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INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COUNTRY China

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INFO.

SUBJECT Reconcile Information: Cost of Living of Foreign Staff of Various American Companies, Shanghai

DIST. 17 January 1947

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SUPPLEMENT

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The following report was prepared at the request of a committee representing nine large American firms in Shanghai. This committee was formed to study the subject of living allowances given the foreign staffs of these companies and to recommend possible further compensation to meet the increased cost of living.

- 1. In order to meet an argent need for a basis for formulating company policy an respect to extra compensations to foreign staff to meet the rising cost of living, recourse is made to certain statistical series of known reliabilkey. From these an analogy is drawn which it is hoped will be generally applicable to the problem of adjusting the H.C.L. allowance of U.S. Dollar salaried employees. A minimum basic allowance is developed from which companies may evolve their allowance system for higher salaried employees. Comparative price lists of goods and services commonly used by Americanswhich tend to support the general presentation- are appended.
- 2. Local staff employees have been placed in a relatively better position to mest the increasing cost of living than have the foreign staffeas a result of the use of the Shanghai Municipal Government's monthly Index of the Cost of Living of Chinese workers as an adjusting factor in computing the selaries of local staff, and because of their insure atdemands for increases in basic pay. In contrast with the situation before the war, many of the local staff are better paid in terms of U.S. Dollars than are the lower ranks of the foreign staff. Local staff salaries form a much larger proportion of opereting expenses than before the war. This is partially because of the fact that compensation to the local staff has followed a cost of living index, while that to foreign staff has been tied to an artificially fixed exchange rates
- 3. From Dec. 1945 to November 30 1946 the S.M.G. Chinese Workers Cost of Living Index, which is used as a factor to adjust Chinese salaries, has increased 501%. During the same period the Central Bank of China's Index of Sholesale Prices has increased 402%. During this time, the rate of exchange (taking first the open market rate of CNC\$1,000 to US\$1 in December 1945 and the Central Bank rate as from March 4) has increased 235%, while the purchasing power of the US\$ (based on 1937 as US\$1) has gone down from US\$ 4445 in December 1945 to USO 0.181 in November 1945. These changes are shown in the attached table, (Table I),

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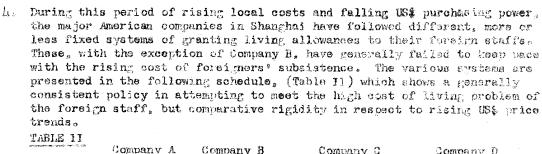


TABLE 11	Company A	Company B	Company C	Company D
RENT	entirely paid by firm	ldfference be- tween 1937 and Now plus 25% is said by firm	by firm	entirely paid by firm
II VI NG ALLOWANCE	mess or \$150. private quar- ters; marr. men \$200.; if		married mon with- out families here \$100.; with fam-	Married men with families here: US\$200. plus (50. for each dependent shild under 21. Single men: US\$100.
l'ela Cai, attendance	firm pays medical attendance, inocubations for atair members only, but no major or minor operations.	between present cost in Shanghai and U.S.A. will be raid.	li not exceeding budgeted emounts expenses will be fully resolversed (which so far was the case). Staff members only.	75% for New York staff and immediate family, except med. supplies, X-Rays, special treat- ments.
HEACI NG	property of	property of l firm, suppli-	Reasonable yuan- tity of coal less US\$15, por ten will be berne by firm.	Difference between 1937 and present cost of fuel where previously rent did not include heat; otherwise entirely paid by firm.
KEYHOIBY, ROUSEHOLD REPALES AND FURNI TURE	No provision for key-money; repairs up to US\$2,000, can be amortized as additional rent allow- ance over a period of two lears.	Repair and reconditioning expenses up to US\$1,000 borne by firms	packing (not exceeding (200.), handling charges, import duty on household effects,	Normal quantity of house- hold effects will be packed, shipped at firm's expense. Locally bought furn. will be paid (diff- erance 1937/1946).

(cont.)

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TABLE Ilcont.	Company A	Company B	Company C	Company D
SEPARATION ALLOVANCES	none	entire cost of basic items, no separate allowance on assumption that salary is enough to	in the field whose families are at home are	Family of a married man stationed here, receive a flat separate allowance of \$125.
EVESPOR - TATION	tation is provided as far as busi- ness concern- ed, but not	Mainly carried out by office cars; if not available, bus- iness and reason- able private trans- portation at firm's expense.	to and from work borne by firm. Use of cars for per-	sonal arrangement. District Managers have own cars, chauffeurs, etc. Privately owned cars are operated under various modifications
	For business purposes by senior members of staff borne by firm, not otherwise.		No allowances except on firm business; each case has to be reported to management.	Only on business s and subject to management's approval.

The firm absorbs 50% of the cest (not exceeding US\$1,200.) less any amount absorbed on shipping household effects as above, in case furniture is bought in Thina. The company will purchase basic household effects (furniture) in USA to include livingroom set, diningroom set, 2 bedroom sets. e refrigerator, 1 electric stove. They will be charged to the employee at pre-war cost in China and may be smortized by the employee over a period of one year.

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^{5.} In contrast with this table, the Shanghai Municipal Government's index of the Cost of Living of Western Foreign Salaried Employees for the years 1936-44 and each month since September 1945 and the amounts of US\$ necessary to purchase fixed amounts of goods and services in Shanghai are given in the following table. (Table 111)

PARLE 111 :		US\$ Cost of Fixed Amount of Goods sm
	Consolidated	Services in Shangha
	Sador.	at official retes
	CNCS	TES S
1936	100 -	29,41
1940	278。	27,83
1941	308。	15 dio
September 1945	21,231.	42° s48
October	<i>35</i> , 589 _°	39 - 5 4
November	96,613	80.51
December	101,566。	72.55
January 1946	135°, 735°	81.77
February	182,184.	87.59
March	270,052。	133.69
April	2 73 ,633。	135 d. 1
May	, 298, 115.	147.58
June	330 , 123 .	163.43
July	373,788。	185 ol.
August	390,,088,	بلاه 116
September	437°401°	130.57
October	478,4400	142.82
November	500,06%	U49.27

These figures indicate that the US\$ cost of a fixed amount of goods and services increased by 105.7% from December 1945 to Kovember 1946, reached the highest peak in July 1946, receded somewhat with the change in the exchange rate in August and resumed the upward trend in the months following.

- 6. It is thus evident that the purchasing power of US, salaries had depreciated by 81% in November 1946 as compared with 1936; or by about 90% as compared with 1941. As shown in a previous table, some American companies had made an attempt to meet this situation by various systems of special allowances, but these tended to be too rigid in view of the depreciating purchasing power of the US\$. These systems were unsa isfactory from the standpoint of both the foreign staffs and the companies concerned, because (1) they were inadequate to cover the actual increases in living costs, and (2) financial worries were thus created in the minds of the foreign staff which tended to affect their work.
- 7. To meet these objections, it is proposed that in addition to supplying quarters or sental allowances and heating, a basic living allowance be established which will be variable, upward or downward, with the average cost of living of imerican families in the lower salary groups. The object of this system will be to enable the average foreign staif employee to cover his normal expenses for food and ordinary miscellaneous items and yet save as much of his income as before the war. This proposal is suggested by the facts (1) that the average foreign employee in Shanghai before the war spent slightly more than 60% of his consumption expenditure on food and miscellaneous items (21.8% for food including beverages and 14.5% for miscellaneous items including everything other than food, housing and clothing); and (2) that the average foreigner's expenditure on food alone in November 1946 amounted to as much as 121% of his entire prewar consumption expenditure.
- 8. To illustrate the basic considerations of this plan, the attached table (Table IV) of expenditures is taken from a study of the consumption expenditures of 27 representative American families made by the Industrial & Social Division of the Shanghai Municipal Council over a period of 16 months from October 1939 to January 1941. The 1939-40 figures are based on detailed accounts submitted by

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the 27 families and averaged for the period. The 1946 figures are derived by multipling the first figures by the differential between the corresponding SMG's indices of the Cost of Living of Western Foreign Salaried Employees for 1940 and November 1946.

TABLE IV	o's	US\$ @ 10	1939-40 CNC\$	Conversion Factor	November 1916 CNC \$	1946 US\$ @ 5000
FOOD	21.84	40.72	407.22	1904	775.346 a	155 o
HOUST NG & TAXES*	26.01	११८ ४५	148H°89	1011	490,195°	***1460
CLOTHI NG	10.61;	19.85	198.46	3171	629,516	126
MISC.**	41.51 100. USE 17.5 "	77.40 186.46CM 40.23 "	773.99 £1864.53 402.34	1776 Average 1800	1.382.346. CNC53.277.201	SS TOS O COMMON COMPROS COMMON COMMON COMPROR COMMON COMPROR COMPON COMPON COMPON COMPON COMPON COMP

- * Includes: Rent, Municipal rates, light and fuel, water, upkeep and repairs

 ** Includes: Medical (Doctors and hospital fees), Insurance, Contributions and

 Club dues, education, tobacco, wages to servants, local traveling

 expenses, amusement, etc.
- *** US\$ Rontals in Shanghai are usually paid in CNC\$ at the official rate of 3350 or in US\$ notes.
- 9. Although the basic consumption expenditures for 1939-40 here presented were for an average family of 3.5 persons, the average total income was lower than the average of the lower-salaried foreign employee of the American firms in Shanghai. Moreover, there were fewer children in the families of such American firms employees, and the minimum consumption schedules of smaller families in a higher income group may, in the absence of direct data, be taken as approximately equivalent to the given averages, especially since families of the employees of American firms were among the 27 contributing to the compilation of these basic statistics. The experience of many people indicates that the 1939-40 consumption schedule given here, was, if anything, well below that of a family of two of any American firm's staff.
- These consumption expenditures, however, do not include extraordinary family medical care (such as pre-matal and childbirth, or operations), to costs of furniture or repairs for setting up an establishement or transportation exists for more than average minimum personal use of buses, trams, rickshas, occasional taxis or car maintenance. In these respects the average of the 27 American families who were the subject of the SMG's study was admittedly below the standard of employees of the major American companies. Likewise, clothing expenditures of American families were below the level of any other national groups in Shanghai, owing to the fact that the Americans covered in the study habitually bought their major requirements in the States and only purchased necessary replacements in Shanghai. This however, need not affect the conclusions, since that is more than ever the American habit since the war, and no extra allowance need be made on this account.
- 11. In order for an average lower salaried American employee with a family to subsist at the same level in 1946 as in 1940, he would have to received a US\$ income of from 3-1/9 to 4-1/3 times his 1940 income. This may in fact only be realized by the company providing quarters and covering the relating difference

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in the employee's consumption expenditures with an allowance amounting to a minimum of US\$370° (i.e. approximately twice the total pre-war consumption expenditures in the above table). This figure is derived from the figures in the above table as follows:

FOOD	usi 155.	PREWAR SALARY	US\$ 227 o
CLOTHI NG	** 126°		
en su ,	276。	mich cost of	· ·
SAVI NGS	40. US\$ 597.	LIVING	" 370. US\$ 597.
	154 59/c		Committee Committee Section (Committee)

- 12. The level of consumption possible in November 1946 with this extra subsidy would not be higher than was supported by the average income before the war, and no additional saving would be possible without sacrifice. Provision of less than this amount would entail draing on reserves, or sacrifice.
- 13. With US\$370, as the basic allowance of an average lower-salaried employee as of Movember 1916, future adjustments in the allowance may be made for any month simply as follows: (1) convert the total CN\$ consumption expenditures in the above table by use of the SMG Consolidated Index of the Cost of Living of Western Foreign Salaried Employees (adjusted to 1940 as base year); (2) convert the resulting CNC\$ into US\$ using the month—end open market rate; (3) deduct the total 1940 US\$ income in the above table; (4) deduct the amount of Housing and Taxes derived as in the above table, thus obtaining the current monthly basic ullowance.
- As has been recognized in previous systems of allowances, staff members living under different circumstances have higher or lower consumption schedules and are therefore entitled to more or less than the basic allowance. If US\$ 370% is taken as the allowance for a married couple, a staff member living singly in a mess where expenses are shared, would probably be able to cover his share of the excess over prewar costs with an allowance of \$\frac{1}{2}\$ the basic allowance. A bachelor in polyate quarters, according to the customary pattern, would no doubt require an allowance of 2/3 the basic amount, while at least the full amount would be reasonable for persons living in hotels, where service and food charges are at the maximum. Separation allowances of course are not considered as covered by local HCL allowances. Allowances for transportation, furniture and medical care, for the reasons mentioned above, are also not considered to be covered, and the present system of prevision for these exceptions may thus be retained.
- The consumption schedule of American families presented above may be compared in total with the postwar expenditures of various members of Company C staff, who submitted detailed reports for one month for the purposes of this study. The effect of applying the basic allowance with the suggested variations as mentioned above to the incomes of this group will be appreciated at a glance; it tends in general to substantiate the practicability of the above suggested allowance system. The October 1946 expenditure, exlusive of transportation, rental and medical costs, of various representatives of different salary categories living in various circumstances were as follows:
 - a) Single menresident in company messjunior salary classification
 - b) Married menmaintaining wife and 1 child in
 USA- resident in small apartmentjunior salary classification

US\$ 350°

781. (includes US\$250. for maintenance of family in USA)

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c)	Married men-	ust 795 o
,	maintaining wife in USA-	
	resident in small apartments	
	semi-senior salary classification	
d)	Married men-	740.
	maintaining wife and I child in USA-	
	sonior salary classification	
0)	Married men-	1.079.
	maintaining wife and I child in China-	*
	resident in furnished house-	
	senior salary classification	
f)	Married men-	1,088.
	maintaining wife in China-	
	resident in small house-	
	senior salry classifiaction	
E)	Married men-	1,097°
	maintaining wife and 3 children in China-	
	resident in fairly large house-	
	senior salary class	

- 16. It is suggested that one half a basic allowance applied to the lowest salaried rear above and a graduated scale plus special allowances for transportation and madical allowances for men in higher salary groups, as outlined above, would adjust these incomes to actual expense requirements.
- 17. In Table V, attached, cortain examples are given to illustrate the general price level in various categories of goods and services. In some cases, e.g., imported canned foods, prices are less in terms of US\$ than six months ago, but rises in costs of local products and services have more than compensated those few deoreases. Wages have advanced especially sharply, while the risks of doing business in an inflationary market and the insecurity of property and life in over-crowded Shanghai have added to the costs of all items. In this connection insurance rates are especially significant as affecting the lives and pocketobooks of all members of the community. Athletic activities have in some cases become prohibitively expensive and they are listed here, not because they are generally indulged in, but to complete the general picture. The average consumption of these goods and services by the lowest American salary group is included in the "Miscellaneous" item in the table of Average Consumption Expenditures given above, and the prices as given below, are merely explanatory of the present level of prices of goods and services in common consumption in Shanghai.

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COST OF LIVING AND WHOLESLIK PRICE IMPICES
FUNCELSING POWER OF THE U.S. \$, OFFICIAL AND OPEN MARKET
RATES OF EXCHANGE, AND US\$ COST OF ARTICLES OF COMMON
COMMUNITION AMONG FOREIGNARS,
SEMEGRAI, JAMUARY - NOVEMBER 18,46.

	SMC Workers Index of Cost of Living (1935= 100)	Percent Indresse over Previous month	Central Bank Index of wholesale Prices (1937 = 100)	Percent Increase over previous month	Central Bank Rate of Exchange	Percent Increase over previous month	Open Market Rate of Exchange	Percent Increase over previous month	Cost of Selected List of articles of Common Consump- tion among For- eigners	Carchesing Lower of X.S.\$ \$19372 US\$1.}
Lecember 1945 Wentury 1946 Webruary March Anvil May June July August September October Aovember	94,507 106,245 184,573 275,422 209,430 409,578 404,065 449,420 453,675 490,739 561,856 568,464		(108,500) (133,200) 239,800 274,650 336,780 415,860 370,500 422,500 482,489 529,025 537,786 549,888		(1400) 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 3350 3350 335	65,8	1400 1660 2080 1930 2470 2330 2650 2485 3330 4010 4200 4950	18.6 25.3 -7.2 27.9 -5.7 13.7 -6.2 34.0 20.4 4.7 17.9	26.97 33.00 35.86 22.71 27.84 30.55 31.15	US\$0.445 .400 .265 .216 .175 .143 .160 .140 .204 .186 .183

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Veretables	Nov. 1941	March 1946	40x° 7346
Carrots	0.45	100.	700。
Caulif'lower	0.90	1,200,	6,000°
White bests	0.30	300 _°	600.
Tomatoes	0.97	7000	1,800。
Celery (native)	O.ll	700 ₆	1 , 000 :
Lettuce (")	0.32	800。	1,,300 c
beets	0.39	300。	500 _°
Onions	0.15	4500	800 ₀
Green peas	0.80	800 s	1,000°
Potatoes (1rish)	0.47	20 0 。	300 a
String beans	o.58	5 0 0。	800 _e
Water chestnuts	O ₄ 35	150。	
Bemboo shoots	o4°5	1.4000	2,000。
Leeks	0.15	100。	400 %
Turnips	0.17	300°	500 a
Spinach	0.18	100 e	300 o
Meat fowl fish eggs.	eto.		
Bacon	5.70	1,600。	5 ₂ 000 ₀
Ham, boiled	8.00	2,000°	6,000%
Pork	4.18	1,200.	4,2400
Soupmeat	2.76	600°	1,600.
Calf liver	2.91	1 " Ļ00 s	3,000 a
Leg of lamb	3.20	900 a	1,800.
Lamb chop	3.10	800。	1,800°
Chicken	3.49	1,600。	3°500°
Fillet of beef	7.74	2,0000	3,200
Beef steak	li = 50	900。	2,000
Veal steak	7.00	2,000 o	4,000
Clams (each)	2.50	500。	1,200
Mandarin Fish	1.89	1,8000	3 °,000 s
Eggs (per doz.)	4.92	1,080.	3,600.
Lard (untried)	3.28	ັ 980 。	3,000 -
Peanut oil	2.11.	700.	1,600,
Coffee (Maxwell)	11.20	7,750.	3°,000°
Salt	0.84	1,200.	400.
Sugar (native, white)	2.29	1,000.	3,000

5,600.

8,000。

DWager	700,7	7,0000	0,000
Evaporated Milk (12 oz.)	3 ∘5/4	1,500。	2,000。
Klim	41.00	4,500。	7,000
Bread (white)	1.40	450°	800。
Flour (wheat)	1.19	300 .	600 .
Rice	1.21	225	600°
<u>Pruits</u>			
Oranges (Mandarin)	1.69	600。	2,000
Apples	1.65	1,000.	2,000 a
Bananes	1 ₂ 59	700 c	1,000
Lemons (each)	1.56	400 =	500 .
Micellaneous			
Lamp bulb (40 watt, ea)	1.73	2,400,	3,600,
Kindling (catty)	0.20	30 o	100 .
Matches (box)	0.30	460.	500
		• • • •	2000

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Pable V (cont.)			
	Merch 1916		Nov. 1946
Cook's salary	60 _e 000		200.000
Chauffeur's salary	90,000	-	350,000
Texi 20 minutes	2,500		6,000
Heirout	1:00		2,000
Movie ticket	೭, ೧೦೦		4,000
Man's shirt	26,000		50,000
Moal at American Club	ຊູຂວວ .		4,500
Binner at French Club	3,500		7,500
Dinner at Cathey Hotel	5,000		12,500
One double bed (new)	1,500,000		5,000,000
One studio couch	300,000		1,200,000
One binokwood dask	350,000		
Y.M.C.A. membership per month	J., e. p. (100		1,500,000
French Club Tennis season			US\$ 10.
" Swimming "			CN\$1.00,000
" Badmington "			110,000
Maintenance of pony por month	Non- 3010		110,000
Initiation Fee American Club	Nov. 1940	•	us#125。
* French Club	U\$\$50.		" 100°
Monthly dues American Club	20a		" 150 _°
Monthly dues French Club	6 0		ື 5∘
2 2 0 11 0 11 0 12 0 10 0 10 0 10 0 10	CN\$25。		CN\$ 36,000
Fire & Burglary Insurance on			1-1/10%
household effects			4. 1/ 1/0/10
Auto ins. Fire Theft & Collision,			US\$130°
2% for 6 mos. on market value			0091506
(US\$6500. on lower priced cars.			
i.e. Ford) equals			
Public Liability Risk			CIPITE 1 70 000
CN\$10,000,000, 6 mag.			CN\$170,000