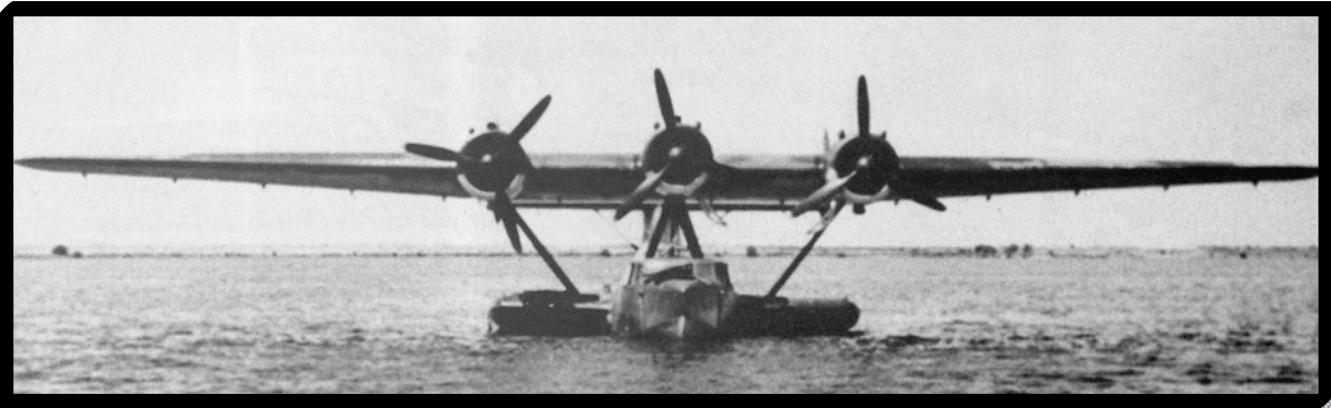
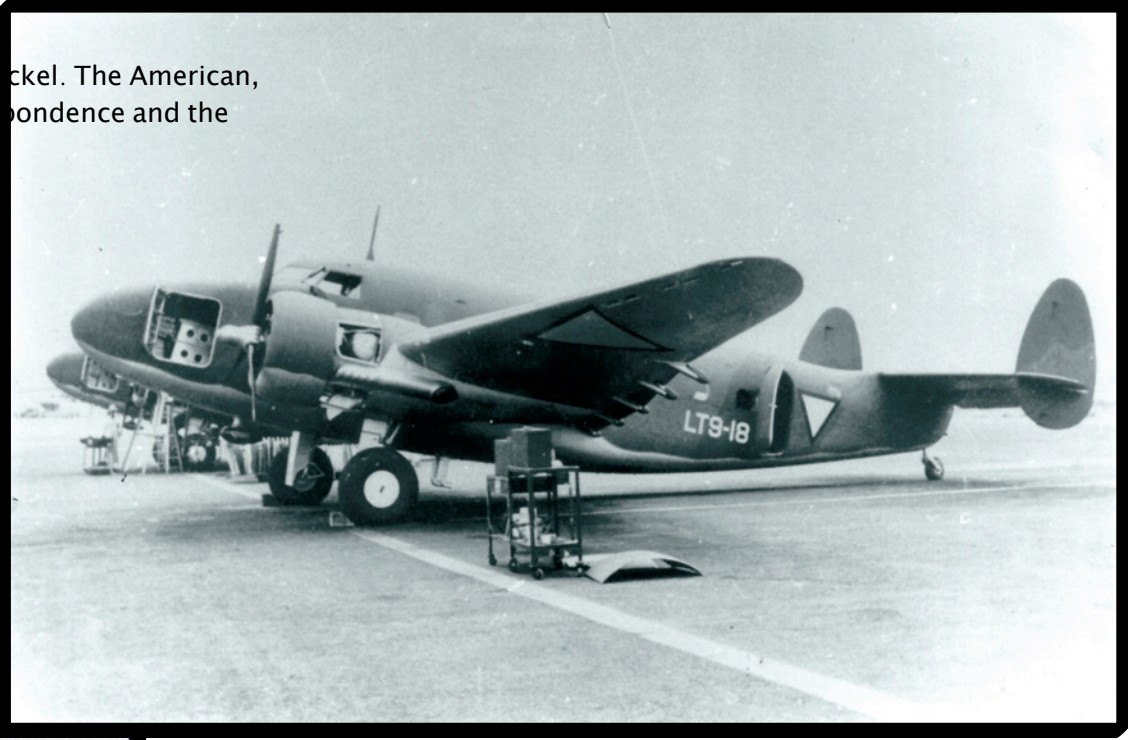


# The Broome air raid of 1942: An important chapter in Dutch Australian connections



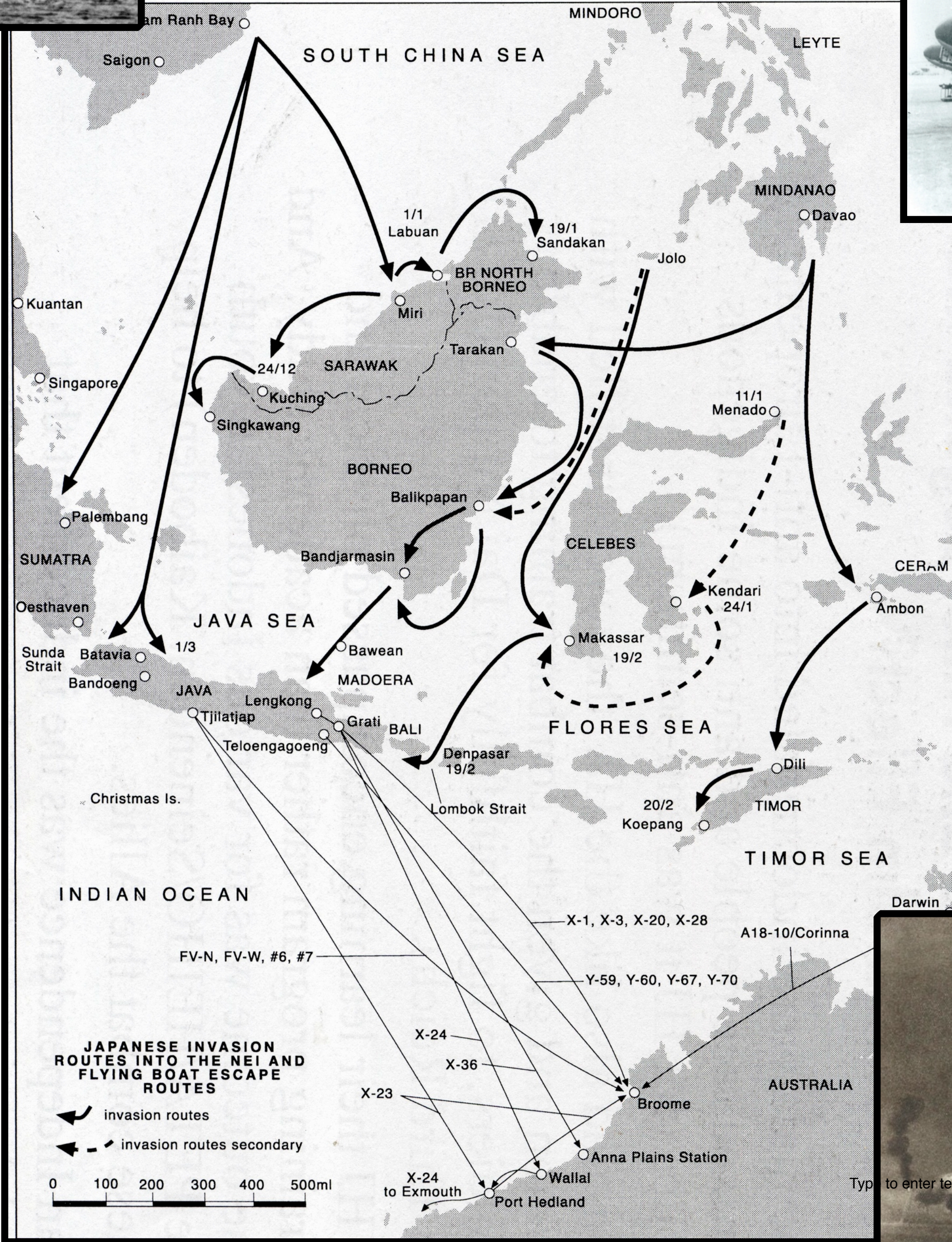
Gus Winckels Lodestar before the Attack. Courtesy Gus Winckel. The American, British, Dutch, Australian (ABDA) Alliance at work in correspondence and the formation of the 18th flying Squadron at Batchelor, NT.



The bombing of Broome included amazing tales of survival and bravery, including the shooting down from the ground of a Zero by Dutch pilot Lieutenant Gus Winckel. The nine Japanese Zero fighters and reconnaissance plane that swooped down over Broome in the far north of Western Australia on the morning of March 3, 1942, killed 88 people and destroyed 22 Australian, Dutch and American aircraft.



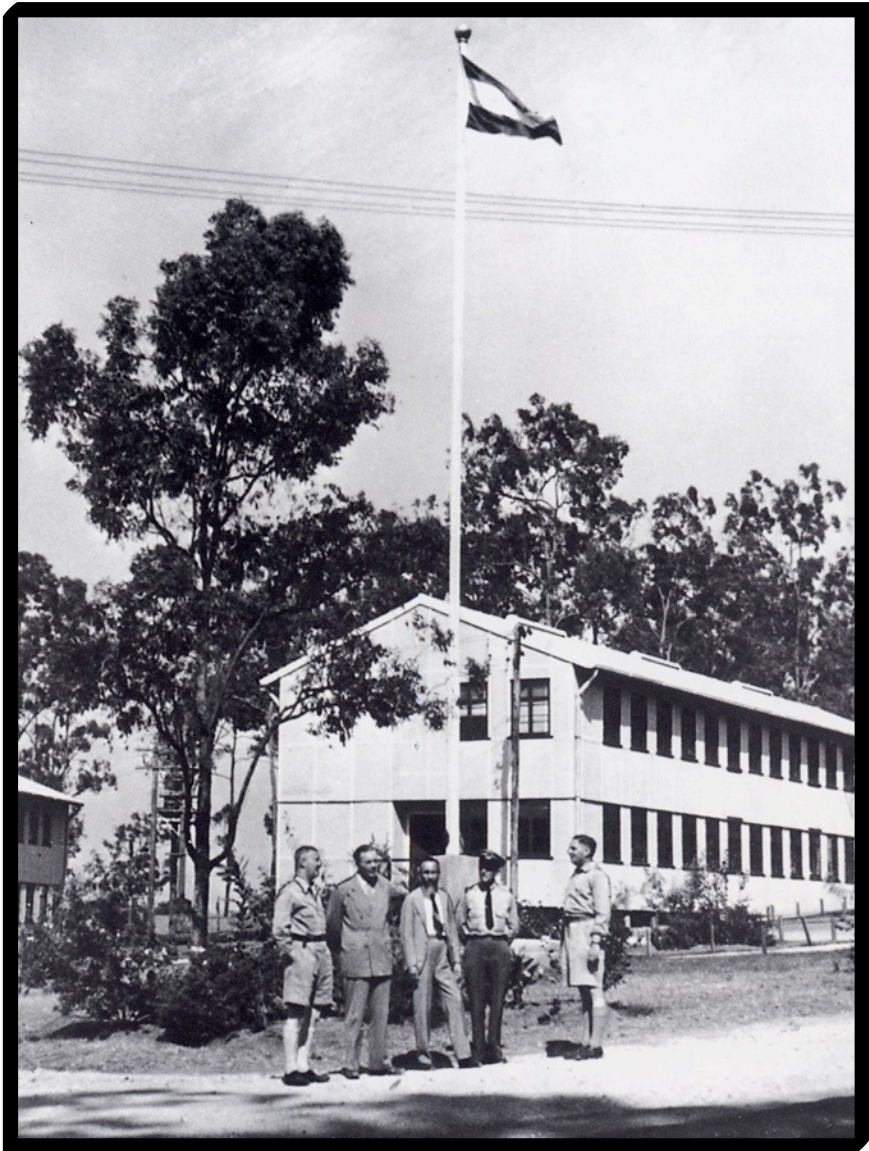
The Netherlands East Indies Administration was in exile in Australia. their main headquarters at Camp Columbia, Wacol Queensland.



Map showing Japanese invasion routes into the NEI and flying boat escape routes (After Shores et al., 1992b).



View of Broome and Roebuck Bay showing the aftermath of the air raid, taken by the 'Babs' (After Ashai Shimbum n.d. via Willy Piers 2005).



18th Squadron Logo



Canberra monument



Type to enter text

WH.  
DECIPHER TO -  
The Secretary of State for  
Dominion Affairs,  
LONDON.

date sent 10

40. CONFIDENTIAL.

I shall be glad if you will convey the following to the  
Netherlands East Indies Government :-

In view gravity situation in Pacific as it affects Australia  
and Netherlands East Indies and their Allies, Commonwealth Government  
has approved the immediate establishment as war-time measure of direct  
radiotelegraph service between Australia and Netherlands East Indies.  
Approval for the establishment of the direct service has been given  
subject to the following conditions :-

- (1) The service shall be provided as war-time measure;
- (2) As in case of recently opened radiotelegraph channel to  
U.S.A., new service shall be controlled by the Common-  
wealth at the Australiandend, Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia)  
Ltd. being given the opportunity to operate the service as  
an agent of the Commonwealth, no licence being issued to  
the Company;
- (3) The tariffs to be applied to the various categories of tele-  
grams transmitted over the new service in both directions  
shall be the same as those now in force for traffic trans-  
mitting the cable system.

Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia) Ltd. is being asked to operate  
the service subject to the foregoing and to the following further  
stipulations :-

- (a) Traffic receipts from the new service shall be equally  
divided between Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia) Ltd. and  
the Netherlands East Indies Administration or the tele-  
graph carrier undertaking the service in the Netherlands  
East Indies, after deducting -
  - (1) the current Australian terminal or transit  
charges; and
  - (ii) all other necessary out-payments to carriers  
and Administrations participating in the circula-  
tion of traffic routed over the new service;
- (b) That the foregoing stipulations are tentative only, in  
order that the service may be opened without delay and  
they may be subject to variation by mutual consent. The  
service therefore is authorised on the understanding that  
negotiations will be opened immediately between the parties  
and that formal agreements between them will be executed  
at the earliest date.

Commonwealth would appreciate advice early as possible whe-  
ther conditions above referred to are acceptable Netherlands East Indies  
Administration. Perhaps the Administration will also submit for con-  
sideration of Commonwealth Government a draft agreement.

It is assumed that the service could be brought into operation  
subject to 24 hours notice and this might be confirmed please.

Ends.  
COPY TO - P.M.G & DEPT. (re G.42/42 of 9.1.42)  
MIN. & DEPT. E.A.  
DEFENCE CO-ORD.

ADVISORY WAR COUNCIL MINUTE  
SYDNEY, 18TH FEBRUARY, 1942

SIONS WITH DR. van MOOK.

van Mook, Lieutenant-Governor-General of the  
Netherlands East Indies, gave an outline of his visit to the  
United States. He also discussed the importance of the role  
of the N.E.I. in the war and expressed views as to future  
developments. The main points were as follows:-

#### United States.

- (a) The importance of the war in the south-western Pacific  
is appreciated in higher Government circles in the  
United States, with the possible exception of the Navy,  
which had not yet fully recovered from the shock of  
the Pearl Harbour disaster.
- (b) The United States were at first pessimistic as to the  
possibility of holding the lines of communication  
to Australia and the ABDA Area, but they subsequently  
considered that this could be done.
- (c) As regards organisation of supply in the United States,  
there was a disturbing number of committees functioning  
at first, but the recent appointment of Mr. Nelson as  
head of the War Production Board would result in the  
elimination of unnecessary committees.

#### Netherlands East Indies.

- (d) The N.E.I. view is that the first aim of Japan is to  
occupy the N.E.I. This would neutralise offensive  
operations from Australia and would give the Japanese  
control of important sources of supply of essential  
raw materials.
- (e) Once the N.E.I. were reduced the Japanese would not be  
likely to embark on a large-scale invasion of Australia,  
but instead they would concentrate their forces on  
assisting the Germans in the Middle East and in  
attacking Russia through Manchukuo. This would  
seriously endanger the Allied position in Europe and  
would prolong the war for a very long period.
- (f) The foregoing pointed to the importance of holding the  
N.E.I. The N.E.I. would resist whether or not they  
were reinforced. Their Army consisted of 35,000 to  
100,000 troops but they lacked equipment and aircraft.  
Java could be held if adequate reinforcements of  
aircraft and troops were sent.

M. C. Langslow

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA. DEPARTMENT OF AIR.

TELEPHONES: 11 10822 OR MX 5101.  
TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS: AIRFORCE, MELBOURNE.  
REPLY QUOTE: 208/1/1952 (ORG.) SAS 226 4  
23 FEB 1942  
SECRET

The Secretary,  
Department of External Affairs,  
CANBERRA.

Training of Netherlands East Indies Air-Crew in Australia

I desire to inform you that, following representations  
from the Netherlands East Indies Government, War Cabinet approved  
(Minute 1885 on 10th February, 1942) the recommendations by the  
Minister for Air, submitted in Agendum 69/1942, for the training  
of a number of N.E.I. personnel.

2. The N.E.I. Government has requested that facilities be  
provided at Adelaide, S.A., and at Rathmines, N.S.W., and it is  
anticipated that the first batch of trainees will arrive in New  
South Wales in the course of a few days. Trainees for South  
Australia will arrive by ship and will disembark at Adelaide.  
Some of those for training at the R.A.A.F. Station at  
Rathmines will come by their own aircraft, following the Qantas  
flying boat route from Broome or Darwin.

3. It is desired that the utmost co-operation be afforded  
in the matter of relaxing of immigration restrictions and  
expediting any quarantine formalities which may be required.

4. It will be appreciated that some of the officers and  
men arriving will not be Europeans, but of course they will all  
be members of the Netherlands East Indies Army or Navy Air  
Force.

5. I should be glad if you will suitably inform all the  
authorities concerned.

M. C. Langslow  
SECRETARY