

~~TOP SECRET~~

RECORD OF A MEETING HELD AT THE FOREIGN
OFFICE ON NOVEMBER 29th, 1949.

"VALUABLE".

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FILED IN THE DEPARTMENT
SECTION 3(4) OF THE
RECORDS ACT

1. Present:

Sir A. Rumbold (in the Chair)
Sir Charles Peake
"C"

Mr. Bicknell
Mr. Sykes.

2. Purpose of meeting:

had arranged to travel to Washington on the following day to discuss operation "Valuable" with the Americans and the object of the meeting was to decide the line that he should take with them.

3. General:

It was agreed that could not in the nature of things commit us on any details of importance which might require to be settled before further preparations could be made, since rulings would have to be given by the Secretary of State himself and he had not yet decided whether or not he wished the preparations for "Phase 2" to be entirely cancelled. Since would have to be non-committal on these points it was agreed that there was no alternative to his confiding to the Americans that we were reconsidering our whole attitude towards the future of the operation. Sir A. Rumbold said he doubted whether the Americans would be much shocked to learn this, since he had reason to believe that the State Department were themselves reconsidering the implications of the venture. would therefore have to confine himself to ascertaining current U.S. views, but his visit would enable us to see what points of detail would have to be put up to the Secretary of State. Our

/recommendations

recommendations on these points could be submitted to the Secretary of State on his return from his holiday together with our main paper about the future of the operation.

4. Main points of detail:

"C" and : explained that the main points upon which decisions might have to be taken fairly soon, assuming that it was decided that preparations should continue for Phase 2, were:

- (a) the possibility of confiding our plans to other governments and seeking their co-operation;
- (b) the selection and preparation of fresh bases.

Sir A. Rumbold said that there could be no objection to "C" taking the French into his confidence if he thought this likely to be useful and if he thought that a base in French North Africa was a possibility. This need not be referred to higher authority. He could not however agree to anything being said to either the Greeks or Italians without the approval of the Secretary of State, even though it might be thought that both the Greeks and Italians already had a shrewd idea of what we were doing. He was fairly sure that the Secretary of State would not agree to the Greeks being invited to associate themselves with us in any venture against Albania. He was also fairly sure that the Secretary of State would be opposed to taking the Italians into our confidence behind the backs of the Greeks, since it was unlikely that he would be willing to accept the risk of it ever being thought that we had at any time collaborated with the Italians in plans to do with Albania without having taken the Greeks into our confidence. Sir A. Rumbold also said that it would require the Secretary of State's sanction before any plans could be made for the establishment of a base either in Tripolitania or in the Canal Zone

said that he would

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try to find out how American plans for a base in their zone of Germany were shaping.

5. Albanian National Committee:

It was explained to the meeting that the Committee was in danger of disintegrating partly because it could not agree on a chairman and partly because it did not have enough work to do. [redacted] thought that the only solution to the difficulty about the chairmanship would be to send the original "midwives" of the Committee, i.e. Messrs. "Bill" Maclean, Julian Amery (U.K.) and [redacted] (U.S.) out to Rome once more to try to knock the heads of the Committee-men together. Sir A. Rumbold said that this seemed to him to be putting everyone concerned to too much trouble. The simplest thing he thought would be for messages to be sent to the Committee-men in Rome to the effect that neither we nor the Americans cared in the least bit who the chairman was provided that they all agreed and that if they could not agree they might try the Anglo-Saxon expedient of having a rotating chairman. In the last resort, however, he agreed that the "midwives" might have to be sent to Rome to straighten things out. He thought it important that [redacted] should impress on the Americans that there was no special "British" candidate for the chairman of the Committee. Anybody who suited the other members would suit us, provided he was not either a communist or a well-known collaborator with the Italians. As to providing "home work" for the Committee, it was agreed that they might be entrusted with the task of preparing leaflets for dissemination in Albania (suitably illustrated for the illiterate).

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