

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

1941 - JAPAN TAKES A HAND

The outstanding events of 1941 from an Intelligence point of view was the commencement of the operation of Security Service on 31st March 1941, and the entry of Japan into the War on 7th December 1941.

Commencement of Security Service

Outlining the establishment of Security Service AHG SM3458 of 28th March 1941 stated, inter alia:-

"It is desired to stress that the Security Service now brought into being has been advocated by the Army for many years. This information has been the subject of many inter-service and inter-departmental conferences. It is to be understood that the creation of the Security Service in no way reflects on the manner in which Military Intelligence has carried out general security work; and that the standard of efficiency reached has been most creditable to all concerned. The correct picture is, therefore, that Military Intelligence is now to shed responsibility for which it undertook to carry for all Services in the absence of a separate organisation and which has, therefore, always been outside its normal sphere of activities. The arrangement was that with the formation of Security Service that Service thenceforth would be responsible, with certain exceptions, for all security matters previously dealt with by the Navy, Army, Air Force and Commonwealth Investigations Branch. The exception in so far as the Army was concerned was that Army HQ and Commands would continue to deal with Military Security Intelligence, Censorship and, for the time being, all matters concerned with internment."

The matters for which Security Service assumed full responsibility were:-

- (1) Investigations and suggested action against hostile, alien, subversive or pacifist organisations.
- (2) Investigations into sabotage and the issue of notes in connection therewith.
- (3) Suspects and activities of individuals, other than actual Service personnel. Investigations and recommendations to the appropriate authority or department suggesting action.
- (4) Control of Aliens under National Security Act, National Security (General) Regulations, National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations and Orders made under them, including Aliens Employment Order, Aliens Control (Prohibited Possessions) Order, National Security (Firearms and Explosives) Regulations and National Security (Change of Name) Regulations.
- (5) Passports. The vetting of all passports from the security angle.
- (6) Aliens registration. (The existing procedure of operating this legislation through the agencies of State Civil Police were not to be disturbed.)
- (7) Security aspect of Immigration.
- (8) Checking of personnel of vital industries. Carrying out inquiries.
- (9) Security measures regarding admission to factories and Government establishments.
- (10) The security aspect with the issue of permits to wharves and shipping. (The Military authorities were to have over-riding control during embarkations or loading of important cargoes.)

- (11) Security of personnel within or in the vicinity of vulnerable areas.
- (12) Seaman, action in connection with suitability or otherwise of persons who signed on in Australia or, if signed outside the Commonwealth, were discharged from ships in Australia.
- (13) Naturalisation.
- (14) Leakage of information.
- (15) Rumours.

The Army was to accept responsibility for Military Security Intelligence, which included:-

- (1) Security instructions to troops.
- (2) Standing Orders, Security Section.
- (3) Security of Signals and Codes.
- (4) Camouflage in relation to Military Security.
- (5) Initiation of action regarding security posters, films and codes.
- (6) Initiation of articles for Department of Information in relation to security of Military personnel, equipment, etc.
- (7) Service Suspects actually serving with Military units and in establishments.

The matters in which Military Security and Security Service were to combine, were:-

- (1) Leakage of information regarding Military, Naval and Air activity.
- (2) Hostile and subversive organisations or individuals in so far as these affected Military organisations.
- (3) Preparations for combating 5th Column activities - operational stage.
- (4) Internal Intelligence not included among the matters which were to be expressly the responsibility of either Military Intelligence or Security Service, and in territories other than those comprised in the States of the Commonwealth.
- (5) Relative aspects of Overseas Intelligence.

It was directed that GOsC Commands and District Commandants would still continue to take executive action in respect to matters of which they possessed delegation powers, although the Investigating and reporting aspects were to be taken over by Security Service.

Commands were to arrange for their Intelligence Sections to work direct with Security Service and act as their District Agents, while, at the same time carrying out their normal function for Commands. It was intimated that at a later stage re-adjustments would be effected to enable units of I(b) Sub-Sections to be more definitely allocated to Security Service as part of its District Organisation.

Japan Enters the War

The policy at the time of the outbreak of war with Germany and again when Italy entered the war was to intern those persons of enemy alien origin in respect of whom a substantial case of disaffection had been made out. This policy was varied, however, when Japan entered the war. It was felt that all persons of Japanese race or birth, constituted such a grave security risk that it would be unwise to leave any of them at large. On the entry of Japan into the war all persons in Queensland, irrespective of sex, of Japanese race or birth between the ages of 16 and 65 were interned. This resulted in the internment of 222 Japanese on the mainland and 363 at Thursday Island. Within twenty four hours of the declaration of war all Japanese had been arrested and interned.

Officers Appointed

Seventeen officers joined Intelligence Section, Northern Command, during 1941.

Sgt J. Christie was promoted in the Cipher Sub-Section. When Cipher duties passed out of the hands of Intelligence into those of Signals, Capt Christie, as he had then become, transferred to Australian Corps of Signals.

Lieut D.A. Ellison was with Intelligence for less than three weeks prior to being transferred to AIF, and Lieut W.A. Hawkins was in Intelligence for a similar period, then was transferred to 7 Infantry Brigade.

Capt H.J. Wiles, D.S.O., who was appointed from the Reserve of Officers, had served in the AIF during 1914-1918. For a short period Capt Wiles performed the duties as Intelligence Officer, Maryborough, and then was transferred to 61 Australian Infantry Battalion, which he ultimately commanded in New Guinea with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Lieut E.C. Baldwin was appointed from the Reserve of Officers and performed duty as Passport Officer until 1942 when he transferred to 1 Australian Labour Company. By September 1944, he was Major E.C. Baldwin, D.A.D. Labour, HQ QLD L of C Area.

Mr R.E. Finzel, a civilian interpreter who was attached to the Field Security Wing, was given a commission in February 1941. He was promoted to the rank of Capt in April 1943 and transferred for duty with Security Service in June of that year.

Lieut E.E. Muddle who was appointed from the Reserve of Officers (Signals), had served between 1914-1918 with the AIF. For some time he was in charge of I(a) Sub-Section and later became GSO III (Int). In 1942 he was transferred to 5 Australian Division as GSO III (Int), having previously been promoted to the rank of Captain. After seeing service in New Guinea he was posted to Advanced LHQ.

WO1 R.St.C. Bolton, who had been senior clerk of Intelligence Registry, received his commission in March 1941. After a period of duty in the I(c) Sub-Section he was appointed GSO III(Int), and in May 1942 he transferred to 9 Australian Employment Company.

WO1 R.A. Bock, who had been attached to Field Security Wing from its inception, was given a commission in March 1941. In June 1942 he was transferred for duty with Security Service.

Sgt G.E. Carrier and Sgt R.L. Wilkinson, both of Cipher Sub-Section, were given commissions in April 1941. Lieut Carrier took up duty in I(a) Sub-Section and in July 1942 was appointed Intelligence Officer, Mackay. In July of the following year he was appointed Intelligence Officer, Maryborough, and was promoted to the rank of Captain, at the time of his appointment to Maryborough Lieut Wilkinson became Assistant Cipher Officer and was transferred to 5 Australian Division early in 1942.

Lieut W.H. Mather was appointed from the Reserve of Officers in June 1941. He had served with the Light Horse during the previous war and subsequently had lived in a number of countries in South America, where he acquired a fluent knowledge of Spanish. Lieut Mather was posted for duty with I(b) Sub-Section and in June 1942 was transferred for duty with Security Service.

Lieut E.G. Foxton saw active service with the Field Artillery during the Great War and was appointed from the Reserve of Officers. After doing duty for some time with I(b) Sub-Section, he was appointed OC 25 Australian Field Security Section in September 1942, being promoted to the rank of Captain at the end of that year. In April 1942 he was seconded for duty with Northern Territory Coastal Reconnaissance Unit. In August 1944 he was appointed to Far Eastern Liaison Office.

Although carried on the strength of Intelligence Section, Northern Command from August 1941 to January 1942, Lieut A.J. Campbell did not join the unit, and on a part-time basis performed special duties for GOC, Northern Command.

In September 1941, Capt F.W. Robinson was called up for full-time duty and was appointed GSO II (Int), being promoted to the rank of T/Major. In civil life Major Robinson was a lecturer in modern languages at the University of Queensland, and during the Great War had been an interpreter attached to a Prisoner of War Interrogation Centre. Major Robinson was recalled by the University in March 1942.

In December 1941, Sgt L. Peterson, received his commission. He had been carried on the strength of the Field Security Wing, and had been performing in a secretarial capacity for GSO II (Int). During the Great War he had seen active service with the Royal Army Service Corps. Lieut Peterson was appointed for duty with I(a) Sub-Section, and eventually with the rank of Captain took charge of that Section.

Sgt V.D. Steege had been a member of Field Security Wing engaged on translation work and was commissioned on 31st December 1941, and three days later was transferred to 16 Australian Garrison Battalion.