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UK/US COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY CONFERENCE 1953

FINAL PLENARY SESSION

Tuesday, 10th November, 1953, at 3 p.m.

A G E N D A

1. To consider Conference Report
2. Any Other Business
3. Remarks by Mr. W.F. Friedman (Head of US Delegation)
4. Closing remarks by Chairman

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Minutes
of the Final Plenary Session
10th November, 1953.

[Redacted]

(Chairman)

[Redacted]

D.S.D. Admiralty	Mr. W.F. Friedman	N.S.A.
D.Sigs. War Office	Mr. F.C. Austin	N.S.A.
ACAS(S) Air Min.	Mr. J.R. Chiles	N.S.A.
DDNI, Admiralty	Mr. T.R. Chittenden	N.S.A.
DMI, War Office	Mr. A.W. Small	U.S. Army
ACAS(I) Air Min.	Lt.Col. J.M. Anderson	U.S.A.F.
DDSD, Admiralty	Major F. Ivey	U.S.A.F.
D.D.Sigs. War Office	Lt.Col. W.F. Zeller	U.S.L.O.
D.D.Sigs(B) Air Min.		
A.D.1, G.C.H.Q.		
C.P.B.		
C.P.B.		
B.J.S.M.		
B.J.S.M.		
B.J.S.M.		

[Redacted]

(Secretary)

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

1. Conference Report.

THE CHAIRMAN said: "First of all I know you will be very sorry to hear that owing to illness [Redacted] is unable to take the Chair to-day. He has asked me to take his place and in due course I shall read to you a message from him. I have also received apologies from [Redacted] and from Mr. Jones, Director, G.C.H.Q. who, owing to other commitments, have been unable to come.

The first business is to consider the Conference Report. As you will see, it consists of a comparatively short report comprising, in the first place, the highlights of all the matters that have been considered and, in the second place, it states quite clearly the action recommended to be taken in connection with those matters. As a matter of procedure the report has to be forwarded to the Chiefs of Staff of both our Nations as it is on their authority that these Conferences are held. I would like to remind you that the report which we are now considering is the outcome of very detailed reports drawn up by three Sub-Committees, on Security, Engineering and Operational Requirements respectively. These latter reports have not been placed before you to-day but have been endorsed by the Executive Committee. The detailed reports have been drafted, re-drafted, vetted, discussed, re-discussed, re-drafted, improved and finally endorsed by the Executive Committee and out of them have come the extracts which are before you to-day. With the exception of the recommendation regarding the next Conference there is nothing in this report which has not appeared in detailed reports.

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The first few words of paragraph 3 of the first page of the report says that "The Conference included a full and frank exchange of views" I would like to say that in the past I have had considerable personal experience of Inter-Allied discussions and I can sincerely say that I have never known a Conference which has enjoyed such a full and frank exchange of views. It is most refreshing and I hope that there is the same feeling on the other side of the table.

The Executive Committee have made two recommendations on the Covering Note of the report and I take it that there are no comments on these two recommendations with the proviso that the Enclosure has still to be formally approved by this Plenary Conference.

As regards the report itself, I do not propose to take it in detail but I should like to stress one or two points, particularly to those of you who have not taken part in the discussions. One of these is a general one and is the high degree of agreement and accord between the U.K. and U.S. representatives at all levels and on all aspects of this extremely abstruse and complicated problem. The paragraph on Speech Security on page 2 places the present position frankly before you, which is that no speech security equipments suitable for Combined and NATO use are available at present. You will appreciate that when speech security equipments are available they will have a momentous effect on the problems before us. Next, the Conference are greatly concerned about Transmission Security and we have at last grasped the nettle of plain language; we hope a solution will be found when the Working Groups get to grips. As for Non-Communications Transmissions a great deal of thought is still required and as regards future liaison I would call attention to the emphasis on "working" rather than on pure liaison.

This brings me to the last recommendation concerning the next Conference and I would ask you to note that the Agenda and business of that Conference are to be left to be formulated later."

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MR. FRIEDMAN said: I quite appreciate the highlights described by [redacted] and am quite ready to sign as I have no specific comments to make at the moment."

There were no comments from either side of the table and the Conference Report was signed by the Chairman and Mr. Friedman.

2. Remarks by Mr. W.F. Friedman (Head of US Delegation).

MR. FRIEDMAN said: "First I would like to express on behalf of the members of my team and myself our regrets at the inability of [redacted] and [redacted] and the Director, G.C.H.Q. to attend the closing Plenary Session. I hope that [redacted] will be recovered in a day or two and that his illness is not serious.

As to the Conference, I too was struck forcibly by the harmony of our two teams working in co-operation. In general, I have been, as you know, engaged in this "racket", as General Canine calls it, for many years. I think that nothing more clearly indicates the full confidence and trust which our two sovereign nations have placed in each other than the fact that in the cryptologic field, where the greatest degree of secrecy is usually applied by every country, we have had a really full and frank exchange of secrets. Despite my having been engaged in this work for so long a time, again I am impressed with that fact. Now, the Chairman has already referred to some of the really outstanding accomplishments of the Conference. I think that the grasping of the thorny problem of transmissions security in our hands at this Conference for the first time is significant and I hope that the authorities on both sides will give the fullest possible support to our recommendations so far as is practicable and within their abilities. We recognise their difficulties and appreciate them. I hope that having made this start we will go forward with vigour towards a solution to our problems in this area. Now, with regard to the last paragraph of the recommendation for the next Conference, we, as you know, are going to have a somewhat "new look" in our country

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on the organisation to be devoted specifically to communications security. As you know, we have now a new Board but I am at the moment unable to give you any indication of the representatives on that Board. We hope, however, to make our new Board as useful and as important as the Cypher Policy Board of the United Kingdom.

As regards the next Conference I do not know whether I can give you the same assurance of control over the weather in Washington when you come over as I have exercised in London. We have indeed had remarkably good weather and we have all appreciated that fact. However, I do extend in advance a most cordial welcome to the members of the team who will be selected by the U.K. to come to Washington and work with us again in full harmony and to continue the good work that we have been able to do together in London at this Conference. On behalf of the members of my team I wish to extend our most sincere thanks to all who have made our visit so enjoyable and to say how much we have appreciated your hospitality."

3. Reply by the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN then said: "I will of course pass your message on to [redacted] who will be gratified by what you have said. Before reading his message I would like to say how much we look forward to continuing our good work on the other side of the Atlantic. I would like also to pay a tribute to those responsible for the mechanics of the Conference, the Secretaries, typists, etc. without whom we would not be able to do anything. We owe them all a good deal of thanks."

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MR. FRIEDMAN seconded this.

THE CHAIRMAN then read [redacted] statement:

"I very much regret that I am unable to be with you to-day. Your meeting brings the formal business of the Conference to a close and there is no doubt from the report which you have just considered, and from what I have heard, that your deliberations have been very profitable and that you have advanced the cause of communications security not only as it affects UK/US communications but also NATO communications.

This is only the fourth Conference of its type. Before 1950 there had been almost negligible collaboration between our two nations in this field and there were inevitably large gaps to be filled in our Combined UK/US COMSEC defences. Since the first Conference, the NATO requirements have materialised and these have substantially increased the number and size of the gaps. It is no small achievement therefore that, despite the limited amount of equipment available, we have been able to effect some bridging of the NATO gaps, even though the bridging is by no means complete and largely of a temporary nature. It is very gratifying that the advent of the U.S. cryptoprinciple embodied in AFSAM 7, allied with your very substantial production capacity will, before long, bridge the main gap comprehensively.

While on the subject of AFSAM 7, I should like to express for permanent record our great appreciation of the very generous terms on which the machine has been offered to us by your Government. But for this offer, the Combined UK/US and NATO First and Second level requirements could not be met until much later, so far as the British Commonwealth is concerned.

The report which we have just considered recommends even closer collaboration between our two nations on both the engineering and the security sides. The precise ways and means of implementing this recommendation will have to be worked out, but the recommendation shows a refreshing enthusiasm for collaboration which I endorse wholeheartedly. I am reminded of the remark by Mr. Friedman at the Opening Plenary Session when he referred to the UK/US crypto position in 1941. At that time the U.K. and the U.S. both had good machine systems but they could not interwork. Only by building an adaptor of materially less security could we achieve combined communications in machine systems. That, as he said, should be a very sobering lesson. We must make

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certain that in the future our two countries can intercommunicate in the best possible systems.

While on the theme of collaboration, I should like to say how pleased I am that, during the Conference, you have been able to give detailed consideration to transmission security. This is a subject on which possibly we know less at present than on cryptography and your deliberations could hardly have been expected to produce suggestions for comprehensive remedial measures. You have none the less agreed that this problem must be pursued with vigour and have made some suggestions and I welcome your recommendation that Working Parties should be set up at once to investigate this subject fully.

As I mentioned at the first meeting the Cypher Policy Board have widened their terms of reference. One of the new responsibilities which it has assumed is the security of non-communications transmissions. This is a problem about which our present knowledge is very limited but it is one which requires our combined and detailed consideration.

Your programme has been a full one and I understand that discussions have gone on outside Conference hours. I hope we have not overworked you and that you have been able to see some of the interesting things we have in London and some of the country outside London.

On behalf of all the U.K. members I should like to thank all the members of the U.S. team, including those who have already returned home, for their valuable contributions to the Conference, to say how much we have enjoyed having you over here and to wish you all Bon Voyage."

MR. FRIEDMAN said: "On behalf of the U.S. Delegation I must sincerely say how much we appreciate the words of wisdom that [] has put in his message and we are sorry that he was unable to be here to present them himself."

THE CHAIRMAN then declared the 1953 UK/US Communications Security Conference closed. PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

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