THE CIVIL DEFENCE OF MALAYA

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from author Rowallan Lucas 1955

THE CIVIL DEFENCE OF MALAYA

A NARRATIVE OF THE PART TAKEN IN IT BY THE CIVILIAN POPULATION OF THE COUNTRY IN THE JAPANESE INVASION

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From information received from persons who were in Malaya at the time, and published under the auspices of

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FOREWORD

AN ACCURATE ACCOUNT OF THE CIVIL DEFENCE OF MALAYA, IN PREPARATION for and during the attack upon the country by the Japanese, has not hitherto been attempted. The Civil Defence included a corps of Air Raid Wardens, Medical Auxiliary Services, Auxiliary Fire Services, and a number of complementary Services.

As little is still known in the United Kingdom of all that was done, and as an official record cannot be expected until after the war, the Association of British Malaya issued in the February, 1943, number of *British Malaya* an appeal for information from the persons who were in Malaya at the time of the invasion. This narrative is compiled from the information thus received, from the Government Gazettes, from the Malayan newspapers published at the time, and from books by persons who were then in Malaya.

It is not within the competence of the Association to give any account of the military operations, except in so far as they affected the civilian population. Nevertheless, it is necessary to make brief mention of the Volunteers and the Local Defence Corps (the equivalent of the "Home Guard") as the recruiting for these forces affected the civilian population.

The following abbreviations are occasionally used :—

A.F.S.	...	Auxiliary Fire Service.
A.R.P.	...	Air Raid Precautions.
F.M.S.	...	Federated Malay States.
G.O.C.	...	General Officer Commanding, Malaya.
K.L.	...	Kuala Lumpur.
L.D.C.	...	Local Defence Corps.
M.A.S.	...	Medical Auxiliary Services.
S.S.	...	Straits Settlements.

The expression "Non-Europeans" is used in order to obviate the wearisome repetition of "Eurasians and Asiatics".

Singapore is a city, but in order to avoid the constant repetition of such expressions as "City and Towns" it is referred to as a town.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

GEOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL

BRITISH MALAYA COMPRISES THE CROWN COLONY OF THE STRAITS SETTLEments, the Federated Malay States (Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang), and the five Unfederated Malay States of Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, Trengganu and Johore. It is situated between the China Sea on the East and the Straits of Malacca on the West, and is bounded, on the North, by the Siamese Provinces of Singora, on the East Coast, and Puket on the West Coast. Its length from North to South is about 450 miles, and its width, which varies considerably, is about 180 miles at the most. The area is 62,500 square miles, and is approximately that of England. A railway runs through the entire length of the country. Starting from Singapore northward, it crosses the Straits of Johore by the Causeway; at Gemas, on the Johore-Negri Sembilan frontier, it bifurcates as it approaches the mountain range which forms the backbone of the peninsula, and separate lines continue up the west and east sides of it, and join up with the Siamese railway system on the Kedah and Kelantan frontiers. There are several branch lines to ports on the western coast. Throughout the country there is a network of first-class roads. Rubber planting and tin mining are the principal industries of the country.

The population of all European nationalities in Malaya at the last census (April, 1931) was 17,648. About 20 per cent were non-British, about 28 per cent were women, and about 14 per cent were children. The estimated European population (of all nationalities) on 31st December, 1940, was published in tabular form in the *F.M.S. Gazette* of the 27th February, 1941, and showed an enormous increase. With the figures in brackets being those of 1931 census, it is summarized as follows :—

Singapore	14,390	(8,147)
Penang	2,794	(1,526)
Malacca	588	(330)
Federated States	11,019	(6,350)
Unfederated States	2,175	(1,295)
	30,966	(17,648)

This increase is out of proportion to the increase of the total population from about 4⅞ millions to about 5½ millions, and there is nothing to show whether 1940 estimate took into account the arrival of military *personnel* after the outbreak of war with Germany in 1939. After almost all the European women and children had been evacuated from Singapore (in the last few days before the capitulation), it was estimated, in a Press communiqué dated 17th August, 1943, that the number of British European civilians who were either unaccounted for or were interned was 18,000.

The population, as estimated in December, 1940, was approximately as follows :—

Malays (indigenous and immigrant)	2,250,000
Europeans	31,000
Eurasians	19,000
Chinese	2,350,000
Indians	750,000
Others	60,000
	5,460,000

The Crown Colony comprised the Island of Singapore, the territory of Malacca on the mainland, the Island of Penang and Province Wellesley, a small strip of territory on the mainland opposite Penang. There was a Governor, Executive and Legislative Councils, and the administration was like that of an ordinary Crown Colony. In the Federated Malay States, each of the four States had its Malay Ruler, British Resident and State Council, and there was a Federal Administration with a Federal Council as well as the State administrations. Each unfederated State had its Ruler, British Adviser (styled a General Adviser in Johore) and State Council. The Governor of the Straits Settlements was *ex-officio* High Commissioner for the Malay States; and though in many sentences in this narrative it would be correct to mention him as the High Commissioner, he is throughout referred to as the Governor.

On 21st July, 1941, it was announced that Mr. Alfred Duff Cooper was proceeding to the Far East from London to examine on behalf of the War Cabinet the arrangements for consultation and co-ordination between the various British Authorities, military, administrative and political, and to report on how these arrangements could be made more effective. He arrived in Singapore, where he made his headquarters, on 9th September, 1941. He visited Java soon afterwards, and attended a meeting of the Australian War Cabinet in Australia in November. On 8th December, 1941, after the Japanese attack, a War Council was established in Singapore and he became its Chairman. He left Malaya on 12th January, 1942.

DIARY OF EVENTS

1ST DECEMBER, 1941—15TH FEBRUARY, 1942

DECEMBER, 1941

1st. Proclamation calling up all the Naval, Military and Air Force Volunteers.

2nd. The *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse* arrive at Singapore.

5th. The Local Defence Corps in the F.M.S. mobilized.

6th. Penang Air Raid Wardens called up.
Southward movement of Japanese transports escorted by war vessels ascertained by air reconnaissance off the coast of Southern Siam.

8th. Japanese attack Kelantan beach at about 1 a.m.
Singapore bombed at 4 a.m.
Aerodromes in North Kedah, Sungei Patani (Central Kedah), Penang and Kuala Lumpur bombed.
Passive Defence Services mobilized everywhere.
Evacuation of all European women and children from Kota Bahru and of some Asiatic men, women and children from the coast (Kelantan).
The Local Defence Corps mobilized in Singapore and Penang.

9th. The *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse* sunk.
Sungei Patani and Kuala Lumpur aerodromes bombed again and Butterworth aerodrome bombed.
Evacuation of European women and children from North Kedah.

10th. Further bombing of Sungei Patani, Butterworth and Penang aerodromes.

11th. Penang town heavily bombed and machine-gunned. Great number of deaths and casualties, and much damage done.
The Local Defence Corps mobilized in Malacca.

12th. Heavy bombing of Penang town continues. Great damage to craft in the harbour and many casualties.
Evacuation of European male civilians from North Kedah.

13th. Bombing of Penang continues.
European women and children evacuated from Penang, and from South Kedah.

14th. Bombing of Penang continues.

15th. Only slight bombing at Penang.
Ipoh bombed at 11 a.m.

16th. Penang evacuated by the British military forces in the evening.
European women and children evacuated from Perak.
European male civilians evacuated from South Kedah.

17th. Communique. Fighting on the line of the Muda River (between Kedah and Province Wellesley).

19th. Mr. Duff Cooper assumes duty in Singapore as Resident Minister in the Far East.

21st. Communique. Loss of Kelantan aerodrome. Withdrawal of British Troops from area north of Kuala Krai, Kelantan.
Repulse of the enemy in Lenggong (Upper Perak).
Enemy air attack on Kuantan (Pahang).

23rd. Ipoh Ambulance men go to Kuala Lumpur.
European male civilians leave Ipoh.
Ipoh bombed again.

24th. Non-essential European men leave Lower Perak.
Tapah Road railway station (Perak) bombed.
Kuala Lumpur bombed.

25th. Capitulation of Hong Kong.

26th. Kuala Lumpur bombed again.
Teluk Anson bombed.

28th. Communique. Fighting at Blanja and Chemor (Perak).

DECEMBER, 1941 (*continued*)

29th. Communique. Fighting South of Ipoh.
Kluang aerodrome (Johore) bombed.
Second air raid on Singapore.
30th. Martial Law proclaimed in Singapore.
31st. Two air raids on Singapore.

JANUARY, 1942

1st. Japanese cross the Perak-Selangor frontier.
2nd. Japanese landing at Kuala Selangor.
European women and children evacuated from Kuala Lumpur.
From this day onwards, there were few days without an air raid on Singapore.
5th. The M.A.S. convoy leaves K.L. for Singapore.
The Japanese occupy Kuantan (Pahang) and proceed to Pekan and Temerloh.
Bombs dropped in Johore.
7th. British forces withdrawn to the South of Slim River.
12th. The Japanese occupy Kuala Lumpur and Port Swettenham.
Mr. Duff Cooper leaves Malaya.
15th. Fighting North of Gemas, the frontier between Negri Sembilan and Johore.
16th. Withdrawal to Segamat (Johore).
17th. Enemy landings at Muar (Johore).
19th. Enemy landings South of Muar.
20th. Preparations for the defence of the Muar-Kluang-Mersing line.
26th. Communique. Batu Pahat (Johore) occupied by the enemy after severe fighting.
Enemy landings at Endau.
Naval engagement off the mouth of the Endau River. Two destroyers, H.M.S. *Thanet* and the Royal Australian Navy Ship *Vampire* engaged a Japanese cruiser and three destroyers. In a running fight, the Japanese made off. H.M.S. *Thanet* sunk. The *Vampire* uninjured. One Japanese destroyer sunk and another damaged.
29th. Rearguard actions about 20 miles from the Johore Causeway.
30th. Great bulk of the British forces withdrawn into Singapore.
31st. The Johore Causeway breached by the R.E. at 10 a.m.
"The Battle of Malaya" ends.

FEBRUARY, 1942

1st. "The Battle of Singapore" begins.
8th. Enemy landing on Singapore Island.
9th. Singapore town comes under enemy artillery fire.
10th. Enemy forces cross the Johore Causeway.
11th. Battle front reaches Pasir Panjang.
Artillery fire on Singapore increases, with continuous bombing.
15th Capitulation at 8.30 p.m.

PART I.—PREPARATION

THIS NARRATIVE IS CONCERNED WITH THE PART TAKEN BY THE CIVILIAN population in the Civil Defence of Malaya rather than with the action taken by the Civil Government. It is considered unnecessary, therefore, to mention the many excellent and elaborate preparations made by the Government for laying in enormous stocks of rice and essential food supplies, which were stored in huge warehouses, for the control of petrol, oil and engineering supplies, and for the control of shipping, imports and exports. The preparations which affected the civilian population fall under four headings :—

(1) The Volunteers.

(2) The Local Defence Corps, a military body, which was the equivalent of the Home Guard in the United Kingdom.

(3) The Passive Defence Services, including Air Raid Wardens, Medical Auxiliary Services, Auxiliary Fire Service, and Rescue, Burial and Demolition Squads.

(4) Miscellaneous Services, such as Canteens, Blood Transfusion, and employment, mostly by women, in Censorship, Telephone Exchanges, Government Offices and Special War Services, and in the departments of the Navy, Army and Air Force.

(1) THE VOLUNTEERS

When compulsory military service was introduced in Malaya in 1940, the Volunteer Force was the only force in which enrolment was possible. Compulsion applied only to Europeans, and there was never any suggestion of applying it to the Malays or the domiciled Asiatics of other nationalities. This vitally affected the number of Europeans available for the Civil Defence of the country, and it is necessary, therefore, to make some mention of the extent to which it was carried. The Volunteer organization included :—

(1) The Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.

(2) The Volunteer Air Force.

(3) The Volunteer Forces.

(1) *The Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve.*—This was constituted in 1934, and in 1939 it had an approved strength in Singapore of 100 European officers and 300 Malay ratings, and in Penang of 30 European officers and 100 Malay ratings. There was a similar organization in the F.M.S. On the 5th September, 1939, on the outbreak of the war

with Germany, a Proclamation declared the existence of a state of emergency and called up the men detailed for signals, wireless and patrol duties. Three armed motor launches in Singapore and one in Penang carried out mine-sweeping and local patrols continuously.

(2) *The Volunteer Air Force.*—This was created in 1936 with a nucleus of regular officers and airmen of the R.A.F., working as a combined unit with volunteer officers and airmen. In 1938 there were 46 volunteers in continuous training, in which flights to aerodromes in the peninsula formed a part. In 1939 it was reconstituted on a Malayan basis, at the entire cost in all respects of the combined Malayan Governments, and became "The Malayan Volunteer Air Force". It had stations at Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh and Penang, and utilized the equipment and personnel of the various Flying Clubs. The majority of the instructors were qualified pilots in civil employment. In 1941 it had about 20 officers and about 150 men, of whom about 50 were qualified pilots. In connection with this force, a Flying Training School was started in 1940.

(3) *The Volunteer Forces.*—At the outbreak of the war with Germany, these were constituted as follows. In Singapore, two infantry battalions, a light battery, engineer units, an armoured car section, a fortress signal company, and an intelligence platoon; in Penang and Province Wellesley, two infantry battalions; and a small force in Malacca. The units comprised Europeans and non-Europeans, and were organized on a racial basis. In the F.M.S. there were a light battery, a signal company, and a battalion for each of the four States in the federation. Here, too, there were Europeans and non-Europeans in separate units. In Johore there was a European field company of Volunteer Engineers. In Kedah there was a battalion of Europeans and Malays, with three rifle companies and two machine-gun platoons; and in Kelantan there was an infantry company with one European platoon and three Malay platoons. Quite distinct from these Volunteer Forces, there was in Malaya at the time of the outbreak of war with Germany, a regular Malay Regiment of one battalion in the Federated Malay States, and a small regular force of Malays and Indians in Johore. It was decided in April, 1941, to raise a second battalion of the F.M.S. Malay Regiment.

The Ex-Service Association of Malaya, a large and influential body of men who had served in the last war, took a keen interest in the Volunteer movement, and did all that was possible to stimulate recruitment. Nevertheless, for some reason, an indefinite impression always existed in Malaya that the Volunteer Force was not very seriously regarded by the military authorities, despite the fact that the General Officer Commanding at any inspection never failed to assure the officers and men that he took the keenest interest in them and their public-spirited devotion and to congratulate them upon

their numbers and efficiency. As soon as the danger of war with Germany arose, large numbers of men enrolled.

In September, 1939, at the outbreak of war with Germany, the Colonial Office very rightly decided that the war effort would better be served by British subjects remaining at their posts in the colonies and protected territories than by their proceeding to the United Kingdom to enlist. It was also decided that Malaya's special role in the war effort was the increased production of rubber and tin. The departure of European men was stopped by refusing them exit permits except in special circumstances. There was immediately a very large increase in the number of European and non-European enlistments.

With afternoon drills several times a week, and with compulsory attendance at week-end camps, the Europeans on the rubber estates and the tin mines (many of whom had to travel considerable distances), in business of every kind in the towns, and in the Government departments found it increasingly difficult to combine volunteering with their normal employment. The danger of an attack upon Malaya seemed to be impracticably remote, and a high percentage of the Europeans, whether on estates, mines, in factories, electrical and engineering works of every kind, in business or Government service, were essentially "keymen". In order to meet a situation in which it was almost impossible for each man to decide for himself whether or not he ought to serve in the ranks as a Volunteer, the Government decided to legislate for tribunals which would settle the question for Europeans and non-Europeans alike when the two duties were in conflict.

A "Compulsory Service (Volunteer Force) Ordinance, 1940," was passed in the Colony in June, 1940, and identical legislation was passed almost immediately in the F.M.S., Johore, Kedah and Kelantuan. It empowered the Governor to direct, by proclamation, that every male British subject and every male British person in the Colony or the State, between the ages of 18 and 55, irrespective of nationality, was liable to be called up for service in the Volunteer Force or in any additional force that might be created for the defence of the country in the existing emergency. The legislation has the appearance of a model law approved by the Colonial Office for use in all Crown Colonies. The reference to "British protected persons" would seem to indicate this, for in the Malay States the Malays are generally termed "Subjects of the Rulers". With sweeping impartiality, the law applied to the Tamil estate labourer, the Malay peasant, the Malaya-born Chinese artisan, and the English bank manager. It went far beyond anything ever contemplated in the United Kingdom, where calling up has always been by age groups. The procedure was that at any time after the issue of a proclamation, the military authority might serve on any person thus liable for service, a notice requiring him to

present himself for a medical examination, and then, if he was medically fit, serve on him an "enlistment notice" (with a minimum notice of three days) requiring him to present himself for enlistment. Anyone was allowed to apply for a certificate of the postponement of his liability (termed "a postponement certificate") on the ground either it was necessary or expedient in the interests of the defence of Malaya, that he should not be called up, or that exceptional hardship would ensue of he were called up. A local tribunal, consisting of a chairman with legal qualifications and two persons appointed by the Governor with regard to their impartiality, would consider the application. Any person aggrieved by the decision of a local tribunal had the right of appeal to an appellate tribunal consisting of a chairman appointed by the Chief Justice and two persons appointed by the Governor with regard to their impartiality. The decisions of the local and appellate tribunals could not be questioned in an action in any Court of Law. In respect of Civil Servants, the calling up powers of the military authority were to be exercised in accordance with arrangements approved by the Governor. The legislation, which was very detailed, and supplemented by Rules, also provided for conscientious objectors (on the lines of the legislation in the United Kingdom) and for reinstatement in civil employment. The number of conscientious objectors was perhaps less than half a dozen, and they were granted exemption on the grounds of their religious beliefs.

Another law, entitled "The Volunteer Force (Training) Ordinance, 1940," was also passed in the Colony in June, 1940, and soon afterwards in the F.M.S., Johore, Kedah and Kelantan. Its object was "to provide for more effective training of the Volunteer Force, and to modify the terms and conditions of enrolment". The Governor was empowered to call up, by an order in the *Gazette*, the volunteers or any units or classes or particular members for any courses of training, at any specified places and for any specified times, and to order them to be attached to, or trained with, any British regular forces. On the 2nd July, 1940, the Governor exercised his powers under the law, and proclaimed that every male British subject and every British protected person, irrespective of nationality, between the ages of 18 and 41 was liable to be called up for service in the Volunteer Forces. In practice, however, no person other than a European was called up.

Every volunteer was liable to be called up for training in week-end camps or billets of 48 hours' duration, with a maximum of two months' service and 20 camps. Afternoon drills were subject to a maximum of 300 hours in a year. No volunteer might be released or discharged from service without the approval of the Governor, but there was provision for "exemption certificates", which could be obtained in the same way as the "postponement certificates" under the other law, where an applicant could satisfy a tribunal that in the public interests he would be better engaged otherwise or that it was a case of excep-

tional hardship. Orders with specific dates for continuous and non-continuous training and week-end camps and regulations for pay, allowances and relief for attendance on continuous training and camps, were gazetted in the same month. On the 1st September, 1941, the Volunteers were called up for compulsory evening parades of two hours' duration and for compulsory week-end camps from 2 p.m. on Saturday to 8 a.m. on Monday, subject to the statutory maximum, so long as a state of emergency should exist. In July–August, 1941, and again in February–March, 1942, all the European Volunteers were called up for compulsory camps, in which they received uninterrupted intensive training for two full months. It should be understood that this was no more than an intensification of a system of military training to which the Europeans had been subjected since the latter part of 1939, that it was combined with each man's work in his normal occupation, and that it was undergone in the heat of a country only a few degrees north of the equator.

The extent to which this called upon the European man-power of Malaya can be realized by the following extract from a broadcast message by the Governor on the 31st March, 1941, on Malaya's War Effort:—"Not long ago I went into the question of our local "man-power. I found that of the total population of European males "between the ages of 18 and 41 (European, mind you, not British), "the number ear-marked as unavailable for active service for reasons "other than health is just over 11 per cent. These include doctors, "engineers, police, harbour board and municipal employees, clergy, "foreign subjects and so on, whether in industry or in the service of "the Government. I do not take into account the many young men "who have been allowed to leave Malaya for service elsewhere. If "it comes to this, that if we are ever faced with war in this country, we "are prepared to let 89 per cent of the men under 41 go forth and fight. "This is a high percentage, but we should like to make it even higher, "and we are doing what we can to release more men by the employment "of women." It will be observed that in his opening sentence on the question of local man-power, the Governor was thinking only in terms of European man-power.

The following instances show the manner in which the business firms were affected by the call upon European man-power. They have been supplied by the courtesy of the firm concerned in reply to enquiries, and may be taken as typical of all businesses, whether large or small.

The banks received special consideration as the entire business life of the country depended upon their efficiency. In one bank, with 40 Europeans in its branches throughout Malaya, 15 Volunteers and 10 members of the L.D.C. were mobilized immediately. This represented a mobilization of 62.5 per cent of the European staff. Four men were in A.R.P. and all the others were fire-watchers. Of the

non-European staff, many were mobilized as Volunteers, and others were doing rotational duty in A.R.P., but there is no record of their numbers. Another bank with about 50 Europeans in its branches has no exact record of the numbers mobilized, but understands that approximately the same percentage of mobilization was applied to it, and that all who were not mobilized were serving in A.R.P. or fire-watching. The manner in which women worked in the banks in an attempt to fill the vacancies is described elsewhere.

The European staff of a business firm numbered 26 in December, 1941. With the exception of two (one over age and due for leave and the other exempt from military service) all were mobilized; but in the early half of December permission was granted by the Authorities to retain the use of six, thus making eight available to the Company. Towards the end of December, this permission was withdrawn in the case of three, so that the Company's five offices in Malaya were then manned by five Europeans. The exact numbers of the senior Asiatic staff who were mobilized is not known, but practically all the most valuable men appear to have been engaged either wholly or part-time in Civil Defence.

A commercial firm with general interests and engineering and electrical departments and with contracts at the Naval Base and some airfields had 53 Europeans, many of whom were highly specialised, on its staff on the 1st December, 1941. Of this number five men were employed on these contracts, three men were in charge of electrical generating stations in the Native States, 17 were mobilized in the Volunteer Force and L.D.C., five were in the R.A.F., three in the Regular Army and one in the R.N.V.R. One man was exempt on medical grounds and another on account of age. Three men who were on leave in Australia flew back at once to Malaya and rejoined their respective A.R.P. Units. All the remaining 14 men served either in the A.R.P. or in the A.F.S. Of these 53 men, 38, so far as is known, are now prisoners of war or civilian internees in Malaya.

In another firm, out of a European staff of 41, 33 were serving in the Volunteers or in the Army, Navy or Air Force. The remaining eight were senior men in charge of the offices at Singapore and branches throughout Malaya, and all performed Civil Defence duties in addition to their office work. Of their wives, all who were not prevented by domestic ties were either assisting in their husbands' offices or were devoting themselves to the nursing service or similar work. Four of those who were nursing remained in Singapore and fell into enemy hands, and one lost her life from enemy action. Latest advices show that 30 of the male European staff and four of the women are in Japanese hands.

Out of a European staff of 42, in another firm, four were on leave and 38 were in Malaya in December, 1941. Two of those on leave succeeded in rejoining the Forces in Malaya. Of the 38, 27 were

mobilized in the Forces and the remainder were all in some form of service, such as A.R.P. or Auxiliary Police. Five of the men in the Forces, including one of the two who rejoined, succeeded in escaping. Of the remaining 24, all but two have now been officially reported as prisoners of war. Of the 11 civilians, one was killed, two were safely evacuated after being severely wounded, two escaped after the fall of Singapore, and the remaining six have been reported as interned.

Another firm had 22 European employees. Two were in the Air Force; one of them was killed on active service after his evacuaiton from Singapore, and the other has since died. Of the others, 15 were in the Volunteer Forces and were immediately mobilized, and five were Air Raid Wardens or fire-watchers. All of them were made prisoners of war or civilian internees, and two have since died. All their wives, except one invalid, were doing war work. Three of them, including the invalid, who has since died, were interned.

A firm, which was the General Managers for a group of fourteen mining companies, reports that 88 European engineers were normally employed on 15 dredges, six hydraulic mines and work at the head office. After mobilization, it was left with 29 men.

A mining company, which employed 31 highly specialized Europeans on its tin lode mine, reports that 18 of them were immediately mobilized in the Volunteers.

Another mining company with four dredges had a staff of 37, most of which were mining engineers and technicians. Thirteen of them were mobilized at once in the Volunteers, and seven in the Local Defence Corps. Two men served in A.R.P.,-and six were over age.

Although it was the Government policy to exercise compulsion only on the European community, every effort was made to stimulate voluntary recruitment in the non-European Volunteer units. Speaking in the Legislative Council on the 28th April, 1941, the General Officer Commanding, Malaya, said that the Chinese Volunteer units were under strength. The Regular Army, he said, had been taking in increasing numbers of local recruits and had increased the number of units which required them. In the Colony alone, a very large number of recruits from the Asiatic communities was required. The Royal Army Service Corps required about 370 men, such as drivers, artificers and general duties, and he would be very glad to see an increase here in applications from the Chinese community. In Perak, the Chinese community was offering to raise a complete transport company. The Royal Army Medical Corps had recruited a considerable number of Chinese, and the result was extremely satisfactory. A large body of stretcher-bearers or pullers of rickshaws altered to carry stretchers was still required. He appealed to the Members of the Council to help in recruiting.

At a Press interview on the 21st May, 1941, the G.O.C. emphasized the need for raising another company in the Singapore Volunteer

Corps, and expressed his disappointment at the recruiting. He also thought that not only the Chinese, but the other nationalities of Malaya, could be usefully employed in various mobile and anti-aircraft units in Malaya. All these units were continually expanding, and large numbers of recruits could be accepted. Every man recruited in Malaya, he said, meant one man less coming to Malaya from England.

Though no figures are available to show the strength of the European and non-European units respectively at the time of the Japanese invasion, it is thus clear that, in accordance with a definite Government policy, the very small European community was to bear the brunt of the military service which was expected from the people of Malaya. In order to give some idea of the disproportion between the numbers of Europeans and non-Europeans in the country, it may be said that in the small towns scattered throughout the peninsula the population might be 15,000 Asiatics and 20 or 30 Europeans, including women and children.

In February, 1941, the "Police Force (Military Service) Regulations" provided that, if necessary, the Police should engage in military operations against armed forces, as an additional military force under the command of the Inspector-General of Police.

In March, 1941, non-European members of the Signal Corps were allowed, if they applied or consented, to be attached to the Regular Forces. On the 12th September, the "Special Platoons" of the 1st (Perak) Battalion were called out.

On the 19th September, 1941, the Volunteer Ordinance was amended, and the Governor was empowered to constitute a corps or unit consisting wholly or partly of women. This was followed on the 28th October, 1941, by Regulations for the formation of an "Observer Corps", in which any person of either sex was eligible for enrolment, and which was subject to the general direction and control of the R.A.F. Authority in Malaya. The duties were to assist in observing and reporting the movements of all aircraft. The service was voluntary, and might be full time with part or part time with allowances, and there was provision for badges and insignia and for the organization and training of the corps. These corps were formed soon afterwards.

On the 1st December, 1941, the Governor declared that a state of emergency existed throughout Malaya and called up all the Volunteer Forces. An official communiqué issued by the military authorities on the same day stated that this did not signify an immediate deterioration in the situation, and that it meant that, as the situation had not clarified, precautionary preparations, which had been decided upon some days before, were to be instituted step by step. The Japanese attack on Malaya began on the 8th December, 1941. Further mention of the Volunteer Forces is made in Part II (Action).

(2) The Local Defence Corps

The Local Defence Corps (L.D.C.) was in Malaya the equivalent of the Home Guard in the United Kingdom. Proposals for forming a number of these Corps were first considered in July, 1940; and in the next month a Press communiqué announced that plans were being rapidly developed in co-operation with the Ex-Service Association of Malaya and that offers of service would be received. By Section 16 of the Compulsory Service (Volunteer Force) Ordinance, 1940, the Governor was empowered to make such Regulations as might be necessary for the creation and organization of such additional forces as he might consider expedient for the preservation and maintenance of essential services and internal security; and every member of such a force was subject to the provisions of that Ordinance.

In October, 1940, in exercise of these powers, the Governor made "The Local Defence Corps Regulations, 1940," which operated throughout Malaya. L.D.C. were to be raised and maintained as local organizations under the orders and general direction of the head of the local civil administration. Corps were immediately formed in Singapore, Penang and Malacca, and in each of the four Federated Malay States, and later they were formed in the unfederated States. The normal duty of a Corps was to assist in the preservation and maintenance of local internal security, but it might be called upon to serve anywhere in Malaya; and when a state of emergency arose, it might, by proclamation, be placed temporarily under the command of a Chief Police Officer, or become part of the military forces. A Commissioner, L.D.C., for Malaya and Deputy Commissioners were to initiate and co-ordinate all the Corps; and full-time officers were appointed immediately. Each Corps had a Commander and a number of officers with military titles, and these appointments were gazetted from time to time. These officers were appointed immediately. There was provision for training, uniform, equipment and arms, allowances, and relief for continuous duty, gratuities for wounds, and pensions to dependents of any members killed in service.

The following persons were eligible for enrolment :—

(1) Male British subjects of pure European descent between the ages of 41 and 55, with discretion to a Commander to enrol men up to the age of 61.

(2) Male British subjects of pure European descent between the ages of 18 and 41, who held "postponement certificates" in respect of the Volunteer Force.

(3) Male British subjects and British protected persons not of pure European descent, provided that they had already been trained in an armed force, a police force, a civil force, or other wise fell in any category which the Governor might define. .

(4) Male persons of pure European descent, but not British subjects or British protected persons, if accepted for service in accordance with Rules made by the Governor.

In February, 1941, the Corps, which until then had for all practical purposes been essentially European bodies, were opened to the admission of non-European British subjects and British protected men over the age of 18. On the 31st March, 1941, it was announced that the numbers enrolled in the Local Defence Corps were approximately 1,100, and that for the time being it was proposed to fix the establishment at 2,000. This number, it was stated, could always be increased if necessary and if arms, ammunition and equipment were available. The voluntary nature of the service was gradually altered by compulsory calling-up orders to all Europeans between the ages of 41 and 55.

As in the case of the Volunteer Forces, compulsion was exercised only against the very small European community, and the non-Europeans were left free to enrol or not as they felt disposed. Uniform, equipment and arms were supplied. In the colony, the training was more or less of a military drill, and in some of the Malay States the men had field exercises and occasionally went into camp.

The duties of a Corps were to provide guards at particularly vulnerable points, such as power stations, waterworks, bridges, and possible landing grounds for parachutes, and to supply mobile units to proceed to any point at which any sudden danger might arise from parachutists or civil disturbance. After some uncertainties in the latter part of 1941, concerning the relations between a Corps and the police and the military authorities, committees were appointed to report, and it was decided that a Corps should be normally at the disposal of the police, but should be capable of attachment to the military forces in an emergency.

(3) The Passive Defence Services

This expression, which was not a very happy one in view of the extraordinary activity displayed under it, was taken from Part IV of "The Defence Regulations, 1939,"* and the services organized under it included:—

(i) A Corps of Air Raid Wardens.
(ii) A Medical Auxiliary Service.
(iii) An Auxiliary Fire Service.
(iv) Auxiliary Transport, Demolition and Debris Squads, and Burial Squads.

* "The Defence Regulations, 1939," were made by the Governor in August, 1939, in exercise of powers conferred upon him by Imperial legislation. These lengthy and most detailed Regulations (which were presumably the same in every Crown Colony) also provided for censorship of every kind, the control of ports, land transport and the movements of persons, the expropriation of property and the control of industry, imports and exports.

The Colonial Government engaged an expert to advise it in organizing and co-ordinating these services, and the system recommended by him very closely followed the one in force in the United Kingdom, and was set in operation in the Colony in the latter part of 1939. It was adopted in the F.M.S. in 1940, and with modifications to suit local requirements in the unfederated States. Committees, on which the different communities were represented, were appointed to supervise the organization, and in February, 1941, a European member of the Malayan Civil Service was seconded for full-time service as "Director of Passive Services" for Malaya, with a number of Deputy Directors. Outside the Colony, the powers of the Director were only advisory, and executive control was in the hands of the local authorities.

The feature of the organization was the close co-operation between the many branches of the combined service, and for this purpose an elaborate and efficient telephone service connected a Control Centre with the headquarters and Divisions of each branch, and in the large towns also gave direct communication with military headquarters and air observation centres. Each headquarters had its direct telephone communication with Divisions, Depots and Posts.

As was the case in the United Kingdom, there was some dispute and haggling between the Government and the municipalities of Singapore and Penang concerning the incidence of the cost of enlargement of the municipal services. It was settled in March, 1941, when it was decided that 75 per cent of the additional cost would be defrayed by the Government. All the necessary equipment was ordered, but there seems to have been difficulty in the fulfilment of the requisitions for the equipment of the fire service. From the outset, the entire cost of the evacuation camp, the A.R.P. and the Medical Auxiliary Service fell upon the Government. Early in 1941, when the greater part of expenditure had been incurred, the expense to the Government of the Colony was more than one million dollars on evacuation camps and more than half a million on the other services. Ambulances, stretchers, uniforms, steel helmets and all requirements were provided down to the last detail. There is no information concerning the expenditure in the Malay States, but early in 1941 the F.M.S. Railway Department alone had incurred an expenditure of over half a million dollars, and had estimated for a further expenditure of half a million.

There was an allowance throughout Malaya for part-time work, and pay for full time, and provision for compensation for death or injuries on service. The Personal Injuries (Emergency Provisions) Ordinance, 1941, published in the S.S. *Gazette* of the 23rd December, 1941, contained the "Personal Injuries (Civilians) Scheme, 1941," in which provision was made for injury allowances and disability pensions to members of the Civil Defence organizations and for gratuities and pensions to their widows and dependants. Some

paragraphs, which have the appearance of a Press communiqué, in the *Straits Budget* of the 25th December, 1941, state that it was understood that the scale of allowances was uniform throughout Malaya.

The following brief description of the organization of each branch of Passive Defence gives some idea of the scale and size of the system.

(i) *Corps of Air Raid Wardens.*—European officers of the Police Force were seconded in 1939 in Singapore and Penang for full-time service in making the movement known to the public and in creating the Corps. Elsewhere this duty was undertaken by European unofficials. They quickly recruited enough men for a course of instruction; amongst them were some Europeans, but only such as would be more useful in senior posts in the corps than in the ranks of Volunteer Force or the L.D.C.; and the great majority of the wardens were well educated, English-speaking young Chinese, merchants, tradesmen, shopkeepers, school teachers, secretaries and clerks. After they had been trained and had passed the prescribed examination, they formed a nucleus; and more men were recruited and trained. The training closely followed that in force in the United Kingdom; and, although the use of gas was not expected, included gas instruction and gas drill in some places. After the men had been trained, there were regular lectures, frequent practices, occasional route marches and public parades in order to make the A.R.P. movement publicly known and understood; and at times there were combined exercises, by day or by night, with the other units of the Passive Defence Services. In Penang, the Corps always remained an English-speaking body; in Singapore, in 1941, Chinese, who could not speak English and were generally of the small shop-assistant type, were recruited and were given their training in whatever language was most appropriate. In the big towns everywhere, the men, many of whom had been in their school cadet corps, were sometimes drilled by Army Sergeants, and some of them were trained in traffic control by the Police. In Singapore some of the wardens were given a course of instruction in First Aid.

Sirens were put up in the towns, and regulations were issued for air raid warnings. In Singapore and Penang the sirens were tested regularly every Saturday morning. Other regulations provided for "black-outs" and "brown-outs", and there were frequent compulsory practices, of which the results were officially inspected from the tops of high buildings and from the air. "Brown-outs" which were for practice purposes only, allowed the use of shaded lamps, if practically no light was visible from outside the building. There were other regulations for lights on shipping and in ports, in railway stations and trains, and on every kind of vehicle. In September, 1941, regulations, far more stringent than anything in the United Kingdom, were introduced for fire-watching. Every occupier of a house within a defined

area was made responsible for securing that an adequate number of fire-watchers was at all times on the premises, and that they had specific duties and were provided with the necessary equipment for dealing with incendiary fires, and every occupier had, within 14 days, to submit to the local Chief Air Raid Warden a written scheme for carrying out these obligations and to receive his written approval. Every male person between the ages of 16 and 55 living on the premises was bound to serve in fire-watching without remuneration, but with an allowance for refreshments. Any police officer and any person authorized by a Chief Air Raid Warden might at any time enter and inspect the premises. At first these regulations were unpopular as it was well known that fire-watchers in the United Kingdom were paid; but no concessions were made, and the men soon settled down to the work in a good spirit. These men were known as "roof-spotters" and did particularly good work when Singapore was bombed.

All the various aspects of a warden's duties and of the obligations imposed on the general public by these regulations were set forth succinctly in a series of nine pamphlets published by the Government.

In the larger towns, the system of dividing the town into "Divisions" with a number of Wardens' "Posts" in each "Division", and with Wardens assigned to specific streets or beats, closely followed that in force in the United Kingdom.

In Singapore there were about 3,000 Wardens. At the Control Centre, which was in part of the High Court buildings, most of the officers were Europeans, and in each Division the Chief Warden and his Deputy were Europenas. In Penang, there were approximately 1,000 Wardens, and of this number all except for about a dozen Europeans, five Eurasians, nine Indians and one Malay, were Chinese: the Headquarters were in a part of the Police Office, a four-storeyed ferro-concrete building, and there were five "Divisions" which were sub-divided into about 80 "Posts".

In Malacca, local conditions made it convenient to have combined posts for all branches of Passive Defence. There were Central Headquarters, two Divisional headquarters, four Group headquarters and 36 Posts. At first, there was a considerable number of European Wardens, but later they were taken away for service in the Volunteer Forces or the Local Defence Corps, and in December, 1941, only five were left. Except for them and about ten Indians, all the Wardens, about 250 men, were Chinese. As the only attack, a small one, on Malacca was on the 11th January, 1942, after the Europeans had left Malacca and the Wardens had been disbanded, the Corps had no opportunity of being tested under air attack.

Mention may conveniently be made here of the comprehensive action taken by the Pahang Consolidated Company, Ltd., at its lode tin mine at Sungei Lembing in the interior of the Kuantan district of Pahang. The company organized and staffed a system of First

Aid and Wardens' Posts, manufactured and installed sirens, made all black-out arrangements, installed watchers on the hill-tops with telephones to give warning of aircraft, laid in an emergency water supply, planned communal feeding, prepared underground shelters in the mines, and had practice evacuations of the whole population of the town.

In every town throughout Malaya there was an A.R.P. Service which was organized to suit local requirements. All the Corps were trained to a high standard of efficiency, and the keenness of the officers and men was admirable. The manner in which the Corps acquitted themselves in the invasion is described in Part II (Action) of this narrative.

(ii) *Medical Auxiliary Service.*—The preparations for the defence of Malaya included the voluntary services of women at hospitals and First Aid Posts, and for this purpose informal contact was made between the Medical Department and the European women in every town. The movement started in Singapore in the latter part of 1939, and seems to have made considerable progress before it spread to the rest of Malaya. Though the scheme differed between one place and another, the basic idea seems to have been the formation of a number of St. John Ambulance Brigades (Overseas), and it was not until February, 1941, that a Medical Auxiliary Service (M.A.S.) was created and constituted an integral part of the Medical Department.

This system was modelled on the one in force in the United Kingdom, and it was organized by Medical Officers who had returned to Malaya after studying the methods used in England in the air raids of 1940. The women enrolled for First Aid Service had exactly the same training as in this country. The instruction was given and the examinations conducted by the Medical Officers and Nursing Sisters, and the training included a specified number of hours' work in a hospital and in some places attendance in operating theatres. At first, the instruction was in English only, and the great majority of the personnel consisted of European women. Soon afterwards, Eurasian and English-speaking Asiatic women joined in large numbers. In some places later it was found that the numbers of English-speaking women were insufficient to staff the required number of First Aid Posts, and instruction was given in Chinese by Chinese Medical Officers. There were also courses in Home Nursing. Only a limited number of women, mostly Europeans, took this course, which aimed at providing auxiliary nurses for the hospitals and not for the First Aid Posts. The Ambulance Corps personnel was English-speaking non-European men with a few European officers, and the training was given in English. In some places, the training was later given in other languages.

The members of each Post and Depot met regularly once a week for practice, and the women also met once a week to make bandages,

dressings and swabs, which were sterilized and stored at the hospitals. When the women talked over their work at the bandage classes and before or after practices, some of our informants were impressed by a difference between the European and the Chinese women in their views of the possibility of war reaching Malaya. The majority of European women seem to have been so influenced by the Government propaganda concerning the defences of Malaya that they found it difficult to believe that the Japanese would venture to attack the country. The Chinese women, on the other hand, were firmly convinced that an attack was inevitable. They knew what China had suffered for years past at the hands of the Japanese; they realized vividly what an invasion would mean to Malaya, and their belief that the Japanese would wreak a special vengeance upon any Chinese man or woman who had taken active part in its defence made them all the more determined to do everything within their power. Whatever the women may have thought of what the future might hold for Malaya, all of them—Europeans, Chinese, Eurasians, and Indians alike—worked wholeheartedly together to make the M.A.S. an essential part of the Passive Defence of the country.

Combined exercises of all branches of Passive Defence were a feature of the general organization. A practice "brown-out" night would be chosen: the Auxiliary Fire Service would extinguish prepared fires, the Air Raid Wardens would deal with incendiaries, and the Medical Auxiliary Service would attend to a number of willing "casualties".

Singapore.—Here the M.A.S. had between two and three thousand members. The town was organized in "Divisions", and in each Division there was a combined First Aid Post and Ambulance Depot, a number of First Aid Posts, and some First Aid Points. Generally at each Depot there were four motor ambulances of different types (many of them buses converted to carry four stretchers), a number of private cars, owned and driven by the women members of the M.A.S., for the less seriously injured, and numbers of stretcher parties. There were also First Aid Posts, staffed by M.A.S. women, at the three great hospitals—the General, Kandang Kerbau, and Tan Tock Sen—and at each hospital wards were reserved for air raid casualties. At each First Aid Post there was a Medical Officer in charge and a trained nurse. By August, 1940, there were 24 First Aid Posts. There were also at many of the Government Offices and the premises of the large commercial firms, where numbers of women were employed, First Aid Posts staffed by these women for treatment of any casualties amongst the employees.

Penang.—The organization was the same, with a First Aid Post at the General Hospital and Depots and Posts in three different parts of the town, all of them staffed by the M.A.S. personnel with

a Medical Officer and trained nurse at each. Here, too, wards for air raid casualties were kept empty for air raid casualties.

Kuala Lumpur.—This town had four "Divisions", with Ambulance Depots and First Aid Posts in each. At one Post, the women were nearly all Europeans, at two others the number of Europeans and non-Europeans was about equal, and at the fourth they were almost all Chinese. There was also a Transport Section with about 25 European and a few Chinese and Eurasian women drivers for ambulances and lorries. In August, 1941, the M.A.S. numbered about 500, with about 80 European women and about 80 non-European women; and the others, with a few European men, were Asiatic men. By December, 1941, the number had risen to about 900. The Railway Workshops at Sentul, about four miles from Kuala Lumpur, maintained an independent Passive Defence Organization complete in itself. With the exception of the wives of some planters in the vicinity, the members were the railway employees and their families. The railway school was equipped as a centre, and the A.R.P., A.F.S., M.A.S., Auxiliary Transport and Burial and Demolition Squads were accommodated in it under the supervision of a European Lady Medical Officer and three non-European Medical Officers. It had three motor ambulances. About 80 English-speaking Asiatic women passed the examinations and took the hospital course. There were over 100 Indians in the Ambulance section, and in all about 500 men and women were attached to this Centre.

Malacca.—In this Settlement, the local organization has been mentioned in connection with the Corps of Air Raid Wardens. Almost every available European woman served in the M.A.S., or in some other form of war service.

Kedah.—Alor Star, the capital of Kedah, had a very small European population. In 1940 the European women offered to form a St. John Ambulance Brigade, and were officially informed that there were so few of them that practical use could not be made of their services. The First Aid Post in the town was entirely staffed by non-European men, and four ambulances were supplied to it. In the towns of Sungei Patani and Kulim (in Central and South Kedah) there was a very efficient M.A.S. organization, in which most of the European women served.

Kelantan.—In Kota Bahru, the capital, which also had a very small European population, a unit of European and non-European women and Asiatic men formed a M.A.S. unit and almost every European woman served in it.

Teluk Anson.—This town, the headquarters of the Lower Perak District, may be taken as a typical example of the "out-district" towns, of which many are scattered throughout the peninsula. The district

is a large one, with many rubber estates at considerable distances from the town. Of about 35 European women in the district, about 25 served in the M.A.S., and some of them travelled between 10 and 15 miles to attend training and practices. Some of the other women lived so far away from the town that it was impossible for them to attend, some were unfit for service and three enrolled as auxiliary telephone operators. In this town there was a very large number of non-European men and women in every branch of Passive Defence, and the combined practices were carried out with such vigour that on two occasions they went to the length of a practice evacuation of every house in the town, and this, with the good-natured assistance of the householders, was accomplished in a very short time.

On the same general lines, and with local variations, there was a Medical Auxiliary Service in every town in which there was a sufficient number of European women to form a nucleus and to give the initiative. In the Passive Defence organisation, the First Aid section of the M.A.S. was the one which was essentially women's work. Unfortunately, it is not possible to give any figures of the number of European women in the M.A.S. in Singapore and Penang. Official figures are not obtainable, and the women who were serving at any Post in these two great towns knew little of the numbers at any other Post. Every letter that has been received from women who took a part in these services has been written upon the work done by the European and non-European women as a body, and has touched upon the writer's personal share in it only as an example of what others were doing; and all are unanimous in saying that almost every European woman who was not prevented by the cares of small children or by ill-health was serving in M.A.S. or in war work of some kind. The women of all the other communities will be the first to say that, if it had not been for the initiative of the European women, M.A.S. could never have started in Malaya, and that, if it had not been for their enthusiasm and inspiration, it could not have contarly all being. On the last and most important point, all writers are on in Firus; they stress the genuine feeling of the complete equali great numbmmunities in the common work, the real comradeshipal to give thal friendship that began in it and continued all through e pleasure and pride that they all took in working together s and Fspirit.

One instance of the sery may be mentioned. In Singapore, when it was suggested that it might be more convenient to staff one First Aid Post entirely with Chinese, the Chinese women unanimously said that they wished to continue working with the European women.

(iii) *Other Branches of the Passive Defence Service.*—The various other services comprised in Passive Defence require only brief mention.

Auxiliary Fire Services.—At dates varying between 1939 and 1941, these were organized in every town by the local chief of the fire brigade.

In his annual report for 1940, the President of the Singapore Municipality stated that an Auxiliary Fire Service had been inaugurated in March, 1939, and had continued its training throughout 1940. Auxiliaries, recruited in complete crews from 18 prominent business firms, formed the greater part of the service, and the interest displayed by these firms had contributed to the general efficiency. He said that difficulty had been experienced in obtaining European recruits to be trained as officers as other branches of the Civil Defence Services had left few suitable men. As a general rule throughout Malaya the men were in two grades, the skilled firemen and the unskilled labourers enrolled to assist them. In some places the training was so arduous that the work was not popular and it was not easy to recruit the required number of men, but with the active help of the Chinese householders, who realized the danger to their property, this difficulty was overcome. Uniforms were provided by the Government or municipality, which also supplied the additional fire engines and equipment. The demands of the military authorities for service in the Volunteer Forces and Local Defence Corps left few Europeans available for this service, but men who were over military age were enrolled. In every way, this was a very keen and efficient service.

Auxiliary Transport.—Apart from the transport of the A.R.P. service and the M[illegible] large number of persons, principally European women, was e[illegible] every town for every kind of transport that might be expe[illegible] any emergency.

Demolition and Debris Squads.—These consisted of the permanent labour force of the municipal engineers' department, with such additional labour force as might be required. The Squads were assigned to differe[illegible] positions in the towns under the officials and foremen of the depar[illegible], and were given instructions in their duties. In Singapore, this service suffered from the lack of European officers. Stations at three different places were organized, and at each there was a European engineer in charge, aid[illegible] about six Asiatic overseers or foremen and about 400 labourers as entire[illegible] all that was allowed by the military authorities, and every supplie[illegible] ropeans had to do two hours, drill with the Local Defence Corps and St[illegible] evening. Elsewhere there seem to have been few Europe[illegible] which [illegible] vice.

Breakdown and Repair Gangs.—These were organized in many towns by the departments concerned for emergency [illegible]s to electrical power stations, water mains and bridges. The men who were all skilled artisans or unskilled labourers, received special training and practical exercises.

Burial Squads.—These generally consisted of selected labourers from the conservancy departments of the municipalities. In Kuala Lumpur, a number of Chinese tin miners enrolled for this service.

(4) Miscellaneous Services

Brief mention may be made of some services which were not a part of the "Passive Defence" organization and personnel, but were connected with the Civil Defence of Malaya.

(i) *Auxiliary Police Force.*—In order to support Passive Defence, an Auxiliary Police Force was constituted in Singapore, and in March, 1941, it was decided to increase its numbers from 130 to 250 men, including 15 officers. Applications to join came in mostly from the Chinese, with a fair number of Indians and Malays. In Kedah, in August, 1941, there was a uniformed "Civil Police Force" of 2,200 men, and 1,500 of them were "Estate Police". The duty of the latter force was to keep order on the estates and in the vicinity, to act as Traffic Police and generally to help the regular Police. All classes, from estate managers to ordinary labourers, served in this force. There was an Auxiliary Police Force in Johore, but information concerning the numbers and nationalities in it is not available. There is no information of similar forces in other Settlements or States at the stage of "Preparation". After the Japanese invasion, when large numbers of Europeans were evacuated from the Northern States into Kuala Lumpur and Singapore they were enrolled as Auxiliary Police.

(ii) *Blood-transfusion Service.*—At an early stage of the preparations, a very elaborate and efficient organization was instituted, under central control, and with branches in the hospitals all over Malaya, and it was mainly staffed by European women. The plasma was sent to the General Hospital in Singapore and the Medical Research Institute at Kuala Lumpur. At first, the blood donors were mainly soldiers and European men and women, but later many Chinese and Eurasian women became donors. In Singapore alone, so early as July, 1941, there were 3,000 blood donors. The women drivers who took them to and from the hospitals were nearly all Europeans, and they were required to pass an examination in First Aid. When there were heavy casualties in Singapore, great numbers of Chinese men queued up at Tan Tock Seng Hospital to give their blood.

(iii) *Air Raid Shelters and Evacuation Camps.—Singapore.*—The population of this great seaport in 1939 was about one million people, of whom about 450,000 were in a densely congested area. A committee, on which all authorities were represented, was appointed to report on the problem of air raid shelters. It is generally understood, but this cannot be stated authoritatively, that at this time the preparations against air attack were based on a belief that the main danger would be that of night-bombing, and that the air defence of the island would be such that any daylight bombing would be unlikely. The problem of shelters was difficult: on the one hand, the congested area was only

a few feet above sea-level, the few areas of small isolated hillocks in the vicinity were occupied by Chinese graveyards, and even to them the access in any alarm lay along crowded streets; and on the other hand, the high ground was in the residential area and occupied by Europeans and wealthy Asiatics, who could erect private shelters in their gardens, and the provision of public shelters there would have been resented as preferential treatment. The committee reported that the water level made it impossible to build underground shelters in the congested area, and that for many reasons it was not practicable to build overground shelters. Lack of space was the great obstacle. It would have been necessary to acquire compulsorily a number of houses in each street, to demolish them and to erect shelters on their sites. The housing shortage had been acute for many years, and the dis-housing and re-housing of a very considerable percentage of the Chinese population would have been very difficult; and, at a time when there was no suggestion of Japan entering the war, would have been strenuously opposed, not only by the people concerned, but by the whole community. Lack of material was another difficulty: the urgent requirements of the military authorities for cement, sand and skilled labour had created an acute shortage. The expense, moreover, would have been enormous: one unofficial estimate was seventeen million dollars. In the circumstances, the Government decided not to build public shelters.

The decision was reviewed towards the end of 1940, and another committee was appointed. This committee reported that it was impossible to build shelters for the whole population of the congested area, and recommended that accommodation should be provided for as many as possible. The recommendation overlooked the danger of rioting and fighting amongst a panic-striken mob, trying to obtain admission, and of suffocation amongst an overcrowded pack of people inside.

Only those who know the four-storeyed old, and jerry-built brick houses of the congested area of "China-town" and the narrow streets in which they stand, can realize how difficult it would be to reach a shelter, and what a death-trap even a completely bomb-proof shelter (if such a thing were possible) would be with buildings ablaze around it. The Government decided that these dangers were far greater than could properly be faced, and adhered to its former decision that public shelters in the town were impossible. The shortage of material and labour, which had become still more acute, did not affect the decision, which was influenced to some extent by the reports of the disasters caused by H.E. and incendiary bombs in the towns of England. To the suggestion that the hillocks should have been tunnelled for shelters there were several objections. Being of soft laterite, they would have required more reinforcement of steel, cement and hard timber than overground shelters of similar capacity: they were too far away to be really useful:

and as they could only have accommodated a fraction of the people who might fight for admission and suffocate after it, they would have been dangerous. Dispersal of the people of the congested areas to the Evacuation Camps, which are mentioned in a later paragraph, seemed to be the only solution.

The Singapore Harbour Board, an independent authority, also decided not to erect shelters along its extent of some miles of great wharves; and the decision has been criticized. Here it would not have been difficult to put up overground shelters which would have been proof against machine-gunning, splinter and blast, and indeed against anything except a direct heavy hit. These shelters would have provided a refuge for troops and civilian passengers embarking and disambarking in an air raid. They would also have minimized the dispersal of the dock-side labour force during a raid. What happened was that when there was an "alert" the whole labour force dispersed indiscriminately, that often it did not return until the next day, and that sometimes it never came back. With air-raid shelters, the labour force could have resumed duty when an "all-clear" sounded. For some days before the capitulation of Singapore, the whole of the dock-side area had been completely abandoned by the labour force, from its fear of air raid attacks, and there is not the slightest doubt that its morale had been destroyed after the first bombing raid by the lack of air raid shelters combined with the absence of protection from the air. Though no civilian population could have been expected to stand up to the continuous bombing which the docks suffered from the latter part of January onwards, it is reasonable to believe that the behaviour of the labour force would have been different if it had had some measure of protection.

The Government, the Municipality and the Harbour Board built shelters at their offices for the protection of the staffs employed there, and shelters at the houses of the employees. Very strong overground shelters were built by some private engineering firms for the protection of their Asiatic labour, skilled and unskilled. Every effort was made to protect all public buildings by additional brickwork, sandbags, etc., against blast, splinter and fire; and the banks and commercial firms took similar action. In the residential area, the Europeans and wealthy Asiatics were urged by the Government to build shelters in their gardens. Before the Japanese attack, comparatively few did so, partly from the difficulty of obtaining material and labour, and partly from honest doubts of there being any attack; and, after the attack, it was nearly impossible to obtain labour or material.

The policy of dispersal from the congested area was the same as that of the Netherlands East Indies. Two evacuation camps were built with water supply from a main, electric light and kitchens for communal feeding. One for the reception of people whom it might be necessary to evacuate from the South-East part of the island in the event of an

attack on the coast had accommodation for about 75,000, and the other, for people who might be evacuated from the congested area of the town, had accommodation for 260,000. Large supplies of food were laid in, and camp commandants and camp wardens were appointed and trained in their duties. The buildings, in long rows, were made with light timber and *atap* (thatch) roofs, were highly inflammable and open to the danger of being mistaken from the air for military camps. When they were used, the evacuees preferred to camp at some distance from them in the daytime, and go there at night for food. They were never bombed by the Japanese. It was, of course, impossible to accommodate the whole population in these camps, but it is certain that the Government did everything that was practicable.

At the stage of preparations for defence, "slit-trenches" were not made in the open spaces and recreation fields. The objections to them were that they would have been breeding-grounds for the malaria-carrying *anophelines*, and would have made it impossible to use these grounds for training the Volunteers and Local Defence Corps, for parking military vehicles, and for camping grounds for the troops. Moreover, these open trenches were so simple that they could be dug in a very short time. At a meeting of the Singapore Municipal Commissioners on the 19th December, 1941 (eleven days after the Japanese attack had begun), the President announced that the municipality had decided to build slit-trenches as public shelters, that a start had already been made at two places on rising ground, and that more would be built wherever suitable places could be found. All householders were urged to build similar trenches for their own use wherever suitable ground could be found, and the danger on *anopheline* breeding was stressed. The trenches were 11 feet long, 3 feet deep and 3 feet wide at the bottom, sloping slightly outward at the top. They were little used, as anyone caught in the open in an air raid preferred the greater safety of the deep concrete drains on both sides of every street.

In Malaya the rainfall is so heavy, and in Singapore the greater part of the town is so little above sea level that on the main roads leading out of the town the concrete drains are almost small canals. They are about 20 feet wide and 10 feet deep, with concrete bridges over them at frequent intervals at every cross-road. On both sides of every street there are concrete drains about six feet deep and three feet wide, with stone or cement slabs over them at every few yards to give access to the houses. When Singapore was bombed it was into these drains, and if possible under the cover of the bridges or slabs, that everyone caught in the streets during a raid plunged for protection.

Penang.—Here, too, the water level in the congested area of the town made it impossible to build underground shelters, and there were the same insuperable difficulties in building an adequate number of public overground shelters. Exactly the same action was taken by the

Government, the Municipality and the commercial firms to protect their buildings in every way against blast, splinters and fire, and to provide such shelter as was possible for their employees. For the same reasons very few private persons build shelters for their own use. After the hideous casualties mentioned in Part II (Action) of this narrative, the casualties from machine-gunning were not heavy, as everyone stayed indoors during an "alert" or, if caught out of doors, leapt for safety into one of the deep concrete roadside drains. Moreover, the greater part of the Asiatic population evacuated the town for the safety of the rural areas withing a few days of the first air raid.

Kuala Lumpur.—There were public air raid shelters in the market square, along the river embankment and in other places where they did not interfere with traffic. The common type was a big and strong concrete cylinder covered with earth; and in places, dwarf brick walls erected a few feet away from buildings afforded a space in which people could find protection from splinter and blast. In the open public spaces there were shallow open trenches. Both in the residential area and the Asiatic part of the town, private persons built shelters for their own use. The Government offices and most of the commercial firms had shelters for the use of their employees.

Ipoh.—Near the Government offices there were a few public underground shelters, covered with timber and earth, and each with a capacity for about 20 or 30 persons. In the People's Park there were some slit trenches covered with *atap* leaves. Some of the smaller towns in the peninsula had public shelters, but most of these towns escaped an air raid.

(iv) *Women's Work in Offices.*—The preparations for the defence of Malaya involved the creation of new Government Departments such as Food Control and Censorship, and, as every European man who was not essential to his own normal employment was enrolled in the Volunteer Forces or Local Defence Corps, it was necessary to call upon women to volunteer for employment. The overwhelming majority of them were Europeans. Figures are available only in respect of the Censor's office, where there were about 100 European women in Singapore and about 25 in Penang on a full-time basis, and many more in part-time. The work was responsible, and required the closest attention, and the hours were long, with frequent unpaid overtime. On Malayan standards of the cost of living, the pay of 125 dollars a month was almost a nominal one, and was about half the pay of a senior Asiatic clerk. Very large numbers of European women were employed in the other Government offices and at naval, military and air force headquarters, where they were teleprinters, typists, confidential secretaries, and entrusted with the secret cyphers. Almost all these women had to manage their own households, in which, in many cases, evacuee women and children were billeted, and many of them had small

children. Others were women who assumed duty on being evacuated from some town in the peninsula.

In the banks, the staff were so reduced by mobilization in the Volunteers and L.D.C. and by rotational duty in A.R.P., that it was found necessary to employ a number of European and Eurasian women in an attempt to ease the strain. Some of them were highly efficient, but most of them were untrained and there was no time to train them. All of them gave their best service in very different conditions. The Singapore banks were doing business until the very end, and the women carried on until they were evacuated.

In Penang, some of the women remained at work in the Censor's office after the general Government evacuation of European women; they helped in the destruction of the records and code books, and were evacuated with the military forces. As the evacuation from the peninsula progressed, Government departments, banks, shipping offices and commercial firms transferred their business to Singapore and there was an increasing demand for more women. In the last days of the defence of Singapore, the naval, military and air force headquarters were so dependent upon the service of these women that it was impossible to evacuate them when the other Europeans left, and some of them are now amongst the women interned in Singapore. Too high a tribute cannot be paid to the work done by all these women.

(v) *Canteens.*—As soon as troops from overseas began to arrive in Malaya, arrangements, which became more and more elaborate as time went on and the number of arrivals increased, were made for their comfort by the people of Malaya. In Singapore an Anzac Club for troops from Australia was financed by Australians and New Zealanders living in Malaya, and was opened in May, 1941. It was accommodated at first in part of the Victoria Memorial Hall, and later in a building presented by a local resident. A Red Shield Club under the auspices of the Salvation Army was opened in Singapore in August, 1941, for Service men. It was helped by a grant of five thousand dollars from International Salvation Army funds and a grant of ten thousand dollars from the Singapore Turf Club, and erected on a site provided by the Government. The Y.M.C.A. and the Presbyterian Church had similar clubs in Singapore, and at the railway station there was a large canteen for the special purpose of troops as they arrived or left by train. Some of these clubs were large, and had spacious accommodation for meals, baths, reading and writing rooms, library and games room. In Penang, the Rotary Club opened a hostel with meals and accommodation for 250 men. In Kuala Lumpur there was another Anzac Club in a large wooden building erected by public subscription, and a United Services Canteen put up by the Ex-Service Association of Malaya near the railway station, where it specialized

in providing meals for the troops passing through the town by train. This list relating to the three large towns is far from complete, and only serves to give an idea of what was done. In every small town of the peninsula, where troops were stationed in the vicinity, there was some club or canteen. They were mainly staffed by European women who worked unremittingly for long hours in serving meals for the troops. There were also mobile canteens, most of which were staffed by European women and others by Chinese women, which provided refreshments to the Air Raid Wardens and men of the Fire Service on night duty. All these canteens, fixed and mobile, were established and maintained by subscriptions. Mention may be made of a Salvation Army mobile canteen, manned by two young Indians, which served coffee to the troops under enemy artillery fire in the last few days of the defence of Singapore. When the Brigadier asked the lads whether they were not afraid, they expressed more concern for their crockery, of which they said they had lost half, than for their personal safety.

(vi) "*Patriotic War Fund.*"—As soon as Great Britain was involved in war with Germany, a "Patriotic War Fund" was started in Malaya. It was supported enthusiastically by every community, and every kind of entertainment that would raise money was set on foot, and was exempt from entertainment tax. Many millions of dollars were raised in this way: some of it was for the relief of distress in China, and £375,000 was remitted to London for distribution by the Malayan Information Agency, and a further £575,000 was remitted to the same agency for a "Malayan Bomber Fund".

In this connection, mention may be made of the stories which were current in this country, soon after the fall of Singapore, of the dancing and gaiety in that town and in the towns elsewhere. Much of it was directly connected with the devices for raising money for these charities, but there was also a great deal of private entertainment to the officers and men of the British and Australian regiments. Special arrangements were made by committees for hospitality and entertainment to officers and men who came into the towns on short leave from duty at outposts. Apart from hospitality on a generous scale to visitors, every European man and almost every available European woman was engaged in some form of war service in place of, or in addition to, normal work at office or at home, and some of them felt that there was no reason why, after the day's work was done, the ordinary club life of every European community in the tropics all over the world should be abandoned. Others gave up all club life and entertainments. Even in Singapore, the European hotels and clubs are few and suffice only for the normal peace-time needs; and, when the town was packed with soldiers, a newcomer, however fair-minded, might be excused for forming a wholly erroneous impression of the crowd of officers and civilian men and women in any hotel or club,

and for passing his impression on to the people of other countries. Any tendency to restrict amusement would have been noticed at once by all the Asiatic communities which would inevitably have interpreted it as defeatism amongst the Europeans. It will not be forgotten that in the days of "The Battle of Britain", when our country was in the gravest peril of its history, the dancing and gaiety in London were hailed by our newspapers as a sign of the indomitable spirit of the nation.

PART II.—ACTION

(1) The Volunteers and the Local Defence Corps

It is outside the scope of this narrative, which is concerned only with the Civil Defence of Malaya, to give any account of the part taken by the Volunteers and the Local Defence Corps in the military operations for the defence of the country. This can only be done when the military history of these operations is written. It may be said, however, that everywhere the Volunteers, all of whom had been called up on the 1st December, 1941 (see Part I), went into action alongside the regular forces, retreated with them down the peninsula, and took part in the defence of Singapore. One armoured car company crossed the Johore Causeway a few hours before it was blown up. With the exception of a small body of picked men, who were specially selected for service with the regular army elsewhere, and a few men who managed to make their escape individually after the capitulation, all the Europeans are now prisoners of war.

On the 19th December, 1941, the formation in the State of Negri Sembilan (but apparently nowhere else) of an "Estate Auxiliary Corps", under the Local Defence Corps, was notified in the *Gazette*. The Corps was to be uniformed, and its duties were to collect and transmit to the police any information concerning enemy activity, the landing or crashing of aircraft, parachutists, espionage, sabotage, enemy agents and subversive activities; to counteract false rumours and despondency; and to maintain order on the estates, and generally to assist the Government. As this State was occupied by the enemy within the next month, the Corps had little opportunity to function.

In December, 1941, a Chinese Volunteer Regiment was formed in Singapore and later placed under the command of Mr. J. G. Dalley, a European Police Officer who could speak Chinese. After a few weeks' training, it went into action in the defence of Singapore.

On the 20th January, 1942, about 3,000 Chinese, including about 2,000 members of the overseas Chinese Volunteer, Corps gathered (according to a report in the *Straits Budget* of the 29th January) in the square at Club Street, and unanimously passed a resolution for the supply of Government assistance in means to enable them to fight against the Japanese. Amongst others, a representative of the Women Workers' Anti-Japanese Association addressed the meeting, and promised that the association would make the uniforms. The meeting, which had been organized by the Singapore Chinese Anti-Aggression Council, then paraded the town with the flags of the Allied Nations.

Whenever it became necessary to evacuate any area in the peninsula, the problem of the Malay, Eurasian, Chinese and Indian volunteers was one of great difficulty. The European units knew that their womenfolk had already been sent further South by the Government, and that they could retreat with the regular forces without any fear for their safety. It was impossible to evacuate the entire population, for there was no place that could receive it; and any non-European unit that retreated had perforce to leave its womenfolk behind it. The choice offered to the non-European units in Penang is mentioned in the part of this narrative relating to the evacuation of Penang. It is understood, although definite information is lacking, that a similar choice of continued military service or disbandment was offered to the non-European units elsewhere.

The attitude of the Government towards the Volunteers was not always sympathetic. One woman writes that her husband, a planter who had been a Volunteer since 1927, wrote to the Federal Secretary, F.M.S., in October, 1941, to enquire what provision the Government intended to make for the safety of the wives and families of Volunteers when they were mobilized, especially in the case of those living in remote estates, and that the official reply was that Volunteers must make their own arrangements as the Government could accept no responsibility in respect of their dependants. The fact that mobilization would make this impossible was overlooked by the Government.

A notification in the *S.S. Gazette* of the 30th December, 1941, contained a declaration by the Governor in Council under the Volunteer Force Ordinance, the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve Ordinance and the Volunteer Air Force Ordinance that gratuities and pensions to members of these Forces and to their widows and dependants should be fixed at the same rates as were payable under the "Personal Injuries (Civilians) Scheme, 1941". This scheme has been mentioned in connection with Passive Defence. The dependants of all Volunteers now prisoners of war receive from the Malayan Governments, whenever it is possible to communicate with them, allowances on the same scales as those granted in the Regular Service.

Though the Volunteers were called up by a single proclamation by the Governor, the calling up of the Local Defence Corps in each place was a matter for the local authorities. Thus, in the F.M.S., the Local Defence Corps were called up on the 5th December, 1941, but in the colony, the Singapore and Penang Corps were called up on the 8th December, when the Japanese attack had begun, and in Malacca on the 11th December. In some places the Corps took part in the military operations alongside the regular forces and the Volunteers. In Penang they were at the disposal of the military authorities, and were unable to render much-needed assistance to the Civil Government in the chaotic conditions which arose when the Asiatic population had

evacuated the town, the entire labour force had dispersed, and looting was out of control. In Perak, when the skeleton Government had retreated to Tanjong Malim, in the southern extremity of the State, the Local Defence Corps was its principal support. In Selangor, the Corps was invaluable both to the military and civil authorities, and in the two days which preceded the evacuation of Kuala Lumpur, when the police force was being disbanded, the civil government relied entirely upon it, but apparently did not use it to stop the looting. In Negri Sembilan and Malacca, the services of the Corps were indispensable to the preparations for evacuation. As each State was evacuated, the Corps retreated southward as a military unit. When all the Corps were finally concentrated in Singapore, they carried out military duties. A few days before the capitulation it was decided to demilitarize them, but they continued to function until the last minute as an organized, but unarmed, body. They provided stretcher parties for wounded soldiers and civilians, helped in the removal and disposal of dead bodies, and rendered every assistance that they were called upon to perform under the incessant shelling and bombing that preceded the fall of Singapore. As the Corps were, under the Volunteer Forces legislation, an intergal part of the Volunteer Forces, the members are entitled to the same treatment as the Volunteers in respect of gratuities, wound pensions, widows' pensions and relief to dependants of prisoners of war.

(2) The Passive Defence Services

Singapore was taken by a land attack, which was preceded by bombing of culminating and continuous ferocity, and in the last few days by intensive shelling. Penang suffered appalling civilian casualties and heavy damage to property by fire from one great air raid, and was bombed daily until it was evacuated by the military forces before any land attack developed. Ipoh had four air raids; the first was slight, and the Asiatic population had practically deserted the town before the other raids, which did much damage to property, took place. Kuala Lumpur had only two slight air raids. Some of the smaller towns had raids, mainly calculated to terrorize the civilian population. Everywhere the Japanese concentrated their attention on the destruction of the aerodromes near the towns. Inasmuch as the enemy attack began in the North and continued down the peninsula, it will be convenient to record the part taken by the Passive Defence Services in that sequence of events. The narrative would be incomplete without mention of the services rendered by some Government Departments, such as the telephone service. As the "scorched earth" policy was a part of Passive Defence, it will be mentioned in this connection.

(i) *Kelantan*

Kelantan is the most northerly Malay State on the east coast of the peninsula, and adjoins the Siamese province of Singora. It was the first place in Malaya to be attacked by the Japanese, and the street lamps were alight in Kota Bahru, the capital, when the Japanese opened a landing attack on the coast, a few miles away, at about 1 a.m. on the 8th December, 1941. There is, at present, no record of the action taken by the Passive Defence Services: the reason for this is that the European women who have reached this country were evacuated within a few hours by the instructions of the British Adviser in accordance with the orders of the military authorities, and that the European men who remained until they, too, in the like manner, were evacuated, are now interned in Singapore. (Particulars of the evacuation are given in the following part of this narrative.) The enemy occupied the aerodrome the same evening, after bitter fighting and a heroic rearguard defence, which covered the evacuation of the aerodrome personnel, and no attempt was made to defend Kota Bahru town. The European male population was ordered by the Government, on military instructions, to leave the Kota Bahru area on the 9th December for Kuala Krai at some distance in the interior on the railway line, and the next day it was ordered to leave Kuala Krai by the train to the Federated Malay States. Four European civil servants remained at Kuala Krai for a few more days, when they, too, were ordered to leave. In the circumstances it may be assumed that there was no opportunity for the Passive Defence Services to come into action.

(ii) *Kedah*

Kedah and the miniature State of Perlis, which adjoins it on the North, are the two most northerly Malay States on the west coast of the peninsula, and have a common frontier with the Siamese provinces of Puket and Singora. On Monday, the 8th December, 1941, at 6.30 a.m. enemy bombs were dropped on Jitra in the North of the State. At 7.20 a.m. and again at 9.30 a.m., the aerodrome at Sungei Patani, in Central Kedah, was bombed. The aerodrome at Alor Star, the capital, in North Kedah, was bombed at 11 a.m. At the first alarms, in the three principal towns (Alor Star, Sungei Patani and Kulim), the Air Raid Wardens, the Auxiliary Fire Service, the Medical Auxiliary Service and all the other branches of Passive Defence went to their posts; and all showed keenness and efficiency. The town of Alor Star was not bombed, but there were some casualties at the aerodrome, which was bombed again on the 9th and 10th. All were taken to the hospital, from which all except serious cases had been evacuated some

days before, and received prompt attention. As has been stated above, there were neither European nor non-European women in the M.A.S., and, in view of the demands for Europeans in the Volunteer Force and L.D.C., there were probably few European men in the other branches of Passive Defence. The evacuation of the European women (directed by the Government on military orders) on the next morning did not affect the Passive Defence Services, as the European female staff of the hospital was allowed to stay. On the 12th December, the Government, also on military orders, directed the immediate evacuation of the entire European personnel of Alor Star hospital. All the non-European members of the hospital staff, including servants, were offered transport by convoy to the South for themselves and their families, and the great majority accepted the offer. The convoy also took all the hospital material that it could pack. Five Indian and Ceylonese Medical Officers decided to stay at the hospital, and some of the dressers preferred to remain with them.

In the meantime, there had been casualties amongst the Asiatic employees at Sungei Patani aerodrome which had been heavily bombed on the 8th, 9th and 10th December. The only nursing sister at the Government General Hospital in the town happened to be on short local leave, and a local planter's wife, a trained nurse, took her place when the wounded were brought in from the aerodrome and continued to work with her after her return from leave. At 10 p.m. on the 12th, an order was given for the immediate evacuation of all patients. After they had been placed in ambulances, and all were ready to move off, the order was countermanded, and the patients were put back in the wards. Four hours later, the hospital was in such imminent danger that the European Medical Officer and the two nurses were ordered to make their escape while it was possible, and the patients were left in the charge of two Asiatic Medical Officers.

On the 12th December, the Government, again on military instructions, ordered the evacuation of all male European civilians from Alor Star to Kulim, in South Kedah. Their Highnesses the Sultan, and the Regent, the Raja of Perlis, and most of the leading Malay officials accompanied them. By this time, Alor Star, though it had not been bombed, had been nearly deserted, and few shops were open. The Alor Star wardens were then formally disbanded. Most of them were local Malays, and none of them wished to leave their families. In the Auxiliary Transport Service the conduct of the Asiatics, most of whom were Malays, was admirable. They gave every possible assistance in loading the convoys, and many of them, particularly the artisans, travelled with the lorries all the way down the peninsula, and worked hard at every place where the convoys made a stop.

All Europeans were ordered by the Government, on military instructions, to leave Kulim for Perak on the 16th December. Their Highnesses the Sultan and the Regent travelled inland, the Raja of

Perlis went to Perak, and the Malay officials returned to Alor Star. The Kulim Passive Defence Service was thereupon disbanded.

On the following day, the 18th, the fighting was on the line of the Muda River, which separates Kedah from Province Wellesley. It will thus be seen that as no town in Kedah was bombed, the Passive Defence Services, though they were mobilized, had no opportunity of performing any active duty.

(iii) *Penang*

The Air Raid Wardens were called up on the 6th December, 1941. On Monday, the 8th December, the date of the attack upon Kelantan, Kedah, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, enemy aircraft machine-gunned the Penang aerodrome. There is no information concerning the damage done or the opposition from the ground or from the air. On Tuesday, the 9th December, a small formation of enemy planes approaching from the sea flew over the town without any opposition from the air or the ground, and passed on to bomb the aerodrome at Butterworth, on the mainland, a few miles away. There is no information concerning the damage done, but it was probably considerable. On the way over the town, leaflets were dropped warning the Asiatics to evacuate it, as the Japanese were waging war only against "The White Devils". A larger formation passed over the town again on the next day, Wednesday, on its way to Butterworth. Despite the warning of the leaflets, despite the official orders, which everyone knew perfectly well, to keep under cover during an "alert", and despite the efforts of the air-raid wardens and the police to keep them back, the Asiatics poured out of the houses and congregated in thousands on the sea front and the recreation ground where, with a feeling of complete safety, they had a grandstand view of Butterworth aerodrome being "blitzed". The crowd saw a few British planes going in to attack: some of them were brought down without apparent loss to the enemy, and a British pilot was rescued from the sea. The aerodrome is believed to have been completely destroyed.

At about 11 a.m. on the next day, Thursday, the 11th, a formation of 27 enemy bombers again approached from the sea side in a perfect V-shaped formation. It was unopposed, and again the Asiatic population, against which the wardens and the police again were powerless, rushed to the sea-front and recreation ground to see Butterworth aerodrome being blitzed again. As the people gazed up, the bombs fell. At first it sounded as if every bomb had fallen simultaneously; then for some minutes there was an earthquake-like rumble of explosions. The planes passed out of sight, and twenty minutes later reappeared in three separate V-shaped formations of nine, and bombed and machine-gunned. Again they disappeared, and, after half-an-hour, in a perfect V-formation of 27, they reappeared and bombed and

machine-gunned again. When, after rather more than two hours, the attack ceased, there were about 1,000 deaths and about 3,000 seriously wounded. A very large number were in a standing position when they were killed or wounded. This was shown by medical examination of the wounds. There were very few women or children among them. The wardens (mostly English-speaking Chinese) did magnificent work in attending to the wounded and in dealing with the havoc, terror and confusion. There were, as has been stated elsewhere, about 1,000 of them in the island, but not all in the town. As quickly as possible, the wounded were taken to the First Aid posts and the hospital. Numbers of lorries and cars were required, but most of the drivers had run away. The Volunteers and Local Defence Corps, many of whose members could drive cars, and which, as a body, would have rendered invaluable help in restoring some form of order, were on duty at some distance.

The receiving stations for casualties were the General Hospital and three F.A. Posts. The hospital is a fine building with two four-storeyed blocks, about 1,200 beds, and every modern equipment. For some time all the wards had been cleared of all except serious cases. Two wards with about 200 beds were empty in readiness for casualties, and in all the other wards there were great numbers of empty beds. The permanent staff was five Europeans and 12 non-European physicians and surgeons, a matron, about 15 European nursing sisters and about 90 non-European nurses. The trained additional M.A.S. personnel was about 30. At each F.A. Post, there was a medical officer, a trained sister and a shift of the M.A.S.

In every kind of vehicle about 850 wounded were rushed to the First Aid Posts and the hospital. The others, apparently, were taken to their houses by their friends. At the First Aid Posts, women of all nationalities set to work to bandage the most hideous wounds, and continued at it until they were relieved by the next shift. Most of the cases were taken direct to the hospital. All round the entrance the congregation of vehicles was controlled by the Air Raid Wardens. Inside the hospital everything moved with precision; the wounded were taken to beds or laid on the floor and were tended by the large and competent staff, and the calmness with which the Matron gave her orders inspired all the nurses of the permanent and auxiliary staff. At five operating tables, surgeons worked throughout the day and all the night.

About 200 of the wounded were in such a desperate condition that they died within a few hours of their admission. All the private practitioners came to render their services, and more surgeons and doctors arrived the next day by air from Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. After the first day, the subsidiary First Aid Posts were closed, and their M.A.S. staff was transferred to the hospital. The whole organization, under the charge of Dr. L. W. Evans, the Chief Medical Officer, was

splendidly efficient, and everything that was possible was done for the wounded. For the next few days, more casualties were brought in after every air raid. On the morning of the 15th, low-flying planes machine-gunned the top storeys of the hospital, but no one was hurt.

Great damage was done in the important business centre along the sea front and in the Chinese quarters. One of the first bombs dropped on Penang had a direct hit on the Fire Brigade H.Q., killing several firemen, and another bomb burst a principal water main: and at the outset the municipal fire brigade and an A.F.S. of about 100 men were temporarily put out of action. Fires in the South-East sector of the town soon developed into one large "incident" which was still burning when Penang was evacuated. Fires in other areas were extinguished by the Wardens and the occupiers of houses, and other fires burnt themselves out without spreading. The Fire Brigade and the A.F.S. were regrouped, and did everything that was possible to extinguish the fires caused by the raids of the following days.

A large police station received a direct hit, which killed many Sikh policemen; and that evening most of the Malays and many of the Indians of the police force deserted. All that afternoon and evening and throughout the night, the Asiatics streamed out of the town to seek safety in any part of the countryside and particularly at the foot of Penang Hill. Many went to the Evacuation Camp there, and obtained food from the store. They preferred not to sleep in the huts for fear of bombing, but dispersed nearby. The organization of the camp worked most efficiently with a staff of voluntary European and non-European helpers. Similar arrangements were hastily made for the distribution of food at other places in the suburbs of the town.

In the town, the Government warehouses, in which enormous stocks of rice, flour, tinned milk, and non-perishable foodstuffs had been accumulated, were opened with a staff of European voluntary helpers for an orderly distribution to the public. Bread supplies, however, ceased almost completely, as all the bakers, except at the Singapore Cold Storage Co., had left the town. Though the four great public markets, on which the public had relied for fresh meat, fish, poultry, eggs, vegetables and fruit, closed immediately and did not reopen, there was no shortage of the necessities of life. A free public distribution of food from the Government warehouses began on the 14th December.

Penang was bombed again, but not quite so heavily, on the next day, Friday, the 12th, but the casualties were not many. The town had been nearly deserted by the Asiatic population, and those that remained had learnt the lesson of the previous day and stayed indoors. The bombing and machine-gunning were concentrated on the launches, ferry-boats and native shipping in the harbour, and there were heavy casualties among the crews and the fishermen, both on these craft and in the fishing villages round the town. Two or three British planes

were seen in the air, and it was understood that they had flown up from Singapore. All business in the town ceased completely. Heavy bombing continued every day for the next three days. On the 15th, Monday, it was slight, and there was none on the 16th.

From the first day all the arrangements of the Municipal Health Department for the removal of the dead broke down completely, as all the labour in the Burial Squads deserted after the first air raid. Putrefaction in Malaya is so rapid that a burial takes place within 24 hours. As there was no one else to remove the masses of dead bodies strewn all over the streets and open spaces, the wardens began upon the task, and on the 12th December they obtained the assistance of a military party. Nevertheless great numbers of dead bodies lay in the streets and open spaces. All the Demolition Squads also disappeared immediately after the first air raid.

On the 12th December looting began in the practically deserted Asiatic part of the town. The temptations were enormous: large warehouses and shops of every size had been partially demolished, and their stores of merchandise, clothing and provisions of every kind lay open to access from the streets, and even the undamaged buildings were only protected by wooden shutters. At first the looting was on a small scale, and the wardens, who did their utmost to stop it, had difficulty in distinguishing between looters and people removing their own property. In the next two days, looting became uncontrollable, and the military sent a platoon and a half of Volunteers with three armoured cars to assist the wardens. This was so successful that, by Monday, the 15th, order was mainly restored, and the Asiatic population was beginning to return to the town.

Throughout, the civil administration of the bomb-shattered and partly burning town depended upon the Corps of Air Raid Wardens. In addition to their A.R.P. duties, which included traffic control, the management of the civilians during every "alert", and co-operation with the Auxiliary Fire Service, they took over the duties of the Police Force, did what was possible to stop looting, and gave invaluable support to the organization for the distribution of food.

On the 13th December the Civil Government, on the instruction of the military authorities, carried into effect a method of the evacuation of the European women and children. The arrangements are described in some detail in the "Evacuation" part of this narrative, and all that need be said in the present connection is that, though it was not a compulsory order, yet it was put out as a "Government Plan" in such a manner that almost everyone felt that compliance with it was a public duty. Many of the European women in the M.A.S. accordingly left with real regret and a deep feeling of humiliation, but a certain number declined to fall in with the arrangements and remained on duty at the hospital, and others continued to work in the censor's office and elsewhere. Until the European women were evacuated they provided

a mobile canteen service, which worked all through every night in supplying coffee to the wardens and the firemen, who were drenched with water from their hoses and completely exhausted by the fatigue of almost unceasing work.

The military evacuation of Penang took place on the night of Tuesday, the 16th December, 1941, and at the same time the Civil Government made arrangements for evacuating all Europeans. So far as the Government officials were concerned, it cannot be said whether they had the option of leaving or staying: in respect of the unofficials, it appears to have been an offer of a passage in such circumstances that acceptance was almost inevitable: but the European women were given no option. Nevertheless, the European Theatre Sister, whose name, unfortunately is not given, refused to leave the hospital. Five European members of the M.A.S., who had been living in the hospital and working there day and night, received the order to evacuate. The conditions in the hospital were appalling: the Matron could not spare them: the non-European women were continuing to work: and the European women felt that they would be disgraced if they left the hospital. With the warm approval of the Matron, all five went in a body to see the Resident-Councillor, who told them that it was an order which could not be disobeyed. Further protests were unavailing, and the women left the Residency. All the missionaries and the Salvation Army officers decided to stay with their Asiatic congregations. A few other European men also decided to stay in Penang. So far as is known, the only Government official amongst them was Dr. L. W. Evans, the Chief Medical Officer, who remained at the hospital.

Mention of the Passive Defence Services of Penang would be incomplete without reference to the Government Telephone Exchange, upon which it and the entire civil life and the military organization completely depended. The Telephone Exchange functioned without interruption. During a bombing attack, private calls were not allowed, but every official call was put through immediately. On the 11th, after three days' bombing, a "Shadow-Exchange", which had been prepared some months before, was occupied. The operators (Eurasian and Chinese girls in the daytime, and men at night) came on duty regularly. One girl walked some miles in an air attack, and another left her bomb-damaged house to report for duty. One male operator spent the whole of every day in searching for his evacuated family, and came on duty for the night. In the evening, the girls were taken to their houses in Post Office vans. On the morning of the 15th or 16th (the exact date is uncertain) the Female Supervisor of the Exchange at Butterworth, on the mainland, rang up the Penang Exchange and asked for instructions, as everyone appeared to have left Butterworth. Unfortunately, the name of this modern Casabianca is not given. The Penang Exchange only ceased to function at 1 p.m. on the 16th, when the Electric Power Station was blown up by the military in preparation

for the evacuation. All the operators were then offered a passage to Singapore on the *Pangkor* and other steamers, which left that night with the military forces for Singapore. Some accepted, and assumed duty in the Singapore Telephone Exchange; and others decided not to leave their parents or families.

The military evacuation was carried out in such haste, as the result of the enemy advance on the mainland, that little demolition was done. The works of the Eastern Smelting Company, the Power Station at Prai (on the mainland) and the Cable Station were put out of order, and the telegraph instruments were wrecked. The oil companies ran off their supplies of petrol and oil in Penang, but large quantities were left in warehouses. Whilst the petrol and oil in the large tanks at Butterworth were run off, the small adjoining installation at Bagan Dalam, in which the quantity is believed not to have been large, was overlooked. Quantities of rubber, tin and other valuable articles were also left in warehouses, and fell into enemy hands. It is possible that some pre-arranged "Demolition Scheme" may have failed by reason of the defection of the labour force. Abandoned launches, sailing craft and sampans were scattered all over the harbour at Prai and in the fishing villages, and it may have been impossible to destroy them, but no attempt at destruction seems to have been made. They were of the greatest value to the enemy a few days later for landings on the coasts of Perak and Selangor. The Wireless Station was so little demolished that, within a few days, the Japanese were broadcasting from it. There is no doubt that public opinion of the manner in which demolition was not carried out in Penang prejudiced public opinion of other actions taken by the civil government and by the military authorities in connection with evacuation, and that the combined result has been that the European women have been blamed for a Government evacuation plan in which they were not consulted, and that the European men have been blamed for accepting an offer to leave with the military forces.

The facts of the Passive Defence of Penang can be summed up briefly. The air attack lasted only for the five days, from the 11th to the 15th December, and there was no attack by land. Those of the Asiatic civilians who could take no part in defence measures acted wisely in leaving the town for the suburbs and rural areas, in which there were adequate arrangements for food; and they could have remained there temporarily to await help from Singapore or the inevitable alternative of surrender, if only their property in their houses in the town had been safe against theft, burglary and looting. In this respect, the desertion of the Police Force was disastrous. This might not have occurred, and even if it had occurred the situation might have been saved, if there had been an Auxiliary Police Force with a strong European core to it, or if there had been more Europeans in the Local Defence Corps, and fewer in the Volunteer Force, and if the Local Defence Corps had been stationed in the town. The

instantaneous failure of the Fire Brigade H.Q. was another major disaster, though scattered units worked nobly. Above all, the factor which caused the collapse of the general services of the town (of which the Burial and Demolition Squads were only a part, although a very considerable one) was the entire desertion of the labour force which accompanied the Asiatic population in leaving the town. The casualties of the air raid of the 11th December were heavy enough to shake the morale of any civilian population in its first air raid, and many of the unfortunate victims, except those on the vessels in the harbour, were alone to blame. But the Asiatic civilian population might have recovered from the shock if there had been the slightest sign, or even any hope, of air protection. The "Order of the Day" of the 8th December, displayed on large posters throughout the town, had declared: "We are ready; our preparations have been made and tested; our defences are strong and our weapons efficient."* It was the sudden realization that, so far as Penang was concerned, this statement was wholly untrue that destroyed the morale of the Asiatic population as a whole, and the labour force in particular.

From beginning to end, the corps of Air Raid Wardens worked with amazing courage and devotion, and, of a force of about 1,000 men, 850 were on duty when the practically deserted town was evacuated by the military forces. In the M.A.S., all the women worked splendidly in the ghastly conditions of the hospital, and, when the European women were evacuated in the manner described above, the non-European women were still tending the wounded patients. Throughout, the telephone service was magnificent, and the supply of light and power from the Electric Power Station never failed. In respect of these services, the Passive Defence of Penang fought with real heroism against overwhelming odds, and at the end was still undefeated.

(iv) *Perak*

Perak is the most important of the Malay States, and lies in the West Coast, south of Kedah and Province Wellesley and north of Selangor. The principal towns are Taiping, the capital, and Ipoh, a much larger and more important town. The West Coast railway line runs from the Siamese frontier through Kedah, Province Wellesley (opposite Penang), Taiping, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur (the capital of Selangor), Seremban (the capital of Negri Sembilan), Johore Bahru (the capital of Johore), and thence across the Johore Causeway into Singapore. There were Passive Defence Services in about ten towns and all of them were mobilized on the 8th December. When news

* The full text of the Order of the Day will be found on page 73.

of the Penang casualties reached Perak, the Asiatic population began to leave the larger towns and to seek safety in the rural areas. The great lime-stone caves around Ipoh offered particular attraction. Many Chinese shopkeepers closed and barricaded their premises.

Ipoh had its first air raid at 11 a.m. on the 15th December with bombing and machine-gunning by twelve bombers almost simultaneously with the "alert". A small number of houses were completely or partially destroyed, but only two were burnt out. All other fires were quickly extinguished by the Fire Service and the Wardens, who were on the scene of the fires within a few minutes, and all of whom did excellent work. One bomb just missed the A.R.P. H.Q. and set the houses opposite on fire. Amongst the public there was terror but not panic, and the assistants in one large European shop attended calmly to the crowd which collected in it for safety. About 18 people were killed, and about 90 wounded. All the wounded were taken at once in ambulances, most of which were driven by European women, to the F.A. Post or the hospital, where they received immediate attention, and all the dead were removed. There was no ground or air defence to the town. The aerodrome, some miles from the town was the main object of the attack, and when the "all clear" sounded after about an hour, a great column of black smoke was rising from a petrol dump which had received a direct hit. The compulsory evacuation on the 16th December, the next day, of all the European women, including the Lady Medical Officers and Nursnig Sisters, deprived the M.A.S. in every town of their leading members. Some particulars of that evacuation, in which the orders of the local military authorities were countermanded by the Governor, and the Governor's orders were disregarded by the military authorities, are given in the "Evacuation" part of this narrative. In this connection, three instances of its effect upon M.A.S. will suffice. One woman who was operating the telephone exchange of M.A.S. H.Q. was ordered on the telephone by A.R.P. H.Q. to get her car and to leave the town immediately; when she expostulated, she was told that her work did not matter and that she must comply with Government Orders. Four women who were sharing a house while their husbands were with the Volunteers were given similar orders by A.R.P. H.Q. on the telephone, and when they protested that they could not leave without permission from M.A.S. Headquarters were told peremptorily that the Government Order made such permission unnecessary. Another woman who was asleep in her father's house on a rubber estate, after a night shift at the hospital, was given fifteen minutes' notice by an officer of the Local Defence Corps on the telephone to leave the house, and was unable to communicate with her father who was on duty with the A.F.S. In the small town of Teluk Anson, in Lower Perak, the telephone exchange in which European women were giving voluntary service, was dislocated by a sudden and peremptory

order to all European women to leave the town. The non-European women in the Ipoh M.A.S. seem to have been unable to carry on, but the ambulance section which was unaffected continued to work efficiently. There was another "alert" this day, but the attack was concentrated on the aerodrome. Two European Volunteers who were in the Batu Gajah hospital after the Matron and all the Nursing Sisters had left, spoke with gratitude, when they reached Singapore, of the valiant manner in which the non-European nurses had carried on for the next three days, until the military medical officers took over the hospital.

Two European women in the M.A.S. at Ipoh, who were evacuated to Kuala Lumpur, heard there the instructions to all Perak women to return to their homes, and by taking the first train back to Ipoh managed to evade the military authorities, who stopped everyone else, and resumed duty in the hospital. They found it in a deplorable condition; as soon as the staff of European women had left, all the attendants and many of the subordinate staff had absconded; and Dr. Chitty and the non-European Medical Officers were working to tend the wounded and the dying and to remove the dead. The two women stayed in the hospital, working for two days and nights almost without rest in nursing the wounded and washing the filthy floors, with biscuits and sardines as their only food. It was then decided to evacuate all patients to Tanjong Rambutan Mental Asylum, and the two women were again sent back to Kuala Lumpur, where they worked in the hospital.

The non-European English-speaking men in the ambulance section, nearly all of whom were Chinese and the others were Indians, volunteered to go to Kuala Lumpur, and were sent there. Within an hour of the convoy leaving there was a heavy air raid on the town. On the way the convoy treated a number of casualties from a bombing attack at Tapah Road railway station. The detachment immediately assumed duty with the M.A.S. at Kuala Lumpur and later left with it in a convoy for duty in Singapore. These men received special mention in the Governor's New Year broadcast message. The non-European telephone girls were given the offer of conveyance to Kuala Lumpur for continued service there, and some of them accepted the offer.

After the raid of the 15th December the Asiatic population left Ipoh in such numbers that the town appeared to be nearly deserted, and so few shops were open that the Government was compelled to commandeer some large Chinese shops and to put Europeans and Asiatics in charge to retail food to the people who remained.

All European civilians were ordered to leave Ipoh on the 23rd December, and the town was subjected to heavy bombing and machine-gunning during the day. There was a tremendous explosion when an ammunition train in a siding received a direct hit, oil tanks

near by were set on fire, and traffic through the town was rendered difficult by the blazing buildings on either side of the main road.

Teluk Anson, the principal town of the Lower Perak District, was not bombed until the 25th December, by which time all the Europeans, except four men who were "essential", had been ordered to leave the district. These four men were the District Officer, the Harbour Master, who was chief of the A.R.P. service, the Chief Police Officer, and an electrical engineer in private employment who was in charge of the electrical installations. The bombs were dropped on the waterworks, where five persons were killed and about ten wounded. The main was burst, but quickly repaired. The town was bombed and machine-gunned the next day, and about 40 people were killed and wounded. On both days the A.R.P., M.A.S., and A.F.S. rendered prompt and efficient service, although their numbers had been sadly depleted by the compulsory evacuation of the European personnel and the spontaneous movement of the Asiatics out of the town. The European Medical Officer had been ordered to leave the district, and two Eurasian Medical Officers came from Kuala Lumpur to tend the wounded. As the Government hospital had been closed, a motor ambulance took the casualties to a nearby rubber estate hospital. Amongst the Police Force of nearly 100 men, the desertions were so serious that the remaining men were assembled and offered their choice of being disbanded and surrendering their arms. Only six men decided to continue serving. The District Officer then arranged with the Chinese for an anti-looting squad of Chinese, who were provided with armlets and heavy wooden clubs, and paraded the streets. The Electric Power Station was demolished on the 27th December, except for a supply to the telephone exchange which functioned until the very end. The devotion to duty of a Tamil telephone operator who was the only man left at the vitally important exchange deserves mention. His meals were sent to the exchange, and he was on duty without a break for the last seven days and nights. On the 31st December the military situation was so serious that the four Europeans and the two Eurasian Medical Officers were instructed to leave the town. For some time before this there had been a free distribution of rice and other foodstuffs from the Government warehouses.

The record of the Passive Defence of the State of Perak can be summed up by saying that the military evacuation of the State (except the area on the extreme south, behind the Slim and Bernam Rivers) was preceded by only a little bombing of the towns; that the Medical Auxiliary Services did everything that was possible in the circumstances; and that, as each town was evacuated by the military forces the Air Raid Wardens and Auxiliary Fire Service were disbanded after excellent work.

(v) *Kuala Lumpur*

Kuala Lumpur, by far the largest town in the peninsula, is the capital of the State of Selangor and the federal capital of the F.M.S. At about 6.30 a.m. on the 8th December the news that Singapore had been bombed about two hours earlier reached Kuala Lumpur by broadcast, and the whole of the Passive Defence Services was immediately called up, and all posts were manned within two or three hours. All the duties had been arranged beforehand in shifts, and the M.A.S. worked in three shifts of eight hours. On each shift at each First Aid Post there were about six women, who had passed all their examinations, and about 20 or 30 trained men at the Ambulance Depots. At each place there was a canteen service.

There were several "alerts" on the 8th and 9th December, and after that they sounded almost daily when the aerodrome nearby was being bombed. Bombs were first dropped on the town on the 24th (Christmas Eve), when there was a small number of casualties. These were attended to promptly and efficiently, and all branches of the service carried out their duties calmly and with complete confidence in their leaders. The second raid was on the 26th (Boxing Day), when the Government Offices, the General Post Office, the Mosque, the Selangor Club and the Old Police Barracks (which contained troops) were hit. The aerodrome was also heavily attacked. As the crowded Asiatic part of the town escaped attack, the number of casualties was far lower than might have been expected. All casualties received prompt attention. There was practically no air defence. Anti-aircraft fire at the aerodrome could be heard, and occasionally two or three British planes were seen in the air.

Immediately after the first air raid, the Asiatic community began to evacuate the town. Bullock-carts, handcarts, rickshaws, perambulators and bicycles, piled with household goods, and accompanied by men, women and children on foot, formed an orderly and pathetic stream on the road to Ampang, a small town a few miles away, which was thought to be free from air attack, and to the villages in the interior of the State. Many shopkeepers closed their shops when they removed themselves and their families.

By the end of December it had become increasingly difficult to provide European woman personnel for the First Aid Posts. The position was different from that of Penang and Ipoh, where the European women had been evacuated by a Government plan unexpectedly and in a body. In Kuala Lumpur it was a gradual process. The women and children evacuated from Penang had passed through the town, and the women and children from Kalantan, Kedah and Perak had poured into the federal capital. The Japanese advance was rapid and unchecked; and husbands, especially those who were

serving in the Volunteer Forces, often had no idea of how their families were faring, and were insisting that they should go to Singapore for safety. Gradually at first, and then rapidly, the European women left Kuala Lumpur for Singapore, and the non-European women left in the same way. All of them felt that by throwing up the work for which they had volunteered they were in some way "letting down" their European and non-European comrades who were staying on. Petrol was now severely rationed, and all women living at a distance from a F.A. Post were compelled to resign because they could not get supplementary petrol coupons, and in some cases their cars were commandeered by the military authorities. One F.A. Post had to close down completely for want of staff, and each of the others carried on with about half a dozen women who camped there at night and took any meals that they could get. At the Sentul (railway workshops) Centre, only two European women were left, and they maintained a skeleton service. The Indian Ambulance men at Sentul began to fail to report for duty when an "alert" sounded, but, as no bombs were dropped in this area (which the Japanese did not want to damage), this did not matter.

On the 2nd January, after the Japanese had landed at Kuala Selangor, the Government Billeting Officer warned the European women by telephone that the advice of the military authorities was "Get south of Seremban, or stay at your own risk", and asked them to pass the message on to their friends.

Another version of the telephone messages circulated by Government officials is "all European women to leave Kuala Lumpur before 10 p.m." Special trains were run for every hour from 6 p.m. (at sunset, for fear of bombing) until 9 p.m., and a train scheduled for 10 p.m. was unable to leave the station. At the same time the General Manager, F.M.S. Railways, notified all his staff that he would not be responsible for the safety of their womenfolk unless they left that evening. The result was that a very large number of European women and a number of non-European men and women left by these trains, and the effect upon the personnel of the M.A.S. was disastrous. Nevertheless, many European women considered that it was their duty to remain at their posts, and declined to leave. On the 5th January, under instructions from the British Resident, the remnants of the Kuala Lumpur Medical Auxiliary Services left in a body for service in Singapore, taking the Ipoh contingent with it. Though there was no compulsion on the European women to go with it, they all felt that they would perform more useful duty by doing so than by remaining. All the non-European women were invited to go with the convoy, and about 24 elected to do so, whilst the others preferred to remain with their families. Almost all the non-European men decided to stay. For fear of bombing, the convoy left at sunset; it halted at Gemas, where the women slept on the floor of the club-house and

men put up in a Chinese school, and it reached Singapore at 4 p.m. the next day. The officer in charge reported to Singapore M.A.S. H.Q. for duty, and the personnel was directed to Raffles College Students' Hostel and other centres for accommodation, and to the military hospital, the civilian hospitals and F.A. Post for duty. The convoy took with it a great part of its light equipment, but one Post was left in working order in charge of a Eurasian Medical Officer. The other Posts and Depots were handed over, as they stood, to the military medical authorities. Dr. Gordon Ryrie, the superintendent of the Leper Asylum at Sungei Buluh, with his European Lay Assistant and the non-European staff decided to remain in charge of the asylum and the patients.

On or before the 4th January six complete train loads of machine tools and equipment were sent from the railway workshops at Sentul for Singapore, but four of them were trapped by the railway having been bombed at Tampin. By this time the railway was working under great difficulties as many of the Asiatic engine-drivers and most of the firemen could not face the constant bombing of the trains. A few men carried on valiantly in great danger, and, with the help of survivors from the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse*, a skeleton service was maintained.

On the 5th January instructions were issued for the destruction of the remaining plant and equipment at the railway workshops. This was immediately started, and carried out for the next two days with oxy-acetylene torches and heavy hammers, and the staff was paid off. On the 8th the military began blowing up the workshops. The railway police had deserted by this time, and looting had begun. Amongst other things, a store of kerosene in readiness for firing a 7,000 tons stock of coal was looted. Two looters were shot by the military for interference with their work.

The following description of the scene at the Sentul workshops, which were some miles from Kuala Lumpur, was written on the 8th January by one of the railway engineers, now interned in Singapore, to his wife, a trained nurse, who had left Kuala Lumpur on the 2nd January on transfer from the M.A.S. for duty in a Johore hospital, and who later escaped from Singapore :—

"Things have been getting more and more chaotic here every day. The Japs have not bothered us at all, but the whole place has gone haywire. Almost everyone has left, and the mobs are looting and pillaging all over the place. To-day thousands descended upon the works and walked off with anything they could lay their hands on. We are not interfering, as it is just as well that the shops should get ransacked before the Japs come in, and we could not stop them if we would. There is no military protection, and the police merely help the looters to get what they want. We have got four guns amongst us and a few rounds of ammunition for our own protection. To-day has been worse than ever. A mob of coolies broke into our little club and wrecked everything. We caught them carting off the liquor and let fly with several rounds of buck shot. They fled, and we smashed the bottles. Now, as I am writing, terrific explosions are going on where the military are blowing

up the works. Huge pieces of metal come flying through the air, making a whining sound and smash all about our compound. Fortunately, the house has not been hit yet. Millions of dollars' worth of machines, etc., has been wrecked. We (the remaining staff) are all sharing houses and have anti-looting patrols on duty day and night to keep the mob away from our bungalows. I am armed with a mashie-niblick, your old rusty one, but so far haven't found it necessary to do more than brandish it. Our work is really over now and we are simply standing by with loaded cars ready to move off as soon as we are allowed to go. We may go to-morrow or next day, but no one knows when."

On the 10th January, by Government instructions, all that remained of the European staff at the railway workshops was sent in a convoy to Singapore where special duties were immediately assigned to all the men.

On or about the 8th January the Police Force (Malays and Indians) was formally disbanded, and the men's arms were removed in order to prevent them from falling into enemy hands. The number of desertions amongst the Malay Police had been so great as to cause serious concern to the Government. As was the case in Penang, the reason for desertion was that as soon as the town was bombed, either the men's families had left it with the other Asiatics or else the men were anxious to keep them no longer in danger. There is every reason to believe that all the others continued to carry out their duties thoroughly and efficiently. When the force was disbanded, the majority probably went into the rural areas to join their families.

On the 9th January the Civil Government commenced to leave Kuala Lumpur. The non-essential European men and such Asiatics as desired to leave for Singapore had already made their own arrangements for departure. The enormous Government warehouses of rice and food supplies, from which up to this date there had been orderly distribution to the public under the supervision of officials and European voluntary unofficial workers, were thrown open to the public for the reason that controlled distribution was no longer possible and that it was better that the public should have the food than that it should fall into the hands of the enemy. The Europeans who remained to the last were those who had been making the final arrangements; the engineers who had been in charge of the constant repairs to the railways, roads and telegraph and telephone lines, and who were now engaged in demolition of bridges and communications; and a large number of Europeans who had either been serving in Auxiliary Transport from the beginning or who had assumed duty in it as soon as they had reached Kuala Lumpur on being evacuated from any place in the North. The equipment, material and stores of the Government Departments were packed in an enormous number of lorries and vehicles of every description, which were collected at Petaling Hill near Kuala Lumpur. Here they were subjected to heavy bombing and dispersed in the shelter of rubber trees. Early the next morning, the 10th January, in small batches or in convoys,

they left for Singapore. They were followed soon afterwards by the British Military Forces, which blew up the road and railway bridges behind them. Kuala Lumpur was occupied by the Japanese on the 12th January, 1942.

Even before the Civil Government ceased to function there was looting in Kuala Lumpur. It was inevitable after the Government food stores had been thrown open and the police had been disbanded, and it seems to have been mainly confined to the abandoned European shops and premises. The Chinese community organized gangs of stalwart Chinese for the protection of their shops, and there appears to have been little public disorder apart from the pillaging. In one part of the town, however, the Volunteers had to open fire to disperse a gang of looters.

In *Malayan Postcript* Mr. Ian Morrison gives a vivid account of what he and three other war correspondents saw on the 11th January. On that day the European officials and essential men were mustering a few miles south of the town; most of the British Forces in North Malaya had already passed through the town on their way south, but there was still a small holding force some fifteen miles to the north, and demolition squads were methodically blowing up all the bridges.

This account of the Passive Defence of Kuala Lumpur can be summarized briefly. There were only two minor air attacks on the town, and, as only slight material damage was done and the casualties were few, there was little opportunity for the different services to prove their value. The M.A.S. did everything that was required of it most efficiently: it was seriously dislocated by the evacuation of the European women, but many women, both European and non-European, remained heroically at their posts for three days after the Government warning to all European women to leave the town immediately. Before the M.A.S. left in a convoy for duty in Singapore, it handed over methodically to the military medical authorities. With the same efficiency, the A.R.P., A.F.S., and other services carried out their duties so long as there were duties to perform, and they seem to have dissolved automatically when the Civil Government evacuated the town. All Passive Defence was dependent upon the devoted work of the Chinese and Eurasian female operators at the Telephone Exchange.

(vi) *Singapore*

In spite of the "state of emergency" proclaimed on the 1st December, 1941, and in disregard of the southward movement of Japanese warships located by air reconnaissance on the 6th December, the street lamps of Singapore were alight when the sirens sounded their warning at about 4.15 a.m. on the 8th December, 1941. A ring of

searchlights round the island came into action, and anti-aircraft fire was heard. Then bombs were dropped on the town, but the raid does not seem to have been a heavy one, nor to have lasted long. The members of the Passive Defence Services went as quickly as possible to their respective posts, and all carried out their duties with the greatest zeal, calmness and efficiency. Fires were extinguished before they could catch hold, the wounded were extricated from damaged buildings and taken in ambulances to F.A. Posts and hospitals, and the dead were removed.

The next morning the Inspector-General of Police officially reported that the behaviour of the civilian population had been exemplary, and at a meeting of the Municipal Commissioners two days later the President paid a tribute to the excellent work of the Rescue and Debris Squads (which were under the control of the Municipal Engineer as part of the Passive Defence organization) in extricating the dead and removing the debris. On the morning after the raid the general feeling shown in the Chinese quarters was one of stoicism and silent endurance. It was officially announced that 60 people were killed, 133 taken to hospital and detained for treatment and that an unascertained number received first aid and were sent to their homes.

Many of the bombs seem to have fallen in the business and shopping centres, and at office hours the next morning, the business men, clerks and attendants found the streets deep in broken glass and debris. Only small bombs appear to have been used, for the craters were shallow, and the material damage was comparatively slight. Trolley-buses and motor-buses were running, wherever the streets were not temporarily closed to traffic, and the streets were quickly cleared by the large Debris Squads. Offices and shops opened in the normal manner, and all business proceeded as usual. The streets were full of uniformed Air Raid Wardens, who helped the Police to control the traffic and to disperse groups of sightseers.

Thenceforth, all Passive Defence was in full operation by day and night. The black-out was complete, and was strictly enforced by the young English-speaking Chinese Wardens with the willing co-operation of the whole community. Mobile canteens, some of which were staffed by European women and others by English-speaking Chinese women, came on day and night service to supply refreshments to the Passive Defence personnel. The three great civilian hospitals (the General, Kandang Kerbau and Tan Tock Seng) and a number of hospitals maintained by missions and philanthropic institutions were fully staffed, and were later supplemented by a great number of medical officers, nursing sisters, and members of the M.A.S. of the towns of the peninsula who had been evacuated into Singapore and had assumed duty immediately upon their arrival. Every hospital had kept wards empty in readiness for the reception of casualties.

The Alexandra Military Hospital had its separate staff of military medical officers and military nursing sisters. This staff was supplemented by a number of women, the wives and daughters of residents in Malaya, who, if they were trained nurses, were members of the Emergency Military Nursing Service, or who had been enrolled as mobile "V.A.D.s."

A few days later, the "Chatsworth Military Auxiliary Hospital" was opened. It consisted of three large private houses in Chatsworth Avenue; and the Matron, and, with the exception of four Nursing Sisters, the entire staff were members of the M.A.S. It took in convalescent patients from the Alexandra Military Hospital, some of the wounded from the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse*, shell-shock cases and soldiers with septic "jungle-feet" and minor wounds. It had about 70 beds and was visited daily by a military Medical Officer who praised the management in the highest terms. Except for the drugs and surgical instruments, which were supplied by the military authorities, this hospital was entirely supported from private funds.

On the day after the air raid, there began, quite naturally and rightly, a voluntary evacuation, on a large, orderly and steady scale, of the Asiatics from the congested area of the town. They sought refuge at or near the "Evacuation Camp" and throughout the rural area, and large numbers crossed the Causeway to enter Johore. On the other hand, from this time onwards, there was an enormous influx of European and non-European refugees from the peninsula. Mention of the arrangements made by the European, Eurasian and Chinese Reception Committees is given in the "Evacuation" part of this narrative.

Martial Law throughout the Settlement of Singapore was proclaimed by the Governor on the 20th December, "in augmentation of Civil Authority", and the General Officer Commanding the Troops, Malaya, was appointed to be the duly constituted authority with power to delegate authority. On the same day, Martial Law Regulations, made by the G.O.C., were gazetted. In the main they dealt with offences prejudicial to the military and civil defence of the Settlement and provided for the summary trial of such offences before a military court. "A Martial Law (Consequential Provisions) Ordinance, 1941," gazetted on the 7th January, 1942, provided, with a saving clause, for the suspension of habeas corpus proceedings in certain cases, and declared that no application for a writ of mandamus, prohibition or certiorari should be entertained by military courts.

The town was free from air raids until the 29th December, when some damage was done and an unspecified number of people were killed and wounded. There were two more raids on New Year's Day. In his New Year broadcast message, the Governor said that, though there were a few casualties, neither did much damage, and that

all the Passive Defence Services were setting an example to the whole community.

On the 26th January, when Johore Bahru had an air raid, a small medical staff, accompanied by members of the M.A.S., went there from Singapore, attended the wounded, and later returned to Singapore.

From the 1st January until the surrender on the 13th February there were few days on which the town was free from a raid; on most days there were several, and, near the end, it was the exception to have a single hour without planes overhead. It is impossible to form any estimate of the casualties or the damage to property. The only records were those kept at the hospitals, F.A. Posts, A.R.P., and A.F.S., headquarters, and the police stations, and all of them have presumably been lost. The good work of the roof spotters was particularly praised. All the men and women employed in Passive Defence were so fully occupied at their various posts that they had no time to see or to hear of what was happening at other places. Every able-bodied European man and woman (except the women with small children) was doing some essential work. As soon as the Europeans had entered Singapore, on being evacuated from the peninsula, they had registered at a "Man-Power Bureau"; and the men had been assigned to duties such as lorry driving, demolition, Auxiliary Fire Service, and Auxiliary Police, and the women had taken up Auxiliary Transport and any other work of which they were capable. All the women who had been serving in M.A.S. in the peninsula automatically continued duty in M.A.S. in Singapore.

Mr. O. W. Gilmour, who as Deputy Municipal Engineer was in charge of the Rescue and Debris Organization, records his difficulties in his book *Singapore to Freedom*. In January he had to abandon one post which had been bombed and to move another post twice. Though his gangs were still doing good work, they often had to disperse when a place where they were at work was subjected to a second raid, and it took some time to reassemble them; and, as the raids intensified, it became difficult to induce them to face the dangers. He mentions his dismay at the immensity of his task. Towards the end of the month, the military authorities, in spite of the enormous numbers of motor vehicles which had come into Singapore, commandeered 40 municipal lorries, including some employed in Rescue and Debris work.

In January, it became necessary to move some First Aid Posts or to abandon them, and Saint Andrew's Mission Hospital, a voluntary institution, was closed, partly because it was dangerous from its proximity to the gasworks, and partly because it had become understaffed.

On the 30th January a curfew from 9 p.m. till 5 a.m. was imposed.

In the latter part of January, Singapore was a town of bewildering contrasts. In many parts of the residential area, occupied by the Europeans and wealthy Asiatics, the bombing had destroyed the

sewage and household sanitation systems and the householders were burying their water-closet contents in their gardens. The main water supply in many places was cut off. In many places the stench from blocked roadside drains was noisome, and the danger of an epidemic disease was so great that the Government was giving free injections against typhoid to everyone who responded to an appeal to be thus protected. On the other hand, almost up to the last day, the streets in the business centre were scrupulously cleaned by municipal labourers. Every day it became more difficult to obtain the supplies of fresh vegetables, eggs, chickens, etc., which the Chinese cooks of the Europeans were accustomed to buy daily in the markets. The supplies were not coming in from the rural areas, and the cooks had several miles to walk in danger from enemy planes. On the other hand, all other food was plentiful, and prices were controlled by the Government. The Cold Storage Company delivered milk regularly every day in the suburban areas until its vans were riddled by machine-gun bullets, and the Cold Storage Depot at Keppel Harbour continued to function until it came under shell fire in February. Even so late as the 11th February (four days before capitulation), when the docks were ablaze, a woman who went into John Little's shop, in the centre of the town, to buy provisions for her voyage found everything quiet and orderly in the shop, and the manager and his assistants serving the customers with the calmness and efficiency of ordinary times.

Up to the end of January the streets of Singapore were thronged week after week by very large numbers of European women (very many of them with small children) who had been evacuated from comfortable and even luxurious houses in the peninsula, and who, with nothing more than they had been able to carry, were looking in at shops which displayed the clothes they could not buy because they had brought no money with them. The final evacuation of these women and children is described in a later part of this narrative. At this point a tribute may be paid to the managers and staffs of every bank, who throughout displayed the greatest kindness and consideration to these evacuees, both men and women, and helped them in every possible way. All the banks were still working when the town capitulated.

Whenever there was an "alert", and in the latter part of January they followed one another with bewildering frequency, all offices, post offices, banks and shops were shut, and all employees and persons inside them sought refuge in the shelters connected with them. The dislocation of all business would have been hopeless if every one had not been intent on carrying on and making the best of every interval. In the King Edward VII College of Medicine, the students sat through their final examinations during heavy air raids.

Soon after the first air raid of the 8th December, and long before the second one of the 29th December, the labour force showed great

nervousness whenever an "alert" signified that the aerodromes in the neighbourhood were being bombed by the enemy. Speaking on the 20th December, the General Officer Commanding complained of the tendency for labour to disappear, perhaps for the whole day, when there was an air raid warning. Some local dispersal might be necessary, he said, but he asked that all should remain at work as long as possible and resume work as soon as there was an "all clear" signal. The Colonial Secretary, speaking on the same day, referred to the fact that in Penang the ordinary labour required for essential services had failed to such an extent that it had been impossible to bury the dead, and urged that the whole success of the defence of Singapore would depend as much upon the steadfastness of the civil population and the maintenance of essential services as on the fighting forces. He appealed to the leaders of the Asiatic communities to use their influence and to set an example.

The leaders of the Chinese community made a fine respondense. Under the chairmanship of Mr. Tan Kah Kee, they organized within a few days a fleet of cars, with loud-speakers, handbills and posters, to visit the factories and places of employment, and to impress on the men the importance of their work to the defence of Singapore. A European factory manager mentions a visit paid to his men on the 2nd January, and describes the enthusiasm of the speeches and the warm welcome given by his Chinese technicians and artisans.

Throughout December the steady evacuation of the Chinese and Indian population from the congested area of the town continued, and the labouring classes, which lived there and in the dockside area, went with it into the rural districts. When the air raids began in January on a daily increasing scale of violence, there were some savage attacks on the densely populated Asiatic quarters. In two particularly heavy attacks, on the 12th and 21st January, large areas were almost obliterated, and an unknown number of people were buried under the fallen houses. As the result of the attacks on the dockside area, the Chinese and Indian labourers who were normally employed there in huge numbers, almost entirely disappeared for safety elsewhere. In consequence, it became necessary to employ British and Indian troops and naval units on unloading and loading the ships. There were no air raid shelters; the formations of enemy bombers rarely met with any opposition from British air forces, and the anti-aircraft fire was ineffective. As the docks were in the front line of defence, it would have required real heroism on the part of the ordinary labourers to turn up for daily duty, and, however unfortunate their defection may have been, it can well be understood. It is not possible to say whether the provision of overground air shelters all along the docks and quays would have materially improved the labour position. Shelters would not have been proof against a direct hit, but they would have afforded protection against machine-gunning, and it may

reasonably be presumed that the fact that there was no shelter affected the morale of the labour force. When soldiers and sailors were handling cargo, and women and children were being evacuated, they had no shelter.

In other parts of the town, the general defection of labour crippled the services connected with demolition and debris removal. Nevertheless, large gangs of labourers worked well under European engineers, many of whom were enrolled for this service on their arrival in Singapore from the peninsula. These gangs were accommodated in the Evacuation Camps and in other improvised encampments. In recruiting this labour, great assistance was given by the leaders of the Chinese community. A curious feature of the labour situation was that, in spite of the terrific air raids all through January, gangs of Tamil labourers employed by the municipality were placidly scything the grass on the roadside verges and sweeping the streets. The gangs of Chinese and Tamils that continued to work, and did so with real courage and devotion, were a small fraction of the total labour force, and there can be no doubt that the others were unable to face the ordeal of the air raids and that the essential services of Singapore suffered in consequence.

Large numbers of Asiatics still remained in the town. In the streets, the Chinese children were playing ball, and did not look up as the army vehicles rumbled by incessantly, nor even when a municipal van, piled with bits of human remains excavated from under debris and sometimes imperfectly concealed by the covering over them, passed on its way to a burial pit.

Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of the situation in Singapore throughout January was the complete confidence of the European community in the Government announcements of the impregnability of the island. Of the European women whose houses were in Singapore, those who were engaged in M.A.S. or any form of war work had no thought of leaving, and even those who could not help because they had small children or were old or infirm seem to have been quite prepared to stay.

Of the women evacuated from the peninsula those who were serving in some capacity in Singapore carried on in the greatest discomfort in billeted accommodation and with only the contents of a suit-case: but the old and infirm and those with small children, who were in deplorable plight in respect of accommodation, clothing and money, and who were quite useless to the defence of Singapore, were naturally anxious to get a passage to England. But even they seem to have believed so strongly that Singapore could not fall that for some time they preferred to wait for a steamer to England rather than travel without clothing or money by a steamer to Australia where they had no friends.

The Government mentality on the subject of defence can be gauged by a lengthy official communiqué in the newspapers of the 29th January. It was a fervent appeal to every Singapore householder with a garden, however small, to grow vegetables for his own use and that of his neighbours, and it ended with reference to the possibility of a vegetable rationing system being introduced, and an announcement that supplies of fertilizers would be distributed by the Food Production Office.

Two days later, on the 31st January, the Johore Causeway was blown up by the Royal Engineers, and thereupon "The Battle of Malaya" ended and "The Battle of Singapore" began. By a coincidence, on the same day, a very large number of European women and children were evacuated by transports which had just arrived with military reinforcements.

The opening of the "Battle of Singapore" was proclaimed on the same day in an Order of the Day by the General Officer Commanding the Troops. "Our task," he said, "is to hold this fortress until help can come, as assuredly it will come; this we are determined to do." After reference to the enemy's "great air superiority and considerable freedom of movement by sea", and mention of "the enemy within our gate", "loose talk" and "rumour-mongering", all of these statements being calculated to create public alarm and despondency, he concluded: "To-day we stand beleaguered in our island fortress". This was followed on the 5th February by an "Order of the Day" from General Wavell: "Our part is to gain time for the great reinforcements which we and our American allies are sending to the Eastern theatre . . . we must leave nothing behind undestroyed that would be of the least service to the enemy . . . I look to you all to fight this battle without further thought of retreat".

It is not clear how demolition could help in gaining time for the arrival of reinforcements nor how there could be any retreat from an island. Neither of these Orders of the Day contained any appeal to the civilian population. Mr. Ian Morrison's comment upon them is that they show the folly of public pronouncements unless the speaker really has something to say, and that they tend later to react on reputations.

Two or three days later Mr. Morrison and two other war correspondents visited the deserted Naval Base at Changi and the obliterated airfield at Seletar nearby, and on pages 149–153 of *Malayan Postscript* he gives a vivid description of a heart-rending scene of destruction and desolation. Incidentally, he mentions that the Naval Asiatic Police Force (which might have been useful in Singapore town) had been disbanded several days previously, and that an acre of ground round their headquarters was knee-deep in their wildly scattered uniforms. Reports from other observers show that throughout the past week the sky over the town had been darkened by the cloud of smoke arising in dense black columns from burning dumps of petrol in this area,

and that the glare at night had been pierced by the gun-flashes of the enemy artillery.

It is convenient to mention here the experience of a military hospital at Changi. At the end of January, a military hospital was transferred from Johore Bahru to Changi Barracks, and with it went about 40 regular military nurses, about 20 European nursing sisters, the wives of residents in Malaya who had answered an appeal for enrolment in the Emergency Military Nursing Service, and about 20 European V.A.D.s, also the wives and daughters of residents in Malaya. The 200 military patients were transferred to Alexandra Military Hospital near Singapore. The Asiatic servants remained behind, and the barracks, which were in a filthy condition after evacuation by a regiment, were cleaned by the nursing sisters and V.A.D.s. The barracks were transformed into wards, an operating theatre was improvized, and the officers' mess became the quarters for the nursing staff. As soon as this had been done, about 100 wounded soldiers arrived in batches from the peninsula. In spite of the Red Crosses prominently displayed on all buildings and in the barrack square, the hospital was bombed and machine-gunned regularly by the Japanese. On the 6th February the water supply and telephone communication were cut off, and on the 8th the Japanese landed at Changi. Henceforth, the bombing was intense; a V.A.D. and an ambulance driver were killed, the nurses' quarters were badly damaged, and the separate house for the night-sisters was partially demolished. In the machine-gunning from the diving planes and the dense smoke from the bombs, Miss C. West,* the Matron, ran from the hospital to the help of the sisters and V.A.D.s on night duty, who were rescued, unharmed but badly shaken by débris. For the whole of the last twenty-four hours, the hospital was in the direct line of continuous fire between the enemy's heavy guns on the Johore coast and the artillery of the British front line forces. Military demolition squads dealt with unexploded bombs. The din of the artillery fire and the exploding bombs was terrifying, and at times the buildings were rocking. The patients were evacuated to Alexandra Military Hospital, but before this was completed the staff believed that their own retreat had been cut off. They were all rescued on the 10th February with the greatest difficulty, and taken to the Alexandra Military Hospital to continue duty. On the next day, about 80 nursing sisters and V.A.D.s, of whom about 40 were the wives and daughters of residents in Malaya, were detailed for duty in the Netherlands East Indies and were taken from the hospital under machine-gun fire to the docks for embarkation. The other nursing sisters and V.A.D.s, whose number

* Miss West was killed when the steamer on which she was evacuated was bombed and sunk.

is not mentioned, were embarked on the S.S. *Kuala* on the 13th February. When this ship was bombed and sunk the next day off Pompong Island, about 40 of them managed to reach the island.

The systematic bombing of the Singapore Harbour Docks began on the 30th January. Alongside the wharves, several big steamers had disembarked troops and were waiting for the evacuee women and children who left the next day. Several buildings and warehouses were set on fire. Throughout the next day, bombing was concentrated on the docks and the railway station and many fires were started at the docks. The bombing continued every day, and on the 6th February the *Empress of Asia* was set on fire and became a total wreck.

On the 7th February the town was shelled from artillery fire from the Johore mainland. The fire was accurate, and had the purely military purpose of making traffic impossible along Orchard Road, which connected the town with the barracks, and along Bukit Timah Road, which connected the town with Johore. All cross roads were also shelled, and great damage was done. The shelling continued throughout the next day, and at night there was a furious bombardment from Johore Bahru. During the night, the Japanese landed on the island. There were more landings on the 9th and guns were brought across. From that time on, the town came under continuous shell fire.

It was now clear that the surrender of Singapore was inevitable, and a demolition scheme was put into effect. For the present purpose one instance will suffice. Messrs. Thornycroft Singapore (Limited) had ship repair yards and boat building yards at Tanjong Rhu, five miles to the east of Singapore, covering about twelve acres and employing about 700 hands. Towards the end of December, 1941, or early in January, 1942, a military officer called on Mr. Stewart Owler, the Managing Director, and informed him that, under instructions from the Governor, he was in charge of a comprehensive scheme for the possible destruction of all plant and stores of military importance. He mentioned incidentally that he had already called upon forty-two other firms with the same instructions. Shortly afterwards other officials visited Messrs. Thornycroft's premises, and listed the boats, plant and stores with the full co-operation and assistance of Messrs. Thornycroft. On the morning of 10th February, 1942, two military officers called on Mr. Owler with a written order from the Governor for the immediate destruction of all the scheduled articles. Full facilities were given to the officers, and they, with a staff of Chinese labourers, set to work immediately to demolish everything that could be destroyed by hand, and the work was largely completed by the following morning. Much material was packed into an R.A.F. Auxiliary vessel which left Singapore for an unknown

destination. As the surrounding area to the boat yards still contained a large number of Asiatics and natives, it was necessary for the military and police to evacuate them before the place could be set on fire. The actual firing of the buildings was left to be carried out by the military after the firm's European staff had evacuated the yards.

This was only one of a great number of enormous conflagrations caused by the intentional demolition of private property on the east of Singapore. On the west, the bombing of the docks had started uncontrollable fires in the enormous warehouses. On the north, there were the fires from the dumps of petrol and military stores that were blown up either by the enemy or the retreating British forces. It was only in the town itself that the Fire Services and the Air Raid Wardens could keep the fires under control.

On the 11th February the battle front had reached Pasir Panjang on the west coast, and was about two miles from the docks, and on the north the enemy was within a few miles of the town. At 6 p.m. on the 12th, bombs started an enormous and uncontrollable fire in the railway warehouses at Tebuk Ayer, and the streets in the vicinity were full of blazing lorries and cars and were impassable. No attempt, however, seems to have been made to warn the residents in the suburban areas. One woman left her house near the golf course at 9 a.m. on the 12th February as usual for her daily work at a Government office, and in the course of the morning was instructed by a military officer on the telephone to go to the docks at once, and on no account to return home, as the Japanese had been seen in her garden. There is reason to fear that some European women were cut off in their houses in this area.

Singapore capitulated at 8.30 p.m. on the 15th February, 1942. The campaign, which had opened on the 8th December, in Kelantan and Kedah lasted exactly ten weeks.

It was against this background of suffering that the Passive Defence Services carried out their duties. In the Medical Auxiliary Services, the women, European and non-European, and the ambulance men, almost entirely Asiatic, worked unremittingly from the 8th December, when Singapore was first attacked. At the First Aid Posts and the hospitals, the shifts were generally of 12 hours on duty and 24 hours off. The posts varied in size; most of them had a large room with a number of beds for the treatment of casualties, an office, a canteen room and a dormitory for the ambulance men. At most posts Europeans and non-Europeans worked together, but at some posts the entire staff was Chinese. There was no shortage of nursing staff, as nursing sisters and M.A.S. women were continually arriving from the peninsula. Some of the women who were working there pay a tribute to the stoic endurance of the wounded as they waited their turn at the First Aid Posts. The Ambulance squads worked steadily and unflinchingly;

and the Debris and Rescue Squads worked well until the last few weeks, when they were affected by the defection of labour.

A European employer of Chinese skilled labour records his surprise at the fact that, whilst his own men were disappearing in order to accompany their families to evacuation camps, the Chinese men in the Debris and Rescue Squads, who seemed to him to be of the same social standing, were "carrying on in spite of everything".

Though a great part of the enemy bombing was directed against the aerodromes, docks and main road communications, the hospitals became very full of patients after the middle of January; and, after any heavy raid, teams of surgeons were working in relays in the operating theatres. The Medical Auxiliary Services were organized as an integral part of the Medical Establishment, and without their devoted help the hospital organization could not have functioned.

The Air Raid Wardens, the Fire Brigade and the Auxiliary Fire Service have received the highest praise from all sides, and a few instances only can be given in order to show how the whole force worked. In his New Year's broadcast message, the Governor paid tribute to the force, and mentioned an instance of wardens forming a chain service to remove tins of petrol from a dump in the greatest danger from surrounding fire. On another occasion, a Chinese Warden ran single-handed to tackle a fire at another petrol dump, and took control of a team of wardens and other helpers until a European Head Warden arrived. When an ammunition lorry took fire near the railway station, the flames were fought most bravely by the railway Volunteer Fire Service and extinguished. A highly qualified engineer from the peninsula who was serving in the Auxiliary Transport Service in Singapore reports that, to the best of his knowledge, up to the date of his leaving on the 13th February, every fire was promptly tackled by the Fire Services and the Wardens, but that many of those at the large warehouses at the docks could not be extinguished. At the great conflagrations caused by the Government demolition programme, all that was attempted was the prevention of the spread of the fire. A woman who had gone to Singapore with the Kuala Lumpur M.A.S. detachment, and who was billeted in a house in the Keppel Harbour area, was deeply impressed by the efficiency of the wardens and the fire service. As one instance, she mentions that on the 30th January, after Keppel Harbour had been heavily bombed and machine-gunned, numbers of fires were started all round the house in which she was staying. By the time that she and her companions emerged, covered with dust and badly shaken, from a shelter under the stairs, all the fires were being tackled, and within a very short time every one of them was extinguished. Many deeds of individual heroism and many gallant acts by groups of men will never be recorded, but it is certain that in protection against fire Singapore was nobly served.

The Air Raid Wardens were also responsible for the enforcement of the lighting regulations in houses and on vehicles, and for the general safety of the public during the air raids. Their hours of duty were long, and they carried out their arduous and dangerous work cheerfully, zealously and efficiently.

In every way the very fine Police Force, with the support of the Auxiliary Police Force, rendered all possible assistance to the Passive Defence Services and to the people of Singapore.

The efficiency of the Passive Defence Services as a whole and the co-ordination of the work of all units in them was the result of the skilful organization and thorough training which started in September, 1939. Though the total personnel numbered some thousands of men and women, it was only a small fraction of the population of the town. But upon it the entire town depended for the succour of the wounded, the general assistance to all civilians and the protection against fire of houses and property. It was not only the efficiency that mattered; the people knew that it was efficient, and the sight of uniformed men and women calmly going about their duties by day and night had an effect upon public morale which can hardly be estimated. So long as there was a hope of holding Singapore against the enemy it depended not only upon the military forces but on the Passive Defence Services. The work of these services was magnificent, and Singapore has every reason to be proud of it.

(5) *Summary of Passive Defence*

The organization of the Passive Defence Services of Malaya began in the latter part of 1939, and was carried out and steadily improved on a comprehensive system which covered every Settlement, State, and town in the country with due regard to local circumstances. It was based on the methods employed in the United Kingdom, and followed them closely. A few examples have been given, and it has been unnecessary to enter into more or less similar details concerning the States of Trengganu, Pahang, Negri Sembilan and Johore. Concerning the method on which they were organized and the manner in which they functioned it is possible to make some observations.

Firstly.—The Medical Auxiliary Services began as the result of close and active co-operation between the European women and the Medical Department. As soon as they were started, they received the enthusiastic support of the non-European women on the First Aid side of the work, and of Asiatic men on the Ambulance side of it. There were very few European men in the Ambulance Corps. The evacuation of the European women had a most unfortunate effect upon the First Aid organization in the peninsula.

Secondly.—The Auxiliary Transport of Passive Defence relied almost entirely upon European women drivers. (The European men, who in the last few weeks of the campaign joined Auxiliary Transport in large numbers on their evacuation from other areas, were mainly engaged in military work.)

Thirdly.—The number of Europeans in the Corps of Air Raid Wardens, the Auxiliary Fire Service and Demolition Squads was extraordinarily small. In Penang there were barely a dozen Europeans in a force of about 1,000 Air Raid Wardens.

Fourthly.—There was an Auxiliary Police Force in Singapore, Kedah, and Johore, but there is no mention of such a force in any other State or in the Colony before the Japanese attack. In the last few weeks before the capitulation of Singapore, a number of Europeans who had been evacuated from the peninsula enrolled as Auxiliary Police.

Fifthly.—The principle of compulsory service in the Volunteer Forces for all Europeans between the age of 18 and 41, and compulsory service in the Local Defence Corps for all Europeans between the age of 42 and 55 adversely affected the number of European men available for Passive Defence.

Sixthly.—In Penang, after looting had reached an alarming extent, it was stopped by the arrival of some Volunteers. There is no mention of any Volunteer Force or Local Defence Corps being available to control the looting in Kuala Lumpur.

Seventhly.—The Corps of Air Raid Wardens, which, in the main almost everywhere and in some large towns almost exclusively, comprised young, well-educated, English-speaking Chinese, was the keystone of Passive Defence. If the Government had increased the number of Chinese Volunteer Corps, or had created Chinese Regiments, the majority, and perhaps almost all, of these men might have enrolled in them, and in that event all Passive Defence would have been impossible.

Eighthly.—Almost every able-bodied European woman without small children was employed in Passive Defence or in some other essential service, and every European man who was not in the Volunteer Forces or in the Local Defence Corps was a "Key-man" in some essential service, and often combined these duties with part-time service in Passive Defence.

(3) Demolition

(1) *Rubber Estates*

The first mention of a Government policy of demolition of private property is contained in a circular issued by the United Planters Association of Malaya to its members on the 16th December, 1941. It was to the effect that the Government had agreed that rubber stocks on estates, and also in dealers' hands, should be destroyed if there was no other way of preventing them from falling into enemy hands; that it would be preferable, if it were practicable, to remove the stocks to safer areas for export when that might be possible; that the decision to destroy, and when to destroy, must be decided by the man on the spot in consultation, so far as might be possible, with the local civil or military authorities; and that the Association was advised by the Government that rubber destroyed by order of the civil or military authorities was covered by war risks (goods) insurance. There is no mention in the circular of destruction of rubber factories or of estate stocks other than rubber. The circular added that the Government wished rubber production to be reduced to 70 per cent of standard production, and the instructions on the subject would be issued by the Government.

Some of the information recorded below has been obtained from private sources, and thanks are due to the Rubber Growers Association for its courtesy in supplying the information at its disposal.

The Japanese attack had begun on the 8th December, and by the time when this circular of 16th December was issued, every European planter had been evacuated from the States of Kelantan and Kedah. There is no mention of any demolition of factories or rubber in these two States, and in the circumstances it is unlikely that there was any. In Central Kedah, normal tapping continued until an order for immediate evacuation was received.

In the State of Perak, it is impossible to say how much demolition of factories and rubber was carried out, but an instance, which may be typical, can be given. The manager of an estate near Ipoh was ordered on the evening of the 22nd December to "stand by" for orders to destroy all machinery and burn all rubber in preparation for evacuation. He paid off the labour force, and distributed all stocks of rice and food. At 11 a.m. the next morning he received orders to evacuate at once. He was able to make arrangements for the immediate destruction of the machinery and rubber; and, when he left at mid-day, the military were about to start the fires. It was on this day, the 23rd December, that all civilian Europeans were ordered to leave the district. In the

Lower Perak district orders were issued by the military on the 23rd December to the managers of all rubber estates to begin the demolition of their factories and rubber estates, and all civilian Europeans were ordered to leave the district the next day. There is a report from one planter that the order for demolition was countermanded by the military for the reason that the smoke would show the enemy that evacuation was intended. Another man reports that he saw no smoke rising from the estates.

In the State of Selangor, to the south of Perak, it was hoped that the enemy would be held on the Slim River line in Perak, and it would appear that, when this line was abandoned, there was little time for demolition on the estates on the northern half of the State. It is certain that, on the estates around Kuala Lumpur and in the southern half of the State, there was very thorough demolition of factories and rubber.

The manager of an estate near Kuala Lumpur reports that on the 3rd January he received orders to be ready to destroy his factory and rubber stocks and that, on the 7th January he had instructions to put it in hand immediately. His Tamil labour force was remaining steadfast at the normal tapping work on the estate, and he had no difficulty in turning it on to the work of destruction. In *Malayan Postcript*, Mr. Ian Morrison describes a visit which he paid to another estate near Kuala Lumpur on the 11th January, when the European civilians had evacuated the town and were mustering to the south of it in preparation for departure for Singapore. Everything was orderly: the company's stocks of rice were being distributed to the Indian and Chinese labourers, each of whom received at least two months' supply, and Indian clerks were keeping a tally. A bewildered old Chinese engineer, who for twenty years had been in charge of the factory, was breaking the machinery with a sledge hammer, and the fire from the burning rubber storehouse was so intense that approach within fifty yards was impossible. The manager, who was superintending everything, had his car packed in readiness to leave when all was finished.

In the State of Negri Sembilan, to the south of Selangor, and in the northern part of the State of Johore, south of Negri Sembilan, there was also very thorough demolition on the estates, and the smoke from the fires was a feature of the landscape for many days. On the western side of South Johore, demolition was forbidden by the military authorities for the reason that smoke by day and flames by night would give information to the enemy, and some managers were informed that, if demolition became necessary, and if there was time, it would be carried out by the military. There was, however, complete demolition on a number of estates on the eastern side of South Johore.

There is no information cconerning the destruction of rubber stocks in the hands of dealers and traders. As is stated elsewhere, large

stocks of rubber in warehouses were abandoned when Penang Island was evacuated.

(2) *Tin Mines*

We are indebted to the Malayan Chamber of Mines for the following information. It is not possible to state with exactitude the date on which the Government first moved in the matter of the "scorched earth" policy as applied to the mining properties on the west coast of the peninsula. In the districts of Perak, it would appear that mine managers received official instructions by telephone to carry out the destruction of all mining plant, including dredges, a few days before Christmas, 1941. It is known definitely that in Selangor at least one mine manager received written instructions from the Acting Senior Inspector of Mines on 3rd January, 1942, "that the plans for total destruction and denial of all mining plant including dredges must be put into operation immediately". It is understood that the military damaged many of the dredges by explosives after the mines' staffs had, under orders, evacuated the properties.

On the east coast, the property of the Pahang Consolidated Company, Ltd., in the interior of the Kuantan District of Pahang, is one of the largest tin mines in the world, and has over 200 miles of underground workings. The company reports that a telegram from the Governor, dated the 27th December, transmitted through the British Resident and the District Officer, was received by the manager on the evening of the 29th December, and contained an order that the mines should be flooded or otherwise made unworkable. Immediate action was taken to give the fullest effect to these instructions. Throughout the next day, the 30th December, the labour force was paid off on generous lines, and the company's stocks of food stores were distributed. That evening all communication by telephone with the Government headquarters on the coast was cut off. An account of the evacuation from this mine is given elsewhere.

The great power installation of the Perak Hydro-Electric Company, Ltd., at Chenderoh, on the Perak River, was rendered unserviceable by the removal of essential machinery and blowing up part of the dam before the evacuation of the property on the 18th December, and the two subsidiary stations at Batu Gajah and Malim Nawar were put out of working order before their evacuation on the 22nd and 23rd December. The mining installations which were dependent upon this power formed a high percentage of Malaya's producers of tin ore, and were automatically put out of action.

(3) *Other Private Property*

Though it is known that in the towns much private property, such as electrical plant and general machinery, was demolished, few particu-

lars have been given. Mention of the intensive demolition of private property in Singapore has been made elsewhere. Special attention was given by the Government to the denial to the Japanese soldiers of all spirituous liquors.

(4) *Government Property*

There was extensive demolition in the towns of Government installations and machinery which would be useful to the enemy. An instance of this is given elsewhere in the destruction of the great Railway Workshops near Kuala Lumpur.

General

On the policy of demolition, Sir E. Grigg made the following statement in the House of Commons on the 8th January, 1942:—

"The 'scorched earth' policy has been and will continue to be pursued in the Far East to the maximum extent that is practicable, except for small supplies of food and water sufficient to meet the immediate necessities of the static native population in Malaya. The denial of resources to the enemy in the Far East has long been the policy of His Majesty's Government, and instructions confirming this policy were issued as recently as 24th December, 1941."

* * *

(4) Government Publicity

On the 4th September, 1939, the following Proclamation was issued by the Governor:—

"It is notified that a state of war exists between Great Britain and Germany. The measures required for the defence of Malaya have been carefully considered, and are being actively carried out. The population can help best by avoiding any action likely to cause excitement or confusion, by abstaining from collecting together in the streets and by cheerfully submitting to instructions issued in their interests."

On the 8th December, 1941, the day of the attack by Japan, an "Order of the Day" issued by the General Officer Commanding the Troops, Malaya, and the Admiral, China Station, was as follows:—

". . . We are ready. We have had plenty of warning and our preparations have been made and tested. . . . We are confident. Our defences are strong and our weapons efficient. . . . We see before us Japan drained for years by the exhausting claims of her wanton onslaught on China. . . . Confidence, resolution, enterprise and devotion to the cause will inspire every one of us in the fighting services, while from the civilian population, Malay, Chinese or Indian, we expect that patience, endurance and serenity which is the great virtue of the East and which will go far to assist the fighting men to gain a final and complete victory."

The keynote of the announcements of 1939 and 1941 was identical: European military preparation combined with Asiatic civilian passivity. A declaration in a neutral country, on the soil of which two other countries were waging war against one another, might thus have urged the civilian population to have nothing to do with the war.

Though every effort was made by the Government to enlist civilians in the Passive Defence Services, and though these efforts received an enthusiastic response and achieved an outstanding success, no attempt seems to have been made, until the 18th December, 1941, to call upon the civilian population, as such, to interest itself in the defence of the country. On that date, by which time Penang had been evacuated, and Kedah, Perlis and the greater part of Kelantan had fallen to the enemy, a Notification in the *F.M.S. Gazette* declared that every person in the F.M.S. was liable for any non-combatant service which Government officers or military authorities might call upon him to perform. As the whole of the Federated Malay States was in enemy occupation within the next four weeks, there was little time for the Notification to achieve much practical result.

A system of compulsory service for non-combatant duties would have been well understood by the Malays. Compulsory service, known in Malay as *Krah*, by the order of the Ruler or territorial chief, and conveyed by the *Penghulu*, the village headman, to the peasantry, is one of the oldest institutions in Malaya. It was abolished many years ago in the F.M.S., and comparatively recently in the unfederated States, but its revival, as soon as a national danger became apparent to the Malays, might have been welcomed by royalty and peasantry as a sign of a method in which they could take a part in the defence of the country. The Malays are experts in forest felling, and when, from 1939 onwards, aerodrome sites were being cleared and subsidiary roads were being made, they could have rendered valuable assistance. In the chapter on "Loyalty" mention is made of other help which they could have given.

The next step was taken on the 24th December, 1941, when the whole of Kelantan and Province Wellesley and the greater part of Perak had been occupied by the enemy, and the initiative came, not from the Government, but from the Asiatic communities. About 60 leading Chinese called on the Governor and informed him that they wished "to form a united front with the sole purpose of resisting the invader".

In a broadcast the next day, the Governor declared:—

"You can realise the immense contribution which the Chinese can, and will, render to the war effort by mobilising themselves in this way, by helping to preserve the peace, by preventing panic, by assisting in the distribution of food, by producing labour, by joining the defence forces and in a multitude of other ways. I have had similar assurances of unstinted co-operation from leaders of the Indian community, and I have, of course, accepted them with equal gratitude."

That was at out two years and three months after the outbreak of war with Germany, and about seven weeks before the capitulation of Singapore.

As readers who are not acquainted with Singapore may be surprised to see that the Governor made no mention of any offer of help by the leaders of the Malay community, it is fair to that community to explain that the Malays form a very small part of the population of the island, and that the Government's urgent need was for labour force which in Singapore is exclusively supplied by the Chinese and Indians.

Any action that could be taken by the Government in keeping the Malayan public fully aware of the Government measures for the evacuation and safety of the civilian population was obviously of essential importance in preserving Asiatic morale, British prestige, and the confidence of all communities in the fairness and justice of the measures. Speaking on the Legislative Council in Singapore on the 16th December, 1941 (the day after the arrival in Singapore of the European women and children evacuated from Penang), the Governor declared the Government policy in the following words:—

"In any withdrawal or movement of population, there will be no distinction of race. No European civilian male or female will be ordered by the civil government to withdraw. We stand by the people of this country, with whom we live and work, in this ordeal. We stand by the ship, gentlemen."

Concerning the military position, the Governor told the Legislative Council on the 16th December that there was no truth in the Japanese allegation that British forces had been the first to enter Siamese territory, and that the Siamese declaration of neutrality had been scrupulously respected. He said that the free passage given by Siam to Japanese troops had made it possible for British aerodromes in the north to be put out of action by bombing, and for the Japanese to launch a large-scale attack in Kedah. In this battle, he said, our troops had fought with splendid courage and had inflicted severe casualties; the R.A.F. and the R.A.A.F. had co-operated in every possible way, and had inflicted heavy losses, especially at Kota Bahru, where they had played a great part in delaying the enemy's landing, sinking two ships which contained tanks and many barges, and machine-gunning beaches and roads; and bombing attacks on enemy aerodromes had been carried out by day and night.

Three days later, on the 19th December, Mr. Duff Cooper went to the microphone. He had been in Singapore for some time as President of the War Council, and had on that day assumed duty as Resident Minister for Far Eastern Affairs with Cabinet rank. As reported in the *Straits Budget* of the 25th December, he said:—

"I consider that one of my duties should be to keep in close and constant touch with the people of Singapore by speaking to them on the radio from time to time and trying to explain to them what is taking place in order to combat one of the great dangers of war, which is false information and inaccurate rumour."

He may be excused for referring to the people of Singapore and not the people of Malaya, but he failed to realize that broadcasts are not a substitute for the supply of regular, accurate and up-to-date information to the daily newspapers. If the newspaper report is correct, all that he could say concerning the war situation and the evacuation of civilians was in the following words:—

"Our forces have been obliged to retreat in the north-west of Malaya, and, as this retreat exposes Penang to attack and we have not sufficient troops with which to garrison it, it has been necessary to evacuate many* of the civilian population.

"It is impossible at present to know all the facts, and until all the facts are known, we can only be thankful that so many people have been safely removed, and wish the best of luck to those who still remain. It was obvious that the whole population could not be removed in the time or in the shipping which was available, and doubtless many who had their homes and families there and had lived there all their lives preferred to remain."

The facts, which are set forth in Part III, were that there had been two evacuations from Penang; the first was the secret evacuation by the Government of about 650 European women and children on the 13th December, and the second was the military evacuation of the island on the 16th, when the European male civilians, the remaining European women and a few Asiatics accompanied the military forces to Singapore. No arrangements were made by the Government for the evacuation of the Asiatic population, and the number of people evacuated by the Government was a minute fraction of the population.

The facts by this time had become publicly known in Singapore, and public indignation amongst the Asiatics and humiliation amongst the Europeans were so intense that the Governor hastily convened a meeting of the leading members of the Chinese, Indian and Malay communities. He had to face representatives of communities which had been horrified by the hideous civilian casualties in Penang and dismayed by its wholly unexpected fall after emphatic and repeated assurances of the completeness of the war preparations of the whole country, and which were embittered by the discrepancy between the ascertained facts of the preference given by the Government to the Europeans and the declarations made by the Governor and Mr. Duff Cooper. The Japanese attack was still in its early days, and it was essentially a time when the only hope of restoring public morale and Asiatic confidence in the Government was to make a frank and full disclosure of the facts. The meeting was held in the Legislative Council Chamber on the 20th December. As reported in the *Singapore Free Press* of the 23rd December and the *Straits Budget* of the 25th December, in identical words, he said that "the evacuation of European civilians from Penang had been done without his knowledge or that of

* The report in the *Singapore Free Press* of the 20th December quotes him as saying "the majority of the civilian population."

the Colonial Secretary." If he is correctly reported, and no correction has ever appeared, he, like Mr. Duff Cooper, failed to explain that there had been two evacuations from Penang, and he omitted to mention that both he and the Colonial Secretary had been actively concerned in the first evacuation. He did not explain how he, as *ex officio* Commander-in-Chief of the Colony, failed to be aware of the military evacuation. On this subject, he only said that he had discussed with the General Officer Commanding, Malaya, the reasons for the withdrawal of the military garrison, and that he accepted that officer's assurances that the withdrawal was absolutely essential from a military point of view. This statement gave the impression that the consultations between the military, administrative and political authorities, which (as mentioned in the introductory note) had been expected from Mr. Duff Cooper's appointment, had not been wholly successful, and that the Governor disclaimed all authority for both evacuations. At the time of both evacuations, Penang was in telephonic communication with Singapore. The only inference which the public could draw from the announcement was that the Resident Councillor of Penang had failed to report the action which he was taking in respect of both evacuations, and that the military evacuation was either not reported by the local military authorities to the General Officer Commanding in Singapore or that the General Officer Commanding had omitted to communicate it to the Governor. All that the public learnt was that the telephone had not been used; and public confidence in the leadership of the Civil Administration and the military authorities, and in the co-operation between them, was not improved by the disclosure. A great opportunity was lost. If, at that time, the facts had been fully and frankly disclosed and explained, the effect upon Asiatic morale and confidence and upon British prestige might have been different.

The Governor then proceeded to give a public assurance that, if it became necessary in the future to yield any district to the enemy, a sufficient number of Government officers would stay with the people to look after their needs so far as they could, even though they might fall into enemy hands, and he said that he had issued orders to the civil authorities that such an arrangement should always be made. This assurance was not fulfilled. The four British Residents of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang, and the General Adviser of Johore, with all their European officers, left their States under Government instructions after this date. It will be seen later in this narrative that there may have been excellent reasons for this. No explanation, however, was given to the public. A public assurance having thus been given, the public had a right to expect to be informed of a reversal of policy. Here, again, if the facts had been fully and frankly disclosed and explained at the time when the officers withdrew, the effect upon morale, confidence and prestige might have been different.

It may well be that what the Asiatics felt was not so much the withdrawal of the European Civil Servants as the manner in which they were withdrawn.

The Governor gave another assurance. It was that if any evacuation of population was ordered by the civil government in future, there would be no discrimination whatever, and no account taken of race, colour, or creed. This declaration of policy was strictly followed in respect of the evacuation from Singapore, and is mentioned later.

When the Governor and Mr. Duff Cooper made these public announcements, every European man and woman had been evacuated from Kedah, every European (except, perhaps, four Civil Servants) had been evacuated from Kelantan, and all European women and children had been evacuated from Perak. Neither the Governor nor Mr. Duff Cooper mentioned these facts. The public knew nothing of the evacuation from these three States, and there were the wildest rumours. There is no mention in the newspapers of any further attempt by Mr. Duff Cooper to impart war news to the public. He left Malaya on the 12th January, 1942.

The aerodrome at Kelantan was occupied by the Japanese on the night of the 8th December (the attack on the beach having been opened in the early hours of the same morning), but no news of this was given out until the 22nd December, when military headquarters issued the following communiqué:—

> "Owing to the loss of aerodrome facilities in Northern Kelantan, and the vulnerability of the communications, it was decided some days ago to withdraw from the area north of Kuala Krai. This operation, involving a series of carefully co-ordinated movements by night, has been successfully carried out by the military commander concerned. During the last few days, the enemy's land and air forces have attempted to interfere with the operation. In spite of this, the greater part of the force and the majority of stores and equipment have been brought out."

From the 8th December, 1941, when the Japanese attack opened, to the 31st January, 1942, when the "Battle of Malaya" ended with the breach of the Johore Causeway, there seems never to have been any attempt in the Government propaganda to lead the people of the peninsula to understand that their country was in peril; and, when "The Battle of Singapore" began, the military "Orders of the Day" (quoted above) contained no appeal to the civilian population of the island.

From the first day of the Japanese attack, the public of Malaya was in ignorance of what was happening. The press censorship was so severe that, when Singapore was bombed on the first day, only a few

meagre sentences concerning the damage were allowed to appear in the newspapers, and when Penang had its hideous raid a few days later, there was little mention of it. The papers filled their columns with long accounts of the fighting in Lybia and Russia.

The first military communiqué, issued by General Headquarters on the 8th December, 1941, stated that the first attempted enemy landing at Kelantan early that morning had been repelled, and that enemy troops which had succeeded in landing, and apparently infiltrating, were being engaged. Another communiqué, issued a few hours later, reported briefly that a few bombs had been dropped on Kelantan aerodrome without causing any casualties, and ended with the words: "all surface craft are retiring at high speed, and the few troops left on the beach are being heavily machine-gunned." The facts, which were never admitted in any military communiqué at any later time, were that the enemy occupied the aerodrome the same evening, and that the enemy transports, having successfully accomplished their work, were returning to their base at the normal speed of vessels in war time. It was announced on the same day that a news bulletin would be broadcast every hour. The next one to appear in the daily papers was published five days later. It was dated the 13th December, and gave a brief and obscure mention of "heavy and confused fighting," "enemy attacks in strength," and "local penetrations." Similar communiqués were issued at intervals later.

In the absence of information from military headquarters, the Malayan papers published Reuter's reports from London or anything that could be gleaned from places outside Malaya. The following examples are taken from the *Straits Times*.

13th December.—A London spokesman says that there is no confirmation of reports that the enemy has landed at Kuala Trenganu and Dungun.

1st January.—In London, it is stated that the comparative quiet in the Malayan situation may be due to the Japanese difficulty of bringing up fresh supplies.

6th January.—It is stated authoritatively in London that the Japanese recently made landings at the mouth of the Perak and Bernam rivers.

15th January.—A British United Press correspondent, quoted by the B.B.C., says that the slaughter of the Japanese in some areas of the Malayan front is unbelievable. Our concentrated fire has mown down wave after wave of them and whole detachments have been blown to bits.

21st January.—It is learned in London, said the B.B.C. last night, that, in spite of the enemy's claims, there are no Japanese troops within 76 miles of Singapore.

29th January.—A B.B.C. broadcast this morning says that Ipoh is suffering incessant bombardment from the air. (As at that time, the Japanese were within a few miles of Singapore, and Ipoh had been in their hands for nearly six weeks, this statement shows how little the public knew of the military position.)

The "Diary of Events" at the beginning of this book is meagre in its information concerning the dates on which the Japanese occupied one State, District or town, after another in their progress down the peninsula. It contained, however, everything that can be obtained from the military communiques, and much of it has been derived from private, but authentic, sources.

In *Malayan Postscript*, Mr. Ian Morrison says that there were some 20 war correspondents in Singapore, and he gives some instances of the ridiculous expedients they used in order to pass on any information to their newspapers. He says that the representative of the Columbia Broadcasting System had his accreditation taken away from him on the grounds that his broadcasts to America, which could be picked up in Malay, were having a depressing effect on local morale.

The *Straits Times*, the leading newspaper of Malaya, had the courage to comment on the effect of the lack of information upon public morale in the following terms in an editorial, dated the 5th January, 1942:—

"Malaya has now been in the front line for a month. The Northern Settlement is in enemy hands, and fighting is taking place within 200 miles of Singapore. This island has been bombed on several occasions with 'slight damage to civilian property' and 'a few civilian casualties'. That is a reasonably accurate summary of all that the people of this country have been told of the fighting which is going on around them. Vague 'lines' have been mentioned and there have been sundry 'strategic withdrawals'. Such generalities provide a very flimsy basis indeed for detailed comment—so flimsy that we do not propose to attempt a task which is very nearly impossible of achievement. This is not a grumble against the paucity of the news which is being released. There are many vital interests at stake, and the decision of the authorities is an extremely difficult one. The view we propose to put forward here is the view of the middle-class Asiatic who has been asked to help in maintaining morale but finds himself quite unable to do so."

After a long and reasoned argument on "the grave danger that the populace will cease to place any reliance on such communiqués as are issued", the editorial ends:—

"If the newspapers and the newspaper reading public are to be of any help in combating rumour, they must be better supplied with the only things which are of the slightest value in carrying out the task. And those things are facts."

The Malayan public was completely bewildered by the lack of any official information, and could only guess at the reason for it. There was a very large and influential section of highly educated, English-speaking Asiatics, and it had, with some reason, been openly sceptical of the British propaganda at the time of the disasters when France, Belgium and Holland had fallen to the Germans. In the towns, the heterogeneous collection of Chinese, Malays and Indians, who could only speak their own languages, listened to anything that they could hear; and in the villages the Malays relied upon the bazaar-gossip of the nearest town. What the Malayan War Council, the Civil government and the military authorities did not understand was that bad news, provided it was true, was better than no news; that the truth must eventually be learnt; and that the combined effect of no news from official sources and driblets of information from "London" undermined all public confidence in the civilian administration and military intelligence.

Everywhere, the Asiatics went to their European friends for information, and were seriously perturbed and incredulous when they heard that they were as ignorant as themselves. The Japanese were broadcasting regularly from Tokyo and Penang, and there was every excuse for listening in to them.

Public confidence in the Civil Administration was shocked by a circular issued by the Governor to the Malayan Civil Service and communicated by him to the public press and the Malayan Broadcasting Corporation. It was published in the *Straits Times* of the 17th January, 1942, and was as follows:—

"The day of minute papers has gone. There must be no more passing of files from one department to another, and from one office in a department to another. It is the duty of every officer to act, and if he feels the decision is beyond him he must go and get it. Similarly, the day of letters and reports is over. All written matter should be in the form of short notes, in which only the important points are mentioned. Every officer must accept his responsibility to the full in the taking of decisions. In the great majority of cases, a decision can be taken or obtained after a brief conversation, by telephone or direct. The essential thing is speed in action. Nothing matters which is not directly concerned with defence, and no one should be troubled with it. Officers who show that they cannot take responsibility should be replaced by those who can. Seniority is of no account."

The date of this circular is noteworthy. By the 17th January, 1942, two settlements in the Colony out of three, and eight Malay States out of nine, were in the occupation of the enemy. Only Singapore and Johore remained. One military defeat after another had followed in rapid succession, from Kelantan, Kedah, and Penang, in the north, down to Johore. A secret circular to the remaining officials in Johore and Singapore may have been necessary, but to publish it in the newspapers and to broadcast it on the Malayan wireless service was a public reflection upon the Civil Servants of the areas which had been evacuated and of the small areas which still remained under British control. The publication of a circular expressed in these terms was calculated to shake public confidence, Asiatic and European alike, in the competence of the Civil Administration, and to create public despondency and dismay. The comment of the *Straits Times* upon it was that it was about two-and-a-quarter years late.

(5) Japanese Leaflets

Throughout the campaign, leaflets were dropped by the Japanese from aeroplanes. They had pictures in crude and lurid colours, and a letterpress in illiterate English and in Chinese, Malay, and Tamil. One set declared that the Japanese were waging war only against "The White Devils", and warned the Asiatics to evacuate the towns before they were bombed. Others aimed at bringing the Europeans into contempt, either by showing an enormously fat European planter

lolling in the shade of a tree, with beer bottles beside him, while his Tamil labourers worked in a burning sun, or by showing a red-faced British soldier grilling a beef-steak, while emaciated Indian soldiers were at work.

Others declared that any Asiatic domestic servant who remained with a European employer would be put to death. Many of these leaflets were brought with genuine amusement and contempt by the servants to their employers. This may be a suitable place at which to pay a tribute to the domestic servants of Malaya. The people who were in Singapore in 1915, when an Indian regiment mutinied in the last war, will remember that it was necessary to evacuate all Europeans for nearly a week from the suburban area, that throughout that time, all the Chinese servants remained in charge of empty houses, and that, when the Europeans were able to return, they found everything in perfect working order. The same devotion was shown on a much larger scale throughout Malaya in the Japanese invasion. When the European women were evacuated by the Government from one town after another, the husbands of a very large proportion of them were on active service with the Volunteers or Local Defence Corps; their servants helped them to pack their suitcases and remained in charge of everything else in the house. Later, when the European male civilians left, they, too, handed over the houses and their contents to their servants. Many servants, especially the nurses, travelled with their employers to Kuala Lumpur or Singapore. The devotion of the chauffeurs, most of whom were Malay immigrants, is stressed by numbers of writers. Often they left their wives and families, to drive the European women to safety, and were then given the cars in order to return to their families and take them to safety. In many cases, these men in both journeys faced great danger.

Another set of leaflets was addressed to the fighting forces. One of them was copied at the time by one of our informants, and ran as follows:—

"To the British Army."

"The conduct, which you the British soldiers behaved badly to the Japanese is never forgiven by both the God and the humankind. That is, you imprisoned the Japanese and put them into the leper-house, into the oil-tanks and moreover slaughtered the Japanese non-combatants.

"Impress on your mind that you expect to be revenged fifty one hundred times as many as you behaved once."

"The Nippon Army."

The last set of leaflets threatened outrages to the European women. One of them was shown to one of our informants in Singapore by a soldier who had picked it up. He would not allow her to keep it, and she believes that he had others which he would not allow her to

see. It was a highly-coloured picture in Japanese style of a very fat, naked European woman being dragged behind a cart in front of a row of Japanese soldiers.

(6) The Loyalty of the People of Malaya

(1) *Malay Loyalty and Subversive Action*

It is necessary to mention in separate paragraphs the behaviour of the Malays, as the people of the country, and the behaviour of the Chinese and Indians, as the domiciled or immigrant people. The reason for this is not that there was any particular difference in their behaviour but that, in the retreat of the British, Indian and Australian forces from the Siamese frontier down to Singapore, the Malays were especially singled out for wild stories of "Fifth Columnism." These stories had their origin in the undoubted facts that as a general rule the British, Indian or Australian officers could not speak Malay, and had little knowledge of the people or the country; that the soldiers were unable to distinguish between the features and general appearance of a Malay and a Japanese; and that the Japanese made a point of wearing the dress of a Malay peasant. One of our informants reports that the officers of a British regiment frankly admitted to him that from beginning to end they never saw any difference between Japanese, Chinese, Malays and Gurkhas. When Japanese soldiers, disguised as Malay peasants, appeared behind our troops, as they were always doing, it was not unreasonable for our men to suspect any Malay who was seen anywhere, and there is no doubt that some innocent Malays were shot at sight. Stories were current, and lost nothing by repetition, of Malays, Chinese and Indians having been seen leading Japanese troops along jungle paths. There is no confirmation of these stories, and even if they are true, there can be little doubt that close to the back of any guide there was a Japanese bayonet or revolver. Fundamental ignorance, combined with the suspicion of the Malays carefully inculcated in British military minds by Japanese tactics, prevented our troops from making, in the campaign, the use which any military force should have been at great pains to secure, long before the campaign began, of utilizing information from local civilian sources.

Every Malay State is divided into a number of districts in the charge of a European or Malay District Officer, and each district is sub-divided into a very considerable number of *Mukims*, or large parishes; and in each *Mukim* there is a *Penghulu*, a Malay headman, who is a salaried and highly respected Government official. He has many statutory powers, holds court in civil and criminal matters and is responsible to the District Officer for the general affairs of the parish.

Often a *Penghulu* is assisted by a parish council. The natural instinct and the communal duty of every Malay is to take any important information immediately to his *Penghulu*, and to the *Penghulu* alone. He would consider it wrong to pass the information on to a stranger, for that, to his mind, would be a matter for the discretion of the *Penghulu*. In the course of the campaign, it is practically certain that every Malay who learnt anything of the presence of British or enemy forces, parachutists, spies or enemy agents took it without delay to his *Penghulu*, who thus had an accumulation of information for which no one ever asked.

In this respect, military headquarters at Singapore might have given more attention to the precept of "keeping an ear to the ground", but this was not all. Every Malay knows all the forest tracks within miles of his village, and the collectors of forest-produce know every mountain pass and wild animal track for far greater distances. With the assistance of the District Officer it would have been easy to prepare a "corps of guides", which the *Penghulus* would have placed at the disposal of any British military commander. It must be emphasized that, whilst no Malay would ever have thought of volunteering his services in any regiment, and indeed would never have dared to do so, the Malays, at the *Penghulu's* order, would readily have come forward as guides.

The ordnance survey maps of Malaya are equal to those of the United Kingdom in their accuracy and wealth of detail; and long before the campaign started it would have been easy to mark on the map of every district the exact site of each *Penghulu's* house, and to instruct every regimental commander that it was his duty on moving to any new area to get into touch immediately with every *Penghulu*. Very few units had any knowledge of the existence of the *Penghulu* system; and at the beginning of the campaign they had few, if any, Liaison Officers or interpreters. In the Civil and Administrative Service and in the Volunteer Forces there was a large number of men who had served with distinction in the last war and many of whom had the Military Cross, and all of whom spoke Malay fluently, but it was not until the retreat had begun that any real attempt was made to utilize their services. The result of this neglect was disastrous to our troops, and a deplorable result was that the Malays, who were ready to render every possible service within their power, were not only ignored but were treated with the suspicion which grew out of ignorance. These indisputable facts are mentioned, not with any idea of recrimination, but solely in the hope that, in the campagin to reconquer Malaya, the military authorities will realize how much valuable information is available from a natural and obvious source of supply, and how much the success of any campaign depends upon co-operation, confidence and mutual respect between forces fighting in

a country which is strange and unknown to them, and the people of the country for which they are fighting.

The mass of information on which this narrative is based has been collected from a great number of people who were in every part of Malaya at the time of the invasion; it has been sifted, checked and cross-checked in every particular of the manifold aspects of this narrative; and, so far as the attitude of the great bulk of the Malays is concerned, it conclusively establishes their complete loyalty to the British Government and the British *régime* in Malaya.

In Burma, villagers, dacoits and Burmese malcontents in bands, organized, and sometimes led, by Japanese agents, are said to have fired on British troops and convoys of European and Indian refugees. No such thing has ever been suggested of the Malays. Though our troops, in complete ignorance of the presence of Japanese infiltrating and circumventing forces, often thought that fire from Japanese disguised as Malays was sniping by Malays, there is, so far as is known no authenticated case of any Malay ever having fired on any British troops. In the evacuation of the European women and children, and later the European civilian men, sometimes in single cars, and always unprotected, it can be stated with certainty that there was never the slightest molestation or interference by the Malays. On the contrary, there are innumerable cases of every possible help having been given by the Malays everywhere to small bodies of our troops, or to individual soldiers who had lost their way, by giving them food, clothing, and housing for the night, by guiding them on their way, by ferrying them across rivers, and by giving them canoes or sailing craft in which to make good their escape.

There was no conceivable reason why the Malays should not have been loyal. They were in every way content with the British *régime*. Each had his smallholding, as much as he required, of land held in a direct title from the State. Those with a few acres of rubber were affluent, and all were in comfortable circumstances. The standard of living was high, and the taxation was negligible. In every village Malay education was free and good. The only fault to be found in the social life of the Malays really was that it was so easy that it created a tendency to softness. As a community, the Malays had no political ideas or aspirations. Politically, socially, and economically, they liked and respected the British *régime*, and they knew full well that a Japanese victory would not improve their comfort or welfare in any conceivable manner.

The finding that the Malays as a community were completely loyal is not inconsistent with the fact that almost certainly there were some traitors amongst them. Traitors exist in every country, including the United Kingdom, and it would be ridiculous to suppose that

Malaya was free from them. The question is whether treachery was prevalent; and before touching upon this question it will be convenient to refer to the expression "Fifth Columnist". In current parlance, this applies indiscriminately to the specialized and highly trained member of the secret service of an enemy country, to defeatists and to any foolish native of the country who carelessly repeats a piece of gossip. So loosely is the expression used that people are apt to think of a whole nation as being composed of "Fifth Columnists". The term is perhaps correctly applied only to the subversive agents organized in any country by the secret service of another country with the object of undermining the morale of the population in every possible way, such as creating discontent, disaffection, despondency, defeatism and spreading false stories of disasters. A "Fifth Columnist" is thus quite different from a spy; both can be of any nationality, and there is no reason why the same person should not combine both roles. In effect, thus the nation is the corporate body which the "Fifth Columnist" infects with his poison or virus, but the nation itself is not a "Fifth Columnist". As is the case in every country, there were undoubtedly some Malays who nursed a grievance against the Government. A number of them were unemployed and felt that their education had been wasted; others had failed to secure promotion or had been dismissed; and there were some who had been passed over in the succession to some hereditary post or had been deposed. Though there were some such men, and though they probably influenced some of their friends or followers, there is very little definite information to show who they were or what they did. At this stage, all that can safely be said is that there is nothing to show that they affected the loyalty of the Malay community.

The general impression derived from all our information is that of Malay villagers everywhere throughout the peninsula watching for many months at the roadsides, with wondering and uncomprehending eyes, the military preparations for defence and the long convoys of troops, lorries and artillery proceeding northwards; of their amazement at the numbers and the stupendous strength of the forces, and of their unwavering belief in the Government declarations that the country was in a position to annihilate any enemy attack. In all this the Malays saw that for themselves, unarmed and untrained, there was no part that they could take, and that no assistance from them was expected. Then came the announcement that the Japanese had attacked Kelantan, to be followed almost at once by the news that an attack by British aircraft had compelled the enemy ships to retreat at full speed and that Japanese survivors on the beach were being mopped up. For some time there was no more news, and then something terrible happened. The roads were filled with cars carrying European women and children and wealthy Chinese and Indians all hurrying southwards, and in silent groups on the roadside the Malay.

looked on in bewilderment at the unending stream of cars. There were rumours of every sort of a British defeat, but there was no news. A few days later, the European Civil Servants, planters and miners, the whole male European population, came along the same road, with cars and lorries loaded with Government equipment, all hurrying southwards, and the same puzzled silent groups of Malays looked on. The rumours grew, but still there was no news. Then, only a few days later, southward came the mauled and battered remnants of the defending forces that so confidently had passed that same way a few months before, and the Malays knew that the end had come. What they did no one yet knows; probably they had already sent away their womenfolk and children into safer retreats in the interior, and they silently and stoically prepared to see the invaders. What they thought then no one knows, but whatever they thought then does not affect the facts that until a few days before they had been completely loyal to the British, and that during those last days they did what they could, in the little ways that only were possible, to help the retreating civilians and military forces. But what they thought then will affect the Malaya of the future.

(2) *The Loyalty of the other Communities and Subversive Action*

It is perhaps hardly necessary to say that the unswerving loyalty of the Eurasian community was abundantly shown on every occasion and in every manner.

In the Chinese community there had been in Malaya a number of illegal Communist parties composed of China-born immigrant Chinese, which frequently quarrelled amongst themselves, and which were violently anti-British. One of their aims, in which from time to time they succeeded, was to promote discontent and strikes for higher wages in the labouring classes. In 1939 there were several strikes attended by rioting in tin mines and rubber estates. These Communist parties were also violently anti-Japanese, and had for some years past given trouble by promoting demonstrations and breaches of the peace outside the shops of Japanese traders. As soon as the Japanese attack began, their anti-Government activities subsided, and when the Japanese forces were approaching Singapore they joined the other sections of the Chinese community in offering their services for the defence of the island. It was then too late to make much use of their offer. Whilst it would be foolish to minimize the trouble caused by these Communist parties, it can be stated with confidence, on the authority of persons who were in Malaya at the time and who had an intimate knowledge of the China-born Chinese, to whom the Communist party particularly addressed itself, that the great bulk of the China-born Chinese were completely loyal to the British *régime*.

Of the fervent loyalty of the Malaya-born Chinese there has never been any doubt. In the paragraphs of the Medical Auxiliary Services at the "Preparation" stage, mention has been made of the Chinese women members having a more vivid feeling of the reality of the impending danger than it was possible for the European women to have. Their menfolk had exactly the same feeling, for both the women and the men knew what the Japanese invasion of China had meant to their countrymen. The manner in which men and women served from beginnnig to end in every branch of the Passive Defence Services is a proof of their loyalty and courage.

The Tamil labour on the rubber estates gave considerable trouble at intervals between 1939 and 1941 in some districts. Strikes, coupled with demands for higher wages, were organized by subversive Indian agents and led to some rioting. Ghandi caps were worn by some estate labourers. In the House of Commons on the 28th May, 1941, the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies reported that some 7,000 strikers had been involved in serious strikes early in that month, that there had been considerable intimidation by bands of strikers, and that five lives had been lost in the disturbances. He also said that the districts concerned had been subjected to considerable propaganda by the adherents of the Central Indian Association of Malaya. Though the strikes were soon settled, they left a feeling of uncertainty and disquiet both amongst the European employers and the Tamil labour force, and when the calling up of Europeans for the Volunteer Forces was rigorously enforced, there was very strong public opinion that more Europeans should have been required to remain on the estates.

The Government undoubtedly took a risk, and perhaps did so knowingly in view of the military situation. In the Japanese invasion, however, the Tamil estate labour force behaved splendidly, and it was only on a few estates that the bombing created panic and dispersal. Elsewhere the labour force continued to do its daily work. On many estates the headman begged the managers to go, saying that they would be murdered by the Japanese if they stayed, whereas they themselves would be safe, for the Japanese leaflets had declared that the Europeans were their only enemies. As a general rule, not only did the Tamils stay quietly on the estates until the Europeans had left, but they remained there after they had gone.

By innumerable acts of kindness and active help to small groups of British soldiers who had lost their way, the Chinese and Indians did all that was possible in the same way as the Malays, and the gratitude of the men who owed their lives to this assistance has frequently been recorded in the newspapers, but has not been recognized in this country as fully as it should have been.

In an earlier paragraph mention has been made of the bewilderment of the Malays in the villages and rural areas as they saw the Europeans —but not only the Europeans—streaming southwards along the roads,

followed by the retreating British forces. The feeling in the towns was different. Both in the towns from which the European civilians, men, women and children, officials and unofficials, were evacuated, and in the towns in which they found temporary accommodation, and finally in Singapore, which was their final destination, the evacuation of the European civilians, and the manner in which it was effected, had a profound effect upon the Asiatic population. It is impossible to say what the result may have been upon the attitude of the Asiatic population now in Malaya towards the British people, and upon its loyalty to the British Government. The question must be faced, and it can only be considered in the light of the facts of the method of the evacuation, and further mention of it will be made in Part III.

In general terms it may be said that the wild and wholly unfounded stories of Malaya being "Fifth Columnist" owe their origin to three causes:

First: There is the popular misconception of what is meant by a "Fifth Column". Undoubtedly there were Japanese military spies and secret service men, who are an essential part of every military organization. There were also some active subversive agencies, engaged in the work of a "Fifth Column", which has been mentioned above, and, though the facts are not yet known, there can be no doubt that there were some traitors. These factors exist in every country, and they do not affect a declaration, which cannot be repeated too emphatically or too often, that all communities of Malaya were loyal in every possible way to the British.

Secondly: An unfortunately worded broadcast by the Governor was misunderstood. In a New Year's message to the Malayas shortly before the fall of Singapore, he said:

> "There is another thing I wish to mention. During the last few days Martial Law has been imposed in Singapore, but there is no need for anyone to worry about that. I signed the Proclamation because it was necessary to make certain that evil-doers against the State shall be punished quickly, and it seemed to us all that this could be best secured by the promulgation of Martial Law. I know you will agree that men who conspire against the State, which means their fellow countrymen in time of war, should be dealt with properly and quickly."

There is always some public consternation when Martial Law is suddenly imposed in any place, and the Governor's intention clearly was to give a public assurance that the new system only meant a more expeditious method of dealing with the circumstances which arise in a state of emergency, and that the new system would not affect the life of the inhabitants of Singapore. By expressing himself as he did, he told the public, and the world at large, that the presence of evil-doers and conspirators was the only reason for the introduction of Martial Law. The people of Singapore seem to have been little concerned by the imposition of Martial Law.

Thirdly: It cannot be declared too emphatically and too often that the British public was so embittered by the wholly unexpected fall of the "fortress" of Singapore that it sought every possible object on which to expend and relieve its feelings; in complete ignorance of the facts, it abused indiscriminately the Civil Servants, the planters, the European women, the Malays, and the entire civilian community for what was, from beginning to end, a military disaster due to lack of military preparedness and adequate military forces. The feeling was cowardly, mean, and thoroughly un-British. To some extent it has subsided, but the impression made by it on public opinion throughout the world still exists. The British public has every reason to be ashamed of what it thought and said, but the Malayan public has every right to be proud of what it did. Unless the facts are recognized before the British return to Malaya, our reception may not be the one that is necessary for co-operation in laying the foundations of the Malaya of the future.

PART III.—EVACUATION

THIS PART IS DIVIDED INTO TWO SECTIONS, OF WHICH THE FIRST DEALS with the Government policy in respect of the arrival and departure of civilians and the policy of evacuation both before and during the Japanese invasion, and the second mentions the Government method of their evacuation after the invasion had started.

(I) THE RESTRICTION ON ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE AND THE POLICY OF EVACUATION

In September, 1939, "Regulation of Travel Orders", made under the "Defence Regulations", prohibited any person, irrespective of nationality, from entering or leaving Malaya unless he or she had first obtained from an Immigration Officer a written permit which would be given in accordance with general or special instructions conveyed to that officer. There was provision for general and special exemption of persons. In December, 1939, the Immigration Officer was empowered to attach conditions to any permit to enter or leave Malaya, and to take any necessary security. Another Order in March, 1940, restored free entry and departure of all women and children.

In November, 1940, these Orders were again amended by a provision that permits to enter Malaya would not be issued (i) to any European woman or girl of any nationality, unless the Immigration Officer was satisfied that she was normally resident or employed in Malaya or the wife or daughter of a person normally resident or employed in Malaya, nor (ii) to any male European of any nationality under the age of 18 years, unless he was the son of a person normally resident or employed in Malaya. An Order made in January, 1941, prohibited the entry into Malaya of any European child over the age of 10 years, and permitted the entry of European children under the age of 10 years only if their parents were normally resident or employed in Malaya. In October, 1941, the Orders were again amended and all European women, boys and girls were allowed to enter Malaya if they were the wives, sons or daughters of persons normally resident or employed in Malaya, or if the women were normally resident or employed in Malaya.

The Orders of January, 1941, and October, 1941, contained special provision for permission for schoolchildren from nearby countries to visit Malaya for their holidays. This concession seems to have been the result of great pressure exercised on the Government by parents resident in Malaya. As the result of this concession, one steamer left Australia with a very considerable number of schoolchildren and women. It arrived in Singapore in the latter part of December, stayed there a few days, and then took most of them back to Australia.

Another steamer, which was ready to take more children and women, either did not leave Australia or turned back.

At an earlier date (June, 1940), all permits issued to male British subjects to leave Malaya were revoked by Regulation of Travel Orders, and in future exit permits were to be refused to any male British subject of pure European descent above the age of 41, to any person liable for service in the Local Defence Corps and to any Volunteer. In special cases, certificates could be obtained from the appropriate authorities. Amended Orders in September, 1940, prohibited all male British subjects of pure European descent over the age of 18 years from leaving Malaya except in accordance with certain general principles. All applications for exemption were to be considered by a tribunal, which might grant exemptions in such cases as normal leave, unemployment or a medical certificate of ill-health.

Under these Orders, the position was that from June, 1940, it was impossible for any British male European to leave Malaya except in very special circumstances and that from October, 1940, their wives and children could freely enter and leave the country.

It is open to question whether these Orders should not have been reviewed in July, 1941, when the Japanese occupation of Indo-China made it probable that an attack upon Malaya was in contemplation. On the 24th July, 1941, it was announced in Vichy that the Vichy Government had agreed to the "temporary occupation" by Japan of strategic bases and airfields in Indo-China as a "temporary measure undertaken to protect Indo-China". Speaking in the House of Commons on the next day, the 25th July, Mr. Anthony Eden said that the Japanese Government had presented demands to Vichy for the occupation of naval and air bases in southern Indo-China; that it was quite evident that the conclusion of a definite agreement was imminent; that it had been clear for some time past that this aggression had been meditated by Japan; and that certain defence measures had been enforced in Malaya "in view of the plain threat to our territories which the Japanese action implies". On the next day, the 26th July, Japanese assets in Malaya were "frozen" by a *Gazette* Notification. On the 28th July, it was officially announced in Hanoi that the Vichy Government had permitted the Japanese to utilize eight aerodromes in southern Indo-China, including some on the Siamese border, and that Japanese troops had begun disembarkation. As was truly said in the "Order of the Day" issued in Singapore, when Malaya was attacked on the 8th December, 1941, "we have had plenty of warning".

Before discussing the manner in which some notice might have been taken, in view of these warnings, to protect the civilian population of the threatened territory, it is necessary to point out that the object of the varying Orders cited above was not to give any preference to Europeans. On the contrary, the policy was to impose on the European community, which was not domiciled in the country, restrictions and

disabilities from which the non-European domiciled communities were free. It is reasonable to suppose that in other British Colonies and protected territories there were somewhat similar Orders or Regulations which applied specially to the European communities, as a matter of preparation for war-time circumstances.

In Malaya, the European women were in two distinct categories:

(i) Those who, whether they had small children or not, were capable of taking an active part in military or civilian defence, and who could be classed, therefore, as "effectives".

(ii) Those who, by reason of infirmity, illness, old age or the ties of small children, were prevented from taking any part in defence measures, and who could, therefore, be classed as "non-effectives".

These two categories were not recognized by the Government in the Regulation of Travel Order of October, 1941, some months after the Japanese threat and the British declaration in reply to it.

There were in Malaya some areas which were well known to be likely to be the first objects of any attack. On the east coast, there were the States of Kelantan, Trengganu, Pahang, and the eastern side of Johore, and on the west coast there was Kedah. Kelantan is on the Siamese frontier and is connected by railway with Patani, Singora and Bangkok on the north, and with Singapore on the south. Kedah is connected with Singora by railway and by a magnificent trunk road, both of which run through comparatively open and flat country to Alor Star, the capital of Kedah, a distance of only about 80 miles from the China Sea to the Straits of Malacca, and thence through more open and flat country for another short distance to Prai, which is opposite Penang. The attack upon Kelantan and Kedah began on the 8th December, and by the 17th nearly the whole of Kedah and practically the whole of the populated area of Kelantan was in enemy hands. An invasion of Malaya apparently had not been anticipated by the military authorities. Speaking early in May, 1941, in Singapore to a Press gathering of American correspondents, the General Officer Commanding, Malaya, is reported in the *Straits Budget* of the 8th May, 1941, to have spoken as follows :

"Malaya and Singapore were prepared for the possibility of interrupted communications. If by some method of blockade, an enemy ever succeeded in isolating this area, then we should live on our accumulated resources. Full provision had been made for this, supplies, including foodstuffs, being maintained at various points. Those stores were safe from air attack as far as could humanly be said."

Nevertheless, an attack of some kind was certainly expected, and some areas were clearly more dangerous than others. The entire coast line of the State of Pahang, for instance, was declared in September, 1941, to be a "Defence Area" to a depth of 500 yards. The

Civil Government and the Malayan War Council, in consultation with the military authorities, might well have considered the vulnerability of certain areas in connection with the series of varying Orders enumerated above in regulation of the entry of European women and children into Malaya, and special measures might reasonably have been taken in respect of all "non-effective" women in those areas. These measures might have taken the form of official advice, or a definite Government "Order", not to enter a vulnerable area or to leave it. In the light of the Government declaration in the House of Commons, this need not have created any undue alarm amongst the European or the Asiatic communities, and indeed it might have been considered as a sign of the manner in which the local authorities were prepared to meet the threat.

In respect of Malaya as a whole, at least three courses of action were open to the Government, namely:

(i) active discouragement by official advice of the entry of all "non-effective" European women;
(ii) definite prohibition by a Government "Order" of the entry of all "non-effective" European women;
(iii) evacuation of all "non-effective" European women.

It should be born in mind, in this connection, that the Government had started upon its "Passive Defence" organization in 1939, and that every European woman knew what other forms of work, such as employment in Government Offices, were also open to her. The test, therefore, whether a woman was "effective" or "non-effective" would have been the simple one of whether or not she had enrolled for some recognized form of defence service.

If it had been necessary or desirable, these three courses of action could have been progressive; first the discouragement of entry, later the prohibition of entry and last the evacuation. As former "Orders" had applied to European women and children, there would have been no objection to the application only to them. The Asiatics would have understood that it was a restriction and not a concession. But first of all, it would have been necessary for the Malayan War Council, the Civil Government and the military authorities to reconsider their general attitude towards the danger of attack and its consequences. Though it has not been possible to collect the public official utterances on the subject, there is not the slightest doubt that the entire European population, "effective" and "non-effective" alike, considered that it was its duty to stay in Malaya, and had the idea that the Government would regard any general departure of the "non-effectives" as tending to impair Asiatic morale. As has been suggested above, in respect of the particularly vulnerable areas, exactly the opposite result might have been achieved if the Government had educated the European and Asiatic public. After the varying orders of the Government, the final removal of all restrictions upon entry of women and children

had necessarily given confidence to the public of Malaya. There is little doubt, too, that each restriction had been relaxed as the result of the heavy and unremitting pressure exercised upon the Government by the local Europeans, who, believing that Malaya was "safe", could not understand why their wives and children should not be allowed to join them. In the light of the Japanese threat, a new and clear pronouncement of the Government policy was needed, and it was not forthcoming. In brief, there seems to be nothing to show that Mr. Eden's statement in the House of Commons had produced any effect upon the local authorities.

It would appear, therefore, that there would have been no reasonable objection to the first course of action, and but little opposition to the second one, and that the extent to which there would have been public criticism of the third one (of compulsory evacuation of all European women "non-effectives") would have depended upon the extent to which the European and Asiatic public understood the position.

Regarding the course of compulsory evacuation, the Malayan authorities may well have been deterred by the experience of the Hong Kong Government. The instructions of the British War Cabinet for the compulsory evacuation of European women and children were received in Hong Kong on the 28th June, 1940, and, in compliance therewith, the Executive Council of the Colony made its formal decision the next day. On the 5th July, there was a meeting of the Legislative Council, and in a debate on the subject of the European and Chinese Unofficial Members attacked the measure with unrestrained vehemence on the grounds of injustice to the European community, of racial discrimination, of the misery of family separation for an indefinite period, and of the public expense which would be shared by the non-European taxpayers. The agitation both in the Colony and in the United Kingdom continued with unrelenting vigour until November, 1941, when the Government yielded to pressure, and appointed a committee to advise on measures for the return of the women and children when the military situation permitted. The deliberations of the committee were interrupted by the Japanese attack a few days later. It will be noted that the evacuation took place in July, 1940, exactly a year before the Japanese occupation in July, 1941, of "strategic points in Indo-China".

If in Malaya in July, 1941, after the Japanese threat had been explained to the House of Commons, the Malayan Government had ordered the evacuation of all non-effective" European women, the difficulties would have been different. Whilst it is impossible to give any estimate of the numbers of the "non-effective" European women in Malaya, there can be no doubt that they greatly exceeded the number of women evacuated from Hong Kong. They could not all

have left Malaya simultaneously. A warning to be ready to leave upon receipt of an embarkation order would have been necessary, and this would have given time for preparation. As in other countries, there could have been no disobedience of the order, and any resentment against it would have depended upon the nature of the Government publicity. The headlong evacuation of European women and children, which actually occurred when the local military authorities took control of the situation and issued orders to the local civil authorities as the Japanese Forces approached, would have been avoided.

It would have been necessary at the same time to consider the possibility of offering facilities for leaving Malaya to all Eurasian and Asiatic "non-effective" women who were prepared to leave their husbands. The only racial discrimination would have been that the departure was compulsory for Europeans and voluntary for others. No non-European could have complained of this distinction. The stipulation that the non-European men should stay in exactly the same way as the European men, if they were able to take a part in the defence of the country, would have been obviously just. Before committing itself to an offer of this nature, it would have been necessary for the Government to have an estimate of the number of "non-effective" non-European women who would be prepared to accept the offer, and also to know what countries would be able to offer them hospitality. The first step might have been to announce that, without committing itself in any way, the Government was prepared to consider applications for a single-ticket passage, without subsistence allowance, for "non-effective" non-European women and their children to some other country which could not be named until arrangements had been made. A single passage only, also without subsistence allowance, would have applied equally to the "non-effective" European women. A time limit within which applications were to be made would have been necessary in order to consult other countries. The Chinese women, whether China-born or Malaya-born, obviously could not have gone to China, and to all of them other countries were unknown. One man, who was in Singapore and in close touch with the Chinese community, records his considered opinion that, even in the middle of January, 1942, when Singapore was being bombed every day, the Chinese did not wish to leave Singapore. The Indian women could have gone to India. What actually occurred was that five steamers arrived in Singapore in the middle of January, 1942, with reinforcements from India. For the return journey, which was to be made as soon as possible, the Government gave priority to Indian women and children. So few women were prepared to leave without their husbands or male relatives that only three steamers took a full complement of Indian passengers. One steamer returned without passengers, and the fifth took about 160 European women and children. Many more

could have been taken if they had been prepared to accept a passage as far as India only, and to have taken the risk of making their own arrangements for continuing the journey thence to England. The circumstances of all the non-Europeans with their homes in Malaya were so different from those of the Europeans with their real homes in other countries that it is reasonable to suppose that an offer of free passages to all "non-effectives" on terms of absolute equality could have been made without fear of embarrassment to the Government in finding the accommodation. The Government offer of evacuation on terms of absolute equality for all nationalities was not made until after the Japanese invasion, and even on the 31st January, 1942, when Singapore was the only place in British occupation and was being bombed daily, only a comparatively few non-Europeans had accepted the offer. This is shown by the following figures which can be accepted as approximately correct:

European women and children, approximately ...	... 7,000
Indian women and children, approximately ...	... 2,300
Chinese women and children, approximately ...	... 450

These figures include Europeans who paid for their passages. If the offer had been made as soon as the threat to Malaya became clear, and before the attack began, there would have been none of the bitter resentment felt by the entire non-European community at the racial discrimination shown in the evacuation of the Europeans from Penang, and it would have been unnecessary for the Governor, after the evacuation, to inform the leaders of the Asiatic communities that in future there would be no discrimination.

There is no reason to believe that if the Government had adopted this policy it would have advanced the date of the Japanese attack. It was not as unfriendly an act as was the *Gazette* Notification of the 26th July, 1941, which "froze" the Japanese assets in Malaya.

In introducing such a policy, there would have been two difficulties. The first would have been the one of finding the necessary shipping accommodation. But, as transports were continually arriving in Singapore from July, 1941, onwards, it should not have been impossible to make arrangements. The question of the expense did not arise, and the Government faced it when eventually it decided to provide free transport for all women and children. By that time, however, the docks of Singapore were ablaze, the steamers were bombed at the dockside and in the harbour as they left, and again in the Straits of Malacca and the Sunda Straits. Some of the steamers were sunk with hideous loss of life, and the fate of others is unknown.

The second difficulty would have been the effect of such a policy upon European and Asiatic morale. Evacuation of European women and children is, however, one thing, and evacuation of "non-effective"

European and Asiatic women and children is a very different thing. As has been stated above in respect of the areas which were particularly vulnerable, a policy of evacuation of "non-effectives" as soon as the threat was clear might have been considered as a sign of the manner in which the threat was being met. It is clear that the Government policy and publicity were based on a belief that the whole of Malaya was impregnable.

If there had been a policy of evacuation of "non-effective" women, with the only racial discrimination that it would have been compulsory for Europeans and voluntary for non-Europeans, there would have been no need for discrimination in respect of the "effective" women. They would all have been at their posts in their different units under the strict discipline of war-time service. When any area became untenable for military reasons, the units would have moved as a body under official instructions. Any non-European woman who wished to remain in any area evacuated by the military forces because her home, husband and family were there would doubtless have been allowed to do so, and any European woman who considered it to be her duty to remain at her post rather than leave with the unit might perhaps have received permission. What actually occurred, and is described elsewhere, was that European Lady Medical Officers, Hospital Matrons, Nursing Sisters, members of the Medical Auxiliary Services and other women serving in war-time essential services were authoritatively ordered to leave their duties, and left devoted non-European women to carry on. The humiliation of this to the European women themselves and the disastrous effect upon British prestige would have been avoided if the Government had distinguished between "effective" and "non-effective" women without regard to their nationality, but with the stipulation that all of them must be prepared to leave their husbands. The question whether such a policy would have affected European and Asiatic morale before the Japanese attack materialized is one which cannot be answered.

It is necessary now to refer to the Government's action in respect of the evacuation of the European male civilians. It has been much discussed in the United Kingdom and elsewhere, and comparisons have been made between it and the action of the Netherlands East Indies Government. The Government Order of September, 1939, which prohibited the departure of European men from Malaya, except in special circumstances, has been mentioned above, and, as has been shown in the paragraphs relating to the Volunteer Forces, the object was to conserve the manpower of the country, and compulsory military service was later introduced.

In any policy of evacuation from an area which was threatened by enemy occupation, it is necessary to distinguish between the unofficial and official members. The unofficials in the rural areas

mainly consisted of rubber planters and tin miners, and in the towns there were merchants, lawyers, bankers, engineers, factory managers, and a number of men in business occupations of every kind. The Government policy was to apply the "scorched earth" system to all rubber estates and mines. No estate manager or mine manager who remained on the site of his rubber factory or mining installation after he had demolished it could possibly continue to render any useful service to the Government, the property or the labour force, and, whilst the labour force could either disperse or remain quietly on the property without much fear of any harm, any European who remained in such circumstances would certainly be in danger of reprisals from the Japanese. In the same way, in the towns, no owner or manager of any factory or business premises could serve any useful purpose by remaining after the works of premises had been demolished or abandoned in preparation for evacuation by the military forces. The case of the missionaries and officers of the Salvation Army was different for they felt that a moral obligation to their congregations and members compelled them to remain with them, and they all stayed when the military forces left. Both in the rural areas and in the towns, the European unofficials were an infinitesimal fraction of the population, and they could render no assistance to the military forces in the retreat from any area. The Government's decision to keep them in Malaya for man-power was eminently right, but a policy of requiring them to stay and surrender to an invading army was a very different matter, and His Majesty's Government could alone decide in a matter of such importance. These observations may appear to be trite, and it would have been unnecessary to make them if it had not been for the public comments which were made at the time of the evacuation from the peninsula to Singapore. As a matter of fact, a large but unascertained percentage of the European unofficials were in the Volunteers. The others, with the exception of the very few who decided to stay and of a very considerable number who immediately joined the regular forces in the peninsula, were able to reach Singapore, where every one of them who was fit for active duty immediately took up some essential work, and the great majority of them is now interned in Singapore. The unofficials who joined the regular forces were mostly planters, who, with their knowledge of the language and country, were taken on as Liaison Officers and Intelligence Officers. They received temporary commissions and, except for those who were killed or are missing, they are now Prisoners of War. Many Civil Servants, on their release from Government duties, joined the regular forces in the same manner.

The case of the European officials as a body was different. Any instructions issued to the British Residents and Advisers before the enemy attack began would have been secret at the time, and there is nothing yet to show what they were. The only indication of a policy

is contained in the Governor's assurance of the 20th December, 1941, to the leaders of the Asiatic communities of Singapore after the enemy had over-run a considerable part of the country. As reported in the *Straits Budget* of the 25th December, where it may have been condensed, it was as follows:

"He gave an assurance that if it became necessary in the future to yield any district to the enemy, a sufficient number of European Government officers would stay with the people to look after their needs so far as they could, even though they might fall into enemy hands, and he stated that he had issued orders to the civil authorities that such an arrangement should always be made."

In the clearest terms, this assurance referred only to measures to be taken in the future. The Governor was speaking only of the evacuation of Penang on the 16th December, when the Government officials had accompanied the military forces in leaving the island, and he said that their departure had been effected without his knowledge or that of the Colonial Secretary. As the military preparations for evacuation had commenced early in the morning and as the ships did not leave until night, and as there was communication between Penang and Singapore both by wireless and by cable, there seems to have been some confusion. When the Governor spoke, the European officials had been removed from Kelantan, Kedah and Perlis, but this fact was not publicly known and he did not mention it. Both in Kelantan and Kedah the retreat was a gradual one, occupying some days, and as there is no reason to believe that telegraphic communications with Singapore had been interrupted, it may be assumed, in fairness to the two British Advisers, that the evacuation of the European officials from the State was effected with the Governor's approval.

In the policy of leaving a sufficient number of European Government officers to look after the needs of the people, there would obviously be an exception in respect of all engineers. All the men in the Railway, Public Works and Telegraph Departments would be urgently required for essential services in support of the military forces. The case of the Medical Officers is more difficult. The number of Government Medical and private practitioners, European and non-European, in the peninsula was so great that it cannot be seriously contended that the presence of all of them was required in Singapore. Possibly when the time came for giving effect to the Governor's assurance, it was found that the objections to insisting upon European Medical Officers remaining in charge of hospitals were greater than any benefits that would result from such a decision. As each area was evacuated by the military authorities, the European Medical Officers, with two exceptions, left for Singapore, and evidently did so with the full approval of the Government. Some brave and devoted non-European Medical Officers voluntarily assumed charge of the hospitals and patients.

The policy of leaving European Civil Servants in charge of the welfare of the population was not put into effect. When the time came for the evacuation of any area, the European Civil Servants, without an exception, left for Singapore, either under the instructions or the advice of the Residents or Advisers, acting under the orders of the local military authorities, who were the sole judges of the military situation. On their arrival in Singapore, they immediately assumed duty in some essential service connected with the defence of Singapore, and almost all of them are now interned there.

The circumstances of the compact little territory of Malaya with its small European population were widely different from those of the enormous size, and large European population of the many widely scattered islands of the Netherlands East Indies. But the only difference between them is that the European male civilians of the Netherlands East Indies remained and surrendered in different places, and that the European male civilians of Malaya remained and surrendered in Singapore.

(2) The Method of the Evacuation

Some incidental mention has already been made of the Government action to evacuate European women merely for the purpose of showing how it affected the Medical Auxiliary Services. Mention has also been made of the Government's failure to explain to the Asiatic communities its reasons for its evacuation of the Europeans, men, women and children, from one place after another, and there has been passing mention of the spontaneous evacuation of the Asiatic communities from the towns. In order to give an account of the Government method of the evacuation of the European civilians, male and female, some overlapping and repetition are unavoidable.

(i) *Kelantan*

The plans for the defence of this State against enemy attack did not include any scheme for the evacuation of the European or non-European civilian population. Shortly after 1 a.m. on Monday, the 8th December, 1941, the beach at Kelantan was attacked by a Japanese landing force, which occupied the aerodrome the same evening. The firing was plainly heard at Kota Bahru, the capital, a few miles inland, and soon after it had begun, the British Adviser had telephone messages sent to the European community in the town and the places nearby for the women and children to prepare for evacuation. At 4.30 a.m., on the instructions of the local military authorities, he ordered all European women and children to leave

immediately, in their private cars, for Kuala Krai, a town on the railway line at some distance in the interior. They all left before daylight. During the morning, the ordinary mail train from Tumpat, the railway terminus on the coast near the scene of the fighting, arrived at Kuala Krai, and was half full of Asiatics, mostly railway employees and their families. Some European women and children from the adjoining State of Trengganu also arrived by cars. The train left in the early afternoon, with about 90 Europeans and an unascertained number of Asiatics, and late the same evening it arrived at Kuala Lipis, the capital of Pahang, where billeting had been well organized and there was the most generous private hospitality. The European refugees were firmly under the impression, from well-meaning and encouraging assurances given to them informally before they left, that their departure was only a matter of a few days whilst the Japanese were being dealt with, and they only had suit-cases with them. The next morning, the 9th December, the refugees continued their journey —buses were provided by a Transport Officer for the Asiatics and any others who had not private cars. Many of the Europeans went to Fraser's Hill, a mountain sanatorium nearby, others went to friends in various places and others to Kuala Lumpur. The position was so unexpected that the British Resident of Pahang, who was solely concerned with his own State, was unable to give them any advice concerning their movements. and they were free to follow their own inclinations and devices.

In the meantime, on the 9th December, Kota Bahru had come under machine-gun fire from the Japanese, and by the orders of the local military authorities, the British Adviser instructed all male European civilians to leave the town and coastal area immediately. With the exception of one planter, who decided to stay on his estate, they all left the same day for Kuala Krai. Three Malay officials were left to hand over to the Japanese, and to take such charge as they could of the people. On the next day, the 10th, four British officials, including the British Adviser, remained at Kuala Krai as a skeleton Government, and all the others took the train to Kuala Lipis. It is not known how long these four officials remained at Kuala Krai, but it is certain that they eventually reached safety with, or before, the British military forces.

Whilst it is unfortunate that the warning to leave Kota Bahru in the early hours of the 8th December should have been confined to European women and children, it will be understood that it would have been impossible to give a similar warning to the whole community. They had all heard the sound of the firing, and knew that a Japanese attack had begun, and they were quickly aware of the departure of the European women and children. At any time on the 8th or 9th, any one who chose to leave the town or coastal area for Kuala Krai

and thence for Pahang could do so in exactly the same way as the Europeans. The population of Kota Bahru and the coastal area consisted almost entirely of Malays who had no thought of leaving their homes.

The order of the local military authorities to the British Adviser to evacuate European women and children was dictated by the military position, of which they alone were in a position to judge, and it is possible that the British Adviser was compelled to act without telegraphic communication to the Governor in Singapore. It seems probable that before the British Adviser decided to evacuate the male European civilians to Pahang, and that before he himself and the skeleton Government left Kelantan, he had time to communicate with the Governor.

(ii) *Kedah*

Some mention has been made in connection with the Passive Defence Services of the Government method of evacuation. The facts may be briefly recapitulated and amplified. On the morning of the 8th December 1941, the Japanese bombed the aerodromes, and soon afterwards attacked by land from Siamese territory. On the morning of the 9th December the military authorities took possession of most of the European houses in Alor Star, the capital, and all European women and children, except the female hospital staff, were ordered by the Government, on military instructions, to evacuate North Kedah. On the 12th December the Government, again on military instructions, ordered all Europeans to leave North Kedah; and on the 16th December, under the same orders, all Europeans, including the Civil Servants, evacuated the whole State. Every Asiatic was well aware of what was happening, and had the same facilities for leaving as the Europeans. Most of them, and probably all the Malays, decided to stay, but seem to have left the towns for the rural areas in the neighbourhood.

The Japanese infiltration methods created such confusion that it was impossible to avoid contradictory orders being given to the planters by the military, the local police and L.D.C. officers, and the civil headquarters. An instance of this is recorded in a letter written in diary form by the manager of an estate in Central Kedah to his wife. She had been evacuated from the estate at daybreak on the 13th December on telephone instructions from the police, he himself had been ordered to "stay put", and the Tamil labour force, which had been paid in full and was working under advances of pay, was tapping as usual. During the morning of the 14th December the manager of another estate called to say that he had been ordered to evacuate at once. They went together to the house of another estate

manager, and found other planters there, and heard from him that he had just received telephonic orders from the British Adviser to "stand firm". They all went back to their estates, and the labourers completed their day's work. On the next morning they all received orders by telephone from the police to evacuate at once. He told his Asiatic estate conductors that he was leaving under instructions, and went with the other planters to a friend's house on an estate south of the Muda River. As they crossed the river they saw engineers preparing to dynamite the bridge. At their friend's house they heard that he had just received a telephone message from the British Adviser that, in his words, "things were not so bad after all", and that they had better remain on their estates. On their way back they called at the police station, where they received peremptory orders to leave at once. At their request these orders were given to them in writing, and they turned south again. The letter, which is written in a most cheery and whimsical vein, shows that the civil authorities and the planters were equally calm and confident, and that they all realized that no one could be blamed for confusion which was unavoidable. The writer of this letter attached himself to a regular regiment, and is now a prisoner of war. Other letters in which the writers give their experiences show that similar conditions prevailed throughout Central and South Kedah. There is no doubt that throughout the whole of Kedah the planting community was under the impression that any enemy occupation would be only temporary.

On his arrival in the States further south, every Government official assumed such duty as was assigned to him by the Government of the State in which he happened to find himself. Every male European unofficial immediately reported for duty to the local authority of the place in which he might be and was forthwith given some war work. The European women who had been serving in M.A.S. were in difficulty and perplexity. They were cut off from their men folk, who were serving with the volunteers or who, if they had been civilian "key men", were in some active employment in a new place, and there was no one to advise them. This, to a great extent, was the result of the division of Malaya into a number of petty States of the size of an English county, and of the Resident or Adviser of one State having no concern with the affairs of any other State. General instructions to the Residents and Advisers as to the advice which they were to give to the evacuees could only come from Singapore. The Kedah "non-effective" women, like those from Kelantan, firmly believed that in a few days' time they would be able to return to their homes. Some stayed with friends on rubber estates or in the towns of Perak; others went on to Kuala Lumpur, where billets were provided, and a number of them decided that the most convenient temporary refuge would be at Cameron's Highlands, a remote mountain sanatorium between Perak and Pahang. Most of those who went there

sent their cars back to Kedah for their husbands. A few days later, when the Government gave the order to evacuate all Europeans from Cameron's Highlands, the District Officer refused to give them any assistance in the way of transport for the reason that they had gone there voluntarily and were "Kedah women". All these women and children found their way to Kuala Lumpur, and eventually drifted down to Singapore.

For the most part, the "effective" women, having become absorbed in various local services, moved with their new units, but some left for Singapore, either under pressure from their husbands or under Government advice or orders, before the units moved. All the European men were employed in some form of service, and every one of them moved, under Government instructions, with their units. All reached Singapore before the Johore Causeway was breached on the 31st January, 1942.

(iii) *Penang (European Women and Children)*

Here again some repetition is necessary. When a great part of the European community was mobilized on the 1st December, 1941, for active service with the Volunteers and on the 8th December in the Local Defence Corps, many husbands took the reasonable precaution of sending their wives and children out of an island, which was likely to be attacked from the air, to safer places on the mainland, and other European fathers followed their example.

On the afternoon of Saturday, the 13th December, word went round the European community that all European women and children were to be evacuated that evening. It was impressed upon all that this was a military order which could not be disobeyed, and that the civil administration was putting it into effect. The strictest secrecy was enjoined upon all. The reason, and the only reason, for this was that the orders were given by the local military authorities for transmission by the local civil authorities, and military regulations require that all orders for movements of persons in an operational area must be kept secret for security reasons. There was complete surprise, as no one had any idea of the precarious position of the fighting on the mainland. Humiliation was the predominant feeling; almost all the women, even those with small children, were working at the hospital, at a First Aid Post, in the offices of the Censor, the Government and the military, at a canteen or in some war work, side by side with Eurasian and Asiatic women, and the idea of Europeans leaving the team and "running away" was unendurable. There was also the shame of explaining matters to the Asiatic servants. One woman knew nothing of it at 5 p.m. when she left her "shift" at the hospital to return to her house at the top of Penang Hill. At the railway

station at the foot of the hill she met a crowd of European women and children who had just come down. She regarded their story of an evacuation as a panic rumour, took the train up the hill, and went to her house. Later the telephone rang: she was to be at the pier at 7 p.m.; in a few minutes she packed a few things and caught the 7.30 p.m. train down the hill.

During the evening and long before the hour of the evacuation the secret was broken by the Singapore Broadcasting Station, which notified the people of Malaya, and the Japanese, that the evacuation would take place that evening, and appealed to the people of Singapore to offer hospitality to the evacuees on their arrival.

From 7 p.m. onwards, crowds of cars collected all round the pier. There was heavy rain which blotted out all visibility, then the "alert" sounded, and for the first time enemy bombers were in the air at night over Penang. The evacuees thought that the enemy had picked up the broadcast, and that the visit was the result. It may, however, have been only a coincidence. In the darkness, the bombers could see nothing; no bombs were dropped, and Penang was saved from a horror which might well have equalled that of the first raid on the island.

The ferry launch from the mainland did not arrive until 2 a.m. It was manned by survivors of H.M.S. *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*, as the Asiatic crew had deserted. The train left Prai station on the mainland at 4 a.m. On it, packed thickly into any kind of railway carriage, were about 650 European women and children and a few Eurasians.

Whatever may be thought of this evacuation from the point of British prestige, four points should be kept in mind: first, that it was a military order, and that the secrecy was prescribed by military regulations; secondly, that, although there was priority for Europeans over others by this particular launch and train, and only a few Eurasians and no Asiatics left by them, yet launches and trains contined to run for some days carrying passengers free of charge, if they were unable to pay, and every Eurasian and Asiatic who wished to leave Penang for the mainland had every opportunity of doing so; thirdly, that, as a matter of fact, a large number of Eurasians and Asiatics did leave Penang by launch, train and car, both before and after this special evacuation; and fourthly, that the news of the intended evacuation was quickly known to the non-European community, and that when it was announced by the broadcast there was no rush of Asiatics to the pier.

When the train reached Ipoh at 9 a.m. on the 14th December, a large number of European residents were on the platform, with a canteen service and all the assistance that was possible during the short

halt. The train arrived at Kuala Lumpur at 1.30 p.m. the same day, and was due to stay for seven hours. All arrangements had been made to meet it. The Anzac Club and the United Services Canteen commandeered all the accommodation in the railway station hotel, and a large number of women were waiting on the platform to take the passengers to their houses for a bath and rest. When the train drew up, the passengers presented a pitiable sight. All had been drenched in the rainstorm of the previous evening, and all were begrimed by the dust of the journey. Crowded in first, second and third class carriages, they had been unable to obtain any water or food for the children since leaving Ipoh. Soup for all was ready on the platform, and meals, in relays, were waiting in the hotel, but their only cry was "water". Later they were fed and tended in every way that was possible in the circumstances. On the platform, all their names, addresses and particulars were recorded. As an instance of the strange feeling in Kuala Lumpur that the Japanese would never be able to reach the town, one woman, hearing that the passengers were to proceed forthwith to an English winter, and firmly believing that she herself would not require her own warm European underclothing, brought it down and distributed it. Evacuated herself a few days later at two hours' notice, she had, she says, the consolation of knowing that it would have been left behind if she had not given it away. The Selangor Club hastily supplied hundreds of bottles of water and ample supplies of lime and orange juice for the long journey to Singapore, and at 8.30 p.m. the train pulled out into its second night journey.

When the train reached Johore Bahru (on the mainland side of the Johore Causeway) early on the morning of the 15th December, the passengers had a surprise which was even greater than that which they had received two days before at Penang. Every woman accompanied by a child was to be taken to Singapore wharf and put on to a steamer for Batavia in Java; every woman without a child was to remain in Singapore. This was notified to the women by officials who handed out typewritten slips with the information. There was no choice; it was a "Government Order". There was no appeal. None of the women knew anyone in Batavia: they had, for themselves and their babies, only the money and the clothes that they could take in their suit-cases, and some of them had lost their suit-cases at the embarkation at Penang. They had expected either to stay in Singapore or to be allowed to go to England. For the first time many women broke down.

At Singapore railway station, about an hour later, a great number of European women were on the platform with canteens and offers of hospitality. Some of them had friends of many years' standing or acquaintances among the Penang women, and had come down on purpose to take them and the children to their homes. Some went

up to complete strangers among the Penang women without children and said, "If you have nowhere to go, will you come to my house?" Billeting officers arranged for accommodation for others in private houses, hostels and institutions. The Penang women with children were locked into the railway carriages, and were only able to receive refreshments through the windows. All that the Singapore women could do for their friends was to go to the nearest shops and buy some clothes for them.

On the 15th December, at 10 a.m., the women with children were all taken by officials in cars to the wharf where they embarked on the S.S. *Nellore*. In a few hours the ship left for Batavia, and thence took the passengers to Australia. Every woman was allowed to send a telegram to her husband. The wording of the message was decided by the Government: it was, "Leaving now for unknown destination".

(iv) *Penang (Final Evacuation)*

Addressing the Legislative Council on the 16th December, the Governor gave a public warning of the military position of the island. "It must be obvious to everyone," he said, "that the fate of Penang must depend largely on what happens in Kedah." That the island was in extreme danger of being cut off from Province Wellesley on the mainland is seen from the fact that the military communiqué of the next day announced that fighting was taking place on the Muda River, which divides Kedah from Province Wellesley and which is only a few miles north of Penang.

Whilst he was speaking in Singapore, the military authorities in Penang (and possibly in Singapore) were preparing without his knowledge (although he was, as Governor, the *ex-officio*, Commander-in-Chief) for the military evacuation of Penang. This announcement was made by the Governor himself in Singapore on the 20th December, and it would appear from it that the arrangements (mentioned in the Introductory Note to this pamphlet) for consultation between the military, administrative and political authorities which had been expected from Mr. Duff-Cooper's appointment had not been wholly successful.

Preparations for evacuation began early in the morning of the 16th December. All the Volunteers were brought into the town during the morning, and at a muster in the afternoon all the non-European members were given three choices: the first was that of going to their homes, in which case they were advised to throw away their uniforms and to get into civilian dress; the second was that of enlisting in an emergency civil police force under Eurasian, Chinese and Malay Officers of the Volunteer Force, who had nobly offered to command such a force, and to keep order in the town until they could surrender

it to the Japanese; and the third was of going to Singapore with the European Volunteers. All of them had their homes in Penang or on the mainland not far away, and very naturally the great majority decided to stay and join their families. A fair number took the second choice of enlisting in an emergency civil police force, and only four or five elected to go to Singapore.

All the Europeans were notified of the impending evacuation. So far as the Government male officials were concerned, it cannot be said whether they had definite instructions to go or whether they were given a choice of remaining. The hospital nurses apparently had definite orders to go, and mention has been made of the coercion exercised against some European women in the M.A.S. who considered it to be their duty to remain at work in the hospitals. A number of European women who had been working until the last minute in the Censor's office, and such of the Eurasian and Chinese telephone girls as wished to go to Singapore, also left. The intimation which was passed round to each of the European male unofficials was to the effect that the military were evacuating the island that night and proceeding by sea to Singapore, and that he could go with them if he presented himself at a certain place at a certain time. Though this was not an "order" from the military or civil authorities, the general impression was that the Government wished all Europeans to leave, and that, as there was to be a military evacuation, every unofficial would be more useful to the Government in some employment in Singapore than as a civilian internee in enemy hands in Penang. The married men would have the opportunity of joining their wives and children, who had already been evacuated by the Government to Singapore, and who were in great distress there. Their case was the very opposite of that of the Eurasians and Asiatics whose homes were in Penang. In these circumstances of the evacuation of the Civil Government and the military forces, it was natural that the European unofficials should accept the offer of a passage. Only a few unofficials decided to stay: the only Government officers who refused to leave were Dr. L. W. Evans and a Theatre Sister who continued in charge of the hospital, and all the missionaries and Salvation Army officers remained to help their Asiatic congregations to the best of their ability. All the Europeans, officials and unofficials, men and women, who went to Singapore immediately took up some war work on their arrival there. Some members of the Eurasian and Asiatic communities also accepted the offer of passages, but no figures are available. At 11 p.m. on the 16th December, 1941, the British regular forces and volunteers, with such civilians as could be crowded into the S.S. *Pangkor*, a small local coasting steamer, and five small craft of the patrol boat and ferry boat type, left Penang for Singapore and arrived there safely on the 18th December.

(v) *Perak*

On the 16th December orders were issued by the Government, on the instructions of the military authorities, for the immediate evacuation of every European woman and child in the State. In the District of Lower Perak, the messages were sent out in the early morning by the District Officer, and strict secrecy was enjoined, but, as had been the case in Penang, it was impossible not to let the household servants know. Only half an hour's notice was given, and luggage was restricted to two small suit-cases. All the European women and children (about 40 persons) and the only two Eurasian women in the district left at once in their cars for the south. During the past few days, on the news of the bombing of Penang, the town of Teluk Anson had become gradually depopulated, and many more Asiatics left on the same day by train and road, but many of them were content to get out of the town, and only went a short distance. The great railway bridge over the Bidor River was blown up by the military on the 23rd December. By Government orders, all European men except four left the district on the 24th December. Mention has been made in connection with "Passive Defence in Action" of these four men.

In the Kinta District, of which Ipoh is the principal town, there was a far larger European population, and mention has been made, in connection with "Passive Defence in Action," of the manner in which, despite their protests, European women were peremptorily ordered to abandon the work on which they were engaged. In this District, there seem to have been no orders for secrecy. One woman says that when her car passed Ipoh railway station within an hour of her getting the notice, she saw that it was crowded with European women and Eurasian and Asiatic men and women waiting for the next train to Kuala Lumpur. During the course of the morning, the main trunk from Perak to Kuala Lumpur was covered by an unending procession of motor vehicles carrying European women, and non-European men and women, from every district in the State. One woman saw an open lorry, used for the transport of rice and tin-ore, owned by a tin-mining company, taking the wives and children of the European employees, without any cover from the heat of the tropical sun. There was no control over this traffic along the road, and all were free to go anywhere, so long as they got beyond the frontier between Perak and Selangor, the adjoining State on the south. Nowhere did this traffic interfere with military transport along the roads. It is impossible to say how many people were travelling by road and train, but there must have been some hundreds of European women and children. The great majority went to Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Selangor. The Selangor authorities had been notified by telephone of the evacuation, and everything that was possible was done to find

billets for the Europeans. Everyone mentions with praise and gratitude the competence and consideration shown by the Billeting Officer and his assistants. Many passed the night in the railway station, on mattresses along the platforms: others found billets in private houses, or went to friends in the town or on the estates in any part of Selangor.

On the next morning, the 17th December, there was a great crowd of European women at the railway station, waiting for information, instructions or advice as to where they were to go or what they were to do. One woman had met a military officer whom she knew and, having been advised by him to go on to Singapore at once, was on the point of telegraphing to her husband when the Billeting Officer came to the station and called for silence. He then said that there had been a mistake, and read out to the bewildered women a telegram from the Governor. Though a copy of the telegram was later posted at the telegraph office, no one can quote the exact words, but there is general consent amongst a number of persons, who saw it and who write independently, that it was to the following effect: "*The evacuation of Perak was entirely unofficial and unnecessary, and liable to cause a panic amongst the Asiatics. Singapore is already overcrowded, and no one may go there.*" The Billeting Officer then said that he was authorized to advise all the women to return to their homes in Perak, and to assure them that it was quite safe for them to do so. He added that, if the numbers of those prepared to return justified a special train, he would see what he could do to get one. A special train was not necessary as an ordinary train for the north was leaving in a short time, and a number of women travelled by it. When the train reached Tanjong Malim, on the frontier between Selangor and Perak, all the women were turned out of it by the military authorities and ordered to take the next train back to Kuala Lumpur.

Some women who had taken an earlier train back to Perak managed to pass by the military cordon at Tanjong Malim. As the train approached Ipoh an "alert" sounded, and when the train pulled up at the station the passengers saw British soldiers on the platform staring at them with blank surprise. European officials came to the carriage doors, escorted the women and children across the railway line to the opposite platform, and put them in a train which left in a few minutes to take them back to Kuala Lumpur. Although some of the passengers had hoped to return to their homes in towns north of Ipoh, and had been officially informed in Kuala Lumpur that it was safe for them to do so, they learned on their arrival at Ipoh that the military situation had necessitated the cancellation of the train service north of Ipoh.

Other women who had spent the night of the 16th December in Kuala Lumpur took the morning mail train to the south the next day, intending to stay with friends in Negri Sembilan, Malacca or Johore,

or to go on to Singapore. The train left before the Billeting Officer announced that there had been a mistake. At Seremban railway station (Seremban is the capital of Negri Sembilan, and the next large town to the south of Kuala Lumpur) members of the Local Defence Corps boarded the train and ordered the passengers to alight as they would not be allowed to proceed further. They were all taken to the Government Rest House, where the Governor's telegram was read out to them. A copy of it was posted on the wall of the room, and copies were circulated. The passengers were then informed by the local Billeting Officer and other officials that they were at liberty to stay in Seremban or to go back to Kuala Lumpur, and that it would be quite safe for them to return to their homes in Perak. Women who reached Seremban by road were stopped in the same way, and given the same instructions and advice. One of the women who thereupon went back to Kuala Lumpur stayed there for two days, and then, discovering that the ban on travel south of Seremban had either been revoked or ignored, took the mail train to Johore Bahru on the 19th December. After waiting there a week with her small child, she went to Singapore on the 26th December, and assumed duty in the Censor's office. Although by this time the military situation in Perak had necessitated the removal, by Government orders, of all European male civilians from the State (except a small "skeleton" Government which remained for a few days at Tanjong Malim), she found that the European women of Singapore were so completely ignorant of the military situation in the peninsula that they treated her coldly and expressed their surprise at her being there, when, as they said, she ought to have stayed in her house in Perak in order to set a good example to the Asiatics.

It is quite clear that the Governor knew nothing of this evacuation. It began in the morning of the 16th December and continued through the day. The same afternoon, speaking in the Legislative Council, he declared the Government policy (in the words which have been already quoted) in the following terms: "In any withdrawal or movement of the population, there will be no distinction of race. No European civilian, male or female, will be ordered by the Civil Government to withdraw. We stand by the people of this country, with whom we live and work, in this ordeal. We stand by the ship, gentlemen." It is equally clear that the Governor's telegraphic instructions, received in Kuala Lumpur and Seremban on the 17th December, were issued in complete ignorance of the military situation in Perak; that the civil authorities in Kuala Lumpur and Seremban who assured the women that it would be safe for them to return to Perak were equally ignorant; and that the manner in which the Perak military authorities disregarded the Governor's instructions shows that there was much to be desired in the co-operation between the Civil Government and the military authorities.

(vi) *Pahang*

In this State on the east coast of the peninsula, the Europeans, and such non-Europeans as wished to leave, made their way by road to Kuala Lipis, the capital, and thence either to Kuala Lumpur or Negri Sembilan. The town of Kuantan, the headquarters on the coast of the district of the same name, was evacuated by the civil authorities on the 30th December. The European staff of the tin mine of the Pahang Consolidated Company, Ltd., in the interior of the district, was left in a dangerous position. Telephone communications had been cut, and the District Officer in spite of every effort to send a warning to the mine, had been unable to get a messenger through by road. In ignorance of the position, on the 31st December the General Manager ordered seven members of his European staff and the wife of one of them to evacuate the mine by cars, via Kuantan town. As the party, with enemy planes flying overhead, approached the town, it came upon a machine-gunned Chinese lying across the road, and some Malays told them that the town was in enemy hands. When the party returned to the mine, the General Manager ordered an evacuation of all Europeans the following morning. The only possible escape was through the forest, and it was necessary to follow the course of a tributary of the Kuantan to a mountain ridge between the Kuantan and Pahang rivers, and, then, after crossing the divide, to follow a tributary of the Pahang river until it crossed the main road between Kuantan town and Kuala Lipis. The party of nine men and one woman could only take light packs of clothing and some food for the journey. On the first night, the party slept in the forest, and on the second night in a hut where they received every kindness from some Chinese woodcutters. They made contact with an army patrol on the third day, and were escorted to the main road. Thence they were driven to Army headquarters, and later they reached Singapore. There is no news of the General Manager and his sister and three European members of the staff.

(vii) *Kuala Lumpur*

Mention has been made, in connection with "Passive Defence in Action," of the manner in which the Europeans from the States of Kelantan, Kedah, Perak and Pahang accumulated in Kuala Lumpur, of the manner in which every man and every "effective" woman assumed duty of some kind, and of the plight of the women who, with small children to look after, could not enrol for work. The Governor's ban of the 17th December on the admission of the Perak women into any place south of Seremban appears to have been raised a few days

later, but the announcement in the telegram, of Singapore being overcrowded and the reference to Asiatic morale, made many women decide to stay in Kuala Lumpur until there was some Government announcement concerning the facilities for steamship passages from Singapore. The conditions in which the women with small children were living were deplorable. They were crowded in private houses, hostels and emergency temporary accommodation of every kind, and only had suit-cases for their clothing. Having been evacuated with notice of only an hour, or even less, they only had such money as they found in their houses for household expenses. The husbands of many of them, perhaps the majority, were serving in the Volunteers, and it was difficult, if not impossible, to communicate with them. Their anxiety added to their physical and financial distress. Although the billeting officers did everything that was possible, the women could obtain no advice from the local Government authorities, and the reason for this appears to be that the local authorities had no guidance or information from the central authorities in Singapore, and only knew that the women were not wanted in Singapore. One planter mentions that he had seventeen Europeans in his bungalow near Kuala Lumpur, and that this was only an instance of the conditions in other houses. He also mentions the hospitality shown by his Tamil subordinate staff on the rubber estates to their compatriots from towns and estates in the north. Unbounded hospitality was shown by the Eurasian, Chinese and Indian communities to all the people of those communities who, in the same manner as the Europeans, had crowded into Kuala Lumpur and the neighbourhood.

Kuala Lumpur was bombed only on Christmas Eve and Boxing Day, and on the second of these two days, the night-mail train for Singapore, which was two hours late from the delay in finding an engine driver and fireman, was moving out of the station when another "alert" sounded. The passengers were collected in a subway, and three hours later the train with almost every window broken proceeded to Singapore. Thereafter, the trains were constantly bombed on the journeys, and, though a few men heroically continued to work in the face of great danger, it was necessary to rely on the survivors of H.M.S. *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*.

On the 2nd January, 1942, after the Japanese had landed at Kuala Selangor, a Government order was "all European women to leave Kuala Lumpur before 10 p.m.", and the General Manager for Railways notified all his staff that he would not be responsible for the safety of their womenfolk unless they left that evening. The majority of the European women left, but a certain number decided to continue work in the Medical Auxiliary Service, and left with it in a convoy on the 5th January. The European male civilians, who were all engaged in some war work, left in organized units on the 10th January, and were followed by the military forces.

An instance of the casual manner in which people were travelling is given incidentally in an account by a woman of her experiences as the local head of a semi-official depot in Kuala Lumpur, and as an auxiliary transport driver after office hours. She concludes her story by saying that on the 5th January, after most of the European women had left, she was ordered to drive some women to Seremban. The next day she motored back to Kuala Lumpur, paid off her Asiatic staff, giving them two months' additional pay, closed the office, and handed the keys to the military authorities, who guaranteed demolition of the stores. She then took some more women to Seremban, stayed there a few days working in the hospital, and then, under orders, drove some women to Port Dickson. She then went on to Malacca to see if she could be useful in the hospital. It had been evacuated by the European staff, and the Asiatic Medical Officer in charge begged her to retrace her journey and see if the European nursing sisters at Jasin hospital were safe. When she got there, she found that they had already left, and she motored on to Johore in search of employment. As she was not wanted there, she proceeded to Singapore. She worked in a hospital there until the 31st January, when she was evacuated on the *Duchess of Bedford*.

In spite of every effort and the best goodwill between all concerned, there was necessarily great difficulty and some confusion in transmitting instructions for evacuation to the people on the rubber estates scattered throughout the State of Selangor. For instance, the engineer on a rubber estate reports that on the 1st January he had orders to evacuate within half an hour all the women and children billeted with him. When he took them to an appointed place, they found that the order had been countermanded. On the 3rd January, by similar instructions, he drove them to another place, and found that no further orders had been received. He then took them, on his responsibility, to an estate in Negri Sembilan, and returned to his own estate. The women and children remained in Negri Sembilan for a few days, then went to an estate in Johore, and eventually reached Singapore. On the 8th January he received orders to evacuate his house within half an hour. By this time the labour force had been paid off, and the factory and rubber stocks fired and destroyed. He made his way to Kuala Lumpur, passing a Volunteer Regiment which was holding a bridge against a Japanese force. At Kuala Lumpur, he immediately enrolled as a lorry driver, and later went with a convoy to Singapore. When he got there, he was at once attached to the R.A.F. for demolition work. He worked there until he was told that his services as an engineer were required in another country, and he was given a passage in one of the last steamers to get out of Singapore.

Clearly, it would have been impossible to issue orders to the Asiatic community. Every Asiatic, however, knew what was happen-

ing, and everyone who wished to leave had the same opportunities of going by road or, in the last few days, by such trains as were running. As has been stated in connection with the "Passive Defence Services," few of the non-Europeans wished to go further from Kuala Lumpur than some nearby village or rural area. Kuala Lumpur was occupied by the Japanese on the 12th January, 1942.

(viii) *Singapore*

When, on the 1st December, 1941, all the Volunteer Forces throughout Malaya were called up for active service, and when a few days later the various Local Defence Corps were also called up, European women and children began to leave their homes in the peninsula for Singapore in order to secure passages to Europe. Singapore was already overcrowded, and a Billeting Committee, set up by the Government, did everything that was possible to find accommodation for them in private houses, in hostels, and in any school or club buildings where arrangements could be made for bed and board. With Government assistance, the Singapore Eurasian Association and the Eurasian Women's Association made similar arrangements for billeting all Eurasians, who came in from the peninsula, in private houses and schools and other buildings placed at their disposal by the Government. Relief centres for Chinese refugees were organized by the Chinese community in close co-operation with Government officials and the Chinese Consul-General. The Indian community made similar arrangemenst with official assistance. These arrangements should be kept in mind in connection with the mention in earlier paragraphs of the evacuation by Eurasians and Asiatics of the areas north of Singapore.

The Government appointed a Committee, under the chairmanship of a Judge of the Supreme Court, to decide upon priority of claims for passages. The allotment was made on the basis of a woman with four children having priority over a woman with three, and a childless woman having the last claim. Applications from men who were too old, infirm or ill to do any useful work were also considered, upon medical certificates, but there seem to have been very few indeed of these applications. There was absolutely equal and impartial treatment for all nationalities. The stipulation that the women should not be accompanied by their husbands, who were required for service in the defence of the country, applied equally to all nationalities, and, as was natural, the result was that there were very few applications from the non-European women, whose only homes were in Malaya. There seems to have been a general impression amongst the civilian women in Singapore at the time that preferential treatment was given to the womenfolk and children of the Navy, Army and

Air Force. It is an ascertained fact that this was not the case. Every one of these women had to appear before the Committee in exactly the same way as the civilian women, and a woman with one child yielded priority to an Asiatic woman with two children. They all travelled on the same steamers as the civilian women.

When they had received some official document from the Evacuation Committee, the women were expected to make all further arrangements for themselves. There were many shipping offices in Singapore, and, until the last few days of December, 1941, the women went to each of them to register an application. Everyone was asked who was prepared to pay for the passage, and, though no cash payment or deposit was required, references, such as the names and addresses of the husbands' employers, were required. It was understood by all the women that payment would be required before tickets would be issued. The anxiety of women who had been evacuated from their homes in the peninsula in such haste that they had no money, and who were unable to communicate with their husbands, can be imagined. Passport visas from different offices were required, as it was impossible to tell applicants whether a steamer would go to the Netherlands East Indies, Ceylon, India, South Africa or Australia, and fees had to be paid. It was necessary for all passports to be in order. One woman from Kedah, aged over 80 years, was in hospital and had lost her passport. For a new passport a photograph was required, and, as it was impossible to find a photographer who would go to the hospital, there seemed to be every prospect of her remaining indefinitely in Singapore, until a daughter-in-law fortunately found an old photograph, which was accepted. A married woman with a small child had her passport in her maiden name. It could not be accepted, and she had the greatest difficulty in finding a photographer. Although every woman had a long voyage to some unknown destination in front of her, there were restrictions on the amount of money she might take out of the Colony. In December and January the amount was limited to £10, or its equivalent, as was the case in England, and all cash had to be reported to the Exchange Control. In February, when the Johore Causeway had been breached, the restriction was not enforced. Malayan currency notes were, however, of little value to people outside the country, and the scarcity of sterling notes compelled the bankers to dole out supplies very carefully. Travellers' Letters of Credit were available to any one who could finance them, but with special exceptions they were all "negotiable only in the Sterling Area" in order to conserve Britain's Foreign Exchange Assets. All personal jewellery had to be inventoried, and no one might take a diamond larger than half a carat. When all these formalities had been completed, the women had to continue their rounds of visits to the shipping offices for news of a steamer.

In December, 1941, Singapore was only bombed on the 8th, the

day of the first attack on Malaya, and on the 29th and 31st. This immunity, combined with the Government publicity of the impregnability of the island, had its effect upon the demand for passages to destinations other than England. The result was that, in the absence of any advice from the Government, many women, not realizing the danger, refused the offer of a passage to Australia, preferring to wait for a steamer to England, and, in consequence, steamers, even in the early part of January, left Singapore for Australia without their full complement of passengers. The *Narkunda*, for instance, left on the 17th January with accommodation for many more passengers.

Singapore came under daily bombing attacks in January, 1942. The system under which the same woman booked a passage at a number of different shipping offices ceased in the last few days of December, when the Government concentrated all bookings in the office of the P. and O.S.N. Company. The company's office was in a high building in a central position in the business part of Singapore, and there was considerable danger in air raids to the people who collected there. For this reason, the office was transferred to the manager's house. It was inconveniently situated on a hill at some miles from the town on one side and from the docks on another, and the access to it was by a steep road leading off the main trunk road between Singapore and Johore. All cars had to be parked at the main road and the women had to walk up the hill and back. On one occasion, the cars were bombed and machine-gunned, and the women and children took refuge in a deep concrete canal at the roadside. Despite its disadvantages, the house was safer than the town office, and the change was made solely in the interests of public safety.

The *West Point* and the *Wakefield*, two troopships, left Singapore on the 30th January for Batavia and thence for Ceylon, and carried a considerable number of European women and children and some Eurasians and Asiatics. The passengers had been required beforehand to provide written guarantees, either from business firms or from responsible persons, that the passage money would be paid. Actual payment was not demanded, either then or later.

It was not until the 31st January, after a month's daily air attacks, and on the day when the Johore Causeway was blown up, and in the words of the "Order of the Day" Singapore became "a beleaguered fortress," that the great evacuation of women and children took place. Word had gone round the evening before that a steamer would be leaving the next day. All that night and all the next morning there was a constant stream of women walking up the hill. Embarkation slips were rapidly handed out to them, without any demand for payment, and they were instructed to be at a certain wharf in the early afternoon. When they approached the wharf the warehouses alongside it were ablaze, and they were told to be at another wharf at 5 p.m.

When they arrived there, they found that all Asiatic labour had completely deserted the dockside area. European civilians, who had come down to see them off and say good-bye, and naval ratings helped them to carry such luggage as they had for the journey. Later, at the shipside, there was the wildest confusion, and, regardless of embarkation slips, passports and inventories, the women and children poured on board. This steamer was the *Empress of Japan*, and she took about 1,500 European women and children, about 20 European men with medical certificates of infirmity or illness, a few Eurasian women and children, and a Chinese family. She was attacked by bombers on the journey but unhit, and reached England in safety. Another steamer which left on the same day and in the same manner was the *Duchess of Bedford*, which carried about 900 European women and children and some non-Europeans. She, too, was attacked on the journey, but also reached England safely. Both steamers were transports which had just arrived in Singapore with troops. It was not until they were at sea that the passengers learned that it was an evacuation arranged by the Government and that the cost of the passages was defrayed by the Government.

A planter's wife who was medically unfit for any work gives an account of her experiences. She left her husband's estate in Kedah on the 9th December on a telephone call from an officer, who advised her to go to Penang. As she had no friends there she went to a friend's house in Province Wellesley, where her hostess was engaged in Christmas decorations for the bungalow, and refused to believe that the enemy would reach so far south. She stayed there a few days, then a few days in Perak, and a few more in Selangor. Then she stayed on an estate in Johore, and reached Singapore in January. She was billeted in a small bungalow with three bedrooms for seven women, and about as many more came in for meals. She says that as she "didn't care for it very much" she went back to Johore to "cheer up" her friends in Batu Pahat. She stayed there a fortnight, and then a military officer ordered them all out of the house, saying the Japanese "were round the corner". On their way to Singapore their cars were attacked by machine-gun fire from planes. They crossed the Johore Causeway a few days before it was breached, and, on the day that it was breached (the 31st January) she obtained a passage on the *Empress of Japan*.

A very large number of European women and children still remained in Singapore. Some women had been unable to obtain accommodation, others still had no idea of the danger, and others refused to leave their posts. The women who had volunteered for employment at naval, military and air force headquarters were so indispensable that all work there would have broken down without their services. Many of the women in the Medical Auxiliary Service considered it

to be their duty to stay. The Chief-in-Command is reported as "missing", and the Second-in-Command is interned. Another instance may be given: the headmistress of a school was in charge of a Casualty Clearing Station, and was offered a passage in February. She refused to take it because the Chinese nurses working under her said they would stay if she stayed and leave if she left. She is now an internee. There is in the May, 1943, number of *British Malaya*, a long, but admittedly incomplete, official list from Japanese sources of the European women now interned in Singapore, classified as Lady Doctors, Hospital Matrons, Nursing Sisters, Salvation Army Officers, Schoolmistresses, Secretaries, Housewives and Miscellaneous. It is impossible to say how many of them stayed because they were unable to escape, but the classification seems to show that many of them considered that their duty was to stay.

One woman with four small children living in her house in the suburbs of Singapore writes that she felt so secure that it was not until early in February that she thought of making enquiries for passages. She was told by the shipping office to be ready to leave immediately she received instructions, and that only suit-cases could be taken. On the 8th February she was informed that a steamer, which would probably be the last to leave Singapore, would be leaving at 6 p.m. that evening. At the pier, where she was instructed to go, she found a solid mass of cars with their occupants waiting for instructions. There were other similar meeting places, and they were chosen to prevent a concentration of cars at the docks. At 9 p.m. long after nightfall, they were told to drive to the docks, some miles away, and boarded the *Felix Roussell*, a Free French transport which had just disembarked troops. She had been bombed three times and was in such a condition that, as the passengers discovered later, she had not been able to take in any provisions. The passengers were taken to Bombay, and when they were landed there had to make their own arrangements for proceeding to England. The *Devonshire* left on the same night, the 8th February, but there is no information concerning the number of passengers or the destination. The *Plancius* also left for Batavia the same night.

On the 11th February, after they had, in accordance with official instructions, completed their part of the demolition of their firms' property, 24 European members of the staffs of two engineering firms were officially informed that they would be more useful for service in another country. They found a small local steamer, the *Ipoh*, which had been abandoned by her Asiatic crew. She had no fuel, but near by in the water there were 70 tons of low-grade coal, which, in the words of our informant, who was one of them, "had been there for ten years and looked like mud." The men stripped and loaded it on to the *Ipoh*, dashing for safety two or three times an hour as the

dive-bombers came over. The *Ipoh* then took on board a number of men also required for service elsewhere. Making five knots an hour, she was caught up on the second day by four tankers and the *Soubadar*. Just as they were abeam, dive-bombers appeared and set fire to all five of them. The *Ipoh*, which was untouched, picked up 65 survivors, and reached Batavia safely.

One woman gives this account of her experiences. She was working in the Censor's office, and did not apply for a passage for herself and her child because she had no money. After the great evacuation on the 31st January she noticed that some women who were working in the same office, and who, she knew, also had no money, had left. She asked her Chief if the Government was paying for passages, and he answered her in the negative. She then went to see the Acting Colonial Secretary, whom she knew personally, and his first words were, "Good God, Mrs. ——. What are you doing here?" When she replied that she was there because she had no money, he told her that he had instructed the shipping agents that all passages were to be at Government expense. On the point that there was no suggestion of free passages for women of all nationalities every one of our many informants is emphatic, and it would appear either that the Government considered that public disclosure of the fact would affect Asiatic morale, or that the shipping agents believed that the fact was for their own information only. In this connection, it is a pleasure to record that our informants express the keenest gratitude for the unfailing courtesy extended to them at all times in the most nerve-racking circumstances by the staff of the P. and O.S.N. Company, and for the personal interest and real kindness of the manager. The whole staff remained in Singapore until the end, and is now interned there. The woman continues her narrative by saying that, under instructions, she went to Clifford Pier on the afternoon of the 11th February. About 150 women of all nationalities collected there, quietly said good-bye to their menfolk, and boarded a mine-sweeper, which went in search of the appointed steamer and found that it had already left. The mine-sweeper, which was dangerously overloaded, then went round the harbour to find another steamer. Japanese bombers dived on the mine-sweeper, and, though no bombs hit it, the women down below heard the rattle of machine-gun bullets on the deck. Except for one very old woman who wept silently and two old women who said their prayers aloud, not one of them spoke. Children of two and three years old were as quiet and brave as the others. Eventually, the *Derrymore* took the passengers, and left for Batavia in the early hours of the 12th February. Three other small steamers left the same night.

The *Bagan*, a local coasting steamer, left Singapore on the 11th February with a number of women and children and, with Govern-

ment approval, the majority of the European staff of the Singapore Harbour Board and a number of Europeans, who, after their evacuation from various States in the peninsula, had been employed by the Harbour Board in emergency duties of every kind. This steamer reached Palembang, in Sumatra, on the 13th February, and the passengers left by train a few hours before the Japanese captured Palembang. Nine officials of the Harbour Board, who had volunteered to remain to finish paying off the subordinate staff, left in the *Mata Hari*, which was bombed and sunk in the Banka Straits. So far as is known all lives were lost. Two Harbour Board officials who still remained accepted an offer made by the naval authorities of a passage in the *Tengaroh* and left on the 14th February under enemy shellfire. This steamer stopped to assist another steamer which had run aground and which, after she had been refloated, was later reported as "missing". In the afternoon the *Tengaroh* came up with the *Shu Kwang*, which had been bombed twice and was listing badly. The crew and passengers had abandoned her, and the sea was strewn with lifeboats, rafts and mattresses. The *Tengaroh* picked up about 100 survivors, many of whom were wounded, and the *Malacca* and *Tanjong Pinang*, two other local coasting steamers, picked up others. From the account of a passenger on the *Tengaroh* it would appear that many other steamers not far away were making a last desperate effort to escape. These three steamers reached Indragiri, in Sumatra, safely on the 15th February.

The *Kuala*, another local coasting steamer, left Singapore on the 13th February with a number of women and children. She also took a large but unascertained number of the Nursing Sisters of the regular army, and Auxiliary Nursing Sisters and V.A.D.s, recruited for military medical service from the wives and daughters of Europeans resident in Malaya, all of whom were under instructions to proceed elsewhere for duty. A number of engineers of the various Government Departments also left in her under instructions to assume duty elsewhere. When they were all assembled on the wharf, bombs dropped amongst them and there were many fatal casualties. Fortunately the *Kuala* was not hit, and she left Singapore after dark. In the early morning she reached Pompong, a small uninhabited island some 80 miles south-east of Singapore, and attempted to conceal herself there by camouflaging the deck, masts and funnel with branches gathered from the island. At 10 a.m. she was sighted by a reconnaissance plane, and at 11.30 a.m. a flight of bombers appeared. The first salvo of bombs got a direct hit, and in a short time the *Kuala*, which was about a quarter of a mile from the island, was ablaze from end to end.

It is convenient now to mention the *Tien Kwan*, which was within 200 yards of the *Kuala*. On the 13th February, the day when the *Kuala* left, the Government decided to offer to about seventy leading

members of the community, including non-Europeans, an opportunity of leaving Singapore. A bank manager records that he had quite made up his mind that he and all the members of his staff would be interned when he was informed at 2 p.m. that day, in the Singapore Club, that he was to leave Singapore immediately under a scheme of evacuation arranged by the Government. When he refused the offer, saying that he would not leave his post and his staff, he was definitely told that it was a Government Order, and that he must go. He has since learned that the man who spoke to him had no authority to convey any such order, but knows that other men who left at the same time and in the same way were addressed in exactly the same terms as himself. Strict secrecy was enjoined, and he was told to go in half an hour to a certain place where he would receive a pass to leave Singapore, and then to proceed to a certain wharf where there would be a steamer to take him to an unnamed destination. After thinking the matter over, he decided that, much as he disliked doing so, he had best obey orders. When a crowd of intending evacuees reached the wharf they were refused admission by sentries with fixed bayonets, and were detained there for two or three hours during which time Japanese bombers flew overhead, without dropping bombs. When they were allowed on the wharf, a large warehouse, full of rubber, received a direct hit, and blazed. The tender in which they crowded was bombed but not hit. About 300 people then boarded the *Tien Kwan*, which at one time had been a river boat on the Yangtsze. She left as soon as it was dark, and in the early morning reached Pompong Island, where she anchored near the *Kuala*.

When the *Kuala* was hit and set on fire, the order to abandon ship was given on the *Tien Kwan*. A second flight of bombers came over and dropped their bombs on the boats, rafts, and swimmers, and on the island. The number of people that reached land from both steamers was counted later and totalled 609, comprising 200 European military personnel on transfer, 40 European Nursing Sisters, 70 European civil engineers, 170 European women and children, 50 European civilian men, 34 Chinese men, women and children, and 45 Indian firemen and others. As it is not known now many people left Singapore in the two steamers, it is impossible to say how many were killed on the steamers or in the water or drowned. The survivors estimated that between 300 and 400 were missing. Bombers came over repeatedly in the afternoon, bombing both steamers and the island. The *Kuala* sank before nightfall, but the *Tien Kwan* kept afloat until late at night, and in the dark, before she sank, there were valiant and partially successful efforts to salvage food and medical equipment from her. A hospital, in which the wounded received the devoted care of the Nursing Sisters, was started, and the dead were buried. It was bitterly cold that night, and men, women, and children only had the damp and scanty clothes in which they had got ashore.

The rations the next day were half an army biscuit, with a bit of bully beef and half a cigarette tin full of water in the morning, and the other half of the biscuit with some condensed milk on it and the same allowance of water in the evening. On the following day the rations were the same, but at nightfall there was a thrill when a launch and three Malay sailing boats came into the bay with the news that the Netherlands authorities were sending help. They brought food and medical supplies, and took away some of the more seriously wounded. These visits were repeated every night, after the Japanese bombers had left. A man who has written a most vivid account of all that happened says that it is impossible to say how kind and sympathetic the Malays of the nearby islands were on these visits. They brought rice, dried fish, bananas, coconuts, pineapples, and, what was greatly appreciated, charcoal, which enabled hot meals to be cooked without smoke attracting the attention of bombers. They asked what else they could bring, and refused all payment, saying that it was a token of their grief for suffering. Every night some of the wounded were evacuated. On the fifth night the *Tanjong Pinang*, which has already been mentioned, came in and took off about 200 persons, mostly women and children. She intended to make for Java, but never reached it. The Japanese broadcast from Padang, in Sumatra, the names of several women, who were in this steamer, as having been captured by them, but whether the steamer was seized or sunk is not known. On the sixth night a launch took off the Nursing Sisters and the last of the slightly wounded, leaving about 300 men on the island. Thanks to the efforts of Tunku Mahmud, a Malay, who was a passenger on the steamer and, having been carried past the island by the strong currents, had been picked up by a Malay fishing boat and taken to another island, four junks came in on the seventh day and took off 50 men in each. The remaining 100 men left later in the same night in a small steamer, thus completing the evacuation of Pompong Island. The adventures of the different parties in crossing Sumatra and eventually in reaching Colombo cannot be told here. Nothing could have exceeded the kindness and consideration of the Netherlands authorities, who, at a time when their own land was in desperate danger, did everything that was possible, both in the rescue from Pompong and in the journey across Sumatra. To them and to the Malays, who were fully aware of the risks which they ran, the survivors of Pompong will always be grateful.

It would appear, though facts are not available, that a number of small steamers and launches left Singapore on the 13th February at about the same time as the *Kuala* and the *Tien Kwan*, and that after that date it was impossible for anything larger than a very small launch to escape. After the capitulation of Singapore, at 8.30 p.m. on the 15th February, numbers of men made daring attempts to escape in any kind of boat that they could find. How many of them lost their

lives will never be known. Two instances of successful escapes will suffice. All the engineers of the Post and Telegraphs Departments of the peninsula were collected in Singapore and engaged in the vital duty of constant repairs to telephone communications. When the "cease fire" sounded, a party of six of them was at work at the Central Telephone Exchange, which had received a direct hit from a shell. They sought and obtained official written permission to attempt to escape, and made their way down to the docks. There they found a rowing boat with only one oar, which they used as a rudder, and with the floor boards they paddled out beyond the harbour mole, where they transferred into a dinghy. Rowing all night against conflicting tides they were completely exhausted, for they had had little sleep for the past week, when they pulled under branches of a small island shortly before dawn. To their consternation, they found themselves within fifty yards of a small launch which they thought must be Japanese. Then they heard an English voice, and found that the launch was manned by some men who had got that far in it without much idea of how to manage it and no idea of how to navigate it. They transferred into the launch, and then, going by night from one island to another, and pulling the launch under the cover of trees at each island in the day time, they eventually reached Jambi, in Sumatra. The other instance is that of a party of five European Volunteers. Their regiment had been taking its part in the defence of Singapore, and was some miles out of the town. A few hours before the capitulation it was withdrawn into the town, and after the "cease fire" had sounded, the men received official permission to try to escape. One of them was an engineer in private life, and knew where an old, abandoned Japanese motor fishing boat was lying at a quay. Making their way in the dark, over masses of shattered masonry and barbed wire, they found it, but it had no fuel, parts of the engine were missing, and it had a heavy list. It had, however, a stump of a mast, about 12 feet high, and a breeze was blowing. They all had their ground-sheets, and these they tied into a sail with bits of string for which they groped in the bilge. They then set sail, and risking the minefields aimed only at getting away from the island. Before they had gone a quarter of a mile they stuck on a sunken ship. There were shouts at them from the shore, torches were flashed on them, but eventually they managed to get free. They rigged up a blanket as a second sail. Conflicting tides all night long took them first towards Pulau Sambu, then back towards Singapore, and then towards Pulau Bukum. At daybreak they were still out in the open sea, when a Japanese plane came over. It hovered over them for a few minutes, and departed. Later the tide took them to an island where they dragged their boat under the shelter of mangrove trees, and set out to see if the island was inhabited. They found some very friendly Malays, from whom they hired a Malay sailing boat, with three Malays manning it, to take them to

another island after nightfall. While they were talking, a plane circled round without seeing them. At the next island, on the following morning, they hired another sailing boat, with two Malays. Proceeding thus, from island to island, receiving hospitality sometimes from Chinese fishermen and sometimes from Malays, they reached Tanjong Pinang on the third day. There they received the greatest kindness from the Netherlands Controlleur, and on the seventh day they reached Rengat, in Sumatra.

How many European male civilians attempted to escape from Singapore after the capitulation will never be known, but it would appear that only a few succeeded in reaching safety. Those who left before the capitulation comprised the very few infirm and old men who obtained special permission, a few men, such as the civil engineers, on especial duty, and a few of the senior business men. All the others are interned in Singapore. A Press communiqué in the newspapers of the 17th August, 1943, announced that the latest, but still incomplete, figures supplied by the Japanese showed that there were 18,000 male civilian internees in Malaya, and this figure apparently refers to Europeans only. The very large and unknown number of European Volunteers is not included in this figure for they are Prisoners of War.

Summary of the Method of Evacuation

(1) After the invasion the local military authorities took complete control of arrangements in Penang and the peninsula for the evacuation southwards of civilians, and were concerned only with the European population. The secrecy in Penang and Lower Perak was in accordance with military regulations relating to movements of civilians in an operational area. Elsewhere in Perak, and in Kelantan and Kedah, the arrangements were carried out in such haste that there was no need for secrecy. In the States to the south of Perak, the evacuation from each place was delayed until the enemy forces threatened immediate occupation.

(2) In these arrangements the co-operation between the local military authorities and the central Civil Administration in Singapore left much to be desired. The instructions usually were conveyed through the local civil authorities and were always given in such a manner as to convince the Europeans that it was their duty to leave.

(3) Everywhere the Eurasians and Asiatics were quickly aware of the evacuation, and were able to leave for any place thy might choose—by train, so long as they were running (free of charge, in some places), and by road. The great majority were content with evacuating the larger towns, and desired only to find refuge in some nearby rural area. There was never any congestion of traffic on the roads.

(4) The billeting arrangements for Europeans, both in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, were good. Everywhere unbounded private hospitality was given by the people of every nationality to complete strangers of their nationality. In Singapore the organizations of the Eurasian, Chinese and Indian Communities were carried out with Government assistance, and were most efficient.

(5) There is no sign of any central organization in charge of methods of evacuation from the peninsula into Singapore.

(6) The failure to distinguish between "Effectives" and "non-Effectives" of the women of all nationalities was the main cause of the confusion, congestion and misery of the European "non-Effective" women.

CONCLUSION

The record of "The Civil Defence of Malay" is really contained in Part I, which sets forth the manner in which the "Passive Defence Services" were prepared for a possible attack, and in Part II, which shows how they behaved under attack. Though Part III (Evacuation) is not a part of that story, the story would be incomplete without it. The paragraphs relating to the Volunteers and the Local Defence Corps are extraneous to Civil Defence, but have been inserted to show how the numbers of Europeans enrolled in those forces affected the numbers available for Civil Defence.

The fall of Malaya was a military disaster. Nothing that "Civil Defence" could have done could have availed to prevent that disaster. It is hoped that this narrative may serve to show how "Civil Defence" supported the military defenders.

THE END