

Analysis on the Supplies Raising and Transportation of the Eighth Route Army Office in Chongqing

WANG Jin^{[a],*}

^[a]Chongqing Hongyan Revolutionary History Museum, Chongqing, China.

*Corresponding author.

Supported by the National Cultural Heritage Administration Project: Demonstration project of revolutionary history museum education into campus.

Received 9 April 2020; accepted 11 June 2020
Published online 26 July 2020

Abstract

The second cooperation between the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Communist Party of China (CPC) contributed to the establishment of Eighth Route Army offices in various places. As an office established in the KMT-controlled area, the Chongqing office's one key assignment was to request military pay and supplies from the Military Commission of the KMT Government, to seek assistance from international friends and overseas Chinese, and to procure and transport military and medical supplies, which played a helpful role for our army's logistics supply.

Key words: Office; Supplies; Raising; Transportation

Wang, J. (2020). Analysis on the Supplies Raising and Transportation of the Eighth Route Army Office in Chongqing. *Canadian Social Science*, 16(7), 15-20. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/11779>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/11779>

1. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EIGHTH ROUTE ARMY OFFICE IN CHONGQING

The Eighth Route Army office in Chongqing was a military representative body of the Eighth Route Army in Chongqing, the seat of the KMT government, during the stalemate phase of the Anti-Japanese War. It was also an important part of the Southern Bureau of the CPC Central Committee.

On May 19, 1938, the Japanese army captured Xuzhou. On June 9, the KMT's organs in Wuhan began to retreat by moving the party and government organs to Chongqing while the military organs to Hunan. On August 1, the KMT Central Committee decided to remove all offices of the top authorities in Wuhan and relocate them to Chongqing with a deadline. According to the instructions of the CPC Central Committee on making preparations for evacuation from Wuhan, the Yangtze River Bureau of the CPC Central Committee in Wuhan sent Zhou Yi and Zhang Yuqin to Chongqing in late August to prepare for establishment of the Eighth Route Army's communications office. After Zhou Yi and Zhang Yuqin arrived in Chongqing, they rented No. 70 Jifang Street in the downtown and established the communications office of the Eighth Route Army in Chongqing, with Zhou Yi as the director. During this period, the communications office actively carried out Anti-Japanese activities and united front work. It also took charge of the Chongqing branch of Xinhua Daily, which created favorable conditions for the establishment of the Eighth Route Army office in Chongqing. On the eve of the fall of Wuhan in late October, the staff of the Eighth Route Army office in Wuhan was evacuated by two routes: some were led by Li Kenong to Guilin via Changsha and Hengyang; the other were taken to Chongqing by Qian Zhiguang, Director of the Eighth Route Army office in Wuhan. After arriving in Chongqing in January 1939, Qian Zhiguang established the Eighth Route Army office in Chongqing (hereinafter referred to as the Chongqing Office or the Office) still at No. 70 Jifang Street, and leased No. 30 Mianhua Street as a residence and office for some of the staff. Under Office Director Qian Zhiguang, and Deputy Directors Zhou Qia, Xue Zizheng, Zhang Yuanpei, there were five sections including the Manager Section, General Affairs Section, Transport Section (also known as Traffic Section), Document Section, and Safe Care

Section. The Manager Section took charge of financial income and expenditure, and its chiefs were Lai Zulie, Liang Longtai and Wang Huasheng successively. The Transport Section took charge of transporting supplies and cadres, and its chiefs were Liu Shu, Wu Zonghan and Long Feihu successively. The General Affairs Section took charge of security and logistics, headed successively by Shi Weiran, Qiu Nanzhang, Chen Yuwen and Mou Aimu. The Document Section took charge of paperwork, document dispatching and receiving, headed successively by Liu Shijie, Zhu Yujin and Zhu Hanmin. The Safe Care Section took charge of radio liaison and transmission of confidential documents and telegrams, headed successively by Lu Jingru and Tong Xiaopeng.

In mid-December 1938, Zhou Enlai arrived in Chongqing from Guilin. On January 13, 1939, the CPC Central Committee approved the list of the standing committee members of the Southern Bureau of the CPC Central Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Southern Bureau). On January 16, the Southern Bureau was established with Zhou Enlai as the secretary. The Southern Bureau shouldered the responsibility of leading the CPC organizations in southern China, Hong Kong and Macao. Since the KMT did not allow the CPC organizations to exist in the KMT-controlled area, the Southern Bureau could only be secretly located in the Chongqing Office. Qian Zhiguang, director of the Eighteenth Route Army in Chongqing, explicitly discussed the relationship between the two organs in an article entitled “Memories of the Fighting Years of the Eighteenth Route Group Army Office in Chongqing.” The Eighteenth Route Army office in Chongqing “was under the direct leadership of the Southern Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and constituted an integral part of the Southern Bureau.” he said, “The Office, on one hand, dealt directly with the KMT authorities, negotiating and handling various matters relating to the Eighteenth Army Group and the New Fourth Army. On the other hand, it also handled all assignments entrusted to it by the Southern Bureau.”¹ A special relationship was formed between the Southern Bureau and the Office. Internally, the Office was under the leadership of the Southern Bureau. All important matters of the Office, such as the core work, personnel arrangement, the increase or decrease of institutions, etc. for each period, were determined by the Southern Bureau, while all administrative, logistical and security of the Southern Bureau were at the responsibility of the Chongqing Office. Externally, the Southern Bureau was based on the Office and much of its work was carried

out in the name of the Office. In this way, the Chongqing Office played a dual role: as the representative body of the Eighth Route Army (also the New Fourth Army) to the outside and as an office of the Southern Bureau to the inside.

According to the agreement between the KMT and the CPC, the military pay, weapons, ammunition and other military supplies were supplied by the Military Commission of the KMT Government after the main forces of the Red Army were reorganized and marched to the Anti-Japanese front during the Anti-Japanese War. These tasks were undertaken mainly by offices in Nanjing, Wuhan, Xi’an and Chongqing.

The main duties of the Chongqing Office included negotiating with the military authorities of the KMT government for military pays, equipment and supplies for the Eighth Route Army, seeking assistance from international friends and overseas Chinese, and making procurements.

2. REQUEST MILITARY PAY AND SUPPLIES FROM THE MILITARY COMMISSION OF THE KMT GOVERNMENT

In the early Anti-Japanese war, the KMT and the CPC maintained normal relations. As agreed by both parties, the Military Commission of the KMT Government issued military pay and supplies to the Eighth Route Army every month. From September 1937, the KMT government gave 500,000 yuan per month to the Eighteenth Army Group. “From September 1937 to October 1938, the Wuhan office received from the KMT Government military pay amounting to 6.55 million Fabi (the paper money issued by KMT), more than 730 firearms, over 1,300 cases of ammunitions, 46,000 sets of clothing, 35,000 boxes of medicines, and some medical devices.”² The Eighth Route Army and the KMT army should be “equally treated” in the distribution of weapons and equipment, medicine and health care, and other military supplies of all kinds. For the first two years, the KMT Military Committee also provided military pay and a small amount of ammunitions and medicines. From the KMT Military Committee, the Chongqing Office collected monthly military pay for the Eighth Route Army, which was then distributed to relevant units and regions according to the regulations of the CPC Central Committee. At the same time, the Eighth Route Army often reported to the KMT Government’s Military Commission for additional demands for urgently needed firearms, ammunitions, medicines, communication equipment, etc., so that a small

¹ “Offices of the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army in Various Places (1)”, compiled by Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Historical Materials Series Editorial and Review Committee, Beijing, Military Science Press, 2009, p. 817. Originally published in the History of the Communist Party, Volume 14, printed by the Collection Committee for Party History of the Communist Party of China in May 1985.

² “Offices of the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army in Various Places (1)”, compiled by Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Historical Materials Series Editorial and Review Committee, Beijing, Military Science Press, 2009, p. 40.

amount of ammunitions and equipment could be received and forwarded to the front troops. Later, the KMT Military Committee allocated the military pay, ammunition and medicine of the Eighth Route Army to war zones to which they belonged for collection, but the war zones often used various excuses to delay in issuance. The Chongqing Office took on the duty to follow up and negotiate with relevant departments of the KMT Government. "At that time, the director of the munitions department was called Zhou Kaiyan. In 1927 when he was the Liangzhe Salt Commissioner, Qian Zhiguang worked in his place. Qian Zhiguang also accompanied Ye Jianying to the Military Supply Department to meet Zhou Kaiyan and promote the CPC's policies. Therefore, Qian Zhiguang had many acquaintances in the Military Supply Department. All these people were helpful."

In October 1939, the KMT diehards suspended the military pay of the Eighth Route Army during the first anti-communism climax. With the well-grounded arguments of the Eighth Route Army headquarters and after a number of negotiations of the Eighth Route Army in Chongqing, the Military Commission of the KMT Government was forced to agree to reimburse the military expenses owed to the Eighth Route Army. "In 1939, the Chongqing Office received 8.4 million yuan (Fabi) in military pay and 10 tons of ammunition from the KMT Government."³ On November 19, 1940, when Li Hua, Deputy Director of the office in Shaanxi, went to the Military Commission's Military Supply Agency in Shaanxi to ask for the Eighth Route Army's military expenses, the agency's personnel told him that, by order of Staff Chief He Yingqin, the Eighth Route Army's military expenses would be suspended from this month, that is, the 200,000 yuan not received in October would also be suspended. The office in Shaanxi immediately reported to the CPC Central Committee and the headquarters of the Eighth Route Army. On November 29, Zhu De and Peng Dehuai called He Yingqin on the suspension of military pay to lodge their strong protests. The offices in Chongqing and Shaanxi continued to pursue the matter to no avail. Subsequent to the South Anhui Incident, Wang Weiheng, Director of the Seventh Military Supplies Bureau of Xi'an Military Supplies Agency, who was in charge of Hu Zongnan's military supplies and also a fellow countryman of Qian Zhiguang, told the Qian: "The KMT will not pay you any longer." (Wang, 1993, p.178) Qian Zhiguang immediately reported to Ye Jianying, who told him to draw up a telegram to report to the CPC's central government. As expected, the salaries of the Eighth Route Army were ceased soon afterwards.

³ "Offices of the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army in Various Places (1)", compiled by Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Historical Materials Series Editorial and Review Committee, Beijing, Military Science Press, 2009, p. 927.

After the South Anhui Incident, the CPC delegation demanded the continuation to reimburse military expenses as one of the important conditions of negotiation. On April 20, 1941, Mao Zedong called Zhou Enlai: "May I ask the KMT if they are still prepared to pay salaries to the Eighth Route Army? If not, we're going to launch a general fundraising campaign (which we're really prepared to do) across the country and the world including the Soviet Union. Learn how to beg for food because the KMT has forced us to have no way out. Otherwise, we are going to starve to death." In late April, Zhou Enlai told Zhang Chong in Chongqing that the Eighth Route Army would collect donations from all over the world if the issue of military pay was not resolved. Following Mao's telegraphic instructions, Zhou Enlai made the issue of military pay for the Eighth Route Army the main topic of conversation when he met with Chiang Kai-shek in May. Representatives of the CPC Central Committee and the Eighth Route Army office in Chongqing repeatedly raised the issue of military pay in the course of their struggle against military friction. "As for armament, ammunition, communications, sanitary equipment, etc., some token shipments were made in Nanjing and Wuhan. Later in Chongqing, they were sent directly to war zones for collection. After the South Anhui Incident, nothing was given." (Wang, 1993) This struggle for military pay continued until the victory of the Anti-Japanese War.

3. SEEKING ASSISTANCE FROM INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS AND OVERSEAS CHINESE

Upon the start of the Anti-Japanese War, righteous people who sympathized with and supported China's Anti-Japanese War and patriotic overseas compatriots provided material and financial supports through fund-raising and other means. The Chongqing Office made great efforts in gaining support from international friends and overseas Chinese, Hong Kong and Macao compatriots for the Eighth Route Army's and the New Fourth Army's anti-Japanese campaigns. The British Association for Aid to China, via Song Qingling, the Great Alliance for the Protection of Civil Rights in China organized by Song Qingling and other democrats, and overseas Chinese patriots, also made a lot of financial and material donation to the Eighth Route Army, such as medicine, equipment and clothing. Song Qingling stressed that the principle of distributing the funds and materials collected from the above-mentioned Alliance was "to help wherever there is a need," focusing on the CPC-led army and anti-Japanese bases. Among the supplies and medical equipment urgently needed by the Eighth Route Army from overseas Chinese and international friends, there were "five

cars and other supplies in five trucks.”⁴ Donation and Condolence Letter from the Anti-Japanese & National Salvation Association of Beijing Overseas Chinese in USA read: “To General Zhu De and all the generals and soldiers of the Eighth Route Army: As the winter is approaching, and your army is penetrating into the enemy’s rear, it is inconvenient to transport supplies to you, which means that the soldiers have to go through snow and ice and their suffering is self-evident. Therefore, it was resolved on the last executive committee meeting of our association that the donation collected from ball games and plays for winter clothes should be sent in an amount of 10,000 yuan to your army to make winter clothes, as a token of our appreciation to your General and the army. Please check and reply. I hereby would like to salute the Anti-Japanese War and the founding of the nation!”⁵ These supplies were transported from Hong Kong to the Chongqing Office via Hanoi, Zhennan Pass (now Friendship Pass), and Guiyang, and then to Yan’an, the Eighth Route Army headquarters, and various anti-Japanese bases. These two types of assistance were important sources of supplies for the Eighth Route Army. Except military pays received in the past which were remitted to headquarters, donations received by the office from home and abroad: “donations received by the Chongqing Office: 7.39 million Hong Kong dollars in 1940, US\$120,000 in 1942, US\$54,000 in 1943, US\$12,500 in 1944, US\$51,000 and 166 million Fabi in 1945” were remitted to the Xi’an office and then forwarded to Yan’an. Zhou Enlai and Dong Biwu also brought money in person when they traveled between Yan’an and Chongqing. Sometimes, they also asked reliable contacts to bring money to Yan’an, and asked the KMT liaison staff to bring money to Yan’an. For all the monies, a larger portion was handed over to the CPC’s central government, and a small portion was withheld as the underground party’s funds and the living expenses of the staff of the Southern Bureau and the Chongqing Office. In addition, they were also used to help democratic parties and progressives with their work and lives.

4. PROCUREMENT OF MILITARY MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Taking advantage of its location in a large city, the Eighth Route Army office in Chongqing actively procured supplies and conducted trade activities. In response to Mao Zedong’s call for self-reliance and economic prosperity, the anti-Japanese bases launched a mass

production campaign to meet their need for food, cloth and some military supplies. However, some scarce supplies and equipment were still not available within the base. The Office was tasked with procuring important supplies and equipment. “Purchase of 15,000 gallons of gasoline, 10 vehicles, and a batch of telecommunications equipment.”⁶ The Office was financed mainly through self-financing after the cessation of military pay. It was also engaged in some trades due to the rising prices, inflation and currency depreciation in Chongqing. The Office managed to solve its economic problems through a variety of relationships and by raising funds in various ways. For example, when new grains came on the market at cheaper prices, they bought enough grains for one year’s consumption to avoid price rise. They opened a company through their contacts in the underground party to deal in local products, sugars and oils. In addition, they remitted money to Xiong Zimin who was in Hubei province, asking him to do business in Wuzhou, Guangxi Province. They also imported some equipment and important supplies from Hong Kong through other connections. From January 1942 to May 1943 alone, the Office purchased items amounting to \$710,000 on behalf of Headquarters. The Eighth Route Army offices in various places took various measures to help the bases procure these scarce supplies from the KMT-controlled areas, and managed to send them to Yan’an or front-line troops through enemy-occupied areas and blockade lines. After the first anti-communism climax, procurement and transportation were made more difficult by the fact that the Chongqing Office was surrounded by KMT spies and many checkpoints were set up along the transport route. In order to meet the urgent needs of Yan’an and the anti-Japanese bases, the Office managed to ship the embargoed and urgently needed goods to Yan’an, to the headquarters of the Eighth Route Army and the anti-Japanese fronts by breaking the goods down into elements and turning “illegal” into legal.

5. TRANSPORTATION OF SUPPLIES

In order to enhance the transportation between the rear and Yan’an at the beginning of the Anti-Japanese War and according to the instructions of Zhou Enlai, Vice Chairman of the CPC Central Military Commission, an indestructible and uninterrupted transportation line was established from Yan’an to Chongqing, then to Guilin, Pingxiang and other places with the establishment of the Eighth Route Army office in Chongqing.

In the summer of 1939, the Military Supply Department of the KMT Government Military

⁴ “Offices of the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army in Various Places (1)”, compiled by Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Historical Materials Series Editorial and Review Committee, Beijing, Military Science Press, 2009, p. 927.

⁵ New China Newspaper, November 21, 1940, Issue No. 1

⁶ “Offices of the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army in Various Places (1)”, compiled by Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Historical Materials Series Editorial and Review Committee, Beijing, Military Science Press, 2009, p. 927.

Commission allocated 10 tons of ammunition to the Eighth Route Army. Upon receipt of the notice, the Chongqing Office immediately sent Wu Zonghan and He Songshan, together with Chen Lianqiu and Li Ze Chun of the Eighth Route Army at the Guiyang Transportation Station, to pick up the ammunition at Huangping County, Guizhou Province, and transport it to Yan'an via Chongqing. In addition to receiving some military supplies from the Military Commission of the KMT Government, the Office also received some cash and supplies donated by overseas Chinese. In order to transfer to the front as soon as possible the received military supplies and overseas Chinese's donations, as well as the radio equipment, gasoline, oil and other urgently needed supplies purchased by the Office itself, the Office procured several "Dodge" trucks from Singapore, which, together with a total of nine vehicles donated by overseas Chinese, constituted a transport team.

From May to July 1939, supplies including gasoline, broadcasting and communication equipment, medical equipment, medicine, and automobiles purchased overseas by the Office and donated by overseas Chinese were stockpiled at Zhennan Pass. At that time, the Japanese were intensifying their invasion into Nanning in a vain attempt to cut off the last transport route to the overseas. In order to hasten the shipment, the Southern Bureau instructed the Chongqing and Guilin offices to deploy cadres and drivers to form a special transport team. The team comprised the Chongqing Office's three principals Yin Chengzhen, Qiu Nanzhang and Long Feihu, deputy officials Wongshifu, He Yuhai, Peng Wuhua and Wu Zonghan, drivers Liu Dekun, Yao Jinquan, Duan Tingying, Yu Bangying and more than 20 returning overseas Chinese drivers. According to the then traffic conditions, the supplies had to be transported first from Haiphong in Vietnam to the mountain pass in Pingxiang, Guangxi, and then to various places. In complex border areas, responsibility was divided by sections. Yin Chengzhen, Qiu Nanzhang, Long Feihu, and Weng Shifu were responsible for picking up the shipment at Haiphong, Vietnam. Wu Zonghan, He Yuhai, Peng Wuhua, Zhong Longqiu, Li Zechun, and Zhang Xingli were responsible for picking up the shipments at Pingxiang Pass in Guangxi, while Fang Zheng, Zhu Youxue, and Yang Hanzhang were stationed at a temporary military station in Hechi, Guangxi. It was in seething June and July, and the KMT was organizing laborers to build a railway at the pass, so the natural environment there was greatly damaged. The extremely poor sanitary and medical conditions caused a large number of laborers to fall ill and die of epidemics. Most of the thirty or so people got sick because they neither eat nor sleep well. In an environment where the lack of medicine left only local remedies to cure the disease, many expatriate drivers performed excellently. An overseas Chinese driver surnamed Chen, a member

of the Communist Party, had a large boil under his armpit that was so painful that he had to keep his arm up and could not put it down. When the first shipment arrived, he was not on the driver list in consideration of his condition. Mr. Chen insisted on accompanying the team out and to be at the front of the line to clear the way for the convoy. To that end, he asked an international friend Dr. Ma Dehai, who was traveling on the team, to do surgery on him. Because there was no scalpel or anesthetic, Dr. Ma Dehai did not agree on the operation. With tears in his eyes, Mr. Chen said earnestly, "You are a foreigner, but you still took the trouble to come to help China in the war. It is my duty to return to China and contribute to the war with my own actions. You must fulfill my request." Ma Dehai was moved by his spirit, so he sterilized a fruit knife and operated on Mr. Chen. When the operation was performed, Mr. Chen had his vest soaked with sweat in pain. But he was so tough that he didn't make a grunt. Dr. Ma Dehai praised Mr. Chen as a tough man. With one arm in a sling, Mr. Chen insisted on driving on the road the next day.

By the time the Chongqing Office was closed in 1946, the route had carried tens of thousands of tons of urgently needed supplies such as ammunition, bedding, medical supplies, radio and communications equipment. Through this route, our party leaders, underground workers and young students were escorted in thousands of times, providing strong support to the anti-Japanese base in Yan'an and the Eighth Route Army in their fight against the enemy. This transport route was under the responsibility of the Traffic Section of the Chongqing Office (also known as the Transport Section, with the Tuwan Warehouse and Xiaolongkan Repair Shop affiliated to it). In more than seven years, fighting in this front were traffic section chiefs Liu Shuo, Qiu Nanzhang, Zhu Hua, Wu Zonghan, escort supervisors Long Feihu, Yin Chengzhen (accounting chief of the Eighth Route Army office in Guilin), drivers such as Liu Dekun and over 20 returning overseas Chinese. The comrades of the Transport Section were heroic, resilient, resourceful and flexible in this treacherous and arduous route and completed one difficult and glorious task after another successfully. With their sweat, blood and lives, they defended the smooth flow of this main transport artery. They completed a number of important transport tasks on the long transport route from Chongqing to Yan'an. Some of them paid with their blood and lives.

CONCLUSION

The Eighth Route Army office in Chongqing lasted nearly eight years from its establishment in January 1939 to its cancellation in August 1946. One of its tasks was to liaise with the KMT's highest military authorities to

negotiate with the KMT Government Military Committee for military pay and supplies, to seek assistance from international friends and overseas Chinese, to procure military and medical supplies, and to transport supplies. Although the funds and supplies raised by the Office for our army didn't play a major role in our army's logistics supply, they were important in improving our army's equipment and guaranteeing its livelihood. In particular, after the KMT diehards and the Japanese imposed an economic blockade on our anti-Japanese strongholds, many scarce supplies sent by the Office helped a lot.

REFERENCES

- Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Historical Materials Series Editorial and Review Committee. (2009). *Offices of the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army in Various Places* (1). Beijing, Military Science Press.
- Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Historical Materials Series Editorial and Review Committee. (2009). *Offices of the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army in various places* (1) (p.927). Beijing, Military Science Press.
- Wang, L. (1993, October). *Biography of Qian Zhiguang* (p. 178). Beijing: China Federation of Literary & Art Circles Press.