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CABINET**DEFENCE REQUIREMENTS IN CEYLON****REPORT BY THE CHIEFS OF STAFF**

AT their meeting on 6th May (C.M. (47) 44th Conclusions, Minute 2) the Cabinet invited us to consider the arrangements which would have to be made with the Ceylon Government to safeguard our defence interests, if the Island attained a position of independence within the Commonwealth.

Military Requirements

2. In view of the strategic importance of Ceylon our military requirements in the Island are in broad terms:—

- (a) In peace, the right to base forces and to maintain the necessary facilities in the island; and to retain our necessary telecommunication and signal intelligence facilities.
- (b) In the event of a threat to Commonwealth security, the right to introduce additional forces, and to develop and add to existing facilities as necessary.

3. The requirements which we consider are essential to the three Services in peacetime are given below.

Navy

4. (a) The continued use of the main Fleet base at Trincomalee, with all its facilities, including an airfield.
- (b) Three associated establishments situated within 25 miles of the port.
- (c) The occasional use of repair facilities in Colombo.
- (d) The retention of four store depots at Colombo itself. The retention of three store Depots and two wireless stations within 25 miles and one store depot within 60 miles of Colombo.

Air Force

5. (a) A flying-boat base for one squadron at Kogalla.
- (b) An airfield at Negombo for a land-based maritime strike squadron, and for an Air Staging Post on trunk routes.
- (c) Wireless transmitting and receiving stations in the vicinity of Colombo.
- (d) Storage facilities at Karunegala for wartime reserves of bombs.
- (e) Air H.Q. and a few small miscellaneous units in the Colombo area.

Army

6. Although at present we do not plan to locate a combatant unit other than A.A. and C.D. in the Island in peacetime, we require the right to move in such forces as we may deem necessary for the defence of the facilities required by the other Services against external threat or internal disorder.

Requirements Common to all three Services

7.—(a) The continued use of our Tele-communication facilities for the Empire Cable system and for the Empire integrated wireless chain and their extension if necessary.

(b) The continued use of the Signals Intelligence Centre near Colombo.

(c) Leave, recreational and hospital facilities to the existing standard.

(d) The use of port facilities in Colombo for the maintenance of our forces.

8. The requirements shown above for the three Services are the minimum necessary for the satisfaction of our strategic responsibilities. Any attempt to concentrate them in one area of the island would result in heavy expenditure, some loss of efficiency and of the advantages of dispersion.

The Security of Ceylon

9. All the above will be of no effect unless the integrity of the Island is fully preserved. We must therefore concern ourselves with:—

(a) The security of Ceylon against external aggression.

(b) The maintenance of internal order within the island.

External Defence

10. As it is unlikely that Ceylon will be able to provide forces capable of defending the Island against aggression we must assume responsibility for its defence. This is no new commitment since Ceylon is only likely to be threatened in the event of a major war, and under these circumstances we should wish, in any case, to preserve our essential defence interests in the country.

While we must retain the ultimate responsibility we suggest that the co-ordination of defence matters with the local authorities would be made easier by the establishment of some form of Joint Defence Committee.

Internal Security

11. There is always a danger of India (especially Congress India) interfering in Ceylonese internal politics and promoting discontent among the powerful Indian minority. The extent of this danger depends upon the future constitutional set-up in India. This danger is superimposed upon the problems of racial differences, anti-European feeling, communism and labour unrest which by themselves are liable at any time to cause internal disorders. Such disorders, however provoked, would have a serious effect upon the working of our service establishments.

Although the Ceylon Government should be responsible for internal security, in the event of the situation becoming beyond her capacity to control and our defence interests being threatened, we should reserve the right to introduce forces, and to take action as necessary to protect our interests.

Locally raised forces

12. With a view to improving the standard of locally raised forces so that they can maintain internal order and assist in the defence of the Island we should wish them to be developed and expanded with our assistance and under our direction.

Conclusion

13. In view of Ceylon's vital and continued importance to us as a base from which to exercise control of Indian Ocean communications, we conclude that, if she attains her independence within the Commonwealth:—

(a) Her continued integrity will be of the utmost importance to us, and we must continue to accept responsibility for her defence.

(b) Her co-operation should extend to:—

(i) Granting us in peace-time the right to base naval and air forces in Ceylon and to maintain the necessary facilities there; to station limited land forces as a nucleus organisation for the defence of the Island and to introduce further land forces in the event of internal disorder, beyond the capacity of the Ceylon Government to control, threatening our Defence interests: and to retain our telecommunications and signal intelligence facilities and to extend them if necessary.

- (ii) Granting us in the event of a threat to commonwealth security the right to introduce additional forces and to develop and add to the existing facilities.
- (iii) Agreeing to the development of Ceylonese forces under our supervision and with our assistance.
- (iv) Establishing suitable joint Civil and Military machinery to co-ordinate Defence matters with us.

Methods of Obtaining Our Defence Requirements

14. The decision as to the method of approach to the Ceylon Government must be a political one. Our military requirements would however be satisfied if an agreement on a permanent basis were concluded with Ceylon, whereby, in return for the use of facilities and installations as outlined above, we guaranteed the integrity of the Island.

We would suggest that any such agreement might be modelled on the bilateral agreement concluded between the United States and the Philippine Government. There is no satisfactory analogy with the Simonstown agreement which deals with one isolated area, whereas our requirements in Ceylon are dispersed throughout the Island.

(Signed) TEDDER.
 MONTGOMERY OF ALAMEIN.
 R. R. McGRIGOR. V.C.N.S.

9th June, 1947.

