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C.O.S. (56) 53RD MEETING

U.K. EYES ONLY

CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE

MINUTES of Meeting held on  
THURSDAY, 24TH MAY, 1956 at 2.30 p.m.

PRESENT

Lieutenant-General W.P. Oliver,  
Vice Chief of the Imperial  
General Staff  
(In the Chair)

Vice-Admiral Sir William Davis, Vice Chief of Naval Staff	Air Chief Marshal Sir Ronald Ivelaw-Chapman, Vice Chief of the Air Staff
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Major-General W.G. Stirling,  
Principal Staff Officer  
to the Chairman, Chiefs  
of Staff Committee

THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT

Mr. F.S. Tomlinson,  
Foreign Office  
(For Item 1)

Mr. E.M. Rose,  
Foreign Office  
(For Item 2)

Mr. G.L. McDermott,  
Foreign Office  
(For Item 3)

Mr. R.R.C. Hunt,  
Commonwealth Relations Office  
(For Item 1)

Air Commodore J.M. Freeman,  
Air Ministry  
(For Item 4)

SECRETARIAT

Air Commodore D.J.P. Lee  
Colonel H.G. Croly

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UK

3. OIL DENIAL IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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(Previous Reference: C.O.S. (56) 39th Meeting, Minute 15)

J.P. (56) 69 (Final)

THE COMMITTEE had before them a report by the Joint Planning Staff commenting on the conclusions reached at the recent Anglo-American talks on oil denial in the Middle East and making suggestions regarding future procedure.

MR. McDERMOTT (Foreign Office) said that the approval of the Chiefs of Staff to the report would give the Foreign Office the guidance they required. He mentioned that an American expert had visited Iran after the Anglo-American talks and had later informed him that the United Kingdom plans for surface denial were technically sound. He pointed out that in the Anglo-American talks the United Kingdom would not agree to take over planning of oil denial measures until agreement had been reached on the financial and other responsibilities.

The following point was made in discussion:-

- (a) That as there were numbers of United States nationals now in Iran, and that, as American influence in that country made it increasingly likely that ground denial as opposed to destruction by nuclear bombing could be achieved, there was an added reason why the Americans should accept responsibility for oil denial there.

In further discussion THE COMMITTEE agreed:-

- (b) That paragraph 9(a) of the report should be amended to read "would" for "might" in the fourth line.
- (c) That the British Defence Co-ordination Committee (Middle East) should nominate a suitable officer to accompany the American representative on a tour of the oil fields in Iran, the Levant and the Persian Gulf Sheikdoms.

THE COMMITTEE:-

- (1) Approved the report by the Joint Planning Staff subject to the amendment at (b) above.
- (2) Instructed the Secretary to arrange for the British Defence Co-ordination Committee (Middle East) to nominate the officer at (c) above.