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Title: Report of Overseas Observations

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Abstract: Report summary of the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), Merrill's Marauders, and other units in the China Burma India Theater.

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Rpt of overseas observations

DISSEMINATION DIVISION
G-2 Section

HEADQUARTERS ARMY GROUND FORCES
Army War College
Washington 25, D. C.

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SUBJECT: Report, Overseas Observations by Colonel Charles N. Hunter.

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Report Distributed

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Subject: Report of Overseas Observations.

1. General:

a. This report covers the period September 21, 1943 to 3 August 1944 during which time I commanded or was second in command of the 5307th Composite Unit (Prov) ("Merrill's Marauders"), and other units in the China Burma India Theater.

2. Background:

a. At the Ottawa Conference in 1943, General Orde C. Wingate was promised 3000 jungle trained American Infantry soldiers to be organized under his direction into three "Long Range Penetration Groups". General Wingate was expected to direct this force in its operations in Burma. Troops were secured, 1000 from the Caribbean Defense Command, 1000 from the South and Southwest Pacific Theaters and 1000 from the United States. As a result of the Cairo Conference, these troops were placed under General Stilwell's command and were organized into the 5307th Composite Unit Provisional. This unit was organized roughly as follows - A small unit headquarters, three (3) battalions organized into a battalion headquarters and two combat teams each and a Unit Rear Base which consisted of the personnel section, a warehousing and packing section, a "kicking" section and a transportation section.

b. This unit was supplied entirely by air, packed its own supplies into containers, packed its own parachutes and kicked its own supplies out of airplanes furnished mainly by the 1st and 2nd Troop Carrier Squadrons. All casualties were evacuated by air by means of L-1, L-4 or L-5 type planes. Pack transportation was used on the ground, due to one quartermaster pack troop's animals having been lost at sea as a result of enemy action, half of the animals actually used in the operation were unconditioned horses, artillery pack type.

c. Theater headquarters furnished key staff officers and communications personnel for the unit headquarters.

d. The unit was accompanied by 9000 tons of supplies and equipment on departure from the United States. One years maintenance was received later on twenty-seven (27) different ships. The supervision of the forward displacement of these supplies fell mainly on the unit itself, a job for which it was ill equipped.

e. It was assumed that the theater commander would designate a commanding officer for the unit on its arrival in the theater in September however, this was not done and by virtue of seniority, the writer exercised command until the appointment of General Merrill to command on the 4th of January and again assumed command both times the commanding general was hospitalized.

f. The unit was trained in Central India until late in January 1944 at which time it was moved by train to Margharita in Assam. On February 6th it started its movement forward down the Ledo Road by night marching (for security reasons). On February 23rd, the unit had completed its shake-down march and was concentrated at Ningbyen in Upper Burma. Distance covered 123 miles of wet cold and extremely fatiguing hiking. This march effectively eliminated the weaklings and contributed greatly to the combat efficiency of the unit. From the 23rd of February until withdrawn from action all supply was by air and until May 15th everything that the unit used was dropped to it from C-47's or smaller aircraft. Missions in general assigned to this unit were to cut the Jap supply route, threaten his flank, precede Chinese Units and finally in conjunction with Chinese units to take and hold the all-weather airfield at Myitkyina.

g. All operations had to be planned with the following in mind:

- (1) The unit carried a very small amount of ammunition.
- (2) The heaviest weapon available was the 81mm mortar. (Later two 75mm pack howitzers were added).
- (3) All evacuation of wounded was by air. (L-type planes were very scarce for this purpose).

h. The above limitations therefore imposed the following requirements on the terrain selected for an attack.

- (1) A convenient dropping area within hand-carry or mule pack distance of the troops engaged.
- (2) An area, in the vicinity, which could be made into a landing field for L-type planes.
- (3) Terrain over which the SCR 284 would operate to base or to forward echelon headquarters of the Northern Area Combat Command, for relay, or to other relay stations. (Radio communication in some parts of Burma is very difficult even with the SCR 177).
- (4) Water for animals.

The above requirements were generally met. In one engagement wounded were hand-carried up to twelve miles over very difficult trails.

3. Equipment:

a. The unit was equipped with all the latest jungle equipment developed and in production at the time it left the United States. In general, the equipment was satisfactory and excessive in type, i.e., several types of certain items were issued and the most suitable type actually used in combat. For example, the pack board was tested and discarded in favor of the regulation pack.

4. a. Natives:

Natives were generally friendly and of great assistance at all times. The O.S.S. had been operating in this area for some time and were able to furnish guides and information not obtainable elsewhere. On entering that part of North Burma where the Japanese were active we were advised, "Shoot every native you see." Fortunately, we disregarded this advice and managed at all times to obtain and keep the respect of the natives who were more than willing, even anxious, to be of assistance.

b. We were very fortunate in having assigned to the unit two British officers who knew the native dialects, had some knowledge of the vicinity and who were thoroughly at home in that part of the world; Captain Darlington, a civil administration official, was well known in the Hukhuang Valley and Captain Girsham, a professional game hunter of the Northern Kachis Levies who was an experienced soldier and woodsman. These officers handled our relations with the natives in a very efficient and humane manner. On moving into the Valley of Tanai, we were fortunate in having the cooperation of Father James Stewart, an Irish priest, who had looked after the interests of the hill people during the Japanese occupation.

c. The natives were available for guide work, improving trails, as scouts and labor of all types. Equipment left along trails due to animals being lost was salvaged by them under supervision of the O.S.S. Excess equipment left at dropping areas was secured and stored for future use or used by the O.S.S. in equipping and training guerrillas.

d. Information furnished by native intelligence through the O.S.S. was in general reliable although not always accurate in detail. Properly evaluated, it was of tremendous importance at all times. Its accuracy usually depended on; the source, that is, the type of native who first reported the information, the interpreter through whom the information was transmitted, the length of time the native had to gather the information and the time delay in receiving the information. I can recall no instance where natives reported presence of Japanese that Japs were not found at the place reported although the size of the Japanese force was sometimes incorrectly estimated.

e. Due to previous native experience with Chinese units during their retreat through North Burma, we made it S.O.P. not to place any native guides directly under Chinese control. An American officer or N.C.O. was always placed in charge of any native guides furnished Chinese units during the times Chinese and American units were working together.

f. Payment for work done was generally made by an O.S.S. representative. Natives were, when possible, hired through the O.S.S. but cash was carried and was used to pay for native homes damaged by air drops, occasionally, to buy food, and more than once to pay a reward to a native who could prove he had killed a Jap.

4. a. Food:

From February 26th until withdrawn from action the unit subsisted almost entirely on the K ration. This ration is considered inadequate

in bulk. Occasionally the 10-1 ration was dropped but only when it was determined that a stop of more than two or three days was to be made in one place. No cooking utensils were carried. Any cooking that was done was accomplished in a canteen cup, a meat can or a helmet. The mountain ration was issued once but not considered suitable due to the high sugar and starch content, the large amount of water required and the lack of cooking utensils.

b. Living off the country or obtaining food locally was out of the question for two reasons:

- (1) The country affords little food suitable for American troops in the quantity needed.
- (2) The natives were very short of food and were barely able to supply their own needs. Many were being fed by the O.S.S. Little or no fruit and no crops of importance except rice grows north of a line through Mogaung - Myitkyina.

c. Water:

Water was always obtainable except high on the ridges. Invariably in the hills the trails are along the ridges and water points become of prime importance. All villages have springs or Kha (water) close by but not always does the spring afford sufficient water for a battalion with its animals. Many times animals had to go for long periods without sufficient water. Halazone only was used to treat the water and proved satisfactory where spring water or swift flowing streams were used. When near Chinese troops and using a sluggish stream, one battalion was soon nearly 100% affected with dysentery. Chinese sanitation is poor at best. The Chinese soldier bathes wherever and whenever the opportunity offers, therefore, beware of drinking any water from a stream in the vicinity of Chinese units. We could not always be sure that somewhere up-stream a Chinese unit was not polluting the water we were drinking. The surgeon was responsible for the establishment of water points. Guards were placed on all water points. In the jungle it is not always possible to build a fire to boil water nor to stop and boil suspected water when watering at a routine halt or when crossing a stream.

d. Food for Animals:

During the march down the Ledo Road long forage was fed both mules and horses. After February 23rd grain was dropped and fed nine (9) lbs per mule and twelve (12) lbs per horse. When planes were scarce or the situation dictated these rations were cut. Mules will eat and maintain weight using bamboo leaves as roughage but all horses do not take to bamboo and soon lose weight if grazing is not possible. If this campaign proved anything at all it proved the superiority of the mule over the horse as a pack animal in tropical country. Some doubt was expressed by certain officers about using mules close to the enemy. It was feared that the mules would bray. When properly worked down and tired after a good day's work they are invariably quiet at night and seldom bray unless separated.

No difficulty was experienced along these lines although occasionally certain animals were muzzled. (The mules of General Wingate's special force were all "debrayed" but I personally do not believe this operation is necessary where men handling the animals have experience. Debraying a mule is a rather delicate operation which cuts the animal's wind and should be done before final conditioning takes place if done at all).

5. Personnel:

The personnel of the unit were all volunteers for "hazardous duty". The officers were generally, of higher type than normally found in a unit of comparable size. Personnel from the South and Southwest Pacific were very nearly 100% either suffering with or had had malaria prior to arrival in India. It was necessary to give this battalion blanket treatment during the training period in India. These men know their business but among them were some who had volunteered for a "change of scenery". Individual discipline was not too good. The battalion from the United States was officered by men with a broader training experience than the officers of the other two battalions. The battalion from the Caribbean Defense Command was made up of men largely from the 33d Infantry who had had jungle experience in Trinidad and Panama. Men other than those from the States had been overseas for some time. None were allowed furloughs before being sent to India since this was a "hurry up" project. This fact caused some hard feeling and bad morale.

6. Training:

a. Training commenced on the boat enroute and never ceased. Administration was subordinated to training. Training was designed to develop small unit leaders, proficiency in; weapons, small unit tactics, scouting and patrolling, river crossings and communications. Disciplinary drills were few. Disciplinary drills and disciplinary training was slighted due to the lack of time. This was unfortunate. In my opinion, disciplinary drills and training has not lost its importance and is still valuable in developing leadership, the ability to command, team-work, the feeling of being "one of many" and a sense of rhythm and timing. Every man was given a chance to fire every weapon available except the mortar. Plenty of ammunition was available and all men became proficient in all types of weapons. This policy paid off in Japs killed. The normal ratio being one dead American to fourteen dead Japs with no artillery fire to help. Mortar crews became extremely proficient and men were willing to consider 50 yards ample safety from the fire of our own mortars.

b. Training in animal management was meager due to the late arrival of animals but once on the road the mule skinner and his mule became inseparable. Many men had had no animal experience prior to joining the unit but the mule skimmers were the unsung heroes of the entire campaign. As the battalions became depleted, more and more men found themselves leading mules until on May 15th the ratio of animals to men in one battalion was 1-3. This meant that most men in addition to their other duties had to help pack and care for an animal. This was especially true of and particularly hard on the communications and medical personnel whose normal work is accomplished during halts or in bivouac.

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7. Communications:

a. Communications were entirely by radio or L-type planes until the airfield at Myitkyina was taken. Radios used were the SCR 536, 300, 284, 177 and AMPRC 11. The 536 was not satisfactory due to the type of terrain and the distances between units. The SCR 300 proved very satisfactory. However, it is too heavy and uncomfortable to carry for long distances. It is believed that if the battery could be carried as a second load by another soldier and plugged in when needed the radio would be more flexible and the operator less conspicuous and more mobile. The 284 was found suitable for air-ground work and for working in the regimental net. It was used between battalions and reconnaissance platoons. The 177 set was not used forward, extensively, due to its weight. The AMPRC-11 was used as a long range set but had the following disadvantages:

- (1) The work required to crank the generator was excessive.
- (2) Its antenna must be set up according to the "compass" which normally requires a fair sized clearing not always obtainable. (There is a definite need for a small, light, rugged, portable gasoline or power driven generator. The hand generators supplied with 284 and the AMPRC-11 make too much noise. The silencer supplied was too bulky).

b. Visual signalling was not attempted to any great extent due to the nature of the terrain. Flares were not of much use since transportation was limited and ammunition carried in their place. Flashlights were invaluable but the plastic type had a tendency to short out. Battery supply was difficult in that adequate reserves could not be carried. Radios were repaired by unit personnel when possible, destroyed when beyond repair or flown back to base for salvage. New replacements were dropped without incident.

8. Medical:

Medical supplies were adequate. Each man was furnished an individual jungle kit (canvas case made in India), containing iodine, aspirin, atabrine, first aid packet, vitamin pills, bandaids, mosquito repellent and halazone tablets. This kit was excellent and contains approximately half the contents of the large jungle kit. A standard medical "drop" was adopted which contained a definite quantity of drugs and supplies which could be packed in an air drop container and kept on hand. The same system was used for veterinary supplies and in fact for all types of supplies.

9. Supply General:

a. Every effort was made to reduce radio traffic. "Standard Drops" were made up as outlined above and units of fire were established. Individual clothing was seldom requisitioned by radio. If shoes were needed, all men of a unit were dropped shoes. By prior planning and hard work on the part of the rear base personnel, supplies were kept packed in the warehouse ready for dropping. Extra dentures were made up for individuals and ready for dropping on request, extra glasses were obtained and dropped when

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needed. Code numbers were made up for all individuals and all items of supply but seldom used for requisitioning purposes. Large miscellaneous requisitions were usually transmitted by liaison plane messenger. A staff officer always flew in from the command post as soon as a halt was made and an air strip constructed.

b. Rations were prepacked in engineer sand bags in two-day and three-day combinations. This facilitated issue since to draw rations it was merely necessary to hand each man as he filed by in line either one or two bags depending on the number of days rations being issued. Combinations of C and K were packed in the three-day pack at times. This system of packing in engineer sand bags speeded up the placing of the rations in the pack and provided each man with a bag although the sand bag was seldom used for field fortification. This method of packing was varied as time went on but several days rations in the two-day and three-day pack were always available in the warehouse. Standard medical, veterinary and signal drops were always prepacked and on hand for emergency purposes.

10. K-9 Corps:

a. Fifteen dogs and fourteen handlers were received about two weeks prior to the fall of Myitkyina. The majority of the dogs were German shepherd type, the remainder great Danes. In the short time these dogs were used they proved very satisfactory in patrolling and mopping up operations.

b. Due to the wet weather it was found that from two to three hours work per day was the maximum that the dogs could perform efficiently. It is just as dangerous to rely on a tired dog as it is to rely on a tired soldier to give warning of prowling Japs.

c. The dog handlers in some cases failed to realize when their dogs were giving warning. A lone Jap wandered into the perimeter of headquarters after dark one night. The dog near the surgical hospital give due warning but the handler failed to investigate. The Jap realizing he had been idscovered, destroyed himself with a hand grenade.

d. It is felt that properly handled and not overworked, dogs can be used effectively. The presence of dogs on patrols and in bivouac tends to increase the sense of security on the part of the men.

11. Operations:

a. The unit crossed the Nam Tarung River on 26 February and by the first of March had made its first contact with the Japs and was seldom out of contact until the end of the campaign in August. No detailed discussion of the campaign will be attempted. The following points are of interest. The unit covered over 600 miles on foot, subsisting for the most part on the "K" or "C" ration. At no time did any individual in the unit have anything like a week's rest unless sent to the hospital. At times, sick were hand carried as far as fifteen to twenty miles before a suitable landing field could be found. In some cases, sick were left behind to be brought forward by native litter bearers under the supervision of medical personnel. The number of sick tended to increase as the unit approached an area in which

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an air strip could be constructed. This was a natural tendency. The men knew they had to keep up and would not report to the surgeon. On arrival in a bivouac area and after seeing the first plane land, the attendance at sick call jumped considerably. The unit surgeon approved all evacuations. All medical officers were conscientious in weeding out "gold brickers" of which there were very few. These had been eliminated in the march down the Ledo Road. Fevers of undetermined origin made up the bulk of the doubtful cases. Twice during the campaign, a medical officer was flown back to the 20th G.H. in Assam to determine whether or not excessive evacuation was taking place. Both times the medical officer brought back negative reports. Typhus developed and all undiagnosed fevers were suspect. Eventually, two hundred (200) cases of typhus developed resulting in thirty (30) deaths. In bivouacing in native villages, the area immediately adjacent to and under the house is to be avoided since that is the normal home of the native live stock. DDT was carried and used when necessary and available. Some physical exhaustion was encountered but was not excessive, until June. Medical officers knew their men and, in my opinion, were superior as a group as were the enlisted personnel of the medical detachments.

b. This unit in its operations worked very closely at times with Chinese units, however, in its initial engagement at Walabun, it was by itself. No until the attack on the city of Myitkyina proper was the unit at any time used to attack front line Japanese positions. The unit was neither organized nor equipped to perform assault missions. By the 8th of June the bulk of the 5307th Composite Unit (Prov) had been hospitalized. Approximately one third (1/3) of the battalion from the United States remained in the Myitkyina area until the city fell and was still fighting when the city was taken on 2 Aug 42. Early in June two combat engineer battalions were placed under my command. Later in that month, approximately two and a half (2½) battalions of replacements were received and less than three days after their arrival, some of these men were fighting. The Engineer battalions had very little combat training, the infantry replacements were barely organized, hastily equipped, short of NCO's and NCO material, wore no insignia and were far from a fighting team. Some MOS numbers had been changed when requisitioned and men had been assigned to jobs with which they were entirely unfamiliar. Men from FARTC's were assigned to infantry squads, etc. The battalions were organized according to boat rosters. One could hardly say that these units were organized.

The writer commanded a task force from April 23rd to May 20th consisting of one Chinese regiment, one depleted American battalion, one battery 75mm pack Howitzer (Chinese) and one Seagraves Surgical Unit. The observations which follow must be considered in the light of foregoing paragraphs:

Lessons Learned:

1. Leadership is still the most important factor in war.
2. Men do not like to serve under a "worried" leader. If you must worry, do it in the privacy of your own fox hole.

3. There is no substitute for adequate reconnaissance. Our Reconnaissance platoons operated up to 15-20 miles in front of columns or battalions at times.
4. Expect radios to fail to function in the jungle. Halts will often have to be made to permit radio contact under favorable conditions. Reception and transmission is best in North Burma during the middle of the day.
5. Evaluate native intelligence thoroughly but don't hesitate to act on it. Remember that any trail a native can get over a wet weather, to him, is a good trail.
6. A little work on a trail some timesaves hours and animals.
7. When a mule is down in water, keep his head up and cut his pack loose.
8. Bazookas fired against trees in the vicinity of Japs are effective when the chips are down.
9. Don't go out in front of a perimeter to relieve yourself when visibility is poor. Keep a can in your hole or use your helmet or shovel for this purpose. We lost a few men this way from our own fire.
10. When in a defensive position animals must be dug in if they are to survive.
11. Platoon leaders must check all firing at night. Green troops must not be allowed to fire at will. Fire control must be exercised by NCO's and platoon leaders. Count the grenades at dark and again at dawn. Count all the ammunition. Don't issue but eight rounds of cal. .30 or the equivalent to men who are trigger happy.
12. Booby traps should be used at night but all the normal precautions listed in the FM's must be taken. (Green troops suffered more casualties from their own booby traps than they inflicted on the Japs). This is especially true if moving forward with new troops. They forget where they put them and can't find them again even when they think they know where they are.
13. Japs will pull out if you get in their rear. They do not like to die any more than we do.
14. When the Jap counter-attacks hit him with everything you have. Our Nesei interpreters were invaluable and when placed in the front line could invariably predict the point and time of the next Jap assault by listening to the Jap officers shouting orders.
15. The Jap feels out a flank quickly and starts an envelopment rapidly.
16. Be aggressive and bold in the jungle but apply all the principles of scouting and patrolling and tactics. Our teachings are sound.

17. Against beaten down and non-aggressive Japs, weapons up to 75mm can be used at ranges under 100 yards for point blank fire.

18. If bothered by snipers spray the area to the front or flanks at first light and as often thereafter as necessary.

19. If Jap rafts are captured look underneath for materiel.

20. Take Jap prisoners if possible, they all talk. Most of them will volunteer to work for you if treated halfway decently.

21. Japs cut off the right arm of their dead for cremation if pressed for time. If really pressed for time they are satisfied with the right hand.

22. Use plenty of incendiaries against Jap positions especially in dry weather.

23. When in close contact in heavy country, blow down all large trees in vicinity of front line; otherwise, three bursts from your own artillery and mortars will be dangerous. The Jap knee mortar is most effective when a tree burst is obtained.

24. Psycho-neurotics must be eliminated quickly among green troops.

25. Men who suffer self-inflicted wounds should be severely disciplined unless the wound can be absolutely proven to have been suffered as the result of an unintentional accident.

26. Green troops must be handled severely until, natural leaders are developed, discipline is achieved and the troops become susceptible to leadership. Not all troops are susceptible to being lead. Some can be commanded, others may have to be driven. I have seen and commanded all of these classes. A unit is not a real fighting unit until it can be lead into battle. Such a unit has morale, self-confidence, good training behind it and is well equipped. Its inefficient officers and NCO's have been eliminated, it is a fighting team.

27. Provisional units should not be sent into combat. The very name implies a lack of permanency. A unit that is sent in to fight, is entitled to a unit designation, a set of colors and table of organization which provides the proper grade or rating for each individual. This unit had no approved T/O for its headquarters; consequently, many men were performing jobs of the next higher or two higher grades without hope of promotion.

28. Attacks launched without reserves have no punch and leave no initiative to the commander.

29. The principle of the main effort is still sound.

30. Air support is effective when higher staff echelons permit close cooperation between the pilot or squadron commander and the ground troops. A qualified officer in the front line with radio communication to the supporting air element is the only workable system found.

31. Air photos are invaluable in the type of operation conducted in Burma. Too often, however, they were received after the engagement rather than before.

32. Japs dug in under trees and bamboo are hard to get out. Shoot the bamboo or tree down, let it dry out in dry weather and burn it with incendiaries. In wet weather such positions must be literally demolished.

33. In reconnoitering Jap positions from the air you can see more from the rear of the Jap position than you can from in front. Positions encountered in Burma were admirably camouflaged from the front but the entrances to all pillboxes could be plainly seen from the rear in the air.

34. Oblique air photos are necessary and increase in value as the vegetation becomes thinned out due to bombing or shell fire.

35. When operating against Japs try to have a deception plan. Do the unusual. The Jap gets confused.

36. When fighting along trails always have your mortars within quick and easy supporting distance of the lead scouts between 100 to 200 yards is normal. Get them in action fast.

NOTES ON CHINESE UNITS

1. A Chinese unit on the march looks large compared to an American unit of the same potential fire power due to the large number of coolies present. The coolie, uniformed as is the soldier, carries no arms and is not expected to fight.

2. Chinese commanders of field grade and above impose drastic punishment on the spot even shooting, summarily, serious offenders.

3. Chinese units not fed won't move (except to the rear).

4. They have a liking for night firing and have a tendency to fire all night. One division commander ordered a certain amount of ammunition fired at 2000, 2300 and 0200 hours each night.

5. The Chinese have been fighting the Jap for over seven years. They resent advice and instruction from non-combat experienced Americans.

6. The Chinese officer delights in displaying academic knowledge.

7. Some officers establish their CP's on the highest ground in the vicinity for the purpose of making face. This is sometimes not the best place to be.

8. American officers not liked are annoyed at times by such disconcerting things as finding their carbine barrels plugged with leaves.

9. The Chinese soldier is brave to the point of rashness.

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10. Fire and movement or fire and maneuver is not combined. The Chinese system seems to be, fire, then move. The Japanese know this and stay down while the firing phase is going on, then meet the advancing Chinese with plenty of automatic fire.

11. Chinese cannot tell a Jap from a fellow countryman. This worries them considerably.

12. A Chinese soldier who deserts will not be shot but one who loses a rifle or any other important piece of equipment is usually shot without delay.

13. The Chinese can dig in more quickly than any other soldier in the world, in my opinion. In passing some small squatting type fox holes dug by Cachins, an American soldier was heard to say, "The Chinese took a ten minute break here."

14. Good Chinese soldiers and units are not committed where they will be shot up badly. On asking a Chinese battalion commander why he had his cooks up where his point should have been, his answer was, "But they are very bad cooks."

15. Chinese map reading ability is not good among the officers and is practically non-existent among the non-commissioned officers.

16. A Chinese regimental commander in moving forward in the attack removed his telephone from Force Headquarters and took up his wire. It was his only means of communication to the rear. Telephone and telephone orderlies seem to go together and if the orderly leaves, his phone is liable to disappear with him. This custom is very annoying.

17. American soldiers gladly carry Chinese wounded but Chinese soldiers lose face if forced to carry American wounded. This is coolie work.

18. Chinese lose face if assistance is offered. One soldier does not offer to carry another struggling soldier's pack nor would the struggling soldier accept an offer of assistance if made. This custom is carried over to the realm of tactics. If a unit on a flank is in difficulty adjacent units will not help it out or do so only after much pressure is brought to bear. The principle of mutual support and coordination of effort is difficult to put across. Their attitude seems to be "every man for himself."

19. The Chinese soldier is a great scavenger and picks up everything laying on the ground. We were told that this is not stealing. Called by any name it is a difficult proposition to cope with and a constant source of friction between Americans and Chinese especially if encouraged by the Chinese officers.

20. The Chinese soldier is a fatalist and seems to show no fear. However, he lives in a cruel world, has been subjected for generations to a half-starved existence with little or none of the comforts of life available to him. Never having owned any property of his own he has little respect for the property of others. Like many other nationalities he

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believes Americans have a never-ending source of supplies of all types.

21. Chinese interpreters are educated Chinese and are a source of trouble at times since they often color their translations according to their own ideas on the subject. Many American or English terms have no equivalent Chinese character making accurate expression difficult. A dishonest or opinionated interpreter can cause misunderstanding and mutual distrust.

22. Chinese are unpredictable. One company which had been on detached mission (not very successful) on joining its battalion which was engaged, launched an attack on its own and suffered approximately seventy five percent casualties. Since the company commander was killed the reason for this abortive effort will never be known. Small Chinese units during the attack on the city of Myitkyina disappeared completely. Where they went or whether like the company mentioned above they went out on their own and were annihilated the writer cannot say. I do believe that some times small Japanese units from platoons down launch suicide "do or die" attacks on their own. It may be a queer oriental custom that we do not understand.

The above notes are based on observations of Chinese units that had had little contact with Americans previous to their employment in Burma. No attempt is made to mention all the good points of the Chinese soldier which have been given wide publicity; rather, an attempt has been made to point out certain characteristics that are not generally known to the average American officers.

/s/ Charles N. Hunter,
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