

ready to give his personal attention to any demand made on his Department, also to Major Taylor who was the officer in charge of the whole of the warning system in Burma.

15. *A.A. Artillery.* When I arrived in Burma some A.A. equipment for the locally raised Burma Auxiliary Force (B.A.F.) units had just come from India. Later on, both British and Indian light and heavy batteries arrived and it was possible to organise a thin scale of defence for vital points. All units acquitted themselves well and a very considerable number of enemy aircraft were shot down—including one by the third shot fired by the 1 Heavy A.A. Regiment B.A.F.

II. REINFORCEMENT POLICY.

16. *Reinforcements.* The first reinforcement to reach Burma was the 46 Indian Infantry Brigade which arrived towards the end of January in time to take part in the fighting west of the River Salween. It consisted of young troops and had been destined for Iraq where it was intended it should complete its training. It was not really fit for active operations without further training and had no experience in jungle warfare.

The only other reinforcements in sight from India consisted of six Indian battalions which it was intended to withdraw from the frontier and equip on the lower scale for service overseas. These eventually constituted the 48 Indian Infantry Brigade, consisting entirely of Gurkhas which arrived about 1st February, and did very good work on the Bilin River, and the 63 Indian Infantry Brigade, which arrived just before the fall of Rangoon. Two East African Brigades which had done excellent service in the Italian campaign, were accepted by India for service in Burma, one to arrive at the end of January and one a month later. Neither of these materialised, though it was only late in February that Burma was informed that they had been diverted elsewhere. There is no doubt that they would have been invaluable at a critical period.

17. *British Battalions.* A further reinforcement sent in response to my urgent demands for British troops, both for internal security, as reinforcements to 17 Indian Division, and for reasons of morale, consisted of three British battalions taken from the garrison of India. One, the 2 D.W.R. (Duke of Wellington's Regiment), arrived in time to take part in the battle of the Sittang, and the others, 1 Cameronians and 1 W. Yorks (West Yorkshire Regiment) did very good work during the fighting near Pegu. These battalions had been given only a few days notice of mobilization and embarkation and some were incomplete in transport, but none the less showed magnificent spirit throughout the operations—a tribute to the value of trained and experienced British troops even though not specially trained for jungle warfare conditions.

18. *Armoured Troops.* A further reinforcement, which proved invaluable, was the 7 Armoured Brigade whose fighting spirit and efficiency were the admiration of the whole Army. Unfortunately it only arrived after the battle of Sittang when it was instrumental in enabling the 17 Indian Division to re-organise round Pegu.

19. *Summary.* It will be seen, therefore, that the reinforcements provided for Burma after the outbreak of war consisted of an Armoured Brigade, three British battalions and three Indian brigades. Of these only two infantry brigades arrived before the battle of the Sittang, which, as will be seen later, practically settled the fate of Rangoon.

The three Indian Brigades, though good material, all suffered from the weakness of having a large proportion of inexperienced officers and recruits in their ranks, and also from having had no training in jungle warfare. The 48 Indian Infantry Brigade did especially well, and also some of the Battalions of the 46 Indian Brigade. As regards the 63 Indian Infantry Brigade, I was informed by General Hartley that it required a period of training before being employed in operations.

III. CO-OPERATION WITH THE CHINESE.

20. *Situation on Arrival.* On my arrival in Burma one regiment of 93 Division "Force Trellis," was already moving towards the Southern Shan States with the object of taking over the defence of the Mekong River, west of the road Kengtung-Mongpayak, with H.Q. at Mongyawng.

The rest of the Division was located about Puerh in China and we were responsible for supplying it with rice.

The remainder of the Sixth Army, which included the 49 and 55 Divisions was stationed near Paoshan on the China road. The Fifth Army was on the Yunnan-Kweichow border. Shortly afterwards the 49 Division, "Force Zigzag," moved up to the border of Wanting in reserve.

21. *Command.* It had been laid down by the Generalissimo that all Chinese troops were to be under my command and he was most insistent that all breaches of discipline were to be reported to him personally. He was anxious, however, that they should be given their own area and not be mixed up with our own troops. We were to be responsible for the supply of rice and any other requirements that could be spared including if possible medical stores and mosquito nets.

On about 15th January, 1942, I visited Kengtung and discussed the possible move of the remainder of the 93 Division from China to the Kengtung area. On 19th January when the situation in Tenasserim area became serious, the move of this Division was ordered and 1 Burma Brigade gradually withdrew from their positions south-east of Kengtung.

It was laid down in my directive that no additional Chinese troops were to be brought into Burma without reference to H.Q. South-West Pacific Command (A.B.D.A. Command). On 21st January, 1942, however, I obtained General Wavell's permission to bring in another Chinese Division, the 49; the Governor was consulted and agreed.

On 29th January it was decided that the 49 Division should come into the Southern Shan States via Lashio, and take over the area east of the River Salween about Takaw, and that 55 Division should move forward to Wanting (Chinese frontier) to complete training and equipment.