L.P.A.

[The Loyal Patriotic Army], which we Americans always called the L.P.A., operated, for the most part, at no great distance from Shanghai. The territory in which they were active consisted, for the most part, of the peninsula that lies between the lower reaches of the Yangtze River and the deep indentation in the coast which forms Hangchow Bay. Including Nanking, Shanghai, and Hangchow, this populous region, which is more than twice the size of the state of New Jersey, included the most important commercial areas of China. Here, too, were to be found the country's best means of transport, its greatest concentration of factories, and, in all likelihood, most of its modern know-how.
(Miles, 1967, p 377-78)

By the autumn of 1944, SACO's Camp One, which was located near Hweichow (Shehsien), in southern Anhwei Province hardly more than a good day's walk outside of this unusually important region, had trained about eight thousand officers and men of the Loyal Patriotic Army and had also managed to supply them with guns. That almost made up for the ten thousand men the L.P.A. had lost in action in the 7 ½ years they had been fighting the Japanese. (Miles, 1967, p 378)

[At the start of 1945 there were] about 25,000 "organized irregulars," an important subordinate command of the Commando Army who went by the name of the "Loyal Patriotic Army." They had been formed in 1937 for the protection of Shanghai by General Tai, who was their first field commander. Their work at that time had been specially commended by the Generalissimo. After the Japanese took the city there were 60 per cent of these men working behind the Jap lines at all times.
(Miles, 1946, p 924)

So long as the L.P.A. was ready to strike, the Japanese were compelled to keep large numbers of men on guard. About seven Japanese divisions that were badly needed elsewhere had to be kept in this area, and even this large force could never be sure where the L.P.A. would strike next.

One of the L.P.A. groups that we never saw was under the direction of a certain Bernard Yoh. Most of its work had to do with sabotage, and its men wrecked planes, cut communication lines, damaged power plants, and kept any number of Japanese troops busy. On one occasion we learned that they had discovered a large store of T.N.T. and other explosives not far from the town of Chinpo. It seemed important to us at Happy Valley that this should be destroyed, and we sent back a message telling them to blow it up. But, to my astonishment, back came some objections that looked almost mutinous to me, though I presently learned better. Still, it was obvious that they had located an important munitions dump and we kept pressing for action. We pressed so hard, in fact, that Bernard Yoh and his men apparently felt compelled to hold a

"committee meeting" about the matter and before long they evolved a plan they thought might work.

Some of them who knew the country in which the munitions dump was located were familiar with certain narrow passes that were a feature of the surrounding hills, and with these in mind our L.P.A. friends wrote out some copy for a handbill and sent it to us by radio. Beginning to see what they had in mind, we not only had twenty thousand of the handbills printed but we also gave them to General Chennault with the request that the next time one of his planes happened that way, he have them dropped over Chinpo and the village nearest which the munitions dump was located. We kept Bernard Yoh and his men notified, of course, and they quickly learned, when the handbills were dropped, that the Japanese were among the first to pick some of them up. And I have no doubt that the Japanese officers who were responsible for the protection of the munitions dump were disturbed to learn that the vicinity was to be bombed within twenty-four hours! Or at least that is what the handbills said.

Under the circumstances, it was not surprising that the Japanese scooped up their precious ammunition and began carrying it out into the hills. But scattered units of the L.P.A. were already waiting in favorable spots overlooking the various passes, and the result was they not only exploded or captured most of that ammunition but were also able to blow up a good many Japanese at the same time.

It was only later that I learned why Bernard Yoh had not followed our suggestion to blow up the dump without so many time-consuming preliminaries. The ammunition, it appeared, had been stored close beside a big village of about twenty thousand friendly Chinese, and if it had been blown up before being moved it might very well have taken most of those people with it.

I was glad to have that lesson. It gave me an additional reason for not sitting in an office while issuing orders to guerrillas. (Miles, 1967, p 378-80)

Additional information about the Loyal Patriotic Army (L.P.A.) can be found in the companion article about Camp One.

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