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" ABDACOM "

An Official Account of Events in the South-West Pacific
Command, January—February 1942.



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SECRET.**" ABDACOM "**

**An Official Account of events in the South-West Pacific Command,
15th January—25th February 1942.**

SECTION I.—INTRODUCTION.

1. *Object.*—The object aimed at in compiling this account is to record the organization of "ABDACOM", which was the telegraphic address and accepted short title for the Headquarters of the South-West Pacific Command; the area for which it was responsible; and the events which took place in that area during its existence, as soon as possible after their occurrence.

2. *Material.*—This account is based on the records preserved and removed from Java either prior to the dispersal of ABDACOM headquarters, or at the time of dispersal. So far as was possible, complete records were preserved, but the necessity for preventing secret information of value to the enemy from falling into Japanese hands, combined with limitations of transport at the time of dispersal, entailed the destruction of some material which might have been of value for establishing precisely and fully the course and results of certain events. Such gaps have, when possible, been indicated in footnotes.

3. *Layout.*—The main text, (Sections II to VI), records the area for which ABDACOM was responsible and the Directive on which it worked, its organization, the situation at the time of its creation, the main reinforcements allotted to the ABDA area and those which actually arrived, the leading events during the existence of ABDACOM, and the situation at the time of dispersal of the Headquarters.

References to cables or documents are serially numbered throughout. A list of these references is given in Appendix "C".

SECTION II.—DATES OF ASSUMPTION OF COMMAND AND OF DISPERSAL, AND DEFINITION OF THE AREA FOR WHICH ABDACOM WAS RESPONSIBLE AND SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITIES.

4. *Dates.—Summary of Dates.*

Preliminary instructions for the formation of ABDACOM issued from Washington	30th December 1941.
Supreme Commander left Delhi for the Far East	5th January 1942.
Supreme Commander arrived Singapore	7th January 1942.
Supreme Commander with skeleton staff arrived Batavia	10th January 1942.
Command issued by Supreme Commander, 1200 hrs., G. M. T.	15th January 1942.

ABDACOM headquarters, (still on a skeleton basis) moved to Lembang	18th January 1942.
ABDACOM headquarters ceased to operate, 0430 hrs. G.M.T.	25th February 1942.
Departure of personnel of ABDACOM headquarters from Java completed, evening	26th February 1942.

5. *Date of Assumption of Command.*—In a personal telegram dated 30th December 1941 (1) to General Sir A. P. Wavell, Mr. Churchill, who was then visiting Washington, stated that at the request of the President of the United States of America and his naval and military advisers General Wavell was to assume, as soon as possible, the duties of Supreme Commander of the South-West Pacific Area. In a later telegram, dated 3rd January 1942, (2) from the Lord Privy Seal to General Wavell the urgency attached to the assumption of his new responsibilities by the latter was emphasised.

General Wavell accordingly left Delhi on the morning of 5th January, 1942 by air, arriving in Singapore on the morning of 7th January. After visiting the Headquarters of the 3rd Indian Corps at Kuala Lumpur, and Divisional and Brigade Headquarters of 11th Indian Division northward of that place, on 8th January, General Wavell issued certain orders for the conduct of operations in Malaya. On 10th January General Wavell moved with a skeleton staff to Batavia, again by air, and Headquarters, Far Eastern Command, Singapore, ceased to exist from 0001 hours, G. M. T. on that day. (3) British authorities were instructed to deal thenceforward with the Supreme Commander as regards matters which fell within his functions. (3).

It was not until 1200 hrs., G. M. T., on 15th January 1942, however, that the Supreme Commander officially took over command in the newly created Area (4). In his telegram announcing his assumption of command, the Supreme Commander made it clear that he was not at that date in a position to establish an office or to exercise effective operational control, but that he considered it desirable, and in this was supported by American and Dutch representatives in Batavia, to assume at once official responsibility for taking general decisions affecting the whole area.

From 1200 hrs. G. M. T. on 15th January 1942, therefore, the Headquarters of the South-West Pacific Command were established, on a temporary basis and with much less than the minimum desirable staff, signals and clerical establishment, at the Hotel des Indes, Batavia, with the temporary telegraphic address ABDACOM, BATAVIA. On 18th January the Headquarters was moved to the Grand Hotel LEMBANG, situated in the foothills some ten miles by road north of BANDOENG, retaining the telegraphic address ABDACOM, BATAVIA, (which was intended to delay, so far as might be possible, enemy knowledge of the precise location of the Headquarters). By the time the Headquarters arrived at Lembang, the minimum essential signals communications had been installed; and embryo office accommodation in the sitting rooms of private suites and the ballroom and dining room of the hotel was available. During the stay of Headquarters in Lembang additions in the shape of improved signal communications, quarters for the guard detachment from the Royal Netherlands Indies Army, additional hutted office

accommodation in the hotel garden and other accommodation for various purposes, were made, not all of which were occupied or in use at the time of dispersal of the Headquarters.

Expansion of the number of personnel at Headquarters necessitated, first, the acquisition of private houses and another small hotel in Lembang and of further private houses on the road Bandoeng-Lembang to serve as living quarters and offices for the Intendant General's Staff, and, later, the establishment of the offices of the Air Staff and the Combined Operations Intelligence Centre in the R. N. I. Military Academy in Bandoeng, with living quarters in Bandoeng for the personnel concerned.

6. *Date of Dispersal.*—When the course of events made it apparent that the retention of Java in Allied hands could not be expected to continue much longer, the Combined Chiefs of Staff at Washington stated (5) that they considered the timely withdrawal from Java of Headquarters South-West Pacific Command to be important. In view of the contracted area over which command could be effective, owing to the loss of Malaya and the greater part of the Netherlands East Indies, the Supreme Commander recommended (6) that the Headquarters should be abolished rather than withdrawn elsewhere. This recommendation was accepted by the Combined Chiefs of Staff (7). ABDACOM headquarters accordingly ceased to operate from 0430 hours G. M. T. (1200 hours local time) on 25th February 1942. The Supreme Commander left for India by air on the evening of that day to re-assume the appointment of Commander-in-Chief in India. The remainder of the Headquarters Staff, less those required to operate the Headquarters of the British, British Empire, U. S. A. and Dutch forces remaining in Java, left Lembang and Bandoeng by road on the morning of 26th February 1942 and sailed in H. M. S. Kedah from Tjilatjap for Colombo at 1800 hours the same day.

7. *Areas of Command.—Original Geographical Area of the South-West Pacific Command.*—The area included in ABDACOM is precisely defined in the directive issued to the Supreme Commander, *vide* Appendix 'A' and the sketch map attached thereto. In general terms it comprised the American—British—Dutch—Australian area which included Burma, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Malaya, Netherlands East Indies, Philippines, Christmas Island and the Cocos Islands. It did not include Australia, China, Indo-China and Thailand.

8. *Subsequent Modifications of the Area of the Command.*—(a) *Burma.*—Burma had been transferred from the Far East Command to the control of the Commander-in-Chief in India on 15th December 1941, soon after the outbreak of the war with Japan. General Wavell, who had repeatedly urged before the outbreak of war that Burma should form part of the Indian command, opposed its transfer back to the ABDA command (8), but was overruled.

When operational control passed to ABDACOM administrative control remained with India, subject to any overriding instructions which might be issued by the Supreme Commander (9).

Operational control was transferred back to India on 22nd February 1942. On resumption of complete control of Burma by India, the Western boundary of the ABDA area was modified to run along the Eastern (instead of the Western) frontier of Burma, thence along the west coast of Malaya to Singapore and thence along the meridian of Singapore,

but Sumatra remained wholly in the ABDA area. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the Cocos Islands were transferred to the India command. Control of 204 Mission also was transferred to India (10).

(b) *Darwin Area, Northern Australia.*—The Southern boundary of the ABDA area was originally defined (11) as "the northern coast of Australia from meridian 143 degrees east, westward to meridian 114 degrees east, thence north-westward to latitude 15 degrees south longitude 92 degrees east." This left the Supreme Commander's responsibility for the defence of Port Darwin in doubt and in his first telegram (12) after arriving in Batavia he requested definition of the position. It was suggested that because its defence must necessarily be dependent on control of the Timor Sea, which was in ABDA area, Port Darwin should be the responsibility of the Supreme Commander. After consideration of alternative suggestions it was decided that the defence of Port Darwin should be the responsibility of the Supreme Commander and that in order to enable him to discharge this responsibility an adequate portion of the hinterland should be included within his area of command. To give effect to this the Southern boundary of the ABDA area was extended to include the mainland of Australia northward of a line running from Onslow on the Western coast to the South-East corner of the Gulf of Carpentaria (13). Command of Royal Australian Air Force forces in this area was assumed by ABDACOM with effect from midnight 30/31 Jan. 1942, and of Army forces from midnight 7/8th February 1942 (14).

Command of all Australian land forces and operational control of any allied land forces within a new Darwin Sub-Command, as defined in paragraph 9 below, was to be exercised by an Australian General Officer with Headquarters at Darwin and responsible to the Supreme Commander.

The command and operation of naval forces stationed in the Darwin Sub-Command and those entering the area for operational purposes was to be exercised by ABDACOM through ABDAFLOAT (i.e., the Chief of the Naval Staff at Headquarters of ABDACOM, who was also Commander of the Allied Naval forces in the ABDA area) and Allied naval commanders under him. Forces employed in local naval defence in the Darwin Sub-Command were to continue to be commanded and operated as directed by the Australian Commonwealth Navy Board. (15).

Operational Control of all air forces stationed in the Darwin Sub-Command was to be exercised by the Commander of the Combined Air Forces ("ACH", i.e., Air Combined Headquarters), Darwin. (15).

9. *Sub-Areas of the South-West Pacific Command.*—(a) *Naval.*—No sub-division of the ABDA area for purposes of naval operations was made. The Chief of the Naval Staff (ABDAFLOAT) commanded Allied naval forces in the area, under the direction of the Supreme Commander. The command of naval forces of the various nations, under the direction of ABDAFLOAT, was exercised as follows:—

- (i) *Dutch.*—By the Commander of the Royal Netherlands Naval forces. Until Admiral Hart, U. S. N. resigned the post of Chief of the Naval Staff, this control was exercised by Admiral Helfrich. When Admiral Helfrich, R. N. N. assumed the duties of Chief of the Naval Staff, control was exercised under his direction by Rear-Admiral van Staveren. R. N. N.

(ii) *British (and Australian).*—Flag Officer Java (or Commodore Commanding China Force), Commodore J. A. Collins, C.B., R.A.N., commanded and operated all British naval forces stationed from time to time in the ABDA area, except those employed in the Local Naval Defence of Malaya and Australian ports, which were operated under the orders of Rear-Admiral Malaya and the Australian Commonwealth Navy Board respectively. Flag Officer Java was, in addition, specially charged with the provision of escorts for and routing of convoys carrying British personnel and supplies to ports in Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies. He was also instructed to co-operate with Rear Admiral Malaya in matters affecting the local naval defence of Malaya and the direction of convoys and shipping to and from Singapore (16). In order to secure close co-ordination with naval operations on adjacent stations the China Force was regarded as a detachment of the Eastern Fleet, but one acting under the control of ABDACOM instead of under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief Eastern Fleet. (17).

(iii) *American.*—The command of American naval forces in the ABDA area was at first exercised directly by Admiral Hart, U. S. N. through his deputy in the U. S. Asiatic Fleet, Admiral Purnell, at Soerabaya, but after his resignation it was exercised by Rear Admiral Glasford, U. S. N., under the direction of ABDAFLOAT.

(iv) *"Task" Forces.*—Normally the naval forces in the ABDA area operated under their own national commanders as indicated in the preceding sub-paragraphs, under the general direction of ABDAFLOAT and the Supreme Commander. It was arranged, however, that when forces consisting of units of more than one nationality were formed for particular operations (i.e., Task forces), a commander for the particular operation was to be designated by ABDAFLOAT. (17).

(b) *Land Forces.*—The land forces branch of ABDACOM staff was under the control of Lieutenant-General ter Poorten, who continued to exercise his functions as Commander of the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army, and had operational control of all other allied land forces in N. E. I. territory.

As for Naval Forces, no definition of sub-areas for the operational control of land forces was necessary, because the respective commands had been in existence sufficiently long for their boundaries to be generally known. One exception to this was the Darwin Sub-Command, created as regards the control of land forces from midnight 7th/8th February 1942, where a mixture of Australian and Royal Netherlands East Indies Army units, in addition to some United States Army units, made it advisable to define the boundaries of the command. The army commands included in ABDA area were:—

- (i) *Burma.*—Commander, Lieut.-General T. J. Hutton.
 (ii) *Malaya.*—Commander, Lieut.-General A. E. Percival.

- (iii) Netherlands East Indies (from midnight 7th/8th February, less portion included in Darwin Sub-Area) Commander, Lieut.-General H. ter Poorten.
- (iv) *Philippine Islands*.—Commander, General MacArthur.
- (v) *Darwin Sub-Command*.—Commander, an Australian General Officer with his Headquarters at Darwin. Boundaries; East ABDA area eastern boundary to Cape York; South, a line running from Cape York along the eastern shore of the Gulf of Carpentaria to the south-east corner of the Gulf and thence a straight line to Onslow; West, a line north-eastward from Onslow to the eastern end of the island of Flores, thence to the eastern end of North Celebes and thence north to the 5 degrees north parallel of latitude. North, from the west boundary along the 5 degrees north parallel to the eastern boundary of ABDA area.

(c) *Air Forces*.—The Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Sir Richard Peirse, exercised command of all the Allied air forces in ABDA area (except Naval Air Arms and their equivalent). Until Sir Richard Peirse arrived and took over his duties from 1200 hours on 28th January 1942, (18), Major-General Breteton, U. S. Army Air Corps, officiated, with Group Captain Darvall, R. A. F. as his Deputy. For purposes of the control of air operations the ABDA area was divided into sub-commands as follows:—

Sub-Command.	Area included.	Commander.
(i) NORGROUP	Burma H. Q. Rangoon.	British.
(ii) WESGROUP	Malaya, Sumatra north of 3 degrees south and including Palembang I and II, and West Borneo. H. Q. Singapore; later Sumatra, then Java.	British.
(iii) CENGROUP	Java west of 110 degrees east and Sumatra south of 3 degrees south, excluding Palembang I and II. H. Q. Bandoeng.	Dutch (AHK Bandoeng).
(iv) EASGROUP	Java east of 110 degrees east, inclusive Flores, inclusive Celebes, exclusive Molucca Sea. H. Q. Bandoeng.	American.
(v) AUSGROUP	East of EASGROUP, inclusive Molucca Sea, to eastern boundary ABDA area, and including that portion of Australia north of a line from Onslow to the S. E. corner of the Gulf of Carpentaria (i.e. corresponding with the Darwin Sub-Command for land forces). H. Q. Darwin.	Australian or American.
(vi) RECGROUP	ABDA area, subdivided into:— <i>Western area</i> .—Malaya-W Borneo to 3 degrees south. <i>Central area</i> .—South of 3 degrees south—Sunda Strait-Java Sea—Sumbawa to S. E. corner of Borneo. <i>Eastern area</i> .—East Borneo-Macassar Strait—inclusive Molucca Sea to Timor. <i>Darwin area</i> .—Halmahera-Ambon-Timor-Onslow to ABDA boundary.	Dutch, with U. S. Deputy.

10. *Directive issued to the Supreme Commander*.—The Directive issued to the Supreme Commander, as approved by the four Governments concerned, is reproduced in full in Appendix 'A'.

The geographical area of the South-West Pacific Command has already been outlined in paragraph 7 above. It is of interest to note that it exceeded 5,000 miles in length measured from the north of Burma round the islands to New Guinea and was almost 2,500 miles from North to South; the superficial area comprised within the boundaries of the Command was some 12 million square miles.

In the Directive the Supreme Commander was made responsible for the co-ordination within his command of the strategic operations of all armed forces of the American, British, Dutch and Australian Governments. He commanded all forces of those Governments which were:—

- (a) stationed in his Command,
- (b) located in Australian territory when such forces had been allotted by their respective Governments for service in, or in support of, the ABDA Area.

The Supreme Commander had no responsibility in respect of the internal administration of the forces under his command, but was authorised to direct and co-ordinate the creation and development of administrative facilities and the broad allocation of war material.

In practice, however, it became necessary for the Intendant General's Branch of ABDACOM staff to make all administrative arrangements in respect of many units and details which arrived in the Netherlands Indies during the later stages of the existence of ABDACOM.

SECTION III.—ORGANIZATION OF HEADQUARTERS SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC COMMAND (ABDACOM).

11. *Commanders and Chiefs of Staff*.—The senior appointments in the Headquarters of ABDACOM were filled as under:—

- (a) *Deputy Supreme Commander, and Intendant General*.—Lieut.-General G. H. BRETT, U. S. Army Air Corps.
- (b) *Deputy Intendant General*.—Major-General C. E. M. LLOYD, A.I.F.
- (c) *Chief of Staff*.—Lieut.-General Sir H. R. POWNALL.
- (d) *Chief of Naval Staff and Commander of Allied Naval Forces*.—Admiral T. C. HART, U. S. Navy; later Admiral HELFRICH, R. N. Navy.
- (e) *Deputy Chief of Naval Staff*.—Rear Admiral PALLISER, R.N.
- (f) *Commander of Allied Land Forces in the N. E. I.*—Lieut.-General H. ter POORTEN, Commander R. N. E. I. Army.
- (g) *Chief of the General Staff and Deputy for Gen. ter Poorten*.—Major-General I. S. O. PLAYFAIR.
- (h) *Chief of Air Staff and Commander of Allied Air Forces*.—Major-General BRERETON, U. S. Army Air Corps, acting until 28th January 1942 when Air Marshall Sir Richard PIERSE assumed command.

(j) *Deputy Chief of Air Staff*.—Group Captain L. DARVALL, R. A. F., acting until 28th January 1942 when Major-General BRERETON, took over.

(k) *Deputy Director of Military Intelligence*.—Brigadier L. F. FIELD.

(l) In charge Public Relations, and Political Adviser.—Sir GEORGE SANSOM.

12. *Organisation of Staff*.—(a) *General*.—The detailed organization worked out for the headquarters staff of the South-West Pacific Command is given in Appendix 'B'. In general outline the organization was as follows.

(b) *Sub-Division*.—The staff was divided into five branches, Naval, Army, Air, Administrative and Intelligence. Co-ordination of the work of these branches fell within the province of the Chief of Staff, who normally effected this in daily, or more frequent, meetings with the Deputy Chiefs of Staff.

(c) *Naval Staff*.—(ABDAFLOAT).—In the Naval Staff, officers were placed in charge of operations, convoy routing and escorts, maintenance of situation charts, etc. Their work was co-ordinated in daily meetings under the chairmanship of the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff.

(d) *General Staff*.—(ABDAMIL—telegraphic address never used).—The Army (General) Staff was organized in five sections, namely:—

G. S. 1.—Co-ordinating section.

G. S. 2.—Burma and Malaya.

G. S. 3.—Netherlands East Indies.

G. S. 4.—Australia and Australian troops.

G. S. 5.—Philippine Islands.

As in other branches, co-ordination was ensured by daily meetings of the Staff officers in charge of sections in the office of the Chief of the General Staff. Out of a total of 20 staff officers demanded for the above sections only 8 had reported for duty at the time of dispersal and only 4 were present throughout the existence of ABDACOM. The available officers, therefore, had to be regarded as a pool for assignment to any urgent work rather than be given any fixed allotment of duties. In consequence the less important office routine work had necessarily to be neglected. The organization outlined above did not prove entirely satisfactory in view of developments in the situation and a revised organization was devised, as follows, to be taken into use on the arrival of a full quota of staff officers:—

Future planning section.

G. S. 1.—Staff Duties Section.

G. S. 2.—Burma and Malaya.

G. S. 3/4.—N. E. I. and Australia.

G. S. 5.—Philippine Islands.

Time did not permit the adoption of the new organization.

(e) *Air Staff*.—(ABDAIR).—The Air Staff was divided into Operations and Administration sections. Originally these were housed with the remainder of ABDACOM headquarters at Lembang. Various additions to ABDACOM Staff, such as Combined Operations Intelligence Centre and the American Far East Air Force G-4 (Supply) Section, together with the arrival of additional personnel made the accommodation available at Lembang unduly cramped. Accordingly all but a skeleton Air Operations Staff was moved from Lembang into Bandoeng, where the transferred portions began to operate in the Military Academy with effect from 0130 hours G. M. T. on 1st February 1942.

(f) *Intendant General's Branch*.—(ABDAMIN).—This branch of the headquarters staff was established from the beginning in requisitioned private houses seven miles from the Supreme Commander's headquarters on the road Lembang—Bandoeng. Measures to secure co-ordination between its activities and those of other branches of the staff included the location of the Deputy Intendant General at the Supreme Commander's headquarters, his attendance at Commanders' and Staff conferences and frequent visits by administrative staff officers to other branches of the staff, in addition to the provision of direct line and secretophone communication. The Works Directorate had separate offices about one mile distant from I. G.'s Branch.

Difficulty in securing the required personnel made it more difficult for the Intendant General's Branch even than for other branches to adopt its designed organization. In outline, it was intended to organize the branch in three sections, Naval, Air and Land. The Land section included all supplies and stores common to all sections, also all buildings and works.

Considerable progress was made in the filling of appointments in the Land section, although many vacancies still existed at the time of dispersal. The Naval and Air sections had not come into being and the establishment of an Air Officer-in-charge of Administration within the staff of ABDAIR made the situation of the proposed Air section of the Intendant General's staff a doubtful one.

(g) *Intelligence Branch*.—The Intelligence Branch at the operational headquarters of ABDACOM served as an Inter-Service Intelligence Bureau. Its personnel were drawn almost entirely from the Far East Central Intelligence Bureau, Singapore, and comprised officers of all three Services. It continued to function as the source of military intelligence for ABDACOM operational headquarters after the establishment of the Combined Operations Intelligence Centre at Air Staff headquarters.

The combined operations Intelligence Centre began to function in the former Military Academy at Bandoeng from 0900 hours (Java Time) on 1st February. Captain F. B. Stump, U. S. Navy, was Director and he had assistants from all three Services of the British, Australians, Dutch and Americans.

It was directed that all information available, including specifically the following, should be forwarded promptly to the C. O. I. C.:—

(i) All enemy reports, stating source when possible and details available, of aircraft activities and location; land forces; vessels; attacks; and mine laying.

- (ii) Reconnaissance of harbours, areas, etc., with all reports of any special reconnaissance with negative reports included.
- (iii) Attacks on enemy airfields, vessels, troops, etc.
- (iv) D. F. and special intelligence reports.
- (v) Reports of dispositions, strength and availability of our forces, including number of available aircraft by type and location; prospective aircraft reinforcements; location of all our naval vessels (especially submarines) and prospective future movements; location and movement of our merchant shipping (especially convoys).

The Director was to be informed of prospective movements and operations of our forces.

(b) *Joint Planning.*—When problems demanding joint planning arose, the Chief of Staff nominated staff officers from the three Services to form an *ad hoc* committee for consideration of the problem in question.

13. *Method of dealing with day to day work.*—The expeditious despatch of work and co-ordination was secured by a series of daily conferences on various levels.

At first one Commanders' conference was held daily and later, from 11th February, they were held twice daily at 0900 hours and 1800 hours. These conferences were attended by the Supreme Commander, his Deputy, the Chief of Staff, the Chiefs of Staffs, who combined with that duty the command of forces of the various services, the D. D. M. I., and other officers whose presence was desired, such as the Commander of the 1st Australian Corps while he was present in Java.

Following the Commanders' Conference, Staff Conferences were held, presided over by the Chief of Staff and attended by Deputy Chiefs of Staff. The function of these conferences was to implement and co-ordinate work in connection with decisions taken at the Commanders' conferences. Normally they were held twice daily.

In addition to the above, Deputy Chiefs of Staff held meetings of their own staff officers as required.

It was found that regular conferences on the above lines reduced to a minimum the necessity for noting and other paper work and expedited the despatch of business.

14. *Office Organization.*—A Central Registry system was taken into use at ABDACOM headquarters for the registration of correspondence and the custody and maintenance of files. This system did not work satisfactorily, even after an almost complete clerical establishment had arrived, because the urgency with which messages received had to be dealt with precluded completion of the normal processes of registry and filing before action was taken. It is probable that the maintenance of files would have been transferred to a section basis as soon as the number of staff officers available increased. In the General Staff some officers were, in fact, maintaining their private files on especially important subjects even with the staff on more or less a skeleton basis.

Separation of, first, the Intendant General's staff and, later ABDAIR from the main operational headquarters entailed those branches' dropping out of the main central registry system. Duplication of file numbers was avoided by the allotment of blocks of numbers to each branch.

SECTION IV.—FAR EAST WAR SITUATION AT THE TIME WHEN ABDACOM TOOK OVER COMMAND IN THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC.

(a) *Object of the Summary.*—In order to provide a background against which to view the activities of ABDACOM it is necessary very briefly to review the course of events from the outbreak of war with Japan up to the 15th January 1942.

(b) *Outbreak of Hostilities.*—On the 7th December 1941 Japan, under the cloak provided by negotiations in Washington between their special peace envoy Mr. Kurosu, and Admiral Nomura, with the United States authorities, opened hostilities over a wide area in the Pacific. This was followed by a Japanese declaration of war against the United States and Britain, which led to declarations of war against Japan by the United States, Britain and the Dominions and many of the Central and South American Republics. On the 8th December the Netherlands East Indies declared war against Japan. On the 11th December Germany and Italy declared war on the United States who replied with a declaration of a state of war with those countries; the Netherlands East Indies declared war on Italy, being already at war with Germany. China declared war on Germany and Italy on the 9th December; Germany rejected the declaration on the grounds that they recognised only one Government, namely the Nanking Government, in China. An agreement was signed at Washington on the 1st January 1942, by the United States, Britain, Russia, China and twenty-two other Anti-Axis States in which they undertook to prosecute the war with all vigour and not to make a separate peace. On the same day Dr. J. van Mook relinquished his ministerial appointment in the Netherlands Government in order to take up the duties of Lieutenant-Governor of the Netherlands East Indies.

(c) *Events in the Pacific Islands.*—Hostilities opened on the 7th December 1941 with heavy attacks by aircraft from several Japanese aircraft carriers, bombardment by submarines and attacks by midget submarines against Pearl Harbour, Oahu and other Hawaiian Islands Objectives. The attacks resulted in the loss of one U. S. battleship by internal explosions following hits by bombs, the capsizing of another battleship, the loss of other smaller naval units and many aircraft and heavy casualties to naval and army personnel. Since then there have been spasmodic attacks on various points in the Hawaiian Islands chiefly by bombardment by submarines, with negligible results.

Between 7th December 1941 and 15th January 1942, when ABDACOM took over command, Japanese action against Pacific Islands was widespread. The three link islands on the U. S. air and cable route between Hawaii and the Philippines were attacked. Guam being occupied in 11th December and Wake Island on 22nd December after a gallantly prolonged resistance by the greatly outnumbered garrison, resulting in the loss of

or damage to seven enemy ships. At various dates in this period landings took place on Makin and Abiak in the Gilbert Islands; air raids were made on Nauru and Ocean Islands and Johnston, Baker, Palmyra and Ocean Islands were subjected to naval bombardment. Rabaul was subjected to an air raid on 4th January, a prelude to an enemy expedition to occupy New Britain en route to New Guinea and, possibly, Australia.

(d) *Events in China.*—The Japanese occupied the International Settlement at Shanghai on the 8th December. Air raids were made on Hong Kong and Kowloon on this day.

On the 9th they attacked the British leased territory on the mainland opposite Hong Kong. During the night 11/12th December the British garrison withdrew from the mainland into Hong Kong Island. By order of their Generalissimo three Chinese Armies carried out diversionary attacks on the Canton-Kowloon railway and on the Leased Territory, but did not succeed in halting the Japanese attack on Hong Kong. The Japanese effected a landing on the island on the night of 18th December and after severe fighting the garrison was forced to surrender at 1905 hours on 25th December 1941.

On the 22nd December General Wavell, in his capacity as C.-in-C. India and Burma, arrived at Chungking for discussions with Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek and Major-General G. H. Brett, U. S. Army Air Corps, regarding co-ordination of effort.

(e) *Events in the Philippine Islands.*—Hostilities against the Philippines opened with air raids against Davao, Palawan and Baguio on 8th December, followed by raids on Cebu on the 12th and 25th. Other enemy air raids were made on Cebu, Manila and Cavite naval base, causing serious casualties in Manila and severe military damage at Cavite. Japanese landings were effected at Vigan and Aparri in the north of Luzon island on 9th December and at Legaspi in the south-east on the 12th. Small Filipino forces resisted, but could not repel these landings. A pause in the land operations followed, while the Japanese built up air bases at the sites of their landings.

Large scale landings were effected by the Japanese at Lingayen Gulf, North of Manila, on the 22nd December, followed by further major landings at Antimonan, south of Manila, on the 23rd. Both landings were followed up by substantial reinforcements. It then became a difficult problem to unite the U. S. forces from the north and the south in defensible positions N. W. of Manila, but the junction was effected before the communications bottleneck north of Manila was rendered unusable by land and air attacks. The U. S. northern force was withdrawn on 29th December and the concentration was effected on the 31st, Manila and Cavite falling into Japanese hands on 1st January 1942. The Japanese met with a reverse in an attack on the new position on 5th January. On the 10th of January the U. S. forces were withdrawn to a position across the base of the Bataan Peninsula which forms the western arm of Manila Bay, and the island of Corregidor at the entrance to the Bay. Incautious Japanese advances against the Bataan position were repulsed with very severe loss by U. S. artillery on 18th January, as were two further Japanese attacks on the 14th.

Japanese landings in the Philippines elsewhere than in Luzon were limited. A landing was effected at Davao in the south of Mindanao on 20th December, and another landing at Jolo. Enemy air bases were established at both of these places, and concentrations of enemy shipping appeared at Davao. Air attacks against this shipping up to 6th January caused the Japanese very substantial losses in warships, transports and store ships.

(f) *Events in Malaya.*—The first Japanese landing in Malaya was effected near Kota Bharu at 0130 hours on 8th December 1941. Simultaneously further landings were made at Patani and Singora near the Malayan frontier in southern Thailand. On the 8th heavy air raids were made on aerodromes occupied by the British air forces in northern Malaya, resulting in crippling losses in aircraft on the ground. Singapore, also, was raided, apparently more as a demonstration than as a serious attack.

A severe blow was struck at Allied morale, besides the serious material loss inflicted, by the sinking by Japanese air attack of Prince of Wales and Repulse off the east coast of Malaya on 10th December, while they were seeking an opportunity to attack the Japanese shipping used in connection with the enemy landings. On the 12th December four Japanese transports, one tanker and one supply ship were sunk off Singora by Netherlands Navy submarines. Reinforcements of naval and air units had arrived in Singapore from the N. E. I. on 10th December.

By 10th December the British force in Kelantan was forced by a Japanese advance in strength from the direction of Singora to withdraw south of Kota Bharu. Thereafter troops in N. E. Malaya were not seriously threatened by a direct enemy advance, but they were forced to conform to the withdrawal in western Malaya. By 22nd December they were in position near Kuala Lipis.

In Kedah an advance was made into Thai territory, along the road Kroh-Yala, after the Japanese had landed. On meeting unexpectedly strong opposition this force was compelled to withdraw to Kroh. A Japanese offensive from southern Thailand into Kedah drove the 11th Indian Division out of an incompletely organized defensive position at Jitra and compelled the Division to retreat in some confusion and with heavy losses. By 17th December fighting was in progress along the Muda River 80 miles south of the Thai frontier. By the 18th our troops were reorganizing south of the Krian River, which forms the boundary between Kedah and Province Wellesley and Perak, and Penang was evacuated. By the 22nd our positions were in the vicinity of Kuala Kangsar, 45 miles S. E. of the Krian River. By the 28th our troops were in contact with the enemy at Chemor, 10 miles north of Ipoh, and at Blanja on the Perak River S. W. of Ipoh; on the 29th our troops had been withdrawn to the south of Ipoh.

At this stage successive withdrawals were caused by Japanese landings behind the British left flank. For this purpose small ships and barges, which must have been left undestroyed at Penang, were used. Movement was made either by night or under air cover, the enemy taking advantage of his air superiority, by day. This air superiority, due at least in part to early losses of grounded aircraft on airfields in northern Malaya, enabled the enemy to carry out frequent bombing and machine gunning attacks on the British troops and transport without the possibility of retaliation on the enemy.

Patrol encounters between Kuala Trengganu and Kuantan had, for some time, indicated an enemy advance down the east coast. On 31st December contact was made with the enemy in the vicinity of Kuantan, on 1st January the Japanese were in the outskirts of the town and on 4th January they attacked the aerodrome. The British garrison defending the aerodrome offered strong resistance, resulting in heavy casualties on both sides, but on the 5th the aerodrome was in Japanese hands and the remains of the Kuantan garrison were withdrawn to the area south of Kuala Lipis, leaving no British troops on the east coast north of Endau.

On the west coast further enemy infiltration by sea caused fresh British withdrawals. Positions south of the River Perak in Lower Perak were reached on the 4th January, Bidor, 70 miles north of Kuala Lumpur on the 5th and positions on the Slim River, on the Selangor border 50 miles north of Kuala Lumpur, on the 6th. On the 7th an enemy tank attack penetrated the Slim River position, resulting in the cutting up of two Brigades of the 11th Indian Division.

General Wavell visited the Headquarters of the 3rd Indian Corps, 11th Indian Division and 12th and 28th Indian Infantry Brigades (the two cut up on the previous day) on 8th January. It was apparent to him from this visit that the 11th Indian Division was in no condition to withstand further serious attacks. He therefore issued instructions for a withdrawal to the northern boundary of Johore, where the 8th Australian Division (22nd and 27th Brigades A. I. F.) and the 9th Indian Division, strengthened by additions, were to conduct an active defence, with 53rd Infantry Brigade (of 18th British Division) and 44th Indian Infantry Brigade, newly arrived in Malaya, in support. On 10th January further withdrawals on the Selangor front were made. Positions north of Seremban were reached on the 12th and the withdrawal continued on the 18th. By 14th January the withdrawal of 3rd Indian Corps was completed and West Force comprising 27 Bde. A. I. F., 45 Indian Inf. Bde. and, later, 9 Indian Div. had taken over the defence. A patrol of 22 Bde. A. I. F. sighted a Japanese fighting patrol near the Rompin River on the east coast north of Endau. In the west the Japanese claimed to have reached the area Seremban—Tampin—Sepang.

General Wavell, when in Singapore on 7th January, had issued orders for the reconnaissance and preparation of defences on the landward side of Singapore Island to be accelerated.

(g) *Events in Thailand and Burma.*—At 0200 hours on 8th December 1941 the Japanese began to enter Thailand. By 0730 hours the same day Thai resistance to the Japanese invasion ceased and later in the day the Thai Government concluded an agreement permitting the passage of Japanese forces through Thai territory. Subsequently Thai troops actively co-operated with Japanese troops in some engagements with British forces.

Japanese action against Burma began with bombing attacks on objectives in the Tenasserim Division on 10th December. On 14th December the Japanese advanced to Victoria Point whence the small British garrison was withdrawn. British small-scale raids on the Thai isthmian railway were made ineffective by the resistance of superior Thai forces.

Operational and administrative control of the troops in Burma was transferred from the C.-in-C., Far East Command to the Commander-in-Chief in India on 15th December 1941.

Air raids were carried out by the Japanese on Rangoon on the 23rd and 25th December. In the former, in which civilian casualties were heavy, the Japanese lost 10 aircraft and in the latter 20. These aircraft casualties, inflicted by fighters of the American Volunteer Group and the R. A. F., apparently deterred the Japanese from daylight raids, because the next raid was carried out on the night of 4th January. One serious result of the heavy civilian casualties in the first raid was a shortage of labour for working the docks, railways, etc., since the greater part of the civilian population left the city.

On 7th January the R. A. F. carried out a very successful bombing raid on Bangkok docks.

On 10th January there was much enemy air activity over southern Burma. On the 12th a patrol encounter on the Thai-Burma frontier near Meeohi resulted in the withdrawal of the Thai patrol.

Thus on the assumption of control by ABDACOM no serious action by land forces against Burma had occurred.

(h) *Events in the Netherlands East Indies and British Borneo.*—The Australian Government was invited by the Government of the N. E. I. on 8th December to establish aircraft at Ambon, south of Ceram, and at Koepang in Timor island for action against the Japanese. This was done and small garrisons of Australian land forces were later stationed at each of these places to supplement the Dutch garrisons.

During 1941 one battalion of Indian Infantry was stationed at Kuching in Sarawak, with one company detached to Miri to ensure completion of the oil demolition scheme at the oilfields there and at Seria, in case of need. The Japanese landed at Miri and Lutong in North Borneo on 16th December, after the oil demolition scheme had been completed successfully and the garrison withdrawn to Kuching. On 19th December a Japanese air raid on Kuching took place, followed by a landing on 24th December which forced the British garrison to withdraw into Dutch West Borneo.

Tarakan in Dutch East Borneo was bombed on 28th December and a Japanese landing took place at Weston, 100 miles north of Brunai, on 3rd January. A further raid on Tarakan occurred on 9th January and the Japanese landed there on the 11th January. Fighting continued during the 12th when destruction of the oilfield and refinery was completed and on the 13th the R. N. E. I. Army garrison was forced to surrender.

On 14th January Dutch detachments, with parties of the Indian battalion from Kuching attacked Japanese troops within a few miles of the Sarawak border.

Enemy action against other N. E. I. possessions up to 15th January consisted of a number of air raids. Sorong, off the N. W. point of New Guinea, was raided on 23rd and 28th December, Ambon on 5th and 7th January and Medan in Sumatra on 25th and 28th December. On 28th December an air raid was carried out on Minahasa on the N. E. arm of Celebes and on 11th January, simultaneously with the attack on Tarakan, the Japanese effected a landing.

On 17th December a detachment of Dutch and Australian troops occupied Dilly in Portuguese Timor in order to counter potential hostile activity by the Japanese in that place. This action gave rise to subsequent diplomatic negotiation in which ABDACOM became involved.

(j) *Preludes to formation of ABDACOM.*—On 20th December a conference was in progress in Washington and the British press suggested that measures to secure co-ordinated strategy were likely to proceed from it. Mr. Churchill arrived in Washington on 22nd December accompanied by senior representatives of the Services. On 2nd January Mr. Curtin, Prime Minister of Australia, disclosed to the press that General Wavell was likely to be appointed Supreme Commander in the South-West Pacific and this was followed by an official announcement of the appointment by Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill on 3rd January. The appointment of Major-General Brett as Deputy Supreme Commander and of Admiral Hart as Commander of the Allied Naval Forces was also officially announced, together with the appointment as Chief of Staff of General Pownall who on 27th December had assumed the duties of Commander-in-Chief Far East Command. Simultaneously it was announced that Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek would command all Allied forces in China, Indo-China and Thailand. It was announced on 6th January that General Wavell's headquarters would be located somewhere in the Netherlands East Indies.

(k) *Summary of the Situation on 15th January* —

Hong Kong had fallen.

The U. S. garrison in the Philippine Islands was besieged on the Bataan Peninsula and Corregidor Island.

Minahassa in the Celebes was in enemy hands as was North Borneo and Tarakan and there were indications of hostile advances southward from these places.

In Malaya 3rd Indian Corps after constant fighting and retreating for five weeks could be counted on for little further effort. The enemy had approached close to Johore and the possibility of getting in reinforcements through Singapore was already open to some doubt.

Burma had not yet seriously been attacked by land forces.

In many parts of the outer N. E. I. islands, air raids indicated further imminent enemy advances.

SECTION V.—REINFORCEMENTS FOR ABDA AREA.

16. *Necessity for Reinforcements.*—(a) The Japanese were known to dispose of a minimum of 72 divisions, not including Depot Divisions in Japan, and some 26 of these were operating in the S. W. Pacific area. Allied land forces in that area approximated to the equivalent of 8 divisions, 3 in Malaya, say the equivalent of 3 in the Philippines and 2 in Java. Elsewhere in the Netherlands East Indies the Dutch forces consisted of only small parties of Territorial troops intended more for internal security duties than for active operations.

(b) As regards Naval Forces, the Japanese usually had approximately 3 battleships, 29 cruisers, 7 aircraft carriers, 71 destroyers, 4 seaplane carriers and 34 submarines operating in the S. W. Pacific and adjacent areas. Allied Naval units under the control of ABDAFLOAT comprised

1 heavy cruiser, 8 light cruisers, 2 sloops, 23 destroyers and 36 submarines. Most of the British ships and some of the Dutch and U. S. had constantly to be employed on convoy escort, and cover for convoy movement.

(c) Any accurate comparison between the opposing Air forces is difficult. At the outbreak of hostilities British aircraft in Malaya and Burma totalled less than 250, with few reserves, as against an estimated minimum requirement of 355 with adequate reserves. The number available was further reduced by early successful Japanese attacks on grounded aircraft on northern Malayan aerodromes. The Netherlands East Indies had 4 fighter and 6 bomber squadrons. Figures are not available as regards the U. S. aircraft in the Philippine Islands, but it is known that, although reinforcing aircraft had begun to arrive, the number there was not large. Opposed to the above the Japanese had approximately 1,300 aircraft, initial equipment, in the area of which some 300 in 7 carriers were highly mobile and capable of being switched very rapidly from one point to another.

(d) It was therefore obvious that substantial reinforcements would be required to check the Japanese drive southward followed by further large increases in strength before a counter-offensive could be staged. The need to continue to counter German efforts elsewhere and a serious shortage of shipping made the provision of reinforcements and their timely transportation to the S. W. Pacific matters of difficulty. It was apparent from the start that the Allies were involved in a race against time, in which the Japanese had a long start.

17. *Reinforcement Policy.*—(a) *Policy.*—It was decided by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom (19) that the considerations governing the allocation of reinforcements should be:—

(i) The security of Singapore and of sea communications in the Indian Ocean was second only to the security of the United Kingdom and the sea communications thereto,

(ii) The defeat of Germany must remain the primary object. Consequently for the time being no more available resources should be diverted than were necessary to hold the Japanese,

(iii) The British offensive in Cyrenaica should be exploited to the greatest possible extent subject to the condition that it must not prevent the dispatch of essential reinforcements to the Far East.

(b) *Naval Forces.*—In fulfilment of the above policy the Admiralty was to arrange to concentrate the necessary naval forces in the Indian Ocean; no record of the measures taken is available. Naval reinforcements detailed for the ABDA area are indicated in the next paragraph.

(c) *Land Forces.*—The target for British and Imperial land forces in Malaya and the N. E. I. was fixed (20) at nine divisions and one armoured brigade, with ancillary troops and in Burma four divisions. Steps taken to attempt to reach these targets are detailed in succeeding paragraphs.

(d) *Air Forces.*—The aim as regards Air Forces (19) was to bring them up to the following strengths:—

In Malaya—8 Light Bomber Squadrons,

8 Fighter Squadrons,

2 Torpedo Bomber Squadrons,

‡ General Recce. (land plane) Squadron.

In Burma—6 Light Bomber Squadrons,
6 Fighter Squadrons.

This programme was modified to some extent as provision progressed, as indicated in paragraph 20 below. The importance of equipping, maintaining and expanding the Dutch air forces in the N. E. I. was urged on the United States Government, but circumstances did not permit this, *vide* para. 20 (d) below.

18. *Allotment of Reinforcements—Naval Forces.*—In view of the Allied strength of submarines already in the South China Sea, H. M. G. decided (19) that no more submarines were to be diverted from the United Kingdom or Mediterranean to ABDA area beyond two British and two Dutch submarines and one Dutch submarine depot ship which had already been ordered eastward. Actually the two British submarines arrived, but neither of the two Dutch submarines ordered nor the depot ship arrived before the dispersal of ABDACOM headquarters. (21).

Reinforcements of surface craft promised for ABDA area were:—

U. S.—One cruiser. Due to arrive approx. 24th February (21).

British.—One cruiser (minelayer). Did not arrive (21).

Two light cruisers, R. A. N. (22). One present, one due to arrive approx. 26 Feb.

Two destroyers, R. A. N. Did not arrive (21).

Three sloops, R. A. N. Did not arrive (21).

One 8" gun cruiser from Eastern Fleet. Employed in area pending arrival of a cruiser with Rear Admiral for China Force due end of March.

Dutch.—One A. A. cruiser.

One destroyer. } Did not arrive (21).

The total Naval units mentioned in para. 18 (b) above, plus actual arrivals included among the reinforcements detailed in this paragraph, were contributed as follows:—

	Cruisers.	Destroyers.	Submarines.	Sloops.
U. S.	4	11	25	..
British	6	5 (plus 4 old small destroyers at Singapore).	2	2
Dutch	3	8	8 (plus 3 local defence submarines).	..

Throughout the existence of ABDACOM no naval units, other than local naval defence vessels, were available in Burma area.

19. *Allotment of Reinforcements—Land Forces.*—(a) *Malaya and N. E. I.*—(i) The formations available in Malaya, excluding Singapore fortress troops, on 8th December 1941 comprised:—

3rd Indian Corps—

11th Indian Division.

6th Indian Infantry Brigade.

15th Indian Infantry Brigade.

28th Indian Infantry Brigade.

9th Indian Division.

8th Indian Infantry Brigade.

22nd Indian Infantry Brigade.

8th Australian Division—

22nd Australian Infantry Brigade.

27th Australian Infantry Brigade.

12th Indian Infantry Brigade.—Command reserve.

In Singapore Island there were:—

1st Malaya Infantry Brigade.

2nd Malaya Infantry Brigade.

Fortress troops, volunteers, and manning details for fixed defences.

(ii) Land forces reinforcements sent or promised included:—

Formations:—18th Division.

45th Indian Infantry Brigade.

44th Indian Infantry Brigade.

1st Australian Corps—

6th Australian Division.

7th Australian Division.

One Armoured Brigade (7th Armoured Brigade).

Units and Details.—About 400 reinforcements for each battalion in the 3rd Indian Corps.

One Australian M. G. Battalion and reinforcements for 8th Australian Division.

One Light Tank Squadron (B Sqn. 8rd Hussars).

One Indian Light Tank Squadron.

These, together with the troops already in Malaya, fell short of the target of nine British and Imperial divisions for Malaya and N. E. I. by some three divisions. The question of the source from which the deficiency was to be made good was referred (23) to the War Office, but was not resolved; the opportunity to complete to the target did not in any case arise.

(iii) The following reinforcements actually arrived in the theatre:—

Formations:—

53 Inf. Bde. of 18 Div. } at Singapore early in January before formation of ABDACOM.
45 Ind. Inf. Bde. }

44 Ind. Inf. Bde.—at Singapore 25th January, M. T. of 18 Div. in the same convoy had to be back-loaded to Batavia because of the difficulty of unloading at Singapore under air attack.

18 Div. (less 53 Inf. Bde.)—at Singapore 29th January; convoy was attacked when approaching Singapore; one large ship, Empress of Asia, was hit by bombs and later burnt out, but casualties were slight.

A skeleton Corps H. Q. of 1 Aust Corps arrived in Java by air and one ship only of the convoys transporting the Corps arrived at Batavia where some A. I. F. personnel were disembarked to assist in the defence of Java. Later Corps H. Q. and all the remainder of the Corps were diverted to destinations outside the ABDA area. Commander and one staff officer of Armd. Bde. arrived in Java, but left when the Bde. was diverted to Burma.

Units and Details:—

One Aust M. G. Bn. and reinforcements for 8 Aust Div. } at Singapore 28rd January.
Drafts for 3rd Indian Corps }
No. 100 Indian Lt. Tank Sqn. } at Singapore 29th Jan.

'B' Sqn. 3rd Hussars—at Oosthaven 13th February; disembarked, but re-embarked for Batavia because southern Sumatra was being evacuated.

(b) Burma.—(i) In Burma the following formations were available when war broke out with Japan:—

H. Q. 1st Burma Division.—

1st Burma Infantry Brigade.
2nd Burma Infantry Brigade.
13th Indian Infantry Brigade.
16th Indian Infantry Brigade—just arriving in the country.

(ii) Land forces promised or sent included:—

Formations:—

H. Q. 17th Indian Division.
46th Indian Infantry Brigade.
48th Indian Infantry Brigade.
Two East African Brigade Groups.
H. Q. 14th Indian Division.
63rd Indian Infantry Brigade.
47th Indian Infantry Brigade.
49th Indian Infantry Brigade.

Units:—

Duke of Wellington's Regiment.
West Yorkshire Regiment.
Cameronians.
Inniskilling Fusiliers.
Many Engineer, Ordnance, Transportation, Pioneer, Labour, etc., units.

The formations included in this and the preceding sub-paragraph would on arrival, have aggregated the four divisions which were accepted as the target for Burma.

(iii) Reinforcements which actually arrived in Burma during the period 15th January to 22nd February, when ABDACOM was in operational control, included:—

46 Ind. Inf. Bde., arrived 25th January.
48 Ind. Inf. Bde., arrived 31st January.
Duke of Wellington's Regiment, arrived 12th Feb.
West Yorkshire Regiment, arrived 28th January.
Cameronians, arrived 19th February.

Several of the Engineer, transportation, etc., units also arrived.

It was later decided that the East African Bde. Gps. should not be sent to Burma. None of the other formations mentioned in sub-paragraph (ii) arrived in Burma during the period of ABDACOM's control.

(c) *Anti-aircraft Reinforcements.*—Early heavy losses of grounded aircraft had served to emphasise, if emphasis were needed, the necessity for A. A. reinforcements for the defence of aerodromes, as well as of other targets. A. A. reinforcements intended for other theatres were accordingly diverted to the Far East by the War Office. The following units arrived in Java:—

H. Q. 16 A. A. Bde.
77 Hy. A. A. Regt.
6 Hy. A. A. Regt. } from Malaya and less guns lost at sea
35 Lt. A. A. Regt. } or in Southern Sumatra.
21 Lt. A. A. Regt.
48 Lt. A. A. Regt.

These A. A. units remained, when the headquarters of ABDACOM was dispersed, for the defence of important aerodromes in Java and they formed the bulk of the British troops in the island when it was attacked by the Japanese.

(d) *United States Army Troops.*—U. S. Army troops in the ABDA area, outside the Philippines, comprised the following units, located as shown:—

148th Fd. Arty. Regt. (less one Bn.) 41 officers and 620 men, DARWIN.
147th Fd. Arty. Regt. 69 officers and 1138 men, DARWIN.
H. Q. & H. Q. Bty. 26 Fd. Arty. 10 officers and 87 men, MALANG (JAVA) Bde.
131st Fd. Arty. Bn. 27 officers and 518 men, MALANG (JAVA)

No scheme for the transportation of U. S. Army reinforcements into the ABDA area was ever received.

20. *Allotment of Reinforcements—Air Forces.*—Air reinforcements despatched in pursuance of the policy outlined in paragraph 17, above, included:—

(a) *Burma.—Coastal Defence.*—In December, India, lacking more modern aircraft, sent 4 Wapitis and 2 Audax to Burma, to form a Coast Defence Flight.

Fighters.—Before the outbreak of hostilities with Japan, No. 67 Squadron R. A. F., equipped with Brewster Buffaloes, was in Burma.

Three more fighter squadrons, Nos. 17, 135 and 136, were diverted to Burma, without aircraft, from a convoy en route to India. Thirty-six Hurricanees for these squadrons were flown from the Middle East and were due to arrive in Burma between 7th and 14th January; casualties en route were numerous, in some batches as many as 50 per cent of the aircraft being written off before arriving in Burma. Batches of 5, 8 and 30 Hurricanees were sent in ships sailing on 20th December and 25th January from the United Kingdom and on 30th December from Takuradi, respectively.

Arrangements for provision of the balance of two squadrons required to bring the total number of fighter squadrons in Burma, apart from the American Volunteer Group, to six were not decided before ABDACOM relinquished operational control.

The successful air defence of Rangoon, during the period, was due largely to the efforts of the American Volunteer Group. The two squadrons of the Group, one of which was available in Burma alternately until the beginning of February, were equipped with P-40's which, through constant hard use, became worn out.

Bombers.—No. 60 Bomber Squadron R. A. F. had been in Burma, but at the outbreak of hostilities all but two of its aircraft were in Singapore for armament training and never came back to Burma.

No. 116 (Blenheim IV) Squadron R. A. F. was despatched from the Middle East by air and it was intended to follow it up with another Blenheim IV squadron.

A decision as regards the despatch of further bomber squadrons to raise the total to the target figure of six squadrons was deferred. (24).

It was decided, later, to operate one-half squadron of American heavy bombers from Burma.

Order of Battle.—Owing to non-receipt of arrival reports, the actual number of aircraft received in Burma during the period of ABDACOM's control, and their dates of arrival, cannot be stated. On 6th February the Order of Battle of the air forces in Burma was:—

Fighters—

No. 17 Squadron.	Rangoon.	10 Hurricanees.
135 "	"	11 "
87 "	"	4 Buffaloes.
136 "	"	<i>Nu.</i>
A. V. G.	"	30 P.40's.

Two additional squadrons were due by the end of February.

Bombers—

No. 113 Squadron.	Rangoon.	16 Blenheim's.
60 "	"	<i>Nu.</i>
45 "	"	"
Three squadrons ex-Middle East } had not arrived.		

(b) *Malaya—*

At the outbreak of hostilities the air forces available in Malaya comprised —

Bombers—

No. 1 Sqn. R. A. A. F.	} General Reconnaissance.
No. 8 Sqn. R. A. A. F.	
No. 34 Sqn. R. A. F.	
No. 62 Sqn. R. A. F.	

Torpedo Bombers—

No. 36 Sqn. R. A. F.	} Equipped with Vildebeestes and Albacores.
No. 100 Sqn. R. A. F.	

Fighters—

No. 21 Sqn. R. A. A. F.
No. 27 Sqn. R. A. F.
No. 245 Sqn. R. A. F.
No. 458 Sqn. R. A. F.
No. 488 Sqn. R. A. F.

Bomber Reinforcements.—Considerable deliveries were made towards completion of the reinforcements required to raise the number of bomber squadrons to eight, but details are not available.

Fifty-two Hudson aircraft were sent from the United Kingdom, the first 23 of which were despatched on 5th January, and one Blenheim squadron was sent from the Middle East.

It was intended to use 16 of the Hudsons to form a new squadron and the remainder to re-equip existing squadrons or as a reserve. On this basis there would be six squadrons, 4 originally in Malaya plus one new Hudson squadron and one Blenheim squadron, leaving a deficiency of two squadrons below the target figure of eight, apart from operational losses not replaced.

Fighter Reinforcements.—No. 232 Squadron, with 51 Hurricanees and 24 pilots, was diverted from a convoy en route to India and arrived at Singapore in mid-January.

Nos. 258, 242, and 605 Squadrons, without aircraft, were diverted to Singapore from another convoy, arriving there at the end of January.

A British aircraft carrier transported 48 Hurricanees to a rendezvous south of Sumatra, whence the aircraft were flown off via Batavia and Palembang, arriving in Singapore on 26th January. These Hurricanees

were used to equip Nos. 488 and 243 Squadrons, thus providing, with No. 282 Squadron, three Hurricane squadrons at Singapore. All the remaining Buffaloes were then concentrated in No. 458 Squadron.

No. 21 Squadron R. A. A. F. was returned to Australia towards the end of January for re-equipment, because no aircraft for it were available in Malaya.

On 31st January thirty-nine more Hurricanes arrived based in Batavia. These were erected there by personnel of No. 605 Squadron which had arrived without aircraft.

Casualties to Hurricanes were unusually high, through crashes and crash landings as well as in combat, owing to the inexperience of the pilots sent to the South-West Pacific area. (25).

Four additional Hurricane squadrons were due to arrive at the end of February in the aircraft carrier which brought the 48 Hurricanes on 26th January, but they were diverted elsewhere.

Flying Boats.—One flying boat squadron, No. 205 equipped with Catalinas (P. B. Ya.), was allotted to ABDA area after the outbreak of hostilities.

(c) *Cen group*—(Western Java and South Sumatra).—This Group was operated by the Dutch. Towards the end of January, Dr. Van Mook, the Lieutenant Governor-General of N. E. I., applied (26) to the U. S. Government for the allocation of 100 pursuit planes per month for six months for the purpose of equipping the N. E. I. air force. ABDACOM in replying (27) to the Combined Chiefs of Staff at Washington on this subject stated that the priorities for American fighter reinforcements were (A) to equip and maintain to full operational efficiency all American units assigned to the ABDA area, (B) to assure a flow of replacement aircraft to keep the units up to full-operational strength, and (C) to furnish to the Australian Government such equipment as could be spared to assist in protection of vital lines of communication leading into the ABDA area. It was not, therefore, possible to allot any in sight to the N. E. I. air force. Time did not permit of an allotment to re-equip N. E. I. air force before the Japanese attack on Java.

The Dutch fighter aircraft sent to reinforce Malaya moved back from Singapore to Java on 20th January.

(d) *EASGROUP*—(Eastern Java).—Elements of the U. S. Air Forces were established in Java on evacuation from the Philippines when the free operation of air forces in Luzon was rendered impossible by the Japanese advances. Heavy bombers, also, had reached Java, via India, either en route to Australia or destined for the N. E. I., before the formation of ABDACOM. Later, the headquarters of the American Far Eastern Air Force (F. E. A. F.) was established alongside ABDAIR in the Military Academy at Bandoeng.

American heavy bombers based on aerodromes in Central and Eastern Java were available throughout the existence of ABDACOM and rendered extremely valuable service, in bombing enemy objectives and occasionally in carrying Commanders over long distances. The number available fluctuated on account of casualties, suffered mainly among grounded aircraft and by crashes due to weather conditions. Losses were balanced to

a greater or lesser degree by the arrival of a variable flow of reinforcements. The numbers normally available for operations averaged 6 to 9 daily. These bombers, particularly the B-17-E., were well able to protect themselves against, and to destroy, enemy fighters in the air. Originally 80 heavy bombers were to be sent (27) and on 9th February the despatch of 22 more during the next two months was arranged. (28).

American Air Forces in EASGROUP which can be traced included:—

7th Group	Heavy Bombers (LB-30)	Jogjakarta.
19th Group	Heavy Bombers (B-17)	Malang.
24th Group	Pursuit (P-40-E)	Djombang.
Combat Wing 10	Catalinas (P. B. Ya.)	Soerabaja, Saumliki, Darwin and Wangapoe.

Three other Pursuit Groups. (26).

Fighter (pursuit) aircraft reinforcements en route to or in the N. E. I. on 26th January (26) totalled 820. A further 820 were due to be delivered to U. S. forces in the ABDA area by 15th April. Actual deliveries during the period of Abdacom's control however barely sufficed to replace wastage. The numbers which actually reached Java did not exceed some 25-30 aircraft out of 40 routed from Darwin to the N. E. I.

(e) *AUSGROUP*—(Darwin area).—This area shared in the flow of reinforcing U. S. aircraft as decided in consultation between the Combined Chiefs of Staff, the Australian Government and ABDACOM.

SECTION VI.—CHIEF EVENTS IN THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC DURING THE EXISTENCE OF ABDACOM.

21. *Arrangement of this Section.*—It is considered best to treat events by areas and to follow the operations of sea, air and land forces in each area to their conclusion, rather than attempt to describe sea, air and land operations separately over the whole period and throughout the ABDA area. Operations are, therefore, described in succeeding paragraphs by areas in the following order:—

- (a) the Philippine Islands,
- (b) Malaya and Singapore, in the later stages of which the operation of supporting air forces from South Sumatra and Java has to be included,
- (c) Burma,
- (d) N. E. I.—
 - (i) Borneo and Celebes,
 - (ii) The Moluccas and New Guinea.
 - (iii) Timor,
 - (iv) Sumatra, Java and the Eastern Chain.

The inter-relation between events in the different parts of the area is indicated by extracts from appreciations, directives and information telegrams which were prepared and submitted from time to time.

22. *The Philippine Islands.*—When General Wavell assumed command of the S. W. Pacific area on 15th January, little was known of the position in the Philippines and means of communication with General Macarthur, and with General Sharpe who was commanding the troops in Mindanao, were scanty. (30) A staff officer from General Sharpe reported at ABDA headquarters on 17th January (31), and one from General Macarthur arrived on 8th February (32). From the arrival of the latter, until his departure on 19th February, it was possible to communicate through him direct with General Macarthur, but thereafter until dispersal communications had to be passed through Washington.

In an early cable to General Wavell, General Macarthur advocated the ejection of Japanese forces from Davao, in the south of Mindanao, by aggressive Allied naval action, the establishment of fighter, followed later by bomber, aircraft on the aerodrome still in American hands on Mindanao, and the initial establishment of one American Corps in that island in order to secure a line of communication to his force there (33). The situation in the Philippines as outlined by General Sharpe's staff officer was that the Japanese, estimated 17,000 strong, were holding only a small area in Mindanao round Davao bay. The remainder of the island was held by troops under American control, totalling some 30,000, who had, however, only five field guns, no anti-aircraft guns, eight fighter aircraft and one bomber and only about 50 rounds of small arms ammunition per rifle. Two Visayan divisions had been ordered to Mindanao on 30th December. By 9th January the bulk of them had arrived, bringing the total to the 30,000 referred to above and the Commander established his headquarters at Del Monte. Jolo in the Sulu Islands S. W. of Mindanao, had been occupied by the Japanese, understood to be about 4,000 strong who were erecting aircraft there. In Luzon the garrison had withdrawn into the Bataan peninsula. The central islands of the Philippine group, the Visayas, were still held by Philippine troops and communication by small steamers between these islands and Mindanao was still open (31). After consultation with the Deputy Supreme Commander and the Commander Asiatic Fleet (34), it was decided that any attempt to send aircraft as suggested by General Macarthur would have so little chance of success that it should not be made. It was explained to General Macarthur that the situation in other parts of the ABDA area made it impossible to do more than to organize the supply to him of ammunition and food. (36) It was arranged that small arms ammunition should be sent to Mindanao by submarine and if possible by air; also that Jolo should be bombed. The possibility of sending further supplies of ammunition by warship or merchant ship, or of running in a convoy with AA guns and reinforcements, was also considered, but the Combined Chiefs of Staff, Washington, found it to be impracticable from a naval point of view (35).

In Luzon a shortage of food began to make itself felt and in early January General Macarthur estimated that supplies would last only from 2 to 3 months with the troops on half rations, as they were from 11th Jan. Strenuous efforts were therefore made to run in ships with food. Several ships (37) were loaded in Australia with rations and ammunition and were sent by various devious routes to Mariveles, at the southern end of the Bataan Peninsula, sometimes with transshipment to smaller ships at certain islands en route. The authorities in China were asked to assist in

this matter, but found on investigation that no suitable ships or junks were available. (38). When the headquarters of Abdacon dispersed, no reports of the safe arrival of any of these ships had been received.

Reported events in the Philippines during the period under review were as follows.

15th January.—Japanese forces in Luzon were estimated at five divisions and there were no indications of any reduction being effected. Much dive bombing of artillery and infantry positions continued, but air activity otherwise had been much reduced from 6th January and it was assumed that the main bomber force previously employed against Luzon had been transferred to other theatres. (39).

Air trips from Corregidor to Del Monte and back were not encountering effective hostile interference. (40). No enemy operations were in progress in the Visayas, and north Mindanao had not been occupied. U. S. forces based on Del Monte were maintaining contact with the Japanese at a point 35 miles north of Davao.

18th January.—Enemy air raid on Cebu causing severe damage to shipping (41).

19th January.—Three U. S. aircraft attacked a Japanese cruiser and a large tanker 100 miles off Jolo, sinking the cruiser and leaving the tanker burning (42). U. S. bombers from Malang, Java, could not locate targets at Jolo owing to cloud, but sank one enemy tanker at sea, refuelled at Del Monte and returned to Malang on 20th January with 23 U. S. air crew personnel.

21st January.—Enemy pressure in Luzon was rapidly increasing, fresh Japanese forces being landed in the Lingayen Gulf and Subic Bay areas and the whole of their 14th Army being committed in the theatre. (41) General Brereton signalled from Brisbane the shipping arrangements made to send food and ammunition to Luzon (43).

22nd January.—The Japanese were repulsed all along the Bataan front in an engagement lasting all day. They had evidently decided on a policy of attrition because their control of the sea enabled them to land reinforcements at will. Up to date the U. S. forces had suffered an average loss of 35 per cent, and some divisions as much as 60 per cent, of their effectives. These losses necessitated a shortening of the front and General Macarthur proposed to make a last stand on a strong position personally selected by him. In Mindanao Japanese activities were confined to patrols, but they were organizing and arming 10,000 Japanese former residents of Davao (44). General Macarthur advised General Wavell that it was highly inadvisable for the latter to attempt his proposed visit to Luzon (45).

23rd January.—Fresh Japanese landings in Subic Bay and along the coast on the west of the Bataan position were counter-attacked but U. S. troops were feeling the fatigue of continuous fighting. The Bataan position was seriously threatened (46). On the same day a U. S. counter-attack on the East flank of the Bataan position was completely successful, the enemy being disorganized by concentrated fire from 155 mm. guns. On the West flank, where Japanese communications were secured by their navy, U. S. troops were forced back, but the situation was stabilized. (47).

24th January.—A ground observer at Jolo reported that 100 aircraft were using the aerodromes, proceeding on daily flights to the South and returning each time with some aircraft missing. (48).

26th January.—General Magruder, U. S. Army, reported from Chungking that after a thorough investigation of the possibilities it had been established that no vessels remained in Chinese hands capable of running the blockade into Bataan with cargoes of food from China. (49). Further arrangements for shipping food and ammunition to Bataan from Australia were notified. (50).

27th January.—As foreshadowed on 22nd January, the U. S. forces in Bataan broke contact with the enemy during the night 26th/27th January and withdrew to the main battle position with no casualties and no loss of material.

The Japanese were increasing their air forces at Davao and Jolo (51).

Two U. S. bombers from Java delivered quarter of a million rounds of small arms ammunition at Del Monte, Mindanao, and returned with 43 key personnel (52).

28th January.—Abdacom explained to General MacArthur that the serious situation in the N. E. I. precluded the possibility of operating aircraft from the Philippines, as had been suggested by him. (53).

29th January.—As anticipated by General MacArthur, the Japanese misjudged the reason for the U. S. withdrawal on 26/27th January and attacked without artillery or air support. As a result, the U. S. artillery inflicted severe loss on the enemy's attacking forces (54).

1st February.—A heavy artillery concentration successfully immobilised a Japanese force of small boats and launches which had been assembled in the vicinity of Ternate, Cavite Province, 10 miles S. E. of Corregidor. (55).

6th February.—Nos. 16, 18, 28 and 65 Japanese Divisions were identified on the Bataan front. (56). The Japanese were landing additional troops at Lingayen Gulf (57).

7th February.—The Japanese began an attempt to reduce the fortifications of Mills, Hughes and Drum, all of which are island forts in Manila Bay, by means of artillery concentrations from batteries in Cavite on the southern shore of the bay. Damage was caused to the fortifications of Drum. The results of counter-battery fire could not be observed on account of lack of air observation (58).

9th February.—During the past 48 hours, Japanese pressure in Bataan had increased considerably, with many dive bombing attacks. Numerous attempts at infiltration had been repelled. The artillery duel between U. S. batteries and Japanese batteries in Cavite temporarily subsided. (59).

His Majesty the King sent a congratulatory message to General MacArthur and his troops on their magnificent defence (60).

10th February.—Sporadic fierce fighting continued in Bataan.

11th February.—The Japanese occupied another of the small Philippine Islands. (61).

13th February.—General MacArthur reported that the bulk of the enemy's bomber formations which had been operating from Davao and Jolo had moved further south. (62).

14th February.—After a four days lull the artillery duels between U. S. batteries and those of the Japanese in Cavite were resumed. (63). U. S. anti-aircraft fire in Bataan had had to be curtailed on account of low stocks of A. A. ammunition; on this date approximately 8,000 rounds of 3-inch A. A. ammunition was en route to the Philippines from N. E. I. (64). Four other ships were also en route to the same destination from Australia, loaded with food and ammunition. (65).

18th February.—Japanese reinforcements were arriving including new air units and a large convoy in Subic Bay where the enemy had started to use Olongapo as a base. Enemy bombing and artillery activity was increasing. (66).

22nd February.—Enemy artillery fire against U. S. fortifications had ceased and he was apparently awaiting the arrival of further reinforcements. (67).

25th February.—General MacArthur was informed of the decision to disperse ABDA headquarters. (68).

To summarise the foregoing diary of events, it may be said that although it had been found impossible to give active assistance to General MacArthur in his defence in Luzon, all practicable measures were taken to provide him with the material with which that very gallant defence might be continued.

23. Events in Malaya—General Sorey—Fighting on the Malayan Mainland.—(a) Plan to hold enemy on Northern Frontier of Johore.

As already briefly narrated, it was apparent when the Supreme Commander visited the headquarters of the 3rd Indian Corps at Kuala Lumpur, and divisional and brigade headquarters north of that place, on 8th January, that drastic measures were essential to maintain the Corps in being as a fighting formation. It had begun the campaign with five infantry brigades:—

6th Indian Infantry Brigade.

8th " " "

15th " " "

22nd " " "

28th " " "

and to these had been added the Command Reserve, 12th Indian Infantry Brigade. Before 7th January it had been found necessary to combine 6th and 15th Brigades into a single, composite Brigade of three battalions, named 15th Brigade, on account of the heavy casualties suffered by both Brigades in earlier fighting. Battalions of the 8th Brigade had suffered heavy casualties in the initial operations in and around Kota Bharu and two of the three battalions of the 22nd Brigade were reduced more nearly to the strength of single companies as a result of the fierce fighting for Kuantan aerodrome. The Japanese tank break through at the Slim River position on 7th January reduced the 12th and 28th Brigades to a few hundred men each. Thus all Brigades were very greatly below their full establishment and vehicle casualties had been almost as great as those in personnel; because units had in many cases been surrounded and they rejoined the main body by jungle tracks, where their transport could not

follow. The final, and probably the most important, factor was that as the result of a month's continuous fighting and retreating the men had reached a state of overwhelming fatigue and there can be no doubt that their morale was, in consequence, lowered.

A plan was accordingly made for 3rd Corps to hold a position covering Kuala Lumpur for as long as possible without awaiting a full scale enemy attack and meanwhile to delay the enemy to the greatest extent possible by demolitions. Thereafter the Corps was to be withdrawn by rail and road into Johore leaving only sufficient mobile rearguards to cover the demolition scheme. 8th Australian Division less one brigade group was to move forthwith to prepare to fight a decisive battle on the general line Segamat-Mount Ophir-Muar. 9th Indian Division, made up from the freshest troops in 3rd Indian Corps, and the 45th Indian Infantry Brigade at that time in Malacca, were to be placed under the Commander 8th Australian Division for employment in the Southern portion of the position indicated above. After withdrawal, 3rd Indian Corps was to be responsible for defence of the east and west coasts of the southern portion of Johore and while fulfilling this responsibility was to reorganize and organize a general reserve from reinforcements as they arrived. It was hoped to gain sufficient time to build up a force with which to initiate a counter-offensive, which could not, however, be before the middle of February at the earliest. The Navy was to assist with small craft on the Johore coasts, to prevent landings.

The disadvantage of allowing the enemy to advance through south Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Malacca with little opposition and of relieving the Australians on the east coast of Johore by troops with less knowledge of the ground was recognised. The well developed road systems in Selangor and Malacca made delaying tactics difficult, however, and with the 3rd Indian Corps in the condition in which it was, it was not possible to fight for those provinces. (69)

(b) Plan for the employment of the Australian Corps on arrival.

It was intended to send to Singapore the whole of 1st Australian Corps, from Middle East, and on their arrival to send back some or all of the Indian formations to the N. E. I. where, while perfecting defensive dispositions, they might have breathing space in which to reorganise and refit. In view of the fact that developments at Singapore or on the sea approaches might make this plan impracticable, preparations were begun to divert part or all of the Australian Corps to the N. E. I. should circumstances demand such a diversion. (70) The despatch of personnel of the Corps headquarters, especially administrative staff officers, by air ahead of the Corps was requested in order that they might assist in these preparations.

(c) Preparation of landward defences at Singapore.

On 9th January, the Supreme Commander ordered acceleration of reconnaissances of the northern (landward) side of Singapore Island, and the construction of defences where required. (71)

(d) Further losses of 3rd Corps and rapid enemy advance.

The Supreme Commander again visited Singapore, by air from Batavia, on 13th January and motored to Segamat to see Generals Heath and Gordon-Bennett, commanders of the 3rd Indian Corps and 8th Australian

Division, respectively. The plan as outlined above was being carried out, but 9th and 11th Indian Divisions were found to have been further weakened in both numbers and morale by fighting north of Kuala Lumpur and the enemy's advance had been more rapid than had been hoped. The Supreme Commander reported to the Chiefs of Staff, London, that the battle for Singapore would be a close run thing and that some luck would be required to get in the reinforcing convoys safely and up to time. (72)

(e) Air situation.—An appreciation by the Air Officer Commanding, R. A. F., Far East, dated 18th January, gives an indication of the air situation in Malaya at this period. He assessed the enemy's air strength at 150 fighters and 250 bombers at aerodromes within range in Malaya and French Indo-China. Taking rapidly available reinforcements into account, the enemy might bring 700 or more aircraft to bear against Singapore. R. A. F. resources locally available were 45 fighters and 17 bombers with 48 reinforcing Hurricanes and 60 bombers en route. He assessed his immediate needs, additional to the resources just quoted, as four long range bomber squadrons and four long range fighter squadrons, each squadron with 12 aircraft, initial equipment. It was necessary, in his opinion, to increase resources, when circumstances permitted, to a total of 32 squadrons with 388 aircraft together with reserves of aircraft and crews. (73)

Enemy fighters operating from Kuala Lumpur and Kuantan were at this time very troublesome. American heavy bombers were, therefore, brought up from East Java in order to attack the aerodromes at those places. Such attacks were made with effect on several occasions, but adverse weather conditions prevented them from being decisive. (74)

(f) Preparation in case of a forced withdrawal into Singapore Island.—On the 20th January the Chiefs of Staff, London, brought to notice points of importance which would require attention in case the garrison in Malaya should be forced to withdraw into Singapore Island. These points included:—

- (i) use of fortress guns against landward attack.
- (ii) obstructing land approaches to the Straits and landing places,
- (iii) diversion of some of the beach defences and machine guns from the South to the North of the island,
- (iv) control of boats and small craft,
- (v) creation of self-contained defensive localities and switch lines,
- (vi) measures against surprise night landings,
- (vii) defence of aerodromes against airborne troops,
- (viii) dispersal and control of the civil population and suppression of Fifth Column activity,
- (ix) use of personnel in fixed defences for tasks in local defence schemes, and
- (x) development of a good signals communications system within the fortress and to aerodromes in use in South Sumatra. (75)

Most of these measures were already in hand, and the completion of arrangements to defend Singapore Island had been vigorously urged on G. O. C. Malaya by the Supreme Commander, since his visit on January 9.

(g) Losses suffered in Australian Division and 58th British and 45th Indian Infantry Brigades.

After a further visit by air to Singapore on 20th January the Supreme Commander reported to the Chiefs of Staff in Washington that the situation had greatly deteriorated. The whole of the 45th Indian Infantry Brigade and two Australian battalions were cut off about Bakri, near the west coast, east of Muar, and had failed to make good their withdrawal. (About half eventually got back, minus their transport.) The 58th Infantry Brigade of 18th (British) Division, also was being heavily attacked about twenty miles east of Bakri. It was apparent that this situation in the south would necessitate the withdrawal of the troops in the Segamat-Labis area, and might necessitate a general withdrawal towards Johore Bahru and eventually to Singapore Island. Measures for the defence of the island were being taken, but the success of the defence would depend on the numbers and state of the troops withdrawn from Johore, the arrival of reinforcements and the possibility of maintaining fighter aircraft on the island. If all went well it was hoped that prolonged defence of the island would be possible.

The intensification of air attacks on Singapore was indicated by the fact that two attacks, by about fifty aircraft each time, were made there that morning. (76).

The organization of formations, and arrangements for commanders and staff in Singapore in the event of a withdrawal into the island was examined by ABDACOM staff on 21st January. (77).

(b) Naval action against Japanese infiltration by sea.—Continued Japanese landings behind our troops on the west coast of Malaya had been causing concern and on 21st January the Chiefs of Staff, London, raised the question. The situation was that a flotilla of small craft mounting light guns was improvised and operated on the west coast. Owing to enemy control of the air, whenever any of these craft operated by day they were sunk. In consequence they were operated by night, but thereby lost much of their effectiveness because enemy movement was usually by day with air cover. The flotilla was augmented as much as possible, the services of a destroyer and a submarine were added and such air support as was practicable was given, but all this was insufficient seriously to interfere with the enemy's freedom of action.

(i) Further precautions in case of a withdrawal into Singapore Island.—Other questions raised were the water supply situation if the Johore supply ceased to be available, and the reduction in the number of useless mouths. As regards water, the situation was that by the loss of Johore the supply would be reduced from 27 to 17 million gallons daily, which could be met by a measure of rationing. Women and children evacuated up to 22nd January numbered 5,200, using every available berth in all ships sailing from Malaya; 4,800 remained, of whom 4,200 had applied for passage and the remaining 600 were employed in war work. (78).

(k) Employment of Armoured Brigade, on arrival.—On 23rd January General Percival, G. O. C. Malaya, reported that by early March, when it was due to arrive, it was unlikely that there would be much scope for the Armoured Brigade which was included in the reinforcements intended to be sent to Malaya. (79). This Armoured Brigade was thereafter allotted

for employment in N. E. I., but, on the appearance of an opportunity to employ it in Burma and owing to the serious situation there, it was diverted to that country.

(l) Responsibility for decision whether a withdrawal into the island should be made.—On the 27th January General Percival was reminded by the Supreme Commander that the primary objects were to gain time and to cause maximum loss to the enemy. Bearing this in mind General Percival was to judge when withdrawal to the island was necessary in order to avoid disorganisation and unnecessary losses of men and material which might prejudice the defence of the island, which he was to be prepared to hold for many months. (80).

The plan for withdrawal into Singapore Island, should that course become unavoidable, had to regulate the retirement of three columns down three roads, Mersing-Johore Bahru, Ayer Hitam-Johore Bahru, and Batu Pahat-Johore Bahru. A bridgehead covering Johore Bahru was to be established through which the final withdrawal into the island would take place. On 28th January General Percival reported that after consulting Generals Heath and Gordon-Bennett he had decided to order withdrawal into the island during the night 30th/31st January. He fully realised the wide repercussions of the proposed step, but in his opinion the risk which even then existed of the right and centre columns being cut off by swift enemy action down the west coast road made any further delay unjustifiable. He had not committed the 44th Indian Infantry Brigade, which had recently arrived as a reinforcement from India, because he considered that better value would be obtained from it ultimately by training it in bush warfare than by turning it straight into the battle in strange country. (81). General Percival's action was approved by the Supreme Commander who directed, however, that every foot of the island must be fought for. (82).

(m) Final action on the mainland.—Touch had been lost with 22nd Indian Infantry Brigade, which had been operating on the railway in Johore and Major General Barstow, Commander 9th Indian Division became "missing" in a personal attempt to establish contact. After all further attempts to find the Brigade had failed, the troops were withdrawn into Singapore Island during the night 30th/31st January and the bridge on the causeway connecting the Island with Johore Bahru was thoroughly demolished. Events thereafter and until the garrison surrendered are described in the next paragraph.

EVENTS IN MALAYA—GENERAL SURVEY—DEFENCE OF SINGAPORE ISLAND.

24. Preparatory Defensive Measures in the Island.—(a) Initiation of defence scheme against landward attack.

It has already been recorded that on 9th January the Supreme Commander immediately after his arrival from India had directed that plans for the defence of the island against attack from the mainland and the construction of defences should be undertaken as a matter of urgency. Prior to this plans had been based on repelling sea borne attacks on the island and holding land attacks in Johore, or further north. Little or nothing had been done to construct defences on the north side of the island to prevent a crossing of the Johore Strait; although arrangements had been made to blow up the drawbridge on the causeway.

(b) Scope of fixed defence guns.

Fortress cannon of the heaviest calibre in the fixed defences had all round traverse and many of the other fixed defence guns had greater or lesser arcs of fire over the mainland. The 15 inch guns, however, had no landward firing ammunition, the 9.2 inch had only 25 rounds per gun, though high explosive ammunition for the 6 inch guns was adequate. (83). The flat trajectory of all these guns made them unsuitable for counter battery work.

(c) Resources of food, etc.

Mention has already been made of the steps taken to evacuate "useless mouths" and to review the water supply available within the island, as well as to control small craft which might be used by the enemy for crossing the Strait. A review of supplies of food, ammunition and Ordnance stores was also made. The estimated strength of the garrison was based on the arrival in the island of the following reinforcements, who did in fact get in, in addition to the troops from Johore whose numbers have been indicated elsewhere:—

Reinforcements—

44th Indian Infantry Brigade Gp.

18th British Division (less one Infantry Brigade Group which had already arrived).

100th Indian Light Tank Squadron.

Machine Gun Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces.

Approximately 3000 reinforcements for 3rd Indian Corps.

For the above garrison, food supplies amounted to three months' meat, four months' flour and tinned vegetables and five to six months' of other items. Stocks of food for the civil population were sufficient for four months, with six months' flour and nine months' meat which could have been used to supplement army stocks. Ammunition stocks calculated at F. F. C. scales were:—

Pistol and Thompson sub-machine gun—12 days.

.55 Anti-tank rifle ammunition—23 days.

.808 inch S. A. A., grenades, and mortar ammunition—1½ months.

Artillery ammunition—3 months or more.

Clothing was sufficient for two months, general stores and mechanical transport for two months except spares for carriers, signals stores were deficient in certain items, particularly wireless, but otherwise were adequate for island communications for two or three months, and it was calculated that there would be no reserve stocks of weapons and no spares when units had drawn arms to replace losses (84).

(d) Progress made with general defensive measures.

On the 22nd January progress as regards other preparations for the defence of the island was reported to be as follows:—

- (i) requirements of high explosive ammunition for guns of the fixed defences had been notified; the War Office had promised to examine the possibility of provision on receipt of this information,

- (ii) obstruction of land approaches to the Straits and landing places in the island, with wire, mines, booby traps or other means was in hand, but was handicapped by a shortage of technical supervisory personnel and labour,

- (iii) field guns from the beach defences in the southern sectors were being moved to the north and west sectors of the island,

- (iv) boats and small craft were being collected where they would not be available to the enemy,

- (v) the preparation of all round defensive localities, with switch lines, was in hand, but was limited by a shortage of military and civil labour for which there were unlimited calls; a compulsory labour ordinance was being passed, but resources were limited,

- (vi) measures to guard against surprise night landings were in hand,

- (vii) measures to defend aerodromes against air borne attack included the provision of troops, armoured cars and anti-aircraft defences at each aerodrome and R. A. F. personnel were taking part in the defence, but many of them were not armed,

- (viii) plans for dispersal and control of the civil population, and for the suppression of Fifth Column activities were made before Japan began hostilities and dispersal camps were in existence,

- (ix) the arming of personnel of fixed defences to take part in the defence scheme had already been arranged,

- (x) signal communications throughout the island and to aerodromes in use in Sumatra were being arranged (85).

(e) The "denial" policy.

The General Officer Commanding Malaya had been instructed by the War Office to continue the "denial" policy in order to include the very valuable stocks, naval, military, air force and civil, in Singapore Island, in case of necessity. He informed the War Office on 22nd January that plans for the destruction of the property of the fighting services were being worked out and in many cases were well advanced. He represented, however, that, in the opinion of the Governor, the Rear Admiral Malaya and himself, any conspicuous measures of destruction, or even preparations for destruction, taken at that date would cause a landslide in public morale which could never be stopped. Already there were doubts about our intention to defend Singapore. In consequence he proposed to formulate plans for the destruction of both civil and military installations and make such preparations as were possible without attracting public attention. Destruction would take place only if a danger of losing the Island existed after seaborne or airborne enemy landings, and this would entail delegation of responsibility to local commanders. He requested approval of this policy and again stressed the danger of enforcing a scorched earth policy in back areas in a country where they were dependent on the Asiatic population for all essential services (86). The Chiefs of Staff, London, signalled their approval of this suggested policy (87). Meanwhile ARDACOM informed the G. O. C., Malaya that the policy was already clear. Singapore was to be defended to the last. At the same time preparations must be made to destroy material rather than let it fall into

enemy hands, though these preparations should of course be made as unobtrusively as possible. The best way to convince the population of our intentions was to make them take part in the defence, especially by supplying the labour required which must be done at once. The denial policy must continue; the enemy would have no consideration for the Asiatic population and would take what he wished from them, if we left it. This was no time for sentiment. The Chinese population of Singapore knew that they need expect no consideration from the Japanese (88).

The order of priority for destruction of material was notified by the War Office (89).

Proposals for the transfer of valuable machine tools and constructional equipment to Australia and elsewhere were initiated, but time did not permit the evacuation of more than part of the equipment. (90).

The G. O. C. later represented that his orders to hold Singapore to the last and to ensure that in the last resort a complete denial policy should be carried out were incompatible. He had done everything which could be done without causing public alarm, but represented that some of the stores required hours or even days for complete demolition, some were in the front line, and as the holding of Singapore was the primary object some demolitions might have to go by default (91). The Chiefs of Staff, London, replied that demolition of the Naval Base should be given first priority and Fortress guns second priority. Other valuable stores, equipment and installations should be destroyed on a priority basis, but their destruction should not be allowed to weaken the defence (92).

25. *Outline of Development of Operations.*—(a) Removal of Fighter aircraft to Sumatra.

The withdrawal into Singapore Island brought the three northern aerodromes on the island, Tengah, Sembawang and Seletar, within range of observed artillery fire from the mainland. Only the aerodrome at Kallang, near Singapore city and harbour, remained free from artillery, though of course not from air bombardment. In these circumstances the Supreme Commander decided during a further visit to Singapore by air on 30th January that all fighter units except a force of one Flight of 8 Hurricanes and one Flight of 8 Buffaloes must be moved to Sumatra. Bombers had already been moved out of the island. The Air Officer Commanding WESGROUP was ordered to establish his headquarters in Sumatra, leaving a Rear Headquarters under a Group Captain or Wing Commander at Singapore (93). To have left the fighters on exposed aerodromes at Singapore would have been to invite their destruction within a few days, and it was also essential to provide fighter protection for the aerodromes in Southern Sumatra from which the bombers were operating. Fighter defence of Singapore was to be maintained so far as possible by use of the two Flights left at Kallang and by using the other aerodromes as opportunity offered for refuelling fighters operating from their base aerodromes in Sumatra.

(b) Reorganization of Indian formations.

Indian formations were reorganized so that a small Corps Headquarters was retained to control 11th Indian Division and 12th and 44th Indian Infantry Brigades; remnants of 9th Indian Division were absorbed into

other formations. 3rd Indian Corps was to be in operational control of the Northern Area, with 11th Indian Division and 18th (British) Division under its command, while it looked after the domestic affairs of the 12th and 44th Brigades. (94).

(c) Organization for Defence.

The Singapore defences were organized as follows:—

Northern Area.—Under command of 3rd Indian Corps.

Troops—

18th Division.

11th Indian Division, to which had been added 8th Indian Infantry Brigade and some Divisional Troops of 9th Indian Division.

Area—exclusive CHANGI VILLAGE—exclusive YAN KIT VILLAGE—exclusive PAYA LEBAR VILLAGE—exclusive PIERCE RESERVOIR—exclusive Point 135 (in grid square 7519)—exclusive WOODLANDS.

Western Area.—Under command of 8th Australian Division.

Troops—

Australian Imperial Forces.

44th Indian Infantry Brigade.

Area—inclusive WOODLANDS—exclusive Point 135—exclusive BUKIT TIMAH VILLAGE—exclusive KAMPONG SUNGEI JURONG—exclusive SUNGEI JURONG to inclusive TANJONG BALAI.

Southern Area.—Under command of late Commander Singapore Fortress.

Troops—

1st Malaya Infantry Brigade.

2nd Malaya Infantry Brigade.

Straits Settlement Volunteer Force.

Fixed Defence units.

Area—inclusive CHANGI—exclusive YAN KIT VILLAGE—exclusive PAYA LEBAR VILLAGE—exclusive road junction at 898143—exclusive BOTANICAL GARDENS—exclusive WAI SOON GARDENS—exclusive BUKIT TIMAH VILLAGE, thence along south boundary of the Western Area. PENDERANG, TEKONG and BLARANG MATI islands were also included in the Southern Area.

Reserve.—12th Indian Infantry Brigade. (95).

(d) Period of enemy preparations for assault.

From the date of withdrawal into the Island, 30th/31st January until 8th February there was no large movement of land forces and enemy activity consisted of artillery fire, some slight movement in small craft and heavy air raids on points in the island, the Naval Base, the Docks, shipping leaving and approaching Singapore and low level attacks and dive bombing on defensive positions and aerodromes. From 1st February Kluang and Batu Pahat landing grounds were taken into use by the enemy, thus giving them air bases very close to Singapore. The three northern aerodromes in Singapore Island were shelled intermittently on and after 4th February. Medium artillery was used by the enemy for the first time

on 7th February. Considerable shipping losses were suffered from enemy air attacks in the Banks and Birhala Straits and in the approaches to and roads at Singapore. As a result after the arrival of a frequently attacked convoy on 5th February any further shipment of reinforcements and stores to Singapore had to be treated as a special operation with special protective arrangements. During the early shelling and air bombing, civilian labour disappeared. By 7th February, however, the morale of the Asiatic population had become steadier, although labour still disappeared from bombed areas. An Army Labour Corps, recruited from Asiatics under their own officers, was increasing in strength and doing well. Throughout this period small parties of men from units and formations cut off during the fighting in Johore continued to trickle in on to the island. On 2nd February an air reconnaissance discovered a convoy of enemy merchant ships with warship escort at anchor at the Anambas Islands and it was thought that this might prestage an attack on Singapore from seaward.

(e) First enemy landings.

In the early morning of 8th February a small party of Japanese landed on Pulau Ubin. During the night 8th/9th February the enemy main landing was made on a 3000 yards front on the N. W. side of the island in the Australians' sector, supported by heavy artillery fire. Considerable infiltration was effected before dawn on the 9th and by midday strong enemy parties had reached the neighbourhood of TENGAH AERODROME—BULIM. The British forces withdrew under pressure to the general line SUNGAI KRANJI—BULIM—HONG KAH—SUNGEI JURONG. The enemy's advance was supported by dive bombing and low flying attacks. Tengah aerodrome was evacuated by our air forces.

(f) Second main landing.

Further enemy landings took place at SUNGAI MANDAI and to the West during the night 9th/10th February. Counter attacks met with local success, but strong enemy pressure along the whole of the Western front caused a general withdrawal to a line running West of the main road to Johore causeway as far south as Bukit Timah village, and in the south-west to Sungai Pasdon. In the south the enemy was held some 4,000 yards east of the Sungai Jurong, but infiltration towards Buona Vista was reported. The Japanese used about 40 medium and light tanks during the night attack. During the night 10th/11th a large landing craft attempting to effect a landing at Labrador was sunk by Siloso Battery.

(g) Orders for defence to the last.

The Supreme Commander arrived by flying boat from Batavia for a visit to Singapore on the morning of 10th February, returning on the morning of 11th February. He found the battle for Singapore not going well, with the Japanese making more rapid progress than they should have done on the west of the island. He saw the Governor and all Divisional Commanders, as well as the G. O. C. Malaya and left with the last named a message to the effect that there must be no question or thought of surrender. Every unit must fight it out to the end in close contact with the enemy. The Supreme Commander ordered the G. O. C. to stage a counter attack with all troops possible on the west front.

While proceeding to embark in the flying boat for the return journey, the Supreme Commander slipped from a jetty in the dark and broke two small bones in his back.

(h) Enemy commander's demand for surrender.

On 11th February the G. O. C., Malaya received a letter from the Commander of the Japanese army demanding the surrender of the fortress. The G. O. C. reported that he had no means of dropping a reply, which would of course be negative (96).

(i) Development of operations in the Island.

A counter attack on the evening of 11th February was successful on the left (south), but during the night an enemy attack down the Bukit Timah road retook the position which had been gained by the 12th Indian Infantry Brigade in the counter attack. Counter attacks by two battalions and the Divisional Reconnaissance Regiment of the 18th Division failed to restore the position. The 27th Australian Infantry Brigade was ordered to attack the rear of the enemy's main body from Bukit Panjang Village, but this was unsuccessful. At the end of these operations the general line was Naval Base—Nee Soon Village—Pierce Reservoir—Race Course—Holland Road—Road Junction 7513—Pasir Panjang Village.

On the 12th further enemy landings at Layang, west of Changi, were reported. Denial schemes in evacuated or immediately threatened areas had so far been executed according to plan. On this date ABDACOM suggested that the G. O. C. might wish to send away the remaining female cipher staff, typists and nurses, in view of the Japanese atrocities reported from Hong Kong (97). During the night 12/13th February the Headquarters of 3rd Indian Corps was withdrawn from Changi.

On the 13th enemy pressure from the north compelled a withdrawal to the MacRitchie Reservoir area. Further attacks developed in the Paya Lebar area and in the west. The whole of Singapore town was by now within range of the enemy's field artillery. Whilst reentering that he must fight it out, as he was doing, it was suggested to G. O. C., Malaya that, after everything humanly possible had been done, some bold and determined personnel might be given the opportunity to escape by small craft to Sumatra.

(k) Intimation of the exhaustion of the defenders.

G. O. C., Malaya reported on 13th February that in addition to the whole town being within field artillery range of the enemy, the troops were in danger of being driven off their water and food supplies. His subordinate Commanders considered that the troops already committed were too exhausted either to withstand a strong attack or to launch a counter attack. In these conditions it was unlikely that resistance could last more than a day or two. His subordinate Commanders were unanimously of the opinion that the gain in time from prolonging resistance would not compensate for the extensive damage and heavy casualties which would occur in Singapore town. The G. O. C. represented that a stage must come when in the interests of the troops and the civil population further bloodshed, which could serve no useful purpose, should be averted. He was carrying out the strict injunctions issued on the 10th to fight to the last, but in view of the circumstances now represented he requested that giving

him wider discretionary powers should be considered. In reply, the G. O. C. was ordered to continue to inflict the maximum damage on the enemy for as long as possible, by house to house fighting if necessary.

(l) Further developments in the operations.

On the 14th February an enemy attack developed at the East end of Macritchie Reservoir, but the situation was restored by a counter attack by 28th Indian Infantry Brigade. In the evening strong enemy pressure forced our forward troops back to the line Mount Pleasant—Hill 130—S. W. of Bukit Brown—crossroads at Bukit Timah—Adam Road, on which the situation was stabilized. Some Japanese in this and previous engagements were reported to be wearing British and Australian uniforms. Various areas in Singapore Town were bombed and shelled throughout the day, starting some large fires and considerably damaging the water supply which the Royal Engineers were making every effort to repair.

(m) Denial of important property to the enemy.

The following destruction of oil installations, fixed defences and ammunition dumps was reported as completed up to 14th February.

Oil installations.

Army—4,620,000* out of a total of 4,670,000 gallons of petrol destroyed.

Navy—Oil tanks at Kranji, Woodlands, Senoko, Pulau Bukom, Pulau Sebarok, destroyed; at Normanton 8 tanks destroyed, but remainder not destroyed, owing to their proximity to crowded military hospitals which could not be vacated.

R. A. F.—All stocks destroyed except one dump which for operational reasons could not be destroyed.

Civil—All first line transport stocks destroyed.

Fixed Defences.

The following were destroyed:—

15 inch—All guns and engine rooms.

9.2 inch—Connaught guns and engine rooms.

6 inch—

Paair Labs guns, magazines, engine rooms and instruments.

Changi guns, magazines and instruments.

Reping Kusa guns, instruments and all ammunition at the gun sites.

Labrador guns and instruments.

Siloso guns, magazines and instruments.

Serapong guns and instruments.

Batu Berlayer and Siloso guns.

6 pdr.—

Kranji, Rehala, Reping guns.

Changi Outer guns, instruments and ammunition.

Coast Artillery Searchlights.

Pt. 8001.

Pasir Laba.

Tanjong Gul.

Powder.

Radius of Changi Battery.

Changi Outer.

Labrador.

Siloso.

Serapong.

Berhala.

Reping.

Batu Berlayer.

Instruments at fire commander's post Changi and instruments at fire commander's post Faber.

Fortress Observation Posts.

Hill 270.

Powder.

Faber.

Changi Hill.

Battery Observation Posts.

Hill 270 (Buona Vista).

Instruments in Fortress Plotting Room at Faber.

At the time of the above report full details of denials on Bistang Mati Island had not been received.

Ammunition Dumps.—Changi magazines and certain field dumps of Heavy Batteries, Royal Artillery, had been destroyed.

R. A. F. dumps at Batak Quarry were destroyed, less certain bomb components which were removed. (98).

(n) Australian Commander's intended action.

On 14th February Major General Gordon-Bennet, Commander 8th Australian Division reported to his Government, through ABDACOM, that the Australian Imperial Forces in Singapore Island were concentrated in the Tanglin area, two miles from the city proper. He stated that non-fighting units including his own headquarters were in position. He could rely on his troops to hold to the last, as usual; all other fronts were weak. He reported that the Supreme Commander had ordered all troops to fight to the last, but if the enemy entered the city behind the A. I. F. he would take suitable action to avoid unnecessary sacrifice (99).

(o) Developments leading to surrender.

Later on the 14th the G. O. C. Malaya reported that owing to extensive damage to the mains the water supply was limited to a maximum of 48, or possibly only 24 hours. If the enemy captured the pumping station, which he was then attacking, the period would be further reduced. That

had now become the governing factor, because the prospect of coping with a million civilians without water had produced an entirely new situation. He stated that he was watching developments and fighting on, but he might find it necessary to take an immediate decision.(100). In reply to this message orders were issued to the G. O. C. that in all places where a sufficiency of water existed for the troops they must go on fighting. (101). The Governor of the Straits Settlements informed the Colonial Office that he had represented to the G. O. C. the danger of pestilence resulting from deprivation of water for a million people concentrated within a radius of three miles.(102). The G. O. C. made a further representation on the above lines (103) and in reply was told that his gallant stand was serving a purpose and it must be continued to the limit of endurance. (104).

On 15th February, G. O. C., Malaya was informed that time gained and damage caused to the enemy were of vital importance in the existing crisis and he was told that so long as he was in a position to inflict such losses and damage, and his troops were physically capable of doing so, he must fight on. When he was fully satisfied that this was no longer possible, he was given discretion to cease resistance.(105).

Finally, on 15th February the following message was received from General Percival:—

"Owing to losses from enemy action, water, petrol, food and ammunition practically finished. Unable therefore continue the fight any longer. All ranks have done their best and grateful for your help." (106).

(p) Cessation of communication with Singapore.

As the Japanese advance on Singapore Island progressed, Service wireless stations progressively were put out of action. The channel of communication which remained was Cables and Wireless Limited, and the last message from that company's Singapore station was sent at 2210 hours, local time, on 15th February 1942.

(q) Reasons for Japanese success in Malaya.

On 18th February General Percival communicated his views regarding the reasons for the Japanese success in Malaya. It was due, he considered, primarily to training, previous war experience, discipline and morale. In order to take on the Japanese army successfully, forces must be trained up to a high standard of toughness, fighting efficiency, adaptability, discipline and morale. (107).

(r) Gallant work by the Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy.

On February 16th the Supreme Commander, in a message to the Commodore Commanding China Force, expressed his appreciation of all the efforts of the China Force to reinforce and succour Singapore. He asked the Commodore also to pass this message to as many as possible of the officers and men of the Merchant Navy whose ships had been concerned in the work. The Supreme Commander said that they had displayed gallantry and devotion to duty of the highest order. (108).

(s) Cessation of air support.

The air forces operating in support of the garrison of Singapore were, in the later stages, based mainly on aerodromes at Palembang I and Palembang II in Southern Sumatra. An attack by enemy parachute

troops was made on Palembang I, and the town and oil refineries there, on the morning of 14th February, followed by a sea borne attack at dawn on the 15th. During the last two days of the defence of Singapore, therefore, the supporting air forces were fully occupied in the defence of their own bases.

EVENTS IN BURMA.

26. *Control of Burma.*—It has been explained elsewhere that on the initiation of proposals to establish a South West Pacific Command General Wavell recommended that Burma should continue completely under the control of the Commander-in-Chief in India, at least until the situation was stabilised and offensive operations were in prospect. It was decided, however, that Burma should be included in the ABDA area and it remained under the operational control of the Supreme Commander from 15th January until 22nd February when, by agreement, it reverted to the operational as well as administrative control of India.

When operational control was transferred to ABDACOM it was generally understood that administrative control, which since 15th December, on the transfer of Burma from the control of Headquarters, Far East Command, was vested in India, would not be affected by the change. A definition of the situation as regards administrative control resulting from the change of operational control was made by the Chiefs of Staff, London, in consultation with their delegation in Washington. This raised some doubt concerning the channels through which demands from Burma should be submitted, but after correspondence these doubts were resolved, India remaining administratively responsible for the forces in Burma and ABDACOM'S responsibility in this connection being confined to early intimation to India of any operational projects likely to cause unusual administrative demands. (109).

27. *Air Operations.*—(a) Control of air operations.

When India assumed control of the forces in Burma the Air Officer Commanding No. 221, Group R. A. F., Burma, was given control of all air forces in Burma and North East India, subject to the directions of the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief in India. Owing to the indivisibility of the defence of Burma and that of N. E. India it was at first suggested that this arrangement might continue after ABDACOM assumed operational control of Burma. After discussion, however, it was concluded that the suggested arrangement might give rise to practical difficulties and it was decided that the A. O. C. No. 221, Group should command only the air forces in Burma, those in N. E. India reverting to direct Indian control. (110).

(b) *Early air operations.*—From 1st to 15th January an average of 21 fighter aircraft was available in Burma from No. 67, Squadron R. A. F. (Brewster Buffaloes) and the American Volunteer Group (Tomahawks or P-40's). In the air raids on Rangoon on 23rd and 25th December, in the latter of which the scale of attack was 110 aircraft, 39 enemy aircraft were destroyed. Thereafter the enemy usually raided with large formations of fighters only, by day, and with small numbers of bombers by night, causing only slight damage. On reduction of enemy effort the Allied air forces began to attack enemy aircraft wherever they could be found on the ground, destroying or severely damaging, up to 17th

January, 21 fighters, 19 bombers and two torpedo bombers, for the loss of one aircraft. Minor scale day attacks were also made, by fighters refuelling at Mergui, on the Thailand—Malaya railway; reconnaissances and occasional attacks were made at Victoria Point on small craft which might be used for infiltration up the West coast of the peninsula.

At first no bombers were available, but on 7th January thirteen Blenheims of No. 113 Squadron R. A. F. arrived in Burma, without maintenance personnel, having been flown from the Middle East. In view of the lack of bomber activity hitherto on our part, it was decided to employ them on one operation before they were overhauled. Accordingly a low flying moonlight attack was made on the enemy base dock area at Bangkok on 8th January, with very successful results. Thereafter these Blenheims were withdrawn to Lashio, to avoid being caught on the ground at Mingaladon, in order to undergo inspection and repair after their flight from Mideast, and their subsequent raid. They became operationally ready again on 20th January.

Personnel of Nos. 17 and 135 (Hurricane) Squadrons, R. A. F., arrived in Burma on 16th January. Their aircraft, which were being flown from the Middle East, were due to arrive in the course of the next seven days.

(c) *Operations after beginning of enemy land advance.*—Late on the night of 15th/16th January one company of a Burma Rifles battalion made contact with a Japanese force estimated to be 100 strong about Myitta on the road leading East from Tavoy to the Thailand frontier. This was the start of a movement by enemy and forces against the Tenasserim Division.

On the 18th the withdrawal of the garrison from Mergui was ordered and R. A. F. personnel were withdrawn from Tavoy. Consequently these two aerodromes which had been so useful for increasing the operational range of fighters and which provided the only air bases for attacks on shipping, aerodromes and dumps at Singora, the main port used by the Japanese for maintenance of their forces in Malaya, could no longer be used by our air forces. The difficulty of the fighter reinforcement route to the Far East, also, was increased and a part of the air warning system for Rangoon was no longer operative.

In a directive dated 17th January (111) No. 221, Group R. A. F. in Burma, ("BURGROUP"), and later "NORGROUP"), were given two tasks:—

- (i) to secure the arrival of reinforcements and protect the port of Rangoon, and
- (ii) to reduce the scale of air attack on Malaya.

The loss of the Tenasserim aerodromes immediately after the issue of this directive made the performance of task (ii) difficult, except by attacks on the enemy's main aerodromes at Bangkok and on docks and railway installations in that area.

Following the minor enemy penetration into Southern Tenasserim, the enemy began an advance on Moulmein on 20th January with larger forces and after fairly severe fighting occupied Moulmein on 31st January, our forces withdrawing to the west bank of the Salween River. During this period the Allied air forces were very actively engaged in attacks on

enemy troop concentrations and transport and in direct support of our troops, in addition to continuing the defence of Rangoon from enemy raids, and attacks on enemy occupied aerodromes. Aircraft losses, inflicted on the enemy during the period 19th to 30th January totalled 57 certain, 9 probable and 26 damaged for a loss of 11 of our own.

(d) *Co-operation of the American Volunteer Group.*—At a time when the situation of the land forces was deteriorating, anxiety was caused to the British Command in Burma by a warning received from Colonel Chennault, Commander of the American Volunteer Group, that he must withdraw to China that part of his Group which was operating in Burma. The reason for this was that the A. V. G. had been allotted to Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek for service in, or in defence of, China and the P-40's with which they were equipped were rapidly becoming worn out through continuous action in defence of Rangoon. Kithhawks with which the Group was to be re-equipped were not expected to arrive from America via Africa before the end of March. Finally, after the combined Chiefs of Staff had represented that withdrawal of the A. V. G. contingent from Burma might prejudice the defence of Rangoon, on the retention of which port the flow of Lease Lend material to China depended, the Generalissimo consented to the retention of one squadron of the contingent in Burma. After Hurricane reinforcements began to arrive in Burma in February, eight of these aircraft were loaned to the A. V. G. to tide them over until their own reinforcing aircraft arrived. As an illustration of the air situation then obtaining, if the A. V. G. contingent had been withdrawn from Burma on 31st January, only six Hurricanes and four Buffaloes would have remained in Burma. The value of the services rendered by the American Volunteer Group is shown by the following extract from a message sent by Air Vice Marshal Stevenson, A. O. C. No. 221, Group, on 27th January:—

"The A. V. G. have borne, and are still bearing, the brunt of the battle and their fighting skill, courage, devotion and discipline are magnificent" (112).

(e) *Demands for reinforcing aircraft.*—The progress made by enemy land forces in their advance in the direction of Rangoon caused the A. O. C. NORGROUP to request that the arrival of both bomber and fighter aircraft for his Group should be hastened. ABDACOM did all that was possible to ensure this without prejudicing the air defence of Malaya and the N. E. I. (113).

(f) *Co-operation in land operations, 1st to 22nd February.*—The enemy crossed the Salween River on the 11th February and after heavy fighting in the Martaban salient our troops withdrew to positions behind the Bilin River. By the 17th February the Japanese had succeeded in effecting lodgements on the west bank of the Bilin River. Severe fighting ensued, but our forces were compelled to begin to withdraw across the Sittang River on the 22nd, completing the movement and destroying the only bridge on the 23rd. In this withdrawal, two brigades were cut off and almost completely destroyed. This disaster was fatal to the defence of Lower Burma.

Throughout this period our available air forces gave constant support, both direct and indirect, to the troops. Enemy positions, troop concentrations, transport columns, communications centres, dumps and

river and tea craft were bombed and machine gunned. Fighter sweeps succeeded in keeping enemy air activity against our troops to small proportions. Opportunities to strike at the enemy air forces were fewer than in the last ten days of January, because of the preoccupation of our air forces with other targets. Enemy raiding aircraft, however, still occasionally came within range and 19 were certainly, 17 probably, destroyed and one damaged during the period 3rd-21st February, for the loss of 2 destroyed and 4 damaged, all while on the ground.

(g) *Construction of new landing grounds, and limitations of air warning system.*—In order to be able to receive reinforcing aircraft and to disperse available resources, Burma pressed on with the construction of several new landing grounds. By 6th February airfields with prepared runways were available in south Burma at Mingaladon, Zayatkwint and Bassein (being completed) in addition to five natural airfields suitable for the heaviest types of aircraft until the rains, and three additional aerodromes with all weather runways were in preparation at Hmawbi and Pegu. (114) These unfortunately were situated in the part of Burma now (March 1942) overrun by the Japanese.

Facilities for dispersion of aircraft were the more necessary because of successive curtailments of the air observer system. The loss of the telephone line, first down the Tenasserim Division and then East of the Sittang River, much curtailed the extent of the warning which could be given, and the course taken by the land operations tended to have an adverse effect on the efficiency of the observer personnel. Dependence had to be placed more and more on mechanical warning devices, efforts to expedite the delivery of which were made, although few had become available when ABDACOM ceased to be responsible for Burma on 22nd February. When the withdrawal of our much reduced land forces to the west bank of the Sittang placed the air bases in use in the Rangoon area under a direct threat, the Air Officer Commanding decided that his air forces must be withdrawn in order to avert the risk of their being destroyed on the ground. It was therefore proposed to establish base landing grounds for No. 221 Group in India, with operational landing grounds at Akyab and Magwe and advanced landing grounds in the Rangoon area, to provide whatever fighter and bomber support could be given. (115) On 23rd February the following measures were put in force:—

- (i) Bombers were evacuated from Zayatkwint and Bassein to operate from Magwe, refuelling and rearming at Mingaladon.
- (ii) General Reconnaissance aircraft were to operate from Mingaladon.
- (iii) "Haig" (one of the new airfields) was to remain an emergency landing ground.
- (iv) 4 Hurricanes with long range tanks and 2 P-40's were to move to Magwe for local defence and support of the land forces. (116)

NORGROUP Headquarters moved from Rangoon to Magwe on 22nd February, leaving a forward control in Rangoon.

On 16th February, the last date for which figures are available, the air forces order of battle in NORGROUP was:—

17 Squadron	} 15 Hurricanes.
135 Squadron	
67 Squadron	5 Buffaloes.
A. V. G.	18 P-40's.
113 Squadron	9 Blenheim IV.
	3 Blenheim I.
1 Squadron	} 11 Lysanders.
28 Squadron	

28. *Operations in Southern Tenasserim.*—Land operations in Burma developed with rather surprising suddenness. One reason for the lack of preliminary information was that Burma, being under the control of Far East Command until 15th December 1941, had been dependent for military intelligence on the Far East Combined Intelligence Bureau in Singapore. Japanese operations in northern Malaya cut that Bureau off from many of its sources of information and at the same time increased the difficulty of rapid communication between the Bureau and Burma. The military intelligence staff in Burma consisted of one third grade staff officer and two intelligence officers. Immediately on taking over control, India began to create a military intelligence organization, but as is always apparent in such circumstances, time is essential to establish an organization capable of bringing in timely, important and accurate news. Large tracts of jungle and broken country impeded air observation.

On 11th January unconfirmed reports were received of the presence of about 5,000 Japanese in the area Mesohd—Raheng, that is to say on the road leading from central Thailand to Moulmein. Air reconnaissances could provide no confirmation of these reports, except the observation of 60 barges at Raheng which, it was thought, might indicate the stocking of an advanced base. On the 13th the results of a visual air reconnaissance of Mesohd—Raheng were negative. The same day two Buffaloes attacked Prachuab Girikan aerodrome and Kajburi railway station, opposite Tavoy and Mergui, respectively, and did not report any unusual troop movement in that area. On the 15th troop movements in the area Raheng—Myawadi (near Mesohd) were reported but the results of air reconnaissance were again negative.

The first report of contact between our forces and those of the enemy, other than patrol encounters, was on the night 15th/16th January at Myitta, east of Tavoy, and no details were available. By 17th January it was reported that the enemy's strength at Myitta was about 250 and that 1,000 more were advancing on Tavoy by the Tenasserim River route. On the 18th, enemy forces estimated at 1,200 were reported to be advancing on Tavoy and 500 to 1,000 on Mergui, although the presence of any enemy in the Mergui area at this time was never confirmed and no contact was made with our troops at that place. About 5,000 enemy were reported at Mesohd, but no move into Burma from this place had been made.

At this time the field formations in Burma were disposed as follows:—

- 1st Burma Division.
- Southern Shan States—Toungoo.
- H. Q. 17th Indian Division—Moulmein.
- 16th Indian Infantry Brigade—Kawkareik, on the road to Mesehd.
- 2nd Burma Infantry Brigade—Moulmein.
- One battalion—Tavoy.
- Smaller detachment—Mergui.
- 46th Indian Infantry Brigade—Rangoon, where it had disembarked on 16th January.

Orders for the withdrawal of the Mergui detachment by sea were issued on 18th January. It was at first intended that they should go to Tavoy, but Tavoy was evacuated on the 19th and they went to Rangoon instead. 46th Indian Infantry Brigade were ordered to Moulmein to reinforce 17th Indian Division, arriving on the 21st and 22nd. By the 26th the evacuation of Mergui had been completed and the aerodrome had been demolished; no contact had been made by our troops with the enemy who eight days earlier had been reported to be advancing on the town. At Tavoy demolition of the aerodrome must have been neglected, because enemy fighters were reported to be operating from it on the 19th.

The enemy thus cheaply and quickly obtained possession of the Tenasserim Division south of Moulmein. On the 20th January the enemy attacked our troops east of Moulmein, events in which area are described in a later paragraph.

29. *Naval Defence of Burma.*—Events on the Tenasserim coast coupled with the Japanese occupation of Penang where three submarines were reported on 5th February, gave rise to apprehension that the enemy might attempt to repeat his infiltration tactics by sea, as successfully practised on the west coast of Malaya. To meet this threat the Naval Officer in Charge at Rangoon requested the allotment of 2 small destroyers, 4 sloops, 6 corvettes or the like, and a number of fast motor launches (117). The Commander-in-Chief Eastern Fleet in commenting on the N. O. I. C.'s demands said that he realised the danger, but had no resources from which to provide against it and suggested that air attack on such infiltration was the solution (118). As neither C-in-C. E. F. nor C-in-C. East India could assist, the latter suggested that the Flag Officer Commanding, Royal Indian Navy's offer of assistance in the local naval defence of Burma might be accepted, if Government of India approval could be obtained. (119). ABDACOM referred the matter to the Commander-in-Chief in India (120). Considerable correspondence followed, the position being complicated by doubts concerning the authority under whose orders NOIC Rangoon should work. Eventually the C-in-C., E. I. was requested by the Admiralty to coordinate the activities of all local defence craft available from India and Burma for defence of the coast including Burma. Commodore C. Graham, C.B., R. N. was appointed Commodore Commanding Burma Coast for the local naval defence of which he was made responsible, under the direction of C-in-C., E. I. (121).

30. *Operations in the area Thailand Frontier—Salween River—Sittang River.*—During the late afternoon of 20th January Japanese troops attacked the 16th Indian Infantry Brigade in position near Kawkareik, some 50 miles east of Moulmein. After some fighting in which the enemy were reported to have suffered heavy casualties, 16th Brigade withdrew on the 22nd not pressed by the enemy who, however, were advancing. On the 23rd the withdrawal continued slowly westward. During the withdrawal the Brigade lost its transport owing to the sinking of ferries which had to be crossed. The withdrawal to the Moulmein area was continued on the 24th, with the troops tired and somewhat scattered; the Japanese strength in their attack at Kawkareik was estimated at 2,500, but this estimate was not confirmed. No contact with the enemy was reported on the 26th when the disposition of our troops in the area was:—

- 2nd Burma Infantry Bde.—Moulmein.
- 16th Indian Infantry Bde.—Martaban and northward.
- 46th Indian Infantry Bde.—Bilin and northward.

In consequence of alarming reports from Burma to the effect that Rangoon was in danger the Supreme Commander visited Burma on 25th January. As the distance to be covered was some 2,000 miles, it was necessary to use an American heavy bomber for the journey, which took some eleven hours each way. During the next few days the Japanese made touch along the Salween River and south of Moulmein. Enemy pressure on Moulmein, thereafter increased and on the night 31st January, 1st February the 2nd Burma Infantry Brigade withdrew across the Salween, the bulk of its equipment, except for 4 Bofors guns, being saved. The Japanese force employed in this engagement was estimated at two infantry regiments.

For the next eight days activity was confined to bombardment and the infiltration of enemy patrols and parties across the river. By the 10th February such parties had established a road block between Martaban and Thaton and general enemy attacks appeared to be imminent.

During this period further fluctuating reports were received and the Supreme Commander paid another visit to Burma on the 5th and 6th February, in the course of which he visited the Salween front. Impressed by the suitability of the country in lower Burma for the operation of armoured formations before the start of the rains, the Supreme Commander ordered the diversion of 7th Armoured Brigade, then en route from the Middle East to the N. E. I., to Burma. He directed the G. O. C. Burma to prepare plans to use the Brigade at the earliest opportunity to strike the enemy a heavy blow.

On the 11th the enemy attacked across the Salween at Pa-an and advanced from Martaban where his forces had been reinforced by troops landed N. W. of the town from a steamer, and were estimated at 2,000 strong. Considerable casualties were inflicted on the enemy in these operations, in which the 8/7th Gurkha Rifles at Martaban and the 7/10th Baluch Regiment at Pa-an especially distinguished themselves. Enemy pressure continued, however, especially from the east, and by the 14th our general line ran from Thaton to Duvinezak. During the night of the 14th/15th our troops were withdrawn behind the Bilin River.

17th Indian Division was disposed as follows on the 16th February:—
46th and 16th Indian Infantry Bdes., west of the road and railway
and north of the Bilin River.

48th Indian Infantry Bde., in divisional reserve and patrolling the
the road Bilin—Kyaikto.

Two battalions, plus one company, Burma Rifles on the Salween,
east and N. E. of Bilin.

On this date reports of enemy crossings of the Salween north of Pa-an end
of the collection of elephant transport in that area were received. In their
advance on Moulmein the Japanese had used bullock cart transport.

Enemy patrols succeeded in crossing the Bilin River on 17th February
and by the 18th a general action had developed necessitating the employ-
ment of the divisional reserve. The Japanese kept trying to envelop
the eastern flank, simultaneously increasing pressure on the western (sea-
ward) flank, but by means of counter attacks our troops succeeded in
maintaining their main positions intact. Fighting continued in approxi-
mately the same area up to the night 21st/22nd February, many of our
units sustaining heavy casualties. During the night 21st/22nd all un-
wanted ordnance was withdrawn behind the Sittang River and at dawn
on the 22nd the withdrawal of 17th Indian Division to the west bank
began.

G. O. C. Burma had been warned by the Supreme Commander on 17th
February that continued withdrawal, as experience in Malaya had shown,
was most damaging to the morale of our troops. It was pointed out that
time could often be gained as effectively, and less expensively, by a bold
counter-offensive. Following this advice the G. O. C. had endeavoured
to check the withdrawal, but without success. This made the dispatch of
reinforcements a matter of vital urgency and India sent all possible units
as quickly as possible, as has been shown in the Section concerning re-
inforcements. The docks situation at Rangoon was such, however, that
the G. O. C. did not feel justified in accepting the complete convoy of 17
ships due in Rangoon on 21st February, considering that a heavy loss of
personnel and stores might be involved. He therefore got the Navy to
return to India all ships except those bringing the 7th Armoured Brigade,
a British battalion and an Auxiliary Pioneer Battalion (122). On 21st
February the G. O. C. was directed to stop all further withdrawal and
counter-attack whenever possible, also to attack the enemy with all air
forces available (123).

By 23rd February 17th Indian Division had retired behind the Sittang
River and had blown the bridge. The enemy on this front had been re-
inforced bringing his total strength up to some two divisions. One of
these made an outflanking movement followed by an attack from the rear
which severed contact between the troops holding the bridgehead and the
two forward brigades, with the result that the greater part of the latter
was left east of the river. 17th Indian Division was re-organized into
two weak brigades west of the Sittang. 7th Armoured Brigade began to
disembark at Rangoon on 21st February and on the 22nd one squadron
moved to Pegu in support of 17th Indian Division.

Practically the whole of the civil population of Rangoon had left the
city by 25th February.

From 22nd February the control of operations in Burma was assumed
by India.

81. *Chinese Assistance in Burma.*—As already related, vital assistance
to Burma was rendered by the loan of one squadron of the American
Volunteer Group to assist in the air defence of Rangoon. Apart from this,
land forces were allotted by the Generalissimo to assist in the defence of
Burma, in pursuit of his object of rendering all possible assistance in the
joint war effort. The forces were the 6th Army consisting of the 49th, 55th
and 93rd Divisions, and the 5th Army comprising the 22nd, 96th and 200th
Divisions. The 5th Army was well equipped with a high proportion of
armoured vehicles and other modern equipment, with which the 6th Army
was not so well supplied. In strength a Chinese "Army" corresponded
approximately with a British "Division".

During a visit to Chungking on 23rd December 1941 General Wavell
accepted the Generalissimo's offer of the 49th and 93rd Divisions for ser-
vice in Burma. For various reasons, including the necessity for the col-
lection of rice for their rations, they did not begin to arrive in Burma until
19th January. By early February the 93rd Division was in position along
the Mekong River east of the road Kengtung—Chiengrai.

Eventually headquarters of the 6th Army were established at Kengtung
and its divisions took over the Southern Shan States front, releasing 1st
Burma Division for service on the southern front. Arrangements were also
made to move the 5th Army into Burma. In order to increase the effi-
ciency of the Chinese troops, certain issues of clothing, bedding, water-
proof sheets and mosquito nets and the provision of medical assistance
and hutments were sanctioned from British sources for those serving in
Burma (124).

The Chinese troops had several successful patrol encounters with Thai
and Japanese parties on the Thailand and French Indo-China frontiers,
but they became engaged in no major operations during ABDACOM's
period of control.

At the wish of the Generalissimo an Allied Joint Military Council was
formed at Chungking. ABDACOM was not directly represented, but the
British Military Attaché at Chungking kept ABDACOM informed of
deliberations of the Council with which that headquarters was concerned.

82. *British Military Mission to China.*—On the formation of ABDACOM,
India retained control of the British Military Mission to China (125).
It was agreed that forces provided by the Mission would be under the
operational control of the Generalissimo while operating in China and under
that of the G. O. C. Army in Burma, subject to any directions which
might be received from the Supreme Commander, while operating in
Burma (126). India remained administratively responsible for the Mission.

83. *Communications, India—Burma—China and Lease—Lend Mater-
ial for China.*—Congestion of the port area at Rangoon had occurred
through the delivery there of quantities of American lease/lend stores for
China which were beyond the capacity of the Burma Road to remove.
British forces in Burma were deficient of many of the items lying there,
but a categorical assurance had been given that nothing would be im-
pounded for use by British troops without the express sanction of the
Generalissimo. G. O. C. Burma stated that he considered that the mili-
tary situation demanded a new policy in order to give Burma a larger

share and to avoid congestion of the port. These views were recommended by the Deputy Supreme Commander (General Brett) to the consideration of his Government at Washington (127).

When as Commander-in-Chief in India, he assumed control of operations in Burma, General Wavell directed the building with all possible speed of a road link between India and Burma, Imphal—Tamu—Kalewa, in case the port of Rangoon should become unusable. This road had already been under consideration. Various questions concerning the order of priority which should be allotted to this and other routes were referred to ABDACOM. While supporting the construction of these routes with all energy, ABDACOM had to point out that it was not, and could not be organized to deal with detailed administrative problems in this connection, which must be left to Burma, India and M. A. China (128).

74. *Andaman and Nicobar Islands.*—Before the creation of ABDACOM, India was responsible for the defence of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, as well as for their Civil administration. When India assumed responsibility for the defence of Burma, this responsibility was delegated to G. O. C. Burma. On re-transfer of the operational control of Burma, to ABDACOM, G. O. C. Burma still remained responsible.

Early in January India made an addition of one Gurkha battalion and four field guns to the garrison of Port Blair, which had been one company of British infantry and some military police. As operations developed, G. O. C. Burma expressed concern regarding the defence of the islands, requirements for which should, be thought, be made the subject of special reconnaissance. India was in favour of withdrawing the garrison which could, at the best, deny only Port Blair harbour to the enemy. As control of Burma was about to pass back to India, ABDACOM left a decision in this matter to the latter. The garrison was eventually withdrawn before the Japanese occupied the Andamans on 23rd March.

EVENTS IN THE NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES.

35. *General Survey.*—In MALAYA and BURMA the problem confronting ABDACOM, as has been seen, was to attempt to bring up reinforcements before the troops available on the spot were compelled by superior enemy forces to retire to an extent which rendered reinforcement impossible. Sufficient forces were not available or in sight to reinforce the widely scattered detachments in the NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES. The problem in the N. E. I. outer islands, therefore, was to delay the enemy's advance towards the main islands, JAVA and SUMATRA, sufficiently to permit the introduction of reinforcements into them. This was done to the utmost extent possible with the sea and air forces available. In spite of this the enemy continued to advance, temporarily checked from time to time by the counter action taken; and the "pattern" of his advance became apparent. His method was to secure an undefended airfield, put in anti-aircraft defences, develop the airfield and stock it with fuel and ammunition, then bring in aircraft working from this new air base, to attack the air forces at the next objective; when those air forces were rendered more or less harmless, to send on a convoy, with strong anti-submarine protection, and bearing what was, in relation to the known strength of the defenders of the objective, an overwhelming force. And so on. Operations to this pattern were repeated so frequently that the

Intelligence Directorate was able not only to tell, by the number and type of ships in the convoy, the strength of the enemy land force conveyed, but also to predict with some certainty, by examination of the type of objective preferred by the enemy, and his course and speed, the next objective and the date and time at which it would be attacked.

The standard make-up of a convoy conveying one Division was found to be:—

- (a) an escorting force, strength according to requirements, but generally two or three cruisers and one destroyer Division.
- (b) 15 to 20 transports, according to size; these invariably included two large troop-carrying transports which carried about two thirds of the infantry portion of the division; stores and heavy equipment were loaded in the smaller ships which usually stood off at some distance until the initial landing had been consolidated.

The most profitable target for attack in any such convoy was obviously the larger transports.

36. *Events in BORNEO and CELEBES.*—As already recorded, the Japanese effected landings simultaneously at TARAKAN in N. E. BORNEO and at MENADO in MINAHASA, the N. E. leg of CELEBES, on 11th January. At the same time KEMA on the S. E. coast of MINAHASA was occupied. KUCHING in SARAWAK had been occupied on December 24th/25th and Japanese troops sent forward from that place were in contact with Dutch and British Indian troops a few miles south of the Sarawak border on 18th January. Various points in BRUNEI and BRITISH NORTH BORNEO had also been occupied by the enemy.

At Tarakan the enemy attacked the Dutch garrison with the bayonet by night, a form of operation which before that date had not been employed by them. The Dutch garrison surrendered on 12th January after the oil denial scheme had been carried out.

Working to his usual plan, the enemy then proceeded to attack the aerodrome at BALIKPAPAN, his obvious next objective, and other aerodromes in the area from which his convoys might be attacked. On the 17th January KENDARI II aerodrome in S. E. CELEBES was machine gunned by enemy fighters, presaging an enemy advance in the CELEBES also. Allied aircraft attacked the enemy-occupied aerodrome at MENADO destroying 8 enemy fighters in the course of the raid. On the 18th, 15 enemy aircraft were over BALIKPAPAN. An enemy force of 13 naval vessels and 30 transports was sighted off the coast of N. E. BORNEO on 20th January and it was predicted that it could arrive at SAMBODJA, north of BALIKPAPAN, on the morning of the 21st. Both TARAKAN and BALIKPAPAN were important oil refining centres and enemy objectives at this time were oil and aerodromes. Demolition of all oil installations and the oilfields at BALIKPAPAN was ordered and was begun at 0900 hours on the 20th.

BANDJERMASIN, the headquarters of the Governor of Dutch Borneo, was attacked by 9 Japanese aircraft on 19th January. The same day it was reported that no enemy shipping was sighted at KEMA, indicating a move southwards, in the CELEBES, because much shipping had been sighted previously at KEMA.

The destruction carried out at BALIKPAPAN was very thorough and the Japanese convoy from TARAKAN appeared to hesitate in view of the demolition of its objective. Advantage was at once taken of the appearance of this enemy convoy within range of sea and air attack. Dutch medium bombers operating from SAMARINDA II, American heavy bombers operating from JAVA and American and Dutch submarines were sent to attack it, while a striking force consisting of one American cruiser and six destroyers was assembled to put in a night attack. From the 29th to the 30th January these attacks resulted in the following minimum enemy losses:—

Sunk.—

9 merchant ships, one of which may have been a tanker; 6 by aircraft and 4 by surface vessels.

Probably Sunk.—

2 heavy cruisers by submarines.
2 transports by destroyers.
2 medium sized merchant ships by aircraft.

Damaged.—

8 hits on warships, cruisers or destroyers.
8 merchant ships.
2 smaller vessels.

Only one battalion was left by the enemy in occupation of TARAKAN and he replaced losses in his convoy, suffering further losses while lying at BALIKPAPAN in the meantime. It was therefore apparent that he intended to continue his southward advance, and MAKASSAR in S. W. CELEBES and BANDJERMASIN appeared to be probable objectives. On 21st January, KENDARI II and on 22nd January GORONTALO in the CELEBES were subjected to enemy air attack. On 23rd January enemy warships entered KENDARI BAY, and a landing was effected there on the morning of the 24th.

In N. W. BORNEO it was observed on the 24th that the enemy were collecting many small craft at KUCHING and it was inferred that they contemplated an attack on PAMANGKAT from which, and neighbouring points, they would be able to gain access to the SINKAWANG aerodromes. In consequence the SAMBAS River was blocked at PAMANGKAT and prepared demolitions were carried out. The expected landing took place at PAMANGKAT on 27th January and in the next few days the Japanese occupied other towns in that area and got possession of SINKAWANG II aerodrome after it had been cratered. The Dutch and British Indian forces operating north of SINKAWANG II were forced by this landing, combined with renewed enemy pressure from SARAWAK, to withdraw to SINTANG in the interior.

At BALIKPAPAN the Japanese landed on 23rd/24th January and the Dutch garrison withdrew slowly westwards in the direction of SAMARINDA II aerodrome, which they maintained in use for as long as possible because of the opportunity which it gave of attacking enemy shipping in the MAKASSAR STRAITS. From BALIKPAPAN the Japanese began a deliberate overland advance to the south-west which eventually put

them in possession of BANDJERMASIN on 10th February. Their advance on SAMARINDA II was not pressed to any great distance, but they eventually rendered the aerodrome there unusable through constant air attacks.

Renewed attention was given to MAKASSAR which, together with its aerodrome at MANDAI, was subjected to air attacks on 26th January.

The rapid wastage to which an air force is subject if circumstances compel it to operate from landing grounds lacking A. A. defences and with little or no warning system is exemplified by the results of an enemy attack on the landing ground at OELIN near BANDJERMASIN on 27th January. Six navy O type fighters attacked from 1315 to 1400 hours, after the ground had been reconnoitred by one fighter at 1100 hours. Seven Glenn Martins on the ground were destroyed and two more were damaged. This instance was typical of many which in the aggregate made arrivals of reinforcing aircraft insufficient to replace wastage, instead of their being available to build up a formidable force.

By 30th January it was deduced that the BALIKPAPAN convoy, which was rapidly being brought up to its original strength by replacement of the losses which it had suffered, would move next on MAKASSAR. Its time of start appeared to be dependent on the building up of air support for it at KENDARI, where Dutch resistance at KENDARI II was delaying this action. Orders were issued for the destruction of the landing ground at PARE PARE on the west coast of CELEBES north of MAKASSAR. On the morning of 4th February an attempt to attack the MAKASSAR STRAIT convoy, assembled at BALIKPAPAN, by surface vessels for a second time was frustrated by the discovery of the assembling vessels by enemy aircraft which attacked the U. S. Navy cruisers Marblehead and Houston, severely damaging both of them. They succeeded, however, in returning to port by the 7th.

On 6th February indications were obtained that the MAKASSAR STRAITS convoy would be joined by another force from the MOLUCCA SEA for the attack on MAKASSAR. On 8th February it was predicted that MAKASSAR would be attacked by the joint convoys at dawn on the 9th and this was what in fact occurred, except that the BALIKPAPAN convoy did not take part.

During this period the enemy developed KENDARI as a large air and submarine base, and many other indications were available of a displacement of his air effort southward. On 4th February it became apparent that the enemy were likely to make an attempt on southern SUMATRA in the near future, in which the parachute troops which had been under training in French Indo-China might be employed. A week later the report of a considerable air concentration at KUCHING appeared to indicate that some part of the Indo-China force had been brought there and it is possible that air forces from further east were switched westward to take part in the SUMATRA operation. Although no positive evidence could be collected, there was a definite impression that the extended, simultaneous Japanese operations were putting such a strain on their air forces that Task forces adequate for the purpose in view could be assembled only by periodical switches of a part of the enemy air forces from one end of the front to the other.

Another enemy transport was sunk by submarine S-37 off MAKASSAR on 8th February. At most of the places which have been mentioned, when the Dutch garrisons were forced by enemy landings to withdraw into the interior they tried to carry out guerilla action against enemy communications, in accordance with pre-arranged plans. In many cases the results were disappointing, the locally enlisted Indonesian troops showing a tendency to discard their uniforms and withdraw to their villages and their families. In other cases, however, useful damage was caused to the enemy. In one such action, on 15th February, a party of about twenty men of the N. E. I. Army having noted from reconnaissances that the Japanese were in the habit of paying daily visits to a bridge which had been demolished near MAKASSAR, laid an ambush and killed 2 Japanese officers and 30 to 40 other ranks, without loss to themselves.

In Borneo, RANDJERMASIN was occupied by the enemy, who had advanced across country and by bicycle along the roads from BALIK-PAPAN, on 10th February. The Governor of Dutch Borneo withdrew to M'EARATEWE in the interior. In the north-west, Japanese were observed moving in boats up the KAPOEAS RIVER towards SINTANG, to which place the Dutch and British troops from SINKAWANG had withdrawn, by a Dutch Lodestar taking supplies to the troops at SINTANG. The Lodestar fired on the enemy, causing casualties, and warned the Sintang garrison.

On the dispersal of ABDACOM headquarters, therefore, the situation in BORNEO and the CELEBES was that the enemy had occupied various places round the coasts where he desired to establish air and sea bases, and where he hoped to start to extract oil from damaged oil-fields, but, except for SINTANG in N. W. BORNEO and the province of MINAHASA in N. E. CELEBES, he had made no attempt to dominate the interior and occupy the country as a whole. The British Indian battalion referred to, which was the 2/15th Punjab Regiment, was expected to be concentrated at KOEMAI in S. W. BORNEO by 10th March. On 22nd February a ship from JAVA with six months requirements of all natures for the unit was due to arrive at KOEMAI. There is therefore hope that the battalion will be able to continue guerilla operations in co-operation with the Dutch troops for at least some time.

57. *Events in the MOLUCCAS and NEW GUINEA.*—The chief islands in the MCLUCCAS are HALMAHERA, which did not appear to figure in Japanese plans to any great extent, CERAM and HURU (BOEROE) with AMBON (AMBOINA) to the south of them, and BANDA ISLAND which gives its name to the BANDA SEA. Dutch New Guinea, although subject to many air attacks, was not included in the places which the enemy had marked down as potential main bases. His chief interest here lay in NEW IRELAND and NEW BRITAIN, both to the N. E. of NEW GUINEA, as stepping stones towards AUSTRALIA, and they were outside the ABDA area. ABDACOM's main interest, therefore, in the area now under consideration lay in AMBON, where a small garrison of Australian and Dutch troops had been established for the protection of airfields and flying boat stations in the vicinity, which were in use by Allied aircraft. Aircraft operating from these bases provided most valuable reconnaissance reports, in the early stages, of enemy movement into and through the CELEBES and MOLUCCA SEAS, besides providing a link between Australia and American occupied bases in the PHILIPPINES.

Apart from the ABDA area proper the enemy movement of chief importance was that on RABAU in NEW BRITAIN. On 20th January RABAU was subjected to air attack and it was deduced that it would become the object of seaborne attack. On 22nd January the enemy occupied MUSSAU ISLAND and UPONAPSU in NEW IRELAND. Thereafter RABAU was occupied by the enemy and subsequently became the target for allied air attacks.

On 23rd January enemy air attacks were carried out against TERNATE in HALMAHERA and SORONG at the extreme N. W. tip of NEW GUINEA. This followed the establishment of an enemy naval air base at KEMA in N. E. CELEBES. Again on the 24th there was a series of air raids, mainly by single aircraft, in the HALMAHERA—SORONG—AMBON area. In view of these varied enemy activities, orders were given on 29th January for the demolition of the aerodrome at BABO in Dutch New Guinea. Air raids were also made on NAMLEA in BOEROE ISLAND, from where allied aircraft were operating. In the course of these air raids considerable numbers of Allied aircraft were destroyed on the ground.

On 28th January a sighting report of an enemy convoy was received. It was in the MOLUCCA SEA, steering south, and consisted of 13 merchant ships escorted by 1 heavy cruiser, 3 light cruisers and 5 destroyers, and it seemed certain that its destination must be AMBON. Enemy air effort in this region on 30th January was mainly directed against AMBON, from which all possible Australian aircraft had been removed in view of the imminent threat. The aerodromes there were demolished on 31st January, enemy landings having started, after air attacks and bombardment from the sea, on the 30th. On the 31st communication with AMBON was severed, but on 3rd February a report got through to the effect that the Australians were still fighting on, although only one company of Dutch troops remained still available for action against the enemy. The enemy was reported to have suffered considerable losses in shipping in this attack, two cruisers and one submarine probably being sunk by mines and one cruiser and one destroyer by the Australian artillery on shore; in addition an unconfirmed but apparently reliable report was received that the aircraft carrier Kaga, 26,000 tons, was bombed and sunk by an American aircraft. After putting up a very stiff resistance, in which they were understood to have suffered heavy casualties, the Australian were forced to surrender on the 4th.

From this date until the dissolution of ABDA headquarters TERNATE and other points in HALMAHERA, and various places in Dutch New Guinea, notably FAKPAK and SORONG, were subjected to frequent enemy air attacks, but no further hostile landings were effected. The enemy's energies were devoted to the development of AMBON as a sea and air base.

58. *Events in TIMOR.*—For some time prior to the outbreak of war with Japan the British Government had been concerned by the interest taken by the Japanese in Portuguese TIMOR. Negotiations were in train with the Portuguese Government for arrangements whereby Netherlands and Australian troops from Dutch Timor would be sent to assist the garrison of Portuguese Timor, on invitation from the Governor, in the event of a Japanese attack. On the 15th December, however, the Netherlands

East Indies authorities decided that in view of the submarine threat it was imperative to strengthen the Portuguese garrison at once. Accordingly a mixed Dutch and Australian detachment, under a Dutch commander, was landed at DILLI, the capital of Portuguese Timor, on 17th December. The Governor protested and this was followed by a protest from the Portuguese Government. When the Allied force landed the Portuguese Government was informed that it would be withdrawn when the threat which it was intended to meet was past and the British Government felt itself bound by subsequent conversations to withdraw its troops when adequate Portuguese forces became available for the defence of the territory. The Portuguese Government decided to send a reinforcing detachment, originally stated to number 800 men, from LOURENCO MARQUES. They requested that the Allied troops should be withdrawn when the Portuguese detachment arrived. While recognising that the arrival of the detachment from LOURENCO MARQUES would not secure Portuguese Timor against Japanese attack, the British Government were naturally desirous of avoiding a break with European Portugal. It was therefore proposed to announce that the Allied troops would be withdrawn on arrival of the Portuguese reinforcement, but to initiate staff talks designed to ensure the prompt calling in of Allied troops in the event of Japanese attack. Road communications between DILLI and the boundary with Dutch Timor were bad and it was proposed that their improvement to facilitate rapid reinforcement should be included in the subject matter of the staff conversations.

Fighter aircraft reinforcements could not be flown from AUSTRALIA to the N. E. I. without landing in TIMOR, the aerodrome at KOEPANG in the Dutch part of the island being in regular use for this purpose. ABDACOM therefore represented their concern at the proposal to withdraw the Allied detachment, but undertook to do the best that could be done to avert the feared consequences of the proposed action. As the Japanese consul at DILLI was known to be actively engaged in intrigue against the Allies, and he was under restraint so long as the Allied detachment remained at DILLI, it was proposed for consideration that all consuls should be expelled by the Portuguese Government from their part of the island.

The Portuguese Government deputed an officer to visit ABDA headquarters to discuss the manner in which Allied help would be forthcoming in the event of a Japanese attack and how the change over in responsibility for defence should be effected. The Governor was also directed to improve the road from DILLI to the frontier although he did not in fact do so. The Portuguese representative arrived at ABDA headquarters on 14th February when the staff conversations began. They were made somewhat difficult by the fact that the only language which the envoy possessed in common with the Allied representatives was limited and rather indifferent French. He had never been to TIMOR and knew nothing of conditions there and he had no instructions from his Government. Before the discussions could reach finality the Japanese attacked TIMOR, the questions at issue thereby became purely academic and the Portuguese delegate, apparently much relieved at the turn which events had taken, departed. In view of the reported Japanese landings, Australian Combined Headquarters, DARWIN, were authorised to remove by any means possible the Australian and Dutch troops in Portuguese Timor. The

Australian strength was two rifle companies, totalling 820 all ranks, and that of the Dutch 1½ infantry companies amounting to some 475 all ranks (129).

In Dutch Timor, on account of the importance of the aerodrome as a link on the route AUSTRALIA—N. E. I., the R. N. E. I. Army garrison had been reinforced by No. 2/40 Infantry Battalion A. I. F. and Australian mortar, anti tank, coast artillery, engineer, medical and supply detachments totalling 1,366 all ranks. The Dutch garrison at KOEPANG, where the Australians also were stationed, was twelve "brigades" totalling approximately 240 men.

Concurrently with growing indications of a new enemy thrust southwards which resulted in the attack on AMBON on 30th January, Japanese air forces began to pay attention to KOEPANG and the landing grounds in its vicinity. On 26th January the aerodromes at PENFOEI and ATAMBOEA in Dutch Timor were machine gunned by four fighters; one Dutch aircraft was shot down 9 kilometres from KOEPANG the crew and two passengers being killed. These attacks were followed on the 1st February by an attack by 8 bombers escorted by 2 fighters on a ship in SEMAOE STRAIT off KOEPANG and the machine gunning of PENFOEI aerodrome. On the 3rd the aerodromes and roads at Koepang were attacked by 9 fighters and one bomber and a Quantas flying boat was shot down at the mouth of the MINA RIVER in S. E. TIMOR, 15 people being killed. Two Dutch ships in the roads were attacked but suffered only slight damage. On the 4th four enemy fighters were sighted over the roads and the aerodrome. At this time it was thought, but it could not be confirmed, that an enemy aircraft carrier must be operating South of the Eastern Archipelago. Two formations of 9 bombers each attacked the roads without effect on the 7th.

On seeing the enemy threat approaching Timor, the Supreme Commander asked Australian Army Headquarters in Melbourne whether they could spare one battalion from Darwin as reinforcement for Koepang, informing them that General Brett had agreed to the move of a United States field artillery battalion from Darwin for that purpose (130). At first Australian Army Headquarters demurred on account of the already thin defence forces at Darwin (131). After further explanation of the necessity, (132) however, their agreement was obtained, subject to the proviso that every possible step should be taken adequately to reinforce Darwin to frustrate any Japanese attack (133).

It was realised that in view of the almost daily enemy air attacks on shipping in the roads at Koepang it would be necessary to place some A. A. Artillery there before the arrival of the reinforcements, in order to give cover for their disembarkation. It was accordingly arranged that one Light A. A. Battery (eight Bofors), which had just been disembarked at Batavia should be sent to Koepang with all possible speed. Owing to shipping difficulties at Batavia, however, re-embarkation of the battery was delayed and it was not possible to get it to Koepang before the evening of 15th February. This necessitated sailing the convoy with reinforcements from Darwin early on the 16th which was calculated to get it to Koepang at dark on the 18th, by when the battery should be in action. The battery was successfully landed and the convoy sailed under escort of the U. S. Navy cruiser Houston, two destroyers and two escort vessels, on 15th February. That day the convoy was reconnoitred by an enemy

flying boat. On the 16th, in the light of information received of an imminent enemy attack on Timor, ABDACOM ordered the convoy back to Darwin. The same day the convoy was attacked by 37 bombers and 9 four-engined flying boats, the bulk of the attack being concentrated on Houston. Luckily, however, only slight damage was done to one of the merchant ships of the convoy in which there were two or three casualties.

The weather at this period over the Eastern Archipelago was very unreliable for flying. On 8th February 8 American P-40's en route from Australia to Java forced landed in the north of Timor island, one pilot being killed and all the aircraft being rendered unserviceable. On the 14th an Australian Hudson, just after taking off from Penfoer aerodrome, Koepang, was struck by lightning four persons being killed.

Dilli was reconnoitred by Japanese aircraft on 15th February. On the 16th, 27 enemy bombers were sighted over S. W. Timor. These bombers, which were possibly a part of those which attacked the convoy, were almost certainly based on Kendari, while the flying boats were probably operating from Ambon. On the 17th, 20 Japanese aircraft were observed over Timor flying south towards the Timor Sea, while another 25 attacked Koepang and surroundings, dropping 60 bombs and causing little damage and wounding only three persons.

On the 19th February Dilli was shelled, probably by an enemy submarine, and Japanese landings west of Dilli were reported. On the 20th the enemy landed at various points around Koepang. Parachutists were used in the attack on the aerodrome at Ossaoc. Fighting continued throughout the 23th. Full details were not available at the time of the dispersion of ABDA headquarters.

39. *Events in SUMATRA, JAVA and the EASTERN ARCHIPELAGO.*—Java was the obvious ultimate goal of the Japanese advance in the Netherlands East Indies. Apart from its very considerable agricultural and mineral resources, it was the seat of Government, it contained the only naval base in that area, valuable air bases, considerable military stores and some munitions factories. It formed the main area in which naval, air and land reinforcements could be assembled prior to a counter-offensive. The acquisition of air bases in South Sumatra would clearly make the defence of Java almost impossible, hence action to obtain the use of these bases was a natural preliminary move on the part of the Japanese. Similarly action to obtain air bases on any convenient island in the Eastern Archipelago as a preliminary to an attack on Eastern Java was to be expected. As the enemy southward advance through the outer islands progressed, it became apparent that he was going to carry these preliminaries into effect and, when they were completed, attack Java.

The area under consideration is extensive and enemy activities were many, so it is more convenient to review events in various parts of the area in turn, as is done in succeeding paragraphs. The Eastern Archipelago is considered first. Events in Timor have been described separately because enemy moves there were designed more to cut the air route and to obtain a base for action against Australia than as a preliminary to an attack on Java. Next comes the attack on South Sumatra, which was a sequel to the enemy's success in Malaya. Finally the preliminaries to the attack on Java are recorded.

40. *Eastern Archipelago.*—The main islands in the chain now being considered are, from west to east, Bali, Lombok, Soembawa, Soemba, Flores, Solor, Alor and Wetar. The story here is chiefly one of hostile air raids, because apart from Timor, as already described, and Bali, the enemy attempted no landings in the area, except possibly on Soemba which was not, however, confirmed. The island of Madoera (or Madura) is a part of Java. Aerodromes at Denpasar in Bali, Bima in Soembawa and Waingapoe in Soemba provided useful emergency landing places for short range reinforcing aircraft unable through stress of weather or other cause to complete their intended journey.

On 26th January three Japanese fighters machine gunned the quay and customs shed at Bima, Soembawa, killing one civilian and wounding five others. The oil installation on Kambing island was set on fire by a bomb. On the 27th an enemy aircraft carrier was reported to be operating in the Flores Sea area. Bima was reconnoitred by 15 enemy aircraft on 1st February and on the same day 9 fighters and 9 bombers attacked Waingapoe on Soemba island, killing 12 civilians and wounding about 15 others. On the 5th of February Denpasar aerodrome in Bali, and Benoa 10 kilometres south of Denpasar, were bombed and machine gunned by 30 bombers and 12 fighters. By bad luck 13 American P-40's, which had been unable to complete the full journey to Java, were refuelling at Denpasar at the time. Nine P-40's managed to take off, of which four reached Java; the four left on the ground were destroyed; one enemy fighter was shot down. On this day a Japanese aircraft carrier of the 50 aircraft type was reported by a reconnoitring plane south of Lombok.

On 7th February two P-40's were destroyed in making a forced landing at Korleko on the east coast of Lombok. A considerable number of enemy aircraft were sighted over Flores during the day, although no attack was made. On the 4th, 5th, 6th, 9th and 10th February intensive enemy air reconnaissance was carried out over Soembawa, but no attack resulted. On the 11th Bali was reconnoitred by three aircraft. In the light of after events it would appear that these reconnaissances were intended to discover Allied dispositions in Bali and the vicinity in preparation for a seaborne attack. On 15th February communication with Waingapoe, Soemba, which had been interrupted for some time, had not been re-established, but this was understood to be due to damage to the wireless station, not to enemy occupation. Ende in Flores was bombed and machine gunned by 8 aircraft on 15th February, 7 natives being killed and 9 wounded, while considerable damage was done to houses. On the 14th 9 aircraft had bombed Kalabahi in Alor, causing casualties.

Positive indications of a decisive enemy move in this area were first received on 18th February when 4 cruisers and two transports were sighted at the southern end of the Makassar Straits sailing south-west. It was inferred from the small troop-carrying capacity of the convoy that while the enemy intended to provide protection against naval interference he did not expect an opposed landing and that he intended to occupy only a limited area. These deductions, together with the course of the convoy as plotted from sightings, led to the conclusion that the enemy attempt would be against Bali, which he could reach by 2030 hours on the 18th. The demolition of Denpasar aerodrome on Bali was ordered, but demolitions on Lombok were not carried out because that island did not appear to be the enemy's objective.

The enemy landings on Bali began at about 2100 hours on the 18th at two points, 10 miles N. E. of Denpasar and at the southern end of the island east of Boeloe aerodrome. As sighted at Bali the enemy force consisted of 2 cruisers, 4 to 5 destroyers and 4 merchant vessels. By the 19th, 3,000 Japanese had occupied Denpasar. An Allied striking force of naval surface vessels was despatched to engage the enemy ships, which were also attacked by our aircraft. The enemy's probable losses in these attacks as compiled from reports received amounted to 1 cruiser destroyed, 1 cruiser or destroyer damaged by torpedo and 1 cruiser or destroyer damaged by gunfire, in addition to 1 large transport sunk. Losses in the Allied naval force were two destroyers sunk and one Dutch cruiser damaged. The enemy moved up aircraft to Bali, including one squadron of heavy bombers formerly at Balikpapan, and thus established an air base at close range in preparation for his attack on eastern Java.

Five enemy heavy bombers at Denpasar were burnt out by attack by American aircraft from Java on the 22nd. The enemy quickly removed his ships from the vicinity of the island, presumably on account of the losses which he was suffering from air and sea attack. These losses probably imposed some slight delay on the enemy attack on Java.

41. *Sumatra*.—Until just before the fall of Singapore, hostile air action against Sumatra consisted first of intermittent attacks on aerodromes, then attacks on ports on the West coast and shipping off that coast, and finally heavy attacks on the British and Dutch air forces which, when landing grounds in Malaya could no longer be used, were based on the aerodromes in South Sumatra.

As early as 8th January arrangements were made with the Commander of the Royal Netherlands Indies Army for the use of aerodromes in Sumatra for the support of our operations in Malaya and for the transit of reinforcing aircraft, and for their protection by anti-aircraft artillery to be provided by the British. Palembang was essential for fighters covering vital convoys and the oil installation. Pakanbaroe was intended to be used for the operation of bombers, although it never actually was. One of the northern group, Sabang, Lhongka and Medan, was required on the reinforcement route (134). Provision of A. A. guns was made for Palembang I and II and the oil refineries at Palembang, guns being got into action at these places, and for Pakanbaroe where the guns did not, however, actually arrive. The development of events did not permit provision for Medan or any other of the northern group.

The urgent necessity for reinforcing Malaya precluded the allotment of British or Indian infantry for the defence of the Southern Sumatra aerodrome area at that time, but from the first it was intended to provide troops for this purpose as soon as any could be found.

The early air attacks on Sumatra are exemplified by the following:—

17th January, Pakanbaroe bombed, 40 casualties.

19th January, Sibolga, in the north-west of the island was bombed, for the first time. Attack directed mainly against the harbour area. Leaflets dropped on Pakanbaroe.

20th January, bombs dropped near a Dutch auxiliary vessel in Aroe Bay and near Pangkalansoeoe, causing no damage. 3 enemy aircraft over Medan and Belawan, bombed and machine

gunned the lightship at Belawan without effect. In the afternoon 9 bombs dropped at Belawan killing 3 coolies and wounding 7.

21st January, two attacks on British auxiliary ships in Sabang harbour: "Larut" slightly damaged in first raid and set on fire in the second. Another British auxiliary vessel attacked with 16 bombs, but not damaged, in Laboehan Bay, near Belawan. Enemy reconnaissance aircraft sighted over Palembang I, and American heavy bombers due to operate against targets in Malaya from there on the 22nd advised to arrive at dusk.

22nd January, Belawan Deli twice attacked; 6 bombers in the first raid dropped many of their 60 lbs. bombs in the water, but wounded 16 persons and caused some damage to palm oil tanks and godowns; in the second raid 8 bombers sank a small ship with full cargo, capsized the auxiliary ship "Raub" and badly damaged the godowns. Near Siak Sri Indrapoera one Japanese who had baled out of an aeroplane was shot while trying to avoid a patrol and two others were captured.

25th January, and preceding days. Several ships bombed and machine gunned by enemy aircraft off the west coast north of Padang; little damage and no casualties, except that S.S. "van Imhoff" was sunk while carrying 53 German internees, several of whom were wounded. Palembang I was bombed on the 23rd, one British soldier and one coolie being killed, one American soldier, one Chinese and two coolies wounded.

25th January, some bombs dropped at Sabang on an auxiliary vessel which was already burnt out.

26th January, 4 bombers dropped 25 bombs on the Dutch Government steamer "Wega", destroying it. Other less effective raids at Pangkalansoeoe, Pagatalan River and Belawan.

26th January, heavy bombing attacks on shipping at Emmahaven (Padang); two steamers and many barges burnt out and another steamer damaged, all godowns and the harbour office set on fire; no casualties.

28th January, a further raid on Emmahaven resulted in the sinking of one steamer, minor raids on points in Banks and Billiton Islands.

29th January, Sabang wireless station and quay bombed, no damage; Padang bombed, no damage.

31st January, two steamers bombed in Muntok roadstead, Banks, one set on fire and beached. On this day work in the tin plant at Sitem, Rhio Archipelago, was stopped, some of the machinery and the staff being removed to Java and vital parts of the remaining machinery being removed. The output of the tin plants on Banks and Billiton was reduced and the surplus machinery was removed to Java.

On 20th January, No. 223, Bomber Group, R. A. F., from Singapore was reformed at Palembang to continue its operations in support of the troops in Malaya from there. It was therefore of urgent importance to provide A. A. defence at the bombers' new base aerodromes. As A. A. reinforcements were not yet due to arrive, it was decided to send from Singapore No. 6 Heavy A. A. Regiment less one battery (16 heavy guns) and one battery and one troop of No. 35 Light A. A. Regiment (16 light guns) to Palembang. The remaining 8 Bofors of No. 35 Light A. A. Regiment were to go to Pakanbaroe. In order to avoid the great delay involved, and because of doubts concerning the capacity of the bridges and ferries on the roads from the west coast, it was decided that these guns, with their ammunition and transport, should be sent in small ships up the rivers flowing past Palembang and Pakanbaroe to the east coast of Sumatra. 6 Heavy Regiment, less one battery, but with 78 Light Battery and one troop of 80 Light Battery, arrived at Palembang with six 3.7" guns and the appropriate light guns on 30th January. Only a few rounds of shrapnel arrived with the six heavy guns. Very little ammunition was available also for the light guns, but the Dutch lent some of theirs which could be used in the British guns, but had a somewhat different functioning which made shooting more difficult for crews who were not accustomed to it. A series of misfortunes then ensued. S.S. Anting with the Bofors for Pakanbaroe and 80 Light Battery less one troop, and the ammunition for all the Bofors, was sunk by enemy air attack on passage from Singapore. The personnel less two casualties, were picked up and landed at Oosthaven, but the equipments and ammunition were lost. More ammunition just arrived in Batavia was rushed up through Oosthaven, and thence by rail, as soon as possible. S. S. Subadar with the remaining 10 heavy guns and the bulk of the 3.7" ammunition received direct hits from enemy bombs and had to be beached in the Berhala Strait. Strenuous endeavours were, therefore, made to find replacement guns and ammunition and to rush them up also through Oosthaven. By some means still unknown, however, Subadar succeeded in refloating herself and arrived with guns, ammunition and personnel at Palembang on 11th February. In the meantime A.A. personnel, divorced from their equipment, were receiving training in infantry tactics in defence of aerodromes, which was to stand them in good stead a few days later.

Meantime the air forces units which had moved to Palembang were forced to operate with slight A.A. defence of their aerodromes and a sketchy warning system, which resulted in heavy losses of aircraft on the ground. This was further aggravated by the fact that the surroundings of the aerodromes were either jungle or at that time of the year were under water which made dispersal of grounded aircraft a very difficult problem.

From the beginning of February enemy air action against Sumatra was as follows:—

1st February, shipping near Banks, and several places on the island were attacked, no fighters could be made available to counter these enemy attacks. Palembang was twice bombed and machine gunned by 4 enemy aircraft, two men being killed and 11 wounded in addition to some damage being caused.

Places in Banks and Billiton were also attacked. Fighters brought down from Tjililitan aerodrome in Java were retained at Palembang to assist in protecting shipping on passage between Singapore and Batavia from enemy air attacks. It was decided to move one battalion of the R. N. I. Army from Java to the Palembang area and another to Banka and Billiton to strengthen the defence of that very important aerodrome area and to deter the Japanese from trying to get it with less than a full scale attack.

3rd February, O. C. 6 Heavy A. A. Regiment was appointed commander of the A. A. defence artillery in South Sumatra, to work under the orders of O. C. No. 225 Fighter Group R. A. F. and in close co-operation with the Dutch Territorial Commander, Palembang. Medan and Sabang were reconnoitred by the enemy and Tandjong Balai was bombed. Two reinforcing British bombers en route from Rangoon were wrecked at Lumbo on the N. W. coast of Achin; their maps showed Lhongka aerodrome 30 kilometres too far to the south.

4th February, attacks on shipping on passage between Batavia and Singapore continued.

5th February, Medan was reconnoitred by one low-flying enemy aircraft; Pangkalan Brandan lightship was bombed and machine gunned without damage.

6th February, Palembang I was machine gunned by 12 aircraft, bombed by 2 bombers and 9 fighters, and further machine gunned by 7 navy 0 type fighters. 10 Hurricanes managed to take off; 3 were missing, one was badly damaged on landing; one navy 0 was badly damaged. 4 Blenheims and 2 Hurricanes on the ground were slightly damaged.

Billiton was again bombed.

7th February, Palembang I was bombed and machine gunned by 6 enemy bombers and about 25 navy 0 type fighters; 6 Blenheims, 1 Hudson and 9 Hurricanes were destroyed; 3 Blenheims and 11 Hurricanes were damaged, 1 Blenheim and 3 Hurricanes missing.

Muntok heavily bombed, Medan and Sabang reconnoitred several times.

During these early days of February, works which might be of service to the enemy and which were situated in areas becoming more closely threatened were gradually destroyed by the Dutch authorities.

Pakanbaroe aerodrome machine gunned; 3 Dutch aircraft damaged.

8th February, Palembang I was attacked by 20 bombers and 24 fighters. 4 Hurricanes got off, 2 shot down; 2 planes on the ground slightly damaged; 1 enemy fighter destroyed, probable. Enemy reconnaissance of Sabang, Padang and Emmahaven.

9th February, Pakanbaroe aerodrome machine gunned by 3 Japanese fighters, army type 97; no damage, no casualties. Padang and Medan reconnoitred.

10th and 11th February, Padang reconnoitred.

12th February, Sabang reconnoitred.

13th February, Palembang I bombed and machine gunned three times; 3 enemy fighters and one bomber shot down; 1 British fighter shot down, 1 missing, 1 damaged.

14th February, enemy parachute attack on Palembang; enemy seaborne force closely approaching.

A force of enemy warships, transports and store ships was sighted near the Anambas Islands, N. E. of Singapore, on 2nd February. At first it was thought that these might be intended for a seaborne attack on Singapore, but on 4th February a review of all indications pointed to the probability of an enemy movement against South Sumatra in the near future. Almost daily sighting reports thereafter confirmed the continued presence of a considerable enemy force at the Anambas and the expected move on South Sumatra began at dawn on 13th February. Sighting reports at that time disclosed the presence of the following in four separate divisions, 3 cruisers, 9 destroyers, 2 large transports, 11 transports, 4 submarines, 1 tanker, 5 unidentified large vessels and 7 small vessels.

At about 0830 hours on 14th February some 700 enemy parachutists were dropped at Palembang from about 100 Lodestar communication planes, many of which had British markings. They were dropped in three parties, about five miles from their objectives, at Soengei Gerong, 100 men, Pladjoe, 300 men and Palembang 300 men. About half the R. N. I. Army battalion recently sent from Java, plus details normally stationed in that locality, were available to oppose the attacks, and they were assisted at all three places by British A. A. personnel and at Palembang I aerodrome by some armed R. A. F. personnel in addition. All serviceable aircraft were flown from Palembang I to Palembang II to get them out of danger of damage or destruction.

Palembang I is situated about 10 miles north of the town. At this place there were 15 Heavy A. A. Battery, one section 78 Light A. A. Battery and one troop 84 Light A. A. Battery, besides R. A. F. personnel and a small force of Dutch aerodrome defence troops with some armoured cars. The parachutists were dropped in parties of 7 to 9 from each aircraft. Their armament, some of which must have been dropped separately, was reported to include rifles and revolvers, sub machine guns, machine guns, some grenades and light mortars. Ammunition was dropped separately. Shortly after landing, the parachutists captured a Dutch armoured car from the aerodrome. With this they went towards Palembang and, using hand grenades, killed the driver of a petrol tank lorry. Other cars were similarly treated and the whole were overturned and formed into a road block which was covered by a light machine gun. The Japanese crew of the armoured car were eventually killed by artillery personnel, using a Bren gun, but it was not until the afternoon that the road block was cleared. This prevented the arrival of reinforcements from Palembang town and the removal of A. A. guns from the aerodrome. Three enemy bombers were destroyed by 15 Heavy A. A. Battery during the initial

attack, but as there were no further enemy air attacks after the parachute landing the artillery personnel concentrated on repelling the enemy ground attacks and removing their guns.

Here, as in operations elsewhere, some enemy snipers got into trees surrounding the aerodrome. They were cleared by firing at them the nearest 3.7" gun, at fuze 1.5. An enemy party which had obtained possession of a Bofors gun site was destroyed, together with the Bofors, by direct fire from a 3.7, and similar action was taken with a radio direction finding set and a crowd of curious Japanese who were investigating it.

At Soengei Gerong and Pladjoe the enemy objectives were the oil refineries and the gun sites were not seriously interfered with. As there was no means of getting the guns away from Soengei Gerong except by steamer, and none was available, the guns were destroyed and the detachments withdrawn after they had finished engaging enemy aircraft. At Pladjoe the A. A. guns remained in action throughout the day, being protected by fighting patrols from artillery personnel. They claimed 16 enemy aircraft destroyed. The A. A. artillery anti-parachutist squad entered the oil refinery before the arrival of the Dutch troops, and by afternoon, with the assistance of the latter, the situation was well in hand.

By the evening of the 14th, Palembang I had been evacuated, but a mixed force of Dutch, British artillerymen and R. A. F. held a position on the road between the aerodrome and the town. The Dutch were still in possession of Pladjoe. It was decided to attack and recapture Palembang I in the morning. British A. A. units' casualties throughout the day amounted to:—

Killed—1 Officer.

16 Other ranks.

Wounded—36 Other ranks.

Missing—6 Other ranks.

No record is available of Dutch and R. A. F. casualties. The Dutch native troops, particularly the Ambonese, are reported to have fought well in this action and the Dutch Territorial Commander was confident of dealing with the remaining Japanese parachutists on the 15th.

In all probability the Dutch troops, together with the British artillery and R. A. F. personnel, could have disposed of the Japanese parachutists if the latter had remained unsupported. On the morning of 15th February, however, it was definitely established that the enemy seaborne expedition from the Anambas Islands, referred to earlier in this account, was attacking southern Sumatra. Consequently a force comprising probably not less than one division, with strong air support, was advancing on Palembang by all practicable river approaches. Against such a scale of attack the small garrison available in Southern Sumatra was manifestly inadequate to maintain a successful defence and on the 15th, when it was obvious that the naval and air action taken against this attack was unable to stop it, it was decided to withdraw from that area.

As soon as the destination of the Japanese convoy could be predicted with a reasonable degree of accuracy, a naval striking force of cruisers and destroyers had been collected at the western end of Java with a view to attacking it. The Allied striking force proceeded east of Banka Island

and through the Gaspar Strait, to the north of that island, during the night 14th/15th February, but failed to find the enemy. Although subjected to heavy bombing attacks it suffered no loss on that account, but one Dutch destroyer ran aground on a reef and had to be abandoned.

All available air striking forces, British, Dutch and American were directed against the shipping of the Japanese convoy and landing craft despatched up river from the convoy. Accurate figures are not available, but many hits and near misses were scored on warships and transports and heavy casualties were undoubtedly caused to enemy troops moving up the rivers in small craft. These results were achieved in the face of strong enemy opposition provided by Navy O type and M. E. 109 fighters. The demolitions at the oil refinery at Soengi Gerong had not been completed before the enemy occupation; in a later raid our bombers took the undestroyed portion of the refinery as their target and were successful in adding to the destruction.

R. A. F. aircraft continued to operate throughout 15th February from Palembang II, Djambi and Lahat aerodromes against enemy small craft entering the Palembang, Telang and Oepang Rivers and enemy shipping in the Banks Straits.

From various causes there was some confusion during the withdrawal of R. A. F. ground personnel, the British A. A. artillery and the Dutch troops to, and through, Oosthaven. This led to the destruction of some equipment which might otherwise have been saved. The local type of wooden bridge, although capable in emergency of taking 3.7" guns and their tractors, was roofed, and these roofs had to be sawn off before the guns could pass. This delayed the withdrawal and owing to misunderstanding some bridges near Oosthaven were destroyed, in accordance with the previously prepared demolition scheme, before the guns had passed. Owing to the suddenness of the move and the lack of a full scale movement control staff, loading of ships at Oosthaven was somewhat haphazard and this also led to the abandonment of some equipment which might have been saved. By the morning of the 16th all aircraft had been removed from Sumatran aerodromes and were operating from Java.

The leading ship of the Australian Corps had meanwhile arrived at Oosthaven, in accordance with the plan for employing the first Division of the Corps to arrive in the defence of South Sumatra. "B" Squadron of the 3rd Hussars, which was intended to proceed to Palembang, had also been disembarked, but owing to the changed situation it was re-embarked for Batavia. Troops landed from the Australians' ship took up positions outside Oosthaven to cover the embarkation, but the withdrawal was not pressed by the enemy or subjected to air attack. The withdrawal from Oosthaven was completed by 20th February.

42. *Java*.—The enemy air force was surprisingly slow in paying hostile attention to Java and the earlier visits were from reconnoitering aircraft which, in all probability, were flown off carriers. On 30th January the first report was received of an enemy aircraft over the island, when one Japanese fighter was observed near Cheribon flying off in a northerly direction. The first air attack took place on 3rd February and was on a considerable scale. Sourabaya was attacked by about 26 bombers and 50 fighters, Malang by 15 bombers and 10 fighters and Madioen by 28 bombers and 9 fighters, and other places in East Java also were attacked by varying numbers of aircraft. 10 defending fighters were shot down or

badly damaged by forced landings at Sourabaya and 4 lost and 2 damaged at Madioen. The chief reason for these losses was that the Dutch fighter units were equipped largely with obsolete types such as the Curtis Interceptor, or more modern aircraft with comparatively low performance such as the Brewster Buffalo. One enemy fighter was shot down at Malang and four, probably, over Madoera Island near Sourabaya. 12 naval aircraft were destroyed at Sourabaya and 4 American bombers at Malang.

At this time anti-aircraft artillery was almost entirely lacking at the Java aerodromes. It was therefore arranged to send British A. A. units then disembarking at Batavia to cover ports and important aerodromes in the island, including those at Sourabaya, Batavia, Malang, Bandoeng, Madioen, Jogjakarta and Buitenzorg, as well as the port at Tjilatjap. On 5th February an express train carrying 77 H. A. A. battery to Sourabaya collided with a goods train and 3 officers and 12 other ranks were killed and 60 officers and men injured.

40 enemy bombers and 20 fighters attacked the naval air base at Sourabaya on 5th February and, although intercepted by Dutch and American fighters, they caused much damage. Two enemy fighters were shot down and probably two bombers. Three Allied fighters were lost and two damaged; these losses, together with those suffered on the 3rd, left no fighters available for the defence of Sourabaya.

On 7th February 7 Junkers 88 were sighted over Semplak aerodrome near Buitenzorg; 6 of them circled over Batavia for an hour, while the seventh flew off south of Bandoeng. Two enemy aircraft machine gunned native women working in fields north of Bandoeng. Three enemy naval aircraft were sighted over Tjepoe, the oil area in East Java. Sourabaya was bombed again, four casualties and only slight damage being caused; three of the enemy aircraft were shot down by the A. A. guns which by then were in position.

Sourabaya docks were again attacked, this time by 18 bombers, on the 8th, 51 persons being killed and 52 injured; three flights of American pursuit planes were available to engage the bombers. On the 9th Sourabaya was attacked twice, one enemy bomber being shot down by American fighters. Enemy air activity over Tjepoe was reported on the 8th and 9th, Malang was attacked on the 9th, considerable damage being done to the R. N. I. Army armoured car camp adjacent to the aerodrome. Batavia city and Kemajoran and Tjililitan aerodromes were machine gunned by 7 Japanese fighters; in this raid Allied losses were 1 bomber, 2 reconnaissance aircraft and 3 fighters shot down, and 5 aircraft burnt out on the ground; enemy loss was one fighter, probable.

On 10th February 9 enemy bombers were prevented by Allied fighters from reaching Sourabaya. This occurred again on the 11th.

After the above incidents there was a short lull in enemy air activity over Java, coincident with the preparations for carrying out the attack on South Sumatra.

On the 18th 6 enemy fighters attacked the aerodrome at Malang, one American bomber being slightly damaged and 4 enemy fighters damaged by the British anti aircraft guns. Sourabaya was attacked by 24 aircraft, of which 5 bombers were shot down. 27 enemy planes were sighted over Tjepoe.

Buitenzorg aerodrome was dive bombed and machine gunned by 5 Ju-88s on the 19th, 3 Hudsons and 2 Sikorskis of the K. N. I. L. M. being burnt out. A few minutes later a further 44 enemy aircraft appeared; one was shot down.

Following the withdrawal from South Sumatra, Royal Netherlands Navy patrols were organised, by 20th February, in Sunda Strait to prevent infiltration of enemy using small craft. The Second Battalion of the 181st Field Artillery Regiment, United States Army, and forty-five 75 mm guns without personnel, were handed over to the R. N. I. Army authorities, by whom they were employed for beach defence.

On 19th February 25 fighters and 12 bombers attacked the aerodrome at Andir, Bandoeng. Two Dutch fighters were shot down and one reconnaissance aircraft was destroyed on the ground. One enemy fighter was shot down. Large enemy formations were prevented by defending fighters from attacking Sourabaya; three enemy fighters and three American fighters were shot down.

On the 20th Malang was attacked by 9 enemy fighters which dived in low over the trees with stopped engines. Five B-17's which had just come in and were refuelling were burnt out, 12 U. S. personnel being wounded. Kalidjati aerodrome was attacked by 10 bombers, 2 Glenn Martins on the ground being destroyed and 2 damaged. Banjoewangi in the extreme east of Java was attacked by 13 bombers, 39 civilians being killed and 15 wounded. Twenty-five enemy aircraft approached, but did not attack Sourabaya.

Kalidjati aerodrome was again attacked on the 21st, by 15 bombers and 13 fighters. 4 enemy bombers and 4 navy 0 fighters were shot down; one enemy fighter was rammed by a Dutch plane, the pilot of which was saved by his parachute. On the ground 1 aircraft was destroyed and 4 damaged. The same day Sourabaya, Malang and Madioen were attacked, only slight damage and casualties being caused, while 2 enemy aircraft were shot down.

On 22nd February the aerodromes at Klaten, Kemajoran, Senjilak, Jogjakarta, Semarang, Malang, Pasirian and Loemadjang were attacked. In these attacks 17 allied aircraft were destroyed and 14 damaged; 3 enemy fighters were shot down by the British A. A. artillery at Jogjakarta.

On the 23rd Malang, and on the 24th Andir, aerodrome was attacked. Two enemy bombers were shot down.

The later activities described above pressed the enemy attack on Java which was obviously under preparation and gave some indication of the scale of air attack by which the seaborne attack could be supported, now that the enemy was established on air bases in South Sumatra and Bali. In spite of exposure to air attack the enemy continued to keep a large concentration of ships at Muntok in the Banks Straits, which indicated its intended use in the immediate future for a further advance. On the 24th a reconnaissance aircraft, in the Makassar Strait, later shot down, reported a "fleet" to the northward. The same day 7 transports were seen at Makassar, two of which were definitely sunk by bombing, and in the area between the Java and Flores Seas, south of Makassar Strait, 1 light cruiser, 7 destroyers, 6 transports, and 4 submarines were seen. The latter party had already been attacked by an Allied submarine which sank one ship and probably sunk another. It was assumed that the transports seen

were troopships and that the "fleet" was en route from Jolo where on 20th February 80 to 100 ships had been seen. From all these sightings it was concluded that at least two enemy divisions from the eastward could be off north Central Java by dawn on 27th February, in addition to the force which could come from Banks Straits and the Anambas.

In the above circumstances it was clear that the Allies had lost the race to get reinforcements into Java in time. Already by 15th February the Allied air forces in Java had dwindled to about 75 fighters, 40 medium bombers plus 20 Dutch Glenn Martins, 14 American dive bombers and 20 American B-17's. In the next fortnight, after which a Japanese attack could be expected, reinforcements amounting to 20 American fighters, 10 American dive bombers, 50 Hurricanes and 8 B-17's were due to arrive. This situation, viewed together with the probable scale of enemy air attack, led inevitably to the conclusion that the Allied air forces would waste more quickly than they could be replaced. In Java they were operating from a limited number of airfields without depth and were engaged not merely in a straight duel with the enemy air forces, but also in attacks on enemy shipping and protection of their own.

Of the Australian Corps the Divisions were so loaded in convoys that the 7th Division would arrive first and the 6th Division second. Unloading facilities in Java were limited and it was calculated from previous experience that the leading brigade of the 7th Division could not be operative until about 8th March and the whole Division by 21st March. This situation, with the natural deduction that the arrival of the Australian Corps in Java was impracticable, was explained to H. E. the Governor-General of the N. E. I., and the Naval and Army Commanders, Admiral Helfrich and General ter Poorten on 15th February. Apart from the physical difficulties of disembarking the Corps in N. E. I. ports in view of the situation which had developed, the natural desire of the Australian Government for the return to Australia, which itself was now directly threatened, of their most experienced and best equipped troops had to be considered.

A brief review of the forces available may serve to show why the defence of Java could not be expected to be prolonged, having regard to the probable scale of attack.

An approximate statement of the Allied air forces has been given above. Against this the enemy could bring 400 to 500 aircraft, including carrier-borne, about half being fighters and half bombers.

The Allied naval resources were 3 to 4 cruisers and about 10 destroyers as a striking force. As a simultaneous attack from both ends of the island was practically certain, the problem was intensified. If the available force were divided it would be too weak in both places; if kept concentrated it would be difficult, Java being 500 miles long, to reach the vital point in time. Wherever the naval force was kept, it would be liable to heavy air attack because there were insufficient fighters available to protect it or its bases.

The Dutch land forces amounted only to three weak divisions comprising seventeen battalions, little artillery and a few light tanks and armoured cars. British Imperial troops in the island were B Squadron 3rd Hussars with 25 light tanks, less than 3,000 Australians in various units including a machine gun battalion and a pioneer battalion, and British Anti-Aircraft Artillery consisting of two Heavy and three Light Regiments

of which one heavy and one light were without their equipments which had been lost in South Sumatra. These A. A. units together with various other British units and details totalled some 5,500 all ranks. There was one American field artillery regiment.

Japanese naval resources were almost unlimited in comparison with Allied; and it was estimated that they could deploy some six divisions as a landing force against Java.

All the above was given most careful consideration and finally it was recommended to the combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington that the Australian Corps should be diverted to Burma, but naval and air reinforcements for ABDACOM should continue to be sent to Java. (185).

By 21st February the Allied fighter strength in Java had been reduced to less than 40, medium and dive bombers to about 30 and heavy bombers 10. Owing to the enemy's occupation of Timor and Bali no more fighters could reach Java from the east and a consignment of 50 Hurricanes then en route in a British aircraft carrier could not arrive in time to be effective. Reinforcement of heavy bombers via India had been stopped by order from Washington and could not in any case have been effective. Steps were therefore begun for the immediate evacuation from the island of some 6,000 R. A. F. and R. A. A. F. personnel who were unarmed and surplus to fighting units, and about 1,400 Americans similarly situated.

Orders were received from the Combined Chiefs of Staff, Washington, on 21st February to the effect that Java was to be defended to the last by all combatant troops at that time in the island for whom arms were available. Land reinforcements then on their way from the West would not proceed to Java but be diverted to Burma, Ceylon and Australia. The Supreme Commander was given discretion to augment the defence of Java with available naval units and with U. S. aircraft then at his disposal and being assembled in Australia. (186). In accordance with these orders U. S. S. Langley with fighter aircraft was directed to proceed to Java at utmost speed. She was sunk off Tjilatjap on the morning of 28th February.

As related earlier, it was decided that ABDACOM headquarters should be dispersed and the bulk of its personnel left Java on the evening of 26th February. Commodore Collins remained in command of the British naval forces still in Java, Major General Sitwell in command of the army forces with Brigadier Blackburn A. I. F. directly in command of the Australians and Air Vice Marshal Maltby in command of the British air forces. These officers were under the command of the Dutch Naval, Army and Air Commanders, who commanded all Allied forces of their respective Services in Java. Rear Admiral Palliser, R. N., also remained on Admiral Helfrich's staff.

A word about shipping is desirable before leaving the subject of Java. During the first half of February Tanjung Priok, the port of Batavia, became greatly congested owing to the limited unloading facilities, aggravated by back-loading from Singapore, the stoppage of ships destined for Singapore and the loss of Oosthaven. At one time 94 sizable seagoing ships were concentrated in the harbour and roadstead. This was the situation for some four days after the Japanese had taken possession of the aerodromes in South Sumatra, but the shipping was not subjected to serious attack. It was clear, however, that this luck could not continue and drastic steps were taken to disperse the shipping, including the despatch

of a portion of it without unloading. The situation which would have been created by the arrival of the large number of ships carrying the Australian Corps in such circumstances can easily be imagined.

43. *Port Darwin Sub-Area.*—Negotiations leading to the establishment of the Darwin Sub-area have been described elsewhere. Air forces in the sub-area remained under ABDACOM control only for 26 days from 31st January to 25th February, and land forces for 18 days from 8th to 25th February. As all reinforcements for the ABDA area of American fighter and dive-bomber aircraft and anti-aircraft and field artillery came through Australia, the Darwin Sub-area formed part of an important line of communications. The allocation of such reinforcements between places in the N. E. I. and places on the line of communications in the Darwin sub-area formed the chief problem for the Supreme Commander in this area.

Developments in the Japanese advance made Australia apprehensive as regards our ability to continue the use of the Torres Straits as a reinforcement route, the safety of Darwin and the threat to the mainland of Australia. Considerable enemy shipping remained at Rabaul after its occupation by the Japanese, for example 4 cruisers, 6 destroyers and 13 transports on 30th January, and this constituted a standing menace to Port Moresby and points in Australia. The enemy appeared to be extending their air operations southward from the Bismarck Archipelago, Gizo in the Solomon Islands being bombed on 28th January; Salamaua was attacked and Samarai, at the S. E. corner of New Guinea, reconnoitred, on the 31st. Port Moresby was attacked on 2nd February. A bomber aircraft en route from Darwin to Malang was attacked by 3 fighters on 9th February about 200 miles west of Port Darwin. Gasmata, the southernmost point in New Britain, was occupied by the enemy on 8th February.

Incidents similar to the above continued and on 16th February the Koepang convoy was bombed, as related in another section, and on 19th February Darwin was subjected to a most damaging air raid in which severe losses of shipping, aircraft and harbour facilities were suffered.

In these circumstances it was natural for the Australian Government to press for the retention in Australia of some part of the reinforcing American aircraft which were being erected in that country.

On 29th January the Supreme Commander in a periodical review of the situation for the Combined Chiefs of Staff, Washington, pointed out that, apart from north Australia and Burma, three main enemy advances had to be dealt with, namely through the Molucca Straits, through the Makassar Straits, and on Singapore with a probable extension to Sumatra in the near future. To meet these advances, no naval striking force was then available, no substantial reinforcement of land forces was due to arrive for several weeks and the air striking force averaged 6 to 8 heavy U. S. A. bombers. Keeping this situation in view, although Australia was pressing for the diversion for the defence of that country of reinforcements allotted to ABDACOM, it was essential to assemble the maximum reinforcements in the ABDA area to resist the Japanese advance. (187).

Before receiving the above review the Combined Chiefs of Staff informed the Supreme Commander that Australia had asked the United States to allot them some pursuit planes already in Australia or shortly due to arrive there. They had asked in particular for the allotment to Port

Moresby of one squadron of the U. S. fighters then being erected in Townsville. The Supreme Commander was asked to state his views and in particular to say whether, in his opinion, the C. C. O. S. should divert to Australia some of the aircraft allotted to him, or alternatively, whether he should assume responsibility for covering the N. E. approaches to Australia, operating his aircraft from bases outside the ABDA area as provided for in para. 2 of his directive. (138). Meanwhile ABDACOM had suggested to the Australian General Staff that the three fighter and three dive bomber squadrons then on their way through Australia should be allotted one each to N. E. I., Koepang and Darwin, in that order of priority. As they all had to pass through Darwin, any balance not forwarded could be stopped there by the Supreme Commander if a threat to that place appeared imminent. (139).

The Supreme Commander said that he did not consider that it would be sound to make him responsible for the defence of the N. E. approaches to Australia which would involve virtual assumption of responsibility for all defence matters in that area, because it is impossible to divorce the defence of approaches by air from defence by other means. It was inadvisable to extend the already large ABDA area as it was difficult enough to distribute available resources to cover it as it stood. The Supreme Commander considered that higher authority should decide the distribution of resources between Australia and ABDA, as they already did between MIDEAST and ABDA. (140). The Combined Chiefs of staff decided to divert from United States squadrons being formed in Australia one fighter group of 80 aircraft to operate under the command of the Royal Australian Air Force. (141). In view of the serious damage and heavy losses of fighter, and other, aircraft incurred in the Japanese air attacks on Java then in progress, ABDACOM requested the C. C. O. S. to allot the first eight squadrons of fighter aircraft becoming available in Australia to the ABDA area (142) and this was arranged by the C. C. O. S. (143).

When the Darwin Sub-area was added to the ABDA area, the forces allotted to the defence of the portion of northern Australia included in the sub-area were those already there. The army forces included field, coast defence and anti-aircraft units totalling approximately 14,000 personnel. Of these troops, one pioneer battalion, one field regiment and certain small units were Australian Imperial Forces and the balance Australian Military Forces who could not be employed outside Australia and its territories. Air forces consisted of one general reconnaissance squadron and one general purpose squadron, based on Darwin.

The Australian Government requested the release of these two squadrons as soon as possible, for employment elsewhere in Australia, by replacement from ABDACOM resources. (144).

General Brett assumed command of that part of the ABDA area which was included in north-west Australia, when ABDA headquarters were about to be dissolved. (145).

APPENDIX "A".

"ABDACOM" DIRECTIVE TO SUPREME COMMANDER, DATED 3rd JANUARY 1942.

Following for General WAVELL from Chiefs of Staff.

Begin. By agreement among the Governments of Australia, Netherlands, United Kingdom and United States, hereinafter referred to as the ABDA Governments.

1. *Area.*—A strategic area has been constituted to comprise initially all land and sea areas including general regions of Burma, Malaya, Netherlands, East Indies and Philippine Islands more precisely defined in Annexure 1. This area will be known as ABDA area.

2. *Forces.*—You have been designated as Supreme Commander of ABDA area and of all armed forces afloat ashore and in air of ABDA Governments which are or will be (a) stationed in area (b) located in Australian territory when such forces have been allotted by respective Governments for service in or in support of the ABDA area. You are not authorised to transfer from territories of any ABDA Government land forces of the Government without consent of local commander or his Government.

3. The Deputy Supreme Commander and if required a Commander of the Combined Naval Forces and the Commander of Combined Air Forces will be jointly designated by the ABDA Governments.

4. No Government will materially reduce its armed forces assigned to your area nor any commitment made by it for reinforcing its forces in your area except after giving to other Governments and to you timely information pertaining thereto.

5. *Strategic concept and policy.*—The basic strategic concept of the ABDA Governments for conduct of war in your area is not only in immediate future to maintain as many key positions as possible but to take offensive at the earliest opportunity and ultimately to conduct an all-out offensive against Japan. The first essential is to gain general air superiority at the earliest moment through employment of concentrated air power. The piecemeal employment of air forces should be minimised. Your operations should be so conducted as to further preparations for the offensive.

6. General strategic policy will be therefore:—

- to hold Malaya barrier defined as line Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java, North Australia as basic defensive position of ABDA area and to operate sea, land and air forces in as great depth as possible forward of barrier in order to oppose Japanese southward advance;
- to hold Burma and Australia as essential support positions for the area and Burma as essential to support of China and to defence of India;
- to re-establish communications through Dutch East Indies with Luzon and to support Philippines garrison;
- to maintain essential communications within the area.

7. *Duties responsibilities and authorities of Supreme Commander.*—You will co-ordinate in ABDA area strategic operations of all armed forces of ABDA Governments where desirable to arrange formation of task forces whether national or inter-national for executing specific operations and appointing any officers irrespective of seniority or nationality to command such task forces.

8. While you will have no responsibilities in respect of the internal administration of the respective forces under your command you are authorised to direct and co-ordinate the creation and development of administrative facilities and the broad allocation of war materials.

9. You will dispose of reinforcements which from time to time may be despatched to the area by ABDA Governments.

10. You are authorised to require from commanders of the armed forces under your command such reports as you deem necessary in discharging your responsibilities as supreme commander.

11. You are authorised to control the issue of all communiques concerning the forces under your command.

12. Through channels specified in paragraph 18 you may submit recommendations to the ABDA Governments on any matters pertaining to the furthering of your mission.

13. *Limitations.*—Your authority and control with respect to the various portions of ABDA area and to forces assigned thereto will normally be exercised through commanders duly appointed by their respective Governments. Interference is to be avoided in administrative processes of armed forces of any of the ABDA Governments including free communication between them and their respective Governments. No alterations or revision is to be made in basic tactical organizations of such forces and each national component of a task force will normally operate under its own commander and will not be sub-divided into small units for attachment to other national components of task forces except in cases of urgent necessity. In general your instructions and orders will be limited to those necessary for effective co-ordination of forces in execution of your mission.

14. *Relations with ABDA Governments.*—The ABDA Governments will jointly and severally support you in the execution of duties and responsibilities as herein defined and in the exercising of authority herein delegated and limited. Commanders of all sea, land and air forces within your area will be immediately informed by their respective Governments that from a date to be notified all orders and instructions issued by you in conformity with the provision of this directive will be considered by such commanders as emanating from their respective governments.

15. In the unlikely event that any of your immediate subordinates after making due representation to you still considers obedience to your orders would jeopardise national interests of his country to an extent unjustified by the general situation in ABDA area he has the right subject to your being immediately notified of such intention to appeal direct to his own Government before carrying out orders. Such appeals will be made by most expeditious methods and copies of appeals will be communicated simultaneously to you.

16. *Staff and assumption of command.*—Your staff will include officers of each of ABDA Powers.

You are empowered to communicate immediately with national commanders in area with view to obtaining staff officers essential your earliest possible assumption of command. Your additional staff requirements will be communicated as soon as possible to ABDA Governments through channels of communication described in paragraph 18.

17. You will report when you are in position effectively carry essential functions of supreme command so your assumption of command may be promulgated to all concerned.

18. *Superior Authority.*—As supreme commander of ABDA area you will always be responsible to ABDA Governments through agency defined in Annexure II.

ANNEXURE I.—BOUNDARIES OF ABDA AREA.

The ABDA area is bounded as follows:—

North.—By boundary between India and Burma, thence east-ward along Chinese frontier and coastline to latitude 030 degrees north, thence along parallel 030 degrees north to meridian 140 degrees east. (NOTE.—Indo-China and Thailand are NOT included in this area.)

East.—By meridian 140 degrees east from 030 degrees to the Equator, thence east to longitude 141 degrees east, thence south to the boundary of Dutch New Guinea (and to) coast on south coast, thence east along southern New Guinea coast to meridian 143 degrees east, then south down this meridian to the coast of Australia.

South.—By the northern coast of Australia from meridian 143 degrees east westward to meridian 114 degrees east, thence north westward to latitude 015 degrees south, longitude 092 degrees east.

West.—By meridian 092 degrees east.

2. Forces assigned to ABDA and adjacent areas are authorised to extend their operations into other areas as may be required.

ANNEXURE II.

1. On all important military matters not within the jurisdiction of supreme commander of ABDA area, U. S. Chiefs of Staff and representatives in Washington of British Chiefs of Staff will constitute agency for developing and submitting recommendations for decisions by President of U. S. and by British Prime Minister and Minister of Defence. Among chief matters on which decision will be required are:—

- (a) Provision of reinforcements.
- (b) Major changes in policy.
- (c) Departures from supreme commander's directive.

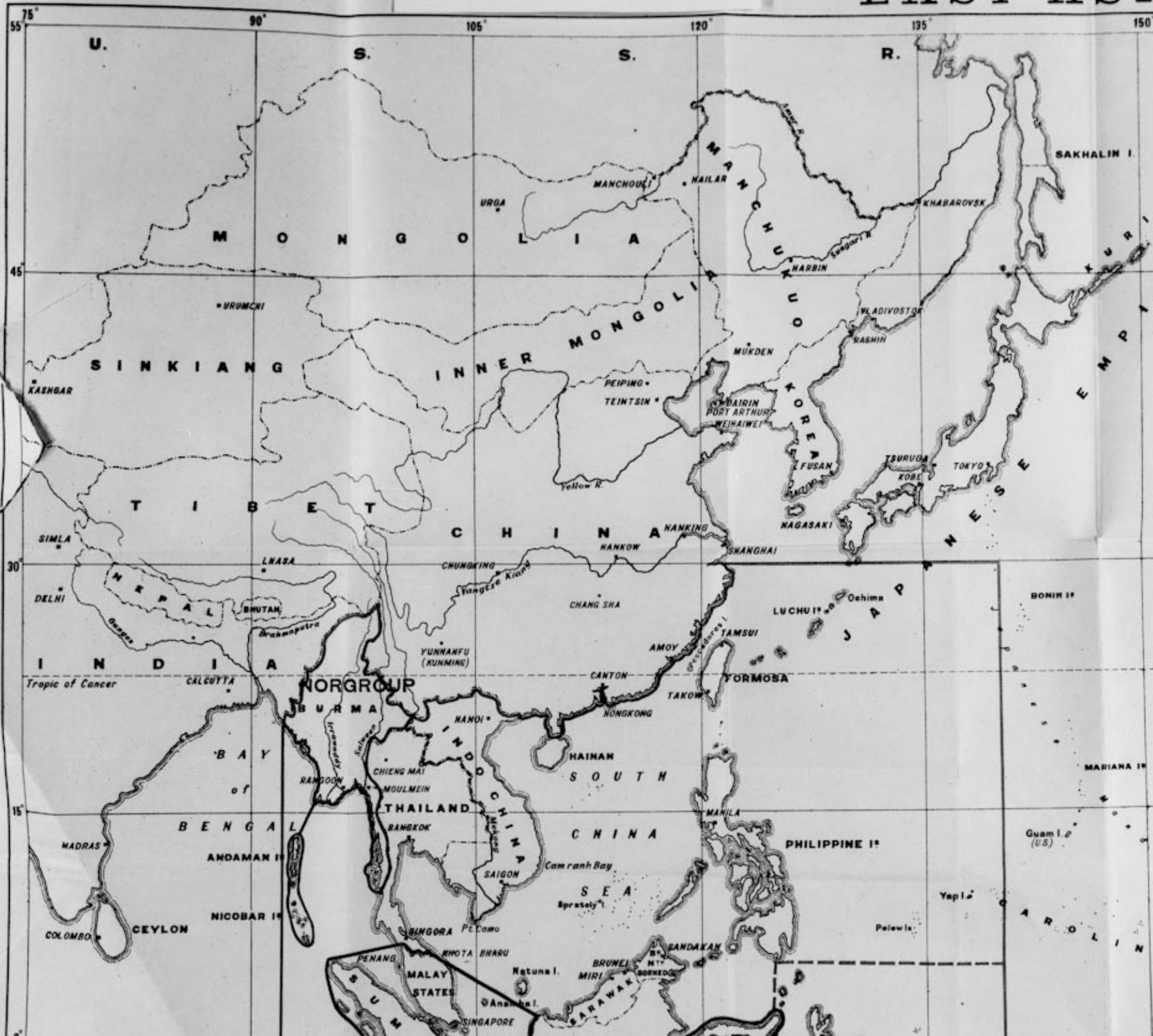
2. This agency will function as follows:—

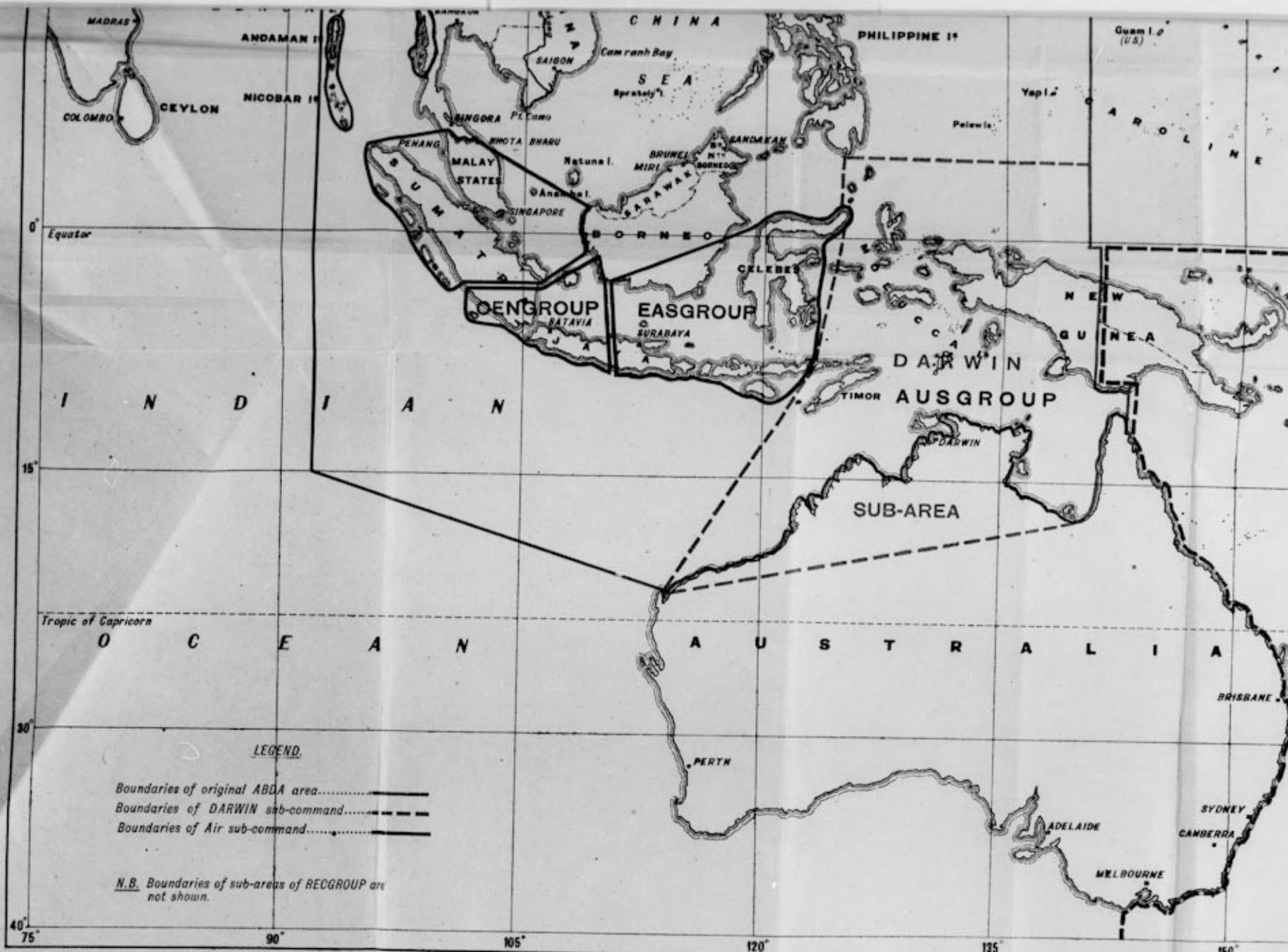
- (a) Any proposals coming either from Supreme Commander or from any of the ABDA Governments will be submitted to Chiefs of Staff Committee both in Washington and in London.
- (b) The Chiefs of Staff Committee in London will immediately telegraph to their representatives in Washington to say whether or not they will be telegraphing any opinion.
- (c) On receipt of these opinions the U. S. A. C's. of S. and representatives in Washington of British C's. of S. will develop and submit their recommendations to President and by telegraphing to Prime Minister and Minister of Defence. Prime Minister will then inform the President whether he is in agreement with these recommendations.

3. Since London has machinery for consulting Dominion Governments and since Dutch Government is in London the British Government will be responsible for obtaining their views and agreement and for including these in the final telegrams to Washington.

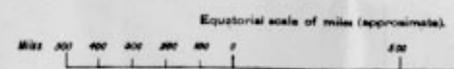
4. Agreement having been reached between President and Prime Minister and Minister of Defence the orders to Supreme Commander will be despatched from Washington in the name of both of them.

BOUNDARIES OF ABDA EAST ASI





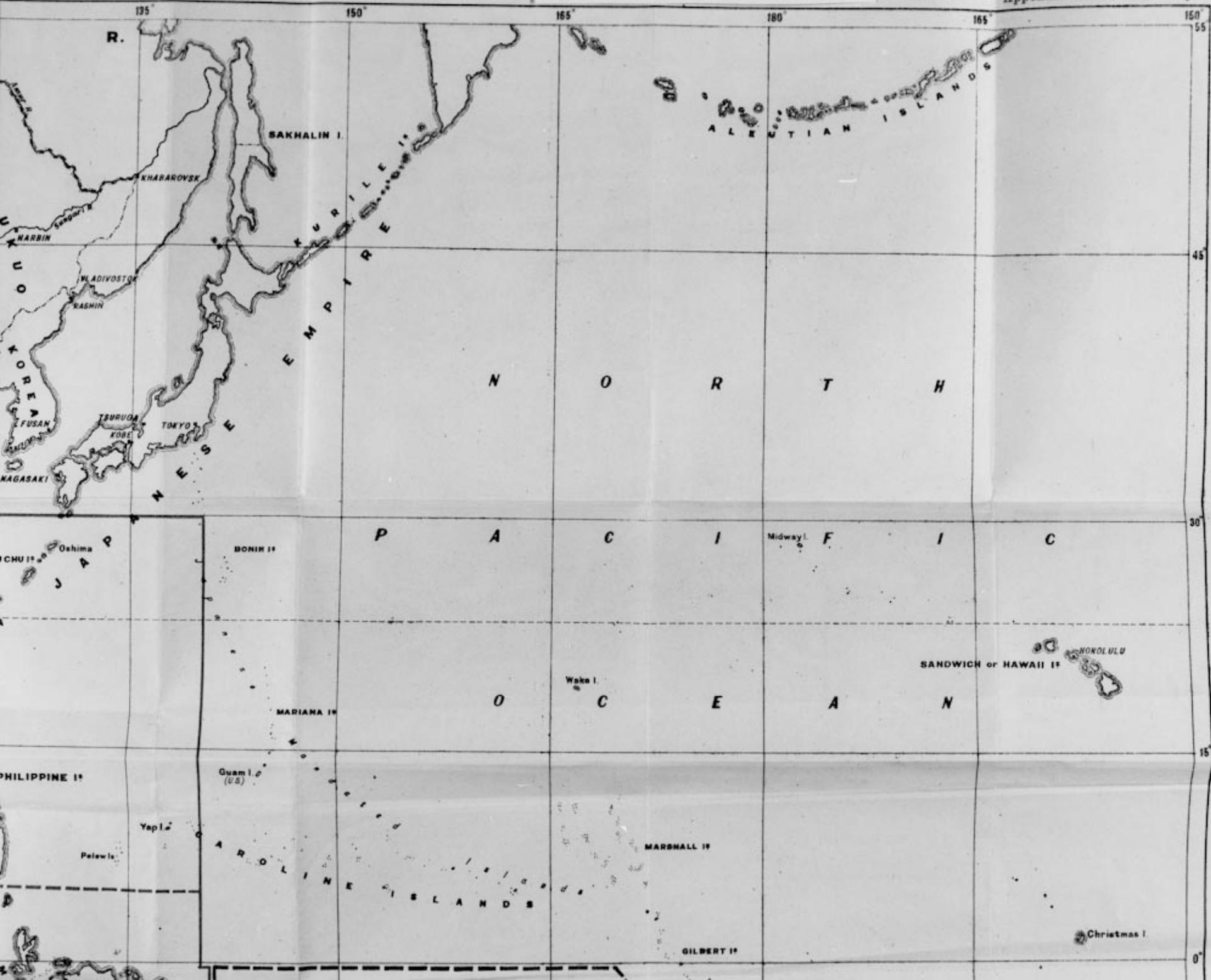
Survey Section No. 1607, July 1941 - 1942
Survey Section No. 1907 July 1942

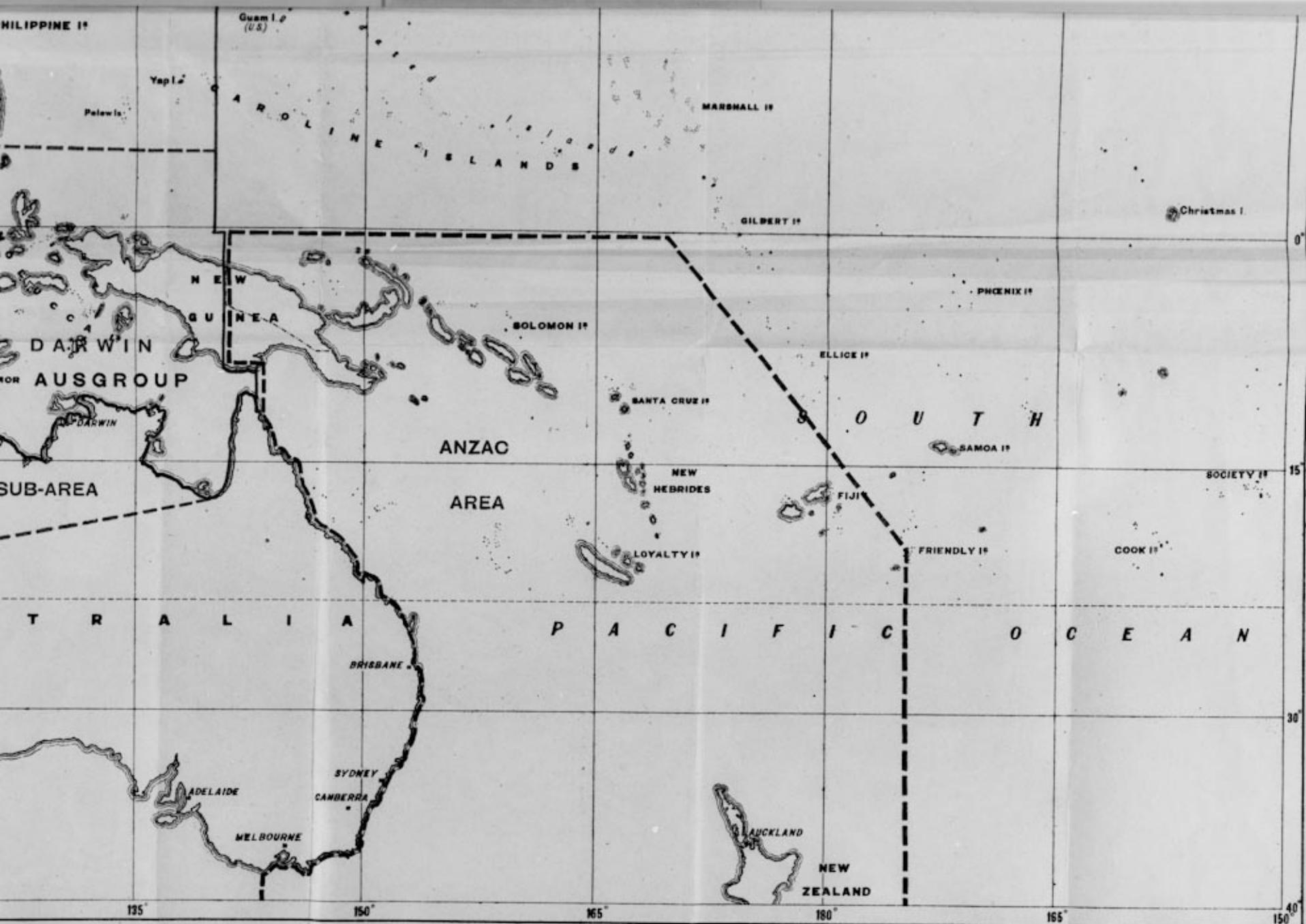


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BOUNDARIES OF ABDACOM. EAST ASIA

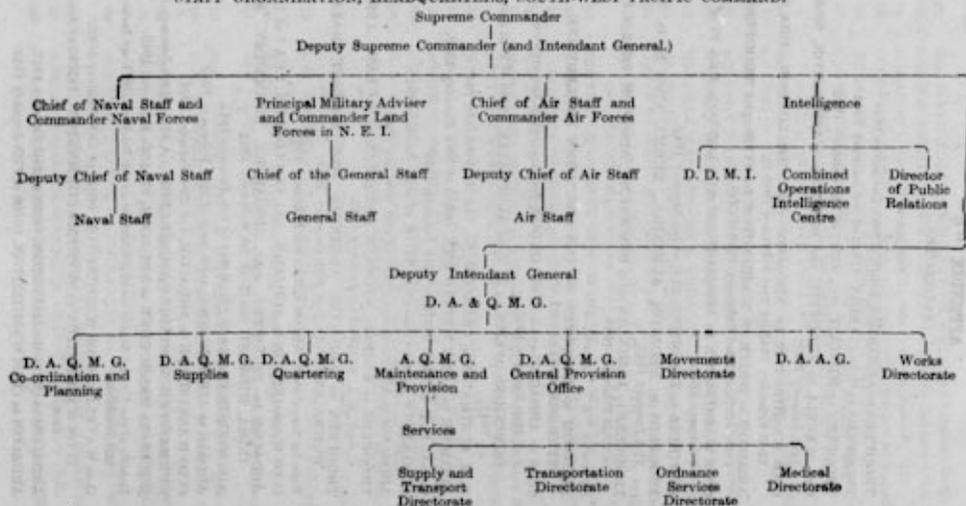
Appendix "A" - Sketch Map.





APPENDIX "B"

STAFF ORGANIZATION, HEADQUARTERS, SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC COMMAND.



NOTE.—Many of the appointments in the Intendant General's Staff were not filled by the date of disposal. In addition to the Staff and Services shown, individuals for the following duties had also arrived from Malaya—Financial Adviser, Imperial Paymaster, Printing and Stationery, 2nd Echelon.

APPENDIX "C"

FOOTNOTES.

Serial No.	Reference.
1	TROOPERS to ARMINDIA, 60946 of 30th December 1941.
2	TROOPERS to C-in-C. INDIA, 61815 of 3rd January 1942.
3	TROOPERS to MIDEAST, etc., 63252 of 9th January 1942.
4	Gen. WAVELL to TROOPERS and BRITMAN WASHINGTON, 00048 of 14th January 1942.
5	CCOS WASHINGTON to ABDACOM rptd. COS LONDON, DBA 29 of 22nd February 1942 (or 21st February 1942 ?).
6	ABDACOM to BRITMAN WASHINGTON for CCOS rptd. TROOPERS for COS, 02076 of 22nd February 1942 (CCOS 19).
7	CCOS WASHINGTON to ABDACOM rptd. COS LONDON, DBA 23 of 23rd February 1942.
8	ARMINDIA to TROOPERS, 32/C of 1st January 1942.
9	TROOPERS to ABDACOM, ARMINDIA, BURMA, 67854 M. O. 10 of 31st January 1942.
10	TROOPERS to ARMINDIA rptd. BURMARMY, ABDACOM, 72362 M. O. 12 of 22nd February 1942.
11	Appendix "A", "Annex. I".
12	ABDACOM to TROOPERS for COS rptd. ARMY MELBOURNE for STURDEE, 0001 of 10/1.
13	CCOS to ABDACOM rptd. COS LONDON for Australian Government, DBA 2 of 24th January 1942. DOMINIONS OFFICE to P. M. of AUSTRALIA, 67236 of 27th January 1942.
14	P. M. AUSTRALIA to ABDACOM, No. 1 of 7th February 1942.
15	ABDACOM to ARMY MELBOURNE, 00613 of 29th January 1942.
16	C-in-C. E. F. to FOJ, 0437Z of 15th January 1942.
17	ADMIRALTY to All Concerned, 1511A of 20th January 1942.
18	ABDACOM to All Concerned, 09457 of 28th January 1942.
19	TROOPERS to EASFAR, MIDEAST, ARMINDIA, rptd. EAST AFRICA C-in-C. E. L., 61519 of 1st January 1942.
20	TROOPERS to ABDACOM, ARMINDIA, rptd. MIDEAST, MALAYA, BURMA, 65582/5/D. 2 of 25th January 1942.
21	Note by Naval staff, ABDACOM of 8th February 1942.
22	CCOS WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, rptd. COS LONDON, DBA 7 of ?
23	ABDACOM to TROOPERS, rptd. SINGAPORE, BURMARMY, ARMINDIA, MIDEAST, 00613 of 1st February 1942.
24	AIR MINISTRY to EASFAR, X/344 of 5th January 1942.
25	ABDAIR to AIR MINISTRY, OP8 1609 of 12th February 1942.
26	CCOS WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, 4 of 29th January 1942.
27	BURMARMY to ARMINDIA (quoting RAFDEL) A 324 of 13th January 1942.
28	HQURAFIA MELBOURNE to ABDACOM, 67 of 9th February 1942.
29	Details of the United States air organization in the Netherlands East Indies are not available.
30	Gen. WAVELL to CCOS WASHINGTON, 00048 of 14th January 1942. CCOS WASHINGTON to SUPREME COMMANDER, 182035 of January 1942. ABDACOM to CCOS WASHINGTON, 00206 of 21st January 1942.
31	ABDACOM to CCOS WASHINGTON, 00100 of 17th January 1942.

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32	Gen. WAVELL to Gen. MACARTHUR, 0001 of 8th February 1942.
33	Gen. MACARTHUR to Gen. WAVELL, 1412 of 9th January 1942.
34	ABDACOM to Gen. MACARTHUR, 00049 of 14th January 1942.
35	CCOS WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, No. 1 (DBA 3 ?) of 27th January 1942.
36	ABDACOM to Gen. MACARTHUR, 210945 of 21st January 1942.
37	Gen. BRERETON to ABDACOM, NR 191 of 21st January 1942. BARNES to ABDACOM, US 45620/1 of 26th January 1942. ACNB to ABDAPLOAT, 479 of 14th February 1942.
38	MACHIN to ABDACOM, M. 141 of 24th January 1942 and 17/64 of 26th January 1942.
39	CAVITE to GLOW, 89 of ?
40	BRITMAN WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, WD 117 of 16th January 1942.
41	BRITMAN WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, WD 123 of 22nd January 1942.
42	BRITMAN WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, WD 121 of 20th January 1942.
43	BRERETON to ABDACOM, NR 191 of 21st January 1942.
44	BRITMAN WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, WD 124 of 23rd January 1942.
45	Gen. WAVELL to Gen. MACARTHUR, 210945 of 21st January 1942. Gen. MACARTHUR to Gen. WAVELL, No. 1 of 22nd January 1942.
46	BRITMAN WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, WD 125 of 24th January 1942.
47	BRITMAN WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, WD 126 of 25th January 1942.
48	Gen. MACARTHUR to ABDACOM, No. 1 of 1st February 1942.
49	MACHIN to ABDACOM, M. 164 of 26th January 1942.
50	HQ USA MELBOURNE to ABDACOM, 45626/1 of 26th January 1942.
51	BRITMAN WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, WD 128 of 27th January 1942.
52	ABDACOM to CCOS, etc., 00425 of 27th January 1942.
53	ABDACOM to Gen. MACARTHUR, 281122 of 28th January 1942.
54	BRITMAN WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, WD 130 of 28th January 1942.
55	JSM WASHINGTON to ADMIRALTY, etc., 1125Z of 1st February 1942.
56	S. W. P. C. Intelligence Summary No. 18 of 6th February 1942.
57	JSM WASHINGTON to ADMIRALTY, etc., WASHOPS 55 of 6th February 1942.
58	JSM WASHINGTON to ADMIRALTY, etc., WASHOPS 56 of 8th February 1942.
59	JSM WASHINGTON to ADMIRALTY, etc., T. O. O. 1360Z of 9th February 1942.
60	TROOPERS to ABDACOM, 69731 of 9th February 1942.
61	JSM WASHINGTON to ADMIRALTY, etc., WASHOPS 62 of 11th February 1942.
62	Gen. MACARTHUR to Gen. WAVELL, T. O. O. 0230 of 13th February 1942.
63	J. S. M. WASHINGTON to ADMIRALTY, etc., WASHOPS 61 of 14th February 1942.
64	ABDACOM to CCOS WASHINGTON, 01206 of 14th February 1942.
65	ACNB (Australian Commonwealth Naval Board) to ABDAPLOAT, etc., T. O. O. 0954Z of 14th February 1942.
66	JSM WASHINGTON to ADMIRALTY, etc., WASHOPS 64 of 18th February 1942.
67	JSM WASHINGTON to ADMIRALTY, WASHOPS 65 of 22nd February 1942.
68	ABDACOM to Gen. MACARTHUR, 02397 of 25th February 1942.
69	EASFAR to TROOPERS, 265/7 of 8th January 1942 and 251/7 of 9th January 1942.

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70	ABDACOM to TROOPERS, 00090 of 12th January 1942.
71	H. Q. SINGAPORE FORTRESS No. 9 in S. F. 334/1/G. of 9th January 1942.
72	ABDACOM to TROOPERS, 00040 of 14th January 1942.
73	A. V. M. MALTBY'S appreciation, dated 18th January 1942.
74	AHQ FE to ABDAIR, A. O. 998 of 20th January 1942.
75	TROOPERS to ABDACOM, 65356 of 20th January 1942, (C. O. S. S. W. P. 8).
76	ABDACOM to BRITMAN WASHINGTON, 00187 of 20th January 1942.
77	Supreme Commander's note, dated 21st January 1942.
78	TROOPERS to MALAYA, 65610 M. O. 10 of 21st January 1942. GENERAL SINGAPORE to TROOPERS, O. 920 of 22nd January 1942.
79	Adv. H. Q. MALAYA COMMAND to ABDACOM, O. 953 of 23rd January 1942.
80	ABDACOM to GENERAL SINGAPORE, 00426 of 27th January 1942.
81	GENERAL SINGAPORE to ABDACOM, 29071 of 28th January 1942.
82	ABDACOM to GENERAL SINGAPORE, 00468 of 28th January 1942.
83	Adv. H. Q. MALAYA COMMAND to ABDACOM, O. 913 of 22nd January 1942.
84	G. O. C. MALAYA to ABDACOM, letter No. O.-837 of 20th January 1942.
85	TROOPERS to ABDACOM, 65386 of 20th January 1942. Adv. HW MALAYA COMMAND to ABDACOM, O. 913 of 22nd January 1942.
86	GENERAL SINGAPORE to TROOPERS, 28788 of 22nd January 1942.
87	TROOPERS to MALAYA, 66158 of 23rd January 1942.
88	ABDACOM to GENERAL SINGAPORE 00270 of 23rd January 1942.
89	TROOPERS to ABDACOM, 66844 of 26th January 1942.
90	TROOPERS to ABDACOM, 67523 U. S. Q. M. and 67524 of 30th January 1942.
91	GENERAL SINGAPORE to TROOPERS, 29298 of 2nd February 1942.
92	TROOPERS to ABDACOM, rptd. MALAYA, 69071 of 6th February 1942.
93	ABDACOM to WESGROUP SINGAPORE, 60354 of 30th January 1942.
94	GENERAL SINGAPORE to ABDACOM, O. 237 of 2nd February 1942.
95	GENERAL SINGAPORE to ABDACOM and TROOPERS, O. 232 of 2nd February 1942.
96	GENERAL SINGAPORE to ABDACOM, 456 of 11th February 1942.
97	ABDACOM to GENERAL SINGAPORE, 01111 of 12th February 1942.
98	GENERAL SINGAPORE to TROOPERS rptd. ABDACOM, 012 of 14th December.
99	AUSTFORCE to ABDACOM, 29780 of 14th February 1942.
100	GENERAL SINGAPORE to ABDACOM, 29284 of 14th February 1942.
101	ABDACOM to GENERAL SINGAPORE, 01197 of 14th February 1942.
102	GENERAL SINGAPORE to ABDACOM, 29785 of 14th February 1942.
103	GENERAL SINGAPORE to ABDACOM, 29786 of 14th February 1942.
104	ABDACOM to GENERAL SINGAPORE, 01226 of 15th February 1942.
105	ABDACOM to GENERAL SINGAPORE, 01228 of 15th February 1942.
106	GENERAL SINGAPORE to ABDACOM, 29790 of 15th February 1942.
107	GENERAL SINGAPORE to TROOPERS through ABDACOM, 29777 of 13th February 1942.
108	ABDACOM to COCF rptd. C.-in-C. E. F. ADMIRALTY, A. C. N. B., 01282 of 16th February 1942.

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109	TROOPERS to ABDACOM, etc., 63795 of 12th January 1942. ARMINDIA to ABDACOM, VVY/1004/G. of 16th January 1942. ABDACOM to ARMINDIA, 00141 of 19th January 1942. BURMARMY to ABDACOM, 0374 of 18th January 1942 and G.7 of 20th January 1942. ARMINDIA to TROOPERS, 1487/G. of 23rd January 1942. ABDACOM to TROOPERS, 00345 of 25th January 1942. TROOPERS to ABDACOM, etc., 67854 M. O. 10 of 31st January 1942.
110	AHQ INDIA directive to A. V. M. STEVENSON, dated 20th December 1941. Gen. WAVELL to TROOPERS, 0726Z of 6th January 1942. ARMINDIA to TROOPERS, VVY/421/G. of 7th January 1942. AHQ INDIA to EASFAR, A. 1055 of 8th January 1942. TROOPERS to EASFAR, 63251 of 9th January 1942.
111	ABDACOM to BURGROUP, 00087 of 17th January 1942.
112	BURMARMY to ABDACOM, A. 40 of 17th January 1942. ABDAIR to NORGROUP, 00154 of 19th January 1942. BURGROUP to ABDACOM, A. 431 of 20th January 1942. ABDACOM to Gen. MAGRUDER, CHUNGKING, 00216 of 21st January 1942. ABDACOM to BURGROUP, 00217 of 21st January 1942. CCOS WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, DBA. 1 of 24th January 1942. NORGROUP to ABDACOM, A. 474 of 24th January 1942. NORGROUP to AHQ INDIA, A. 501 of 27th January 1942. BRITMAN WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, No. 1 of 28th January 1942. NORGROUP to ABDACOM, A. 540 of 31st January 1942. ABDACOM to MACHIN, 00639 of 1st February 1942. NORGROUP to ABDAIR, A. 558 of 2nd February 1942. CCOS WASHINGTON to ABDACOM 1 of 6th February 1942.
113	NORGROUP to ABDACOM, X. 441 of 21st January 1942. BURGROUP to AHQ INDIA, A. 446 of 21st January 1942. AIR MINISTRY to ABDACOM X. 655 of 22nd January 1942. AIR MINISTRY to AHQ INDIA, X. 70 of 22nd January 1942. ABDACOM to AIR MINISTRY 00277 of 23rd January 1942. AHQ INDIA to AIR MINISTRY, T. 154 of 23rd January 1942. AIR MINISTRY to ABDACOM X. 847 of 24th January 1942. ABDACOM to MIDEAST, 60386 of 27th January 1942. AIR MINISTRY to ABDACOM, X. 141 of 27th January 1942. ABDACOM to WESGROUP, 00456 of 28th January 1942. AIR MINISTRY to MIDEAST, X. 241 of 28th January 1942. AHQ INDIA to AIR MINISTRY, A. 1101 of 30th January 1942. NORGROUP to ABDAIR, A. 558 of 2nd February 1942. AIR MINISTRY to AHQ INDIA, X. 583 of 1st February 1942. NORGROUP to ABDAIR, A. 670 of 9th February 1942. AIR MINISTRY to AHQ INDIA, X. 460 of 11th February 1942.
114	NORGROUP to AHQ INDIA, A. 587 of 6th February 1942.
115	NORGROUP to ABDAIR, A. 801 of 20th February 1942.
116	NORGROUP to AHQ INDIA, 98 of 23rd February 1942.

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117	NOIC RANGOON to RAMY, 0446Z. of 22nd January 1942.
118	C.-in-C. E. F. to ABDACOM, 168 of 23rd January 1942.
119	C.-in-C. E. I. to ABDACOM, 0531 Z. of 24th January 1942.
120	ABDACOM to ARMINDIA, 00343 of 25th January 1942.
121	ADMIRALTY to C.-in-C. E. I., 1957A. of 31st January 1942. C.-in-C. E. I. to Various, 1226Z. of 14th February 1942.
122	BURMARMY to ABDACOM, O. 785 of 20th February 1942.
123	ABDACOM to BURMARMY, 01855 of 21st February 1942.
124	TROOPERS to ABDACOM, 64523 of 15th January 1942 and 64921 FF. I of 17th January 1942.
125	ARMINDIA to TROOPERS, 934/G. of 15th January 1942.
126	TROOPERS to ABDACOM, 66276 of 23rd January 1942. ABDACOM to TROOPERS, 00397 of 27th January 1942.
127	ABDACOM to BURMARMY, 00218 of 21st January 1942.
128	ABDACOM to TROOPERS, 00202 of 21st January 1942.
129	ABDACOM to ACH DARWIN, OPX. O. 2272 of 24th February 1942.
130	ABDACOM to ARMY MELBOURNE, 00431 of 27th January 1942.
131	ARMY MELBOURNE to ABDACOM, M. C. 4617 of 28th January 1942.
132	ABDACOM to ARMY MELBOURNE, 00576 of 31st January 1942.
133	P. M. AUSTRALIA to ABDACOM, No. 1 of 7th February 1942.
134	EASFAIR to CLG, 263/7 of 8th January 1942.
135	ABDACOM to BRITMAN WASHINGTON, 01517 of 18th February 1942.
136	CCOS WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, DBA. 19 of 21st February 1942.
137	ABDACOM to CCOS WASHINGTON 00488 of 29th January 1942.
138	CCOS WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, DBA. 5 of 30th January 1942. For the Directive, see Appendix "A".
139	ABDACOM to ARMY MELBOURNE, 00576 of 31st January 1942.
140	ABDACOM to BRITMAN WASHINGTON, 00649 of 1st February 1942.
141	CCOS WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, DBA. 8 of 1
142	ABDACOM to BRITMAN, WASHINGTON, 00810 of 6th February 1942 (CCOS. 2.)
143	CCOS WASHINGTON to ABDACOM, DBA. 12 of 8th February 1942.
144	P. M. AUSTRALIA to DOMINIONS SECRETARY, 86 of 28th January 1942.
145	HQUSAFIA MELBOURNE to ABDACOM, 204 of 24th February 1942. ABDACOM to HQUSAFIA, 02303 of 24th February 1942.