

Burma Expedition

by Ah Xiang

[Excerpts from "Resistance Wars: 1931-1945"]

In early 1941, China formed a military alliance with Britain. Chiang Kai-shek dispatched "Shang Zhen military inspection delegation" to Rangoon for talks with British commander. Sheng Zhen visited Mao-tan-miao, Mandalay, Myitkyina & Lashio for two months. On July 24th 1941, Roosevelt ordered an economic embargo on Japan, and on Aug 1st, further ordered an oil embargo on Japan. On Nov 1st, Japan set Dec 1st as a deadline for diplomacy while secretly preparing attacks against Pearl Harbour, Guam, and HK. On Dec 8th 1941 [Dec 7th Hawaii time], Japanese secretly raided Pearl Harbor of Hawaii, and launched simultaneous attacks at Hong Kong, the Philippines, Burma and Malaysia as well as Shanghai Bund and Tientsin Settlements. China declared war on Japan on Dec 9th 1941. On Jan 4th 1942, Aung Shan's Burmese Independence Army began to harass the Thai-Burmese border under Japanese auspice. Aung Shan, like Nehru and Ghandi of India, deeply resenting British historical conquests of Burma in 1824, 1852 and 1885, had sought for Japanese assistance by going to Hainan Island of China earlier.

Chiang Kai-shek departed on a secret visit to India via the Hump on Feb 4th 1942. Wang Chonghui, Zhang Daofan, Dong Xianguang, Shang Zhen, Pi Zonggan & Yu Guohua were among the entourage. The British, seeing that Japan had control over HK, Thailand and Malaysia, intended to have Chinese president rally Indians out of the non-cooperation movement. On Feb 5th 1942, Chiang Kai-shek arrived in Calcutta of India. Chiang antagonized Britain over British colonialism & Indian Independence by advocating for autonomy during Feb 10th talk with British governor in New Delhi. Chiang Kai-shek asked British Lord Lin-li-zi-ge whether he could make a promise to Indians that Britain would offer independence after the war, but received ambiguous reply. British were only interested in having Chiang persuade Nehru out of the non-violent struggle against the British. Indians, after 160 years of colonial rule, were simmering with independence movements as well as sympathy for Japan's Pan-Asianism slogans. Among Indian's one million soldiers, only 150,000 were at home, including Sikh, Gurkha, Bengal and Muslims. British forces numbered around 57,000. Upon the news that Singapore fell on Feb 15th, Chiang Kai-shek commented that it was British lack of courage, not the bravery of Japanese, and expressed concern that Indian army could ever put up a fight against the Japanese. On Feb 15th, British gave Chiang Kai-shek a royal medal.

On Feb 20th, Japan invaded Burma under 15th Group Army commander Shofiro Iida, with 18th, 33rd, 55th, 56th division-conglomerates and special operation units. Japanese obtained the defection of Burmese military against the British. Rangoon was lost on March 6-7th. British retreated to Prome. Prior to the loss of Rangoon, China sold to Britain 70000 tons of merchandise in Rangoon warehouses after successfully shipping out 44000 tons. Americans hastily assembled 820 Ford trucks and 95 armored vehicles for the Chinese.

Chiang held three talks with Nehru, one in New Delhi and two times in Calcutta. On Feb 27th, at a dinner in Calcutta, Chiang pointed out to Nehru that it was not easy to launch a revolution in India

because India possessed an advanced transportation system that could carry British troops to the hot spot instantly. Chiang, having expressed support for non-violence approach, told Nehru that China could play a role in helping Indians win independence after the war should Indians stand on the same side as Chinese and the anti-fascist union. Nehru countered Chiang by stating that Chinese might not have experienced the brutality of the British which was comparable to that of Japanese as Chinese had experienced, and mentioned the Indian bloodshed in 1857 & 1914, respectively. Nehru pointed out that Gandhi had abandoned the hope of cooperating with the British after the British army slaughtered 2000 National Congress Party meeting participants in Punjab in April 1914. Nehru told Chiang their success of non-cooperation by shutting all doors at the time British crown prince visited India. After receiving a letter from Mahatma Gandhi, Chiang Kai-shek was moved to tears and demanded a personal meeting with Mahatma Gandhi. Chiang Kai-shek's original request for meeting with Gandhi was declined by the British. At the insistence of Chiang Kai-shek, British agreed to a meeting between him and Mahatma Gandhi on 18th, which was facilitated by Nehru. Gandhi came to Calcutta from Bombay with a goat and a weaving machine, and stayed in the residence of a wealthy merchant. Gandhi countered Chiang Kai-shek by pointing out that how could China safeguard Indian independence after the war when China herself failed to get representation at the "joint chief-of-staff" meeting of the Allied countries? Gandhi offered the weaving machine to Mme Chiang Kai-shek as a gift. Chiang left India on Feb 22nd, at which time Indian radio station announced that China's president had paid a state visit to the country. Radio also carried the text of "Chiang Kai-shek Open Letter To Indians" which was recited by Mme Chiang in English. Chiang Kai-shek commented upon British colonialism as the fundamental reason that the Burmese collaborated with the Japanese and that Indians showed passivity in the war against Japan. In March, Japanese sacked Andaman Islands, and supported a radical Indian Bao-si [Subas Chandra Bose] as the leader of "interim Indian government". As pointed out by Donovan Webster in "The Burma Road" [Douglas & McIntyre Ltd, Canada, 2003 edition], the 40-45,000 Indian National Army under Bose was composed of captured British Indian soldiers in Malaya in late 1941 and early 1942. Later in Aug, British declared the emergency law in India and imprisoned Nehru & Gandhi. (Britain passed the Monbarten Act later in June 1946, and allowed the establishment of India & Pakistan in Aug 1947 after Indians launched an armed uprising in Feb of 1946.)

However, British delayed the approval to have Chinese enter Burma. A regiment of Chinese herald troops arrived in Rangoon around the turn of Jan and Feb even though Chiang Kai-shek agreed to British request for organizing expeditionary force on Dec 23rd 1941 and Chinese forces converged upon the border in Jan 1942. China's "Burma Expedition Forces" consisted of 5th, 6th & 66th Corps commanded by Du Yuming, Gan Lichu & Zhang Zhen respectively. To the east, Gan Lichu's 6th Corps was to face Japanese 18th Division-conglomerate; in the middle, Du Yuming's 5th Corps was to face Japanese 55th Division-conglomerate; and to the west, British 1st Division was to face Japanese 33d Division-conglomerate. Wang Chuying, i.e., Chinese representative to British 17th Division as well as organizer of Burmese Chinese Volunteer Fighters at Thai-Burmese border, at Lin Wei's instruction, had contacted the British for 268 trucks to pick up 200th Division from Chinese border overnight. Earlier, Wang Chuying's Burmese Chinese Volunteer Fighters defeated Japanese three times at the Thai border and killed a Japanese shosa [major equivalent]. Chiang Kai-shek met with both British and Chinese generals at Lashio on the same day. Chinese side, with merely two divisions of 6th Corps inside of Burma, expected the 5th Corps and the rest of 6th Corps to take another 2-3 weeks to get deployed in Burma while Japanese could reinforce the 33rd & 55th Division-conglomerates for a possible attack prior to Japanese Army Day of March 10th. Dai Anlan, pointing out that his division still lacked 1306 soldiers, requested for 90 machineguns, 18 heavy machineguns, 18 mortars, 8 cannons, and 300 submachineguns. On the night of March 3rd, Japanese crossed the Sittang River for Rangoon. On 4th, 200th Division departed for Toungoon.

British, totally defeated by Japanese, would yield the 1000 kilometer line from Toungoon to Kentung to Chinese army to be under the command of Stilwell. 66th Corps was dispatched to Mandalay & Lashio area of Burma after Chiang Kai-shek found out that 5th & 6th Corps were over-stretched in Burma for fulfilling Stilwell's Mandalay duel plan. Having never ever fired a shot in WWI, Stilwell, nicknamed Vinegar Joe, made a blunder in ordering a counter-attack at Japanese for recovering Rangoon. Japanese, possessing four division-conglomerates of 18th, 33rd, 55th & 56th, were equivalent to ten Chinese corps, not to count the Japanese airforce and navy powers in the area. At Toungoo, Japanese encountered 200th Division of Chinese 5th Corps and suffered fierce resistance not seen after entering Burma. Beginning on March 17th 1942, Japanese began to bomb Toungoon [Tonggu]. Chinese army took over the defense positions from the British, dug three defense lines, defeated 20 rounds of Japanese attacks, destroyed 20 tanks and armored vehicles, killed about 4000 Japanese soldiers, and captured alive 400. On 18th, Japanese followed the retreating British 2nd Brigade to the city. After destroying dozens of Japanese on March 18th, three companies of soldiers ambushed about 600-700 Japanese and four tanks at railway and highway bridges on 19th, and inflicted a death toll of 200 onto Japanese. Deputy Cavalry Regiment Chief Huang Zunxian sacrificed his life during the battle. On 20th, another ambush killed about 200 Japanese from 2nd da dui 143rd lian dui. On 22nd, 2000 Japanese mounted an attack at Chinese positions for two days. Among the Japanese dead would be a Japanese Taisa [colonel equivalent] from 55th Cavalry lian dui and a Japanese shosa [major equivalent] from 2nd da dui of 112nd lian dui. Dai Anlan repeatedly beat back Japanese by means of 100 meter wrestling fightings. By March 26th, Japanese intruded into the city defence line. Japanese reinforcements arrived on 28th. Division Chief Dai Anlan, with 9000 soldiers against 20,000 Japanese, persisted at Toungoon from March 16th to 29th before retreating to Pyinmana. Du Yuming mounted an unsuccessful siege of Tongoo and had to evacuate from Tongoo on 30th. At Yedashe, a few miles to the north of Toungoon, Liao Yaoxiang's 22nd Division of 5th Corps persisted from March 30th to April 15th. Facing Chinese frontal resistance, Japan changed direction to attack British on the left side and to attack Chinese in Loikaw on the right side.

Sun Liren's troops did not cross the border till March 27th 1942. Sun Liren [Sun Li-jen] arrived in Lashio on April 2nd, and was subsequently sent to the defence of Mandalay on May 5th after leaving behind Peng Keli's battalion at Lashio. On the same day, Chiang Kai-shek flew to Maymyo, a city about 50 miles to the east of Mandalay. Two days later, on May 7th, Chiang Kai-shek announced to his generals that Stilwell was to become the commander-in-chief of the expedition force as well as conferred the post of garrison commander for Mandalay onto Sun Liren. In likening Mandalay to Nanking, Chiang Kai-shek instructed that Sun Liren defend Mandalay to the last. On April 11th, a plane came over with official stamped conferral for Sun Liren and a bag of Burmese currency valued at 20,000 units. After almost two years of strict training, by Nov of 1940, Sun Liren had restored the title of "Tax Police Army" for the eight regiments of troops he had trained under Kong Xiangxi's Finance Ministry. KMT spy chief Dail Li, however, intended to absorb Sun Liren's troops for deployment as guerrilla fighters under Sino-American Special Technical Cooperative Organization (SACO). Only the Pacific War and the British-American intervention would allow Sun Liren to retain three regiments of 2nd, 3rd & 4th for a re-organization as New 38th under Zhang Zhen's 66th Corps. Each regiment trained by Sun Liren had about 1200-1300 soldiers. After promulgating a pacification order, Mandalay came back to life under Japanese bombardment, and refugees returned from forests and mountains.

To the west, Japanese marched along Irrawaddy River to attack British at Prome. British, at the sight of Japanese, collapsed. After vacating Prome on April 1st, British first fled to Allamyo. Yenangyaung oilfield was ordered to be sabotaged. After giving up Megwe on April 10th successively, British fled to Yenangyaung where Japanese 33rd Division-conglomerate caught up with and surrounded the British. Further, Japanese crossed the Pinchong River to drive away British at the crossing, hence cutting off

the return path of the British in Yenangyaung. On the afternoon of April 15th, Sun Liren was ordered to send out Chen Mingren's 112nd Regiment & Liu Fangwu's 113rd Regiment to Natamauk and Kyaukpadaung. General Alexandre, with Stilwell, had requested with Chinese army for giving relief to British encircled at Yenangyaung. On the night of April 16th, Sun Liren went to expeditionary army command center at Pyawbwe with a request to personally lead 113rd Regiment for rescuing the British in lieu of Deputy Division Qi Xueqi. Sun Liren explained that his remnant 114th Regiment, with one battalion left at Lashio airport, could not fend off coming Japanese attack unless he was to win some victory over Japanese on his initiative. By dusk of 17th, Qi Xueqi, with Liu Fangwu's regiment, closed in to 5 miles from the Pinchong River. By dawn of 18th, 3 battalions of Chinese army suddenly descended on the Japanese and pressured the Japanese to the river bank. Sun Liren arrived just in time to command his thirsty soldiers to charge at the Japanese, with a call for drinking water at the river ahead. By noon, Japanese to the north of the Pinchong River were eliminated. General Slim, still unconvinced that one Chinese regiment could do any good in rescuing 7000 British across the bank, was asked by Sun Liren to throw in cannons and chariots. Sun Liren promised to the encircled British a lift no later than dusk of the following day and demanded that the British persist for a third day. Sun Liren, having brought Slim along to the frontline, personally instructed as to how British cannons were to blast at the Japanese positions tier by tier while the chariots and Chinese army were to follow through. To the east, two battalions of soldiers were to cross the river circumventially to attack the 5000 Japanese from the hindside and east side. On April 19th, in the early morning, Sun Liren personally led the remaining battalion of 113th Regiment for a river crossing to charge at Japanese encirclement line at Yenangyaung [Ren-an-jiang]. Chinese forces circumvented to sack Japanese defense positions three times in a zigzag war. Battalion Chief Zhang Qi sacrificed his life in the bayonet fighting. After thirteen hours of fighting, Chinese forces defeated Japanese 33rd division-conglomerate, killed more than 1000 Japanese and captured 500 Japanese, recovered from Japanese hands about 500 British prisoners of war, priests and news reporters, and rescued 7000 British & Indian soldiers. (Luo Zhuoying's telegraph to Chiang Kai-shek on April 20th stated that Sun Liren's daring attack had inflicted a casualty of 500 onto Japanese. Sun Liren's memoirs stated that his regiment incurred a death toll of 204 soldiers while inflicting a casualty of 1000 onto Japanese during the three day around-the-clock campaign.)

On April 5th, Chiang Kai-shek met with Division Chief Dai Anlan at Maymyo in regards to Pyinmana Duel. British withdrawal from Allamyo led to Chinese abandonment of Pyinmana on April 18th as well as cancellation of Stilwell's Pyinmana Duel plan. Stilwell, however, made another blunder by stranding Chinese forces to the west for Mandalay Campaign. To appease British General Slim, Stilwell ordered Sun Liren on a chase of Japanese 33rd Division-conglomerate. Meanwhile, after Yenangyaung rescue, Sun Liren, intending to destroy Japanese 33rd Division-conglomerate, had called over 113rd & 114th regiments for encirclement of Japanese which was scheduled for the morning of 21st. General Luo Zhuoying had to dispatch 28th Division to the replacement of 38th Division at Mandalay, yielding to the Japanese a vacuum at Lashio to the east and north which was the lifeline for Chinese troops. Sun Liren was suddenly ordered to go back across the Irrawaddy River for Sagaing on the midnight of April 20th. Meantime, Sun Liren learnt from a British captain that Japanese 56th had defeated Gan Lichu's 55th Division of 6th Corps at Loikaw on April 19th.

To the right, Japanese 56th & 18th division-conglomerates took over Loikaw position from Gan Lichu's 55th Division of 6th Corps on April 21st. Japanese crossed the Salween River for a long trip to Lashio. 66th Corps Chief Zhang Zhen dispatched partial of 28th Division back to Lashio's defence in vain. Midway, Japanese 56th Division-conglomerate took over Taungyi & Loilem which were to the south of Lashio. After leaving about 400 soldiers, Japanese continued on towards Lashio. Dai Anlan's 200th Division, being ordered to recover Taungyi to the east, dispatched herald troops of Cavalry

Regiment and 598th Armored Regiment. On 23rd, Dai Anlan and 600th Regiment arrived at the outskirts of Taungyi. Stilwell and Chinese corps chief came over on 24th. By dusk of 25th, Chinese troops took over Taungyi and destroyed 400 Japanese troops, including a Japanese shosa [major equivalent] from 3rd da dui of 113rd lian dui of 56th Division-conglomerate. Stilwell then ordered Chinese 200th Division to chase Japanese from Taungyi. Instead of sending Chinese armies back to the rescue of empty Lashio city, Stilwell ordered that main forces of Chinese 5th Corps return to Mandalay for his Utopian duel, albeit allowing 200th Division to look for the northbound Japanese 56th mechanized division-conglomerate.

Chinese_Tank_Forces_and_Battles_before_1945_ed.htm stated that "in April 1942, after taking Rangoon, the Japanese encircled two British brigades and a tank battalion at the Yenangyaung oilfields in central Burma. The Allied forces in Burma, commanded by General Joseph (Vinegar Joe) Stilwell, rushed the [KMT] 200th Division [?????? Sun Liren's 38th Division]... the only Chinese mechanized formation, from Lashio to the rescue."

On April 25th, British General Alexander informed Stilwell of a "tactical retreat" to India. Du Yuming was fetched back from Taungyi for the meeting. Du Yuming and Dai Anlan parted right after the recovery of Taungyi. On the night of April 25th, Stilwell and Chinese commanders decided upon a retreat from Mandalay, with agreement that the British retreat to India and Chinese 38th Division of 66th Corps and 22nd & 96th Divisions of 5th Corps retreat to China via Myitkyina. 100,000 Chinese armies were left to their own fate by Stilwell. On the night of April 29th, British 17th Division and Liao Yaoxiang's 22nd Division crossed the Irrawaddy River via Mandalay Bridge. Bridge was destroyed thereafter. On April 29th, Japanese took over Lashio. Supplies bought using American Lend Lease Program was shipped out of Lashio [Liexu] during Mandalay confrontation. At Lashio [Liexu], Chinese had to destroy 10000 tons of supplies.

200th Division Chief Dai Anlan, with about 6200 soldiers, arrived at Loilem on April 29th, but was ordered to retreat instead of fighting against the Japanese. Dai Anlan received conflicting orders from Du Yuming and Lin Wei, with Du Yuming asking him to go back to 6th Corps at Katha while Lin Wei directed him to Jingdong [Kengtung, i.e., later Golden Triangle] to be subordinate to Corps Chief Gan Lichu. Dai Anlan made a strategic mistake in crossing the forests to the north. While crossing a highway near Bhamo on May 16th, 200th Division was surrounded by armored Japanese. Two days later, on May 18th, Dai Anlan was wounded when he personally led 599th Regiment for a circumvential attack. Dozens of remnant soldiers rotated to carry Dai Anlan back to China on shoulders. On May 26th, at Mengguan [Maobang], Dai Anlan passed away. The group, with Dai Anlan's corpse, broke through Japanese line on June 2nd and penetrated the wilderness to arrive at Tengchong of China on June 27th.

On April 30th, 36 Japanese planed bombed Sun Liren's defense positions at Sagaing. On May 1st, news came that Luo Zhuoying's Myitkyina-bound train had collided with a southbound locomotive. Instead of re-organizing the dislodged allied armies for fortification in Myitkyina or Bhamo, Stilwell would trek his way through the jungles, acting as if the head of a company chief. On May 3rd, Stilwell himself, after sending off a plane which just arrived at Shwebo to pick him up [? page 39], walked across the mountains for India. After 3 weeks, Stilwell emerged in Ledo as a hero in the news media, not an idiot general. Zheng Langping commented that Stilwell could very well intend to limit his entourage for minimizing exposure to the Japanese army.

On the early morning of May 2nd, Battalion Chief Liang Dizhu of Sun Liren's 112nd Regiment covered the retreat of 96th Division by shelling mortars at plaincoated Japanese in the forests across the

Irrawaddy to the southwest of Mandalay. Sun Liren, on the early morning of May 3rd, speedily crossed the precarious mountain road for the British camp at Yeu, but British General Alexander refused to assist him with cannons. Sun Liren left the British camp disappointed, with his jeep driving into a creek on his way to Wantho. Sun Liren was asked to send its bulk of forces to Wantho and to send his 113rd Regiment to Katha for guarding against Japanese from Bhamo direction to the east. Du Yuming declined to allocate trucks to Sun Liren. At a crossing near Katha, Sun Liren personally stopped the British from destruction of a bridge and waited for a company of 100 soldiers to evacuate from the defense position at a village across the river.

With Myitkyina and Bhamo taken by Japanese, Chinese commanders held a meeting at Indaw on May 8th. At the meeting, Luo Zhuoying claimed that his command center would go for Imphal of India and then left with Stilwell [? page 165 Shen Keqin's Biography of Sun Liren]. Deputy commander Du Yuming immediately ordered forces to retreat back to China by Kumon Mountain Range. Sun Liren objected by proposing a counter-attack to retake Myitkyina and Bhamo. When asked to provide cover for 5th & 6th Corps, Sun Liren, thinking that he might not even have tree leaves and skin to eat by following Du Yuming, suggested that he would like some leeway for a retreat to India after completion of mission. On May 8th, Sun Liren, leaving Chen Mingren's 112nd Regiment behind, would personally guard a crossing near Watho till the last ferry. On May 10th, Sun Liren's 38th Division command center arrived at Meza. Knowing that 113rd Regiment was still entangled with Japanese at Katha and 112nd Regiment was encircled by Japanese at Watho, Sun Liren, past midnight, suddenly rode on his horse to order his retreating soldiers at Meza Train Station to go back. At dawn, Sun Liren's troops set up a trap at a hilly area to the south of Watho train station, ambushed five Japanese tanks, and destroyed 800 Japanese soldiers in collaboration with the encircled 112nd Regiment. 112nd Regiment hence broke through the encirclement. On May 13th, Japanese cut off the path between Watho and Bhamo. Sun Liren retreated to the northwest of Watho, and ordered that 113rd Regiment detached from fightings with Japanese at Katha. After waiting for 113rd Regiment for one day, Sun Liren led his troops into the mountains. With British and Burmese help, Sun Liren walked out of the mountains to arrive at Kaget on May 16th.

After failing to get response from 66th Corps Chief Zhang Zhen and Chiang Kai-shek's Chongqing military commission, Sun Liren contacted Stilwell [? Stilwell did not arrive in India till 19th]. Sun Liren's column picked up stranded soldiers, ethnic Chinese, British and Indians, including Prince of Sikkim [Yuksom]. By 6:00 pm on 18th, Sun Liren arrived at the bank of Chindwin River by penetrating the mountains and walking in the valley stream instead of following hundreds of thousands of refugees on the road from Siton to Tomu. With Japanese patrol boats in the river, Sun Liren faked a defense on the bank for divulging to Japanese via a county magistrate and other Burmese collaborators, and then crossed the river via rafts at night. While crossing the river, plaincoated Burmese suddenly changed to white-colored clothes and attacked the Chinese. The next day, Japanese army caught up with one battalion guarding the crossing. A Chinese engineering battalion retreated to the river to attack the Japanese from a different angle, and destroyed about 200 out of 800 Japanese after over one day long fighting. A few dozens of British and Chinese captives were rescued from the retreating Japanese. From Chindwin River to India, Sun Liren lent help to refugees along the road and distributed the remnant 3000 Burmese currency. Sun Liren's troops then crossed the mid-point of the Patkai-Chill-Aakan Ranges to arrive at a village near Imphal of India on May 27th. During the First Burma Campaign, Sun Liren's 38th Division lost 200 soldiers from 113rd Regiment at Yenangyaung, dozens from 112nd Regiment at Watho, and about 30 in crossing Chindwin River.

Chinese troops suffered heavy losses in crossing Ye-ren-shan [i.e., Wilderness Man] Mountain. Numerous Chinese soldiers died, including women soldiers, inside of Wild Man Mountain of Burma.

Du Yuming's 22nd & 96th Divisions, about 10,000 soldiers, were lost in the mountains to the north of Magaung Valley, between Kumon Range and Patkai Range. Chiang Kai-shek dispatched Yu Feipeng to India for British assistance in locating Du Yuming. Sun Liren dispatched Zhou Youliang and a company of soldiers for searching the missing troops. By Aug 4th, Du Yuming, Luo Youlun and Liao Yaoliang, and about 4300 remnant soldiers arrived at Ledo of India. While Du Yuming lost 7000 soldiers in the mountains, Regiment Chief Yang Lichu under 28th Division of 66th Corps, though having collected remnants to a total of 5000, would walk into the mountains against the advice of Sun Liren, with about 700 remnants by the time they walked to Gaoligong [Kumon] Mountain and 130 remnants by the time they walked to the Chinese border. Zhang Shuji claimed that his column had dwindled to 300 men from original 1000 after 3 months' trekking through the mountain with plantain as the sole food. [Chinese_Tank_Forces_and_Battles_before_1945_ed.htm](#) stated that "the Japanese entered Lashio and forced [Chinese into] a general withdraw. In the process, the [KMT] 200th division was destroyed with its command staff." Out of 100,000 Chinese expedition forces, possibly 60,000 were lost. Zhang Langping, however, stated that 80,000 out of 100,000 might have retreated to India or China, with majority deaths related to starvation, disease, and going astray.

Wu Xiangxiang mentioned that Americans shipped away its 10th Flight Group to North Africa on May 26th, and Ni Lexiong attributed the vacuum of air cover as the fundamental reason that First Burma Campaign failed. Stilwell himself, during the June visit to Chiang Kai-shek, shifted the blame to incompetency of Chinese generals and lack of air support. Zheng Langping, in "An Everlasting Glory", blamed Chinese casualties on Stilwell's multiple blunders, and further pointed out that Chiang Kai-shek should have demanded the dismissal of Stilwell right here in lieu of 2 years later. In Zheng Langping's opinion, the "Burma Counter-attack" would become an Anglo-American scheme to bog down China & Japan in a balanced way so that China would not emerge a victor to pose a threat to the Anglo-American interests in the Far East. Certainly, we did not have to remind the world that Russians, after signing a neutrality pact with Japan on April 13th 1941 [by betraying the 1937 non-aggression treaty between China and USSR], had sealed off China's continental exit to the north and northwest.

As to Burma Theater, Li Zongren memoirs stated that he was against it. Li Zongren advocated a concentrated fight against Japanese in Guangzhouwan Bay, hence securing a seaport for delivery of US supplies as well as cutting Japanese army in the waist. Li Zongren claimed that should China have secured the southern coast, Japanese in Burma and Vietnam would automatically collapse. Moreover, China might be able to ship troops to Manchuria and Northern China in case of a sudden Japanese surrender. The end result of continuous Burma Expedition would be the entrenchment of 400,000-500,000 best trained troops in the mountains of Burma and Yunnan Province at the time of 1945 Japanese surrender. (In the spring of 1942, Li Zongren participated in a military district commander meeting in Chongqing for discussing the new situations of World War II. After that, he went to Guilin of Guangxi Province for visiting his mother, and spent one week in hometown Liangjiangxu. Seeing that his mother was ill, Li Zongren stayed on for some more days and saw his mother pass away at age 76 as a filial Confucian disciple. Then his one seat plane flew back to Chongqing, and en route, plane had a short stopover at quiet Zhijiang Airport of Hunan Province for refueling, barely passing three Japanese reconnaissance planes at an elapse of three minutes.)

Before Japanese continued on to Wanding of Yunnan Prov, another 40000 tons of supplies and 30000 tons of gas were deliberately destroyed. Japanese then sacked Longling & Tengchong. Japanese sudden attack of Huitong Bridge would force Chinese into blowing up the bridge, with 500 trucks stranded behind enemy line. Chinese and Japanese faced each other across the Nu-jiang River [i.e., the upper stream of the Salween River]. Burma-Chinese highway was hence cut off by Japanese.

Later, Song Ziwen and Chiang Kai-shek argued with Roosevelt & Churchill numerous times for re-launching Burma Theater campaign since Burma-China Highway was essential to China's war against Japan. Song Ziwen, in briefings with US, mentioned that the flight route over Tibet (i.e., Hump Course over the Ridge of the World) had barely brought over supplies for US "Flying Tiger" column, not to mention supplies for Chinese forces. Contrary to common misperception, Chiang Kai-shek never hesitated to reroute his troops for Burma campaign while US & Britain time and again avoided committing marines, navy, airforce and army to Burma as well as insisted on merely a Northern Burma Campaign. Over the Hump Course, more than 600 planes were lost from May 1942 to Sept 1945.