

valuable evidence, I regret to report, died in captivity or during subsequent operations. Discrepancies have been slow and difficult to reconcile between sources of information now scattered throughout the world, despite the ready help I have received from the authors of such reports.

On the other hand valuable information has been freely supplied to me from the Cabinet War Library, the Air Ministry, the War Office, the Colonial Office and by the authors of several other despatches relating to the War in the Far East. To them also I am much indebted.

For the sake of brevity only those matters are mentioned in the report which are necessary for establishing important events, for elucidating the factors which governed action at the time, and for compiling before it is too late a reasonably comprehensive narrative of what happened in the Far East.

Within these limitations every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, and the report, as a whole, is believed to give a reasonably true picture of the campaign from the air aspect—although doubtless it may display inaccuracies of detail brought about by the circumstances in which it has been compiled. It should, however, contain the necessary data from which correct deductions can be drawn. In order, however, that inaccuracies may be corrected, readers are invited to call attention to them through the Air Ministry.

The whole report has been written under my direction, the first two sections on behalf of the late Air Vice-Marshal Pulford who held his command until 11th February, 1942, two days before he left Singapore. In my opinion there is nothing in these sections, or in Section V, with which he would not agree.

I myself took over my duties at his headquarters on 12th January, 1942, from which date the report is written on my responsibility, and largely with my personal knowledge. This part of the report continues in the third person for the sake of continuity in the narrative.

P. C. MALTBY,
Air Vice-Marshal
Royal Air Force.

London.

July 26th, 1947.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE REPORT.

- G.H.Q.—General Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief, Far East.
H.Q.M.C.—Headquarters of the General Officer Commanding, Malaya Command.
A.H.Q.—Air Headquarters of the Air Officer Commanding, R.A.F. Far East Command.
Norgroup—Code name for Group H.Q. controlling air operations in Northern Malaya.
Abdacom—Code name for Supreme Allied Headquarters, S.W. Pacific, which formed on 15th January, 1942, and absorbed G.H.Q.
Abdair—Code name of the Air Section of Supreme Allied H.Q., S.W. Pacific.
Westgroup—Code name allotted to A.H.Q. on the formation of Supreme Allied H.Q., S.W. Pacific.
Recgroup—Code name for the Allied Air Reconnaissance Group responsible for seaward reconnaissance of whole sphere of Supreme Allied Command, S.W. Pacific.

Britair—Code name for A.H.Q. in Java after the dissolution of Supreme Allied H.Q., S.W. Pacific.

A.A.C.U.—Anti-Aircraft Co-operation Unit.

A.H.K.—Headquarters of the Dutch Commander-in-Chief at Bandoeng, Java.

A.I.F.—Australian Imperial Forces.

A.L.G.—Advanced Landing Ground.

A.M.E. Station—Air Ministry Experimental Station (Radar).

A.O.A.—Air Officer in charge of Administration.

A.S.P.—Air Stores Park.

(B)—Bomber.

D/F—Radio Direction Finding.

(F)—Fighter.

(F.B.)—Flying Boat.

F.E.C.B.—Far East Combined Bureau—a combined service intelligence organisation for obtaining intelligence, under Admiralty administration, throughout the Far East.

(G.R.)—General Reconnaissance.

I.E.—Initial Equipment.

I.R.—Immediate Reserve.

M.U.—Maintenance Unit.

M.V.A.F.—Malayan Volunteer Air Force.

N.E.I.—Netherlands East Indies.

[N.F.]—Night Fighter.

O.T.U.—Operational Training Unit.

P.R.U.—Photographic Reconnaissance Unit.

R.T.—Radio Telephony.

R. & S.U.—Repair and Salvage Unit.

S.A.O.—Senior Administrative Officer.

S.A.S.O.—Senior Air Staff Officer.

(T.B.)—Torpedo Bomber.

V.H.F.—Very high frequency radio.

SECTION I.

PRE-WAR PREPARATIONS.

SCOPE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE, FAR EAST.

By mid-summer 1941 the geographical area of the Far East Command, Royal Air Force, included Hong Kong, Borneo, Malaya and Burma; then, embracing Ceylon, it stretched across the Indian Ocean to Durban and Mombasa.

2. The main functions of the Command were firstly to protect the Naval Base in Singapore, and secondly, in co-operation with the Royal Navy to ensure the security of the trade routes in the Indian Ocean and South China Sea. The Headquarters of the Command was in Singapore.

3. In November 1940, Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham was appointed Commander-in-Chief, Far East. He was responsible for operational control and general direction of training of all British land and air forces in Malaya, Burma and Hong Kong, for co-ordinating the defences of those territories; and for similar responsibilities for additional British Air Forces it was proposed to locate later in Ceylon, the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal. He set up his headquarters at the Naval Base in Singapore where he was provided with a small operational staff, but no administrative staff.

4. The formation of G.H.Q. in no way relieved the Air Officer Commanding, Royal Air Force, of his responsibility (which was now within the policy laid down by the Commander-in-Chief) for ensuring the effective co-operation