

defences to be stronger than they really were. It is certain that the troops retiring from the mainland, many of whom had never seen Singapore before, were disappointed not to find the immensely strong fortress which they had pictured.

SECTION XLVI.—THE ADMINISTRATIVE
SITUATION 31ST JANUARY, 1942.

440. *Reserve Stocks—General.*—As explained in Section IX, the policy adopted by the Army as regards reserve stocks on Singapore Island had been one of dispersion. This was done partly to minimise the loss from air attack and partly owing to lack of accommodation in the Singapore Town area, a situation which became more and more aggravated as refugees poured in from the north. Some of the biggest dumps and depots outside the Town area were adjacent to the Bukit Timah and Thomson roads, where they were easy of access. This fact had a big influence on the operations which subsequently took place on Singapore Island. The civil stocks, on the other hand, were mostly in the Town area, where some large godowns had been taken over for the purpose. A large stock of rice was, however, stored between the River Kranji and the Causeway.

441. *Food.*—It is difficult to state with any accuracy what food reserves were available on Singapore Island at the end of January but there was probably not less than three months' supply for both troops and civilians, European and Asiatic.

The Main Military Supply Depot for Malaya had been established on the main road just east of Bukit Timah Village. At the Bukit Timah Racecourse a little further east was a large dump of foodstuffs which had been backloaded from the mainland. Other dumps had been established at Bukit Panjang Village, on the Jurong Road, at Changi, at Alexandra and in the Singapore Town area. A limited supply of fresh meat was held in cold storage at Alexandra and at Bukit Timah. There was a large supply of attah for the Indian troops at Bidadari on the Serangoon road.

The majority of the Civil Government's reserves of rice and other foodstuffs for the Asiatic population was held in the Singapore Town area. For the Europeans fresh meat was held in cold storage in Orchard Road, the main thoroughfare leading from the Town to the residential area. Finally, the Bali cattle, which had been purchased from the Netherlands East Indies and which had been grazed in Johore, had been driven back on to Singapore Island. With a view to dispersing the civil reserves, the population had been allowed to purchase and remove to their own houses limited quantities of rice. A modified form of rationing for certain European foodstuffs was in force.

442. *Water.*—After the Japanese captured the main source of Singapore's water supply at Gunong Pulai in South Johore on the 27th January the Island was dependent on water from the reservoirs. The water level in these reservoirs was rather lower than usual owing to the abnormally dry season. Nevertheless, there was with care an adequate supply even for the greatly increased population of Singapore Island. The measures taken to economise water have already been explained in Section XXXV. The two pumping stations, the one at Woodleigh $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles S.W. of Paya Lebar Village on

the Serangoon road and the other in Mackenzie road east of Government House, were both working at full pressure. Up to the end of January breaks in the mains due to air bombardment had been successfully dealt with. The civil staff of the Municipal Water Engineer had been augmented by European Volunteers, most of whom were refugees from the mainland.

The garrisons of Blakang Mati, Tekong and Pengerang were dependent on local supplies.

443. *Ammunition.*—The ammunition situation was on the whole satisfactory except as regards the 25-pounder field guns (for which we had about 1,500 rounds per gun), the Bofors Light Anti-Aircraft and some categories of mortar ammunition.

The two magazines which had been originally constructed were at Changi and at Alexandra (west of Singapore Town). These were bomb-proof and contained all types of ammunition. There was also a small magazine at Pulau Brani, and one at Fort Canning which contained S.A.A. only. Under the dispersion policy a large shell-proof magazine had been constructed on the east bank of the River Kranji and dumps had been formed in the Nee Soon area, on the Bukit Timah Rifle Range, near the MacRitchie Reservoir, in the Paya Lebar area and elsewhere.

In addition to these reserve stocks, the normal scales of equipment ammunition were of course maintained at the battery positions in the case of the Fixed Defences and with field echelons.

444. *Petrol and Oil*—As previously stated, it had been found impracticable to back-load much of the unconsumed petrol from the mainland owing to lack of transport and the bulkiness of the petrol drums. Nevertheless, there were considerable Army reserves on Singapore Island.

The Main Reserve Depot was near the Bukit Timah Road a little east of the Racecourse. The Reserve Depot was just east of Bukit Timah Village. There were other dumps at Bukit Panjang Village, near the Thomson road, and in the Alexandra area.

The Main Reserve for the Royal Air Force was held in underground tanks at Woodlands just south of the causeway. There were also large reserves at Seletar and at the other aerodromes. There were other small dumps of aviation petrol dispersed about the Island.

The Civil Government held no petrol reserves. Considerable stocks were however held by the Asiatic Petroleum Company at Kranji and at Pasir Panjang. The main reserve stocks of that company were on Pulau Bukum.

445. *Fuel Oil.*—The Naval Fuel Oil Reserves were stored in three groups of large tanks, situated at the Naval Base, at Kranji just west of the Bukit Timah road and at Normanton just west of the Alexandra area. In addition there were very large reserves on Pulau Bukum.

446. *Transport*—There was now a superfluity of transport, both military and civil, on Singapore Island and serious traffic blocks began to develop. To ease the situation all military transport no longer required was parked on the open spaces, while restrictions were placed on the use of civil transport. These measures had an immediate effect in reducing the number of vehicles on the roads.