

between them, co-operation left a great deal to be desired, and it was some months before this could be considered satisfactory. Every operation should have been looked upon as a combined operation of two, or very often the three, services; for a long time there was a tendency for one of the services to work out a plan on its own and then see how one or both the other services could come in.

A great step in advance was made by getting the headquarters of the Army and Air Force on the same site. This entailed a good deal of building, but before war started there was a single combined Operations Room functioning and the whole of the Army General Staff were located on the same site as Royal Air Force Headquarters. A naval section joined the Operations Room at the start of the war as planned previously.

14. The local tradition of inter-service jealousy had some effect for the first few months on the working of General Headquarters. Personal relations with Army Headquarters were good, but my staff had to be scrupulously careful in dealing with matters that touched on the province of the General Officer Commanding.

Co-operation between the Navy and Air Force was good, and it continually improved between the Navy and the Army, for instance, on such matters as getting advice from naval officers as to the probable sites of landings from the naval point of view.

15. Relations between the Commander-in-Chief, China Station, and myself were close and friendly throughout. Our offices were adjoining after the move of my headquarters to the Naval Base and I had luncheon with him in his house nearly every day.

Relations between the commanders in Malaya and the Governor were good. I always found the Governor ready to help, and our personal relations were very friendly.

As regards the Colonial Service generally, our relations in most cases were satisfactory, and much help was received from many Departments, especially the Survey and the Government Posts and Telegraphs. But, partly owing to the complicated system of government, delays sometimes occurred and on certain matters it was difficult to get full and accurate information. I feel it would be of great value to the Colonial Service if its officers could attend some college on the lines of the Military Staff Colleges at some time in their career.

There was an interchange of liaison officers with the Dutch, first Navy and Air and later Army as well. Observers from the American Army and Navy were also posted to Singapore.

Borneo.

16. Unless we obtained command of the sea, it was impossible to defend British Borneo as a whole with the forces available. But through communications in the island were practically non-existent; consequently, any defence could be limited to holding the important points. The only place which it was decided to hold was Kuching, the reason for this being not only that there was an aerodrome at that place, but that its occupation by the enemy might give access to the aerodromes in Dutch Borneo at the North-Western end of the island, these aerodromes being only some 350 miles from Singapore, i.e., much nearer than any in South Indo-China.

I informed the Governor of North Borneo that his territory could not be defended, and that the volunteers and police at his disposal were to be utilised for purposes of internal security. No attempt was made to defend Labuan, though it was a cable and wireless station.

The State of Brunei was of some importance owing to the oilfield at Seria in the South, which, in addition to Miri, supplied crude oil to the refineries at Lutong in Sarawak. Although one company of the 2nd/15th Punjab Regiment less one platoon to Kuching, had been moved to Lutong in December, 1940, and two 6-inch guns had been mounted there, it was finally decided that it was useless to attempt to defend the refinery or either of the oilfields. Consequently, a partial denial scheme was carried out before war broke out, whereby the oil output was reduced by some 70 per cent., and only a small number of items were left to complete the denial scheme when war broke out. According to reports, the work was completed satisfactorily.

The 2nd/15th Punjab Regiment, less the one company referred to above, left Singapore for Kuching on the 10th and 11th May, 1941. Steps were also taken to develop local forces, i.e., volunteers and a body of native troops known as the Sarawak Rangers.

III.—FACTORS AFFECTING THE DEFENCE OF BURMA.

Authorities.

17. Sir Reginald Dorman Smith replaced the Hon. Sir Archibald Cochrane as Governor of Burma on the 6th May, 1941, and Lieut.-General Hutton took over the duties of General Officer Commanding from Lieut.-General McLeod at midnight the 28th-29th December, 1941.

The War Committee in Burma included Burmese Ministers as well as the two British Counsellors and the General Officer Commanding. The Governor was President and the Premier of Burma Vice-President.

Sir R. Dorman Smith established a military liaison officer on his personal staff. There were obvious advantages in this, and it would doubtless have worked well had the facts and figures always been obtained from the responsible authorities. As it was, information was sometimes sought through other channels, with the result that at times inaccurate or incomplete information was given to the Governor, leading to misunderstandings.

Communications.

18. The main factor affecting the defence of Burma was that of communications. The total length of frontier facing Japanese-occupied territory in December, 1941, was nearly 800 miles. There were good roads, as well as railways, running north and south up the valleys of the Sittang and Irrawaddy. Roads in the Tenasserim Peninsula were bad.

Working north from the southern end of the Tenasserim Peninsula, there were only mountain tracks leading eastwards from Siam until reaching the road from Raheng through Mesod towards Moulmein, which crossed the Burma frontier at Myawadi. Even this road was not continuous, and there was a section of fifty miles reported to be not much better than a pack track. From the Japanese point of view, it had the disadvantages that we should be able to operate from close to our railhead at Martaban, and that, so long as we