

Newsweek

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Condensed Chow

A great problem in the organization of parachute troops is providing a light-weight ration which has little bulk and at the same time has enough food value to sustain the parachutist until he can forage off the country or make contact with his own forces.

To supply such a ration, the Quartermaster Corps' subsistence laboratory in Chicago has been experimenting with condensed foods since last autumn. Last week, following two unsuccessful starts in which scientifically compounded rations were tested and discarded, a third was put to the test under field conditions at Fort Snelling, Minn.

Weighing only about 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ pounds against the ordinary 7-pound garrison daily allowance, but containing 3,200 calories, compared with the garrison chow's 3,600, the new condensed ration not only features compactness but also sufficient variety to provide a different meat and drink for each meal. A typical menu:

Breakfast—twelve cracker-size "pemmican" biscuits, made from whole-wheat flour, white flour, dried milk, soybeans, eggs, and carotene, the coloring matter of carrots, which helps develop night sights one malted-milk tablet, 3 ounces of veal loaf to spread on the biscuits, and soluble coffee, including sugar.

Dinner—twelve pemmican biscuits, one dextrose "pep" tablet similar to the "courage pills" used extensively by the Germans, 4 ounces of dried summer sausage, and lemonade powder.

Supper—twelve pemmican biscuits, one 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -ounce chocolate bar, 3 ounces of ham spread, and a $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce beef-bullion tube.

To serve as guinea pigs for last week's 48-hour test, four enlisted military policemen and Lt. Col. Rohland A. Isker, the 6-foot, 200-pound director of the subsistence laboratory, and his food-chemist aid, Capt. R. H. MacDonnell, carried out drills and successive marches of 9, 30, and 9 miles on the condensed meals alongside eight military policemen who ate the hefty Army field rations. Then the two groups reported to Dr. Ancel Keys, professor of physiology at the medical school of the University of Minnesota, for a checkup and new tests expected to take several weeks.

Meanwhile, the tablet-takers reported themselves none the worse for the experience and agreed that the new rations were palatable and not too monotonous. Nevertheless, one soldier summed up his reactions by declaring: "My appetite said I had eaten enough, but my stomach said it was empty." And after the physiological checkup, all the guinea pigs headed for the university cafeteria, where they stoked up on steaks and roast beef.

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