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CED(75)

Series

CABINET

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON CAPTURED ENEMY DOCUMENTS

MINUTES OF MEETING

	No. of Meeting	Date of Meeting	Papers Considered	Subjects Discussed
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CED(75) 1st Meeting

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CABINET

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON CAPTURED ENEMY DOCUMENTS

MINUTES of a Meeting held in
Conference Room D, Cabinet Office
on WEDNESDAY 21 MAY 1975 at 2.45 pm

PRESENT

Sir John Wheeler-Bennett
(In the Chair)

Mr R Wheatley
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Mr J D Lawson
Ministry of Defence

Miss A Ward
Ministry of Defence

Mr P Wood
Ministry of Defence

Mr E Denham
Public Record Office

Mr R W A Suddaby
Imperial War Museum

Professor J Joll
London School of Economics

Mr C J Child
Cabinet Office

SECRETARY

Mrs N B Taylor

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Cheeseman, Mr Haslam and Dr Frankland.

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2. DEATH OF SIR JAMES BUTLER

THE CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that Professor Sir James Butler, who died on 1 March 1975, was a founder-member who had taken a great interest in the work of the Committee and who had given much wise advice to the Chairman and the late Vice-Chairman, which was of particular value when the restitution of German records to the Federal Government was being negotiated. THE CHAIRMAN added that Sir James' task as Chief Military Historian had been brilliantly realised, and that only two volumes conceived under his editorship remained to be published - Volume I in the Grand Strategy series which would appear shortly, and Volume VI in the Mediterranean and Middle East series, which Sir James had read extensively in draft. With the esteem and affection in which Sir James was held by all members of the Cabinet Office Historical Section and the sense of loss felt by his death, it was unanimously agreed that the Committee should place on record its admiration of his work and character, and its sorrow at his passing, and that its tribute should be communicated to Sir James' family.

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3. INTERGOVERNMENTAL PROJECT, GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY ARCHIVES

MR WHEATLEY informed the Committee that he had prepared a note on the progress of the project, together with a table of the volumes so far published, and it was agreed that these should be appended to the Minutes as Annex I. MR WHEATLEY also reported that a Meeting of Editors-in-Chief would take place in June, at which the taking up of Series A would be discussed; he hoped that a positive decision would be reached as the documentation for this series, covering the period November 1918 to 1925, seemed likely to be of great interest. In reply to a query from THE CHAIRMAN

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- (b) British Section of the International Committee for the History of the Second World War.

MR CHILD reported that there were plans for another Anglo-French colloquium to be held in the winter of 1975, but the financial future of the Committee would have to be resolved before several current plans could be finalised. PROFESSOR JOLL explained that although the expenses of Government representatives attending the Committee's conferences were defrayed, the Committee as such was dependent on quinquennial grants from the Wolfson Foundation, of which the second had been less than the first. MR WHEATLEY suggested that it would be of great assistance if the Committee were formally recognised by the British Academy. MR CHILD pointed out, however, that the Academy's own resources were limited by its dependence upon funds from the Department of Education and Science. He was however hopeful that a solution would be found. THE CHAIRMAN referred with pleasure to the Knighthood recently conferred on Sir William Deakin, the Chairman of the British Section, and it was agreed that Sir William should be sent a letter of congratulation on behalf of the Committee.

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5. QUEST FOR RECORDS

PROFESSOR JOLL reported that at the Düsseldorf Conference mentioned in Item 4(a) above it had been stated that a copy of the Diary of Admiral Canaris had reached Germany from Spain. He gathered that it would soon be published, and that Mr David Irving might have a hand in its editing.

THE CHAIRMAN referred to the Kaiser's Diaries, the whereabouts of which were still obscure despite numerous enquiries made by himself and by Mr Wheatley (see Item 4 in the Minutes of the last meeting). PROFESSOR JOLL, who was of the view that the Diaries had been taken to Potsdam after the Kaiser's death in Doorn, suggested that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office might approach the Chief Archivist in Potsdam, alternatively that enquiries could be instituted through academic channels. MR CHILD reminded the Committee that Her Majesty's Government now had diplomatic relations with East Germany, and recommended that the British Ambassador in East Berlin should be requested to make formal enquiries of the authorities there about the whereabouts of the Diaries. It was agreed by the Committee that Mr Child should draft a letter on these lines, for submission to the Secretary of the Cabinet.

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Admiral Buckley as Head of the Branch. The non-restitutable German records held by NHB were now housed in Empress State Building, and other German records currently stored in Hayes would also be brought to London. MR LAWSON reported that it was his intention to sift through the latter material, and asked if the Committee would agree to leave it to the discretion of the Navy Department to decide which items should be returned to Germany. Asked about the nature of the material, MR LAWSON explained that it was of a technical and scientific nature and that it was not sensitive; he would consult the Foreign and Commonwealth Office over any items in which the FCO might be concerned, THE CHAIRMAN and Committee agreed that decisions on restitution could be left to the Navy Department, and Mr Lawson was asked to report further on this matter at the next Meeting. MR SUDDABY asked if the Imperial War Museum might have copies of any items that seemed likely to be of interest to historians and researchers, and MR LAWSON agreed to keep the Museum informed of his investigations.

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8. BOOKS

It was agreed that a Book List, compiled by Mr Child, should be appended to the Minutes (Annex II). MR CHILD said that the Chairman should be congratulated on behalf of the Committee on the first volume of his distinguished autobiography. The Committee were pleased to hear from THE CHAIRMAN that the second Volume was due to appear in October of this year and that the third Volume, covering the post-war years, would probably appear in the autumn of 1976.

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9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that this should be left open, with a Meeting possibly to be convened for November of this year if the agenda warranted.

Cabinet Office
12 June 1975

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ANNEX 1

QUADRIPARTITE GERMAN DOCUMENTS PROJECT

A table of volumes so far published is attached. Besides completing the German edition of Series C and D, the project is engaged on the preparation of two new Series, also in German: Series B (1925-1933), and Series E (1941-1945). Eight volumes of Series B have now been published on the Stresemann period from December 1925 to September 1927 (Volume I Parts 1 and 2; Volume II Parts 1 and 2; Volumes III, IV, V and VI. Volume VII (October to December 1927)) is now due, and the material for a number of further volumes has been settled. As regards Series E, the first three volumes, which cover Germany's relations with her Axis partners and neutral powers from Pearl Harbour to the autumn of 1942, have also been published. Volume IV, which will cover the remainder of 1942, will be issued in the autumn. The German edition of Series C and D continues to make progress. Following the completion of Series D, three volumes of Series C, which are concerned with the early Hitler period from January 1933 to March 1935, have so far appeared.

The selected documents for Series B Volumes VIII-XI, covering the year 1928, have already been circulated, revised and settled for publication. Many of the selections for the following volumes covering the years 1929-33, are within sight of completion.

May 1975

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Akten zur deutschen auswärtigen Politik 1918-1945

(Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945)

Table of series and volumes published

Series A (1918-25)	Not so far edited
Series B (1925-33)	Eight volumes in German (I, Parts 1 and 2 to VI) have appeared, covering the period December 1925 to September 1927. Volume VII (October-December 1927) is due now.
Series C (1933-37)	Largely published in English by the former Tripartite Project. Volumes I-III, German edition, have appeared.
Series D (1937-41)	Published in English by the former Tripartite Project. German edition completed (13 volumes).
Series E (1941-45)	Three volumes in German (I to III) have appeared. Volume IV (October-December 1942) is due in the autumn.

May 1975

BOOKS OF INTEREST

GENERAL

Knaves, Fools and Heroes. By Sir John Wheeler-Bennett, London, Macmillan, 1974.

WORLD WAR II

The German Occupation of the Channel Islands. By Charles Cruickshank, London, OUP, 1975.

In Letzter Stunde. By Johannes Steinhoff, Munich, List Verlag, 1975

Hitler and His Generals: the Hidden Crisis, January-June 1938. By Harold Deutsch, OUP, London, 1975

Hitler and seine Feldherrn. By David Irving. Berlin, Ullstein, 1975.

Too Serious a Business: European Armed Forces and the Approach of the Second World War. By D C Watt, London, Temple Smith, 1975

Operation Sea Lion. Edited by Richard Cox, London, Futura Paperback, 1975

The Loneliest Man in the World: the Inside Story of the 30-Year Imprisonment of Rudolf Hess. By Eugene K Bird, London, Secker and Warburg, 1974

Crisis Convoy: the Story of HX 231. By Peter Gretton, London, 1974

Die Deutsche Seekriegsleitung, 1935-1945, Vol. 3, Denkschriften and Betrachtungen, 1938-1944. By Michael Salewski, Frankfurt, 1973.

Films and the Second World War. By Roger Manvell, London, Dent, 1975

Stalingrad; Risse im Bündnis 1942/1943, By Jürgen Fürster, Freiburg, Rombach Verlag, 1975

Finland, 1939-1940. By Antony Upton, London, Davis-Poynter, 1975.

THIRD REICH AND ITS ANTECEDENTS

Hitler, By Joachim Fest. English translation by Richard and Clara Winston, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974

Hitler: The Führer and the People. By J B Stern, London, Collins/Fontana, 1975