

mountainous country in the face of considerable opposition. The weather was extremely hot and the task of the troops was arduous and exhausting. The Faqir fled before the arrival of the troops, but his headquarters were destroyed and a considerable portion of his resources in rifles, ammunition and supplies were captured. The Royal Air Force rendered most valuable support throughout the operations. The force withdrew without much opposition and air proscription of the area was then instituted to prevent any further gathering of tribesmen.

The tribesmen were disheartened as a result of these successful operations and, for a period, comparative quiet was restored in Northern Waziristan.

9. *Further activities of Mullah Sher Ali in South Waziristan.*—While operations were in progress against the Faqir in the Kharre area Mullah Sher Ali, with a gang of about 150 tribesmen and a tribal gun, took the field again in South Waziristan, and on the 11th July, the South Waziristan Scouts post at Splitoi was sniped and shelled. The gang, however, withdrew before reinforcements, despatched in motor transport, could arrive. The same gang sniped a Scouts' convoy south of Sorarogha Post on the 13th July and a sharp engagement ensued between the gang and Scouts who moved out from the post. Aircraft co-operated. On the 18th July, a force of Scouts patrolling near Ladha successfully encountered a portion of Sher Ali's gang, inflicting several casualties. In these two engagements Sher Ali's gang was roughly handled. After due warning air action was again taken against certain Bahlolzai Mahsud villages which had been guilty of harbouring the gang.

10. During July Major-General Hartley resumed command and political control in Waziristan. Major-General E. P. Quinan, C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E., assumed command of the Waziristan District which included the Waziristan Striking Force.

11. *Raids into the settled Districts from the Ahmadzai Wazir Salient.*—Hostile acts, at the instigation of the Faqir of Ipi, now started in a fresh area. A gang, under Mehr Dil, an outlaw, based on the precipitous Junighar Hills in the Ahmadzai Wazir Salient, to the north of Bannu, made attacks on villages in the Bannu and Kohat Districts and on traffic on the Bannu-Kohat road.

From the middle of June, onwards, troops and civil armed forces, supported by aircraft when necessary, were employed to protect the road between Bannu and Kohat, and to guard against raiders.

On the night of the 23rd-24th July, Mehr Dil's gang, reinforced by local sympathizers and bad characters, raided Bannu City. Property was looted and houses and shops were burnt. Fighting with Police, Frontier Constabulary and troops in Bannu City continued for about an hour before the raiders were ejected. The gang dispersed over a wide area rendering pursuit during hours of darkness difficult.

12. *Independent Air Operation.*—With the object of deterring gangs from using the Salient as a base for raiding a tactical air proscription was after due warning imposed on the whole area involved, from the 31st July to the 26th August. This proscription was carried

out as an independent air operation. No raiding from the Salient took place after the 12th August.

13. *Minor outrages on the lines of communication.*—No important operations took place during August, but the mining of roads, attacks on civilian lorries, kidnappings, cutting of telegraph and telephone lines, interruption of water supplies and damage to bridges and culverts continued.

During this month the 3rd (Jhelum) Infantry Brigade was relieved by the 1st (Abbottabad) Infantry Brigade.

14. *The Faqir of Ipi.*—The Faqir, after his ejection from Kharre in July, changed his headquarters frequently, remaining in the vicinity of the Afghan Frontier. In August he was reported to be moving to a locality near the Afghan Frontier to the north-west of Wana, where he hoped to gain sympathy to his cause in a fresh area. On arrival of the Faqir, the locality he intended to visit was proscribed for air action after due warning. This prompt action upset the Faqir's plans and his object of infecting a new area in South Waziristan was frustrated.

15. *Further minor operations in South and North Waziristan.*—In September it became necessary to use the Razmak-Wana road for the passage of stores and the Razmak and Wana Columns were employed for this purpose. This operation was opposed by Mullah Sher Ali and his followers. In an action near the Sharawangi Narai on the 12th September, the hostile tribesmen were successfully engaged by our troops supported by aircraft and were roughly handled. As a result Mullah Sher Ali remained inactive for a considerable period.

Towards the end of September, three Columns of Tochi and South Waziristan Scouts accompanied by a detachment of Mountain Artillery, all under Major A. Felix-Williams, D.S.O., M.C. (Tochi Scouts), entered the Bannu-Ahmadzai-Wazir Salient, to deal with raiders who were again harbouring there. They were supported by aircraft, while Frontier Constabulary blocked the exits from the Salient. The very precipitous nature of the country made movement difficult, but the operation was successfully carried out and for the time being, raiding across the Kohat-Bannu road practically ceased.

16. *The situation at the close of 1938.*—By the end of October, the annual migrations of the tribes to their winter locations had taken place. In North Waziristan small gangs of irreconcilables continued to be active and further measures were taken to prevent supplies reaching them. The failure of the Tori Khel Wazirs to control their bad characters, who had been responsible for raids and kidnappings, made it necessary to bring pressure on certain sections of the tribe by denying them the use of their winter grazing grounds.

Owing to the advent of winter and the fast of the Ramzan, November passed quietly in tribal territory, except for attacks on civilian traffic and minor outrages by gangs whose leaders were in close touch with the Faqir.

On the other hand raiding into the settled districts increased. On the 18th November two villages south of Kalabagh, on the Indus, were raided, while six other minor raids also took place, accompanied by casualties to civilians and kidnapping.