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BOOK REVIEWS

A Multipolar World as Seen by Russia and China: International Challenges

Vladimir PORTYAKOV

I

Considering unacceptable to join the Euro-Atlantic community of developed countries as a junior partner, the Russian Federation declared its adherence to the principle of multipolar world as early as in the first half of the 1990s. This orientation is still valid. The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation endorsed by the country's President on July 12, 2008, characterized the emerging "multipolar tendency" as the "fundamental trend of modern development." The Strategy of National Security of the Russian Federation up to the year 2020 endorsed on May 12, 2009, defines Russia as a "key subject of the multipolar international relations being formed."[1]

In China the thesis about the cessation of the existence of the bipolar world system after the disintegration of the U.S.S.R. and the world's entry into the "period of multipolar development" was first made public by Jiang Zemin in April 1992 and actively propagated throughout the 1990s. In July 1995 the Chinese leader said that "the modern world was going toward a multipolar structure and the epoch when one or two powers or groups of great powers determined world affairs and the destinies of other states had passed never to return." In April 1997 Jiang Zemin pointed to the "accelerated development of the multipolar tendency both at the global and regional levels in the political as well as economic spheres."[2]

The adherence of both Russia and China to the principle of a multipolar world can clearly be seen in communiques and joint declarations on the results of the reciprocal visits of the two heads of state in the 1990s (September 3, 1994, April 25, 1996, April 23, 1997, November 10, 1997, November 23, 1998).[3] Indicative in this respect is the title of the document of April 23, 1997: "The

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V. Sabanov had graduated from the Chinese section of the Narimanov Moscow Institute of Oriental Studies, V. Sidikhmenov and S. Lozin had graduated from the Oriental department of the Far Eastern University in Vladivostok, P. Lelyakov, M. Yakovlev and myself had graduated from the Military Institute of Foreign Languages, as to K. Lepeshinsky, Chinese was his mother tongue. V. Sidikhmenov regularly spoke at meetings before local people in perfect Chinese.

I still remember my Chinese colleagues Zhang Muliang, Guo Jingtian, Song Shusheng, Ouyang Hui, Liu Hewen, and others; they were excellent translators and very kind persons.

The years of my life and work in China, my contacts with Chinese specialists and common people left very vivid memories, proved a great school for me as a scholar of China, and predetermined my further destiny. I fell in love with the industrious, disciplined and wise Chinese people, admire their rich cultural wealth, and continue to improve my humble knowledge of China and its language even now.

P.S. V. Antonov returned from the PRC to Moscow in May 1955. Having quitted the Soviet Army in the rank of captain, he continued his Chinese studies. In 1955-1957 he worked at academic institutes, in 1957-1987 he was employed as an administrative assistant at the department of the CC CPSU for connections with the communist and workers' parties of the socialist countries. Since 1987 Vladimir Antonov has been working at the Institute for Far Eastern Studies, RAS, and is at present at the Center of Scientific Information and Documents of IFES, RAS. He made a substantial contribution to Soviet and Russian Sinology while taking part in working on the Great Chinese-Russian Dictionary edited by Professor I. Oshanin. V. Antonov is one of the authors of the 5th volume of the work *AUCP(B), Comintern and the Chinese Revolution* and also the 4th volume of the encyclopedia *Spiritual Culture of China*.

The Chinese Army in the Burma Campaigns of World War II (1942-1945)

Aleksandr YURKEVICH

Abstract: The article is devoted to the actions of Chinese formations against the Japanese Army in the Allies' Burma campaigns, conducted to reestablish the overland route for military supplies to China. The Allies' strategic thinking and clashes of interest in preparing these operations is examined. In the author's opinion, the successes in Burma could not have been repeated on Chinese territory, since the Chinese troops in Burma were operating as part of a unified, sophisticated military operation, the likes of which did not exist in China.

Keywords: *China, World War II, Army of the Chinese Republic, Burma campaigns, Stilwell*

The participation of Chinese formations in Allied troop actions in Burma from 1942 to 1945 is not an episode that is particularly well-studied among historians, at least beyond the borders of the United States and Great Britain.[1]

This topic hardly deserves to be forgotten by historical scholars. It is especially interesting from two points of view. First of all, the operations in Burma were a rare example of successful offensive actions by Chinese troops against the Imperial Japanese Army. Second, these campaigns were the result of a complex intertwining of competing strategies and interests, changing priorities, and even personal sympathies and antipathies among national and military leaders.

The main reason leading to the use of Chinese troops in Burma was the intention at first to maintain and then reestablish the overland route along which American arms and munitions, granted under Lend-Lease, were supplied to China.

Supplies to China depended on the Burma Road, which ran north from Rangoon to Kunming in Yunnan Province. The road could carry up to 30,000 tonnes of supplies a month, which was enough to sustain one American or British army

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corps. The actual transport conditions were such that out of every 14,000 tonnes of cargo shipped from Lasho in Burma, only 5,000 reached Chongqing; the rest were sold on China's black market.[2] Without this aid, however, it is doubtful that the Nationalist government would have survived. China's fate thus depended very much on the military situation in Southeast Asia.

An American-British-Dutch-Australian High Command was set up under General (later Field Marshal) Archibald Wavell, commander of the Indian Army, to coordinate the defense of Southeast Asia. Allied troops had to repel a Japanese offensive against Burma as early as the end of 1941. On December 11, 1941, the Imperial 15 Army began advancing from the Kra Isthmus deep into Burmese territory. In the near-impassable conditions of the terrain and the poorly developed road network, the lightly-armed Japanese infantry, which was able to advance through swamps and jungles, had an advantage over the British who, with their heavy hardware, were tied to the roads. Chiang Kai-shek had by this time offered to aid in the defense of Burma, but the Allies at first declined Chinese assistance.[3] Only in January did the 5th and 6th Nationalist armies move into Burma, followed by the 200th Division, the sole mechanized unit remaining to China.

In Burma, the operations of this group became one of the main worries of Lt. Gen. Joseph Stilwell, head of the American military mission after Pearl Harbor and China's official declaration of war against Japan. He also became Chief of Staff for the Allied Military Command of China, the United States, Great Britain, and the Netherlands, and was formally in charge of the Chinese Army's headquarters together with General He Yingqin (since Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek assumed the post of Supreme Allied Commander of the Chinese Theatre of Operations.[4] At a meeting with Stilwell on 6 March, Chiang, it would seem, agreed to place the Chinese expeditionary forces in Burma under the American's command. In fact, Chiang appointed him an honorary general and began to treat him appropriately. Stilwell's chief of staff, Luo Zhuoying, and the other Chinese commanders communicated directly with Chiang Kai-shek and carried out the American's orders only with Chiang's approval.[5]

The list of generals who were sent to Burma testifies to Chiang Kai-shek's extreme interest in the success of the operation. Almost all of them belonged to the so-called Huangpu Clique. This group in the Kuomintang embraced former cadets and officers from the Huangpu Military School founded in Guangzhou in 1924 with the assistance of the Soviet Union and headed by Chiang Kai-shek. Du Yuming, Gan Li-Chu, and Zhang Zhen, commanders of the 5th, 6th, and 66th armies, respectively, were members of Huangpu's first graduating class; Liao Yaoxiang, commander of the 22nd division, was a member of the sixth; and Dai Anlan, commander of the 200th division, was a member of the third.[6] The main hero of the Burma campaign, Sun Liren, commander of the 38th division (and later of the New First Army) was not a Huangpu graduate; rather, he graduated from the Virginia Military Institute and enjoyed the patronage of the "Americanophiles" in Chiang's inner circle. These generals' immediate subordinates

were mostly graduates of the Central Officers' School, the successor to the Huangpu school.[7]

The formations comprising the heart of Chiang Kai-shek's Central Army were created on the base of the school, allowing him to keep provincial generals out in the countryside. By 1942, the troops of the Central Army, having borne the brunt of the Japanese attack, had suffered tremendous losses and no longer held supremacy over the forces of local warlords. Chiang nevertheless decided to send his best units into Burma.

Once Chinese formations were committed, the overall number of Allied troops in Burma was 81,000: nine Chinese divisions (around 50,000), five Indian infantry brigades, a British armored brigade, and the six infantry battalions under Lt. Gen. T.J. Hutton. Their operations were supported by Chinese-American Air Group and several squadrons of the British RAF.[8]

This formidable group, almost equal to the Japanese one in military might, was inferior to the Japanese in terms of organization and the coordination of efforts. By the end of January, the 33rd and 55th divisions of the Japanese 15th Army had occupied Molamyain (Moulmein), a port to the southeast in the Andaman Sea's Mautam Strait. On February 22-23, they crushed the Indian 17th division at the bridge across the River Sittaung, and took Rangoon on March 7. On March 21, the Chinese 200th division took up defensive positions on the approaches to Taung on the Sittaung (around 200 km to the north of the southern coast), while the 17th Indian division was defending Prome on the Irawaddi (today's Pyay, around 250 km to the northwest of Rangoon).

The 200th division held Taung until March 31, repulsing attacks by the Japanese 55th division. These battles are considered some of the fiercest of the first Burma campaign. Sun Liren's 38th division also distinguished itself with its counterattacks, which saved surrounded British units. However, the desire of Chinese officers to keep losses to their units low reduced the effectiveness of Chinese combat operations, as did their lack of mutual support. Stilwell tried unsuccessfully to compel Gen. Du Yuming, commander of the 5th Army, to come to the aid of the 200th division.

The Japanese 18th and 56th divisions laid siege to Rangoon in March and April. They now had to mount an offensive along the central line of advance to Mandalay, an important transportation nexus in the center of Burma. On the eastern flank, the 56th division took Lasho (around 200 km to the northeast of Mandalay, along the Burma Road) on April 29. Mandalay fell on May 1. The Chinese 6th Army withdrew back into China through Taunggyi (halfway between Rangoon and Lasho) to the east, while the Chinese 66th Army, which had fought hardly at all, retreated to the north through Lasho, along the Burma Road. To the west, the Japanese 33rd division advanced as far as Prome. Over the same period, the Japanese Imperial Navy's First Fleet had pushed the British Eastern Fleet back to the African coast. Now vessels with cargoes bound for China were unable to dock in either Rangoon or even Calcutta.[9] In the north, Japanese troops

invaded the territory of Yunnan Province and took the cities of Tengchong and Lungling.

The volume of military cargoes to China dropped sharply. They totaled 80 tonnes in June and only 73 tonnes in July (under Lend-Lease, China should have received 3,500 tonnes of supplies in both May and June). Cargoes were shipped by rail from Bombay to Calcutta, and from there to Assam by narrow-gauge rail. From Assam, they went either by air or along near-impassable mountain roads through northern Burma.[10]

In mid-April, Stilwell embarked on a project that would eventually decide the success of operations in Burma. He proposed concentrating a 100,000-strong Chinese contingent in India, arming it through Lend-Lease, and training it with the help of American instructors. Stilwell was essentially basing his decision on the situation with military supplies: if it was impossible to bring arms to the troops, he would have to bring troops to the arms.[11] In addition, he now had the chance to bring these units under his own command.

Chiang Kai-shek approved the project. A training camp was set up in Ramgarh (Bihar State) to instruct the X-force, as this Chinese contingent was called in the operational planning of the China-Burma-India (CBI) Command.[12] Along with the 5th Army's 22nd and 38th divisions, now transferred to Indian territory (the 5th Army's 96th division was withdrawn into China), units of the 14th, 30th, and 50th divisions were later assigned to Ramgarh.[13]

Stilwell intended to subsequently create 30 divisions on the basis of these forces, which he proposed to equip, arm, and train in Ramgarh, and which would form the foundation of a new Chinese Army. The British supplied the Chinese troops with victuals, fuel, and lubricants, and provided ranges and training grounds for infantry, artillery, and tankers, expanded with the participation of Chinese servicemen. Weapons, munitions, uniforms, and medical supplies were provided by the Americans, to the same standards as for their own troops. The training centers and the logistics and technical support centers were run by American officers. Brigadier General Frederick McCabe (later replaced by Col. D.A. Yang) was placed in charge of the training program in Ramgarh.[14]

Frictions arose between the Chinese and American officers from the very outset. The Chinese insisted that their officers undergo training with instructors first, and that the officers would then train their own troops. It was also difficult for them to take criticism from instructors who had never been under fire.[15] The Americans were afraid that the Chinese officers' many years of experience fighting defensive battles would make it difficult to train them to undertake aggressive offensive actions. The instructors complained that the Chinese soldiers, who were used to poor equipment and irregular supplies, were continually forgetting about details such as canteens, entrenching tools, and pack animals; this was unacceptable to the Americans.[16]

In the words of the American historian F.F. Liu, the training methods used at Ramgarh "utilized every aid from films to Donald Duck comic books,"[17] i.e., the

main training methods were show and repeat. Colonel J.V. Slaney, in charge of artillery training, wrote most eloquently on this topic: "Thank God we don't speak Chinese, and we have no interpreters.... We show them and they copy us. They are the greatest mimics in the world and learn very quickly."[18] Colonel R.M. Kennan's trainees learned how to operate a 75 mm howitzer in a week, according to his reports. Browning machine guns and Bren light machine guns required more time to master, but the Chinese troops did so in record time, too.[19] In tactical exercises, emphasis was placed on mastering jungle operations and overcoming water barriers.[20] The base in Ramgarh became the model for training centers on Chinese territory, in Kunming and Guilin. Both private soldiers and noncommissioned officers were trained there, as were commissioned officers of all ranks.[21]

Along with the training of combat units in India, Stilwell proposed a broad program for reorganizing the army to Chiang Kai-shek. This would have included the merging of undermanned divisions and ridding the officer corps of those whom he considered incompetent and corrupt.[22] These proposals were largely identical to those that German advisers made in the early 1930s.[23]

Chiang at first welcomed the recommended changes, since they would have weakened his military rivals in the Kuomintang, but he was soon compelled to reject any attempts at dangerous innovations that would have involved him in a struggle with recent allies and subordinates. In a similar manner, encroaching on the authority and power of either his rivals or his allies, whether they were commanders of undermanned units or simply displayed incompetency, could have led to revolts and to some of the general officers going over to the enemy's side. It is quite true that, thanks to Lend-Lease, Chiang Kai-shek got a new channel for encouraging the loyalty of his generals, but the blockade substantially reduced the opportunities this channel offered.

Stilwell's immediate goal was to reestablish the overland route for delivering military cargoes to China. The plan proceeded from American political leadership and military command's precept so that the outcome of the war against Japan would be decided by operations on Chinese territory.[24] Stilwell recommended to U.S. Chief of Staff Gen. George Marshall that the Chinese contingent in India be reinforced with American units, and that an invasion of Burma with support from Chinese troops operating out of Yunnan be organized. Chiang Kai-shek unwillingly began to set up an auxiliary force there, dubbed the Y-force. True, he appointed the prominent Huangpu graduate Cheng Cheng, head of the Military Council's political department and former commander of the 6th Military Zone,[25] as the officer responsible for the contingent's training. Stilwell held Cheng in high esteem. The Y-force training program drawn up by Stilwell was, however, held back both by the high command's lack of interest and by the clashing ambitions and jurisdictions of Chinese generals Cheng Cheng and Lung Yun, the *de facto* master of Yunnan.[26]

Both Chiang Kai-shek and the American political leadership in 1942-43 were largely inclined to launch an air war against Japan from Chinese territory,

following the plans proposed by Brig. Gen. Claire Chennault, commander of the American Air Group in China (and formally one of Stilwell's subordinates). For Chiang, this offered the opportunity not to risk his troops and to await landings by the United States Army in China without fading from the American Establishment's center of attention. The political leadership's hopes for the success of the Allied air forces allowed the U.S. military high command to remain focused primarily on operations in the Pacific without being distracted into a secondary theater of war. Chennault drew his superiors a picture of crushing blows against Japanese aviation that would completely undermine its combat capability, turn Japan's industrial areas into ruins, and disrupt the communications of the Imperial Army. These promises made a deep impression both on Chiang Kai-shek and on U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt. In March 1943, Chennault was appointed commander of the U.S. 14th Air Force. The volume of deliveries made by "flying the Hump" during that period was 3,000 tonnes of cargo monthly, the lion's share of which went for the needs of aviators.[27]

In 1942-43, the Allies in no way had surpluses of men and equipment, and supplying one front meant denying another. In 1942, Rommel's breakthrough on the road to El Alamein meant that deliveries of aircraft and other military cargoes sent by sea to India via the Cape of Good Hope had to be diverted to Egypt. Marshall proposed sending the Chinese share of Lend-Lease cargoes to British India, so that the British could use them to retake Burma and open the Burma Road into China.[28] This was unacceptable to Chiang Kai-shek, for whom American hardware and munitions were necessary in China. On June 29, 1942, he threatened to withdraw from the war and presented a number of demands: that three American divisions be sent to India, that an air group in China be brought up to 500 planes, and that 5,000 tonnes of cargo be delivered to China every month via the air bridge from India.[29] Chiang's demands were at that time not entirely realistic.

The victory at Midway Island in July 1942 gave the American high command the confidence it needed to maintain the initiative by subsequently undertaking limited offensive operations. Plans for an operation in Burma therefore came in handy. The Americans considered it possible to partially satisfy the demands made by Chiang Kai-shek. A campaign to liberate Burma was planned for the winter of 1942; Chiang promised to support it with actions by troops from Yunnan. Considerable Japanese forces were meanwhile to be distracted by an Allied amphibious operation (BUCCANEER) in the Bay of Bengal in early 1943.

The planned British landings in North Africa, however, required ships before anything else, placing the operation in the Bay of Bengal in doubt. Besides, in Burma, under the wet and roadless jungle conditions, it was possible to carry on the fight only during the relatively cool autumn and winter season, before the onset of the hot period and the monsoon rains. For 1942-43, the British therefore set limited goals in Arakan (on the west coast) and in the north, postponing the operation to liberate Rangoon and the Irawaddy Valley until 1944. The Hukaung Valley in Upper Burma was designated the zone of operations for the X-forces.

The attempt at a British offensive in Arakan in 1942-43 failed as a result of successful counterattacks by Japanese forces. The main Allied offensive in Burma, labeled ANAKIM by Stilwell, was now planned for the winter season of 1943-44.[30]

In May 1943, however, the British delegates to an Anglo-American conference expressed general doubts over the wisdom of Operation ANAKIM and proposed a landing at Sumatra to disrupt Japan's supply of oil. These plans, which required the involvement of considerable numbers of ships and ground-based aircraft, threatened to derail the landing of Allied troops in France, which was the central point of American strategy. In the end, the British and the Americans reached a compromise, agreeing to a scaled-down version of ANAKIM in 1943-44, an operation to open the overland route from India to China, and postponement of the campaign to liberate Rangoon and the Irawaddy Valley until 1944-45.

Meanwhile, there were changes in the operational situation in southern China. In May and June 1943, the Japanese 11th Army, five divisions strong, began operations in Hubei with the aim of requisitioning the largest possible number of river vessels. Chiang Kai-shek, however, saw the Japanese actions as a threat to Chongqing and ordered Cheng Cheng to move the 70,000-strong Y-force group onto the territory of the 6th Military Zone in order to cover China's temporary capital.[31]

Along with the withdrawal of the Y-force from the border with Burma, Britain's position continued to threaten operation ANAKIM. At the August 1943 meeting between the heads of state of Great Britain and the United States, and the meeting that same month between representatives of their military high commands in Quebec, the British insisted on stepping up operations in the Mediterranean and came out against the actions in Burma, expressing doubts as to China's ability to play a decisive role in the war. The Americans nevertheless stood by their previous decisions regarding ANAKIM without making any substantial changes. Only the structure of the Allied military leadership in the region was altered: the Southeast Asia Command (SEAC) was established; it was headed by Vice-Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, with Gen. Stilwell as his deputy.

In the autumn of 1943, however, Stilwell, the main architect and proponent of the Burma operation, almost lost his opportunity to influence the situation. In the plans he submitted to Chiang Kai-shek for conducting the offensive operations of the Chinese armies, Stilwell first of all continued to insist on a radical reorganization of the Chinese Army; second, he suggested employing the Communist forces formally enlisted in the Nationalist Army. Chiang Kai-shek demanded Stilwell's dismissal. U.S. Army Chief of Staff Marshall and President Roosevelt stood by Stilwell; Chiang retreated, saying it was all a "misunderstanding" and redirecting his wrath toward his minister of foreign affairs.[32]

After the Quebec Conference, the Allied Combined Chiefs of Staff Committee (CCS) ordered that an offensive be conducted in northern Burma. The aim of the operation was to take the Hukaung Valley and the area around Mogaun and

Michina (the latter being a city in the north of the country where there was a crossing over the Irawaddy River, which bisects Burma from north to south, and the former being the settlement at which the road from Assam opens to the south through the Hukaung Valley at approximately the same latitude as Michina and roughly 50 km to the west of it). The overland route from North Assam to China was first of all supposed to join up with the earlier Burma Road farther north of Lasho, now occupied by the Japanese; second, Japanese fighter planes were forced out of the Mogaun area, making it safer to bring supplies from India into China by air, and allowing the tallest mountains to be bypassed from the south. The Chinese X-forces trained in India played a leading role in the operation. During preparations for the operation, Stilwell was forced to compete with Chennault, refusing him priority cargoes in favor of his plan to create a third group of Chinese divisions in Hunan (the Z-force), also equipped by the Americans.[33]

Ironically, it was in just this period that China's importance to the outcome of the war in Asia was reduced substantially. The U.S. Navy acquired several new *Essex*-class aircraft carriers during 1943, increasing its capabilities by an order of magnitude. The events in Europe and the Pacific put Burma on the far reaches of World War II. For Chongqing, however, desperate to solve its problems through the expansion of the American Air Group in China and the involvement of American ground troops, Burma was a front of the greatest possible importance.

The fate of the Burma operation was decided at the Cairo Conference between Churchill, Roosevelt, and Chiang Kai-shek, held on the eve of the October 1943 meeting between the leaders of Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union in Teheran. Chiang proposed rearming and retraining not 60 Chinese divisions, as Stilwell's plan called for, but 90 divisions. He supported Chennault's request to conducting air operations that would deliver 10,000 tonnes of supplies to China monthly, criticized the limited aims of the planned Burma campaign, and insisted that an amphibious operation be held in the Bay of Bengal immediately.

The position of the other belligerents with regard to China was, however, influenced by the need for the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan after the defeat of Germany. The Soviet Union thus promised to do in the future that which had been expected of China and was, according to all estimates, in a better position to accomplish than China. As a result, the British and Americans cancelled Operation BUCCANEER.[34]

The second Burma campaign began in October 1943 with an offensive by the Chinese 38th division in the Hukaung Valley. Stilwell left for Ledo (Assam) to command the operation. Under his command, in addition to the Chinese forces, was the 5307 Composite Unit (Provisional) of Brig. Gen. Frank D. Merrill (which would gain worldwide fame as "Merrill's Marauders"), made up of lightly armed Ranger-type units. Stilwell's forces were up against the Japanese 18th division, headquartered in Michina. The Japanese 56th division, occupying Lunglin, on the east bank of the River Salween in Yunnan Province, faced the 11 divisions of the

Y-force, whose participation in the campaign depended entirely on the goodwill of Chiang Kai-shek, now insulted over the cancellation of Operation BUCCANEER. The British contingent, the 4th Corps, whose area of responsibility was the Chinduin River Valley (flowing, like all of Burma's main rivers, from the north and flowing into the Irawaddy from the west a bit south of Mandalay's latitude), and the 15th Corps in Akiab (Sittowe, a port on the coast of the Bay of Bengal) was to join in the offensive only if it appeared likely that the Japanese forces in northern Burma would be reinforced.

The Japanese troops put up fierce resistance. The 38th division had to fight their way through enemy defenses around the village of Yupban Ga until the end of December. The Chinese commanders fought in their accustomed manner, avoiding risky maneuvers and scrupulously following their freshly-learned American book. At the same time, military historians have noted the level of organization of the Chinese units' actions, their mutual support, their steadfastness in repelling counterattacks, and their skillful use of artillery – those aspects of the military art that could never have been ascribed to ordinary units of the Kuomintang army earlier.[35] At the beginning of January, the enemy was driven out of Yupban Ga. Delays in the initial phase of the offensive, however, meant that the Chinese had to be satisfied with the taking of Valoubum, a settlement in the southern part of the Hukaung Valley, approximately 100 km northwest of Michina. The advancing forces were nevertheless followed by sappers laying the so-called Ledo Road, which was eventually to join up with the Burma Road.[36]

The operation in northern Burma compelled the Japanese high command to respond with active measures against the British forces in Arakan, beginning in February 1944. In March, they opened an offensive along the Imphal (in the central region of Manipur State)-Kohima (Assam) axis, the mission of which was to cut the Bengal-Assam railroad in the area of Dimapur, to the west of Kohima. The operation was meant to nullify the results of the northern Burma campaign, since trains were cut off along the same branch from Calcutta to Ledo, over which ran military cargoes for China, while central and southern Burma remained under Japanese control. In 1944, however, the Allies had air superiority, and the British forces that were cut off were given strict orders to hold their positions and await supplies and support from the air. As a result, the materiel for which Stilwell had been waiting went to the British. Under the pretext of a lack of results from operations in Burma, Churchill once again tried to disavow Stilwell's operation and pushed the idea of an offensive against Sumatra (Operation CULVERIN), but to no avail.[37]

Outside of Valoubum, a maneuver executed by Merrill's Marauders around the enemy's left flank, bringing them out in the Japanese rear, forced the Japanese to withdraw. In March, however, another such maneuver against Japanese units in the vicinity of Inkangahtoun (around 50 km to the northwest of Mogaun) ended with a retreat by the Americans into the jungle and swamps, where they remained until March 29, when Chinese units finally drove the Japanese out of

Shaduzup (25-30 km north of Inkangahtoun). Even after this, however, the Japanese 18th division held on a bit farther south, on the approaches to Kamain, for around two months. Finally, a raid by the 112th regiment of the 38th division, which had bypassed Seton (between Kamain and Mogaun) by going around the enemy's left flank, led to a rout of the Japanese through the jungle in the direction of Mogaun. Kamain fell on June 16, with Mogaun falling ten days later.

This was not enough to accomplish the offensive's mission, since the city of Michina remained under Japanese control. Stilwell ordered a separate group of forces, centered around the Chinese 30th division and Merrill's 5307 Composite Unit, to take Michina. On May 16 they reached Michina's suburbs. The Japanese, however, reinforced their troops with men from the Imperial 56th division. Troops of the Chinese 14th and 50th divisions joined in the siege. The Japanese garrison, no larger than 3,500 troops, held out until the beginning of August and was evacuated, avoiding capture. By the end of the siege, Merrill's Marauders had suffered such losses that they *de facto* ceased to exist as a combat unit.

The second campaign in northern Burma proved that properly trained and equipped Chinese units could fight open battles with the Imperial Army. The blockade against China, however, was still not lifted. The Japanese 56th division continued hold Lunglin in Yunnan, blocking the Burma Road, and offensive actions from Chinese territory by the Y-force would be needed to reopen it. Chiang Kai-shek, however, insulted once again that Lend-Lease supplies were being delivered to the British Army in Burma instead of to China, kept the Yunnan contingent from joining the battle.[38] Threatening to withdraw from the war, Chiang demanded $1 billion from the Allies. In response, Roosevelt in January 1944 threatened quite plainly to cut off supplies altogether if the Y-force did not cross the Salween River. On April 14, the Chinese high command gave its approval to launch the offensive.[39]

During this period, Chiang's staff was more concerned about Japanese actions in southern China. On January 17, Imperial Army Headquarters ordered that Operation ICHIGO be undertaken. The objective was to seize the Beijing-Hankou, Guangzhou-Hankou, and Hunan-Guangxi railroads, thereby threatening the airdromes used by the Americans in Hengyang, Lingling, Guilin, and Luozhou as well. In April and May, the Japanese easily took the Hunan section of the Beijing-Hankou railroad. Chennault, who had recently complained once again about the poor state of his air group's logistics, rushed to lay the blame on Stilwell, who had allegedly deprived the Z-force defending Hunan of American supplies.

On the Salween Front, the twelve divisions of the Y-force under the general command of Wei Lihuang were only around 40% up to strength with approximately 72,000 men. The Yunnan contingent lagged considerably behind the X-force in terms of arms, equipment, and combat training. The Y-force's 53rd and 54th armies, operating on the right flank, were to have taken Tengchong, to the west of Salween, from which a mountain road whose eastern end joined up with the Burma Road ran farther west to Michina. The taking of Tengchong allowed

the route from Michina to the Burma Road to be extended, and at least the section of the Road that ran from Salween north to the Mekong and beyond to be used for the overland shipping of cargoes from Assam. On the left flank, the 2nd and 71st armies were concentrated to strike in the direction of Lunglin (on the Burma Road approximately 80 km farther south than Tengchong).

On the right flank, Chinese troops took Salween the night of May 12, 1944. One month later, the desperately resisting Japanese would be driven out of Tengchong. The forces advancing on Lunglin, however, were thrown back by a counterattack. By the beginning of the rainy season, the Y-force, which had been compelled to cease active operations, was once again cut off from the X-force.

Meanwhile, the Japanese were finishing their operation in Hunan. On June 18, Chinese forces pulled out of Changsha. At the end of June, the enemy took the airdrome in Hengyang, out of which the American air forces had earlier operated, and occupied the city on 8 August. Having destroyed the remnants of the 27th Army Group to the southwest of it, the Japanese troops entered Guangxi, while their 23rd Army advanced to the north of Guangzhou. Stilwell referred to the situation that now attained in the south as a "mousetrap."[40]

Chiang Kai-shek added to the tension by threatening to redeploy the Y-force for the defense of Kunming if the X-force from Michina did not launch an offensive to the south, in the direction of Bamo. These threats exhausted the American leadership's patience. On September 19, the Chinese-Burma-India high command received a radiogram from the President of the United States, in which he demanded that Chiang "immediately reinforce" the army on the Salween and "step up its offensive," placing all available forces "at the unrestricted disposal of Gen. Stilwell."[41] The latter showed the radiogram to Patrick Hurley, Roosevelt's personal representative to Chiang Kai-shek. Hurley asked the General to soften the tone of the "proposal" before sending it on to Chiang. Stilwell, however, preferred to live up to his nickname of "Vinegar Joe" and to humiliate the Generalissimo, to whom he referred as "the Peanut" in his personal letters. (In American slang, a "peanut politician" was a petty, self-seeking politician of no particular importance.) In his diary, he proudly wrote "I've laid the Peanut low."[42]

This moment of celebration cost Stilwell dearly. A furious Chiang Kai-shek launched a campaign to force him into retirement. In October 1944, Vinegar Joe was recalled to Washington (frictions within the mission had also played a role), and Maj. Gen. (later Lt. Gen.) Albert Wedemeyer was appointed in his stead. At the same time, the Allied command structure in the China-Burma-India theater was completely overhauled, the CBITO being divided into Chinese and Indian-Burmese theaters of operations. The latter was placed under the command of British Lt. Gen. D.I. Sultan, and thus no longer fell under the formal purview of Chiang Kai-shek.[43]

The Chongqing government continued to display its military incompetence, putting an end even to the aviation plans of Gen. Chennault. Japanese troops forced the Chinese Army out of Hunan and Guangxi. In November, the Ameri-

cans' main airdromes (in Guilin, Luozhou, and Nanning) were lost, and the Japanese consolidated the territories they controlled in French Indochina with their zone of occupation in southern China.

The taking of Guilin and Luozhou created a threat to Guiyang, the heart of Guizhou Province, from which the road to Kunming led. This evoked fears on the part of Wedemeyer that the objective of the Japanese offensive might be to seize the Burma Road's terminus, which hypothetically could have knocked China out of the war. Wedemeyer proposed a plan to defend Yunnan's main road, calling for the creation of a second echelon of troops along its approaches in case the defense of Guiyang failed. To accomplish this, he proposed using the 57th Army, lifting its blockade of Communist bases in Shaanxi, and the 53rd Army, moving it from the Salween Front. He also intended to transfer the distinguished 22nd and 38th divisions from Burma into Kunming. The Chinese-American high command, headed by Minister of War He Yingqin, a member of the Huangpu Clique, was to coordinate the operations of the Y- and Z-forces.[44]

As a result, the 22nd and 14th divisions were transferred by air from Burma to Kunming at the beginning of January 1945.[45] The Y-force's 53rd Army also began its advance into Yunnan. The Japanese, however, demonstrated that Kunming was not their objective by starting to transfer their 11th Army from Guizhou to Guangdong. Operation ICHIGO was completed in January 1945. This allowed the Allies not to divert forces from the third Burma campaign, which had already begun under Stilwell.

In September 1944, as the British 14th Army was repelling a Japanese offensive in Arakan and in the Chingduin Valley, the Chinese troops in Yunnan and the Allied units in northern Burma came into contact with the Japanese 33rd Army (the 56th division in Lunglin, the 18th in Bamo, and the 2nd in reserve in Lasho). In October, the New First Army, under the command of Sun Liren (the 38th, 30th, and 50th divisions), advanced to the south of Michina to attack Bamo from the east. The British 36th division and the New Sixth Army of Liao Yaoxiang (the 14th and 22nd divisions, later transferred to Yunnan) advanced to the southwest, toward Pinwe (around 100 km to the west of Bamo) in the Indo region. Allied aircraft had complete air superiority, allowing units to remain in communication with one another and to be resupplied from the air. On 30 November, the British took Pinwe and continued to advance down the Irawaddy. By the middle of November, the two Chinese armies had surrounded Bamo and the enemy was forced to surrender on December 15.

By this time, the Y-force in Yunnan had attacked the Japanese and driven them from Chinese territory into the border regions surrounding Wanting district, (around 200 km to the north of Lasho). The rapid advance of the New First Army, which had liberated the area between Bamo in the west and Wanting in the east in December 1944 and January 1945, and then Lasho in March, came as a surprise to the Japanese, who had learned from radio intercepts about the transfer of two divisions from Yunnan. The overland route from Ledo thus acquired the section from Bamo to Mon Yu (a settlement to the south of Wanting near the junction of the so-called Ledo Road and the Burma Road), which could be used at any time of year. Transports from Assam were moving along this route as early as January, the first of them reaching Kunming on February 4, 1945. The blockade of China was over. Building on their success, the British took Mandalay in March and Rangoon in May.[46]

The second and third Burma campaigns had lasted 17 months. Altogether, the X-force had marched more than 600 km from their base in India to their final area of operations without losing a single battle. Stilwell summed up their success in his own soldierly manner:[47] "The Chinese troops have been grand – and they will do what I say now. Their tails are up and they tear into the Japs with full confidence that they can beat the hell out of them." Stilwell asserted that the Japanese had lost more than 20,000 men killed in action alone in battles with the X-force.[48] Altogether, the Chinese units had, along with Merrill's Marauders, accounted for 75,000 dead and wounded enemy soldiers and officers, with 3,023 Japanese taken prisoner.[49]

To a considerable degree, the success of the Chinese forces was achieved because they were an innovative, well-run, unified military organization, both in training and in battle. The American project, one element of which was the arming and training of the Chinese contingent in India, was based on the possibility of creating such an organization in China through strong political resolve. Left unconsidered was the weakness of the internal military and political balance, which could have been irreparably damaged as a result of such resolve. The Burma triumph could thus have hardly been duplicated on Chinese territory.

The operations in Burma were executed through a comprehensive coordination of interests and efforts, and achieved objectives of key importance to the Allied nations whose troops took part in these campaigns. They led to the reopening of the overland supply route to China, reinforced the shaky authority of the Chongqing Government, and drove the Japanese Army from British possessions in South Asia, thereby depriving Japan of an important strategic staging area. The success of the Burma campaigns helped bring final victory for the Allies, amply paid for with the blood of frontline soldiers both Western and Chinese, a bit closer.

NOTES:

1. In the Russian literature, this topic is hardly ever raised, while in China, a certain interest has been expressed in it only since the 1980s, and then after a long pause. This was largely due to political reasons. For Soviet historians, the Chinese Army in the Burma campaigns of World War II (1942-1945) and the expelling of the Japanese from Burma was one episode in the fight against colonial domination, and the main achievements in this struggle belonged to Chiang Kai-shek's regime (abhorred in the Soviet Union) and the British. The same reasons make it difficult for PRC historians to evaluate the actions of the Chinese troops in Burma. In the article "World War II" in the "Military Affairs" [Jiunshi, Vol. 1] section of *The Great Chinese*

Encyclopedia [Zhongguo da baike quanshu] (Zhongguo da baike quan shu chubanshe, Beijing, 2002) only a few lines mention the participation of Chinese troops in the 1944-1945 liberation of Burma, while the article "The War of Resistance against Japan" ignores the Burma operation altogether. Luo Huanzhang and Zhi Shaoceng's *The Chinese Nation's War of Resistance against Japan* [Zhonghua minzude kangri zhanzheng] (Beijing, 1987) devotes short chapters and paragraphs to the Burma campaigns (pp. 347-355, 446-452]. The Taiwanese authorities' inattention to the same events also had political undertones. Their main hero, Gen. Sun Liren, has been labeled an oppositionist since 1955. Only after more than 30 years were the first books on him published: Song Kegang, *Zhongguo jun hun: Sun Liren jiangjun Miandian zuozhan shilu* [The Soul of the Chinese Army: True Notes on the Military Actions of Gen. Sun Liren in Burma] (Taipei, 1993).

2. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, *Stilwell's Mission to China. The United States Army in World War II, Series 9: China-Burma-India Theater,* Washington, 1953, Vol. 1, pp. 43-45; E.L. Dreyer, *China at War, 1901-1949*, London.; N.Y., 1995, p. 267.
3. E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 267.
4. F.F. Liu, *A Military History of Modern China, 1924-1949*, Princeton, N.J., 1956, p. 177; C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, op. cit., *China-Burma-India Theater*, Washington, 1953, Vol. 1, pp. 32-35; E.L. Dreyer, *China at War, 1901-1949*, London; N.Y., 1995, p. 267.
5. E.L. Dreyer, *China at War, 1901-1949*, London; N.Y., 1995, p. 271; C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, op. cit., p. 118.
6. *See*: Wang Yongjun, *Huangpu junxiao san bai ming jiang zhuan* [Three Hundred Biographies of Famous Generals Who Graduated from the Huangpu Military School], Nanning, 1989, pp. 104-105, 200-206, 390-391, 803-806, 835-839.
7. *See*: F.F. Liu, op. cit., pp. 184-185.
8. F.F. Liu, op. cit., p. 212. According to different data, the number of Chinese troops alone was around 100,000. *See*: Luo Huanzhang and Zhi Shaoceng, *Zhonghua minzude kangri zhanzheng* [The Chinese Nation's War of Resistance against Japan], Beijing, 1987, p. 355.
9. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, op. cit., pp. 93-148; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 271.
10. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, op. cit., p. 167.
11. F.F. Liu, op. cit., p. 184.
12. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, op. cit., pp. 211-220; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 273.
13. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, op. cit., p. 143.
14. F.F. Liu, op. cit., p. 184; Song Kegang, op. cit., p. 29.
15. Song Kegang, op. cit., p. 185; Ho Yung-chi., *The Big Circle*, New York, 1948, p. 45.
16. F.F. Liu, op. cit., p. 185.
17. Quoted from F.F. Liu, op. cit.
18. Quoted in F.F. Liu, op. cit., p. 186; F. Eldridge, *Wrath in Burma*, New York, 1946, p. 142.
19. F.F. Liu, op. cit., p. 186; *China after Seven Years of War*, New York, 1945, p. 208.
20. Song Kegang, op. cit, p. 29.
21. F.F. Liu, op. cit., pp. 181, 189-191.
22. F.F. Liu, op. cit., p. 181; C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, op. cit., pp. 372-373.
23. E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 272. For more detail, see: F.F. Liu, op. cit., pp. 60-70.
24. *See*: F.F. Liu, op. cit., p. 275; Tang Tsou, *America's Failure in China, 1941-1950,* Chicago, 1963, pp. 57-87.
25. Wang Yongjun, op. cit., p. 341.
26. E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 277.
27. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, op. cit., p. 253; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 276.
28. E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 272.

29. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, op. cit., p. 172; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 273.
30. E.L. Dreyer, op. cit.
31. Soon the Japanese, having fulfilled their mission, simply withdrew to their previous positions. They lost 1,125 dead and 3,636 wounded. Chennault, however, saw their withdrawal as a consequence of the brilliant actions of Chiang Kai-shek's army: according to his report, the Japanese lost 30,000 of their 100,000-strong contingent. He thus convinced his superiors that his frontline airdromes in Hunan were reliably defended and could be used to launch the promised total air war. *See*: C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, op. cit., pp. 301-310, 335-337; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 278.
32. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, op. cit., pp. 258, 367-381; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 279.
33. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland. "Stilwell's Command Problems," *The United States Army in World War II, Series 9: China-Burma-India Theater*, Washington, 1956, Vol. 2, pp. 15-48; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 280.
34. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, "Stilwell's Command Problems," pp. 46-82; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., pp. 281-282.
35. E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 282.
36. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, "Stilwell's Command Problems," pp. 119-159; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., pp. 282-283. For more detail, see L. Anders, *The Ledo Road: General Joseph W. Stilwell's Highway to China*, Norman, 1965.
37. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, "Stilwell's Command Problems," pp. 160-172; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 283; M. Harries and S. Harries, *Soldiers of the Sun: The Rise and Fall of the Imperial Japanese Army*, New York, 1991, pp. 406-414.
38. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, "Stilwell's Command Problems," pp. 74, 109-116; Dreyer E.L, op. cit., p. 284.
39. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, "Stilwell's Command Problems," pp. 297-314; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 285.
40. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, "Stilwell's Command Problems," pp. 317-374; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., pp. 285-287.
41. Quoted from E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., p. 288.
42. Quoted from E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., *See also:* C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, "Stilwell's Command Problems," pp. 433-446; F.F. Liu, op. cit., p. 180.
43. M. Byrd, *Chennault: Giving Wings to the Tiger*, Tuscaloosa, 1987, p. 179; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., pp. 277-288, 300.
44. C.F. Romanus and R. Sunderland, "Time Runs Out in the CBI," *The United States Army in World War II, Series 9: China-Burma-India Theater*, Washington, 1959, Vol. 3, pp. 56-64; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., pp. 300-301.
45. E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., pp. 301-302.
46. C.F. Romanus, and R. Sunderland, "Time Runs Out in the CBI," pp. 77-141, 165-168; E.L. Dreyer, op. cit., pp. 302-303; Song Kegang, op. cit., pp. 86-117.
47. Quoted from F.F. Liu, op. cit., p. 189.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid., p. 215.