Personnel Problems

In line with efforts of higher echelons to get maximum efficiency out of available personnel, this base published Regulation 35-9, "Assignment and Reassignment of Enlisted Men," on the last day of the month.[1] Main purposes are: to insure proper assignment; to provide information for Forms 20; to coordinate assignments between sections; and to provide an accurate inventory of enlisted personnel.

Shortages of personnel remain one of the major problems of the base. The Report of AAF Personnel, prepared on 31 March by the statistical office, revealed shortages in certain sorely needed MOS's. Most critical shortages (below authorized number): aerial engineers, 47; radio operator mechanics, 63; airplane engine mechanics, 20; special vehicle operators, 29; cooks, 35; automobile engine operators, 63; and guard patrolmen, 52. Only section with an appreciable surplus was aircraft maintenance, which had an overage of eight officers.

Because of insufficient personnel, the signal office began operating the field switchboard on twelve-hour shifts; the base hospital utilized convalescent patients for minor maintenance work during time normally devoted to the arts and crafts program; the personal affairs officer borrowed typists from various sections in order to handle processing lines;[2] and the adjutant requested permission to establish a messenger service on the base, so that each section would not have

1 See Appendix D, Document 15.
2 Each day sacrificing time and efficiency in order to teach new typists the entire processing procedure. (App. B, Doc. 14)

to send personnel twice daily to headquarters for distribution.[1]

The post engineer stated that only 90 out of 120 enlisted men assigned to him are actually on duty, the remainder being on furlough, in the hospital, in confinement, absent without leave, or on rosters for kitchen police.[2] He also stated that squadron hours (devoted to physical training, orientation, drill, and so forth) sharply cut the productive capacity of his assigned personnel.

Directives continued to come in from higher echelons of command requiring various types of reports from sections which were not authorized any clerks on the manning table or had none on hand.

The post exchange officer, who needs about 56 persons to operate the exchange and has no manning table authorization for enlisted men, was having his difficulties. Civilians to fill fairly important positions in the exchange were not to be had, so the post exchange officer wrote a letter to the Army Exchange Branch of the Ninth Service Command requesting assistance in securing a civilian manager of the main exchange, a warehouse manager, and a branch manager.[3] He also requested permission to pay enlisted personnel working for the post exchange more than half their base pay.[4]

---

1 This system would also remove some of the burden from the sergeant-major's shoulders and would relieve the congestion in the distribution section. See Appendix C, Document 7.
2 See Appendix C, Document 6.
3 Ltr, CO MAAF to CG 9th Service Command, Ft. Douglas, Utah, subj: "Assistance in Securing Civilian Employees". (App. C, Doc. 22)
4 Ltr, CO MAAF to CG 9th Service Command, Ft. Douglas, Utah, dtd 19 March, subj: "Payment to Enlisted Personnel." (App. C, Doc. 17)

MUROC EXCHANGE
Muroc Army Air Field
Muroc, Calif.

PX/PHK/jl

31 March 1945

JECT: Muroc Exchange Historical Report, 1 - 31 March 1945.

: Base Historical Office, MAAF, Muroc, California.

ATE

rch

4

PROBLEM

1) $14,652.86 was available for distribution this month due to the influx of personnel on the Field created by the presence of the Muroc Training Detachment (A.A.Artillery). Merchandise was sold quicker than it could be replaced. The inventory for 24 Feb 45 was $67,756.84 which is the lowest inventory this Exchange was experienced in the last ten months. The inventory turnover rate for this period was 2.1. The large sum of money was made available due not only to a normal profit but to a sudden unexpected drop in inventory. The Exchange was (is) faced with the problem of having insufficient cash to replenish the stock that was sold out during the abnormal influx of personnel if the entire amount of $14,652.86 is distributed.

Telephone calls to Fourth Air Force (Maj. Morey) and Ninth Service Command (1st Lieut. Harris) in an attempt to obtain permission to withhold a sufficient amount of the $14,652.86 to replenish the stock. It was recommended that a letter setting forth the problem be sent to HNSC in an effort to obtain official decision on the matter. The request was denied, by TWX from HNSC.

The matter was brought before the Exchange Council and it was recommended that the Exchange Officer keep a close check on the future needs of the Exchange and the available market of desireable merchandise. When there is an opportunity to buy from such a market and the cash position of the Exchange does not permit the purchase than it was recommended that a grant be requested from AXS.

2) The PX Cafeteria was closed for the evening meal following a conference with representatives of the War Housing Administration, the Commanding Officer and the Exchange Officer. This move was made in an effort to increase the volume of business at the Muroc Housing Cafeteria as they reported that they were loosing money to such an extent that they would be forced to close the Cafeteria. The P.X. Cafeteria would be unable to handle the combined volume of both cafeterias. This closing of the P.X. Cafeteria for evening meals will also help to conserve ration points which an acute problem at this time.