

THE STORY OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE IN QUEENSLAND SEPTEMBER 1939 - SEPTEMBER 1945

1942 - EXTENSION OF ACTIVITIES

The year 1942 proved to be a busy and eventful year for Military Intelligence in Queensland. At the end of December 1941 a number of US troops who were on their way to the Philippines at the time of the attack on Pearl Harbour, were diverted and sent to Brisbane where they were established in a camp at Ascot Racecourse. The number of troops involved were relatively small, but liaison was immediately established, with a view to assisting our Allies in matters of security.

January 1942 saw the arrival in Brisbane of considerable numbers of US troops and the formation of a Base Section of the USAFIA (United States Armed Forces in Australia) in Brisbane. The first Security Officer appointed to that formation was Capt W. Donahey, who, having no knowledge of local conditions, was dependent on Military Intelligence, to a very large extent, for his information. The very closest liaison and collaboration was established between Military Intelligence and the American Forces, and this has been maintained without interruption. To ensure speedy and safe communication, a direct telephone line was run from the office of the Base Section Security Officer to the office of the GSO 1 (Intelligence) at Victoria Barracks.

Preventive Internment

In February 1942 a policy of preventive internment was adopted.

In that month the Deputy Chief of the General Staff advised the GOC, Northern Command that the Minister had approved of the following measures:-

- (a) The GOC, Northern Command, he directed at once, at his discretion, to intern any enemy aliens who, in the past had been connected with any Fascist or German organisation and whose internment, because of the deterioration in the situation, was regarded as necessary.
- (b) Northern Command to hold ready for execution Detention Orders in respect of all other enemy aliens whose internment the GOC considered necessary in the event of hostilities in Australia.
- (c) Northern Command to submit recommendations for the internment of such Naturalised British subjects, as in the opinion of Northern Command
 - (i) should be interned at once, and
 - (ii) should be interned in the event of hostilities in Australia.

The detention orders in respect of the latter were to be held at Army Headquarters, and not issued for execution until the situation appeared to warrant it.

- (d) Northern Command to consider the advisability of issuing orders for National Security (Aliens Control) Regulation 21 (1)(b) with the object of preventing meetings of enemy aliens or their congregating together in excessive numbers or in certain localities.
- (e) The issuing of a Ministerial Order under Aliens Control Regulation 19 (1)(d) directing that no enemy alien in Queensland should be outside his or her residence during specified hours. This order to held in abeyance and issued only in the event of an emergency.

To this the GOC, Northern Command, replied that in Queensland the majority of aliens who had had association with Fascists or German organisations had already been interned, and he therefore recommended that paragraph (a.) above be interpreted to permit the internment of all aliens with a former anti-British history.

With regard to paragraph (b.) above, the GOC stated that he considered that the leaving of the execution of detention orders until actual hostilities on the Australian mainland would be too late.

Regarding paragraph (c) the GOC expressed the view that the preparation of individual recommendations for internment of Naturalised British subjects and others, would defeat the desired object of the removal of potential saboteurs from vital area, including those occupied by Allied Forces. He intimated that classified lists of names with the information available were being forwarded and he desired that signed detention orders be held in Northern Command in respect to personnel covered by paragraph (c) (i) but that the detention orders should not be issued until the situation appeared to warrant it.

The GOC, Northern Command, also stated that he considered that a Ministerial Order under Aliens Control Regulation 19(i)(d) should operate immediately, and to cover the period between 1900 hrs and 0600 hrs.

The Deputy Chief of General Staff replied agreeing to the proposals of the GOC, Northern Command, in respect of paragraph (a) (b) and (c) intimating that action was being taken immediately to prepare the necessary order referred to in paragraph (e).

Lists of names were immediately prepared and detention centres orders were issued in respect of names of persons referred to in paragraph (c) (i). This resulted in the internment of 1600 persons, the majority of whom were resident in North Queensland.

There can be no doubt that the introduction of this policy of internment had a salutary effect upon the alien community of Queensland, for not only did it remove known potential leaders and saboteurs, but among those members of the aliens community who were not interned, fear of possible internment made them very circumspect in their activities.

It was for the purpose of implementing this policy that Lt-Col Wilkinson was appointed GSO 1 (Int), it being the first occasion that such an appointment was made in Queensland, and this officer was primarily responsible for the policy being approved by War Cabinet.

Headquarters Divided

In March 1942, Headquarters Northern Command, was divided into two components, an Operational Headquarters and a Base Headquarters. In June 1942 the Operational Headquarters moved out to the Marist Brothers College at Ashgrove, the Base Headquarters remaining at Victoria Barracks. Capt E.E. Muddle moved out with the Operational Headquarters as GSO III, and Lieut R.L. Wilkinson was appointed to the same Headquarters as Cipher Officer. With these officers went three other ranks from Military Intelligence. The Operational Headquarters dealt with all operational intelligence, the Base Headquarters being responsible for all other intelligence matters. Ultimately the Operational Headquarters was transformed into Headquarters 5 Australian Division and sent to New Guinea on active service.

Raising of Field Censorship Sections

General Staff Intelligence, Headquarters, Northern Command was called on in April 1942 to raise three Field Censorship Sections and this was done forthwith, No 1 Section under command of Lieut H.B. Anderson, No 6 under command of Lieut D.M. Gunn, and No 9 under command of Lieut J.G. McClennan. These three officers had been members of the Field Security Wing, Lieut Anderson and Gunn having been Corporals and McClennan a WO II.

After a short course of instruction under the District Censor, Brisbane, No 9 Section was moved in May 1942 to Townsville for duty with the Sub-District Censor. Nos 1 and 6 Sections were also trained by the District Censor, Brisbane, No 1 Section later moving to Townsville to relieve 9 Section which went to New Guinea, and No 6 Section also moving to New Guinea. These were the first Censorship Sections to operate in New Guinea.

Senior Headquarters Arrive

In April 1942, Headquarters First Aust Army arrived in Queensland and was located at Toowoomba. In the month of July GHQ also arrived in Queensland and was located in Brisbane, and Adv LHQ was established at the University Buildings, St. Lucia.

Arrival of these Headquarters in the area resulted in much additional work for Military Intelligence. Not only were the responsibilities in respect to Security materially increased, but as the staffs of Adv LHQ, Headquarters First Aust Army and GHQ had little knowledge of local conditions, the demands for information which were made upon I(a) Sub-Section, Northern Command were very great. This entailed the provision of much detailed topographic and economic intelligence, and it speaks well for the work already done by the I(a) Sub-Section that no matter what the demand was, it was met immediately, comprehensively and accurately.

Among the security problems which faced Military Intelligence in Northern Command was that of ensuring secrecy with regard to the arrival of General Douglas MacArthur in Brisbane. Owing to the number of US personnel arriving in Brisbane and the requisition of office accommodation, it had not been possible to hide indefinitely from the public that GHQ was about to be established in Brisbane. For obvious reasons, however, it was imperative that the date of arrival of General MacArthur should remain a close secret. To this end Military Intelligence was responsible for starting a whispering campaign to the effect that General MacArthur had already arrived in Brisbane. The rumour spread like wildfire and long before General MacArthur arrived, there were thousands of people in Brisbane who were quite satisfied that they had seen him, and were broadcasting to their friends details of his appearance and his habits, and his place of residence. This whispering campaign was so effective that when, in due course, General MacArthur did arrive in Brisbane not one civilian was in the vicinity of the railway station and the passage of his car from the station to his Headquarters and thence to his place of residence attracted little public attention.

Preparation for Invasion Warning

In May, 1942, under instructions from Adv LHQ, General Staff, Intelligence, Northern Command, established a Secret Line of Communication (see Pt 2) in North Queensland. This Line of Communication was established on behalf of First Aust Army and was maintained by Northern Command.

The personnel selected for this Secret Line of Communication were all expert bushmen with a sound knowledge of North Queensland generally, and an expert knowledge of the area in which they were located. Their duties were to establish observation posts along the coastline in North Queensland, and to give warning in the event of an enemy invasion. Each man was provided with a portable teleradio set and with enough rations in moisture-proof containers and other stores and equipment to make him self-sufficient for several months. These rations and stores were then placed in hidden caches in the vicinity of observation posts. In the event of an invasion it was the duty of each member of the Line of Communication to remain in his allotted area and to report by teleradio, movement of enemy troops in that area.

A control station was established in Central Queensland and another station was set up on the outskirts of Brisbane. From the latter station it was possible for General Staff Intelligence to communicate at all times with the Control Station, and under favourable conditions it was also possible for General Staff Intelligence to communicate direct with out-stations. This Secret Line of Communication remained in existence until all threat of invasion to Australia had passed, the Secret Line of Communication being disbanded in August 1944.

The installing and maintenance of the Secret Line of Communication was done by Lieut H.B. Beaman. To visit all stations it was necessary for him to travel by air, by jeep, on horseback, and by lugger.

Security Service takes over Internal Security

In June, 1942, the responsibility for Internal Security was transferred to Security Service. The Security responsibilities transferred to Security Service were very similar to those taken over by that Service in March 1941, but the essential difference was that the new organisation had executive as well as advisory powers, including those affecting restriction and internment.

With the acceptance by Security Service of full responsibility for Internal Security, Capt J.T.T. Stevens, Capt R.E. Finzell, Lieut Mather, and Lieut R.A. Bock, together with six NCO clerks, 24 members of the Field Security Wing, six interpreters, three typistes, and one civilian clerk were transferred to Security Service, Queensland, and all files held by General Staff, Intelligence, Northern Command, relative to Internal Security were handed over to Security Service. The total of these files was in excess of 30,000 and all had been completed since September, 1939.

It is of interest to note that in the period which responsibility for Internal Security had rested upon Military Intelligence, a total of 3409 persons were interned in Queensland. There were made up as follows:-

Germans	205
Naturalised British Subjects of German origin	160
Italians	1644
Naturalised British Subjects of Italian origin	578
Japanese	585
Other enemy aliens	193
Other Naturalised British Subjects of alien origin	41
British Subjects	4

Raising of Field Security Sections

With the assumption by Security Service in June 1942 of responsibility for Internal Security and the consequent transfer to Security Service of Field Security Wing personnel under command of Headquarters Queensland Line of Communications Area, that Headquarters was left without any Field Security personnel for Security duties.

In July 1942, the Director of Military Intelligence informed Headquarters, Queensland Line of Communications Area, that Field Security personnel had been deleted from the War Establishment of Headquarters Sections (Intelligence Corps) Line of Communication Areas and that Field Security Sections in accordance with AIF War Establishment had been added to the Order of Battle to replace them.

Immediately following on this a direction to raise 25, 26 and 27 Field Security Sections was received. These Sections were raised with a strength of one officer, one Warrant Officer, Class II and Staff Sergeant, one Sergeant, and 11 other ranks, and were trained by General Staff (Int) although little information was at that time available concerning such units. The training was carried out under the supervision of the GSO III (Int) (Capt Johnstone).

25 Section was commanded by Lieut E.G. Foxton, 26 Section by Lieut W. Wilton and 27 Section by Lieut KC Boyle.

During the period when a Section of Field Security Wing had been allotted to Queensland Headquarters, up to July 1942, 72 personnel had passed through its ranks, and it is of interest to note that 18 members ultimately received their commission. Several of these were commissioned after transferring from Field Security Wing, and others received their commissions while engaged in Field Security duties under other formations.

One member of the Field Security Wing, not previously mentioned in this review of activities was Pte J. Bergin, a grazier who enlisted early in 1940. While New Guinea was still under command of Queensland Headquarters, Pte Bergin was posted to Port Moresby for duty under the Intelligence Officer there. He subsequently received his commission, and after service with New Guinea Force, was posted to Headquarters, First Aust Army as GSO III (Int) with the rank of Captain. Later he qualified as a parachutist, being the first staff officer of the Australian Military Forces to be so qualified.

Another member of the Field Security Wing, not previously mentioned was Corporal P. Wessels, a Dutchman who joined the Australian Military Forces and was attached for duty with Intelligence Officer, Cairns. He was eventually discharged from the Army to enable him to take up an appointment in the Netherlands Consular Service. In September, 1944 he was appointed Vice-Consul of the Netherlands in Melbourne.

As a natural corollary to the transfer of personnel to Security Service and the deletion of Field Security Sections from the War Establishment of Queensland Line of Communications Area Section, Australian Intelligence Corps, a new War Establishment for the Intelligence organisation within Queensland was issued.

This reduced the establishment by four officers and 30 other ranks.

I (a) Takes a Hand in New Guinea Campaign

The value of I(a) Sub-Section, General Staff Intelligence, Headquarters, Queensland Line of Communications Area, was clearly demonstrated during the critical days of 1942, and the work done by that Sub-Section at that time received commendations from the High Command.

When in August, 1942, the Japanese drive from Gona began and the enemy fought their way across the deep gorges and razor-back ridges of the Owen Stanley Range, descending the southern slopes to within 32 miles of Port Moresby, the Australian Forces in New Guinea were without operational maps of the area.

From the outset of its activities the I(a) Sub-Section of the Queensland Headquarters had collected and collated every available map and sketch of New Guinea. The sources from which these maps were obtained included the New Guinea Civil Administration, mining companies, trading companies, missionary societies, prospectors, explorers, District Officers, and planters.

Immediately it became apparent that the Kokoda Trail would be the scene of fighting, General Staff Intelligence, Queensland Line of Communication Area, prepared a map of the trail and adjacent areas from all information which they then held. This map was submitted to Adv LHQ and was immediately re-produced and sent to New Guinea where it proved invaluable to the troops in action.

A similar map was produced by General Staff Intelligence, Queensland Line of Communication Area, covering Milne Bay area. No map of this area was held by the troops at Milne Bay and consequently the value of the map produced by Queensland Headquarters was immediately recognised by Adv LHQ who rushed maps by air to the forces holding Milne Bay. These maps arrived three days before the Japanese Units landed at Milne Bay to threaten Port Moresby from the East. The accuracy of the maps was the subject of considerable comment among the troops who had to use them.

The existence of a track from Bulldog to Way was not known to Australian Headquarters until it was brought to notice by General Staff Intelligence, Headquarters Queensland Line of Communication Area. This track was discovered in one of the maps held in the Queensland Headquarters. I(a) Sub-Section immediately prepared a collated map of the area and copies were sent to New Guinea. This track was subsequently developed for use as a line of communication, but after our successful coastal advance it was used as an alternative supply route.

Maps of Queensland

During 1942 the work of I(a) Sub-Section in connection with maps was not confined to their preparation. Just after Japan entered the war, the distribution of Queensland maps was handed over by the General Staff to Military Intelligence, and this distribution became a function of I(a) Sub-Section. The amount of work this involved can be gauged from the fact that during the first two months after Japan declared war approximately 250,000 maps were handled weekly by I(a) Sub-Section and up to 1,250,000 maps were held in stock. Later the demands in relation to maps eased considerably, but the distribution of maps has remained a major function of I(a) Sub-Section.

When it looked as though Australia might be invaded, a new scheme was undertaken to map the whole of Queensland on a 4 mile to the inch scale. Within three months a total of 332 basic maps were drawn on linen by I(a) Sub-Section, one or more maps being prepared for each of the 117 4-mile strategical map areas. Information for these maps was classified under four general headings, and where it was necessary (i.e. in closely settled areas) was plotted on four separate maps. Where very little information was obtainable, as in areas of Western Queensland, one map only was used. In this way maps in from one to four colours could speedily have been produced when necessary.

The Intelligence 4-mile series of maps has been maintained against any emergency, and additional detail has been added, water information taking priority.

I(a) Sub-Section determined the location of more than 8,300 bores and plotted them on these maps, and several thousands of miles of bore drains were also plotted in addition to thousands of wells, tanks, dams and waterholes. The equipment of the bores, the output and storage capacity at the site were noted. The actual analyses of more than 3000 bores were traced and classified on the maps, the remainder of bores being classified according to reliable estimate.

In the first three months of work on Intelligence 4-mile series maps, 16,000 miles of main roads alone were classified and plotted, together with sources of road building and repair material, and all other matters in connection with road and rail transport. In addition, much new information was gathered and plotted concerning the telephone and telegraph network of the State.

At the direction of the Director of Military Intelligence the information available from this source was forwarded to the Commander in Chief in New Guinea for use in connection with plans being made for the establishment of AIF camps and training areas on the Atherton Tableland, and such information was found to be of material assistance.

Appointments and Promotions

In 1942, 12 officers joined Intelligence in Northern Command.

In February 1942, Major (now Lt-Col) L.F. Wilkinson was appointed GSO 1 (Int) Northern Command Base. During the Great War he had seen service with Field Artillery, 1 Australian Division, and for some years subsequent to the war he served in Royal Australian Artillery (Militia). In 1940 he was called up for full-time duty on the staff of the Director of Military Intelligence and served on AHQ until appointed to Northern Command. In March 1941 this officer was detached for special duty in Canberra for a period of four months on the staff of the Director of Security, and took an active part in the organisation of Security Service as the representative of the Department of the Army.

Lieut H.E. Bernoth was transferred to Northern Command from Northern Territory. Prior to going to Northern Territory he had been a corporal in the Cipher Section of Northern Command. He was appointed Intelligence Officer, Cairns, and a month or two later returned to civil life.

Sgt E.L. Edwards was commissioned in March 1942. As a sergeant he had been engaged in secretarial duties for GSO II (Int), and on receipt of his commission he appointed to I(b) Sub-Section. In April 1943 he was seconded to Northern Territory Coastal Reconnaissance Unit, and in June 1944 he was reposted for duty with Queensland Line of Communication Area where he took charge of the I(b) Sub-Section.

Cpl D.B. Casas, a member of Field Security Wing, was commissioned in May 1942. Lieut Casas had a fluent knowledge of Greek and in civil life was a journalist. On receiving his commission he was posted to I(c) Sub-Section as Censorship Liaison Officer and in September 1944 he was in charge of that Sub-Section.

Lieut H.B. Beaman was attached from General Reinforcements AIF for duty with Intelligence in May 1942. He had a very extensive knowledge of Cape York Peninsular and had attended a Commando Training School. His services were utilised for the establishment and maintenance of a Secret Line of Communication (see Pt 2) in North Queensland. He was transferred to Headquarters, First Aust Army in November 1943.

Cpl E.H. Fox was a member of the Field Security Wing, who for a short period performed secretarial duties for GSO 1 (Int), and received his commission in June 1942. He was appointed Intelligence Officer, Maryborough, in July 1942, and in August 1943 he returned to Headquarters for duty with I(b) Sub-Section. In November of that year he was posted as Intelligence Officer, Cairns, and returned to Headquarters in March 1944 as Assistant Ix. In June 1944 he was posted as Intelligence Officer, 1 Aust Base Sub-Area (see Pt 7).

WO II A.C.S. Clarke received his commission in June 1942. As a Warrant Officer he had acted as Intelligence Officer, Thursday Island, and also as Intelligence Officer, Cairns, in which latter post he continued after receiving his commission. In June, 1943 he was posted as Intelligence Officer, Mackay, and was still in that post in September, 1944.

WO I D.F. Dobbyn who had been senior clerk in the Intelligence Registry, received his commission in June 1942, and was posted as Assistant Ix. In July 1943, he was transferred to 1 Australian Field Censorship Company.

S/Sgt W.E. Cuppaidge was commissioned in August 1942. He had been a member of the Field Security Wing, with which, owing to his knowledge of Japanese, he had been employed primarily in translation work. On being commissioned he was attached to I(a) Sub-Section, and in April 1943, he was sent to Melbourne to attend as a student at an Army Japanese Class. Shortly after the completion of the School he was transferred to Central Bureau in September 1943, and was posted for duty in Northern Territory.

Lieut W.F. Nixon-Smith was transferred to Intelligence from 15 Australian Employment Company in August, 1942. He had previously held a commission in 11 Light Horse, from which regiment he was seconded for duty as ADC to the GOC, Northern Command in 1941, and as GSO III (Int), 1 Australian Air Intelligence Liaison Section in 1942. He was posted for duty with I(b) Sub-Section and in March 1944, was promoted to the rank of T/Captain. In September, 1944, he was performing duty as Ix.

In December 1942, WO II H.V. Greenfield was given his commission. He was one of the original draftsmen in the Intelligence Section, and at the time of receiving his commission he was the senior draftsman of the Section. He was appointed for duty with I(a) Sub-Section, and did several periods as relieving Intelligence Officer in country districts.