

Secretary's Standard File 33

113

TOP SECRETSECRETARY'S STANDARD FILECOPY NO. 9C.O.S. (44) 146th Meeting held on
5th May, 1944.1. OVERLORD SECURITY MEASURES - COMMUNICATIONS BY ALLIED
MILITARY AUTHORITIES.(J.I.C. (44) 169 (0))(Previous Reference: C.O.S. (44) 128th Mtg. (0), Minute 2)

SIR STEWART MENZIES stated that the Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee, in drawing up, in accordance with the instructions of the Chiefs of Staff, directions for the control of Allied military communications into and out of the United Kingdom had been faced with two special cases on which they had made recommendations. In the first place, the Prime Minister had given a verbal assurance to the Polish Prime Minister that he would not insist upon the surrender by the Poles of the cyphers used by them in communicating with the Polish Underground Movement, on the understanding that en clair copies of all messages sent should be handed over. The Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee felt that there was considerable danger lest our other Allies should get to know of the concession that had been granted to the Poles. He, Sir Stewart Menzies, thought it right to say that so far as the Polish General Staff were concerned he was satisfied that they were acting fully in accordance with the spirit of the agreement and were not sending or receiving messages without his knowledge.

MR. SPORBORG said that the Chiefs of Staff should know that the Polish Ministry of the Interior carried on certain communications by means of their own wireless sets with Polish elements in France. These Poles in France were being organised to take certain action on D. Day of OVERLORD and it was understood that General Eisenhower attached importance to this action. The Poles had construed the concession granted by the Prime Minister as extending to the messages sent to the Polish Resistance Movement in France. If the concession were withdrawn and if, as a result, the Polish Resistance Movement in France became ineffective, General Eisenhower would have cause to complain.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL proposed that the Chiefs of Staff might suggest to the Prime Minister that he should follow up the assurance he had given to the Polish Prime Minister by a further communication reiterating the importance of maintaining absolute secrecy regarding the concession that had been granted, in view of the dangers that we foresaw, should the other allies get to know of it, and stating that should this information leak out we would feel obliged to withdraw the concession on grounds of security.

Reference:-

CAB 79/89

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

COPYRIGHT - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

113
34

SIR STEWART MENZIES said that the second issue upon which a decision was necessary related to the French.

General Koenig had been sent to this country to engage in negotiations with General Eisenhower regarding problems of administration on French territory that would arise after OVERLORD. At present these negotiations had ceased, owing to the ban on communications. It should be remembered that it was General Eisenhower himself who had, in the first instance, pressed for the imposition of the diplomatic ban. Now he felt the need of finding a way out of the impasse that had arisen with the French. The Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee had accordingly put forward a proposal that General Koenig should be allowed to retain and use one cypher for this one particular purpose without handing it over to the War Office. This cypher should be used only for communications relating to the negotiations between himself and General Eisenhower. This concession would be allowed on condition that General Koenig should authorise the presence in the cypher room of the French Headquarters in this country during the cyphering and decyphering of messages in this category, of two censors. The censors should be authorised to examine the en clair texts of all such messages, but might not take copies of them and would be forbidden to disclose the information thus obtained.

SIR ANDREW CUNNINGHAM suggested that it was highly unlikely that General de Gaulle would, in the last resort, allow his negotiations with General Eisenhower to break down. It was obviously in his interest to make full use of the limited recognition by the Americans that was implied in these negotiations.

MR. SPORBORG said that he thought it would be unwise to bank on General de Gaulle setting as much store as was suggested by the First Sea Lord on these negotiations. There was reason to believe that General de Gaulle reckoned on large numbers of Frenchmen within France obeying him irrespective of whether he had reached agreement with the Supreme Allied Commander or not. General de Gaulle had already many agents in France to whom he had undoubtedly given orders. Moreover, in the last resort, we could not prevent him communicating direct with France from Algiers. It was thought highly unlikely that he would do such a thing, but the possibility could not be ruled out. He had been provided with wireless transmitters by both the Russians and the Americans.

SIR ALAN BROOKE handed round an amended draft of the final paragraph of Annexes 'B' and 'C' to the Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee's paper.

THE COMMITTEE:

- (i) Instructed the Secretary to submit a minute to the Prime Minister on the lines agreed in discussion.
- (ii) Instructed the Secretary to arrange for the despatch by the Admiralty and War Office of the communications at Annex 'A', 'B' and 'C' to the report.

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

6th May, 1944.

Reference:-	
CAB 79/89	
PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE	
COPYRIGHT - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION	
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6

COS(44) 146th Mtg 35

See Standard File 14

TOP SECRET

SECRETARY'S STANDARD FILE

COPY NO. 10

12. AUSTRALIAN WAR EFFORT

(Previous Reference: C.O.S.(44) 144th Meeting (O), Minute 2)

THE COMMITTEE discussed with the Australian military representatives how best to furnish the military background for the subsequent discussions of the Australian Delegation with Ministers on the best method of providing a balanced Australian war effort.

SIR ALAN BROOKE said that no decision had as yet been reached as to the strategy to be followed in the Far East: it seemed to him, therefore, that an attempt should be made to decide what forces Australia would require and could maintain after returning a certain proportion of her manpower from the armed forces to production.

In the course of the discussion which followed, the following points were made:-

Apart from certain naval units, no British forces could become available in the Far East before 1945. This would mean, if the latest U.S. programme for the advance through the Pacific was maintained, that British forces could not participate in the Pacific before the capture of Formosa. Nevertheless, bases would be required from which eventually to mount those British forces, and a decision was required as to the development needed to produce those bases.

It was possible that the U.S. forces might find it difficult to keep to their timetable when they came up against the larger islands, such as the Philippines, where stiffer Japanese resistance might be expected: on the other hand, it was known that resistance to the Japanese was continuing in the Mindanao area, which the enemy had not yet succeeded in stamping out, and the establishment of a bridgehead might not prove to be so difficult as would at first appear. The Jap was on the defensive, and was no longer as formidable as when he was attacking.

General MacArthur considered that his primary task was to recapture the Philippines: once that had been achieved, he would hand over the direction of the subsequent phases of the war in its advance towards Japan to the U.S. Naval authorities. His own effort thereafter would probably be directed towards Borneo, and the clearing up of the areas to the south.

General MacArthur was known to be contemplating the use of some 12 divisions of which 3 divisions might be Australians for his advance to the Philippines and had tentatively allocated the capture of Halmahera to the Australians: he intended to capture and clear the Vogelkop in the course of his advance. When he turned south from Luzon, it might be the correct strategy to develop a pincer movement across the Bay of Bengal and through the Straits of Malacca: another possible pincer movement might be developed by other forces under General MacArthur's command operating from north and north-west Australian bases via Timor and the Banda Sea.

Reference: CAB 79/89

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

COPYRIGHT - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

36
of dup. doc.

The Australians were already proceeding with the development of Port Darwin as a base and considerable strides had been achieved. In considering the possibility of developing other ports in that area, it should be remembered that tidal conditions were extraordinarily severe. There was no timber in that area, no roads, and no railways. This meant that all major equipment had to be brought round from Eastern Australia through the Torres Straits, the navigation of which was at present difficult for ships of any size. It was intended that two additional survey ships should be made available, at Admiral King's request, from the Indian Ocean, for surveying and buoying the Straits, after which these difficulties would be much reduced. Port Moresby should not be forgotten: it possessed an excellent well-developed harbour, and there were facilities there for stationing a considerable body of troops.

The Australians had come to the tentative conclusion that six divisions would be required from their resources. Of these, three A.I.F. divisions were destined, as stated above, for operations to capture Halmahera: the other three, which were militia divisions, were at present fighting in New Guinea and would probably take over the task of occupying New Guinea as the advance moved on. Considerable administrative services would be needed.

Regarding the R.A.A.F., the Australian Government expected that Australian airmen and squadrons at present in the R.A.F. in Europe would be returned as soon as German resistance had ended. It was intended to utilise the returning squadrons to expand the R.A.A.F. beyond the present 53-squadron programme. Approximately 45 R.A.A.F. squadrons were already established in Australia. A point of some importance for future planning was whether the Australian squadrons returning from Europe would be equipped with British types, or would change to U.S. types when they reached Australia.

There was no question of reducing the strength of the Australian navy: in fact, there had been some question of expanding it by the addition of an aircraft carrier, without which it was not a balanced force, and possibly other vessels.

Regarding British forces, although it was extremely difficult to provide a firm figure at this moment, it looked as though there would be some six British divisions capable of undertaking amphibious operations, which could be made available for the Far East after meeting our other commitments consequent upon the collapse of Germany. Some further divisions might come from India, but the number of these would be dependent upon the outcome of operations in Burma.

The British contribution of air forces, after the return of the Australian squadrons and personnel from Europe, would amount to approximately 20 squadrons.

With the figures already provided in the course of this discussion, it should be possible to produce a phased programme of the forces which could be made available for a Pacific strategy, and the dates by which British units could reach Australia, on the assumption that Germany had been knocked out of the war by the end of 1944. It should be assumed that these forces

-2-

X. corrigendum issued 12.5.44

Reference:-

CAB 79/89

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

COPYRIGHT - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

172 37

would be based on Australia and that they would work in conjunction with U.S. forces, although it was impossible to assess, without reference to Washington, the number of U.S. divisions which would be employed and the extent to which they would be based on Australia. It was clear that the U.S. would continue to make use of the extensive facilities for the rehabilitation of their casualties which they had established in Australia, and would expect to obtain considerable quantities of their supplies from Australian sources. But as the advance progressed, it would obviously be more economical to maintain increasing numbers of U.S. divisions direct from the U.S.A., possibly using Milne Bay, which they were developing as an advance base. The U.S. navy was, moreover, developing Seadler Harbour, in the Admiralty Islands, as a main fleet base. In preparing the phased programme referred to above, an examination should be made into the possibility of developing a new port, or ports, in Northern Australia, and account should be taken of the time required to give new formations the necessary jungle training.

THE COMMITTEE:-

- (a) Instructed the Joint Planning Staff to prepare, for their consideration on Monday, 8th May, a short report setting out, in the light of the discussion recorded above, the details of the forces which would be available from British and Australian resources, to implement a Pacific strategy involving the use of bases in Australia.

The following assumptions should be made:-

- (i) that the war against Germany had been brought to a successful conclusion by the end of 1944;
- (ii) that these forces would operate in conjunction with U.S. forces, a proportion of which would also be using Australia as a base, at any rate until after the capture of the Philippines;
- (iii) that the present phased programme of the U.S. advance across the Pacific would be maintained.

The report should examine the possibility of developing a new port, or ports, in Northern Australia, and should report on the requirements for providing British formations with jungle training.

- (b) Invited Air Vice Marshal Wragley to consult with the Air Staff regarding the equipping, with British or American aircraft, of Australian squadrons returning from the European theatre.

Offices of the War Cabinet,
S.W.1.,
5TH MAY, 1944

-3-

Reference: CAB 79/89

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

COPYRIGHT - NOT TO BE REPRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHICALLY WITHOUT PERMISSION

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	