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M.R.(40)(P.) Series

CABINET
ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETINGS

No. of Meeting.	Date of Meeting.	Papers Considered.	Subjects Discussed.
1st	1. 4.40	-	Meeting with Polish Representative Colonel Mitkiewics.

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S E C R E T.

M.R.(40)(P)1st Mtg.

COPY NO. 37

1ST APRIL, 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

RECORD of the 1st Meeting of the Allied Military Committee with the Polish Representative, held at Gwydyr House, S.W.1., on MONDAY, 1ST APRIL 1940 at 4.0 p.m.

P R E S E N T.

UNITED KINGDOM.

Lieut.-General J. H. Marshall-
Cornwall.
Air Commodore C. E. H. Medhurst.

FRANCE.

Admiral Odend'hal.
General Lelong.
Colonel Rozoy.
Colonel Bonavita.
Lieut.-Colonel de Peyronnet,
Capitaine de Frégate
J. C. Planté.

POLAND.

Colonel Léon Mitkiewicz.

SECRETARIAT.

Mr. H.L.d'A. Hopkinson.
Captain C. M. Berkeley, (Interpreter)

GENERAL MARSHALL-CORNWALL extended a warm welcome to Colonel Mitkiewicz on behalf of the British and French Military Representatives.

He thought that it would be useful if he gave Colonel Mitkiewicz an outline of the Allied Military Committee's methods of work. Both the French and the British delegations received instructions or directives from their respective High Commands when some project was to be discussed by the Committee. This applied particularly when some plan or strategy was being elaborated by the Allies: in such cases the Committee examined the proposals put forward by

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the planning staffs of each side in detail in order to harmonise them and to make sure that the two High Commands were in full accord.

As a rule the Committee met in London, but it was sometimes found convenient to hold Meetings in France. Naturally its work became more intense in the period immediately preceding a Meeting of the Supreme War Council. Thus early in February, when the Allies were considering means of giving direct assistance to Finland, the Committee had sat in Paris for a full week immediately before the Supreme War Council on February 5th, at which decisions based on the Committee's proposals had been adopted.

Individual members of both delegations had frequent occasion to visit France to maintain close personal contact either with the French authorities or with the British Missions, and General Marshall-Cornwall assured Colonel Mitkiewicz that if he at any time wished to proceed to France to consult his own authorities, either delegation would be most willing to accommodate him in one of the two aeroplanes which maintained a daily service for the convenience of the two delegations.

The close collaboration between the British Chiefs of Staff and the French High Command established through the Allied Military Committee had been most successful and had proved a great improvement on the machinery established at Versailles during the last war, especially as regards planning. There had been no single instance of misunderstanding or divergence of views between the two High Commands, thanks not only to the harmonious relations between the two delegations on the Allied Military Committee but to the very close contact maintained by each delegation with its own High Command.

ADMIRAL ODEND'HAL associated himself heartily with the welcome extended to Colonel Mitkiewicz.

He explained that the position of the French Representatives differed from that of the British not only in that they were normally stationed at a distance from their own High Command, but in that he himself, General Lelong and Colonel Rozoy acted in London not only as French naval, army and air representatives respectively on the Allied Military Committee, but also as the heads of the French naval, army and air missions in London. In their latter capacity they had direct access to the British Services Departments.

He could wholeheartedly confirm General Marshall-Cornwall's words regarding the success achieved by the Committee. Apart from its main task of maintaining contact between the two High Commands, the Committee had shown itself a useful clearing house for settling questions of Allied concern affecting the work of several Government Departments

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on either side of the Channel.

GENERAL BELONG added his welcome to those previously extended to Colonel Mitkiewicz. As representative of the French Army authorities in London he had already had to deal with a number of questions relating to the Polish forces, e.g. the recruiting and transfer from Great Britain to France of Polish subjects joining up. These matters had always been settled entirely satisfactorily with the utmost goodwill shown on all sides, and he had been very happy to collaborate with the Polish Military Attaches already established in London.

He looked forward to equally happy collaboration with Colonel Mitkiewicz and said that he would be very glad to give the latter all the assistance in his power. There might, for example, be cases in which he could transmit to General Gamelin direct some issue in which Colonel Mitkiewicz was particularly concerned. In this or in any other way, he would always be at the Colonel's entire disposal. French Staff Officers were always on duty at Gwydyr House when the three French military representatives themselves were carrying on their daily duties elsewhere.

GENERAL MARSHALL-CORNWALL explained that the Allied Military Committee's main task was to examine specific problems in regard to which planning was to be conducted on an Allied basis. There were at the moment no such problems calling for the formulation of an Allied strategy and the Committee met only to conduct purely domestic business.

He felt quite certain, however, that at some future date, perhaps quite soon, plans would come up for discussion in which the Polish Representative would be interested. Colonel Mitkiewicz would doubtless fulfil an important role when the time came for Polish forces to take an active part in operations with their British and French Allies. Moreover, in due course, there would also be questions relating to Polish collaboration at sea and in the air to be discussed.

COLONEL MITKIEWICZ thanked the members of the Committee for their words of welcome. He was very proud to be the representative of General Sikorski on this important Allied body. Although Polish participation in the Allied struggle was as yet modest, he felt sure that General Sikorski, and he himself as the latter's representative, were regarded not as exiles but as the representatives of the Polish nation and of the 30 million Polish people who still dwelt on Polish soil.

Although his mission appeared at the moment not an easy one, Colonel Mitkiewicz felt convinced that collaboration would soon be established on a very satisfactory footing. For the moment, he was

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the only representative of the Polish High Command in London, the three Service Attaches being engaged in purely routine business. Later, as the work developed, the Polish authorities might no doubt appoint naval and air representatives of the High Command as well.

GENERAL MARSHALL-CORNWALL said that they all looked forward to the day when the Polish forces would be actively participating with the Allies, either on the Western Front or elsewhere. Polish Naval Forces had already rendered signal service in collaboration with the British Navy in the North Sea.

Colonel Mitkiewicz would be informed as soon as some subject came up for discussion before the Committee in connection with which his participation was called for; he would also receive copies of any documents likely to be of interest to the Polish High Command.

Gwydyr House,
Whitehall, S.W.1.

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M.R.(40)(S) Series 2

**CABINET
ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE**

MEMORANDA

Serial No.	Date.	Brief Description.
1	13. 2.40	Preparation of a Directive for the Petsamo Expedition.
2	17. 2.40	The Petsamo Operation. Minute by the British Representatives on the Allied Military Committee.
3	21. 2.40	The Petsamo Operation. Note by the Secretary.
4	5. 3.40	Scandinavian Operations: Security of Plans. Note by the Secretary.
5	9. 3.40	Command of Allied Contingents in Scandinavia. Note by the Secretary.

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MOST SECRET.

M.R.(40)1(S).
Also Paper No.
C.O.S.(40)240(S).

13.2.40

COPY NO. 7

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

PREPARATION OF A DIRECTIVE FOR THE PETSAMO EXPEDITION.

The Chiefs of Staff, at their meeting today,* Tuesday, 13th February, 1940, instructed the British Military Representatives on the Allied Military Committee to prepare a directive upon which a planning staff can draw up a detailed plan for an operation in Northern Finland, known as the Petsamo Operation. Before a satisfactory and comprehensive directive can be produced, it is necessary to have guidance in several directions. Accordingly the following list of questions, accompanied by some comments, is appended.

A basic assumption has been made that the Petsamo Operation will only be undertaken if the Narvik operation has to be abandoned, and that, as a worst case, the decision to abandon the more important operation is only received after the expedition for Narvik has sailed. Consequently, the Narvik expedition becomes the Petsamo expedition.

1. What is the object of the Petsamo Operation? It may be one or more of the following:-

- (i) Assistance to Finland limited to clearing the Russians out of the Petsamo area.
- (ii) Assistance to Finland on a larger scale, with the object of cutting the Murmansk railway and subsequently capturing Murmansk and using that as the base of operations.
- (iii) Assistance to Finland combined with an effort to reach the Gällivare ore-fields and Lulea.
- (iv) To reach and hold the Gällivare ore-field and Lulea, even after Finnish resistance in the North has vanished.

Since any operation in the Petsamo region against the Russians means war with Russia, and the Chiefs of Staff have stated that nothing less than the prize of control of the Gällivare ore-field will justify war with Russia, may we assume that the object is to gain control of the Gällivare ore-field, combined with direct assistance to Finland?

2. The operation at Narvik and the operation at Petsamo are basically different in concept, since the former presupposes an unopposed landing at a modern port,

* C.O.S.(40) 29th Meeting.

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while the latter postulates an opposed landing at a primitive port, only some 50 miles distant from an enemy submarine and air base. Are we to assume therefore that preparations should be made for an opposed landing in any event, and that the loading of the Narvik expedition into the ships should be so governed? It must be remembered that, at Narvik, a modern railway line of communication is available, and no road. At Petsamo, arctic transport is required off the single road until the end of April. During May, movement is only possible by rail, and no rail except the Murmansk railway exists. After May, sufficient M.T. will be required for use on one road, plus pack transport.

3. What are to be the stages of the operation?
 - (i) Preliminary naval operation?
 - (ii) Seizure of a Norwegian fiord as a naval base?
 - (iii) Landing at Petsamo or neighbouring inlet and consolidation ashore by British troops?
 - (iv) Operation to advance to Kuolojarvi and capture Kandalaksha by ski troops, thus greatly shortening the Finnish front?
 - (v) Capture of Murmansk and consolidation of base?
 - (vi) Advance to Lulea and Gällivare, a distance of about 450 miles?
4. In considering an advance to Lulea and Gällivare, are we to assume Swedish assistance, neutrality or hostility?
5. Can it be assumed that subsequently the Narvik route will be available for supply or retreat?
6. Since, presumably, the reason we have not gone to Narvik is the hostility of the Swedes and Norwegians, must we accept the risk of the Germans invading Southern Sweden and occupying Stavanger etc., or even the head of the Gulf of Bothnia, as a result of our drive for Gällivare.
7. Can Russia be considered as an enemy from the moment the expedition sails? The Naval Command must know this in advance.
8. Are any forces, Naval, Fleet Air Arm, Land or Air, other than those earmarked for Narvik, available for Petsamo? For instance, Poles, Foreign Legion, aircraft carriers, etc.?
9. Can we assume that any Finnish military co-operation will be available, and, if so, of what will it consist?
10. Can we assume that the additional shipping and Naval cover required for the maintenance of the Petsamo expedition over and above that required for the Narvik operation will be available?

(Signed) J. H. MARSHALL-CORNWALL.

L. DARVALL
(For British Air Representative)..

J.S.S. Litchfield-Speer.
(For British Naval Representative).

Gwydyr House, S.W.1.,

13th February, 1940..

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Rear Admiral L. G. ...
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COPY NO. 2

M.R. (40)2(S).
(Also Paper No.
C.O.S. (40)244(S))

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

THE PETSAMO OPERATION.

Minute by the British Representatives on the Allied Military Committee.

1. The Chiefs of Staff, at their Meeting on the 15th February,* had under consideration a Questionnaire from the British Military Representatives which, in our view, required decision before we were in a position to draft the Directive which we had previously been instructed to prepare for the Staff who will be required to plan the Petsamo operation.

The Chiefs of Staff considered our Questionnaire and decided that the preparation of a Directive was not possible with the information available, and that an Appreciation of the whole project of passing Allied troops into Finland through the Petsamo area was required as a necessary preliminary. We were, therefore, directed to prepare an Appreciation at once, in consultation with the Directors of Plans of the three Services.

The Appreciation is forwarded under cover of this Minute. Since the Appreciation is limited to a consideration of the Military project only, we think that some amplifying remarks are required to relate the operation to higher strategical and political questions and to draw attention to important implications.

2. The Chiefs of Staff recognised that the object of an expedition to Petsamo must be limited to helping Finland, and could not aim at denying the Gällivare ore-fields to Germany. Consequently it was decided that, if possible, the object of the operation should be taken as "assistance to Finland, with the object of cutting the Murmansk railway and subsequently capturing Murmansk and using that as the base of operations", since anything less than the capture of Murmansk appeared unlikely to provide an effective measure of assistance to Finland.

* C.O.S. (40)30th Mtg., Item 2.

ø Paper No. M.R. (40)1(S) - also Paper No. C.O.S. (40)240(S).

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3. This operation involves a direct attack on Russian forces; and war with Russia, with all its implications, would have to be accepted. The Chiefs of Staff have already concluded (W.P.(40)41) that this risk should not be run for any prize short of control of the Gällivare ore-fields.

4. In this connection, it will be essential to issue clear instructions to the Naval Commander before the expedition sails as to the action to be taken if Russian naval or air forces are encountered at sea.

5. Enemy opposition to the passage of the expedition during its approach to the landing point, and during the period of disembarkation, will probably consist mainly of submarine and aircraft attack and minelaying. The convoy will require, therefore, to be protected by a strong force of destroyers, anti-submarine vessels, anti-aircraft cruisers and minesweepers. This force can only be provided at the expense of other naval operations which may be contemplated during this period.

In any case the forces normally employed for the protection of trade, particularly on the East Coast of England and in the Western Approaches, will have to be reduced until the defences of the advanced base for the Petsamo operation have been completed.

6. The Time Factor is really the crux of the situation. The expedition will not in any event be ready to leave the United Kingdom before 15th March at the earliest. If the negotiations with the Scandinavian States are prolonged, the decision to despatch the Petsamo force will be deferred accordingly, and the time available for operations in the North will be correspondingly reduced. It will take at least 5 or 6 days for the expedition to reach the Petsamo area, and will probably take at least another 10 days before the force is actually in possession of Petsamo itself. During May the ice breaks in the White Sea, and sea communications between Archangel and Murmansk are reopened. The Russian forces in this area could then be considerably reinforced. In consequence, the expedition will have to succeed in capturing Murmansk via Kandalaksha (a distance of over 300 miles from Petsamo) in a period of less than five weeks. When it is remembered that the only troops able to operate off the road and track are the ski-troops, and that their transport will have to be mainly pack, we think that even under the most favourable conditions of weather, ineptitude of the Russian troops and co-operation of the Finns, there is no chance whatever of completing the operation in the time available.

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7. There are further considerations bearing upon the larger project and they are the attitude of Norway, Sweden and Germany and our principal Scandinavian object of gaining control of the ore-field.

8. We consider it to be quite in accord with the attitude of Norway and Sweden that the more the fear of Russian success on their frontiers recedes, the more rigidly will they adhere to their neutrality and the less chances will there be of our being able to enter the ore-field.

9. So far as Germany herself is concerned, while she may be expected to watch our operations at Petsamo with some interest, she is likely to feel that, to the extent that they reduce the likelihood of the Russians reaching Sweden, we are actually doing for her what she would give a great deal to be free to do herself.

10. We would invite attention to the fact that in our appreciation we have arrived at the conclusion that a landing on the Russian or Finnish coast is not practicable, and that a landing at the Norwegian port of Kirkenes cannot be avoided. The assumption is that Norway has just refused to compromise her neutrality by allowing us to land at Narvik. If we then violate her neutrality by seizing the port of Kirkenes, we must be prepared for the subsequent reactions of Norway and Sweden, the extent of which we are not in a position to judge. We must, however, reckon with the possibility that Germany, either by intimidation or force, may secure the use of air or submarine bases on the Norwegian coast. This would have most serious results, which the Chiefs of Staff may wish to reconsider in relation to the object of the Petsamo operations.

11. The Chiefs of Staff accepted the risks involved in the despatch of air forces, particularly fighter squadrons, to Scandinavia in view of the importance of the object to be achieved in securing the Gällivare ore fields. They may also wish to reconsider this question in relation to the Petsamo project.

12. In conclusion we feel that:-

- (i) A landing on Russian or Finnish territory is impracticable.
- (ii) A landing at Kirkenes is practicable, provided the violation of that part of Norwegian territory is accepted.
- (iii) The capture of Murmansk in the time available is impossible.
- (iv) We could probably clear the Russians out of the Petsamo area, and possibly the Ribachi Peninsula, in the time available, but this in itself would not materially reduce the pressure on the Finns.

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(v) The operation involves war with Russia, and the possible risk that Germany will seize submarine and air bases in South Norway.

(Signed) J. H. MARSHALL-CORNWALL
Lieut.-General.

W. S. CHALMERS
Rear Admiral.

L. DARVALL
Wing Commander.
(for British Air Representative.)

Hydr House, S.W.1.
17th February, 1940.

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OPERATION TO ASSIST FINLAND BY A LANDING IN THE
PETSAMO AREA IN THE SPRING OF 1949.

APPRECIATION.

REFERENCES:- Chart 2317. Norway, Sheet XV.
Chart 2333. Varanger Fiord to
Mali Oleni Island.
Chart 2962. North Cape to
Einsamkeit Island.
Chart 2966. Kola Inlet.
Chart 2967. Plans on the North
Coast of Lapland.
C.B. 1753. Plan 17 (Murmansk
and the Kola Inlet -
Defences of).

APPENDICES:- Appendix A. Certain Finnish
Aerodromes.
Appendix B. Russian Air Forces
Tracing showing Russian defences
on the North Coast of Finland
and the Murman Coast.

In the Conclusions of the 5th Meeting of the
Supreme War Council it was agreed that:-

"11. In view of the possibility that the
Norwegians and/or Swedes may conceivably
object to our proposals to the extent of
active opposition, in the face of which it
would be impossible for the Allies to get
control of the Swedish ore fields, it might
be necessary for the Petsamo project to be
reconsidered by the Supreme War Council as
being the only means of rendering assistance
to Finland. The Staffs should bear this
possibility in mind in framing plans and
preparations for the major project."

This Appreciation is, therefore, based on an
assumption that the major operation in Scandinavia through
Narvik has been abandoned, and that it has been decided to
assist Finland by a landing in the Petsamo area instead.

OBJECT.

2. The object of the Petsamo operation is:-

To assist the Finns by landing a force in the
neighbourhood of Petsamo, cutting the Murmansk
Railway, and subsequently capturing Murmansk as
a base for further operations.

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SECTION I.FACTORS AFFECTING ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECT.POLITICAL FACTORS.

3. Russia. Unlike the Narvik operation, a landing in the Petsamo area is an operation which would bring the Allied forces into direct and immediate conflict with Russian forces. We must assume, therefore, that war with Russia would ensue, more especially as a necessary part of the operations would be an invasion of Russian territory, and that the Petsamo expedition would be liable to attack by Russian as well as German forces.

4. Norway. Since the reason for the abandonment of the Narvik operation would have been the refusal of Norway and Sweden to allow the landing of Allied forces on their territory, it would clearly be desirable to avoid infringing Norwegian neutrality in the Petsamo operation if this is practicable.

5. Germany. A violation of Norwegian neutrality in the north would provide Germany with an excuse to seize submarine and air bases in southern Norway. On the other hand, unless she fears that the Petsamo operations might eventually threaten her supplies of iron ore from Sweden, she is less likely to take action in southern Norway than in the case of the Narvik operation. It is even possible that Germany might secretly welcome Allied opposition to Russia in the north. Whether the Petsamo operation is practicable without the infringement of Norwegian neutrality will, however, be examined in a later section of this Appreciation.

ENEMY FORCES AND BASES.

6. Russian Naval Forces. The present strength of the Russian Naval forces in the Murmansk area is believed to be approximately:-

1 (possibly 2) modern "G"-class destroyers (1500 tons).

4 old Novik-class destroyers (1300 tons).

10 modern "S"-class destroyers (800 tons).

About 24 submarines, of which 3 or 4 may be modern 1200-ton submarines.

2 Minelayers.

12 Minesweepers (some fitted for minelaying).

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In addition it must be assumed that minefields have been laid off the Murman and North Finnish coasts. There are also reports that German submarines may have been sent to reinforce the Russians in this area.

7. Russian Naval Bases. The principal Russian naval base in the Arctic is at Murmansk, 25 miles up the Kola inlet on the eastern shore. The Kola inlet is 80 miles by sea east of Petsamo. There is also an operational base at Polyarnoe, seven miles south of the entrance to the Kola inlet; and on the western shore of the Kola inlet, at its mouth, between Toros Island and the mainland, a submarine base has been under construction and may now be in use. The Kola inlet is open to navigation all the year round, but it is not suitable for blocking on account of its depth and the width of the channel. The depth is over 70 fathoms over a distance of 25 miles from the entrance.

In the White Sea, Archangel is the principal shipbuilding centre in the north and forms the second naval base. The White Sea is, however, closed by ice until about the middle of May.

8. Defences of the Kola Inlet. Murmansk is the centre of the organisation of the whole Murman coast defence system, and the Kola Inlet itself is strongly defended by 6-inch and 4.7-inch guns and searchlights at a number of points throughout its length and possibly by 12-inch guns at the entrance. There are also reported to be anti-aircraft batteries, and an A/S net may have been placed in a position about seven miles north of Murmansk. It is believed that observation posts exist at several points on the coast along the Kola peninsula, equipped with hydrophones, W/T and telephone communication. The defences of the Kola inlet have probably been reinforced by minefields.

9. Communications with Murmansk. Murmansk is the terminus of a single track railway from Leningrad. The railway is reported to be in poor condition in the north, and between Murmansk and Kandalaksha passes through a marshy region which, in early summer when the thaw sets in, renders the line almost unworkable. The railway is the only line of communication between Murmansk and the south, except by sea. Lateral communications by road are scanty, and there is no direct road communication across country between the Petsamo area and the Kola peninsula. The cutting of the Murmansk railway combined with a blockade of the Murman coast by sea would, therefore, deprive Murmansk of supplies.

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10. Petsamo. As the Russians are now in occupation of Petsamo, the latter must be considered as a Russian base. The entrance to Petsamo fiord, about 3/4 miles in width, is commanded by steep rocky bluffs which could probably be easily defended, and it is reported that the Russians have already mounted guns of about 3-in. calibre there, and that fortifications are being built on the Cape immediately East of Peurovuona fiord and at Nurmensatti (Nemetski peninsula). It is probable that a defensive minefield has been laid to the westward of Heinasaari Island, North of Petsamo fiord.

11. The port of Liinahamari lies in a cove on the western shore of the fiord, three miles south of the entrance, and is not open to direct bombardment from seaward. There is a wooden pier at Liinahamari, 150 feet long with a depth of 26 feet alongside, and also a small ferry boat pier near the South-west end of the fiord where boats could go alongside. There is an anchorage off Liinahamari for one ship of 600 feet length, and in the southern end of the fiord for four others.

12. Communications at Petsamo. Liinahamari, which lies a few miles to the north of Petsamo village, is the terminus of the Finnish Arctic Highway. This is the only line of communication on land between Petsamo and the south.

13. Russian Military Forces. According to the latest intelligence, the following Russian forces are at present in the north:-

- 1 Division at Petsamo (18,000 to 19,000 men)
- 2 Divisions at Murmansk
- 2 Divisions at Kuolajärvi

The two Divisions at Kuolajärvi are based at Kandalaksha and can, therefore, be moved up to Murmansk by road and railway, but this would take some time as the distance is 250 miles, of which the first stretch from Kuolajärvi to Kandalaksha is by road. The two Divisions from Murmansk can be moved to the neighbourhood of Petsamo by sea, or via the Gulf of Motovski and thence by the Ribachi Peninsula.

14. Little is known about the efficiency of these troops but they do not conform to the standard of first class European troops and their sojourn in this area during the winter will not have improved their efficiency. Little is known of their equipment or mobility, but it is unlikely that any high proportion of these could operate off such roads and tracks as exist locally.

15. Russian Supplies for the Petsamo Garrison. It has been reported that the Russian garrison at Petsamo are supplied by one small ship a week from Murmansk via the Kola Inlet and the Motovski Gulf. If the garrison were reinforced, however, supplies would have to be correspondingly increased.

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16. Enemy Air Forces. Full details are given in Appendix B.

From March to May winter conditions still prevail and the total air forces which the Russians could operate over Petsamo are thought to be approximately as follows:-

24 Medium-range Bombers (load 1,100 lbs.)

42 Long-range Bombers (load 3,300 lbs.)

48 Single-seat Fighters and 18 obsolete Flying Boats.

In summer this force might be considerably increased. At Salla, the Russian air threat would be roughly twice as great as at Petsamo.

Aerodromes are likely to be completely unserviceable for from a week to a month during the thaw in May.

17. Very little indeed is known about the supply situation, but it must be remembered that, while ample aircraft and, in summer, landing grounds, are available, the Russian air organisation is inefficient and communications are generally bad. Since, however, the Russians will be operating from peace stations in the Murmansk area, and have shown signs of expecting an attack in the Petsamo area, it is reasonable to assume that stores of bombs, ammunition, fuel, etc., sufficient for several weeks of operations, are available.

ALLIED FORCES.

18. Naval Forces. Units of the Home Fleet could be available to cover the transport of the expedition from the United Kingdom, and adequate naval forces can be provided to secure the passage of the expedition and its subsequent maintenance against Russian and German naval attack. The maintenance of a sea line of communication over 1500 miles in length and culminating at a point within 100 miles of an enemy submarine and air base would, however, be a heavy additional naval commitment which would require, in addition to covering forces and escorts, the employment of considerable anti-submarine and minesweeping forces and A.A. cruisers, and the use of an advanced base equipped with anti-submarine and anti-aircraft defences.

19. Military Forces. Although the whole Scandinavian force is, theoretically, available for the Petsamo operation, it is unlikely that more than 1 Division could be maintained through the Petsamo base without considerable improvements of communications and port facilities. Moreover, in view of possible German action in Southern Scandinavia, we cannot afford to commit all our available Scandinavian force initially to the Petsamo operation, even if it were possible administratively to do so.

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20. Only the military force earmarked for Narvik will, therefore, be taken as available initially for the Petsamo operation. This force consists of a first echelon of two brigades with ancillary troops. Of these one will be a demi-brigade of chasseurs-alpins (total approximately 4,000 men). The French are also providing a second echelon consisting of another demi-brigade of chasseurs-alpins, a company of Anti-tank guns, a company of tanks, a group of mechanised cross-country vehicles, and a company of light lorries (total approximately 4,500 men), and a third echelon of 4 battalions of Poles (total approximately 4,500 men).

21. The tactical operation of landing at Narvik and landing in the Petsamo area are two entirely different problems, since at Narvik the landing would be an unopposed one at a well-equipped port, whereas in the Petsamo area the landing might be opposed and at the best would have to take place at a second class port. Unless, therefore, the Narvik Expedition could be organised for an opposed landing it will be necessary for it to be re-organised before it sails for Petsamo.

22. Since we cannot assume an unopposed landing at any point in the Petsamo area, it will be essential that landing craft should be taken with the Petsamo Expedition, and suitable transports must be provided. On 15th March 2 or 3 Assault Landing Craft, 2 Support Landing Craft, and 7 or 8 Motor Landing Craft will be available.

23. Finnish Co-operation. When the Petsamo operation was first considered with the French in January, it was envisaged that the landing would be preceded by a Finnish offensive against Petsamo from the south. It appears very unlikely, however, that the Finns will now be in a position to offer any effective military co-operation, since their military forces in the north have been driven some distance south of Petsamo, and the bulk of their remaining forces are now hard pressed on the Mannerheim Line.

24. Air Support. It will be seen that adequate naval forces can be provided to secure the passage of the expedition and its subsequent maintenance against Russian and German naval attack and that, while the maintenance of the long line of communication would be a heavy commitment, it could in fact be undertaken. Military forces, up to the maximum which can be supplied through Petsamo, are also available. The question of air support, however, presents a very different picture.

25. The air component available is assumed to be that provided for the Narvik project (one Fighter Squadron of 16 Gladiators with 5 in reserve, and one Army Co-operation Flight of 6 Lysanders with 3 in reserve.) Owing to the fact that no aerodrome is available in the vicinity which is not occupied by the Russians, cover for a landing at Petsamo could only be provided by aircraft-carriers, one of which might also transport part of the air component, or by aircraft operating from Finnish occupied territory. Cover provided by fighter aircraft from carriers would be very limited and the carriers themselves are very vulnerable to shore-based air attack. In view of the scale of the operations now being undertaken in Southern Finland,

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Finland's known shortage of aircraft and the distance of available aerodromes from Petsamo, no adequate air assistance from the Finns can be expected.

26. There remains the possibility of infiltrating some Blenheim Fighter or Bomber aircraft into Finland, specially to support this operation, in the guise of volunteers. For this to be successful a start would have to be made at once. There appear to be suitable aerodromes within range at Rovaniemi and Sodankyla. In order that any air support at all can be relied on, this latter course would have to be adopted. Particulars of available Finnish aerodromes are given in Appendix "A". It seems inevitable that one carrier will be required for fighter support and another to convey the aircraft for the air component, which will fly off and land when Petsamo aerodrome has been captured.

27. Air Defence. Whether Petsamo itself, after its capture, or some other neighbouring port or anchorage is used as an advanced base, the Petsamo Force will be exposed to Russian air attack. Prior to and during the landing Russian aircraft can use the Petsamo aerodrome and at least three others within 100 miles. A considerable scale of A.A. defence will therefore be essential, including A.A. cruisers, particularly since the problem of the provision of aircraft support is so difficult. If an opposed landing is undertaken, the question of air support may well be critical.

28. Shipping and Maintenance. The shipping provided for the Narvik operation will be available for Petsamo; but it will not necessarily be suitable. If it is decided to attempt an opposed landing, a ship capable of carrying and launching landing craft will be required. Furthermore, while for the Narvik operation it is intended to embark as many troops as possible in one or two large ships, the risk of air and submarine attack off the Petsamo coast makes it desirable to divide the Petsamo force among a number of smaller ships, which would also be more handy for manoeuvring in the narrow fiords in that area. No difficulty is envisaged in regard to the provision of adequate tonnage for the subsequent maintenance of the Petsamo force.

29. Secrecy. It is certain that the Narvik project will become known as soon as the Norwegians and Swedes reject it, if not before, and this is likely to warn the Russians that a major operation of some kind in the north is in contemplation. Reports indicate that the Russians and Germans already anticipate a landing at Petsamo, which is the only port on the north coast of Finland, and it must be expected that the Russians will maintain air and possibly submarine reconnaissance off the north coasts of Finland and Norway if they have any reason to think that an operation is in the wind. It seems improbable, therefore, that we shall succeed in achieving either strategical or tactical surprise, and it would be unwise, in planning the operation, to count on either.

ADVANCED BASE.

30. From the naval point of view, the use of an advanced base will be essential for fuelling, boiler cleaning and resting small ships, and for the landing of stores and supplies. From the military point of view, an advanced base will also be essential if the weather is unsuitable for landing on a beach, and in any case will be desirable if the expedition meets bad weather during the passage from the United Kingdom, since prolonged seasickness might render a proportion of the troops unfit to undertake an immediate opposed landing.

31. The only anchorage on the North coast of Finland which would be suitable for use as an advanced base is

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Petsamo, but Petsamo would not be available until after its capture from the Russians.

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32. On the Norwegian coast there are a number of possible anchorages on the south coast of the Varanger fiord, but the only one which appears at all suitable for use as an advanced base is Kirkenes. The other possible anchorages are unsuitable on account either of depth, lack of adequate swinging room, exposure to weather, incompleteness of the survey or lack of inland communications.

33. Kirkenes lies 40 miles by sea west of Petsamo and is situated at the head of a network of fiords 9 miles from the sea. There are 4 quays which have a least depth of 10 fathoms alongside, and there are the usual facilities of a small port. In the surrounding fiords there are suitable anchoring berths for 9 ships of 600 ft. length and 30 ft. draught, and a further 21 berths are available in depths of between 25 and 25 fathoms. If the ships were navigated by R.N. Navigating Officers, it is considered that local pilots could be dispensed with, both as regards the landfall and also the subsequent berthing.

34. Kirkenes is linked with Petsamo by a recently built motor road which connects with the Petsamo-Rovaniemi Arctic Highway at the Finnish frontier at Salmijarvi. The distance from Kirkenes to Liinahamari by road is 55 miles (35 miles across country), and there is one ferry to be crossed on the way. There is also a short railway line from Kirkenes to some mines to the southward.

COMMUNICATIONS AND CLIMATE IN NORTH FINLAND.

35. The outstanding feature of the scanty communications in the North is the lack of lateral communications East and West. The only line of communication between Liinahamari (the terminus of the road in the North) and Rovaniemi, the railhead some 300 miles to the South, is the Arctic Highway. This road, although a good one for such a remote region, is narrow with a sand and gravel surface, fairly free from holes (before the war) but very loose in parts. There are a number of wooden bridges, and at two points rivers are crossed by rather primitive ferries. In the extreme North the vegetation is sparse and the ground is covered with moss or a low growth of heath. South of Salmijarvi the country becomes less rugged and the forest begins. The forest is fairly free from undergrowth and scrub and can be penetrated on foot, but there are few tracks except those of reindeer, and direction is very difficult. The going in the forest is sometimes tedious on account of rocks and boulders and would be quite impracticable for M.T. Except in the extreme North, the country would give excellent cover against air attack. On the Arctic Coast the hills are usually quite bare and give no cover at all, but in sheltered valleys there are usually small trees which would give some cover.

36. North of Rovaniemi there are no Finnish towns in the accepted sense; names on the map usually represent a collection of wooden buildings built around a church, with perhaps a good inn. In some cases villages consist of no more than a few log huts.

37. Although there are no lateral roads between the Petsamo district and the Kola peninsula, suitably equipped

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troops should have no difficulty in getting across country, either on skis while the snow lasts, or on foot in the summer. In March and April, conditions of extreme cold are likely to be encountered in Northern Finland, and the ground is likely to be under deep snow. The Petsamo fiord, except near its head, and the fiords around Kirkenes are normally ice-free throughout the winter, as is the coast; but ice is liable to form in small inlets and at the head of the fiords. The prevailing wind on the Petsamo coast in winter is south or south-westerly, and in summer north and north-easterly. In spring the wind is uncertain, but bad weather is liable to be encountered and poor visibility or fog is usual when the wind is blowing from seaward. The thaw usually sets in at the end of April and may render active operations impracticable for from a week to a month on end.

38. The conditions likely to be encountered in the Petsamo operation may be summed up, therefore, by saying that in March and April conditions of extreme cold and snow will be met, and movement off the road will only be possible on skis or sleighs. In May, during the thaw, all movement off the road will be impossible for anything from a week to a month, after which (when the White Sea is open) the enemy will be able to move up reinforcements to the Lurmansk area.

39. In summer (i.e. June, July and August) the climate is good and the country is extremely healthy; foreigners feel exceptionally fit and full of energy. June and July are, however, bad months for mosquitoes, which are a real pest and cause acute discomfort unless veils are provided, though they are not malarial. Reindeer are fairly plentiful and the rivers and lakes teem with fish, and there is, of course, plenty of water and an unlimited supply of wood in the forest country.

TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT.

40. Two factors require special consideration in the training and equipment of the Petsamo force. Firstly, Arctic conditions and snow; secondly, the possibility of having to effect an opposed landing. The force must be clothed to endure the rigours of an Arctic climate in March and April, and must be provided with special snow equipment and transport. In this connection, it would not be safe to rely upon obtaining any local transport on the spot, since to take it up before the arrival of the expedition would destroy the last chance of secrecy, while it may not be forthcoming after the force has landed. No accommodation of any kind is likely to be available ashore, except perhaps in Kirkenes, since the Russians will probably burn all buildings during their retreat, and some form of portable shelter must be taken with the expedition. Finally, if there is any question of attempting an opposed landing, some training in landing from boats or landing craft is absolutely essential. The results of peace-time combined operations invariably show the necessity for most careful preliminary training. Any troops which are to operate off the roads must also be proficient on skis.

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TIME FACTOR.

41. Assuming that the Petsamo expedition leaves the United Kingdom on the 15th March (the earliest possible date), it might arrive off Petsamo by 21st March. It must be remembered, however, that it is quite possible that the expedition may in fact not be able to sail until considerably later. The thaw in the North begins to take effect at the beginning of May, and after that not only are operations on land impracticable, but the White Sea begins to open. Consequently, there are at most 5 weeks in which to complete the operations; there may only be 3 weeks. This period might possibly be extended as a result of a hard winter.

42. If we are to succeed in capturing Murmansk there are the following stages to be undertaken.

- (i) Capture of Petsamo and consolidation of Base in the face of at least one and possibly two Russian Divisions, and without Finnish assistance.
- (ii) Advance of a mobile force to join the Finns on the Salla front, a distance of 200 miles. On this front there are reputed to be two Russian Division in the Kuolajärvi area.
- (iii) Penetration of the Russian line in this area and advance to and capture of Kandalaksha.
- (iv) Advance to and capture of Murmansk.

43. It is apparent that in the time available, even if it is found possible to capture Petsamo by a coup de main, there is no chance whatever of capturing Murmansk or even of cutting the railway at Kandalaksha. The most that could probably be done is to effect a junction with the Finns in the Salla area.

44. The only object, therefore, which appears to be attainable in the short period available is to effect a junction with the Finns at Salla.

SECTION II.POSSIBLE ALLIED COURSES OF ACTION.

45. Operations to effect a junction with Finnish forces in the Salla area would comprise three stages:-

1. The landing operation.
2. The capture of the Petsamo base, consolidation ashore and disembarkation of the force and stores, combined with an operation to secure the Ribachi peninsula, through which Russian counter-attacks from Murmansk may be expected.
3. Advance southwards to Salla.

46. There are three possible courses of action open to the Allies in the initial stage, i.e. the landing operation.

- (1) Naval action against Murmansk, combined with a Finnish military offensive against Petsamo, with the object of driving the Russians out

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of Petsamo or at least of weakening their resistance by cutting off their line of communication both by sea and land, before any Allied troops were landed at all.

(ii) A landing near Petsamo, with the object of capturing Petsamo by a coup de main. A landing at Petsamo itself is impracticable on account of the local defences.

(iii) A landing at some undefended locality, necessarily in Norwegian territory, prior to military operations on land against Petsamo.

47. With regard to (i) above, no Finnish military co-operation is likely to be forthcoming. Furthermore, preliminary naval action against Murmansk would give the Russians clear warning of the impending operation, and of the date on which it is likely to occur.

48. With regard to (ii) above, a landing on the Finnish coast, near Petsamo, would have the advantage, if it were successful, of achieving the initial stage of the Allied operations quickly, and would also avoid the necessity of infringing Norwegian neutrality.

POSSIBLE LANDING PLACES NEAR PETSAMO.

49. Coast to the West of Petsamo Fiord. In general the coast of the West of Petsamo as far as the Norwegian frontier at Jakobselv is bold and rocky with high cliffs in places, but there are a few coves or small inlets where a landing might possibly be effected under good weather conditions. None of these possible landing places, however, have any proper communication with the interior. Taking these coves from East to West, there are:-

(a) Murmensatti (Nemetski peninsula).

On each side of the Isthmus there are small bays, but only the Eastern bay is used by fishing boats as the Western bay, although larger, is rocky and open to the West. The Eastern bay is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ cables long by 1 cable wide and is fairly sheltered from seaward but a swell is liable to be experienced. It lies about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles West of the entrance to the Petsamo Fiord. The beach is sandy and the entrance into the bay is marked by an unlit beacon. There is a short stretch of flattish ground behind the beach but the beaches are commanded by high ground beyond.

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Communications inland are bad. There is no road, only a raised track across the hills to Liinahamari. This track, which is marked by posts at intervals, runs in part through defiles and is commanded almost all the way by high ground on both sides. Trained troops could, however, reach the high ground which overlooks Liinahamari and the Petsamo fiord. The distance over the hills from Nurmensatti to Liinahamari is about 5 miles. Landing at Nurmensatti would be impracticable except on a calm day, and ships stopped to disembark troops would be most vulnerable to submarine attack. Furthermore, guns are reported to have been mounted on the Nemetski peninsula.

(b) Other Beaches.

Available information indicates that there are no other suitable landing places between Petsamo and the Norwegian frontier.

50. Coast to the East of Petsamo Fiord. The coast between Petsamo and the Ribachi peninsula is bold and steep for the most part, but there are a number of points where a landing might be effected from boats in good weather conditions. Reports indicate, however, that such points are probably defended, and that guns have been mounted in this area. A disadvantage of landing to the East of the Petsamo fiord is that communications are poor, and a long detour would be necessary to get round the head of the fiord and subsequently to cross the Petsamojoki river.

51. Conclusions on Possible Landing Places on the Russian or Finnish Coast near Petsamo. A landing operation does not appear practicable at any point except at Nurmensatti (Nemetski peninsula). The beaches at this point will, however, almost certainly be defended and ships lying off will be exposed to submarine attack, as well as to the fire of any coast defences which may exist there. Furthermore, a landing can only be effected in favourable weather, which cannot be relied upon in advance. In consequence, we do not consider that any landing on the Finnish or Russian coast at or near Petsamo is a practical operation of war.

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LANDING IN NORWEGIAN TERRITORY.

52. Close study of the available information indicates that the only suitable landing area in Norwegian territory is at Kirkenes, about 30 miles West of Petsamo. It has reasonable port facilities, and a road which connects with the Arctic highway at Salmijarvi, South of Petsamo. Although the approaches to Kirkenes might be mined, possibly by the Norwegians themselves, minesweeping operations could be carried out unhampered by enemy naval action or coast defences.

53. A landing at Kirkenes has the disadvantage that Norwegian neutrality would be violated at a place which cannot even be considered as a lonely fiord. The possibility, therefore, that the landing might be opposed by the Norwegians must be considered. The normal garrison is one battalion. It is possible, but unlikely, that it has been reinforced, but any further reinforcements must be sent by sea.

54. No other fiords have any port facilities nor are they connected by road to the Arctic highway. Even if the transports were to anchor in some secluded part of the chain of fiords around Kirkenes, therefore, the actual landing of the main force and stores would have to be effected through Kirkenes.

55. The possibility that the Russians might occupy Kirkenes before the arrival of the Allies cannot be entirely disregarded.

PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION FOR THE FIRST STAGE (THE LANDING).

56. Since a landing on the Russian or Finnish coast at or near Petsamo is impracticable, we consider that there is no alternative but to land on the Norwegian coast, although this involves the violation of Norwegian neutrality. Kirkenes is the only suitable point at which the landing can be effected. Consequently, we consider that the landing should be made there.

PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND STAGE (CAPTURE OF PETSAMO)

57. Operations from Kirkenes for the capture of Petsamo and consolidation there will involve:

- (i) An advance as soon as possible to Salmijarvi, the junction of the Kirkenes road with the Finnish Arctic Highway, possibly combined with a direct advance across country from Kirkenes to Petsamo by ski troops.
- (ii) An advance on Petsamo from Salmijarvi, and the capture of Petsamo and the Ribachi peninsula, with the aim of securing a base on the Finnish coast.

COURSE OF ACTION FOR THE THIRD STAGE (ADVANCE SOUTH TO SALLA).

58. Operations to achieve the third stage will depend upon Russian action and our own progress, and no particular course of action can be planned in advance.

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SECTION III.POSSIBLE ENEMY COURSES OF ACTION.

59. Naval action. As soon as the enemy are aware of the arrival of the Allied expedition in Northern waters, we must assume that they will attempt naval action against the convoy. If we are able to achieve some degree of strategical surprise in point of time it is unlikely that the convoy will be exposed to any but a chance encounter while on passage; but after its arrival and especially during the process of disembarkation the transports will be open to Russian as well as German attack.

60. Air action. The convoy will be exposed to air attack as soon as its presence is known. During the process of disembarkation, we must assume that the enemy will concentrate all his available air strength against the expedition, which may not have the advantage of any effective air support except that provided by naval units. During the subsequent operations on land we must also expect that the enemy will make full use of his air superiority in the north against the Allied troops, their lines of communication and their bases. It must be remembered, however, that the whole Russian organisation is, by Western standards, most inefficient.

61. Military forces. To oppose the initial stage of the Allied operations only three Russian Divisions are available. The courses open to these Russian forces are :-

- (i) These divisions can remain where they are, (i.e. one at Petsamo and two at Murmansk) until they know our exact intentions.
- (ii) If it is thought that we intend to violate Norwegian neutrality, Russian troops can be moved into Norway.
- (iii) Petsamo may have been reinforced by at least one or perhaps both divisions from Murmansk.

62. It unlikely that the Russians would violate Norwegian neutrality unless they were certain of our exact movements and probable landing place, so course (ii) is improbable, though it cannot be ruled out altogether. Either course (i) or (iii) might be adopted according to the information available to the Russians; but it is unlikely that more than one Division would be taken from Murmansk.

63. The most unfavourable position for us in the initial stage would be, therefore, to be opposed by two divisions in the Petsamo Area, with the possibility of another Division arriving from Murmansk. These troops are likely to be disposed at key points such as Liinahamari, Nurmensatti, and Salmijärvi: and, even though they may not be able to interfere with a landing at Kirkenes, they will be within 20 miles of that port by road.

64. It will be essential for us, therefore, to get to Salmijärvi and the Arctic highway as soon as possible, and also to stop the further move of reinforcements by sea from Murmansk.

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65. Divisions from further South would in all cases have to reach the Murmansk railway before they could move northwards.

SECTION IV.

OUTLINE PLAN.

66. Weighing up all the known and likely factors, and basing the plan upon the assumption that a violation of Norwegian neutrality is unavoidable if the operation is to stand any chance of success, we consider that the only practicable plan would be:-

- (i) To land the force at Kirkenes and advance as quickly as possible to Salmijärvi.
- (ii) To advance on Petsamo by the Arctic highway, possibly combined with a cross-country advance by ski troops direct from Kirkenes.
- (iii) To consolidate at Petsamo, secure the isthmus of the Ribachi peninsula, and transfer the base from Kirkenes to Petsamo.
- (iv) Finally, to advance to the southward by the Arctic highway, with the aim of eventually linking up with the Finnish forces in the Salla sector.

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APPENDIX A.
CERTAIN FINNISH AERODROMES.

Name	Position	Height above M.S.L.	Surface	Communications Road & Rail	Dimensions (in Yards)	Fuel and/or Repairs	Hangars	Remarks
PETSAMO	69°24'N. 31°02'E.			Road.	1313 x 1313		Nil.	
SALMIJARVI	69°20' 30°07'				880 x 1300			Proposed aerodrome.
KEMI	65°47'N. 24°34'E.	30 ft.	Sandy heath.	Both.	999 x 999	Fuel and minor repairs in Kemi.	Nil.	5 kms. N. of Kemi. 4 rolled gravel runways.
ROVANIEMI	66°34' 25°55'			Road. Rail at Rovaniemi.	3 runways of 880, 1 of 1100.			Proposed landing ground 6 kms. N.E. of Rovaniemi, on N. shore of Ounasijoki river. ready for skis Jan. 1940. Completed Spring 1940.
SODANKYLA	67°25' 26°38'			Road.	1200 x 1200 when completed.			3 kms. S.E. by l. of Sodankyla aerodrome under construction 3 runways 990 x 770 will be ready in Spring 1940.

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Petsamo and Salmijarvi are now of course in Russian hands and might be destroyed before they could be captured. It is possible that they might have been prepared for winter use by aircraft without skis. Kemi, Rovaniemi and Sadankyla should be little affected by the thaw, but will have to be prepared for use before then by aircraft without skis.

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APPENDIX B.RUSSIAN AIR FORCES.AIR FORCES AVAILABLE.

From March to May winter conditions still prevail and the total air forces which the Russians could operate over Petsamo is thought to be approximately as follows:-

From 4 Aerodromes in Vicinity of Petsamo:

24 Bombers (S.B. - Load 1,100 lbs.) } obsolescent.
48 Il6 Single-seat Fighters.
18 Obsolete Flying Boats.

From Aerodromes 250-300 Miles South.

24 Bombers (T.S.Kb.26 - Load 3,300 lbs.)

From Aerodromes 500 Miles South.

18 Bombers (T.S.Kb.26 - Load 3,300 lbs.)

In summer as much as 150% increase might be expected.

As operations moved south the weight would increase as aerodromes are more plentiful and plenty of medium-range bombers (S.B.) as well as fighters are available. Long-range bombers (T.S.Kb.26) are restricted in numbers. At Salla the Russian air threat would be roughly twice that at Petsamo.

Aircraft now maintained in the Petsamo-Murmansk area are actually in excess of the figures in paragraph 1, but it is improbable that more than the numbers quoted could actually be operated. Bombers could, of course, be substituted for fighters on the Northern aerodromes (say 1 bomber for 2 fighters) and S.B. bombers might operate from aerodromes further south and refuel at Murmansk, though this would correspondingly restrict local aircraft.

In summer the weight of attack would depend entirely on the supply situation. Landing grounds are plentiful and many lateral roads exist. It is thought that the Russians would be prepared to reinforce their air strength from Southern Russia and, in spite of inefficiency, their resources and organisation are probably well developed for this purpose.

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AERODROMES.

Aerodromes are likely to be completely unserviceable for from a week to a month during the thaw - late April to May. No runways exist on aerodromes in this area. In winter skis are used and snow is rolled.

SUPPLY AND MAINTENANCE.

It is not known what stocks of spares, bombs and supplies are maintained. On aerodromes further South petrol stocks are normally 60 - 200,000 gallons. Maintenance is normally very poor, but, as aircraft are fairly plentiful, replacements would probably be made by flying up new aircraft. Supplies would be very slow by rail, especially in Spring, when breakdowns are frequent, and probably non-existent if the railways were out, as transport aircraft are not plentiful.

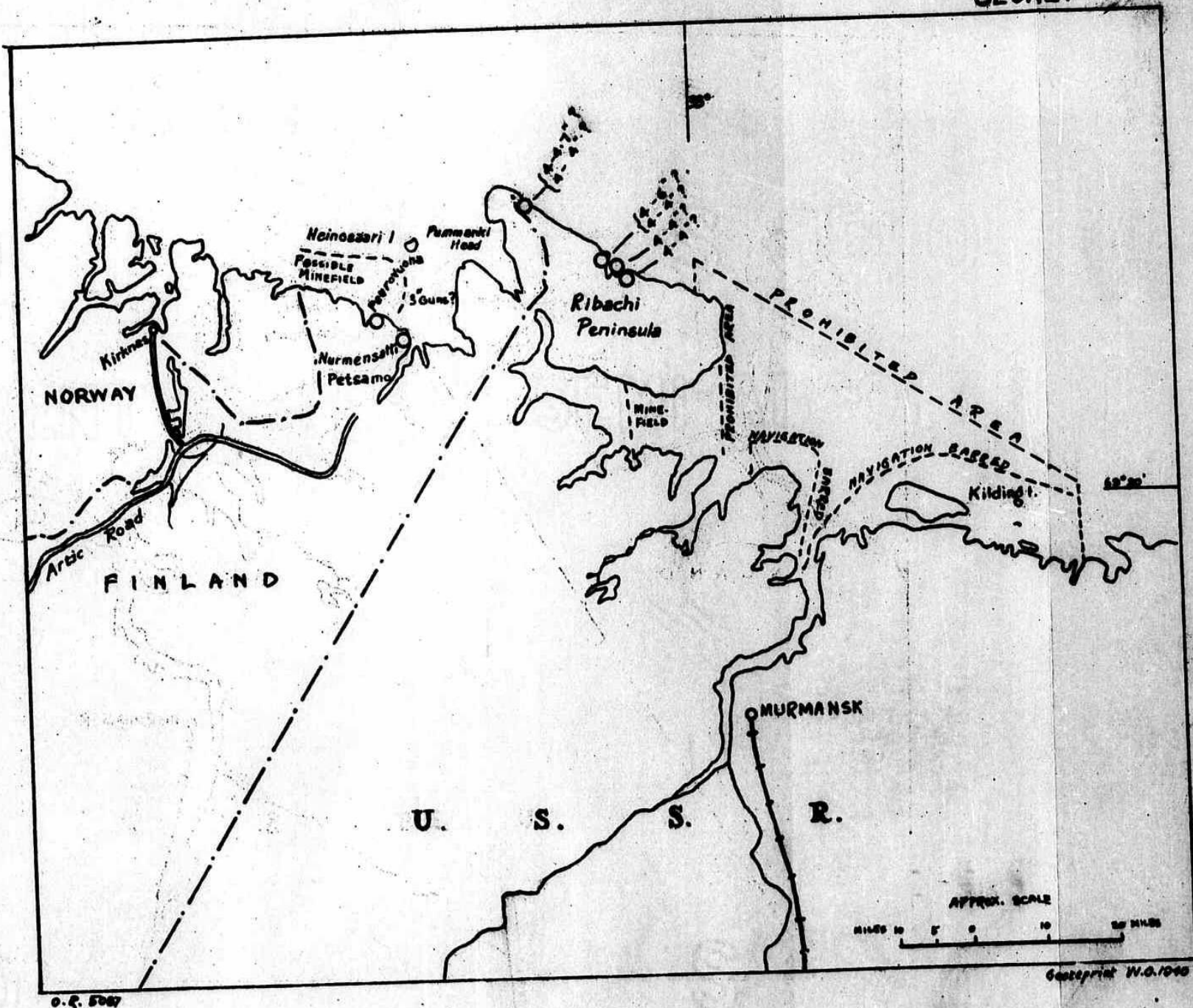
EFFICIENCY.

The whole Russian air organisation is, by Western standards, inclined to be very inefficient and this must be borne in mind in considering all operations particularly sustained operations from Arctic landing grounds.

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M.R. (40)3(S).

COPY NO. 13

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

THE PETSAMO OPERATION.

Note by the Secretary.

The British Representatives on the Allied Military Committee are informed that the Chiefs of Staff at their meeting on 20th February, 1940, (C.O.S.(40)36th Mtg., Item 4) had under consideration the Appreciation on the Petsamo Project (Paper No. M.R.(40)2(S)) and agreed:-

- (a) To instruct the British Representatives on the Allied Military Committee to hand the Appreciation to their French colleagues, and to tell them that it had received the general approval of the Chiefs of Staff; and to ask them for the views of the French Military authorities thereon at an early date.
- (b) To invite the Chief of the Air Staff to inform the War Cabinet, in the course of the next progress report on projected operations in Scandinavia, that this Appreciation had been prepared, and was under discussion with the French Military authorities; that the general conclusion which emerged from the Appreciation was that an operation through Petsamo could not fulfil the object of giving material assistance to the Finns; and that it was not possible for it to be prepared simultaneously with the main operation.

(Signed) A.W. CLARKE.

Secretary.

Gwydyr House, S.W.1.

21st February, 1940.

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M.R.(40)4(S).

COPY NO. 15

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

SCANDINAVIAN OPERATIONS: SECURITY OF PLANS.

Note by the Secretary.

With reference to M.R.(40)57th Mtg., Item 6, the attached translation of the Note handed across by the French Representatives is circulated for information.

(Signed) H.L. d'A. HOPKINSON.
Secretary.

Gwydyr House, S.W.1.
5th March, 1940.

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ENCLOSURE.

P. No. 90,7

SCANDINAVIAN OPERATIONS: SECURITY OF PLANS.Note by the French Representatives.

1. At a meeting of the Special Service Sub-Committee on Plans for a Certain Operation, held on 16th February, 1940, the French Representatives were asked whether the French High Command were in agreement with the British Chiefs of Staff as to the general plan contemplated by the latter with the object of diverting attention from the preparations now being made for a certain operation.

The French High Command agrees with the British authorities that the feint of an intended operation in the Middle East is appropriate. A plan of this sort is best calculated to explain the placing of orders for and the distribution of warm clothing, etc. Care should, however, be taken not to speak too openly of the Caucasus.

2. The following steps have been taken in France to preserve secrecy and to mask the plans now under consideration effectively:-

(a) Steps designed to maintain secrecy:

- (i) All suspect persons found in the neighbourhood of ports of embarkation are being watched and, where appropriate, removed;
- (ii) Mail from or to crews of liners and merchant vessels now being brought together in those ports is being examined;
- (iii) All maps and other documentation concerning the area in question will be distributed to the forces at the last possible moment, on board transports and only when the ships have left the quayside and are on the eve of departure. Similar arrangements have been made in the case of naval vessels.

(b) Camouflage measures:

- (i) An embarkation exercise (officers only) is to be carried out at Marseilles; officers from each unit of the Audet detachment, including the Polish brigade, will be summoned. A few naval officers are to take part in this exercise. Throughout the exercise and with the object of attracting the attention of enemy agents, all telephone traffic between Departements will be suspended for 24 hours into and out of the Departement of Bouches-du-Rhône;

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- (ii) The same officers will carry out an exercise in plotting out an area suitable for the temporary bivouacking of troops before embarkation in the neighbourhood of Marseilles;
- (iii) Troops will be issued with maps and other documentation relating to Asia Minor, in such a manner as to allow for certain leakages; similar arrangements will be made with regard to crews of naval vessels;
- (iv) Units of the Audet detachment will be asked to provide lists of men's measurements, as if they were to be issued with linen suits; similar steps will be taken with regard to naval effectives;
- (v) Information will be put about that the various merchant vessels brought together for the expedition have, in fact, been collected with a view to being equipped with A.A. guns;
- (vi) Some of these ships, after having been armed, will be sent to sea for a few days, either, (a) for purposes of normal temporary commercial service, or, (b) for purposes of training in A.A. action;
- (vii) Information will be put about that the above-mentioned ships have been brought together with a view to an increase in the transport of effectives across the Atlantic, no details being given as to points of arrival and departure.

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M.R.(40)5(S).

COPY NO. 12

9TH MARCH, 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

COMMAND OF ALLIED CONTINGENTS IN SCANDINAVIA.

Note by the Secretary.

The attached communication (Enclosure I) from the French High Command was handed to the British Military Representatives at the Meeting of the Allied Military Committee on Saturday, 9th March, 1940^R.

For convenience of reference the relevant portion of the record of the Fifty-eighth Meeting of the Allied Military Committee, at which the matter of command was raised with the French Representatives, is also attached herewith as Enclosure II.

(Signed) A. W. CLARKE.

Secretary.

Gwydyr House, S.W.1.

^R M.R.(40)61st Meeting, Item 4.

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ENCLOSURE I.

TRANSLATION.

Allied Military Committee.

[D.F. No. 95.]

9th March, 1940.

COMMAND OF ALLIED CONTINGENTS IN SCANDINAVIA.

Note by the French Representatives.

The Chief of the General Staff for National Defence states, in reply to a question remitted to the Allied Military Committee on 6th March by the War Cabinet², that he is in agreement with the British High Command in their decision that the general direction of operations in Finland should rest with Field Marshal Mannerheim, subject to the proviso that the Allied Contingents should, in principle, operate north of a line running east and west of the northern extremity of the Gulf of Bothnia, and that the tactical command of the Anglo-French units should remain in British hands.

² See Enclosure II.

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ENCLOSURE II3th MARCH. 1940.ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.CONFIDENTIAL ANNEX.

(M.R.(40)58th Meeting, held on 6th March, 1940.)

2. CERTAIN OPERATIONS.

GENERAL MARSHALL-CORNWALL informed the French Representatives that the Chief of the Imperial General Staff had been discussing with General Enckell, the representative of Field-Marshal Mannerheim in London, the question of Higher Command in Finland in the event of Anglo-French regular forces (but not volunteers) operating in Finland alongside of Finnish troops. The British War Cabinet had also discussed the matter at their Meeting the previous day and had decided that, subject to the concurrence of the French Government, the proposed Anglo-French contingent in Finland should be placed under the general direction of Field-Marshal Mannerheim, provided that it was not required to operate South of a line running East and West of the northern extremity of the Gulf of Bothnia (including, however, the port of Kemi). The British General in command of the Anglo-French contingent would, of course, maintain tactical command. This arrangement had been agreed upon between General Gamelin and General Ironside in the course of their conversations in Paris at the beginning of February, but the War Cabinet would like the French High Command to give formal confirmation of their acceptance of the arrangement.

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M.R.(J.)(40)(S) Series 2

COMBINED

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

MEMORANDUM

Serial No.	Date.	Brief Description.	Date.	Initials
1	8. 4.40	GERMAN INVASION OF HOLLAND: ALLIED POLICY. MEMORANDUM BY THE BRITISH CHIEFS OF STAFF. Note by the Secretary.		
2	11. 4.40	THE MAJOR STRATEGY OF THE WAR. Note by the French Representatives.		
3	10. 4.40	FRANCO-BRITISH AIR CO-OPERATION IN THE EVENT OF AN INVASION BY GERMANY LIMITED TO HOLLAND. Note by the Secretary.		
4	11. 4.40	GERMAN INVASION OF HOLLAND. Note by the French Representatives.		
5	13. 4.40	OPERATIONS IN NORWAY. Note by the French Representatives.		
6	15. 4.40	FRANCO-BRITISH AIR CO-OPERATION IN THE EVENT OF AN INVASION BY GERMANY LIMITED TO HOLLAND. Note by the Secretary.		
7	15. 4.40	OPERATIONS IN NORWAY: VIEWS OF THE FRENCH HIGH COMMAND AND FRENCH FORCES AVAILABLE. Note by the Secretary.		
8	19. 4.40	OPERATIONS IN SCANDINAVIA. Note by the French Representatives.		
9	20. 4.40	OPERATIONS IN SCANDINAVIA. Note by the French Representatives.		
10	23. 4.40	SCANDINAVIAN OPERATIONS: PROVISION OF FRENCH AIR FORCES. Note by the French Representatives.		
11	3. 5.40	ALLIED ACTION IN THE EVENT OF A GERMAN ATTACK ON THE NETHERLAND ISLANDS. Note by the Secretary.		
12	8. 5.40	THE MAJOR STRATEGY OF THE WAR. FRENCH WAR PLAN FOR HOSTILITIES WITH ITALY. Note by the French Representatives.		
13	15. 5.40	USE OF SYMBOLS IN DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE POSSIBLE OCCUPATION OF SALONIKA AND OF GREEK BASES. Note by the French Representatives.		
14	15. 5.40	OPERATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. Note by the French Representatives.		

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M.R.(J)(40)(S) Series

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ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE

MEMORANDA

Serial No.	Date.	Brief Description.
15	15. 5.40	DESPATCH OF FRENCH UNITS TO NORWAY. Note by the French Representatives.
16	30. 5.40	DESPATCH OF A FORCE TO CRETE. Note by the Secretary.
17	31. 5.40	DESPATCH OF A FORCE TO CRETE, Note by the Secretary.
18	3. 6.40	DESPATCH OF A FORCE TO CRETE. Note by the Secretary.

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M.R.(J)(40)(S)1.

8TH APRIL, 1940.

COPY NO. 28

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

GERMAN INVASION OF HOLLAND: ALLIED POLICY.

MEMORANDUM BY THE BRITISH CHIEFS OF STAFF.

Note by the Secretary.

The enclosed memorandum has been prepared by the British Chiefs of Staff in accordance with the decision of the Supreme War Council, at their last meeting, that the contingency of a German invasion of Holland, and Belgium does not go to the assistance of Holland, should be the subject of study by the French and British Staffs.

2. It is requested that the views expressed may be transmitted to the French High Command for consideration as a matter of urgency.

3. The British Chiefs of Staff wish to emphasise that the contents of the memorandum has not yet been submitted to the British War Cabinet.

(Signed) A.W. CLARKE.

Gwydyr House, S.W.1.

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ENCLOSURE.GERMAN INVASION OF HOLLAND: ALLIED POLICY.Memorandum.

On the 28th March, the Supreme War Council agreed upon Allied policy in the event of German aggression against the Low Countries, in the following terms:-

x x x x x

- "(c) If Germany invades Holland, and Belgium does not go to the assistance of Holland, the Allies should regard themselves as entitled to enter Belgium for the purpose of assisting Holland, but should reserve liberty of action as to the precise course to be adopted.
- (d) If Holland were to grant naval and/or air bases to Germany; this would be an un-neutral act, entitling the Allies to take any counter-action they might think necessary, but that the precise action which the Allied Governments would take in any particular case would depend on the circumstances existing at the time.
- (e) The contingencies in (c) and (d) should be the subject of study by the French and British Staffs".

2. In accordance with the above resolutions, we have given consideration to (c) above as this is clearly a matter of urgency. We propose to make (d) above the subject of a further Memorandum in the very near future.

Allied action on land.

3. We have examined the question of what action the Allied land forces should take in the situation envisaged by the Supreme War Council in resolution (c) quoted above. We

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appreciate that the final decision as to the action to be taken by our forces on the Western front rests with General Gamelin as Commander-in-Chief in France, but in our view an invasion of Holland would constitute a direct threat to our vital interests. We consider, therefore, that an advance into Belgium must be undertaken at once. The object of such an advance would be to prevent the Germans occupying territory, the possession of which would greatly facilitate attack by land, sea, or air, upon Great Britain and France. To achieve this object, the Allies should secure the line Namur-Antwerp; and to hold this successfully the Germans must be prevented from gaining possession of the Scheldt estuary. It is clear that if the Germans gained possession of Holland without the Allied land forces moving forward into Belgium, the Allies would have lost for ever any chance of occupying those positions in Holland and Belgium which are of such importance to themselves. Since delay may prove fatal, the Allies cannot afford to wait until the Belgian attitude is ascertained by negotiation.

4. The moment the Germans start an invasion of Holland, therefore, Allied troops should make their initial moves into Belgium. Their objective would be the line Namur-Antwerp, and this line should be seized by fast-moving light mechanised forces at the earliest possible moment, in accordance with present plans. Since, however, the Namur-Antwerp line is flanked by fortresses held by Belgian troops, it would be unwise to commit the main Allied army to this line unless reliance could be placed on the intention of the Belgian army to defend them. We consider that the main bodies should, in the first instance, seize the line Scheldt-Terneuzen, but should resume their advance immediately it is known that the Belgian attitude is not unfavourable.

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5. In our Report to the British War Cabinet in November, 1939, on Air Policy, we recommended that in the event of a German invasion of Belgium and Holland:-

"(i) Immediate action should be taken by those portions of the French and British air forces, which are particularly suitable for the purpose, to attack the advancing German Army in accordance with pre-arranged plans.

(ii) The remainder of our bombers should immediately attack specified military objectives in the Ruhr."

6. As regards (i), in the event of an Allied advance into Belgium, it must be our immediate aim to use our air forces in the manner best calculated to delay the enemy advance, and enable our land forces to reach their foremost positions.

7. As regards (ii) above, i.e. attack on the Ruhr, or any other economic target, this raises a question of high policy which will require a decision by the French and British Governments. Our object in the present Paper is to obtain the concurrence of the French High Command to our proposal that, in any event, Allied forces will move into Belgium if Germany invades Holland. We are therefore raising the issue of our air policy in a separate Paper.

Naval Action.

8. The Allied naval action in immediate support of Holland would be confined to putting into effect, in co-operation with the Dutch, the agreed plans for denying Dutch resources and port facilities to the enemy,

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and to interrupting German sea communications along the Dutch coast. If, however, the Allied land forces advance into Belgium, the British would also provide naval anti-aircraft cover for the left flank of the Allied army while advancing along the Belgian coast, as already arranged. The execution of the plans for demolitions at Flushing and Antwerp would then depend on specific instructions from the Allied Commander-in-Chief.

Denial of Dutch resources to the Germans.

9. The existing arrangements for denying certain Dutch resources to the Germans would be put into effect in accordance with the development of the situation.

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M.R. (J)(40)(S)2.
(Also D.F. No. 113).

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11TH APRIL, 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

THE MAJOR STRATEGY OF THE WAR.

(Reference: Paper No. M.R. (J)(40)32).

Note by the French Representatives.

The French Delegation have referred the British Representatives' proposal, advanced in Paper No. M.R. (J)(40)32, for a study of the major strategy of the Allies to the French High Command.

A study of the major strategy to be adopted by the Allies is equivalent to the formulation of a plan of war. The French High Command have just drawn up a document on the conduct of the war, the third part of which constitutes a plan of war as contemplated by the French General Staff. The document has been approved by the three French Commanders in Chief, and has now been referred to the French Government for approval.

The General Commander in Chief wishes this document to be placed forthwith before the British Chiefs of Staff for their approval, and for any comments they may desire to make.

The plan of war is based upon considerations which are given in the first two parts of the document; these considerations are not set out in the order proposed in Paper No. M.R. (J)(40)32, and many of them are not developed as fully as that Paper suggests. The French High Command is prepared to undertake a fuller investigation of some of the points enumerated in the British plan. Such a study would, however, require considerable time and would not, in the view of the French High Command, cause the conclusions arrived at to be modified.

The French Delegation wish to draw the attention of the British Representatives to the highly secret character of the attached document, of which the French General Staff itself has only two copies.

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PART I.THE GENERAL POSITION OF THE BELLIGERENTS COMPARED.A. GENERAL POSITION OF GERMANY.

After her rapid and successful campaign in Poland, Germany may have thought that by placing France and the United Kingdom before the accomplished fact she could induce the two Powers to negotiate a peace, leaving her with the greater part of her conquests.

Faced, however, with an attitude on the part of the two great Western democracies which is hostile to her designs, Germany appears to have endeavoured to achieve the following aims:-

- (i) On the one hand, by attacks on British sea power, both naval and commercial, to wear down the United Kingdom morally and materially;
- (ii) On the other hand, by conducting skilful propaganda designed to convey that she had no good reason for engaging in warlike operations, strictly so-called, against France, who had unwillingly been dragged into the conflict by Britain, to undermine French morale and to drive a wedge between the two Allies.

Hence the Reich appears to have suffered relatively little wear and tear during the first six months of war, and that mainly as a result of the Allied blockade. Meanwhile, it has profited from the interval to perfect the degree of equipment of its land and air forces, to increase the officer strength and complete the training of its troops, and to add further divisions to those already in the field.

1. Military Situation.

The German land forces amount today to 170 - 175 field divisions, i.e. some 40 divisions more than the total placed in the field at the outbreak of war.² The increase appears to have consisted largely in standard

² This figure of 170 - 175 divisions does not, of course, include a number of divisions of Landesschutz and of the older Landwehr classes, nor does it include the non-divisional infantry regiments and police battalions maintained within the country for reasons of internal security; these may represent from 15 to 20 divisions, largely of an infantry character, poorly provided with artillery and of low fighting value, only suitable for occupying conquered territory.

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divisions rather than in special formations such as armoured divisions. In addition, the divisions more recently placed in the field are in all probability far from possessing the fighting capacity of the active divisions and those formed at the time of mobilisation.

There has, therefore, been little appreciable increase in the enemy's power of attack. At the same time the increase in the number of divisions places larger reserves at the disposal of the German Command, and these can be used either for reinforcements in actual battle, or for extending the fighting line, or again for taking action in new theatres of war:- in other words, Germany's capacity for strategical manoeuvre is thereby enhanced.

That capacity has been still further increased owing to the extension and strengthening of the systems of fortifications which the enemy is still engaged in erecting on the Western Front.

Germany's strength in the air has also increased, and although the rate of increase may have been less than that achieved on the side of the Allies, Germany is still, numerically, markedly stronger in the air than the Allies.

The position of the German naval forces does not seem to have altered to any appreciable extent. Submarine losses have been heavy, but they have, generally speaking, been counter-balanced by new construction. The surface fleet has also been severely tested, but it will receive an accretion of strength in the summer, when two 35,000 ton ships are to be added to it.

2. Economic Situation.

It does not appear likely that the economic position of the Third Reich will undergo such changes in the next few months as to compel the German High Command to undertake early military action with the object of breaking the blockade or of seizing raw material sources in contiguous territories.

At the present time, it would seem that German requirements are being met. As regards raw materials of vital importance to the German war economy, and in the absence of active operations, consumption in many fields does not greatly exceed the figures for the years immediately preceding the war, and has even in some cases fallen.

In particular, Germany obtains from Sweden all the additional iron ore she requires, while Roumania, Poland and U.S.S.R. supply her with sufficient oil fuel - allowing for her own production - to enable her to carry on and to pursue the struggle at a reduced tempo without making appreciable inroads into her stocks.

This situation may in part explain the passive attitude observed by Germany throughout the winter, i.e. she may have taken advantage of the winter months to complete her stocks.

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More generally, she has nothing to gain from the economic standpoint in carrying the war into Scandinavia or the Balkans; in so doing, she would run the risk of bringing about the destruction, before she herself could reach them, and in any event of reducing the flow, at least momentarily, of raw material sources which are vital to her.

Nevertheless, there is one weak point in the economic structure of the Reich, namely, transport. Several sources which appear reliable draw attention to the paucity and poor condition of the German rolling stock. The severe winter added to transport difficulties, and the shortage of coal within the country became so acute that certain factories engaged in war work were temporarily brought to a standstill.

3. Internal political situation.

Although various reports appear to indicate a certain weariness throughout the population, some dissatisfaction among the liberal classes and a latent conflict between a section of the High Command and the Nazi regime, it is only prudent to assume that the Nazi leaders still retain sufficient power to have full control of the situation. Nevertheless, the beginnings of dissatisfaction with the regime which are apparent in certain strata of the population may in due course compel the Fuehrer to seek further successes of prestige abroad. Should he do so, it would seem that success could most easily be won in the Balkans, subject, of course, to the attitude of Italy.

4. External political situation.

Germany still appears to enjoy the support of her former accomplices.

Italy at the outset played Germany's game by her declaration of "non-belligerency", while her ambiguous attitude compels us to keep certain forces in the Alps and in Tunisia. She again favoured Germany when she later endeavoured to keep the Allies out of the Balkans, where Allied action might add considerably to the difficulties of the enemy. In any event, Italy's attitude now still inhibits Allied freedom of action in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

The U.S.S.R. was for a long time an enigma, since it was practically impossible to determine to what extent she was acting hand in hand with Germany. Today it would seem that her arduous campaign in Finland, by undermining her prestige and throwing her internal economics into confusion, has tended to throw her further into the arms of Germany.

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A further problem now arises, namely that of the wearing down of Russia's capacity. The new enigma which faces Britain and France is to determine to what extent Germany can consent to a further wearing down of her accomplice's power, bearing in mind that the consequent internal disturbances would seriously affect the volume of Russian supplies to the Reich.

Bulgaria has undoubtedly been armed by Germany, while a high proportion of her people are sympathetic to Moscow ideals. Nevertheless, this country has for some time been evolving towards a stricter concept of neutrality. It may, in any event, be surmised that Bulgaria will not take up arms unless the German or Soviet armies appear in close proximity to her territory.

Japan has, up to the present, acted, both in the Far East and in respect of Germany, in a manner somewhat similar to that shown by the U.S.S.R. in Europe. Although she has not openly thrown in her lot with the Reich, she has indirectly aided the latter by keeping the Allies in a state of doubt as to her own intentions and compelling them to earmark relatively substantial forces for possible action in a distant area.

Neutral Countries: Whereas Germany continues to enjoy the support of a number of accomplices, it is apparent that mistrust of her intentions is becoming steadily more marked among the neutrals. Yet the latter, at any rate in Europe, live in a state of more or less avowed terror of German aggression; and they endeavour to keep the scales even as between the Allies and Germany, in the hope of warding off the threat which the latter country unceasingly exercises against them.

On the other hand, the repeated military setbacks of Russia in Finland gave renewed courage to those countries which had reason to believe themselves the next victims of Soviet aggression. This is particularly the case of Rumania. The loss of prestige suffered by the U.S.S.R. can only be disadvantageous to Germany.

B. GENERAL POSITION OF THE ALLIES.

Numerically inferior to Germany, inadequately provided with armaments - more especially in the air - and hampered in their freedom of manoeuvre by contiguous neutral countries, the Allies employed the first months of the war in perfecting their equipment and organising their production. By this time they have considerably improved their original position; but they cannot acquire superiority of means before 1941.

1. Military Situation.

The Franco-British land forces in the field at present amount to the following:-

- (1) On the front in North-east France: some 100 French divisions and 10 British divisions.*

* The figure for French divisions includes fortress troops and divisions at present in course of formation.

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- (ii) In the Alps: the equivalent of 7 divisions (including fortress troops).
- (iii) In North Africa: some half dozen mobile divisions (in addition to defence divisions).
- (iv) In Syria: the equivalent of 3 divisions (in addition to defence troops).
- (v) In Egypt and Palestine: the equivalent of 3 or 4 divisions.
- (vi) A number of miscellaneous divisions and formations in British and French colonies.*

Moreover, it will not be till towards the end of this year that all our divisions will have their full complement of modern equipment. Only in 1941 shall we have at our disposal the number of heavy guns and new equipment, at present in the planning stage, which will be required before an attack on the Siegfried Line can be launched.

The Franco-British Air Forces have increased appreciably. The total fighter strength with bases in France or the United Kingdom will soon draw level with or exceed the total of corresponding formations in the Reich. Nevertheless, Germany will continue to have a marked superiority as regards bombers, while her geographical situation gives her increased freedom to move her forces from one area of hostilities to another.

Our naval fighting strength has sustained some loss as a result of enemy action, but these losses have already been or will shortly be made up for by current naval construction. In the meantime, the Allied navies have brought about a complete stoppage of German trade in all seas except the Black Sea, the Baltic and the territorial waters of Denmark and Norway. They have safeguarded the freedom of Allied communications and have in general, through their achievements, enhanced the prestige of the Western powers.

Submarine warfare appears to have become stabilised, while, although mine-laying and air warfare still cause severe losses - especially to the United Kingdom - those losses are not sufficient to "starve" the Allies. It does not seem that the situation will alter appreciably in the course of the next few months.

2. Economic Situation.

France and the United Kingdom entered the war possessed of stronger and healthier economic means than did Germany.

* The above figures do not include effectives in depôts in France, nor divisions now in course of formation in Great Britain.

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In order, however, to catch up with Germany's considerable advance in the matter of armaments at the outbreak of hostilities, the Allies are now making bulk purchases in neutral countries, particularly in the United States; these purchases involve in certain spheres a heavy consumption of economic and financial resources which is only made possible by their command of the seas. The pace now set may lead to a somewhat rapid impoverishment of the two countries, and from a certain date onwards time will no longer be on the side of the Allies. Nevertheless, that date still appears sufficiently distant to relieve them from the obligation to seek a decision before the present year has run out, and hence before the required means are at their disposal.

3. Internal political situation.

From the psychological and moral points of view, which alone are of concern to the High Command, we are faced here with the whole problem of sustaining the Home Fronts. Here the Western democracies, being countries in which opinion is free, are more vulnerable than is the National Socialist dictatorship. Were the apparent inactivity of the War Front to continue, it is conceivable that the necessary privations will react upon the morale and the social balance of the country to an extent which it would be dangerous to fail to guard against.

4. External political situation.

Here the position appears to be relatively favourable to the Allied cause.

BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS.

The November and January scares made these two countries aware of the insecurity of their position. Belgium, in particular, appeared determined to appeal to the Allies, even if Holland alone was attacked. Allowance must, however, be made for weariness and fear, and it will be wiser to assume that in the event Belgium will call upon us only if Germany definitely crosses her frontiers.

ITALY.

It is perfectly clear that Italy's attitude closely governs our own position in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Italian hostility would not only make it impossible for us to support the Balkan countries but would bring new areas of activity into play in the Alps and in Tunisia, where we should be obliged to send back adequate forces.

A friendly Italy, on the other hand, would at once secure us the advantage not only of her own armed forces but also of the hundred odd divisions which the Balkan countries can place in the field. Further, we should dispose of land communications, greatly facilitating our contacts with the Balkans. The strategical situation of the French and British would therefore be appreciably stronger and better.

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It seems, however, that Italy is likely to abide by her declaration of non-belligerency as long as she can.*

TURKEY.

Since the recent agreements were signed, Turkey appears to be evolving towards a position definitely favourable to the Allied cause. Staff conversations are at present proceeding. Surveys of aerodromes, naval bases and itineraries now in progress seem to show that our Turkish friends realise that they may be drawn into the conflict at any moment and that they are determined to face up to the danger.

BALKAN COUNTRIES.

Three other Balkan countries, and in the first place Greece, seem to be most favourably disposed towards the Allies. The Greek General Staff is clearly facing up to the prospect of Greek forces in active participation with the Franco-British armies. Conversations with the Greek General Staff should be possible at an early date.

The same may be hoped of Yugoslavia, although there is some internal conflict between Croats, Slovenes and the Government - who all appear to favour strict neutrality even if their independence is thereby in part endangered - and the population of Old Serbia and the Army on the other hand, both definitely sympathetic to the Allies. It may be expected that Yugoslavia will resist German aggression and will refuse right of passage across her territory to German forces seeking to attack Greece and Turkey.

Rumania's attitude is guarded. She is swaying between her powerful neighbours and the Allies, giving the latter the excuse that no other policy is possible for her while she is not fully armed. It is difficult to forecast Rumania's probable attitude if she is sooner or later faced with a more or less disguised ultimatum from Germany or the U.S.S.R.

At the same time, it would seem that the recent conference at Belgrade has strengthened the bonds between the countries of the Balkan Entente. Contacts between the General Staffs are now being established.

* Italian policy is, in fact, governed by a number of considerations: the Italian nation shrinks from going to war and from fighting at the side of Germany against the Allies; there is a haunting fear of Bolshevism, for which doctrine the mediocre and anxious living conditions of the Italian people might pave the way; the country is incapable of sustaining prolonged warfare; there is a fear of Germany; and, finally, there is a fear that the collapse of the Hitler régime would mean the end of the Fascist régime. In the circumstances, it will be wise to assume that Italy will avoid being drawn in for as long as marked successes on one side or the other do not give her an assurance that she can take sides at small risk to herself.

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SWEDEN AND NORWAY.

In both countries, public opinion generally favours the Allies. The brutal aggression against Finland and the fear that they may suffer a similar fate has awakened a feeling of solidarity with the last named country and a determination to resist further Soviet encroachment. Nevertheless, the fear of provoking Germany into intervention has led to a timorous attitude on the part of the two Governments; since the signature of the Russo-Finnish peace treaty, both Sweden and Norway appear inclined to withdraw into a form of jealous neutrality which is likely to be more severe towards the Allies than towards Germany.

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PART II.COMPARISON OF THE COURSES OF MILITARY ACTION OPEN TO THE BELLIGERENTS.A. GERMANY'S MILITARY PROSPECTS.

As the comparison of the general position of the belligerents made in the previous chapter shows, Germany will, in 1940, maintain her present marked superiority of means, in respect both of land effectives and of air armaments considered as a whole. Nevertheless, her margin of superiority will diminish month by month and it is probable that, in the Spring of 1941, there will be a reversal of the position to the advantage of the Allies, in armaments if not in effectives. Germany may therefore attempt to force a decision by military means before 1941.

What military courses of action are open to her in the light of her general position and of her present superiority of means?

It can be assumed that the German High Command will be compelled to earmark 15 or 20 divisions permanently, in addition to forces of occupation in the strict sense, in Bohemia, Moravia and Poland and along her new frontier with Russia.

On the Western front, owing to the cover afforded by the fortifications of the Siegfried Line and, on the flanks, by the neutral buffers of Holland, Belgium and Switzerland, the German Command requires no more than 70 or 80 divisions to meet any possible large scale attack by the Allies, such an attack being necessarily frontal.

Accordingly, some 70 or 80 divisions remain available for offensive action.

Operations in the West.

The forces available to the German High Command for action in a selected field are sufficiently large to allow of a deep offensive on the Western front, from which important strategical results might be expected. Two main objectives could be envisaged:-

(a) Germany might seek to engage in large scale air and naval warfare against the United Kingdom, after invading Holland and Belgium so as to secure the mouths of the Scheldt and gain a footing on the Flemish coast. In that event, and granted an initial success, the German army would take up a defensive position opposite the Franco-British forces, which, for their part, would on this hypothesis have marched into Belgium. The operation would call for the employment of practically the whole of the forces Germany can spare for a large scale offensive; nevertheless, once it was complete, it would still leave adequate strategical reserves at the disposal of the German Command.

(b) Germany might seek a decision by defeating the Franco-British armies:

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- (i) either by effecting a frontal breach of the fortified system in Alsace and Lorraine,
- (ii) or, by a flanking movement on both wings, whether or not combined with a frontal attack on that fortified system.

A breach of the fortified system in Alsace-Lorraine would call for very considerable effectives and, even more important, material resources. No exact information is available regarding Germany's material reserves. It is unlikely that the German armies possess sufficient artillery equipment to make a breach on a wide front; on the other hand, heavy bombing from the air can be counted upon. Taking all factors into consideration, this operation appears exceedingly risky. It is unlikely that the German High Command would attempt it, unless it possesses newly invented means of warfare of a nature likely to bring success.

A flanking movement, particularly through Belgium, appears more likely. It holds out the prospect of easier and more appreciable gains, at any rate in the early stages. It would also call for considerable effectives, but would require less substantial material means. Further, any territorial gains bringing the German force nearer to the Flemish coast would improve the prospects of an air attack on Great Britain, while the over-running of Belgium as far as Antwerp would make it easier to deal subsequently with the Netherlands. In this respect the operation is somewhat similar to that envisaged in the preceding paragraph, the only difference being that in the previous case the original intention would be to make a direct thrust at the Franco-British armies.

A flanking movement through Switzerland would obviously be less repaying, from the German point of view, in the absence of Italian support.

Operations in Northern Europe.

German action in the North of Europe might have the following aims:-

- (i) To secure undisputed possession of the Swedish iron ore fields;
- (ii) To gain possession of the seaboard of Southern Norway, in order to establish naval and air bases at the shortest possible distance from Scotland, the Orkneys and the Shetlands.

The possession of such bases would at the same time make it possible for Germany easily to outflank the Northern extremity of the Allied blockade control, while making it easier for German or neutral merchant ships to reach harbours in Germany.

From 10 to 20 divisions would be required for operations of this character. One result would be greatly to lengthen the German lines of communication, which would consequently become very vulnerable to attack by the British air forces.

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Operations in the South-East.

German action in the South-east of Europe might be undertaken for political, or economic, or strategical motives. Politically, Germany might seek to add to her prestige by easy successes, to draw Italy into the conflict, or to oppose the designs of Soviet Russia. Economically, she might be forced to take action if the Allies succeeded, by means of commercial negotiations, in depriving Germany of the raw materials which she is now abundantly supplied with by the Balkan countries. Strategically, she might endeavour to forestall possible Allied intervention in the Balkans, or to impede the constitution of a common Balkan front, or again to gain access to the Straits and the Aegean, in order thereafter to attack vital French and British lines of communication in the Mediterranean.

Summary.

Germany is in a position to take the initiative in operations on the Western front, or in Northern Europe, or in the Balkan Peninsula. She could engage in deep large scale operations simultaneously on the Western front and in the Balkans; by aiming at restricted objectives she could take action simultaneously on several fronts.

Nevertheless, her fear of having to fight on two fronts, her desire not to overtax her transport system, her concern lest hostilities should spread to areas of raw material supply from which she is at present receiving large quantities of commodities, and lastly the fear that she may add to the number of her opponents, may all induce Germany not to bring about a further extension of the area of hostilities.

It is, therefore, impossible to rule out completely the possibility that in the next few months, the German High Command will pursue its previous general war strategy, as evidenced throughout the winter. In that event the waiting policy will continue on the land fronts, while the war in the air and under the sea will be brought to its maximum pitch against Great Britain.

B. MILITARY PROSPECTS OF THE ALLIES.Land Forces.

The Western theatre of war is and must remain the principal area of Allied operations, since the Allied armies have as their first task to preserve the integrity of French soil, whatever developments arise. Further, France and Great Britain must never lose sight of the fact that their frontier lies along the Rhine; that must be the first general objective of the offensive which the bulk of the Franco-British forces will undertake when they are ready for it.

In the existing political circumstances, with Italy a neutral, the forces available to the Allies in the Spring of 1940 are sufficient to enable them to carry out their initial task, whether the enemy makes a frontal attack between the Rhine and the Moselle or invades Belgium.

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On the other hand their forces are not sufficient to allow them to undertake large scale offensives on their own initiative, more particularly since they do not yet possess the material equipment required to effect a frontal breach of the Siegfried Line between the Rhine and the Moselle. Nevertheless, they will be in a position, if required, to go to the assistance of the Belgian and Swiss armies, and to stiffen their resistance on their own soil on a line as far forward within the territory of either country as circumstances permit at the time.

As regards external theatres of war, it would be possible for the Allies - assuming an unchanged general political situation, with Italy abiding by her present attitude of non-belligerency - to constitute a force of some 10 divisions by withdrawals from effectives in France, North Africa and the United Kingdom.[¶]

Such a force would be insufficient to allow the Allies to undertake operations single-handed in new theatres of war. Nevertheless, it could be used as a contribution to, or in completing, the strength, both in effectives and equipment, of the Allies and of any associated countries which may join them in the conflict.

Forces so constituted should in particular prove adequate for the following purposes:-

- (a) To provide Sweden with the number of divisions she requires to defend the iron ore fields in Lapland against Russia coming from the East and Germany moving up the Gulf of Bothnia, as also to defend Central Sweden against a German force landing on the southern shores of the peninsula;
- (b) To furnish the Commander in Chief of the French forces in the Middle East with the number of divisions he considers essential for the purpose of amalgamating and combining into one cohesive instrument of defence against aggression the armies - consisting of from 60 to 100 divisions - of those Balkan countries which we may hope to rally to our cause.

It must, however, be added that it would be impossible to conduct two or more of the above operations simultaneously. In particular, the Allies would not be in a position to pursue large-scale operations in Northern Europe and in the Balkans at the same time. Only if Italy were definitely to come in on our side, or at least provide adequate guarantees of her absolute neutrality, could the Allies undertake two such large-scale operations simultaneously. Even then, problems of sea transport would

[¶] And also in due course from Egypt, once forces now on their way from Australia, New Zealand and India have been brought together there.

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arise which, as is shown below, would be exceedingly difficult to solve.

Air Forces.

A comparison of the air strength on either side as at the beginning of April shows that Germany has a marked superiority in bomber strength (in the proportion of 2.3 to 1), while the Allies have a slight advantage in fighter strength (in the proportion of 1.6 to 1.4).

The Allied fighter strength is, however, based half in Great Britain and half in France. Consequently, it has to defend an appreciable wider front than the German fighter strength, and cannot claim to bar the way in every case to enemy bomber attacks. At the same time it can inflict such losses upon the enemy as to compel the latter in part to refrain from daylight attacks.

The Allied deficiency in bomber aircraft and the heavy burden resting upon their fighter strength compel them in practice to concentrate their efforts on the Western Front, and to limit withdrawals of aircraft for action in other theatres of war to very small proportions or to very brief periods.

Although this difficulty can in part be overcome in the case of operations in Northern Europe, owing to the fact that the heavy bombers required can still in part operate from bases in the United Kingdom, no such advantage would exist in the case of Allied intervention in the Balkans, or, even more obviously, in the case of Allied air action against the Caucasian oil deposits. Here the main difficulty would be that the bomber forces required could only in part be drawn from the Franco-British air forces at present stationed in Syria, Egypt, Palestine and Iraq; the balance must necessarily be obtained from France or Great Britain or possibly from French North Africa - but here again the problem of Italy's attitude would arise.

Naval Forces.

Allied strength at sea is adequate to ensure the maintenance of freedom of communications and the interception of enemy traffic.

It is also sufficient to enable the Allies to engage in combined naval operations either in Northern Europe or in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea, subject, in the latter case, to assurance of absolute neutrality on the part of Italy.

On the other hand, the Allied fleets are not in a position to undertake active operations at sea in two distinct areas simultaneously.

Lastly, the shipping required to transport an Expeditionary Force of any size would be so considerable as to make it impossible for the Allies to transport a force simultaneously to Scandinavia and to the Balkans.

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Even the simultaneous maintenance of such forces once transported would create serious difficulties, in view of the existing calls upon our shipping for a variety of maintenance purposes.

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In the light of the above availabilities on land, in the air and at sea, what forms of action are open to the Allies?

Operations on the Western Front.

It has been shown that the resources at the disposal of the Allies are insufficient to allow them to take the initiative in operations of a decisive character on the Western front. All investigations of the position point to the conclusion that an attempted breach of the Siegfried Line cannot be contemplated until the Spring of 1941, and then only if preparations are made forthwith to have all the necessary resources available by that date.

Hence the Allies will only be in a position to undertake, between the Rhine and the Moselle local offensives with limited objectives designed to pave the way for subsequent operations or to impede any action the enemy might be contemplating.

If, however, Germany invades Belgium (and/or Holland and Luxembourg), the Allies could with advantage undertake a counter offensive against an enemy who would then be facing them on open terrain. The Luxembourg-Belgium-South Holland field of battle is the only one offering a possibility of wearing down the enemy and obtaining a decisive result, without the added difficulty of fortified systems and series of obstacles. For the purpose of a French counter offensive against forces in possession of the area between the Albert Canal and the Meuse above Liège, a flanking movement could be effected North of the Albert Canal, while the Meuse obstacle could be circumvented directly by an advance between the Ardennes and the Moselle.

As the Allies have adopted ab initio a waiting policy on the Western front and as they have decided not to enter Belgium unless invited to do so by that country, or unless the Germans should do so first^(*), they can only take the military initiative in Northern Europe, in the Balkans, or in the Caucasus.

Operations in Northern Europe.

Allied intervention in the Scandinavian countries might be designed to achieve one of the following objects:-

- (a) To defeat any further Soviet campaigns against

* Or again, in certain circumstances, if Germany should invade Holland.

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Finland and in this manner - perhaps in combination with action in the Caucasus - to bring about the more or less complete collapse of the U.S.S.R.;

(b) To seize the iron ore deposits in Lapland and thus cut off one vital source of raw material supplies to Germany;

(c) As a consequence of the above two developments, to compel Germany to intervene actively and to face her with the necessity of immobilising and using up some 20 divisions, together with considerable air effectives.

These operations in the Northern area would call for some 10 Allied divisions.

Operations in the Balkans.

Allied operations in the Balkans might have as their aim:-

(a) As a minimum, to deny Germany access to the Straits and the Aegean, should she be the first to intervene in the Balkans;

(b) As a maximum, to compel her to use up forces on a very wide front, by securing the active participation on the Allied side of a large number of Balkan divisions, while simultaneously cutting Germany off from valuable sources of raw materials.

These operations would call for from 10 to 15 Allied divisions.

Operations in the Caucasus.

France and the United Kingdom are at war with Germany, but not with the U.S.S.R. Germany is their principal adversary.

Nevertheless, if Germany is allowed sufficient time to organise and exploit the U.S.S.R. methodically, she will have fully adapted herself to conditions of warfare; as a result, neither side will be in a position to gain a decisive victory before many months and perhaps years have elapsed, assuming that no internal collapse intervenes within Germany. (Such a collapse is, of course, possible, but cannot be taken into consideration by the Military Command.)

An effort must, therefore, be made to break away from the state of equilibrium in which the belligerents are likely to find themselves.

One of the main weapons in the hands of the Allies is the blockade system. Germany is already fully blockaded in the West, but not in the East, the West, or the South.

One of the means open to France and Great Britain to complete the siege of Germany is to bring about and hasten the collapse of Russia. This possibility is open to the

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Allies, as a consequence of the Soviet attack upon Finland, of the world-wide condemnation of that attack and of the sentence passed upon it by the Assembly and Council of the League of Nations.

The actual procedure would consist in rendering the Caucasian oil supplies useless by means of military action directed against Batum and Baku. (x)

Allied intervention in the Black Sea and the Caucasus might, therefore, be aimed at the following objectives:-

- (a) As a minimum, to cut off German communications in the Black Sea;
- (b) As a maximum, to throw Soviet economy into confusion and thereby complete the economic siege of Germany on the Eastern side.

The three forms of external intervention examined above would have as their certain consequence to compel the enemy not only to utilise his effectives, but also to use up the various stores and reserves he has constituted. The result would, therefore, be considerably to strengthen the efficacy of the blockade by indirect means.

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- Once the blockade has been rendered effective in the East, the economic seige can be completed by cutting off Swedish ore supplies and deliveries of oil from Rumania. Germany will then have to face the alternative either of yielding or of making some desperate effort to break the iron ring which surrounds her by launching an attack.

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PART III.LINE OF CONDUCT (OR PLAN OF WAR) TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE ALLIES.A. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS.

The paramount aim of the Allies is still the defeat of Germany. That object must be simultaneously sought:-

- (i) on the military plane - the German armies must be beaten;
- (ii) in the economic sphere;
- (iii) politically; and
- (iv) on the moral plane.

On the military plane the Allies must achieve superiority in land and air armaments, preserve their superiority at sea, and also, if possible, gain a preponderance in effectives.

Superiority in land and air armaments may be hoped for towards the spring of 1941. In order to preserve superiority at sea the Allies must proceed actively with current building and reach an early decision regarding new construction. The completion of ships of the line and of anti-submarine vessels must especially be speeded up.

As to preponderance in land effectives, this can only be achieved if the French and British can win the support and collaboration of other countries (Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, the Scandinavian and Balkan countries, etc.).

Under existing circumstances it is not possible for the Allies to take the offensive in a decisive sense on the Western Front, except if developments at present unforeseen occur, more particularly in connection with the situation of Germany.

On the other hand the Allies can endeavour at once to wear down the German effectives by opening new fronts and by bringing into line at their side the armed forces of new Allies or associated countries.

In the economic sphere the Allies must attempt:

- (i) to complete the siege of Germany by endeavouring to seize the sources and supply of raw materials essential to and still received by her;
- (ii) to compel her to use up her reserves;
- (iii) to accelerate the already apparent deterioration of her means of transport.

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Politically and on the moral plane, active and skilful propoganda must be conducted with the object of:

- (1) causing and hastening the process of internal disorganisation within Germany;
- (ii) inducing neutrals to declare themselves against the Reich, first on the human and moral plane and next in the economic, political and military senses.

A comparison of the general position of the belligerents reveals that Germany can be compared to a fortress, partly surrounded, within which the besieged continue to pile up means of defence, arms and supplies in order to sustain a prolonged siege.

If internal consumption does not increase as a consequence of active military operations, and if the Reich is not deprived of any of its existing European sources of supply, it will certainly, owing to the stocks it has accumulated and to self-imposed restrictions, be in a position to hold out for a long time despite the naval blockade.

Hence, until the Allies succeed in building up an instrument of war allowing them to effect a breach in the German ramparts in the West, they can only contemplate, as means of offensive action:

- (1) the completion of their siege of the German stronghold by interference with external sources of raw material supplies (U.S.S.R., Swedish ore, Rumanian oil) and by a general interception of such supplies;
- (ii) Obliging the enemy to engage part of his forces in new and outlying theatres of war, so as to compel him to use up forces on new fronts and to increase the strain on his transport system.

B. CONCRETE PROPOSALS FOR ACTION.

In the circumstances, and with due allowance for the relative possibilities of action of either side, the attitude to be observed by the Allies and the operations they may be lead to undertake in various areas of hostility, both existing and potential, may be defined as follows:

IN THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY SPHERES:

Western Front.

- (a) Italy not a belligerent.

Until the means required for the Allies to take the offensive have been brought together, the following tasks face them:

- (1) the Franco-British land forces will have as their essential duty to defend the integrity of French soil;

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- (ii) the air forces will provide for the protection by air of French and British soil and will take part in the land battle when it comes;
- (iii) the naval forces will preserve freedom of communications in the North Sea and North Atlantic Ocean.

Land operations will be specially directed at the following aims:

- (i) to immobilise any German attack on national soil;
- (ii) to give the fullest possible support to the Belgian, Dutch and Swiss Armies in the event of German invasion or if the Governments concerned appeal for help;[#]
- (iii) to seize any opportunity of proceeding to a counter-offensive presented by our opponents;
- (iv) to engage in local offensive actions in so far as means allow, in order to improve our fortified position or our advanced posts and to enable our troops to gain a clear ascendancy over the enemy.

(b) Italy hostile.

The Allied land forces would have as their main task to maintain the integrity of metropolitan and colonial territories; the air forces would similarly protect Allied, and in the first place metropolitan, territories, and the naval forces would maintain Allied freedom of communications in the North Sea, the Northern Atlantic and the Western Mediterranean. Our initial efforts should be aimed at Italy's African possessions, Abyssinia and Lybia.

Northern Europe.

Here the problems are at once political and military.

On the political plane the Allies should endeavour to obtain Swedish and Norwegian co-operation in order that they can render assistance to Finland in the event of further aggression, and in order to exert indirect action on Germany.

In consequence it will be necessary to determine the attitude of the Allies towards the U.S.S.R.

[#] We have everything to gain by an opening of the Belgian theatre of operations before the Germans enter Belgium.

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On the military plane everything must be prepared so that if the war spreads to Scandinavia, the Allies will dispose of the forces required to undertake the proposed operations.

If Allied action in Northern Europe were to have the result of causing Germany to invade Sweden in order to seize the iron ore fields, or Norway in order to gain naval or air bases, the Allies would have to face the consequences.

Thus the operations which we may be led to undertake in Northern Europe should aim at the following results:

- (i) as a minimum, to deprive Germany of iron ore supplies from Lapland and of naval and air bases on the Norwegian sea-board;
- (ii) if necessary, to preserve the integrity of Swedish territory to the North of the Gotha Canal line.

Balkans.

On the political plane the Allies should endeavour to bring about the formation of a bloc of Balkan countries determined to oppose all aggression. Apart from assistance to Turkey in the defence of the Straits and of her frontiers, the Allies can only enter the Balkans in force if they receive concrete assurances of Italian neutrality.

On the military plane the Allies must be ready to act with the necessary forces to secure the following objectives:

- (i) as a minimum, to provide in concert with Greece and Turkey for the defence of all Greek territory south of a line running from Albania to the mouth of the Struma on the Aegean, of Turkish Thrace and of the Straits.
- (ii) if possible, to stiffen Yugoslav and Roumanian resistance so as to compel Germany to use up her resources on an extended front, assuming that these two countries are on our side.

Caucasus.

On the political plane the Allies should endeavour to secure Turkish, and if possible Iranian, collaboration in a Franco-British military action against the Soviet Caucasus.

On the military plane the operations undertaken should be aimed at the following objectives:

- (i) to stop all sea transport of oil through Batum, Poti and possibly Tuapse;
- (ii) to destroy installations at Batum and Baku - refineries, storage tanks, pipelines, stations and harbour facilities.

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The main form of action should be exercised by the Franco-British Air Forces. Conditions will be the most favourable if the Allies can secure the co-operation of Turkey.

Action by air may be supplemented, in that event, by a Turkish land operation designed to take advantage of any weakness in the Russian resistance in order to occupy Batum and its installations permanently.

The Allied Navies would give support to air and land operations aimed against Batum.

At the same time the employment of Franco-British Air Forces for operations against Batum and Baku would make it impossible, at any rate with the present level of our resources, simultaneously to employ our expeditionary forces in the Balkans.

When the time comes a choice will therefore have to be made. This choice will be governed:

- (i) by developments in the Northern countries, e.g., by the necessity of assisting Finland, if she is again the victim of Soviet aggression, by precipitating the collapse of Russia.
- (ii) or by Germany's attitude. If the latter should herself intervene in the Balkans, it would become necessary at least to provide in good time for the defence of Salonika and the Straits, with all the necessary resources, including in whole or part those already earmarked for action in the Caucasus.

IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE:

Here the Allies should seek to strengthen and complete their blockade measures against German economy:

At sea:

Increased pressure by the Allies Navies upon the trade of neutral countries through which Germany still obtains supplies. In particular, every violation of international law by Germany or Russia should be met by appropriate counter-action.

In the air:

Possible action against German sea and land communications (harbours, shipyards, railway goods yards, reserves of rolling-stock, repair shops, etc.)

On land:

Application of a large-scale plan of sabotage, obstruction and demolition designed to paralyse German economic activity and in particular German commercial exchanges with contiguous countries.

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IN THE MORAL SPHERE:

Here the Allies must resolutely take the offensive and endeavour, by active and many-sided forms of propaganda:

- (i) to destroy such prestige as Germany still enjoys in neutral countries by reason of her military strength;
- (ii) to exploit within Germany existing dissent, lack of allegiance to the Régime, economic difficulties, and the hatred of Germany present among oppressed populations.

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M.R.(J)(40)(S)3.

10th APRIL 1940.

COPY NO. 29

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

FRANCO-BRITISH AIR CO-OPERATION IN THE EVENT OF AN INVASION BY GERMANY LIMITED TO HOLLAND.

Note by the Secretary.

The attached Note by the French Representatives on the Allied Military Committee is relevant to the following conclusion agreed to at the Meeting between the British Chiefs of Staff and the French High Command in London on 27th March:-

"That, without Belgian co-operation, the only assistance that could be given to Holland would be by naval or air forces, and that the French and British Naval and Air Staffs should work out detailed plans for assisting Holland in such a contingency."

(Signed) A.W. CLARKE.

Secretary.

Gwydyr House, S.W.1.

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TRANSLATION.

Allied Military Committee.

[D.F. No. 116.]

10th April, 1940.

FRANCO-BRITISH CO-OPERATION IN THE AIR IN THE EVENT
OF A GERMAN INVASION LIMITED TO HOLLAND.

(Reference: Paper No. M.R.(J)(40)(S)1, dated 8th April, 1940).

Note by the French Representatives.

In the document quoted above, the British Representatives examined the position which would arise if Germany invaded Holland but not Belgium. They proposed that a Franco-British plan for air action should be drawn up with the object of delaying the enemy's progress and of allowing the Allied land forces to occupy their allotted advance positions.

A similar question has just been raised by the French High Command, which has now transmitted to the French Representatives preliminary proposals regarding the suggested plan of action.

The plan envisages two hypotheses and proposes the following Franco-British joint action in the air in each case:

Case 1: Holland offers no resistance and submits to occupation;

Case 2: Holland decides to resist invasion.

In the first case the main task of the Allied air forces would appear to be that of attacking air bases in Holland once they have been occupied by the enemy.

Taking into consideration present possibilities of action, it is thought that the French Air Force might make itself responsible for attacking the three following aerodromes:

FLUSHING, NERHOVEN, EINDHOVEN.

In the second case the main initial object would be to attack the lines of communication so as to give the Dutch enough time to carry out flooding operations.

The French Air Force might, in this case, make itself responsible for attacks upon the available bridges across the Meuse between Roermond and Grave, namely, three road bridges and four railway bridges situated between those two towns and constituting six separate objectives.

In both cases action by the French Air Force would take place at night only.

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Action of this character might, however, be fitted into a general attack by Franco-British air forces against air bases within German territory, i.e. those lying within the area at present allotted to the French Air Force. In particular, attacks might be concentrated upon the area enclosed by:

- (a) the line running through Krefeld, Duisberg, Hagen and Paderborn;
- (b) the meridian passing through Paderborn;
- (c) the parallel passing through Frankfurt;
- (d) the western frontier of Germany.

The French delegation would be grateful if the British Representatives could inform it as soon as possible whether the above proposals are approved, and acquaint it with any comments to which the proposals may give rise.

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M.R.(J.)(40)(S)4.
(Also D.F. No. 119)

COPY NO 27

11TH APRIL, 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

GERMAN INVASION OF HOLLAND.

(Reference: Paper No. M.R.(J.)(40)(S)1).

Note by the French Representatives.

1. General Gamelin concurs with the views of the British Chiefs of Staff. General Georges has been instructed to settle with General Lord Gort the execution of the forward movement, with due regard to circumstances at the time and to Belgium's attitude.

2. General Gamelin is at present in contact with the Dutch General Staff through the Dutch Military Attaché in Paris. The latter has informed him of his Government's intention to request the United Kingdom to despatch one division to Zeeland in the event of a German invasion.

The reply made to the Dutch Military Attaché was that the possibility of a German invasion was already provided for, and that one division from General Giraud's Army would advance into Dutch territory to the southern banks of the Scheldt. This division would naturally be called upon to occupy Zeeland.

General Gamelin has asked the Dutch High Command to provide facilities for the crossing of the Scheldt.

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M.R.(J.)(40)(S)5.
(Also D.F. No. 122).

COPY NO. 28

13TH APRIL, 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

OPERATIONS IN NORWAY.

(Previous Reference: Paper No. M.R.(J.)(40)46).

Note by the French Representatives.

1. General Gamelin wishes again to urge upon the British Chiefs of Staff the importance of advising the Norwegian Army to carry out the fullest demolitions of lines of communication and to engage in guerilla warfare.
2. He would be glad to be informed whether the British Chiefs of Staff have considered, in connection with the forces despatched to Narvik, the steps which should be taken, if required, to occupy the railway line to Lulea, the iron ore mines and the electric power stations, and also the measures required to destroy certain installations if such a course should subsequently be considered necessary.

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M.R.(J)(40)(S)6.

15th APRIL 1940.

COPY NO. 26

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

FRANCO-BRITISH AIR CO-OPERATION IN THE EVENT OF AN INVASION BY GERMANY LIMITED TO HOLLAND.

(Reference: Paper No. M.R.(J)(40)(S)3 and M.R.(40)86th Mtg., Item 3.)

Note by the Secretary.

A copy of the Enclosure to this Note, which is in reply to the French proposals contained in Paper No. M.R.(J)(40)(S)3, was handed direct to the French Representatives at the meeting of the Allied Military Committee on Monday, 15th April, 1940.

(Signed) A.W. CLARKE.

Secretary.

Gwydyr House, S.W.1.

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ENCLOSURE.

FRENCH MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

FRANCO-BRITISH AIR CO-OPERATION IN THE EVENT OF AN
INVASION BY GERMANY LIMITED TO HOLLAND.

Paper No. M.R.(J)(40)(S)3 dated 10th April, 1940 contained a note by the French Representatives dealing with what air action the French High Command proposed to take if Germany invaded Holland and not Belgium.

This note was examined by the British Air Staff. In view, however, of the decision of the British and French High Commands to enter Belgium with land forces immediately it becomes apparent that Germany is about to enter Holland, the Air Staff feel that the situation previously envisaged would now be changed.

In these circumstances the French and British air forces in France will act under the direct command of General Gamelin through General Georges in accordance with previous arrangements.

The British light bomber forces operating from England will act in the manner already agreed upon, namely, by attacking the advancing German columns. The role of the British heavy bomber force will be decided in the light of events at the time.

(Signed) C.E.H. MEDHURST.

British Military Representative (Air).

4th April, 1940.

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M.R.(J.)(40)(S)7.

COPY NO. 28

15TH APRIL, 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

OPERATIONS IN NORWAY:
VIEWS OF THE FRENCH HIGH COMMAND
AND FRENCH FORCES AVAILABLE.

Note by the Secretary.

The attached is a translation of a note, communicated by the French Representatives on the Allied Military Committee, expressing views of the French High Command regarding the operations in Norway, and stating the French forces which will be made available.

The attention of the Secretary to the Chiefs of Staff Committee has been drawn to the attached as a matter of urgency, in order that the British Chiefs of Staff may be informed without delay.

(Signed) A. W. CLARKE

Secretary.

Gwydyr House, S.W.1.

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ENCLOSURE.

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TRANSLATION.ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.D.F. No.125.

15th April, 1940.

MOST SECRET.OPERATIONS IN NORWAY.Note by the French Representatives.

1. The French War Committee, at their Meeting held on 13th April, recognised the capital importance of an operation against Trondheim.

2. General Gamelin's personal view is that this operation is of paramount importance; once Trondheim is in Allied hands, Narvik can be securely covered, and communications with Sweden maintained.

He also wishes to draw particular attention to the important railway junction at Domas (?Dombas). If Allied troops can be established in the neighbourhood in the near future, it will be possible to prevent a German thrust northwards and to oppose any subsequent enemy movement towards the Swedish defensive line of the Lakes.

3. The French High Command agree with the British Chiefs of Staff that General Audet's detachment should be regarded as a reserve force to be used wherever circumstances dictate.

4. Both from the point of view of command and from that of supply, it is very desirable that the French Expeditionary Force should not be split up to any considerable extent.

5. It has been decided, in view of its size, to describe the Belhouart detachment as a Light Division.

6. According to present plans, the French Expeditionary Force taken as a whole will be the equivalent of one large Army Corps, consisting of the following:-

- 3 light divisions.
- 1 Polish Brigade.
- 1 contingent of Foreign Legionaries.
- 1 group of mountain artillery held as a general service reserve.

Details of the composition of these forces have already been sent to the War Office.

7. With a view to arranging for maintenance bases for the French Expeditionary Forces on British soil, an officer from the 4eme Bureau of French General Headquarters will be arriving in London in the near future.

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M.R.(J)(40)(S)8.
(Also D.F. No. 128).

19th APRIL, 1940.

COPY NO. 29

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

OPERATIONS IN SCANDINAVIA.

Note by the French Representatives.

General Gamelin shares the views expressed by the French Admiralty that it would be desirable to avoid holding French convoys in the Clyde.

At the same time he wishes to urge that everything should be done to proceed rapidly, failing which there is a danger that the Allies will be forestalled by the enemy on the passes of the range of mountains between Trondheim and Lillehammer, to the vital importance of which General Gamelin has already drawn attention. Once the enemy is established on those passes it will be very difficult to dislodge him. It should not be forgotten that the information available shows that the Germans have two mountain divisions in Norway.

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Also D.F. No. 129.

COPY NO. 32

20TH APRIL, 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

OPERATIONS IN SCANDINAVIA.

Note by the French Representatives.

TRANSLATION

The transport of the French 'A' Detachment is proceeding and the last units are to sail from Brest on 23rd April.

General Gamelin wishes to draw the attention of the British Command to the fact that it will then have at its disposal forces sufficient to render an occupation of the mountainous region to the south of Trondhejm possible. The British Command will thus be in a position:

1. To provide cover for the operations against Trondhejm, namely, the capture of the port and the flanking movements from north and south, for which very satisfactory preparations have been made; and
2. To resist any possible enemy thrust from the south designed to relieve Trondhejm.

General Gamelin wishes again to stress the great importance, from the point of view of subsequent operations, of occupying these mountain passes, and the desirability of entrusting General Audet with the direction of the covering operations to the south of Trondhejm.

As from 23rd April, the embarkation of the 2nd Light Division of Chasseurs can be begun. This Division will therefore be able to take part in the covering operations either by landing at Trondhejm or, if necessary, in the Aandalnes area. From both these points roads are available leading to Dombas and to the road and railway connecting Kongsvinger and Trondhejm through Roros.

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M.R.(J)(40)(8)10.
(Also D.F. No. 132).

23RD APRIL, 1940.

COPY NO. 30

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

SCANDINAVIAN OPERATIONS: PROVISION OF FRENCH AIR FORCES.

Note by the French Representatives.

The General Commander in Chief of the French Forces has detailed the following units for the composition of the French land forces in Norway:-

- 1 Light Division already in process of embarkation.
- 1 Polish Detachment and a half brigade of the Foreign Legion, which are ready to embark.
- 2 Other Light Divisions in course of formation.

The General Commander in Chief of the French Air Forces must therefore forthwith prepare the organisation and despatch of the necessary air forces to meet the initial requirements of the French Expeditionary Corps, that is to say:-

- (a) One or two army co-operation squadrons, (eight aircraft of the type Potez 63 to each squadron).
- (b) One group of fighters (26 aircraft of the type Morane 406 to a group).

Although these air forces could not be despatched until after the taking of Trondheim and the preparation of landing grounds for their use, it is essential that preparations for this operation should be undertaken at once. The transport of the aircraft could only be effected by sea.*

* In this connection the French Air Staff proposes to effect the transport of the aircraft in the carrier "Taste".

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With this object in view the General Commander in Chief of the French Air Forces requests the British High Command to be good enough to:-

- (1) Include the above mentioned French air forces in the plan for finding aerodromes, and the supply of petrol and oil which the British Command has no doubt made.
- (11) Communicate such information as may be at their disposal in regard to:-
 - (a) the disembarkation of aircraft material in the ports.
 - (b) the towing of the aircraft from the port to the aerodromes.
 - (c) the general conditions in which the aeronautical services in regard to the following are to be organised:- supplies, wireless transmissions, meteorological information.

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3RD MAY, 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

ALLIED ACTION IN THE EVENT OF A GERMAN ATTACK ON THE NETHERLAND ISLANDS.

Note by the Secretary.

The Supreme War Council, at their meeting on the 23rd April, 1940, (S.W.C. (40) 4th Meeting, second session, resolution 4) agreed that in the event of a German aggression against Holland, or against Belgium, or against both these countries, the British Air Force should be authorised, without further consultation between the Allied Governments, or the Allied High Commands, immediately to attack marshalling yards and oil refineries in the Ruhr.

The British War Cabinet have agreed that an attack by Germany upon the Netherlands Islands would constitute "a German aggression against Holland".

The British Chiefs of Staff consider that the occupation of the Netherland Islands would merely be the first step in a German occupation of Holland, and they are anxious to be reassured that the moment the Germans move in the direction of such an occupation the French High Command are in agreement that all the action envisaged in the event of a direct German invasion of Holland would be put into operation, viz:-

- (a) Air action should be initiated against objectives in Germany, on the basis of agreed plans.
- (b) The Allied Armies should advance into Belgium in accordance with existing plans.
- (c) Naval forces and medium bombers should attack points of landing and enemy transports.
- (d) The various plans already prepared to deny Dutch and Belgian resources to the enemy should be put into immediate effect.
- (e) The Royal Marine Operation should be carried out.

The British Chiefs of Staff would be glad to know if the French High Command agree.

(Signed) A.W. CLARKE.

Secretary.

Gwydyr House, S.W.1.

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8TH MAY, 1940.

COPY NO. 25

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

THE MAJOR STRATEGY OF THE WAR.

FRENCH WAR PLAN FOR HOSTILITIES WITH ITALY.

(References: Papers Nos., M.R. (J)(40)(S)2
M.R. (J)(40)63 and M.R. (40)103rd Mtg., Item 2)

Note by the French Representatives.

At its meeting on 6th May the French "Comite de Guerre" approved the following proposals of the French High Command regarding a war plan in the event of hostilities with Italy.

" In the event of war with Italy the initial task of the land forces shall be:-

- (i) To defend the frontier of the Alps and to improve our initial situation there to the fullest possible extent;
- (ii) To defend Tunisia, French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa and gradually to pass to the offensive against Tripolitania in concert with the action of the British forces in Egypt;
- (iii) To put at the disposal of the Navy such forces as are required to reinforce the Greek bases;
- (iv) If circumstances so require, to participate with the Turks in their operations against the Dodecanese.
- (v) As soon as the position in regard to naval communications permits, to support our Balkan Allies, using Thrace and Salonika as bases, according to the state of development of the operations.

The initial task of the naval forces shall be, in concert with the British forces:-

- (i) To close the Mediterranean outlets at Gibraltar, Suez, and the Dardanelles.
- (ii) To secure complementary bases in the Mediterranean (Crete, Melos and Salamis).

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- (iii) To interfere with Italian communications with Tripolitania;
- (iv) To take action against all vulnerable points held by the enemy (and in particular, possibly to take action against the Balearic Islands if the Italians instal themselves there;
- (v) To assist the Turks in the conquest of the Dodecanese;
- (vi) To assure, as soon as it becomes possible, the transport of French forces from Syria to Salonika.

The initial task of the air forces shall be:-

- (i) To participate in the operations undertaken by the land forces and, where appropriate, by the naval forces;
- (ii) In suitable circumstances to take action against Italian/military centres in the valley of the Po (subject to special authorisation by the "Comite de Guerre").

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The initial task of the Colonial forces shall be:-

- (i) To take part in the operations against Tripolitania;
- (ii) To defend Jibuti and to participate in any operations which may be undertaken in Abyssinia (support of an insurrection)."

The French Delegation wish to draw the attention of the British Representatives to the highly secret character of this document, and to request that its circulation be limited to that accorded to document D.F. No. 113 (i.e. Paper No. M.R.(J)(40)(8)2).

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M.R.(J)(40)(S)13.
(Also D.F. No.164.)

COPY NO. 25

15th MAY 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

USE OF SYMBOLS IN DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE POSSIBLE OCCUPATION OF SALONIKA AND OF GREEK BASES.

(Reference: M.R.(40)118th Mtg., Item 6.)

Note by the French Representatives.

The French High Command suggest that, in order to avoid all risk of leakages, the following symbols should be used in all documents relating to plans for the occupation of Salonika and other Greek bases:-

SALONIKA	to be referred to as	HONDURAS
CRETE	" " " "	GUATEMALA
MELOS (MILOS)	" " " "	ARGENTINA
SALAMIS	" " " "	CHILE
NAVARIN	" " " "	COLOMBIA
ARGOSTOLI	" " " "	BOLIVIA
The GREEKS	" " " "	EQUADOR
The TURKS	" " " "	BRAZIL

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M.R.(J)(40)(S)14.
(Also D.F. No.165.)

COPY NO. 25

15th MAY 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

OPERATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

(Reference: Paper No. M.R.(J)(40)77 and
M.R.(40)118th Mtg., item 7.)

Note by the French Representatives.

As a sequel to the conference with the British Commanders-in-Chief in the Middle East, recently held at Alexandria, General Weygand has suggested the following measures:-

- (1) To request "Ecuador" to occupy "Argentina" with 1 battalion of their "Guatemala" division;
- (2) To supply "Ecuador" for the defence of "Guatemala" and "Argentina" with anti-aircraft equipment and, if possible, with shore guns under the disguise of supposed material supplies;
- (3) To station submarines permanently in "Guatemala".

General Gamelin hereby forwards these suggestions to the British Chiefs of Staff and wishes once again to urge upon them that the British should supply the necessary A.A. equipment, as the French High Command is absolutely unable to release any, in view of current developments.

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M.R.(J)(40)(S)15.
(Also D.F. No.163.)

COPY NO. *25*

15th MAY 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

DESPATCH OF FRENCH UNITS TO NORWAY.

(Previous reference: Paper No. M.R.(J)(40)(S)10,
dated 23rd April 1940.)

Note by the French Representatives.

In the document under reference above the French Delegation informed the British Representatives that the Commander-in-Chief of the French Air Forces intended to despatch to Norway 1 or 2 "groupes" of observation aircraft and 1 "groupe" of fighters to meet the requirements of the French expeditionary force, as originally established.

Since that date operations in Norway have been limited to the Northern sector and the French expeditionary force has been reduced from 3 to 1 light division. In addition, the possibility of creating aerodromes in Northern Norway now appears slight, while the British Chiefs of Staff have made known their intention of sending to Norway as soon as possible 2 or 3 squadrons of fighters and 1 observation squadron.

On the other hand, although it may be possible for the British fighter squadrons to assume responsibility for the air cover of the Allied expeditionary force as a whole and although the British observation squadron may also discharge general reconnaissance duties, it nevertheless appears difficult for the latter squadron to carry out air observation duties on behalf of the French troops as well. The latter troops will require to have their own air observation facilities. Hence a decision should be reached as soon as possible regarding the composition and organisation of the Allied air forces to be sent to Norway.

To this end the French Delegation wish to suggest to the British Representatives that the following principles should be adopted:-

1. The British air forces in Norway will discharge general air duties for the whole Allied expeditionary force, viz:
 - (a) Cover and protection by fighter aircraft;
 - (b) Reconnaissance;
 - (c) Where appropriate, bombing.

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2. Each Allied land division will be responsible for its own air observation, which will be carried out by air units under its exclusive control.

Observation duties for the French light division now in Norway shall be entrusted to 1 air observation "groupe" (i.e. 13 aircraft, together with 4 aircraft held as immediate reserve.)

3. The British Commander-in-Chief for Operations in Norway will decide at what moment the French air observation "groupe" should reach Norway.

The French Delegation will be grateful if the British Representatives would inform it:-

- (1) Whether they are in agreement with the above principles;
- (2) If so, on approximately what date the air observation "groupe" should be despatched.

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COPY NO. 27

30TH MAY, 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

DESPATCH OF A FORCE TO CRETE.

Note by the Secretary.

With the concurrence of the French Government, telegrams in the following sense have been despatched by the British Government to the British Commanders-in-Chief in the Mediterranean and Middle East, and to His Majesty's Minister at Athens. At the suggestion of the British Government, the French Government are also telegraphing similarly to the French Commanders-in-Chief in the Mediterranean and Middle East, and to the French Minister at Athens.

Instructions to the British Commanders-in-Chief in the Mediterranean and Middle East.

"We assume that arrangements for the expedition to Crete are now complete. In the event of the Italians attacking Greek territory the forces arranged to proceed to Crete are to be despatched without further reference to London or Paris. If information of Italian action is received first in London or Paris orders to execute the operation will be telegraphed. On the other hand, you can act direct on information received from His Majesty's Minister at Athens. Should war with Italy arise on any other issue than an attack on Greek soil Allied troops are not to land on Greek soil without prior authority. Allied representatives at Athens are now being informed of the above arrangements and instructed that, immediately Italy attacks Greece, the Greek Government is to be informed of the despatch of the expedition so that local authorities in Crete may be told."

Communication to His Majesty's Minister at Athens.

"It has been decided that in the event of Italian attack on Greek territory the Allies shall immediately send expedition to Crete to assist Greece in denying island to the Italians. Instructions have been issued that should war with Italy arise on any other issue than an attack on Greek soil, Allied troops are not to land on Greek soil without prior authority. In the eventuality referred to in the first sentence above you will receive instructions to inform Greek Government and invite them to send immediately necessary

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instructions to local authorities to assist landings. You should make no communication to the Greek Government on the subject until the receipt of these instructions. If any information should reach you indicating that Italian attack on Greek territory has taken place you should immediately inform the Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean, and, of course, myself (the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs).

It is suggested that the French Representatives might obtain confirmation from the French High Command, for the information of the British Chiefs of Staff, that similar instructions to those given to the British Commander-in-Chief have been received by the French Commander-in-Chief.

(Signed) A. W. CLARKE

Secretary.

Handwritten note: at the same time for S. to make the communication to the Greek Government referred to above.

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M.R.(J)(40)(S)17.

31ST MAY, 1940.

COPY NO. 28

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

DESPATCH OF A FORCE TO CRETE.

(Previous reference: Paper No. M.R.(J)(40)(S)16.)

Note by the Secretary.

With reference to the instructions on the subject of the despatch of a force to Crete which have been agreed between the British and French Governments, as reproduced in Paper No. M.R.(J)(40)(S)16, a meeting took place yesterday Thursday, 30th May between the French and British Naval Representatives on the Allied Military Committee, the Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (A) and the Director of Plans, Admiralty.

The object of this meeting was to ensure that there should be no misunderstanding on the question of who would give the actual executive order for the sailing of the expedition to occupy Crete.

It was then agreed:-

- (a) that, if information of an Italian attack upon Greek territory was first received by the military authorities in the Mediterranean, the British Naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean would be responsible for giving the executive order to the French and British expeditions to sail;
- (b) that, if information of Italian action was first received in London, the British Admiralty would be responsible for communicating the order to execute the operation, which would be sent to the British Naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, who would act accordingly;
- (c) that, in the event of information of Italian action being first received in Paris, the French Admiralty would communicate the executive for the operation to the French Naval Commander (Admiral Godfrey) at Beyrouth, who would act at once while at the same time informing the British Naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean; it being understood, however, that in any case the French Naval Commander would act at any time on the receipt of an executive from the British Naval Commander-in-Chief without any further orders from France.

W. J. B. House, B.W.I.

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(d) that, if the British Minister in Athens received information of an Italian attack on Greek territory, he would pass this information to the British Naval Commander-in-Chief who would give the executive order as in (a) above.

(e) that, if the French Minister in Athens received information of an Italian attack on Greek territory, he would pass this information to the French Naval Commander-in-Chief at Beyrouth, who would act as in (c) above;

The French Representatives are asked to confirm that the French High Command concurs in the above arrangements, and that these will be communicated to the French Commanders concerned. The British Representatives are recommending that, as soon as French concurrence has been received, the Service departments shall at once inform the British Commanders concerned. In view of Count Ciano's declaration that Italian entry into the war is now imminent the conclusion of these arrangements is an urgent necessity.

(Signed) A.W. CLARKE

Secretary

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M.R.(J)(40)(S)18.

COPY NO. 26

3RD JUNE, 1940.

ALLIED MILITARY COMMITTEE.

DESPATCH OF A FORCE TO CRETE.

(Previous Reference: Paper No. M.R.(J)(40)(S)17).

Note by the Secretary.

With reference to the allocation of responsibility for the executive in connection with the despatch of a force to Crete, Amiral Odend'hal informed Rear-Admiral Chalmers in the evening of Saturday, 1st June that he was in agreement with the contents of Paper No. M.R.(J)(40)(S)17, which conformed to the views of the French High Command.

Steps are now being taken to inform the British Commanders-in-Chief in the Mediterranean accordingly.

(Signed) A.W. CLARKE.

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