

primarily to assist the Civil Police. They were not incorporated in the military organization but came directly under the Civil Government.

91. *Labour*.—The question of the conscription of labour in time of war had been considered and, in accordance with the advice of those best acquainted with labour conditions in Malaya, rejected as unworkable. The question of the control of labour in time of war had, however, been the subject of frequent discussions and tentative schemes had been worked out.

Although the grave labour problems which developed after the outbreak of hostilities had admittedly not been fully foreseen, some of the trouble could in my opinion have been avoided had the problems of war-time control of civil labour been tackled more energetically in time of peace.

The Singapore Harbour Board and the Municipality, independent bodies operating in co-operation with the Government and carrying out its policy, had their own labour forces.

92. *Passive Air Defence*.—The steps taken by the Civil Government as regards reserve stocks of essential commodities, medical services etc. have already been described in Section IX. The general organization of Passive Air Defence was based on the Home organization. Warning sirens were installed at all the main centres and the P.A.D. organizations included First Aid and Salvage detachments, Medical Auxiliary Services, Fire Services etc. As a rule the detachments were led by Europeans, the members being composed of both Europeans and Asiatics.

A few blast walls to important buildings were built. Only very few air raid shelters were constructed for the civil population. As regards Singapore itself this was partly due to the difficulty of constructing underground shelters, and partly due to the advice of the civil medical authorities, who were of the opinion that to obstruct the circulation of air by building surface shelters in the streets might well lead to epidemics. A number of slit trenches had been dug but these soon became waterlogged and bred mosquitoes.

In Singapore the general policy was to rely rather on dispersal to camps constructed outside the town area. Apart from members of the Fighting Services gas masks were provided only for those persons, such as members of salvage squads, whose duties might compel them to work in gassed areas. This decision was made by the War Committee after consultation with gas experts, on the grounds that the danger from gas bombing was not great in the climatic conditions of Malaya.

Generally speaking, it may be said that the arrangements for Passive Air Defence were in 1941 on too small a scale and inadequate to deal with anything but sporadic air raids. Realising this, arrangements were made in October and November of that year for a series of lectures to be given at the main centres of Malaya by Brigadier I. Simson, the Chief Engineer Malaya Command, who had recently had experience of Passive Air Defence both in London and in Scotland. These lectures were attended by both military and civil officials, but there was little time before war broke out for the instruction given in them to be put into effect.

93. *Evacuations*.—Careful plans were worked out jointly by the military and civil authorities for the evacuation, in case of need, of the civil population from the South Coast of Singapore Island and from other exposed areas. Some areas in East Johore were actually cleared of civilians before war broke out.

94. *Hospitality*.—The civil population, following the example set by the Governor and High Commissioner, were generous in their hospitality to the troops. Clubs were built, equipped and operated by civilians for their benefit. Many civilians invited troops to their houses and entertained them in other ways. A debt of gratitude specially is due to the women of Malaya, many of whom worked untiringly in that enervating climate in the interests of the troops.

95. *General*.—Nevertheless, an atmosphere of unreality hung over Malaya. In the restaurants, clubs and places of entertainment peace-time conditions prevailed. There was no restriction on the consumption of foodstuffs. A measure to restrict the hours during which intoxicating liquor could be sold was not passed into law after long delays until November, 1941. Long immunity from war had made it difficult to face realities.

SECTION XI.—RELATIONS WITH THE SERVICES AND THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

96. Throughout the summer and autumn of 1941 the co-operation between the Services was good, commanders and staffs working together on friendly and intimate terms. This was true both in the higher and the lower formations.

Relations with the Civil Government also showed a marked improvement. Generally speaking, officials throughout the country co-operated willingly with the military commanders.

I feel bound to record, however, that in my experience of Malaya there was a lack of the team spirit between the Service Departments on the one side and the Civil Government on the other in tackling problems of common interest. The vital importance of attaining the common object, i.e., the security of Malaya, was at times overshadowed by local interests, aggravated by the insistence of the Home Government on the maximum production of tin and rubber. The task of balancing the requirements of a country of vital strategical importance to the Empire with those of a wealthy and prosperous commercial community was a difficult one requiring great tact and patience. Clashes of interests naturally occurred followed very often by long delays due in part to the complicated form of government. Other delays, as has so often happened before in our history, resulted from discussions as to the relative financial responsibility of the Home and Malayan Governments on matters of defence. There was also a difficulty in getting full and accurate information as to civil defence measures.

These difficulties and delays could to some extent have been overcome if there had been more regular meetings of the Defence Committee Malaya, and later of the War Committee. Both the Services and the Civil Government