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NOTES ON THE MEETING HELD ON 18TH JUNE 1952

Between

International Planning Teams and Military Representatives' Staff

on

Defensive Arming of Merchant Shipping
(IPT 1/7, dated 12 June 52)

RECORD - IPT/MILREPS

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PRESENT

Military Representatives Staff

J. Ducq	Lt Col	Belgium
P.F.X. Russell	Cdr	Canada
J. H. Johansen	Lt Col	Denmark
Hoydor Olcaynoyan	Capt	Turkey
George Panayotopolous	Capt, R.H.N.	Greece
A.M. Belo	Cdr	Portugal
H.A.W. Goossens	Cdr	Netherlands
R. A. Tamber	Cdr	Norway
Ugo Giudice	Capt	Italy

I. P. T.

Commander Traub
Capt. Balfour
Capt. Sowell

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Wg Cmdr E.A. Keegan

Capt. Sowell opened the meeting by outlining the background against which IPT 1/7 had been written. He said that the paper incorporated most of the thoughts on the subject which had been written in previous papers. The principal revision adumbrated in IPT 1/7 being the new policy for the supply and installation of armament in merchant ships. He said that IPT 1/7 in itself represented a split view on the subject and that because of this and the factors listed in paragraph 21, it had not been possible to arrive at a standard NATO-wide policy. Captain Sowell said he thought IPT 1/7 offered the most practical solution in view of the limited armament available and the difficulty in supply and installation. He then asked all Military Representatives

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Staff Officers for their views.

The Netherlands Representative said that the policy for supply and installation outlined in IPT 1/7 might have very dangerous consequences. He recalled that certain principles had been suggested in SG 73/6 for the supply and installation of armament of merchant ships, and he considers that if these principles were not adhered to, then nations may drift into believing that there was no need for a common pool of ships, etc. Captain Sowell said he appreciated the point about common pools for ships, but he pointed out that SG 73/6 had not been approved by the Standing Group and that the principles therein were not necessarily valid.

The Netherlands Representative said that such principles should be laid down by the Standing Group, and that a central authority should be set up, which would accept armament from those nations which were short of adequate armament.

Captain Balfour said that the surplus armaments shown in the paper did not in fact amount to very much, and he doubted if nations possessing those surpluses would be prepared at this stage to give them up.

The Netherlands Representative said that even if there were no surplus armament, he felt that the principles should be laid down, and that the arming of merchant ships should be controlled and coordinated within the NATO organization, rather than bi-laterally, as suggested in IPT 1/7. If this were done, and the productive resources of nations were examined centrally then the NATO-wide rearming of merchant ships could be done on an equitable basis.

The Norwegian Representative agreed with the point of view expressed by the Netherlands Representative, and said that it is his understanding that merchant ships would be used in war, irrespective of their nationality; if this were so, they then should be armed accordingly.

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The Danish Representative supported the views of the Netherlands and Norwegian Representatives and suggested that if the matter were not solved within the Standing Group, then perhaps it should be put to the Council for resolution.

Captain Sowell said that IPT 1/7 was a step forward in that it did provide practical means whereby nations shall assist one another in the arming of merchant ships. He said he appreciated the points of view expressed by the Representatives and that he would try to incorporate them in a re-draft of IPT 1/7.

He went on to say that even if the problem were sent to the Council unresolved, the Council would ask the Standing Group for naval advice and that time might be saved if some workable solution could be found within the Standing Group before submitting the paper to the Council.

Objections to paragraphs 20 and 22 were expressed by many of the Representatives and the reflection of these paragraphs in the conclusions. The IPT noted these objections and other minor amendments suggested by the Representatives and agreed to attempt a revised draft of IPT 1/7.

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