

#47 - ABDA Com.

1

DECLASSIFIED
NOV 7 1973

Map Room
Box 38

~~SECRET~~

COPY NO. 26

TO: ABDACOM
Repeated B.A.D. 82
C. in C. Far Eastern Fleet
S.O. China Force.

FROM: Admiralty

~~TOP SECRET~~
~~IMMEDIATE~~
~~HUSH~~

Following from Chiefs of Staff to ABDACOM repeated British Joint Staff Mission, Washington (for Combined Chiefs of Staff) C. in C. Far Eastern Fleet, S.O. China Force.

Your 00737, Cypher 030983 of 4th February.

A. Eastern Fleet Destroyers, H.M.S. Jupiter, Encounter, Express and Electra, also R.A.N. destroyer H.M.A.S. Vampire were stationed in ABDA area temporarily until required by Eastern Fleet.

B. The 4 fleet destroyers will not repeat not be withdrawn until it becomes essential that they should be available for screening heavy units of Eastern Fleet. This is not repeat not likely to be before the end of April.

C. H.M.A.S. Vampire has had to be withdrawn to join H.M.S. Hermes and proceed with her to ANZAC area as part of 2 allocated to that area. The 2 R.A.N. Destroyers allocated to ABDA area are still refitting. One is in Australia and the other is H.M.A.S. Vendetta.

D. It is intended that H.M.S. Newcastle, wearing the Flag of Rear Admiral W. G. Tennant, shall join China Force by the end of March. Admiral Tennant will relieve Commodore Collins in command of China Force.

DECLASSIFIED
JCS MEMO, 1-17-79
BY *RHP* DATE

NOV 7 1973

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E. Pending the arrival of H.M.S. Newcastle,
H.M.S. Exeter is being detailed to join
China Force.

P.O.O. 2319A/6

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Plus U.S. Chiefs of Staff

DECLASSIFIED
JCS MEMO, 1-17-78
BY *RAP* . DATE NOV 7 1973

COPY NO.

30

TO: INDIA

Repeated: Joint Staff Mission

FROM: ABDACOM No.00771 5/2.

~~SECRET~~

We propose in future to send you
our INFORMATION summary containing daily news
up to 1200Z. This is issued daily unless there
is nothing to report.

DECLASSIFIED
JCS MEMO 1-17-72
BY *PAH* DATE NOV 7 1973

INFORMATION CIRCULATION

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COPY NO. 6

TO: TROOPERS for Chiefs of Staff

Repeated: WASHINGTON for
Combined Chiefs of Staff.

C in C.E.F.

FROM: ABDACOL.

~~SECRET~~
IMMEDIATE

00737 4/2

Following from GENERAL WAVELL to Chiefs of Staff.

1. I presume that in accordance with Para. Four of my directions, the U.S., Australian and Dutch Governments have been forewarned of the intention to reduce materially the British Armed Forces in the ABDA area by withdrawal of five Destroyers.
2. It is difficult to forecast effect of this withdrawal without more knowledge of intended replacements. I have been informed of formation of ANZAC area and intention to send two Australian Cruisers, two Destroyers and three sloops to ABDA Area. ISAAK STEERS will eventually arrive from Mediterranean. It would be very helpful to receive comprehensive statement of future allocation of forces to this area.
3. Present naval position is as follows. The bulk of British and U.S. reinforcements will in future be directed to E.I. ports. If a convoy has to be sent to SINGAPORE it will have to be treated as a special operation. If withdrawal of Destroyers had not been ordered this would have resulted in releasing from escort duties a small British Force. Force would have consisted of EXETER if spared from Eastern Fleet or PERTH and HOBART after arrival in area plus two modern Destroyers. This force would have been employed as independent British striking force or added as contingent to combined U.S. and DUTCH striking force now formed. There are now fleeting opportunities for using a striking force but if they are missed we shall eventually be forced to a general naval defensive.
4. I appreciate urgent need for Destroyers to screen Eastern Fleet. Yet this area presents obvious opportunity for using destroyers for offensive repeat offensive purposes. If they have to be withdrawn, it will be impossible to supply a British Destroyer contribution to the offensive. It will also result in more U.S. and DUTCH Destroyers being required for defensive escort duties in addition to the British ships already so employed.

T.O.O. 0015/4

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and U.S. CHIEFS OF STAFF

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JCS MEMO, 1-17-73
BY *RRD*, DATE

NOV 7 1973 47

COPY NO. 23

To: War Office, London, for
Chiefs of Staff,
British Army Staff,
Washington, for Combined
Chiefs of Staff.

From: AEDACOM No. 00742 dated
4th February, 1942.

~~SECRET~~
IMMEDIATE.

General Wavell goes by air tonight
4/5 February to BURMA for a meeting. Return
probably 7th February.

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U.S. Chiefs of Staff

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JCS MEMO. 1-17-73
BY AKK DATE

NOV 7 1973

COPY NO. 24

From: ABDACOM
To: Washington for Combined Chiefs of Staff.
Repeated: London for Chiefs of Staff.
No: 00649 of February 1.

~~RESTRICTED~~
IMMEDIATE.

From General Wavell.

Reference your DBA 5.

1. I can well understand that threat via Rabaul must greatly concern Australia. I have not sufficient information here to estimate fully imminence of threat its dangers or means to meet it. In area already included in ABDA I have at the moment to meet four separate attacks with most inadequate resources. I was compelled to refuse Australian request for Squadron for Port Moresby as it was most urgently required else here and I did not consider it would suffice to defend our communications through Torres Strait or that threat was so imminent as others further West.
2. I agree that threat to Australia would cause demand for diversion of U.S. material intended for ABDA. I do not however consider that it would therefore be sound to make me responsible for covering North East approaches to Australia which would involve virtual assumption of responsibility for defence of N.E. Australia since impossible to divorce defence of approaches by air from defence by other means. Understand ANZAC have an area already set up. I should like to be informed of its scope.
3. ABDA area already stretches for over 5000 miles from North of Burma to Gulf of Carpentaria and for nearly 2500 miles from North to South. I do not think it advisable to extend this area any further. I have difficulty enough already in distributing my resources to cover it. See my telegram AW 4 of 29/1 also 00576 31/1 to Strudsee.
4. I consider that distribution of resources between Australia and ABDA area must be responsibility of higher authority in the same way as they now decide between Mideast and ABDA.
5. Your signal received corrupt but trust above covers main points.

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JCS MEMO, 1-17-78
BY *RAH* DATE NOV 7 1973

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COPY NO. 24

To: War Office for Chiefs of Staff.
British Army Staff Washington for
Combined Chiefs of Staff Washington.

From: ABDACOM.

No: 00603. 31/1.

~~RESTRICTED~~

My proposals for the Command and direction of
the Allied Air Forces under my command are as follows.

1. Chief of the Air Staff and C.-in-C, Allied Air
Forces Air Marshal Peirse.

2. Deputy Chief of Air Staff and Deputy C.-in-C.
General Brereton. The nature of the latter appointment
will eventually preclude General Brereton from Command
of American Air Forces. I request therefore that another
officer be appointed in his place as soon as possible.

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JCS MEMO. 1-17-73
BY RFP, DATE

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COPY NO. 24

From: ABDACOM.

To: Army Melbourne.
Repeated War Office for C.O.S.
British Army Staff Washington
for Combined Chiefs of Staff.

No. 00576. 31/1.

~~SECRET~~
Personal for Sturdee*from Wavell.

Your MC 4617 28/1.

1. Japanese attack on Ambon involves threat both to Keopang and to Darwin. Both these places are essential to defence of ABDA Area. Unless Keopang is held movement of short range aircraft reinforcements between Australia and Java and vice-versa becomes impossible and movement of shipping between Australia and N.E.I. must take wide detour. Allocation of very limited resources for defence of these two points is urgent and difficult problem. After full discussion here with Brett, Peirse and Brereton consider following best distribution.

2. Ground Forces. Most strongly urge that Pioneer Battalion AIF from Darwin be sent early as possible Keopang with U.S. 148th Artillery Regiment less one Battalion. Consider that this reinforcement together with air dispositions outlined below should give considerable degree of security for Keopang and that defence of Port Darwin will not be seriously compromised in view of proposed arrangements for air defence. Propose sending as early as possible some Bofors Light Anti-Aircraft guns for protection Keopang. Protection Darwin against low flying attack can be provided to some extent by 50 calibre machine guns of 147 U.S.A. field artillery Regiment which will remain Darwin and anti-aircraft guns will be provided as soon as possible.

3. In addition to squadrons now in Darwin air forces available in near future against threats to Keopang and Darwin are three P.40 fighter squadrons, three Dive Bomber Squadrons on way through Australia. Also Heavy Bombers now in N.E.I. Proposed temporary allocation of above to meet present situation is as follows. One fighter squadron and one dive bomber squadron Keopang. One fighter squadron and one dive bomber squadron Darwin. According to direction in which main Japanese threat develops heavy bombers may operate from Port Darwin against Southward movement from Ambon, or against movement through Macassar Straits.

*General Sturdee is Chief of the General Staff, Australia.

4. In view of threat to Koepang, priority of movement will be that fighter and dive bomber squadrons for M.E.I. will have first priority and those for Koepang second priority and Darwin third priority. As all these squadrons will pass through Darwin however I can always stop them at Darwin if threat to that place appears imminent. Heavy bombers will be operated according to direction from which Japanese threat appears to be developing.

5. Fully realise the difficulties and dangers of above proposal which however seems best distribution of our very limited resources and hope you will be able to agree.

6. Decision most urgent since U.S. Light Naval Forces who can act as escort to troops for Koepang are due to leave Darwin on 2nd February.

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JCS MEMO. 1-17-73
BY *RAE* DATE NOV 7 1973

COPY NO. 24

To: WAR OFFICE for CHIEFS OF STAFF.
Repeated British Army Staff, Washington
for Combined Chiefs of Staff.

From: ABDACOM (G.H.Q. Batavia).

No. 00522 of 30/1.

~~RESTRICTED~~

Reinforcing aircraft from America are at present arriving by air via Darwin, Koepang, Waingpoe and Melang.

2. There is possibility that this route will become impracticable for use by Fighter aircraft in near future. It is anticipated that 50 P-40 Fighters will be available at Brisbane for transfer to Java by 15/2. It would be of greatest assistance if a carrier could be made available to ferry these aircraft if present route is closed. Aircraft might be erected on board while on passage to flying off position.

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JCS MEMO, 1-17-73
BY *PDP*, DATE NOV 7 1973

From: ABDACOM.

To: War Office, Admiralty, Air
Ministry, Arminia, Military
Attache China, Washington,
Airboard Melbourne, G.O.C.-in-
C. Singapore, Air H.Q. Far
East, Rear Admiral Malaya,
Air H.Q. Middle East, G.O.C. New
Zealand Military Forces, Dutch
Naval Authorities Batavia.

~~SECRET~~
No. 00494 of 29th January, 1942.

Combined Airforce Command ABDAIR organised as follows:

- NORGROUP - Burma. H.Q. Rangoon.
- WESGROUP - Malaya, Sumatra North of 3 degrees South, and including Palembang I and II and West Borneo. H.Q. Singapore.
- CENGROUP - Java, West of 110 degrees, South and excluding Palembang I and II. H.Q. Bandoeng.
- EASGROUP - East of 110 degrees, east to Flores including Celebes, including Molucca Sea to eastern boundary ABDA Area and including that portion of Australia north of line joining Onslow and south east corner of Gulf of Carpentaria. H.Q. Darwin.
- RECGROUP - H.Q. Bandoeng, divided provisionally into four Areas:-
 1. Western Area - Malaya, West Borneo to latitude three degrees south.
 2. Central Area - South of latitude three degrees south of Sunda Java Sea, Sourabaya to south east corner of Borneo.
 3. Eastern Area - East Borneo, Macassar Strait Molucca Sea including to Timor.
 4. Darwin Area - Halmheiria Ambon Timor Onslow to ABDA boundary.

2. Air forces in each area are to take action in their own area in accordance with directive issued from time to time requesting assistance from Abdair, repeating neighbouring groups if situation demands. In future, groups will be referred to by designations set out above.

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JCS MEMO. 1-17-73
BY RRP, DATE NOV 7 1973

Chas. McDowell

24

From: M.O.10, War Office.

TO: ABDACOM, Batavia.

~~RESTRICTED~~

IMMEDIATE

67465 of 29th. January 1942.

Your 00318 of 27th. January.

Four hundred and fifty native reinforcements for Timor left Lourenco Marques 26th. January. Col. Antunes also sailing to take up post military Commander Timor. Major Nogueiro arrives N.E.I. for conference about 8th February. Suggest you arrange conference earliest subsequent opportunity.

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JCS MEMO. 1-17-73
BY *PJP* DATE NOV 7 1973

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U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

(Reference D.B.A.No.6)

C. C. Wavell

COPY NO. 23

From: ABDACOM, Batavia.

To: War Office for Chiefs of Staff,
rptd. British Army Staff, Washington,
for Combined C.O.S.

No: 00429 dated 27th January, 1942.

From General Wavell.

Reference War Office 66819⁶ dated 26th.

January.

(a) Agree to send information telegrams
to Machin* for Generalissimo.

(b) Will confirm that Burma, Malaya, are
sending Sitreps to Machin*. Will request P.I. to do
so but their communications Chungking are bad.

⁶ C.C.S. 2nd Meeting, Item 4 refers.

* British Military Attache, Chungking.

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COPY NO. 24

To: ABDACOM

Repeated: Joint Staff Mission, Washington,
and BURGROUP.

From: AIRMIN, Whitehall.

~~SECRET~~
IMMEDIATE

For General Wavell from V.C.A.S.

Your 00357 W 2, 26th January, paragraph 2,

Air.

Of the 52 Hudsons at present being ferried
from U.K. to ABDACOM Area 38 have crews trained in G.R.*
duties. Suggest you retain appropriate number, say
six or eight Hudsons, in Burma forming scratch flight
and providing some spares from Far East or Australian
sources.

T.O.O. 1727DE/27

*
General reconnaissance

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Finished - File

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JCS MEMO, 1-17-73
BY *ALP* DATE

NOV 7 1973

COPY NO. W

NAVAL MESSAGE

IN

Addressed to, AIRMIN

Repeated : Joint Staff Mission Washington
and BURGROUP

From : ABDACOM

IMMEDIATE

No. 00442 28/1.

Your X141 27/1.

Retain six with G.R. trained crews
after forty have been delivered Malaya area.

T.O.O. 0635/28

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plus U.S. CHIEFS OF STAFF

Note: It is presumed that this signal is
in reply to 1727DE/27 from Air
Ministry to ABDACOM.

COPY No. 24

To: Combined Chiefs of Staff.
Repeated: CINCAP.
From: ABDACOM.

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Since using submarines for transportation to and from Philippines always directly reduces the opposition which can be brought against the enemy at sea in their theatre, I strongly urge that such diversion of forces be kept to a minimum.

T.O.O. 0820/24.

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JCS MEMO. 1-17-73
BY AKK DATE

NOV 7 1973

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Note: This despatch was received
through U.S. Naval channels.

McInerney

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COPY NO. 22

TO

WAR OFFICE for Chief of Staff,
British Army Staff WASHINGTON for Combined Chiefs
of Staff.

FROM

ABDACOM
GEN. WAVELL
00270 23/1

Although RUSSIA unlikely to attack
Japanese in MANCHURIA an in hopes she is being urged
to take all measures that will keep Japanese land and
air forces in constant apprehension of attack and
prevent withdrawals.

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JCS MEMO. 1-17-73
BY *RAP*, DATE NOV 7 1973

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~~SECRET~~ COPY NO. 21

To War Office for C.O.S. British Army Staff,
Washington for Combined C.O.S.
From ABDACOM.
No. 00291 of 23rd January, 1942.

General Wavell has left by air for
RANGOON returning probably 25th.

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JCS MEMO. 1-17-73
BY RAA DATE NOV 7 1973

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plus U.S. CHIEFS OF STAFF

cc. Mr. Donnell

COPY NO. 21

From: ABDACOM
To: Troopers
Britman Washington for
President

~~TOP SECRET~~
IMMEDIATE

No. 00184 of 20th January, 1942.

For Prime Minister from General Wavell.

1. While my Headquarters were not yet established my only reason for not wishing to take over Philippines at once was that I was entirely without information of situation or means of communication with MacArthur or Sharpe. I have now received staff officer from Mindanao and messages from MacArthur and am doing all in my power to help both.

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JCS MEMO. 1-17-73
BY *RHP*. DATE NOV 7 1973

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