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12TH APRIL, 1940.

WAR CABINET.

OPERATION "ALPHONSE".

Memorandum by the Military Co-ordination Committee.

We considered that the arrangements for the intervention of the metropolitan heavy bomber force in the land battle in the event of a German attack on the Western Front needed clarification. Accordingly we invited the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the Chief of the Air Staff to hold a meeting with representatives of the Commander-in-Chief, British Expeditionary Force, the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, British Air Forces in France, and the French High Command, to review the plans and the machinery for putting them into operation. At our 17th meeting on the 9th April, 1940, we received the report of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and of the Chief of the Air Staff.

Our conclusions may be summarised as follows:-

- (1) Use of Heavy Bombers to impede the Forward Movement of German Columns.

We are of the opinion that in the event of a major land attack on the Western Front the primary task of the heavy bombers of the Metropolitan Air Force will be to intervene in the land battle, which may be decisive. It will be for the French High Command to indicate the targets which they require to be attacked, and the order of priority

COMMISSIONERS OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE

IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ON THE 15TH MARCH 1881

THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE HAVE THE HONOR TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RECEIPT OF YOUR LETTER OF THE 10TH INSTANT

IN RELATION TO THE MATTER REFERRED TO IN YOUR LETTER OF THE 2ND INSTANT

AND TO ADVISE YOU THAT THE MATTER IS NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION OF THE COMMISSIONERS

AND THAT THE COMMISSIONERS WILL BE GLAD TO FURNISH YOU WITH SUCH INFORMATION AS MAY BE IN THEIR POWER

TO OBTAIN FOR YOU IN CONNECTION WITH THE MATTER REFERRED TO IN YOUR LETTER OF THE 2ND INSTANT

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for such attack; and it will be for the Air Staff to decide the allocation of the available bomber force between these various objectives.

(2) Channel of Request for Additional Bomber Support.

The A.O.C.-in-C., B.M.F.F., should apply direct to the Chief of the Air Staff for additional bomber support, sending a copy of his request to the A.O.C.-in-C., Bomber Command.

(3) Allocation of Heavy Bombers in the Event of a Conflict of Requirements.

It is essential to employ a procedure which will allow decisions to be taken with the minimum of delay.

We recommend that, in the event of a conflict of requirements or the scale becoming abnormal, the Secretary of State for Air and the Chairman of the Military Co-ordination Committee in consultation, should be empowered to decide what proportion of the metropolitan heavy bomber force should from time to time be allocated to meet the requirements of the French High Command, who will be responsible for the conduct of the land battle. In the event of a disagreement, the matter would have to be referred to the War Cabinet.

(Initialled) W.S.C.

On behalf of the Committee.

Richmond Terrace, S.W.1.







