

the disposal of G.O.C. Iraq and Lt. General Quinan was instructed to arrange for its transfer in direct communication with G.O.C. Palestine and Transjordan.

On 8th August Lt. General Quinan submitted outline plans for action as follows:—

(a) *8th Indian Division* (Major General C. O. Harvey).

(i) Seizure of Abadan Refinery at first light by the 24th Indian Infantry Brigade Group (Brigadier R. E. Le Fleming) less one battalion, moving by the River Shatt-el-Arab and supported by the Royal Navy.

(ii) Seizure of Khurramshahr by one battalion of the 24th Indian Infantry Brigade supported by one Squadron Guides Cavalry, moving by land from Tanumah (opposite Basra).

(iii) Simultaneous advance by the 25th Indian Infantry Brigade Group (Brigadier R. G. Mountain) and the 13th Lancers from Tanumah to Ahwaz, thence to Haft Kel oilfields with detachments to Kut Abdullah and Dorquain pumping stations.

(iv) All moves supported by the Royal Air Force after first light.

(b) *2nd Indian Armoured Brigade* (Brigadier J. A. Aizlewood).

Simultaneous seizure of Naft-i-Shah and Qasr-i-Shirin, the latter mainly by the 14/20 Hussars.

On seizing Naft-i-Shah an advance was to be made without delay to the Gilan area and preparations to be made for a move on to Shahabad preparatory to a general advance on Kermanshah. In the event of the latter being necessary the 9th Armoured Brigade (Brigadier W. R. Tiarks) was to participate. No air support could be made available unless stiff opposition was encountered.

(c) The Bandar Shahpur operation was to take place simultaneously as planned. Two companies of the 2nd Battalion 10th Baluch Regiment embarked on H.M.A.S. Kanimbla after dark on 11th August and sailed that night. The 9th Armoured Brigade from Palestine arrived at Kirkuk and Khaniqin on 11th August.

Operations in Iran.

30. On 29th July intimation was received from His Majesty's Government that a joint Anglo-Soviet note to Iran was to be presented on 12th August. Lieut.-General Quinan was informed of this and was instructed to complete the preliminary concentration of his troops by that date.

31. Lt.-General Quinan informed the General Officer Commanding Palestine and Transjordan that he would require the 9th Armoured Brigade, which, in order to achieve a measure of surprise, he proposed to locate initially at Kirkuk. He also ordered the following moves to be put in hand:—13th Lancers from Syria and one squadron Guides Cavalry to Shaiba to join the 8th Indian Division, 25th Indian Infantry Brigade, less one Battalion, from Syria to Shaiba. The 24th Indian Infantry Brigade was already in the Shaiba-Basra area and the 18th Indian Infantry Brigade due to arrive from India on 10th August. This completed the concentration of the 8th Indian Division.

The 14th/20th Hussars were to be employed in the Naft-i-Shah area.

32. Lt.-General Quinan decided to place all operations in Southern Iran, including the seizure of Abadan, under Major-General C. O. Harvey, Commander 8th Indian Division. Operations in the Naft-i-Shah area were placed under Brigadier J. A. Aizlewood, Commander 2nd Indian Armoured Brigade, whose force was to consist of the 2nd Indian Armoured Brigade Group (less two regiments), two Indian Infantry Battalions and one medium battery.

In addition, the following air component was made available for operations in Southern Iran, and was to be moved to Shaiba by 12th August.

One Army Co-operation Squadron (Vincent).

One Fighter Squadron (Hurricanes).

One Bomber Squadron (Blenheims).

Six Bomber Transport aircraft.

33. The presentation of the Anglo-Soviet note was postponed more than once and it was not until 17th August that it was finally delivered to the Iranian Government. On 21st August information was received from His Majesty's Government that the reply to the memorandum had been unsatisfactory and that an advance by joint Anglo-Soviet forces into Iran would probably commence on 22nd August. The necessary warning orders were issued and 9th Armoured Brigade was ordered to move to Khaniqin on 22nd August. Due to representations by the Russian Government a further postponement was necessary and the final date for the advance was fixed for 25th August.

34. As the concentration of troops had been completed by 12th August, these many postponements decreased any chance of achieving surprise and it was apparent that the Iranian Government fully expected an early British advance into Khuzistan and that reinforcements, including light and medium tanks, were being sent to Ahwaz.

The Iranian forces likely to oppose our advance were estimated to be:—

In the Ahwaz-Abadan-Khurramshahr Area.
6th Khuzistan Division.

One composite Division, made up of units from Teheran.

16 Light Tanks.

10 Armoured cars, 2 sloops, 3 gun boats, 4 aircraft.

In the Senna-Kermanshah Area.

5th Kurdistan Division.

12th Kermanshah Division.

One composite Division from Teheran.

One weak Brigade Group from 13th Division en route from Isfahan.

35. The advance into Iran commenced on 25th August and the operations went according to plan. 24th Indian Infantry Brigade (less one battalion) embarked in naval craft after dark on 24th August and landed at Abadan at 0410 hrs. on 25th August. The majority of the Iranian troops were asleep in their barracks and escaped by lorries, but resistance was met from some well sited machine-gun posts along the wharves. Street fighting ensued and it was difficult to dislodge the Iranian troops without damaging the refinery buildings, which were not completely cleared until 1700