of petrol should be reduced to three, namely, 100 octane aviation spirit, 80 octane motor transport spirit and petroleum spirit (unleaded). This reduction in the number of grades reduced our storage problems and those in India.

On the 9th February, the hitherto uncompleted section of the British four-inch pipeline between Chittagong and Chandranathpur began pumping, thus giving a continuous flow to Manipur Road. This pipeline was by the 2nd March extended to Imphal, and storage tanks to deal with a flow of three and a half million gallons per month had been constructed there. The opening of this pipeline eased the strain on the road transport a great deal, as hitherto all the petrol for Imphal, including very large Air Force requirements, had had to be brought from Manipur Road by motor transport. Later this pipeline was extended beyond Imphal to Moreh, thus bridging an exceptionally bad sector of hill road from Palel. The supply onward was by road tanker to Kalewa, by I.W.T. from Kalewa to Myingyan and from Myingyan forward by road and rail.

333. Finally, a few more general observations on this exceptional road L. of C. are called for. With a single road of limited capacity, there comes a time when, if its length is extended sufficiently, no matter how much is put in the rear end, practically nothing comes out at the forward end. On the Northern L. of C. we had nearly reached this stage, despite the tremendous effort that had been put into its development and operation. The magnitude of the road transport can be gauged by the following figures. Between November, 1944, and April, 1945, the quantity of stores sent forward, excluding petrol, oil and lubricants, varied between 31,000 and 45,000 tons per month, while petrol, etc., came to between 16,000 and 27,000 tons per month. The personnel lift forward varied from 25,000 to 50,000 men per month.

The L. of C. Transport Column had a daily average of 8,830 tons on wheels in March, and 9,932 tons in April; during the latter month a total lift forward of 91,378½ tons was achieved between Manipur Road and Shwebo.

334. For comparison with these figures, it is interesting to analyse the actual requirements of Fourteenth Army and how they reached it. I have already said that in April Fourteenth Army's average daily requirements were 2,090 tons. These were made up as follows:—

	Tons
Supplies	445
Petrol, oil, lubricants	406
Ammunition	175
Ordnance stores	110
Canteens	20
Engineer requirements ...	143
Construction and Transportation projects	225
R.A.F. requirements	196
Civil Affairs (Burma)	5
Stocking, maintenance of Sub-areas, Reserve Divisions, etc.	365
	2,090

During April, a daily average of 1,845 tons was delivered by air, while the balance came by road and I.W.T. to Myingyan. This, more than anything else, shows the total inadequacy of the Northern L. of C. Owing to the inability of the Chiefs of Staff to meet our constantly increasing demands for additional transport aircraft, we were compelled to develop this wasteful route to the utmost, despite the gross disproportion between the effort expended and the results which it was possible to achieve. It should dispel any idea that the fullest attempts to send up supplies by ground L. of C. were not made before we made our urgent appeals for more transport aircraft to be sent to the theatre.

SECTION XXI (paras. 335-350) THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTHERN LINE OF COMMUNICATION

Development of Chittagong and the smaller Arakan ports: I.W.T. projects: Development of Akyab and Kyaukpyu: The final stages in Arakan.

335. The development of the Southern L. of C. was on different lines. I have touched on the main characteristics of this L. of C. in paragraph 305. Initial maintenance was by sea from the main base ports in India to the Advanced Base at Chittagong, and by rail to Chittagong from the Advanced Base at Mymensingh (north-east of Calcutta). As in the case of the Northern L. of C., rail transhipments were necessary, at Santahar owing to change of gauge, at the ferry at Tistamukh and into Inland Water Transport at Goalundo and Sirajganj. Distribution from the Advanced Bases was by sea to Cox's Bazaar and Maungdaw, by motor transport to Bawli Bazaar, by I.W.T. and animal transport to Taung Bazaar, and by air from various airfields, as will be described in the next section. Shipments were also made direct from India to Cox's Bazaar and Maungdaw, but it must be borne in mind that these were only small river ports, used in normal times for local coastal traffic.

336. Chittagong itself is a port of very limited facilities. Some construction was undertaken, notably a 700 foot timber jetty and a screw pile petrol and oil jetty. The port lighting was greatly improved and the water supply scheme completed in December, 1944. Chittagong and the area round about was important, however, for an additional reason. It will be remembered from Part I of this Despatch that the original operation Dracula—the large-scale combined airborne and seaborne invasion of Rangoon—was in November, 1944 postponed by the Chiefs of Staff but not actually cancelled. The area round Chittagong was the mounting base for the airborne part of this operation and I was ordered to proceed on the assumption that the postponed operation would be launched immediately after the 1945 monsoon. This meant that construction had to be virtually complete before the 1945 monsoon, that is by about May, 1945. The planning and construction of this mounting base, involving, as it did, fair-weather airfields, petrol pipelines, bulk tankage, camps, hospitals and water supply, required consider-