

police, and agricultural labour. Nevertheless, a police force was organized, order restored, crops sown, and "collaborators" brought to trial.

196. In the Kabaw Valley and the Naga and Chin Hills, the work of the Military Administration was largely confined to the organization of Intelligence, the provision of labour, and general liaison between the Army and the local population.

In Arakan, the British Military Administration continued to administer the northern area.

197. The Civil Affairs Service depots for relief supplies and stores were at Chittagong for Arakan, at Manipur Road and Imphal for the Chin and Naga Hills and Upper Chindwin, and at Ledo and Moran (seventy miles south-west of Ledo) for the Northern Combat Area Command area. The difficulty, of course, lay in moving these supplies forward to distribution centres; and Army air and road transport had to be borrowed, until such time as Civil Affairs Service transport companies could be formed.

198. In spite of the shortage of transport, the paucity of communications and bad weather, the whole of the relief supplies for the population of the re-occupied areas were successfully distributed, including some 6,000 tons of rice, 1,500 tons of salt, and large quantities of milk, cloth, etc.

The chiefs, headmen and local inhabitants of the areas released from Japanese occupation were found for the most part to have behaved loyally during our absence and, with a few exceptions, our return was greeted with satisfaction.

Main Administrative Lessons.

199. *Air Supply.* The need of foresight, of standardising drops, of giving the Air Supply Depots ample warning of any change of plan, and of economising resources, were all of paramount importance. As operations went on, formations became more skilful in choosing dropping zones, and pilots more efficient at dropping on them. The necessity for alternative dropping zones was clearly brought out. Finally, the importance of salvaging all parachute material and containers was emphasised.

200. To meet the uncertainties of supply-dropping in the monsoon, orders were given that, as soon as there was a failure to drop supplies, all ranks and mules were to be put on half rations until dropping could be resumed. All troops carried three days' reserves and they could therefore carry on for six days: in addition they had their emergency rations. These precautionary measures turned out to be wise. It so happened that the maximum number of days on which supply-dropping was impossible consecutively was five, but on one occasion the margin was narrow. In a final attempt on the sixth day, the aircraft found only one gap in the cloud over the whole area. Under this gap was the dropping zone.

201. *Vehicles.* The value of the 30 cwt. 6 x 6 vehicles has been shown. It had the cross-country performance of a jeep, except on narrow tracks, and nearly the capacity of a 3-tonner.

As regards specialist vehicles, experience has shown that they should either all be 4 x 4 or that their equipment should be capable of

being fitted on to a standard chassis. The latter is preferable as, should the specialist vehicle be damaged, its equipment can be quickly transferred.

The highest standards of maintenance and traffic discipline are essential to maintain efficiency under the conditions I have described.

202. *Salvage.* Owing to the length and complexity of the lines of communication, it was found unprofitable to send back many types of salvage. Instead, workshops were set up which manufactured from this salvage a large assortment of articles, and thereby saved transport.

203. *Welfare.* Good administration in units in the provision of food, recreation, etc., was vitally important in the monsoon for the quick restoration of morale after battle. Cinemas are possibly better than E.N.S.A. parties in this Theatre and I hope that before long each brigade will have its own. Corps "Welfare Shops" proved very popular.

Under monsoon conditions, arrangements for the periodical withdrawal of troops from the line in order to have hot baths and a change of clothing are essential and have a high moral value.

204. *Conclusion.* The administrative machine stood up well to the strain of fighting a war and administering a great expanse of territory with inadequate resources and under difficult conditions. Much improvisation has been necessary and all Services have shown great resource and ingenuity in doing their many duties. Their success reflects the greatest credit on all concerned.

PART IV. CONCLUSION.

205. "This Army has by its aggressive operations guarded the base of the American air line to China and protected India against the horrors of Japanese invasion." With these words Mr. Churchill put in clear perspective the vital part that Fourteenth Army has played during the last six months in the struggle against Japan. The crushing of the Japanese offensive against Kohima and Imphal and our pursuit of his retreating columns to the Chindwin were, of course, one battle. We have inflicted upon the enemy a major defeat. It is the first time the Japanese have been driven back so far—and they will go further. The facts speak for themselves and they will give encouragement and assurance to those who fought against a ruthless and cunning enemy, against disease and in rain and heat through the jungles and mountains of Assam and Burma, to inflict the first great land defeat on Japan.

I have quoted the words of the Prime Minister. I also quote a few sentences from an address delivered by His Excellency the Viceroy, Field-Marshal Lord Wavell, when he visited the troops during the course of the campaign: "You will find that, when the history of the war comes to be written, the recent fighting will be put down as one of the turning points of the war, when the Japanese were routed and their downfall really began. Not only have you inflicted a tremendous defeat on the enemy but, even more, you have dealt a damaging blow to their morale—and it is the breaking of the enemy's morale that finishes wars in the end."