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JIC(82) 27th Meeting

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CABINET

JOINT INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a Meeting held in
Room 215, Cabinet Office on
THURSDAY 20 MAY 1982 at 11.00 am

PRESENT

Mr P R H Wright
Foreign and Commonwealth
Office (In the Chair)

Mr R P Flower
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Vice-Admiral Sir Roy Halliday
Ministry of Defence

Mr J L Jones
Security Service

Sir Brian Tovey
Government Communications Headquarters

Sir Antony Duff
Cabinet Office

THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT

Air Vice-Marshal M J Armitage
Ministry of Defence

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Mr C O Spencer
Canadian High Commission
(Items 1 and 2)

Mr B S Gorman
Australian High Commission
(Items 1 and 2)

New Zealand High Commission
(Items 1 and 2)

Mr R J O'Neill
Assessments Staff

Mr P G Wallis
Assessments Staff

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Captain N L Browne
Assessments Staff
(Items 1-3)

Mr A J Colquhoun
Assessments Staff
(Items 1-7)

Mrs J P Hamilton-Eddy
Assessments Staff
(Items 1-7)

Mr D I Miller
Assessments Staff
(Items 1-7)

Wing Commander D I Scott
Assessments Staff
(Items 1-3)

SECRETARIAT

Mr T W Savage
Commander A H R York
Mr F J Wilson
Mr D J Kiernan

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1. CURRENT ASSESSMENTS

The Committee had before them Part II of the Draft Weekly Survey of Intelligence (JIC(82)(WSI) 20) which contained items entitled "Iran: Recent Political Developments", "Guyana - Venezuela" and "Poland".

After a detailed discussion on each of the above items -

The Committee -

Approved Part II of JIC(82)(WSI) 20 as amended by their discussion, instructed the Secretary to issue it in final form and agreed that the items "Iran: Recent Political Developments" and "Poland" should be edited for release to NATO.

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2. IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENTS

The Committee took note of the following Immediate Assessments -

a. FALKLAND ISLANDS - daily assessments issued since the previous meeting -

JIC(82)(IA) 72, 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 82

b. ISRAEL/LEBANON

JIC(82)(IA) 75 issued on 13 May 1982

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3. FALKLAND ISLANDS: DAILY ASSESSMENT BEARING A NATIONAL CAVEAT

The Committee took note of JIC(82)(IA) 81 a daily assessment on the Falkland Islands, issued on 19 May 1982 under a UK/US EYES only caveat.

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4. CURRENT ASSESSMENTS (BEARING A NATIONAL CAVEAT)

The Committee had before them Part III of the Draft Weekly Survey of Intelligence (JIC(82)(WSI) 20) which contained items entitled "Western Sahara", "New Yugoslav Government" and "Belize - The Threat from Guatemala".

After a detailed discussion on each of the above items -

The Committee -

Approved Part III of JIC(82)(WSI) 20 as amended by their discussion and instructed the Secretary to issue it in final form.

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5. GUYANA-VENEZUELA

Referring to the Committee's discussion of the item on this subject in Part II of the Draft Weekly Survey of Intelligence, (Minute 1 above), SIR ANTONY DUFF said that in view of the likelihood that current UK and US intelligence collection resources would be unable to provide warning of any Venezuelan military preparations against Guyana it was desirable to consider refining the present requirement for intelligence on this topic. The existing guideline (JIC(RP)(82) 12 dated 4 May refers) dealt only with the Venezuelans' military capability. He would pursue the matter with the Departments and Agencies concerned.

The Committee -

1. Took note;
2. Invited Sir Antony Duff to proceed in accordance with his proposal.

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6. NATO ANNUAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES: MC161/82 and MC255/82: REPORT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM DELEGATION TO THE NATO INTELLIGENCE WORKING GROUP

The Committee had before them (JIC(82)(SEC) 20 dated 13 May 1982) a Secretary's Minute covering a report by the United Kingdom delegation to the NATO Intelligence Working Group on the draft NATO documents MC161/82 (Warsaw Pact Strength and Capabilities) and MC255/82 (The Significance to NATO of Soviet Policy and Activities in the Middle East and Peripheral Areas).

VICE-ADMIRAL SIR ROY HALLIDAY said that MC161 was the NATO standard reference book on Warsaw Pact strengths and capabilities. As such, considerable importance was attached to it in NATO circles, particularly by the smaller nations. It was a large and detailed document which had grown year by year to a point where it was questionable whether it was worth the effort involved

in completely revising it annually. The Director of Service Intelligence, as leader of the UK Delegation, had received support at this year's MC161 Conference for his suggestion that the exercise would be pruned; the Terms of Reference Committee for the 1983 revision had been directed to shorten papers where possible and examine whether they might be updated at longer intervals. The Summary attached to JIC(82)(SEC) 20 gave the details of the across-the-board improvements which had taken place in Soviet military capability over the past year, reflecting their growing strength in almost every field.

MC255/82 was an examination of Soviet policy and activities in the Middle East and peripheral areas. It considered these influences in 26 countries and reviewed the Soviet attitude towards the region's many conflicts and problems. The importance of oil supplies and the geographical proximity of these countries to the NATO area made this a region of important interest to NATO members.

SIR ROY HALLIDAY added that the Committee, in considering these papers, should bear in mind the fact that these were NATO documents and therefore it was inevitable that they would not meet every national point of detail.

During a discussion it was noted that it was necessary for the Committee to recommend that the Chiefs of Staff accept the documents so that they could in turn notify the UKMILREP of UK acceptance. Two years ago there had been difficulty in deciding how the Committee could endorse documents which they had not had the opportunity to consider in detail. It had been agreed then, on the Intelligence Co-ordinator's advice, that the Assessments Staff should study the UK Delegation's Report on the documents and discuss with Ministry of Defence and other Departments any points on which they had doubt. The Committee could then be assured that the documents were generally in line with their thinking and the Committee's view could be recorded in the following form of words -

"The Committee have considered the report of the UK Delegation to the NATO Intelligence Working Group. They understand that the judgements in the NATO documents do not differ in any significant respect from views expressed in current and relevant JIC reports. On this basis, they recommend that the documents be approved by the Chiefs of Staff."

It was noted that although there would be no opportunity for recommending alterations to the text because the documents had been produced as part of a well established NATO procedure, it would be open to the Committee to comment on any significant points of difference with national assessments. Depending on the strength of these reservations they could then be noted by the Chiefs of Staff or, if significant enough, be passed by them to the UK Representative at NATO to be recorded, probably as a footnote, in the final text.

THE CHAIRMAN, summing up, said that it was apparent from the discussion that there would probably be only one or two points of reservation but that Departments, particularly the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, would welcome additional time to consider these documents in more detail. The Committee would wish to agree that they should defer further discussion until their next meeting when they could identify more clearly any points of difference which they might wish to bring to the attention of the Chiefs of Staff and provide the necessary recommendations for approval of the documents.

The Committee -

1. Took note, with approval, of the Chairman's summing up.
2. Instructed the Secretary and Departments and Agencies, to proceed in accordance with the Chairman's summing up.

7. ASSESSMENTS FORECAST

During a detailed review of proposed work for the immediate future the Committee -

1. noted that the Assessments Staff were preparing papers for the coming week on; Iran and the Gulf, Military Relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, Romania, Greek/Turkish relations in the Aegean, Ethiopia and the Sudan, Mauritius, and Mozambique;
2. agreed that the Assessments Staff should examine at the earliest convenient opportunity Soviet relations with Syria. This topic was particularly important in view of the known American worries and of the possibility of the question being raised by President Reagan or the US Secretary of State during forthcoming Ministerial meetings;
3. agreed that the Assessments Staff should give thought, in drawing up their programme of work over the next few weeks, to other topics likely to be the subject of discussion between senior officials and Ministers during the imminent series of summit meetings with the United States and other Allies. One such topic might well be the question of Soviet arms supplies to the Argentine.

The Committee -

Invited the Chief of the Assessments Staff to proceed in accordance with the Committee's discussion.

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8. FALKLAND ISLANDS: TIMING OF CIGS

Referring to the Committee's previous discussion of the timing of CIGs and the Falkland Islands Daily Assessments (JIC(82) 26th Meeting, Minute 2 refers), Mr O'Neill said that the matter had been considered in detail by the Assessments Staff and the Departments and Agencies involved. They had concluded that it would be preferable to retain the present schedule,

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so that the CIG could take full advantage of the bulk of intelligence that became available between six and ten o'clock in the morning and so that Departmental representatives, particularly from the Ministry of Defence, could bring the benefits of prior briefings within their own organisations.

The Committee -

Took note.

Cabinet Office

21 May 1982

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