal knowledge
(22) A-4
(23) Personal knowledge
(24) A-10

In addition to the problems of overcoming the traditional practices of the Chinese army commanders, there was also the problem of instilling confidence in the Chinese soldier himself. For hundreds of years the Chinese soldier had been considered a being on the lowest rung on the social ladder. This situation had come about by the great faith placed in the teachings of Confucius and Lao Tzu. The great majority of the Chinese people revered the scholar who devoted his life to the study of the classics of the ancients, but merely tolerated the tradespeople and the soldiers. In addition, the Chinese had a fundamental defensive attitude based on the religious concept of Taoism, or "there is no sense in resistance as one will only receive injury". Hence the Chinese soldier became an individual who could only bring harm upon the nation as a whole. Small wonder that the average Chinese soldier had an inferiority complex! (25)

The Chinese system of recruiting further served to bring into the armies only those persons who were considered undesirable in their villages or cities. Regular brokers were set up to supply the armies with all necessary personnel. Although all classes were eligible to be drafted, it was a common practice for sons of wealthy parents to pay a broker a nominal fee; and he, in turn, would give some poor peasant a few dollars to enlist in the army. This practice, coupled with the idea that at all costs China must preserve her scholars by not making them eligible for the draft, limited the availability of man-power to the poor,

(25) A-6, A-8, A-7

ignorant peasant. Instances of college and university students enlisting in large numbers in the service of their country were conspicuous by their absence. (26)

The Chinese soldier upon entering the army lost all personal identity. He was subject to all or any indignities that his immediate commander desired to place upon him. Punishment by death for minor infractions was the rule rather than the exception. Extreme physical punishment was an everyday occurrence, and the beating of a man with a heavy stick about the face until he was unrecognizable was considered a minor disciplinary measure. (27)

The Chinese officer corps was not trained in the methods of instilling morale and esprit d'corps in their particular units, and consequently the Chinese soldier had the feeling, and justly so, that no one cared for him or was looking out for his welfare. Hence any new ideas that were installed by the Americans with regard to the Chinese soldier's welfare, were regarded with suspicion; the burden of proof that any new system would work was directly an American responsibility.

To overcome these initial obstacles, it was necessary for the American personnel assigned to the RPC's to build up confidence, and to do this it was necessary to first get the active cooperation of American personnel of the

(26) Personal knowledge

(27) Personal knowledge

advisory teams assigned to the Chinese units. Finally, the Chinese from the generals to the lowest private had to be convinced that this new system of ration issue would work.

To do this the various RPC's used various methods. RPC #5, which was located in KUNMING, probably had the more complex problem. (28) This particular area contained both the 5th and 6th Army Area Service Commands, and each general was anxious to be placed in complete charge of storing all supplies purchased by the RPC's.

On 6 May 1945 the Chief of RPC #3 held a meeting of all Chinese Army officials from both areas, at which time the plan of operation was unfolded. Immediate cries of consternation arose from the Chinese, as they all envisioned immediate financial disaster. Cries of "Wai, kuo fa tzu, pu hao", or the foreign method was not for them, echoed throughout the council hall, and for several minutes it looked like the initial meeting would break up. However, when the outburst subsided the officials were told in true American style that the new system would go into effect on the 15th of May whether they wanted it or not. Furthermore, if their particular units did not report to the ration distribution point on that date to claim their rations, their troops, including themselves, would go hungry. The Chinese commanders outwardly accepted this ultimatum with the true Chinese fatalistic attitude of "mei yu pieh te fa tzu", or, there is no other say. (29)

The Chinese commanders were then told that strength

(28) Personal knowledge

(29) Personal knowledge

lists of their respective units must be submitted to the RPC Headquarters prior to 9 May 1945 and weekly thereafter. Unfortunately, the American commissioner neglected to state that each troop strength report would have to be certified to by the chief of the American advisory team assigned to that particular unit. The Chinese, quick to take advantage of this loop-hole, certified that every unit in the 5th and 6th Area Commands was up to full strength during the two weeks that followed. However, this oversight was brought to the attention of the individuals concerned and corrective action was taken. (30)

Now that the plan had been placed before the Chinese, it was up to the American personnel to implement it by setting up the necessary distribution points, locating suitable facilities for storage and a headquarters, and contacting local merchants who could furnish the necessary rations.

These problems were further augmented by the lack of qualified American personnel to operate the RPC's adequately. Instead of a complement of five officers and three enlisted men, there were only two officers and two enlisted men. The head of RPC #3's only qualification, was that he spoke Mandarin Chinese. At the same time, he was totally ignorant of Chinese customs. The assistant chief was a Chinese-

(30) Personal knowledge

American who was able to speak the three major dialects of the Chinese language, and thus he proved to be invaluable in the initial operations. However, after a period of one month, he was assigned to Headquarters, Chinese Service of Supply, as a personal interpreter for the American counterpart of the Chinese Commanding General. (31)

As was previously stated, both the 5th and 6th Area Commanders were eager to turn over facilities to serve as ration breakdown points and storage depots. It was decided that the most favorable location was in the 5th Area Command, headed by Major General Chan Chi Min. Major General Chan proved to be scrupulously honest and willing to cooperate at all times; it was due to his aid that RPC was able to accomplish its mission. (32)

The Chief of the RPC was under the impression that only those units which were part of the "Alpha Units" would be supplied with the supplemental ration. This would include the 45th Division, the 96th Division, and the 103rd Youth Division. These units were part of the 5th Army which had fought in the Salween Campaign and were being reorganized, re-equipped, and retrained under the Alpha plan by the Chinese Combat Command.

The following American-sponsored training centers were also to take part in the rationing program:

- the Field Artillery Training Center,
- the Infantry Training Center
- the Command and General Staff School

(31) Personal knowledge
(32) Personal knowledge

the Signal School

the Motor Transport School

In addition to the above schools, such installations as the Rear Echelon, Supreme Headquarters, Chinese Army, under the command of General Ho Ying Chin, Chief of Staff, and additional security elements, were included. This headquarters later proved to be one of the greatest obstacles in perfecting the operations of the RPC's throughout China. (See Annex I)

For the initial issue of rations it would be necessary to purchase sufficient supplemental rations to supply 41,000 troops. (33)

With the headquarters and ration breakdown point established, the next step was to go into the local markets and procure these rations. As was previously stated, each RPC was given an initial allotment of funds, based on the rate of \$100, Chinese National Currency, per day per man with which to purchase the supplemental ration. The allotment was ample when based on the official rate of exchange of \$80, Chinese National Currency, to one American dollar; however, the "black market" rate was \$1,500 to \$1, and spiraling every day. Unfortunately, there was no way to remedy this situation, as the money came out of a revolving fund set up by the Chinese government. (See Annex I)

The funds were deposited in the Central Bank of China in a joint commercial account under both the names of the American Purchasing Commissioner and his Chinese Counterpart,

(33) Personal knowledge

Colonel Chiu Min Tung. This policy served as a safeguard insofar as each check drawn on the account required both signatures to be valid. At the same time, protection was furnished to Colonel Chiu Min Tung because it prevented his loyalty to his superior officers in the Chinese Service of Supply to overcome his unquestionable honesty. (34)

Funds being available, immediate steps were taken to purchase the necessary rations required to meet the deadline set for 15 May 1945.

The biggest problem facing the RPC was the procurement of meat and firewood. The area around KUNMING had been under a strict meat ration program for the past two years. With the advent of more American personnel arriving daily in the China theater, beef was unobtainable. Lamb or mutton was only palatable to the northern Chinese, while pork at this time, although available, was too expensive.

To overcome the meat problem, the American purchasing commissioner, after much consultation with his Chinese counterpart and other Chinese members of both the RPC and Headquarters, Chinese Service of Supply, entered into a contract with the local slaughter house. Arrangements were made to purchase those parts of cattle and hogs that were left over after the animals were slaughtered, such as the heads, hooves, tails, etc. This expedient seemed to be the only solution at the time.

The problem of firewood was one that could not be

(34) Personal knowledge

solved. Initial requirements were 21 tons per day. To obtain this amount, it would be necessary to bring it from KAIYUAN, which was approximately 300 miles to the south, and connected to KUNMING by a single gauge railroad built by the French in the early 1900's. The area around KUNMING had been completely de-forested by the tremendous influx of refugees during the past seven years. (35)

Vegetables, oils, peanuts and soya beans offered no problem as YUNNAN Province is one of the most fertile of all China with continuous all around crops. (36)

The final step was to receive, weigh, and breakdown the rations for the units concerned. As no American type scales were available, everything was weighed by the Chinese on their scales, which consisted of a long pole graduated in catties with a weight on one end and a balance on the other. All figures were in Chinese; consequently, it was necessary to accept the word of the Chinese officer who was in charge as to the true weight. This left the one gap that hadn't been stopped. In order for the merchants to receive payment for their merchandise it was necessary for them to produce a certified weight certificate from the weighing officer. It was a common practice for the merchants to give the weighing officer a present and in return to receive a certificate showing a greater weight than had actually been delivered, such a malpractice increased his margin of profit. The practice was successfully curtailed with the assignment of a Chinese-American enlisted man who could read

(35) Personal knowledge

(36) A-1

read Chinese to the RPC. (37)

On 15 May the initial issue of rations was made and confusion reigned supreme. All the local Chinese commanders were present, along with the Commanding General of the American Service of Supply. The 5th Army added to the confusion by sending horse-carts to pick up their rations instead of their $2\frac{1}{2}$ ton trucks. The excuse offered was that there was no gasoline available for the trucks. Consequently, traffic was tied up for several miles in every direction. To make matters worse, it was an extremely hot day, and as no refrigeration was available, the so-called meat which had been picked up that morning and stored in a room without proper ventilation was rapidly reaching the spoilage point. With the opening of the meat storage door, the RPC almost came to an abrupt end before it had an opportunity to start. The slaughter house personnel had removed all edible meat from the cows' heads; therefore, the meat consisted of 90% cattle skulls intermingled with a various assortment of tails, hooves, and intestines which had not been cleaned. (38) This sight and odor brought forth a mass cry of "pu hao" from the Chinese and a distinct look of disgust upon the faces of all American officers who were present to witness the event.

The Chinese representative from the Supreme Headquarters announced that from this date on, only live animals would be

(37) Personal knowledge

(38) Personal knowledge

issued as the meat ration, and the units concerned would do their own slaughtering. (39)

During the period 15 - 25 May the main effort was one of securing reliable merchants who could be depended on to deliver merchandise as needed. It became quite evident at this time that very little time would be spent by the RPC Commissioner in trying to find these merchants. The magic word that the RPC bought in large quantities and paid cash for all items, served as a veritable magnet. Daily the headquarters was filled with contractors who were more than anxious to sell. It was now necessary to be able to differentiate between those who represented old reliable establishments and those who were only "fronts" for high Chinese officials. These officials had finally realized that the system was here to stay, and their only method of making profits was to go into the meat and vegetable business themselves. (40)

Prior to the establishment of the Ration Purchasing system a large percentage of the sales to the Chinese armies had been made by high scale brokers and hoarders. This fact, together with the scarcity of food and materials in China due to the lack of industrialization and a blockade resulting from seven years of war, had made the price of the most insignificant commodity prohibitive. It was only by the close cooperation of both Chinese and Americans that fair prices for foodstuffs for the Chinese army were finally established.

(39) Personal knowledge

(40) Personal knowledge

On 26 May 1945 it became evident to the Ration Purchasing Commissioner that certain malpractices still existed in the new system. Rumors from several market places within the city of KUNMING and from other reliable sources, such as merchants and Chinese officials, indicated that the meat ration being issued to the larger units never reached the troops. Furthermore, the American Liaison Officers of the Chinese Combat Command assigned to these units, confirmed these reports.

Certain Chinese commanders, not wanting to conform to the new method, and being unable to sit idly by and see their age-old practice of "squeeze" being taken away from them, were re-selling the rations that were issued to them for troop use on the "open market". This practice was completely stopped by the following three methods.

1. Pork, being the highest priced commodity that was issued to the troops, naturally furnished the most lucrative and quickest profit. In addition, it was a commodity that was very easy to dispose of, as all pork was issued in the form of live hogs. Therefore, it became necessary to mark all hogs with an indelible dye so as to forestall both the Chinese from selling and the Ration Purchasing Commissioner from re-purchasing the same hogs over and over again.

2. The second method used was to deliver rations direct to the larger units. This was accomplished by the acquisition of another truck battalion from the 5th Area Commander which was placed under the direct control of an American sergeant.

3. The third and most effective means used was the utilization of American personnel from the Chinese Combat Commands. These officers, in addition to their tactical duties and combat supply problems, offered to supervise the actual distribution of rations within their own units. They carried this one step further by daily inspection of the messes and having one officer present whenever the troops were being fed. The Ration Purchasing Commission furnished each American chief of these advisory teams with a copy of the supplemental ration that was being issued. By checking the food that was being prepared against this list, it was a simple matter to establish whether the food was reaching the soldiers or not.

These three methods, accompanied by threats of disciplinary action by the Supreme Chinese Headquarters, brought this malpractice to an end. (41)

On the 27th of May elements of the New Chinese First Army began to arrive in the KUNMING area. These were the Chinese troops who had fought in the north BURMA Campaign and were acknowledged as the finest army that Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek had under his control. They had been trained by the Americans at RAMGARRH, INDIA, and had been completely supplied throughout the BURMA Campaign by the Americans.

The troops, flushed with the first real victory over

(41) Personal knowledge

the Japanese in seven years of war, were understandably arrogant and felt that they were due special consideration. However, upon their arrival, they were immediately placed under the RPC for rations.

This supplemental ration with its lack of emphasis on meat, was a far cry from the abundant ration they had been issued in BURMA by the Americans. When they finally realized that they were to receive the same treatment as their more unfortunate brothers who had not had the advantage of being clothed and fed by the Americans, it was a bitter pill to swallow.

The Chinese could understand the method of issuing all items, with the exception of meat. For example, a unit whose strength was 250 men would be entitled to 250 ounces of meat per day. Therefore, a hog which weighed 300 pounds represented 19 days' meat ration for the unit. Hence, when a live hog was issued, an explanation was made pertaining to the unit's eligibility for the next meat ration. With much bowing and murmurs of "Tung hao", or "very good", the Chinese would place the squealing pig on a horse-cart and return to their unit. However, the following week when they returned to receive their rations and were issued no meat, great cries of consternation could be heard; and the term "Wei kuo fa tzu, pu hao", or the "American method is no good", became their battle cry. No amount of explanation could convince them that the Americans were not deliberately

forcing a vegetable diet upon them. (42)

This lack of knowledge of supply was prevalent from the highest ranking commander to the lowest private in the army. Supply discipline was nonexistent and had never been part of their basic training. The Chinese commanders were under the impression that if a certain part of the supplemental ration was not issued due to a critical shortage, and no substitute was available, they would be paid a monetary allowance in lieu thereof. When they were informed that such a procedure could not be followed, they demanded that the ration they had missed be made up in the next ration issue. This was a physical impossibility. For example, firewood was a critical item in this area, and the daily requirements amounted to over sixteen tons. The usual amount that could be purchased by the RPC with a guarantee of delivery was approximately seven tons per day; therefore it became evident that no matter what measures were taken, there would always be a shortage. When this was explained, not only the army commanders, but representatives of the Supreme Headquarters, insisted that the shortage would have to be made up. However, no one could offer any suggestions as to how.

By 30 June, most of the initial problems that had faced the RPC's were overcome. Additional American personnel had been obtained from the 124th Cavalry, which had been deactivated. With this added personnel, the RPC's were able to expand their activities and the number of units that could be supplied. (43)

(42) Personal knowledge

(43) Personal knowledge

Originally, only those units that had been designated as "Alpha Units" were to be supplied by the RPC system. However, pressure was brought to bear by the Supreme Headquarters to furnish all units located in the KUNMING area. In addition to several body-guard units of the higher ranking officials, Chinese replacement centers were also authorized.

One replacement center in particular is worthy of mention, because it involved not only the RPC but also the Medical Department of the Chinese Service of Supply.

This center, which was under the control of the 5th Area Command, was located at HEI LING P'U, approximately seven miles east of KUNMING. On 2 August the Ration Purchasing Commissioner received an urgent call to report to the Headquarters, Chinese Service of Supply, to confer with Major General Ho Shih Lai, Assistant Commander of Chinese Service of Supply.

General Ho informed the commissioner that the commanding general of this particular training center had disappeared three weeks previously along with \$20,000,000 of the Chinese National Currency which had been given him to purchase rations for the troops. General Ho then requested that the commissioner, along with the American Chief of the Medical Department, make an immediate inspection of the center and present him a true picture of the situation.

The forthcoming review of HEI LING P'U disclosed the fact that there were 5,000 troops stationed there. The troops were the typical undernourished peasant type who

had been forcibly drafted from the province of SZECHUAN, and by train and foot march had finally arrived at HEI LING P'U. Their ages ranged from fourteen to thirty years. They had arrived at HEI LING P'U in an exhausted state, and their condition had been further aggravated by meager rations, which in the past two weeks had deteriorated to a handful of rice and water. Malnutrition had reached the critical stage, and by this time the fatality rate averaged forty men per day. (44) The RPC Commissioner, in conjunction with the American medical officer decided on the following course of action:

A branch RPC would be located at HEI LING P'U and supervised feeding would be installed under the direction of the medical officer. It was further decided to feed an average of seven small meals per day. These meals called for a special ration which was not part of the standard supplemental ration. It became incumbent upon the RPC to secure permission to purchase these additional foods, and this permission was readily granted.

The commissioner realized from past experience that the prices on special items, such as eggs, would skyrocket if it became known that they were being purchased in large quantities. Therefore, the commissioner, to forestall any price increase, called a meeting of the local merchants in

(44) Personal knowledge

KUNMING and proceeded to take them on a conducted tour of HEI LING P'U. By showing the merchants the conditions that existed and further outlining the plan to improve this situation, the commissioner was able to obtain all necessary rations at a reasonable price. This conducted tour further lessened the merchants' desire to acquire an exorbitant profit on the standard supplemental rations. It is felt that this particular method of orientation contributed materially to a better understanding of the Chinese soldier and his problems by the Chinese civil population. (45)

On 20 August 1945 the Chinese Service of Supply received a warning order from American Service of Supply to be ready to turn the complete operation over to the Chinese. By 2 September this turnover was completed except for a small residual unit which was left to complete the administrative details.

SUMMARY

In summarizing this operation, it can be said that the Chinese Service of Supply had accomplished its mission. In a period of five months the supply system of the Chinese Army had been completely reorganized. Several thousand Chinese had been trained in the American methods of supply. The Chinese soldier had gained a confidence in his commanders that had not existed before. Although this system was not tested under combat conditions, indications are that it would function equally as well.

(45) Personal knowledge

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

In analyzing and criticizing the operations of the Chinese Service of Supply, it is incumbent upon the reader to consider the fact that this organization was primarily a foreign organization. The role of the Americans was that of an advisory capacity. It must be further understood that the Chinese concept of the difference between right and wrong is at the opposite pole from the Western. The Chinese concept of right and wrong is derived from their religious beliefs and several thousand years of tradition. Therefore, only those violations that are a complete deviation from the normal will be analyzed and criticized.

1. FAILURE TO BRIEF AMERICAN PERSONNEL

The failure of the staff of the Chinese Service of Supply to adequately brief the newly-arrived American personnel was a major factor contributing to the initial blunders committed in this operation.

The majority of these men were Infantry soldiers who had just arrived from BURMA. They were almost totally ignorant of the language, customs and traditions of the Chinese. Their only previous contact with the Chinese had been with elements of the New Chinese First Army in BURMA.

Furthermore, these men were not specialists in the normal duties of Quartermaster personnel.

Had the staff of the Chinese Service of Supply given the men an intensive indoctrination course prior to their being sent to the field, the erroneous concept that they

would be accepted with "open arms" by the Chinese commanders would have been dispelled. The failure to acquaint this personnel with the known fact, that they were to install a system that would eliminate a lucrative source of income for the Chinese commanders, contributed to their difficulties in overcoming the obstacles placed in their way by the Chinese commanders.

2. LACK OF QUALIFIED BI-LINGUAL PERSONNEL IN THE RPC

The lack of bi-lingual personnel proved a definite hardship to the RPC's. In all dealings with both the Chinese Army commanders and civilian merchants, the Commissioners of the Ration Purchasing Commissions were completely dependent upon interpreters obtained from the Chinese Service of Supply interpreter pool. These interpreters were students recruited from the local universities. Their knowledge of the English language was limited; their loyalty to the Americans, questionable. This fact is clearly shown by the incident of falsifying weights in the initial stages of RPC #3. It was the duty of the interpreter to translate the weight certificates correctly after making an accurate check of the stock physically present. The failure to do this resulted in excessive expenditures of funds, and was corrected only by the assignment of American-Chinese non-commissioned officers who could read, write, and speak the language.

3. MORALE AND ESPRIT D'CORPS OF THE CHINESE TROOPS

Morale and esprit d'corps of the Chinese Armies as a whole was practically nonexistent. The average Chinese

soldier was from peasant stock and had been forcibly drafted into the army for an unknown period of time.

This soldier was poorly trained and equipped and would go for months without receiving pay. Medical facilities were limited, and in most cases were never available when needed. The soldier's very existence depended upon the whims of his superior officers. Corporal punishment was the rule rather than the exception for any minor infraction.

The responsibility for these evils can be placed squarely on the shoulders of the Chinese officer corps. To the average Chinese commander his troops represented a number of bodies who could be used to enlarge his income. He felt no responsibility in regard to their well being.

LESSONS

1. Intensive briefing must be given to all newly-arrived personnel as to the customs and traditions of a foreign country, prior to their being sent to the field.
2. Trustworthy bi-lingual personnel are essential to the successful accomplishment of a mission in a foreign country.
3. The proper application of the principles of leadership are essential in the problem of morale and esprit d' corps.

ANNEX I

The purpose of this Annex is to clarify statements contained within the monograph proper which are controversial. Certain items are, through mutual agreement between the Nationalists' Government of China and the United States of America, still classified as secret.

ITEM I. "ALPHA DIVISIONS"

In December 1944 the American Government agreed to sponsor thirty-nine Chinese Divisions. These Divisions were to be trained and equipped by the Americans. Their Table of Organization and Equipment are still classified as secret.

ITEM II. CENTRAL BANK OF CHINA

All funds provided for the R.P.C.'s to purchase rations were supplied by the Chinese Government. These funds were deposited in the Central Bank of China. The exact method by which these funds were obtained and used is classified as secret.

ITEM III. GENERAL HO YING CHIN

General Ho was Chief of Staff of the Chinese Army, with his Headquarters located in Kunming. General Ho was definitely against the new system of issuing rations and was one of the leaders in placing obstacles in the way of R.P.C.'s.

Chinese commanders in the field were quick to censure mistakes made by the R.P.C.'s. Instead of trying to correct the matter at the source, they would immediately wire General Ho. The General, in turn, would make daily trips to the Chinese Service of Supply Headquarters to render complaints and demand that the old style of rations be restored.

This constant harassment by the Supreme Headquarters did

much to lower the morale of R.P.C. personnel..

ITEM IV CHINESE REVOLVING FUND

This was a fund set up by the Chinese Government and backed by the United States, details of which are still classified as secret.

ORGANIZATION of CHINESE SERVICE of SUPPLY

