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Pusing Fights For Survival

WORST TOWN EARNS

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THE RUSH

By

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PUBLIC ATTENTION is still focussed on the small mining town of Pusing, made infamous by the conviction it received from a court for not co-operating with the Government in the present campaign against the terrorists.

A Government notification issued last week warned in unmistakable terms that any further incident in Pusing would result in "other arrangements" being made for them. One wrong step may therefore mean another Jenderam for the 6,000 inhabitants of Pusing.

In an endeavour to avert this catastrophe, all able-bodied men of this town have taken up arms "to look after themselves." The Dis-

trict Officer said he wished to see "outward and visible signs of the peoples' intention to help themselves" and



...to help themselves and gave them 48 hours to organise the Home Guards. This order came after three Special Constables had been ambushed and the perimeter fence there had been cut the previous night.

The warning had a salutary effect. It shook the people out of their apathy and instilled into them at least an outward sense of duty which they did not display before. They were, in



effect, made to understand that they could not very well serve two masters and that if they were not for the Government they must then be regarded as being against.

Pusing first hit the headlines when a European resettlement officer was wantonly killed in cold blood inside the perimeter fence a few months ago.



This led to a trial in which the adult population of the town was accused of non-cooperation. A list of incidents was made out in support of the prosecution case and they were not rebutted. The town was convicted and sentenced to pay a collective fine of \$40,000.

It was described by the Magistrate as "probably the worst town in Malaya," and that description has stuck.

For some months past, Pusing's notoriety was al-



most forgotten and all seemed well until a week ago when the ambush of the three S.Cs and the cutting of the perimeter fence took place, and Government's ire was once again aroused.

But this time, it gave the town the benefit of the doubt, as there appeared to be some doubt as to the degree of collaboration from inside the fence. However, a curt warning was issued that "this must be the last incident in Pusing."



Whether or not there will be any further incident is of

course a matter of conjecture. But current events

show that the people intend making an effort to see that such incidents are not repeated in Pusing.

By joining the Home Guards, they showed their first sign of co-operation, which means they will now incur the wrath of the terrorists—people who they were accused of protecting before.

All eyes are now on Pusing. Will it be another Jenderam? Time alone will tell. But whatever happens, Pusing will perhaps go down in Malayan history as a town which had brought suspicion from the Government, hatred and revenge from the enemy and pity from the general public. Its fight for survival is on.



Some of the able-bodied men of Pusing seen here registering for the Home Guards. It's a crush now.

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Last Updated 2023-01-31