

Australian Air Force. It is interesting to note that this was the first official intimation which had been received by Headquarters, South West Pacific Area regarding the representation of Allied Air Forces in Japan.

335. With Japan's surrender, H.Q. South West Pacific Area were not unnaturally anxious that we should accept full responsibility, as soon as possible, within the new Theatre boundaries originally discussed at a meeting between Admiral Mountbatten and General MacArthur, which had taken place at Manila during July.

336. In the division of responsibility for implementing the surrender terms, South East Asia Command was allotted the following:—

(a) Andamans.	Nicobars.
Burma.	Thailand.
F.I.C. (South of 16° N.).	Malaya.
Sumatra.	Java.
Bali.	Lombok.

Australia accepted responsibility for:—

(b) British New Guinea.	Borneo.
Bismarck Islands	Solomons.
Flores.	Timor.
Soemba.	Ceram.
Boeros.	Amboina.
Kai Aroe.	Tanimbar.

Islands in the Arafura Sea.

337. This division, however, left a gap comprising the Celebes, Halmahora Islands and Dutch New Guinea, for which no forces were available to implement the surrender terms unless the Dutch did so—a commitment which would obviously have introduced a shipping problem to transfer the necessary forces from Europe. The Australians, too, were anxious to hand over Borneo to us as soon as possible.

THE SURRENDER IN SOUTH EAST ASIA.

Ceremonies at Rangoon and Singapore.

338. In accordance with the orders of the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia, Japanese envoys, headed by Lieutenant General Takazo Numata, Chief of Staff to Field Marshal Count Terauchi, Japanese Expeditionary Force, Southern Regions, arrived at Rangoon by air on August 26th to be given their instructions for the implementation of the local surrender terms. Thus, after inflicting on the Japanese one of the greatest defeats of the war in the Far East, in a campaign which had lasted for over three years and in which the enemy's losses amounted to 100,000 men, it was at Rangoon that the Japanese Generals arrived to take their orders from the Allied Forces in South East Asia.

339. The meetings in Rangoon with the Japanese plenipotentiaries were, in no sense, negotiations. There was no question of discussion of terms. The Japanese were there to accept Unconditional Surrender. It was intended also that a binding act of surrender should be signed at Rangoon and that the official ceremony of surrender would be carried out at Singapore after the Supreme Allied Commander's instructions had been completed at the Rangoon meetings.

340. The conditions insisted upon by the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia, included immediate relief to prisoners-of-war and internees; Allied aircraft to begin day and night reconnaissance flights over South East Asia; Allied vessels to begin mine-sweeping operations in hitherto Japanese-controlled waters, and also for Allied vessels to enter ports in Malaya and elsewhere with full facilities provided.

341. The meetings with the Japanese plenipotentiaries, which were resumed at Rangoon in the opening days of September, brought to light many positive facts concerning the plight of the Japanese Army in Burma from the time of the enemy's disastrous retreat at Imphal in June, 1944. It was apparent from one important statement read by Major General Ichida, at Rangoon on September 11th, that the Japanese in Burma had not reckoned with two important and vital factors which upset their calculations and placed their forces at disastrous disadvantages:—

(a) Allied air supply, which permitted ground forces in Burma to consolidate their positions without being forced to retreat, and thus rendered the enemy's infiltration and encircling tactics abortive.

(b) Allied air superiority, which so disrupted Japanese supply lines, both in Burma and further afield, that starvation and illness overtook thousands of Japanese troops facing Fourteenth Army, and also denied them the essential supplies of fuel, equipment and material with which to fight a superior equipped, and better supplied, Allied Force.

342. With the disruption of the enemy's lines of communication, and the systematic attacks on their rear supply bases, it was not surprising that Major General Ichida should declare:—

"From the time of the Imphal operation, last year, our Army in Burma carried on its operations continuously for a period of a year with its main force, and during that period the army hardly ever received any reinforcements in its manpower—none since December last year—the replenishment of military stores also being very meagre."

343. The situation of the Allied ground forces, ranged against them, presented a happier picture. Thanks mainly to Allied air superiority, and resulting air supply, they had withstood the siege of Imphal, and, on the siege being raised, had taken the offensive down through Burma with the knowledge that fuel, rations, ammunitions and miscellaneous equipment would be air-dropped or air-landed to them, throughout the advance, while casualties inflicted by the enemy would be taken care of and evacuated safely to base.

The Ceremony at Singapore.

344. With the Supreme Allied Commander, and other Commanders-in-Chief, it afforded considerable satisfaction to witness General Itagaki sign, for his defeated compatriots, Admiral Mountbatten's terms for Unconditional Surrender in the South East Asia Theatre at Singapore, on 12th September, 1945.

345. There was not displayed at that ceremony any deliberate outward show of pride in Allied military achievement. It was more, I consider, an atmosphere of confident achievement which reflected the mood of the three