



Source 1

water level and began machine-gunning small naval vessels. The main force now split up into three detachments, a group of fighters and dive bombers to the airfield, another to the harbour and the high-level Kates which at 9.58 a.m. opened the attack on the jetty and then on the town; soon followed by the dive bombers and fighters against ships and air installations. The five Kittyhawks attempted to get into the air but were all destroyed. The army anti-aircraft defences (16x3.7's, 2x 3's) at first fired inaccurately but soon steadied and were quickly joined by at least as many guns on naval vessels. Machine guns afloat and ashore fired steadily and at times with success. However the toll of shipping rose rapidly. When the attackers departed, of the four transports of the Houston convoy, two were sunk and the others beached; of four supply vessels three were on fire and were to sink shortly, one exploded when 200 tons of depth-charges ignited, the fourth was slightly damaged; of two tankers, one was settling low in the water and a hospital ship had been struck twice by bombs. The American destroyer Peary was mortally hit and on fire. The seaplane tender William B. Preston, although damaged, had cleared the harbour. The Australian sloop Swan was damaged. Another sloop Warrego, four



Source 1 (pg2)

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four corvettes, a floating dock, a base depot ship and upwards of twenty tenders had been attacked, but only one small lugger went down, although an old coal hulk sank two days later. Off Bathurst Island two supply ships were caught and destroyed.

In the town the post office, administrator's and ~~gas~~ government offices and ^olice barracks received direct hits, while one wing of a hospital was badly damaged. The two-berth jetty was cut and some twenty wharfe labourers killed; a r ailway locomotive was thrown into the harbour from the jetty.

Just before midday, with rescue and salvage operations proceeding, another warning was received, and fifty-four Betty's pattern-bombed the airfield, completing the task of destruction begun by the ~~six~~ carrier aircraft. The enemy had destroyed eleven American Kittyhawks in the air and on the ground, and a Liberator and three transport aircraft on the ground. Australian losses, all on the ground, were six Hudsons and a Moth ~~Minor~~ destroyed, a Hudson and a Wirraway damaged. In addition three Catalinas of the U.S. Navy were lost. Deaths, ^{which were} in excess of 300, were mainly among ships crews and civilians. The Japanese lost five aircraft definitely destroyed.

Report for the Cabinet on the attack on Darwin



EMPIRE HOME FRONT *What effect did bombing raids have?*

Source 2



Photographs showing the effects of a bombing raid in Malta



Source 2 (pg2)



Photographs showing the effects of a bombing raid in Malta



Source 3

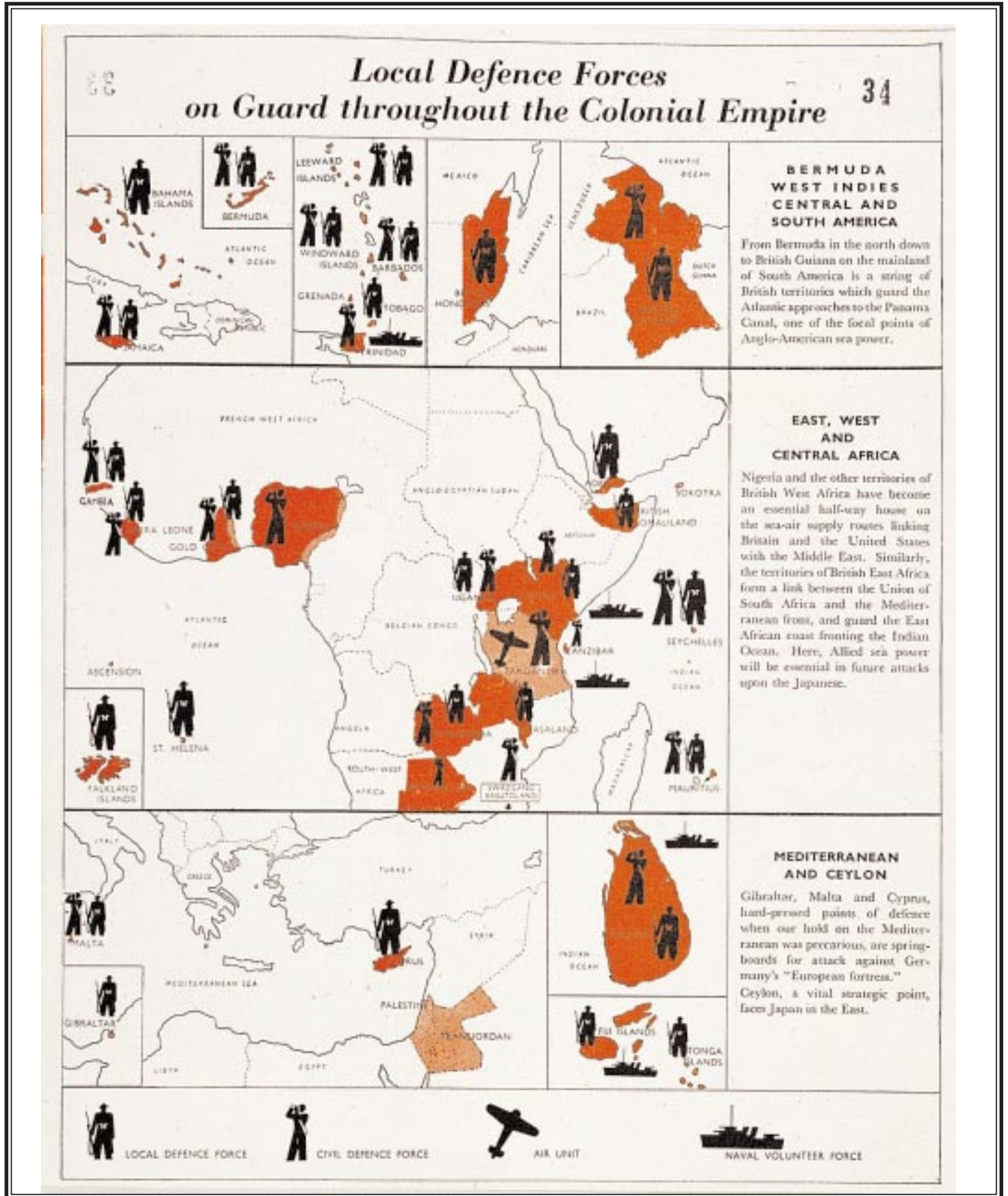


Diagram showing strength of Local Defence Forces in the Colonial Empire