

U. S. SECRET  
BRITISH MOST SECRET

C.C.S. 62nd Meeting

COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF

MINUTES of Meeting held at Anfa Camp  
on Tuesday, January 19, 1943, at 1600.

PRESENT

General G. C. Marshall, USA	General Sir Alan F. Brooke
Admiral E. J. King, USN	Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound
Lt. General H. H. Arnold, USA	Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles F. A. Portal

THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT

Lt. General B. B. Somervell, USA	Field Marshal Sir John Dill
Rear Admiral C. M. Cooke, Jr., USN	Vice Admiral the Lord Louis Mountbatten
Brig. General J. E. Hull, USA	Lt. General Sir Hastings L. Ismay
Brig. General A. C. Wedemeyer, USA	Major General J. N. Kennedy
Colonel J. E. Smart, USA	Air Vice Marshal J. C. Slessor
Commander R. E. Libby, USN	Air Vice Marshal F. F. Inglis *
Major C. R. Codman, USA **	Lt. Colonel C. E. R. Hirsch *
	General Henri Giraud **

SECRETARIAT

Brigadier V. Dykes  
Brig. General J. R. Deane, USA  
Brigadier E. I. C. Jacob

\* For Item 1  
\*\* For Item 3

1. AXIS OIL POSITION.

(C.C.S. 158)

THE COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF had before them a note by the Assistant Chief of British Air Staff (Intelligence) summarizing the latest British views on the Axis oil position (C.C.S. 158).

SIR CHARLES PORTAL said that the British had fully realized the great strategical importance of oil targets in Germany, but for tactical reasons these were extremely difficult to attack. The most important targets were the synthetic oil plants and the Rumanian oil refineries. Unfortunately the latter, from bases at present available, were at extreme range of our bombers; and he felt that it would be a mistake to make light and sporadic attacks on Ploesti, which would do little harm and only result in an increase of the German air defenses. It would be better to wait until we had the Turkish air bases before starting our attacks. The synthetic oil plants were in the Ruhr and elsewhere, but they were very small targets which needed precision bombing to put out of action. Recent developments in radio navigation increased the chances of success on these targets, and great hopes were placed on the possibility of daylight precision bombing by the U. S. Air Forces. When a sufficient force had been built up in a few months' time, it might be possible to resume attacks on these targets more effectively, provided of course that this could be achieved without prejudice to the U-boat warfare.

GENERAL ARNOLD pointed out that the Ploesti fields--which were roughly equidistant from Sicily, Benghazi, Cairo, and Aleppo--were within range of the B-24 with a load of 4,000 pounds of bombs or under.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL pointed out that one of the chief difficulties was getting the necessary meteorological information, without which long-distance attacks of this nature were unlikely to be successful. It was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain information from secret radio stations in the Balkans owing to the activities of the Gestapo.

AIR VICE MARSHAL INGLIS confirmed that in the British view the Rumanian oil supplies were vital to Germany. Her stocks were so low that she depended on Rumanian oil for about thirty-three percent of her total need.

GENERAL SOMERVELL said that the latest American estimate was less

optimistic about the shortage of oil in Germany than the British. It was believed that Germany would have a surplus of about 40,000,000 barrels at the end of 1943 instead of the 10,000,000 barrels which she had at the end of 1942, owing to the opening up of new sources in Hungary and elsewhere. It was, therefore, calculated that even if the whole of the Rumanian production were knocked out early in the year, she would still have enough for operations in 1944. There were two tetraethyl lead factories however, the destruction of which would hamstring the production of German aviation fuel.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL suggested that this latest American information should be immediately given to the British intelligence Staffs with a view to the production of an agreed estimate.

GENERAL MARSHALL emphasized the importance of making great efforts against German oil if we could be sure that it formed a really critical target. U. S. aircraft in the Southwest Pacific were bombing targets at a greater distance from their base than Rumania from the present bases available. We might have to wait a long time before the Turkish bases could be used.

SIR CHARLES PORTAL said that we must be sure our bombing would be really effective. The value of attacks on German oil had to be balanced against the needs of HUSKY, for which we should try to cause the maximum loss to the German air forces in the Mediterranean during the coming months. Only by this means could we hope to obtain the necessary air superiority on which depended the success of the operation.

After some discussion,

THE COMMITTEE:

- (a) Took note that the Axis oil situation is so restricted that it is decidedly advantageous that bombing attacks on the sources of Axis oil--namely, the Rumanian oilfields and oil traffic via the Danube, and the synthetic and producer gas plants in Germany--be undertaken as soon as other commitments allow.
- (b) Directed the Combined Intelligence Committee to submit as early as possible an agreed assessment of the Axis oil