

considerable. This should not be so with well-trained and disciplined troops.

I should like to express my grateful thanks to Colonel (now Brigadier General) G. Chennault and to all the officers and men of the A.V.G. who did such skilful and gallant work in the defence of Rangoon.

I should also like to record the good services of Air Vice-Marshal Stevenson, who commanded the air forces in Burma from January, 1942, onwards, and of his predecessor Group-Captain Manning.

32. The troops who fought in the Burma campaign were subjected to a very severe strain. They were opposed by a well-trained, vigorous and determined enemy, usually superior in numbers; they had to fight in a type of country and under conditions quite unfamiliar to the majority; they had no relief and very little rest during more than five months, in the later stages they were almost entirely deprived of air support. After the fall of Rangoon they felt themselves cut off from outside help and from all amenities. Every effort was made to send mails and a supply of stores to Burma, but the limitations of air transport made it impossible to meet the full needs. Rations, however, thanks to the efforts of the administrative staff, were not short.

The importance of the Fifth Column in Burma has been exaggerated; the number of actual rebels who took arms against us or assisted the enemy was probably small. But the moral effect on the soldier of the knowledge that a proportion of the population was potentially hostile and treacherous was considerable. The defection of large numbers of the men of the units of the Burma Army also had a depressing effect.

In the circumstances the troops put up a remarkable performance and showed a fine fighting spirit.

Particular mention should be made of the 7 Armoured Brigade under Brigadier J. H. Anstice (7 Hussars, 2 Royal Tank Regiment, 414 Battery (Essex Yeomanry) R.H.A., A Battery 95 Anti-Tank Regiment), who, from their arrival in Burma in the third week of February till the end of the campaign, formed the mainstay of the Burma Army and kept up a very high standard of morale and efficiency. Owing to the fact that no tanks had been available in India, the infantry in Burma had had no practice in co-operation with armoured forces, which was in consequence elementary.

The 1 Indian Field Artillery Regiment, which went straight into action on landing at Rangoon and was continually engaged to the end of the campaign, greatly distinguished itself.

33. Lieut.-General Hutton did most valuable work in placing Burma on a war footing so far as could be done in the very limited time available. To reorganise the whole military system and to endeavour to create an administrative lay-out practically from nothing, while at the same time controlling difficult operations in the field, threw a very heavy strain on him. As C.G.S. to General Alexander he continued to give most valuable service till the arrival of Major-General Winterton.

I should like also here to pay a tribute to the work previously done by him as C.G.S. in

India during the expansion of the Indian Army, which owes much to his organizing ability.

34. General Alexander took over an extremely difficult situation and a somewhat shaken and disorganised army. By his cool and inspiring leadership he did everything possible during the remainder of the campaign to check the Japanese advance and to keep the army together. He also succeeded in establishing and maintaining good relations with the Chinese, though, as he says, a real combined command, owing to the difference in outlook and methods, was not possible.

35. Generally speaking, the standard of leadership of the Army in Burma was high. Lieut.-General Slim, Commanding the Burma Corps, Major-General Cowan, Commanding the 17 Indian Division, Major-General Bruce-Scott, Commanding the 1 Burma Division, were all good and resolute commanders; and it was largely due to their efforts that the enemy's superior numbers were kept at bay for so long and the final withdrawal so skilfully conducted. The majority of the brigade and battalion commanders also showed themselves competent and determined leaders.

36. Of the staff officers Major-General Goddard in charge of administration under both General Hutton and General Alexander, did outstanding work and was quite untiring. On the General Staff side Brigadier Davies, first with General Hutton and later under General Slim in the Burma Corps, did work of a high order.

The work of Major-General Wakely in charge of the lines of communication also deserves special mention.

37. The bearing and endurance of the Chinese troops who fought in Burma created a favourable impression. General J. Stilwell of the United States Army, who was placed by the Generalissimo in command of the Chinese troops in Burma, and General Lo Cho-Ying, who commanded the Fifth and Sixth Armies, were always ready to co-operate, although Chinese methods usually resulted in considerable delay in the execution of orders to put into effect the plans that had been concerted.

I should like to record the great impression that the Generalissimo, Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek, made on all commanders who met him; and to express my gratitude for the whole-hearted assistance he gave in the attempt to hold Burma.

38. The Civil Administration in Burma was faced suddenly by a series of most difficult problems due to the rapid Japanese advance, the bombing of Rangoon and the flight of a large part of the population. As might have been expected, parts of the administration stood the test well and parts collapsed. The Governor, H. E. Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith, was always whole-hearted in his co-operation with the military, and his Counsellor, The Honourable Mr. John Wise, was also extremely helpful. But some of the executive branches, such as the Police, tended to break down under the strain.

Denial of essential materials to the enemy was on the whole effectively carried out. The oil refinery at Syriam, just outside Rangoon, and the oilfields at Yenangyaung were very thoroughly destroyed.