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C.O.S.(44) 132nd Meeting (Q)

BIGOT

WAR CABINET

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF Meeting held on MONDAY,
24th APRIL, 1944 at 11.0 a.m.

PRESENT:

Marshal of the Royal Air Force
Sir Charles F.A. Portal,
Chief of the Air Staff (In the Chair)

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew
B. Cunningham, First Sea Lord
and Chief of Naval Staff.

Lt.-General A.E. Nye,
Vice Chief of the Imperial
General Staff.

Lt.-General Sir Hastings L. Ismay,
Office of the Minister of Defence

THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT FOR ITEMS 1 AND 2

Captain G. Grantham, R.N.,
Admiralty

Brigadier C.S. Sugden,
War Office

Air Commodore W. Dawson,
Air Ministry

Brigadier V.D. Thomas,
representing Chief of
Combined Operations

Brigadier A. Head,
Combined Operations Headquarters

SECRETARIAT

Major General L. C. Hollis
Colonel C.R. Price
Lt.-Colonel Capel-Dunn
Lt.-Colonel H.A.R. Powell

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1. OPERATION "CALIPH"C.O.S.(44) 360 (0)(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 91st Meeting (0), Minute 7)

THE COMMITTEE had before them a note by the Secretary covering a minute^x by the Prime Minister on operation "CALIPH", which had, in anticipation of instructions, been referred to the Joint Planning Staff for examination.

THE DIRECTORS OF PLANS explained to the Committee the results of their preliminary investigations into the questions put forward by the Prime Minister in his minute.

After a full discussion, THE COMMITTEE:-

Instructed the Joint Planning Staff to prepare, for their use at the Staff Conference that evening, an aide memoire^o outlining the proposed answers to the points covered in discussion.

x Serial No. D.128/4
o J.P.(44) 118 (copy attached).

2. OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN - DIRECTIVE TO GENERAL WILSON(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 128th Meeting (0), Minute 5)

In the course of their discussion with the Directors of Plans, THE COMMITTEE referred to a telegram^x from General Wilson outlining his intentions and ideas on the implementation of the directive⁺ recently issued to him.

LT.-GENERAL NYE suggested that the Joint Planning Staff should prepare, for the use of the Chiefs of Staff at the Staff Conference that evening, a draft telegram to the J.S.M. outlining the action which it was proposed that S.C.A.E.F. and S.A.C.M.E.D. should take to develop the "CALIPH" concept. Instructions to General Wilson should be in amplification of paragraph 6 (c) of his MEDCOS 100. It should be emphasised in this telegram, with reference to paragraph 6 (b) of MEDCOS 100, that in the event of an early withdrawal by the enemy to the Pisa-Rimini line, the task of our Mediterranean forces would be to prevent or, failing that, delay the withdrawal of German divisions for use against "OVERLORD".

THE COMMITTEE:-

- (a) Took note with approval of General Wilson's telegram;
- (b) Instructed the Joint Planning Staff to prepare, for consideration that evening, a draft telegram^o to the Joint Staff Mission in Washington on the lines suggested above.

x MEDCOS 100
o COSMED 90
o J.P.(44) 119 (copy attached)

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3. FOOD SUPPLIES FOR THE VATICAN CITY

SIR CHARLES PORTAL said that the Foreign Office had drawn his attention to a telegram^x from Sir d'Arcy Osborne reporting that he had received information from the Vatican of the movements of Vatican lorry convoys on the 24th, 26th, 27th and 28th April. Sir d'Arcy Osborne had been asked to report these journeys with a view to avoidance of air attacks.

Sir Charles Portal suggested that this telegram should be repeated by the Air Ministry to General Wilson for such action as he might be able to take.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Invited the Air Staff to repeat this telegram to General Wilson and General Eaker.

x No. 277

4. OPERATION "ANVIL"C.O.S.(44) 361 (0)(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 129th Meeting (0), Minute 12)

THE COMMITTEE had before them a minute by the Prime Minister asking for an answer on a point which had been raised by Mr. McCloy and General McNarney concerning Allied action if the Germans suddenly withdrew in Italy at full speed leaving rear-guards behind them and nipped through the tunnels into the "OVERLORD" battle.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Invited Lt.-General Ismay to draft and circulate for their approval a reply to the Prime Minister's minute in the light of the discussion.

5. FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN "OVERLORD"(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 128th Meeting (0), Minute 7)

THE COMMITTEE considered a telegram^x from the Joint Staff Mission reporting a proposal put forward by the U.S. Chiefs of Staff concerning the provision of M.T. ships for the movement to the U.K. of the balance of the vehicles of the Second French Armoured Division,

THE COMMITTEE:-

Invited the War Office, in consultation with the Ministry of War Transport, to examine this proposal and to prepare a draft reply to the Joint Staff Mission.

x J.S.M. 15

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6. SITUATION IN EGYPT

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 131st Meeting (O), Minute 3)

LT.-GENERAL NYE handed round copies of a draft minute to the Prime Minister, prepared in the light of the latest telegrams from General Paget, on the forces available in the Middle East to deal with the Egyptian crisis.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Approved the terms of the minute, as amended in discussion, and instructed the Secretary to submit it to the Prime Minister.

x Annex I

7. "CROSSBOW"

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 131st Meeting (O), Minute 1)

THE COMMITTEE took note of the following statement by the Chief of the Air Staff of the results achieved to date by attacks on "CROSSBOW" objectives.

Ski Sites

Category A	70
Category B	17 (- 3 possibly A)
Category C	9
Total	<u>96</u>

Large Sites

No change.

8. BOMBING OF ROUMANIA

THE COMMITTEE took note that the Prime Minister had minuted as follows on Foreign Office telegram No. 1368 to Cairo.

"Keep up the bombing of Roumania on all convenient occasions."

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9. ARRANGEMENTS FOR RUSSIAN AIR FORCE DETACHMENT IN ITALYC.O.S.(44) 355 (0)(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 125th Meeting (0), Minute 13)

THE COMMITTEE had before them a copy of a letter from the Foreign Office commenting on the Prime Minister's minute of the 16th April concerning the Russian request to establish a small air detachment in Italy. It was noted that the Foreign Office had changed their views since the submission of Mr. Eden's minute to the Prime Minister of the 17th March.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL said that there seemed no alternative but to agree to the Russian request on condition that operational control was retained by A.F.H.Q. He circulated a draft telegram to this effect requesting the Joint Staff Mission to clear this question with the U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

THE COMMITTEE:-

- (a) Approved the terms of the telegram to the Joint Staff Mission and instructed the Secretary to despatch^x it;
- (b) Instructed the Secretary to draft and circulate for their approval a minute to the Prime Minister reporting the action they were now taking.

x Sent as C.O.S.(W) 8

10. DESPATCH OF YUGOSLAV PARTISAN AIRMEN TO RUSSIA(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 129th Meeting (0), Minute 5)

THE COMMITTEE had before them a telegram^x from General Wilson disagreeing with the suggestion in Foreign Office telegram No. 248 that the 60 Partisan airmen should join those already in the R.A.F.V.R. and stating that he would welcome an early decision on the question of the air transport of these 60 trainees to Russia.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL circulated copies of a draft reply to General Wilson accepting his view and agreeing that Russian aircraft now at Bari could transport these 60 trainees to Russia.

THE COMMITTEE:-

- Approved the terms of the reply, and instructed the Secretary to arrange for its despatch, subject to prior concurrence by the Foreign Office.

x Concurred in by the Foreign Office and sent as COSMED 92.

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11. LANDING SHIPS AND CRAFT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

THE COMMITTEE took note of a statement^x, (copies of which were handed round at the meeting,) by the First Sea Lord on the numbers of landing ships and craft which would remain in the Mediterranean theatre after all ordered withdrawals had taken place.

x Annex II

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12. S.E.A.C. - MAINTENANCE OF FORCES IN FORWARD AREA(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 122nd Meeting (O),
Minute 6)

THE COMMITTEE considered a telegram from the Joint Staff Mission, reporting that the U.S. Chiefs of Staff felt that the draft signal contained in COS(W) 1277 should be sent to Admiral Mountbatten as coming from the British Chiefs of Staff.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Instructed the Secretary to arrange for the despatch to S.A.C.S.E.A. of the draft telegram² contained in COS(W) 1277, with the omission of paragraph 3.

■ Subsequently sent as COSSEA 90

13. S.E.A.C. - TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT FOR OPERATIONS IN BURMA(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 95th Meeting (O),
Minute 2)

THE COMMITTEE considered a telegram² from Admiral Mountbatten, reporting the return to Air Transport Command of C.46 aircraft no longer required for the present campaign in Burma, and requesting authority for the right to call on these aircraft again in the event of a further emergency.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL suggested that the U.S. Chiefs of Staff should be asked to agree that Admiral Mountbatten should be given the authority which he requested. He circulated a draft telegram to the Joint Staff Mission.

THE COMMITTEE:-

(a) Approved the draft telegram to the Joint Staff Mission.

(b) Instructed the Secretary to arrange for its despatch.⁶

■ SEACOS 142

6 Subsequently sent as COS(W)6

14. OPERATIONS IN BURMA(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 124th Meeting (O),
Minute 1)

THE COMMITTEE took note of a telegram² from Admiral Mountbatten, reporting the situation on the Burma front.

■ SEACOS 144

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15. STRENGTH OF GARRISONS IN INDIA

THE COMMITTEE considered a Minute by the Prime Minister (circulated* personally to each Chief of Staff), covering a draft telegram which he proposed to send to General Auchinleck regarding the possibility of a reduction of the garrison forces in India, in order to increase the forces available for Burma.

LIEUT.-GENERAL NYE said that at present there were the equivalent of 14 brigade groups on the north-west frontier, and 92 battalions employed in internal security roles in India. In addition, he thought that there should be a minimum of 2 divisions as a general reserve in India.

"X" It was suggested that the draft telegram should contain a paragraph requesting General Auchinleck to consult with the Viceroy before making his reply.

THE COMMITTEE:-

- (a) Expressed entire agreement with the draft telegram from the Prime Minister to General Auchinleck, subject to the addition of the point at sideline "X" above.
- (b) Instructed the Secretary to inform the Prime Minister accordingly.

* COS. 621/4
 / Annex III

16. CREATION OF V.L.R. STRATEGIC AIR FORCE FOR THE WAR AGAINST JAPAN.

THE COMMITTEE considered five telegrams⁺ from the Joint Staff Mission containing details of a plan put forward by the U.S. Chiefs of Staff for the creation of a Strategic Army Air Force (V.L.R.) for the war against Japan, to operate directly under the U.S. Chiefs of Staff. The plan included a proposal that General Arnold should be in Command as executive agent of the U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL said that, in his opinion, ultimate authority for the control of the proposed Air Force should be vested in the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Its creation would undoubtedly raise practical problems, the solution of which would involve the British Chiefs of Staff. For example, part of the Force was to operate from, among other places, Ceylon and from bases in India, and these were theatres of British responsibility. The Commanders concerned would be responsible for the provision

+ J.S.M. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

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of suitable bases and for their defence. In any case, it was clear that, in the long-term view, the bomber effort against Japan would become a combined effort.

"X" Regarding the proposal that General Arnold should exercise command of this Air Force, he saw no objection, provided strategic direction was exercised by the Combined Chiefs of Staff. General Arnold's position for the Japanese war would be that which he (Sir Charles Portal) had occupied until recently in the European war. Since, however, this involved a long term decision on a matter of principle, he thought that the Prime Minister should be made aware of the proposal.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Instructed the Secretary:

- (a) to draft a telegram to the Joint Staff Mission, instructing them to ask the U.S. Chiefs of Staff to agree that the proposed new Air Force should be under the strategic direction of the Combined Chiefs of Staff;
- (b) to submit the draft telegram to the Prime Minister for his approval, under cover of a minute informing him of the point expressed at 'X' above, prior to its despatch.

17. BRAZILIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

(Previous Reference: C.O.S. (44) 129th Meeting (O). Minute 9)

THE COMMITTEE considered a telegram^H from the Joint Staff Mission, reporting further comments by the U.S. Chiefs of Staff on the proposal that one Brazilian infantry division and one fighter squadron should be employed in the Mediterranean area.

LIEUT.-GENERAL NYE said that he was not clear as to how far we were committed to agreeing with this proposal since the recent discussion between the Prime Minister and Mr. Stettinius.

THE COMMITTEE:-

- (a) Invited Lieut.-General Ismay to ascertain the outcome of the conversation between the Prime Minister and Mr. Stettinius during which the matter had been discussed.

H J.S.M. 9

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(b) Invited the War Office, in consultation as necessary with the Ministry of War Transport, to report on the implications of providing shipping for the transport of the Brazilian forces concerned to the Mediterranean, and for the replacement of stocks in the North African theatre consequent on their move.

18. POTENTIALITIES OF AUSTRALIA AS A BASE

Referring to the discussion at their meeting[#] on the 28th March, SIR ANDREW CUNNINGHAM suggested that, in view of the impending arrival of the Naval Reconnaissance Party in Australia, General MacArthur should be informed of the purpose of their visit, and that he should be requested to extend to them such facilities as might be necessary.

THE COMMITTEE:-

Instructed the Secretary to draft a telegram^b to the Joint Staff Mission, requesting the U.S. Chiefs of Staff to inform General MacArthur accordingly, and to arrange for its despatch.

C.O.S.(44) 102nd Meeting (0), Minute 6
b Subsequently sent as COS(W) 1207

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.,

24TH APRIL, 1944

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ANNEX ICopy of a minute dated 24th April, 1944, to the Prime Minister from the Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee

Reference my minute dated 20th April, 1944, at Flag 'A', the Chiefs of Staff have now received the further views of General Paget in amplification of COL/393 from the Commanders-in-Chief, Middle East, about the situation in Egypt.

2. General Paget now assesses his requirements under three hypotheses:-

CASE A if the present Government goes out of office and the Wafd is hostile to us.

CASE B if the present Government is maintained in power by means of an ultimatum and the Egyptian Army is non-cooperative but remains passive.

CASE C if the Egyptian Army is actively hostile and has to be disarmed.

3. In case A, General Paget can meet his requirements from the forces immediately available in Egypt.

4. In Case B, without having recourse to Palestine and Syria, it appears that he will be deficient of four infantry battalions and three armoured regiments, but this deficiency may be reduced in light of later information.

5. If the formations at present in Palestine and Syria can be utilized in Egypt, General Paget will have at his disposal sufficient permanent units to meet his requirements under the worst case (Case C). Whether or not he would be justified in taking these forces away from Palestine and Syria is a political issue which in the opinion of the Chiefs of Staff is for decision by the War Cabinet. If the decision is that they must not be taken away, General Paget will be deficient of eighteen infantry battalions, three armoured regiments and one field regiment to meet his requirements in Egypt under Case C.

6. From a military point of view it is not only a question of troops available but how far operations in Italy will be affected by interference with the base in Egypt. Of the 90 days reserve held for the Allied Armies in Italy, 30 days reserve are located in the Middle East. Middle East is responsible for the supply of all stores of Eastern Group origin, which must all pass through Egyptian ports; these include numerous items for Supply and Transportation services. Reliance is to a large extent placed on base workshops in Egypt for fourth line repairs to vehicles and other equipment, and the R.A.F. rely on the Middle East maintenance units manned mainly by civilians to produce aircraft to meet wastage in the squadrons of the Mediterranean Allied Air Force.

Annex to C.O.S.(44) 129th Meeting (0)

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7. Any dislocation of the base either by the use of base personnel or internal disorder, would undoubtedly affect the ability of Middle East to play their part in nourishing the battle in Italy.

8. The Chiefs of Staff also point out that 46 and 56 British Infantry Divisions are resting and re-equipping in the Middle East, the former being 10% deficient of personnel and the latter 30%. Any prolonged internal security commitment in which they were involved, would seriously retard the date by which they will be ready once more for operations.

9. To sum up, the position is that in the best Case General Paget has sufficient forces, and in the worst Case he only will have enough if troops are moved from Palestine and Syria to Egypt.

(Signed) L.C. HOLLIS

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ANNEX IILANDING SHIPS AND CRAFT IN THE MEDITERRANEANRevised Statement by First Sea Lord

The following table shows the main Landing Ships and Craft remaining in the Mediterranean after all ordered withdrawals have been made:-

L.S.I.(L)	6	
X.A.P.	3	(Not yet named)
A.K.A.	6	
L.S.I.(M) or (H)	2	
L.S.T.(1)	3	(1 Long term repair)
L.S.T.(2)	33	(7 Long term repair)
L.S.G.	2	
L.C.D.	1	
L.C.I.(L)	74 ⁺	
L.C.T.	94 ⁺	

This gives approximately a balanced lift for one Division ship to shore plus another Brigade shore to shore inside the Mediterranean.

+ Lack of spares acute and low serviceability to be expected.

24th April, 1944

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ANNEX III

Copy of a minute dated 24th April, 1944, to the Prime Minister from the Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee

Reference your minute^ø at Flag 'A', the Chiefs of Staff are all in favour of the despatch of your telegram to General Auchinleck⁺ (Flag 'B'). They suggest, however, the addition of the following sentence at the end:

"Viceroy should, of course, be consulted and kept informed."

(Signed) L.C. HOLLIS

ø D 129/4

+ Attached to Secretary's Minute
COS 621/4

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J.P.(44) 118

24th April, 1944.

WAR CABINET

JOINT PLANNING STAFF

THE CALIPH CONCEPT - AIDE MEMOIRE

Memorandum by the Joint Planning Staff

As instructed by the Chiefs of Staff, we have prepared the following aide memoire on the CALIPH concept, for use at the meeting to be held tonight between the Prime Minister and the Chiefs of Staff. The statements in the Prime Minister's minute and our comments thereon are set out in opposite columns. In considering the resources that may be available for such an operation as the Prime Minister has in mind, we have throughout assumed that there will be no interference with either OVERLORD or DIADEM as now planned.

Points in the Prime Minister's minute

Comment

1. It will be a scandal if, when the main battle is at its height, say the 20th to the 30th day, we are found with two of our finest and most experienced armoured divisions, less in each case their motorised brigades, and 6 or 7 French divisions, all without employment.

1. We now know from General Wilson that operation DIADEM will absorb all army formations in the Mediterranean, with the exception of :-

(a) Forces required for security.

(b) The 5th French Armoured Divisions - in North Africa.
The 1st French Armoured Division - in North Africa.

(c) The 91st U.S. division - undergoing amphibious training in North Africa. This division will not be ready till mid-June.

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(d) The 9th French Colonial Division - now concentrating in Corsica - ~~is~~ part of the threat to the South of France and in preparation for an operation for the capture of Elba after 25th May.

∟ Note - We do not know whether General Wilson will, in the event, have available Commandos and Ranger battalions also.

Resources in the United Kingdom

52nd Division - the availability of this division and of any further resources is subject to confirmation by S.C.A.E.F.

2. What is the day when the bulk of the transportation for the battle will be over?

2. S.H.A.E.F. state that up to D + 90 all the shipping and landing craft allotted to OVERLORD is likely to be employed to capacity. Owing to the cancellation of ANVIL there should, however, be shipping available in the Mediterranean at the end of May with sufficient M.T. and personnel lift to carry forces of the order of two divisions. If, as is considered likely, a small assault lift is required, assault shipping and craft would have to be found from the Mediterranean. The availability of vehicle lift will depend upon requirements for DIADEM, though some L.S.I.(L) for personnel without vehicles should be available.

In any case, the operation would have to be mounted in the Mediterranean since port facilities in the United Kingdom would not be available. Owing to lack of coasters, the objective chosen should be one which does not require this type of shipping.

3. In what posture may we reasonably hope to be on D + 20?

3. We should have some 24 effective divisions ashore. Our bridge-head, with a perimeter of perhaps 90 miles, will include Cherbourg and a number of fighter airfields.

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4. What will be the condition of the German fighter and bomber air force at that time? Will it not probably be shot to a standstill and largely annihilated?
4. It is not possible to give, at this stage, a firm answer to this question, since such an answer must depend upon whether the enemy decides to use his available air strength to fight vigorously during the early stages of OVERLORD or whether he attempts to conserve his resources. We assume that by D + 4 he should have some 1,200 aircraft available for use in the OVERLORD area. Assuming that he reacts to our operations vigorously, by D + 20 this figure should have dropped to some 750/900 aircraft. The daily sortie rate should, however, have dropped from 1,000 to 350/400. If, on the other hand, in the early stages the enemy conserves his forces, he should be able, by D + 20, to operate a daily sortie rate of 1,000.
5. Will not divisions from the St. Nazaire - Bayonne coastal sector have been drawn upon?
5. Coast defence divisions are unlikely to be moved and little reduction is to be expected in the strength of the static defences. One panzer division, covering the Mediterranean coast, and the other two panzer divisions in South-West France will probably have been drawn northwards into the OVERLORD battle.
6. May there not be an opportunity for an important diversionary landing?
6. There may be such an opportunity. We cannot exclude the possibility of the Germans leaving undefended or very weakly held, gaps in some area or areas. Our intelligence should be on the look out for such an event, and we should be prepared rapidly to take advantage of it. An operation of this kind will probably depend for its success upon opposition being reduced to negligible proportions.
7. Could not, for instance, an Anglo-French force, with at least two armoured brigades and 3 or 4 French divisions, be brought from Algeria and Morocco, having moved to their assembly points in secret, and be mounted wherever is thought best on the wide front which is open?
7. As has been stated above, the forces likely to be available are not as numerous as those the Prime Minister has in mind.

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8. St. Jean-de-Luz, Bayonne, to the North or South of Bordeaux, La Rochelle or Nantes - all require immediate study.
8. Considerable study has already been made of all possible areas on the Biscay coast of France. Annexed is a detailed statement of our information up to date.* Perhaps the most promising are the area South of the Gironde estuary and the La Pallice - La Rochelle area.
9. Will not some of the shipping which has carried the army in OVERLORD be available in time to reach Oran and Casablanca?
9. See comment on para. 2.
10. Cannot a dozen auxiliary carriers no longer required in the narrow waters, and bombarding vessels, which have done their part, be made available?
10. Seven assault carriers will be available and the necessary bombarding vessels.
11. There never was such a chance for a surprise descent into a population eager to revolt. This is a fine country for armoured cars and tanks. The French ought to have a show in France and not merely be made to send more divisions to Italy.
11. We fully agree that if any French forces can be spared from the build-up in Italy they should be employed in the liberation of their own country. We must point out, however, that the area on the West coast of France is not one in which the resistance movement is strong.
12. This would, of course, all have to fit in with General Wilson's plan for amphibious feints, etc. in the Mediterranean.
12. We agree.

(Signed) G. GRANTHAM
C.S. SUGDEN
W.L. DAWSON

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.
24TH APRIL, 1944.

* A similar study has been made of areas in the South coast and particulars are included in the annexed statement.

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ANNEX
WEST COAST OF FRANCE

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Sea Conditions. This coast is fully exposed to the ATLANTIC weather. Any winds from the western sector will cause heavy seas to break on the beaches. In spite of calm local conditions there is frequently a heavy swell caused by some distant disturbance. While this swell will not make landing impossible, the chances of successfully unbeaching craft are slight, as it is probable that landing craft will be driven up onto the beach. Days when really calm sea conditions prevail are few and far between. Maintenance over the beaches cannot therefore be relied upon.
2. Beaches. The beaches to the north of the R. GIRONDE are few. There are extensive beaches to the south of this river, reaching almost to the Spanish frontier some 150 miles to the southward. These are only suitable for infantry as there are few exits, and the terrain backing them is unsuitable for M.T.
3. Ports. All ports will be subject to extensive prepared demolitions.
4. Enemy Opposition. Initial land opposition is likely to be not more than one defensive division. This could be reinforced by elements of defensive divisions on either side and subsequently by at least one offensive division from either the OVERLORD battle, ITALY or the South of FRANCE. Air opposition is unlikely to exceed 150-175 aircraft, including 50-75 L.R. Bombers.

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PORT	LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION.	PORT FACILITIES			BEACHES			DEFENCES		AIRFIELDS AND L.Gs. NEAR COAST.	USE OF AIRBORNE TROOPS		CONCLUSIONS
		For:- (a) Pers. (b) M.T. (c) Tanks	Stores daily capacity: (a) on opening (b) 30 days later.	Number and distance from port	Length	Exits etc.	Port	Coast and Beaches.	Suitability of ground		Distance from bases.		
LORIENT	At mouth of R. BLAVET, 3½ miles from sea, U-boat base.	(a) Good (b) Good (c) Good	(a) 1000 tons (b) 2500 tons	9 beaches within 6 miles. No beaches inside estuary.	Total 7000 ^x	Inf. and Tks. M.T. will require some assistance. Open to the west.	79 C.D. guns incl. 2 Hy. 19 H.A. 14 Fd. guns. Booms and minefields. Radar.	16 Md. and Med. gms.	1 airfield. Strips could be constructed.	Good	U.K. 220 miles	Owing to the very heavy defences a coup de main does not seem possible. With a large Naval bombardment force, and air support, it might be possible to capture the port by employing an air-borne div. and two seaborne assault divs. In this case the port is likely to be completely demolished by the time it is captured, and therefore not available for shipping for at least 30 days.	
ST. NAZAIRE	At mouth of R. LOIRE on north bank. Artificial harbour.	(a) Good (b) Good (c) Good	(a) 1500 tons (b) 2000 tons	One; 7 miles One; 2½ miles H.W. only.	8000 ^x 2500 ^x	Fair exits with good comms. Inland. Open to the west. Partially sheltered to the west. Fair exits.	26 C.D. guns, incl. 3 or 4 Hy. 9 Rly. guns 8 Fd. guns 12 H.A.A. 14 AA/CD guns. Booms. Minefields. Radar.	Port defences mostly cover beaches.	One L.G. Strips might be constructed.	Good	U.K. 260 miles	Very similar to LORIENT in every respect, and the same conclusions can be drawn. The beaches are rather better and the defences not quite so heavy, but the port, by reason of its construction, is open to greater damage by demolition and it would therefore be about 40-60 days before it could be operating.	
NANTES	N. bank of R. LOIRE; 35 miles from mouth. Commercial port.	(a) Fair (b) Fair (c) Fair Coasters or lighterage required.	(a) 2000 tons (b) 5000 tons	-	-	-	St. Nazaire C.D. defences 10 HAA guns	-	1 airfield. Strips could be constructed.	Good	U.K. 260 miles	Although it might be possible to seize this port by airborne assault, it lies 35 miles up a river at the entrance to which stands ST. NAZAIRE. It would not, therefore, be a feasible operation without first capturing the latter port, and maintaining forces over the ST. NAZAIRE beaches.	

LA PALlice/LA ROCHELLE

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PORT	LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION.	PORT FACILITIES		BEACHES			DEFENCES		AIRFIELDS AND L.Gs. NEAR COAST.	USE OF AIRBORNE TROOPS		CONCLUSIONS
		For:- (a) Pers. (b) M.T. (c) Tanks	Stores daily capacity: (a) on opening (b) 30 days later.	Number and distance from port	Length	Exits etc.	Port	Coast and Beaches.		Suitability of ground	Distance from bases.	
LA PALLICE/ LA ROCHELLE	On coast 40 miles north of mouth of GIRONDE. ILE DE RE 1 1/2 miles off-shore. U-boat base.	(a) Good (b) Good (c) Good	(a) 600 tons (b) 1400 tons	One; for scramble landings only. One between LA PALLICE and LA ROCHELLE H.W. only.	200' 2300'	None, except for Inf. Fair exits well sheltered but swell probable in S.W. winds.	65 C.D. guns incl. 11 Hq. 34 Fd. guns 10 HAA guns 11 A./CD guns. Booms and Minefields.	As for port.	1 airfield. 3 E.L.G.S. Strips could be constructed.	Good	U.K. 350 miles	It might well be possible to capture these ports by a <u>coup de main</u> employing an airborne div. and eight commandos. It should be possible, eventually, to build up and maintain up to six divs., using both ports and the beach. This would allow the deployment of 3-4 divs. as a striking force.
LE VERDON	S.W. bank at mouth of R. GIRONDE. Trans-ATLANTIC liner port.	(a) Good (b) Poor (c) Poor	(a) 500 tons (b) 500 tons	One about 3 miles.	1400'	Good for Inf. but very poor for M.T. and tanks.	59 CD guns incl. 6 Hq. 19 Fd. guns incl. 3 Rly. guns. 3 HAA Booms Radar	17 CD guns of Fd.	Two L.Gs. Strips might be constructed north of GIRONDE Estuary.	Poor	U.K. 360 miles. N.AFRICA 650 miles.	It might be possible to silence the C.D. guns at the mouth of the GIRONDE using about 8 commandos and at the same time seize LE VERDON. Building up a force of any size would be difficult since neither the port nor the beaches are suitable for M.T. or tanks. Any landings could be easily sealed off since the port lies on the south side of the Estuary.
BORDEAUX	On R. GARONNE 49 miles from mouth GIRONDE. Large commercial port and U-boat base.	(a) Good (b) Good (c) Good	(a) 3000 tons (b) 5000 tons	35 miles west at ARCACHON.	Whole west coast of MEDOC Peninsula from ARCACHON.	Inf. only and Dukws, except small no. of vehicles at ARCACHON. For the most part open to west.	CD as for LE VERDON. A.A. not known.	-	One good airfield. Strips could be constructed.	Fair	U.K. 420 miles. N.AFRICA 600 miles.	Due to its distance from the coast and from allied air bases, a <u>coup de main</u> would not be feasible. Although the beaches along this part of the coast are extensive, the use of M.T. or tanks is almost impossible. A normal assault is therefore ruled out unless a large number of Dukws are available. In this case at least two assault and two follow-up divs. would be required.
RAYONNE	S. bank of R. ADOUR 1/2 to 3/2 miles from sea. Small commercial port.	(a) Good (b) Poor (c) Poor Coasters or craft only.	(a) 750 tons (b) 1500 tons	2 within 1/2 miles on either side of mouth of river.	Extensive.	Inf. only and Dukws.	24 guns incl. 6 Hq. 17 Fd. guns 2 Rly. guns A.A. not known.	As for port.	One L.G.	Fair	U.K. 520 miles N.AFRICA 510 miles	It might well be possible to capture this port with 4 commandos and 2 assault bdes. It has the great disadvantage however that only coasters or landing craft could be employed to build up additional forces, due to a sand bar at the mouth of the R. ADOUR. When the port is working and provided coasters were available it might be possible to maintain 3 divs. This would not be sufficient to hold the port and provide the necessary striking force.

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SOUTH COAST OF FRANCE

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Terrain.** The area is bounded on the west by the PYRENEES, which meet the coast at the Spanish frontier; and on the east by the ALPS which reach the sea just east of MARSEILLES. Between these two lies the coastal plain of LANGUEDOC, backed by the mountainous mass of the AUVERGNE. There are two natural routes from the coastal plain through these mountains; the CARCASSONE gap, running N.W. from SETE to TOULOUSE, and the RHONE Valley, which runs north from MARSEILLES to LYONS.
- Coast.** Between the Spanish frontier and MARSEILLES the coast line in general is low and marshy, broken by lagoons and water courses. To the east of MARSEILLES the character of the coast changes. There are many stretches of steep and unscalable cliffs and a rocky shore predominates, broken by many narrow sandy beaches, from which the land rises sharply. A coastal barrage minefield is probably laid outside the 20 fathom line.
- Ports.** All ports will be subject to extensive demolitions. 6-8 defensive divs., 1 offensive div. plus possibly 2 offensive divs. en route from ITALY to OVERLORD. These might be further reinforced by 1-2 divs. from N.W. ITALY after an assault.
- Air opposition.** Air opposition is unlikely to exceed 175 aircraft, of which 75 might be L.R. Bombers and 75 S.E. Fighters.

PORT	LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION.	PORT FACILITIES		BEACHES		DEFENCES		AIRFIELDS AND L.Gs. NEAR COAST	USE OF AIRBORNE TROOPS		CONCLUSIONS
		For: (a) Pers. (b) M.T. (c) Tanks	Stores daily capacity: (a) on opening (b) 30 days later	Number and distance from port	Length Exits etc.	Port	Coast and Beaches.		Suitability of ground	Distance from bases.	
PORT VENDRES	6 1/2 miles north of Spanish frontier. Fishing port.	(a) Good (b) Poor (c) Poor	(a) 600 tons (b) 1200 tons	Two within 5 miles.	Total 4000 ^x Good for inf. and M.T.	35 med. and 10 HAA guns. Booms and nets. Radar.	3 strongpts 6 Pillboxes M.Gs. Wire. Possibly mines.	NIL. Strips could be constructed near beaches.	Only north of port.	N.AFRICA 400-450 miles.	Although this port could be assaulted and captured fairly easily it is not suitable for unloading M.T. or tanks and therefore does not really meet our requirements.
SETE	On coast 85 miles west of MARSEILLES. Commercial port.	(a) Good (b) Good (c) Good	(a) 1000 tons (b) 3000 tons	One along-side port.	16000 ^x Exits for Inf. only. No routes inland.	41 med. or Lt. CD guns. Possibly 4 Rly. guns. 10 HAA Booms and nets. Flame-throwers Minefields Radar.	4 strong-points M.Gs. Wire and Mines A. tank wall.	NIL. Strips might be constructed N.E. of port.	Restricted possibly to the N.E. for small forces only.	N.AFRICA 450 miles.	The beaches on this portion of the coast are poor for wheeled vehs., there being no exits onto the road that runs on an embankment a short distance inland. The establishment of a beach head would be complicated even using Dukws. The use of airborne troops would be restricted by the ground to small parties. Although SETE has a final capacity of 6000 tons a day it is approached through canals which are easily blocked, and exits from the port are very difficult. It is therefore not suitable as a base. It has been rejected in the ANVIL plan.
MARSEILLES	Eastern end of LANGUEDOC Plain. Largest commercial port in FRANCE.	(a) Good (b) Good (c) Good	(a) 3000 tons (b) 5000 tons	One 2 1/2 miles. One; 15 miles.	2000 ^x 1000 ^x Poor exits for M.T. and tanks. Good exits for Inf. and M.T.	41 Med. or Lt. guns. ? H.A.A. Booms and nets. Minefields Radar.	30 Med. CD uns 25 Lt CD guns 45 Lt. AA/CD guns A. Tk. wall 4 strong-points. 10 Pill-boxes M.Gs, Wire 20 Med. or Lt. CD guns A. Tk. ditches and walls. Wire, M.Gs. 10-20 A. Tk. guns Pillboxes	NIL. Strips could be constructed west of the port.	Good.	N.AFRICA 450 miles. SARDINIA 300 miles.	The capture of this port has already been studied in some detail for ANVIL. Its capture is beyond the scope of a "Caliph" conception.

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		For: (a) Pers. (b) M.T. (c) Tanks	Stores daily capacity: (a) on opening (b) 30 days later.	Number and distance from port	Length	Exits etc.	Port	Coast and Beaches.		Suitability of ground	Distance from bases.	
TOULON	35 miles E. of MARSEILLES on the coast. Naval base.	(a) Good (b) Good (c) Good	(a) 3000 tons (b) 4000 tons	One; 7½ miles	1000 ^x	Good for Inf., M.T. and Tanks.	06 Med. or Lt. CD guns 2 H.A.A. Booms and nets. Minefields Radar	10 Lt. C.D. guns A.Tk. ditch Wire 3 strong-points 5 A.Tk. guns	1 Airfield Strips could be constructed	Good	N.AFRICA 440 miles. SARDINIA 300 miles	As for MARSEILLES.
				One; 12 miles	5000 ^x	Good for Inf., M.T. and Tanks.	3 Lt. C.D. guns A.Tk. ditch Wire 10-14 A.Tk. guns or pill-boxes.					

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ANNEXDRAFT TELEGRAM TO J.S.M.

From: A.M.S.S.O.

To: J.S.M. Washington.

COS(7)

TOP SECRET

We are in general agreement with General Wilson's appreciation in MEDCOS 100. There are however certain further points which, ~~in our view~~, you should put to U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

2. We consider that an opportunity may arise at some period after OVERLORD D + 20 which would enable a port on west coast of France to be seized at little cost, thereby opening up a further point of entry into France and offering opportunity for employment of land forces not required for DIADEM, for example, 91st U.S. Division and the two French armoured divisions referred to in MEDCOS 100, paragraph 1.
3. Such an opportunity would occur if as a result of initial success of OVERLORD, German divisions now on west coast were withdrawn. While it is unlikely that German troops manning static coast defences will be completely withdrawn, we consider that whatever arrangements are practicable, without repeat without interfering with OVERLORD or DIADEM, should now be made to enable a port to be seized if at the time such an operation seems feasible.
4. It appears to us that a small assault lift, and possibly some airborne forces, would be necessary. We realise that the assault lift could only be provided from the Mediterranean, and then only if all other amphibious operations thereafter were given up. Nevertheless, in certain circumstances, this might be best use of available resources. Code name for this concept in following telegram.
5. Planning of this operation will require closest co-ordination between S.C.A.E.F. and SACMED. We cannot tell now whether or when conditions required for its success will arise, but we are sure plans should be prepared now to enable us to seize the opportunity if it comes. We therefore suggest that S.C.A.E.F. and SACMED should be instructed to examine this concept together and draw up outline plans.
6. Reference Paragraph 6(c). We agree no entry into the south of France could be made except under RANKIN conditions, but we think to tackle these on an ad hoc basis would leave too much to chance. We propose that SACMED should be instructed to examine and prepare plans as far as possible to meet this contingency.

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7. Reference Paragraph 6(b). Although General Wilson is in no doubt as to his primary object of holding forces away from OVERLORD, we are not clear how he intends to do this if the Germans attempt an early withdrawal to the Pisa - Rimini line. We propose that he should be asked to explain this paragraph and give us his plan for destroying and containing the maximum number of German formations in this event.

8. If U.S. Chiefs of Staff agree with proposals in paragraphs 6 and 7 we will instruct General Wilson accordingly.

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