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THE USE OF THE AIR FORCE FOR REPLACING MILITARY GARRISONS.

By WING-COMMANDER J. A. CHAMIER, C.M.G., D.S.O., O.B.E.

(Owing to the absence on duty of its author, the lecture was read by Wing-Commander Gossage, D.S.O., M.C.)

On Wednesday, 12th January, 1921.

Major-General Sir N. M. Smyth, V.C., K.C.B., in the Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN : Ladies and Gentlemen, Wing-Commander Chamier having been unavoidably detailed for duty away from London, Wing-Commander Gossage, D.S.O., M.C., who has assisted him in preparing his lecture, has kindly undertaken to deliver it in his absence. I have much pleasure in introducing Wing-Commander Gossage to you. He has had a great amount of active service experience, having begun the War with the Royal Field Artillery in Belgium and France. From January, 1915, to April, 1916, he was a flying officer and Flight-Commander on the Western Front, principally engaged in co-operation with the Army. Later, in 1916, we find him in command of No. 8 Squadron, co-operating with the VIIth Army Corps in France, and at the end of 1917 he commanded the squadrons of the 1st Wing, co-operating again with the various army corps comprising the First Army. After the Armistice he was posted to the Military and Land Operations Branch at the Air Ministry in close liaison with the War Office. The subject of the lecture is primarily the substitution of aircraft for troops. I have much pleasure in asking Wing-Commander Gossage to deliver the lecture.

LECTURE.

1. Before the War we had an Army and a Navy only, and we could afford to pay for them. Now we have a third Service and the same sized Navy and Army, and have to pay all three at a time when economy is the guiding principle. The Navy and the Army are approximately their previous size, and we have imposed this third Service on them without apparently any attempt to effect a reduction in either of them. An exposition of how the Air Force can prove a saving by replacing the Army in some of the functions of garrison duty is my excuse for trespassing on military preserves this evening.

2. The following are the normal rôles of military garrisons :—

(a) *Precaution against internal disturbances.*—A military garrison stands behind the civil power, and its strength is in direct

proportion to possible disturbances. The larger the threat, the bigger must be the garrison, particularly if inhabitants are liable to be swayed by religious fanaticism or any other cause.

- (b) *To guard against external aggression.*—Excluding for the moment “defended ports,” where, owing to the smallness of the area to be defended, the garrison carries out the dual functions of protection from invasion and guarantees internal quiescence, all our garrisons overseas can be concentrated to repel an invader. India from Afghanistan; Mesopotamia from the Turk in the north. Normally, however, they are disposed with a view to the maintenance of internal security.
- (c) *The temporary occupation of a late enemy country to enforce peace terms.*—Instance, the Rhine, where we are in occupation of points of strategic importance more as a reminder of our power as victors rather than as a direct threat should the inhabitants wish to take up arms once more. The effect of the garrison is really a moral one, and relies for its backing on the prospect of speedy reinforcement.

3. I will now discuss the aspect of the Air Force with regard to these three main functions of military garrisons, but will chiefly concern myself with the first-named—the precaution against internal disturbances—as it is by far the most important of the three. I will therefore deal with it first.

To gain a true appreciation of what the Air Force can do to relieve the military in their task of preserving order, it is necessary to examine what the Army does in this respect.

- (a) Firstly, the military must be everywhere to show the Flag and provide backing to the Civil Administration. Hence, small isolated detachments, and long and dangerous lines of communication result.
- (b) These detachments must be ready at all times to nip disorder in the bud or arrest ringleaders. They must be prepared to hold out if disorder does break out and gets beyond their immediate control.
- (c) A considerable-sized relief force has to be in existence ready to be sent off to extricate detachments when they get surrounded. Lack of communications either by road or rail all assist in causing delay.

Shahroban, Kufa, Rumaitha, Samawa, and two other places were all invested in the recent Mesopotamia rebellion, and all had to be relieved. The Mosul Vilayet and N.W. Persia also were cut off.

To free all these places and administer salutary punishment we sustained a large number of casualties, and had to send reinforcements from India into Mesopotamia to the extent of almost a division and a half.

Our inability to deal with the disorder in its incipient stages was, I make bold to say, the primary cause of our becoming entangled in this costly small war.

4. Now regard the picture from the air point of view.

(a) *To be everywhere and show the Flag.*—Look at the table on the map and the circles on it. This shows a distance of 250 miles from Baghdad. An average aeroplane can keep the air for a distance of 450 miles without refuelling—an airship for some 2,000 miles. This is ubiquity, is it not? Not much of the country, therefore, is left without some form of aerial surveillance. The native, in his ignorance (and some Europeans believe this, too), thinks that he alone is being observed, and this adds to the moral effect.

(b) *To provide a show of force to back up the Civil Administration and nip disturbance in the bud.* A threat by a Political Officer that he can call up an aeroplane to support his arguments (this he can do by wireless), and the appearance of the aeroplane will cause a salutary impression, provided that the lessons of the power of the long arm of the Air Force are properly learnt. (About this I will speak a little later on.) Propaganda, inviting compliance with demands, may come first, but bombs will follow by day and by night against villages, inhabitants, cattle and crops if terms are not acceded to.

(c) *Delay.*—There is no delay—the aeroplane is demanded and it appears. Disturbance is nipped in the bud either by a show of force or by the immediate application of force itself in its most intense form.

Few casualties to the airmen, if any, need be sustained. It is only the lucky rifle bullet which brings the aeroplane down, and as our accuracy in bombing increases, so will the height from which we can attack our objectives—hence the chance of being hit diminishes.

There is also no reason why we should not land a party of troops at the request of Political Officers to arrest ringleaders who are trying to foment trouble. Aeroplanes flying overhead ready to take immediate offensive action on a signal from the ground could overawe the inhabitants during the performance of this operation. This is no flight of imagination—it was actually done in Mesopotamia last August.

(d) *Ubiquity.*—As I said before, aeroplanes are ubiquitous. Look at the map once more. The circle showing the average radius of present-day aircraft covers the area occupied by many military detachments. This, however, leads me to the question of Air Force detachments, which I will discuss later.

ECONOMY

5. I wish now to turn to the economy of the employment of Air Forces in replacement of Military Garrisons, and I would invite your attention to the map.

Look first at the red dots; each dot represents about 500 men. They represent the forces in Mesopotamia prior to the rising of mid-summer, 1920. They are scattered all over the country, but, of course, for some very good reason. No one likes detachments at any time on account of the anxiety they cause—food and possibly beleaguering. For instance, Zakho guards approach from Turkey; Chemchemal is the key to Kurdistan; Kufa overawes the holy city of Nejef.

However, there they are, carrying out the functions which we have considered previously and requiring the large central striking force collected at Baghdad to go off at any time and relieve any of them should it be necessary.

All this involves the presence of some 47,000 fighting men and costs nearly 20 millions per annum to maintain. There were two squadrons of aeroplanes.

Look what happens now.

We place ten squadrons of the Air Force in Mesopotamia, and by the advice of the most competent authorities, who have examined the question on the spot, we can reduce the Military Garrisons to what is represented by the green dots. You will see I have had to cut some of them in half to show 250 men only.

All the Air Force requires are safe bases from which to operate, and the whole country is under their surveillance, and their communications, being in the air, are unhampered.

The danger of isolation to the military forces and the extreme difficulty of the daily maintenance of these outlying posts disappear when the Air Force is employed.

Two hundred men require only 880 lb. weight of supplies each day, and the present-day weight-carrying machines can "toy" with three times that amount.

Modern aeroplanes can also carry ten fully-armed men, and we are designing them now to carry a much greater number.

If, as is usually the case, aeroplanes can land at these outlying posts, reinforcements can be brought up by air, and conversely the posts can be evacuated by air.

All this is a direct saving when you realize that by the normal present-day methods it requires three men on the lines of communication to maintain one man in the firing line.

These ten squadrons and the 7,000 fighting troops, which are represented by the green dots, cost only £10,000,000 a year, and will, it is contended, preserve internal order with facility equal to, or superior to, that exercised by a force which costs twice as much.

Where we cannot afford the more expensive scheme, we should, I think, turn to the cheaper—in fact, we have no choice in the matter. It is forced upon us.

6. After having said all this, you will say: Why don't you carry it out?

My answer is: That, as we are in most overseas theatres subsidiary to the Military Command, we have not been allowed to.

Military commanders only partially appreciate our potentialities, and quite naturally, I suppose, rely on their time-honoured methods of

expensive lines of communication connecting the many detachments which are forced upon them by political and other circumstances. They are somewhat shy of trying something new which they do not quite fully understand. If the military are in the ascendant and primarily responsible for the garrisoning of a country, they naturally will want things done their way, and in so thinking will consequently decide upon what they know about and what is, incidentally, the more expensive method. If, however, you are prepared, or if you are forced, to accept the cheaper method—the virtual preponderance of air units with their superior advantages—you must accept what indubitably accompanies it, and that is, Air Control. At present under the military régime we are only being partially used. The inability of military commanders and their staffs to think in aerial terms leads to this.

The Army must have detachments, and incidentally honour us by asking us to carry out reconnaissance for each one of them; but at the same time they ask us to divide ourselves into "penny packets," too; separated by enormous distances from our bases and sources of supply.

This is bad enough for the military, but consider what it means to a technical Service like the Air Force with its thirty-two different trades in each squadron and 22,000 odd articles of stores in its catalogue. A single bolt missing may put an aeroplane out of action, and just think what you will have to carry with each "penny packet," if each "penny packet" is going to have its own proper proportion of skilled tradesmen and stores.

Of course, each "penny packet" can have these men and stores, but at a price. If, however, economy is to be the ruling factor, it cannot be done, and the Air Force must live concentrated and amongst its essential facilities for maintenance and repairs. It must and can rely on its enormous range of action for its ubiquity and support to military detachments.

From an administrative point of view Air Force detachments are inefficient and uneconomical; from an operational point of view they may well prove a snare and a delusion, and lead to calamity.

7. This present piecemeal employment of aircraft now brings me to the all-important question as to what is the correct way to use the Air Force. The lesson which I wish to convey must be learned by all who would employ aircraft; otherwise, trifling with this new weapon of warfare will prove to the users to be reliance on a broken reed, and to the Air Force a blow from which it will take years to recover.

Firstly, the soldier relies unconsciously on the prestige, acquired by the white armies in centuries of contact with natives, to impress them with awe. The Air Force possesses no such tradition. The superstition of the native concerning the "god in the air" commands his respect, until he realizes that the man who flies the aeroplane is much the same as any other white man.

Before he can have a real taste of the fact that the white man can bite equally as well from the air as on the ground he will not grant him the same respect after his first illusion is shattered. Engine failures

and other signs of inefficiency, an aeroplane being shot down by him occasionally, and, most important of all, the irritation and "souring" effect of spasmodic light bombing, will breed not awe and respect, but merely contempt.

To establish a tradition, therefore, which will prove effective, if only a threat of what is to follow afterwards, is displayed, the Air Force must, if called upon to administer punishment, do it with all its might and in the proper manner.

One objective must be selected—preferably the most inaccessible village of the most prominent tribe which it is desired to punish. All available aircraft must be collected at a base from which they can function with all their maintenance and repair facilities at hand.

The attack with bombs and machine guns must be relentless and unremitting and carried on continuously by day and night, on houses, inhabitants, crops and cattle.

No news travels like bad news. The news of the punishment will spread like wildfire. The objective may be changed if it does not spread quickly enough.

Submission will soon be rendered by the rebellious tribe, and in such a short space of time and at such a small cost in money and lives that no real comparison can be made with what would result from a similar punishment carried out by a military expedition.

This sounds brutal, I know, but it must be made brutal to start with. The threat alone in the future will prove efficacious if the lesson is once properly learnt.

Look at the warship which sails into a foreign port when our interests or legation are in danger. Of her own power she is unable to accomplish much. She carries with her the traditional threat of the power of the British Nation, and peace usually reigns once more. So must we have it with the Air Force—the Service aeroplane must command this respect.

What I have described is not mere imagination again. In Mesopotamia recently two of our pilots had a forced landing and were captured. In their report on their release they stated that "It was very evident that the people were in great terror of our bomb raids, and on the morning following our capture the sky was anxiously searched by them."

If spasmodic efforts cause this, what will the real thing produce?

It is no use taking two bites at a cherry—decide on using the Air Force to exercise punitive measures and let the Air Force use their powers in the proper way. It will be cheaper, quicker, and more efficacious in the long run.

My recounting what happened in Waziristan at the beginning of last year will illustrate how air operations should not be carried out, and will no doubt commend itself as a future guide of what not to do.

We had thirty aeroplanes only available, and with these we tried to make an impression on an area of 32,000 square miles by visiting places all over this area. Our offensive action, by reason of the very vastness of the objective, was almost negligible in effect.

Good intelligence should have indicated the best target or targets, and concentrated effort against these would have achieved success. As it was, the value of aircraft was frittered away.

Light is shining, however. I quote from a private letter from Mesopotamia. "We have been going in for massed bomb raids lately with excellent results. G.H.Q. (who were running the operations, mark you!) now realize how futile it is sending out an odd machine to bomb a tribe."

The root idea of the employment of aircraft is to maintain a concentrated Central Air Force, suitable, by reason of its radius of action, for offensive action far and wide, and immediately ready and capable of reinforcing or supplying military detachments from the air, should reliance still be placed on the use of detachments or should their need be imperative.

So far you have only come part of the way with me. Appreciation of the principles of air power and experience of its workings will, I think, cause you to come to the realization of the fact that with aircraft properly used, *detachments can be done away with entirely*, and complete reliance placed on the long arm of the New Service for the efficient preservation of internal order throughout most, if not all, of our overseas possessions.

8. So much for internal security. I will now make a passing reference to invasion and what assistance the Air Force can give in warding it off. Most of our overseas garrisons are primarily located in stations designed to meet the needs of the maintenance of internal security. They must normally concentrate to meet invasion. This requires time.

Here the Air Force can help. They can operate far in advance of our troops, who are making their preparations to meet the invader or awaiting reinforcements, reconnoitring the possible lines of approach of the invading army and carrying out all kinds of concentrated offensive action against his troops and transport, both road and rail, on his line of march. This delay, while proving a blessing to the army awaiting attack, may well prove decisive, as the first rush of the invader is usually the stake on which he banks for his chances of ultimate victory.

9. Lastly, there is the rôle of the Air Force as part of a military garrison occupying a conquered country to enforce peace terms.

In the case of a highly-civilized country the military forces are largely designed to hold strategic points such as bridgeheads, and their presence, though normally out of all proportion to the threat which might be directed against them should the conquered country show signs of taking up arms once more, is a token of the power which rests behind them. Contact is here established with the conquered people, and aircraft can be of little use in reducing the number of troops that can be employed. They can merely be used for purposes of close co-operation with the military forces.

Aircraft as a portion of the forces of occupation in the case of less civilized countries will be of the greatest use where occupation

of the country means that of showing the Flag continuously and impressing the inhabitants with the power of the conqueror.

Aircraft are a constant reminder through eye and ear. A single aeroplane in a single flight can be seen by every inhabitant of 400 square miles of country. In other words, the accomplishment of a vast amount with the minimum of effort.

10. Let me finish with a final word on the more peaceful aspect of what the Air Force can do in reducing the number of military garrisons.

They can be employed as a most rapid means of communication and contact between white officials and the natives they control so well.

Visits which used to take months to complete can be undertaken in a few hours.

The spread of false information and misinterpretation of a political officer's assurances—a cause of endless trouble and the possible source of rebellion—can be checked, as the official version will invariably get round quicker by air than that which is passed by the natives from mouth to mouth, and contorted in the process.

During our recent successful small operation in Somaliland the deepest impression was made on the local chiefs by the fact that the Governor of Somaliland was able to visit them and speak to them at the conclusion of the operations, forty-eight hours after the fall of the Mullah's stronghold. He accomplished the journey from Berbera—300 miles—by air in one day.

DISCUSSION.

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR W. S. BRANCKER, K.C.B.: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, the chief reason that I wished to speak was that I anticipated the gallant lecturer would be heavily attacked by the Army, and I desired to support him, but apparently there is not going to be an attack. I honestly think this is almost the best lecture I have ever heard on aviation, and I have heard a good many. It opens up an extraordinarily interesting problem for the future. I agree with practically every word the lecturer has said, except that he has dealt only with the immediate present and not very much with the future. I believe that in the near future he will be able to extend his 200 miles radius to a 500 miles radius, as we improve and develop engines and get better designs; this is almost within practical politics now. There is another point I should have liked to accentuate if there had been any critics, namely, that although we were over four years at war it was only in the last year that aviation really began to come into its own as an independent weapon. Critics may very well say: "You claim this, that, and the other for aviation now, but why did not you do it during the War?" You could not carry out accurate bombing, and you had no serious effect on the movements of troops on the ground during the fighting in France." In 1918, however, things were just beginning to develop; and if you take France alone, there was an example of the checking of a German advance in April, 1918, by the concentration of all available aircraft flying low, and there were one or two instances in the German retreat where the Germans lost very heavily from independent aircraft attack. Then both during the advance on Jerusalem in Palestine and during the big operations at the end of the campaign, aviation acting independently had a tremendous effect on the enemy's retreat; while in India, in 1919, an Afghan force was practically stampeded by action from the air or the threat of action from the air. There has been a good

deal of criticism about aerial operations in India since the Armistice, and I think the lecturer hit the nail on the head when he said that the bombing there was spasmodic. One of the bedrock principles of the application of force, not only in aviation, but in naval and military operations as well, is the concentration of all available force at the decisive point, starting with some definite plan and going through with it with every machine or man that you can possibly spare. I think the apparent failure of the Waziristan operations was largely due to the lack of perseverance and concentration of force at really important points. I do not think I can say any more except to congratulate the lecturer very heartily on having so ably opened a subject, which will carry us a very long way in the next twenty years.

MAJOR G. G. WATERHOUSE, R.E.: I should like to put one question to the lecturer, namely, how does he propose that we shall establish the Air Force tradition in a country that is administered by us? We have the tradition and the prestige of the British Army behind us, but can we afford to establish this new tradition, say, in Mesopotamia by going "all out" for some tribe? This Air Force tradition is itself a hypothesis; we do not know that we can establish it. We have seen on the frontier the way in which the natives have become used to the aeroplane; they quickly learned how to camouflage themselves and their stock from attacks; and you must remember that a native village is not very susceptible to a bombing attack. The lecturer himself said that the superstition of the aeroplane would go, and the fear due to its novelty would go with it, and knowledge of how to escape it and how to minimize the effect of bombing will very quickly develop. Taking it that we do establish some form of tradition, I think we are still up against the question that if the tradition fails, if we cannot adequately establish it, how is the Air Force going to deal with tribes who are not in open rebellion but who are merely causing trouble to their Political Officer? The method that is adopted at present is that a military expedition is sent up to overawe the tribe. On the other hand, the Air Force can only cope with that tribe by hitting it and keeping on hitting it. Therefore, if tribes cause a little trouble we are to do our best by means of the Air Force to wipe them out! That seems to be rather the Hun method than the method on which the British Empire has been built up, and on which the British Empire will undoubtedly be maintained in the future. I should, therefore, like the lecturer kindly to explain a little more definitely on what he bases, firstly, his feeling that the tradition will be established, and, secondly, failing the establishment of that tradition, how he proposes to deal with a vast country in which the tribes on the east may hear nothing of the punishment which has been inflicted on the tribes on the west, and so on.

COLONEL H. E. T. KELLY, C.B., C.M.G.: I should like to say a word on behalf of the Army, as nobody has said anything in support of it yet. Wing-Commander Gossage's idea is very attractive, but nevertheless I do not see how you are going to do away with the poor old Army. First of all, the establishment of the aerodromes will be a very big show. The Air Force will have to get a lot of their gear out by rail or by carriage in some way, so that you cannot do away with the necessity of having a military force to start the thing. They will have to open a line of communications in order to get the aerial bases settled. It must also be remembered that when the aerodromes are established they will prove to be very vulnerable. One of the chief difficulties of attacking villages, towns, and so on at some distance is the difficulty of keeping a permanent watch over that particular spot. To keep one aeroplane in the air all day on an ordinary patrol requires, I think I am right in saying, six aeroplanes. So that if you are always going to keep watch over a particular disordered spot it may take a tremendous lot of

aeroplanes to do the work. General Brancker says that if you bomb at all you want to do it in force, so that there again it means a very big show indeed. I think, as the last speaker said, that directly the aeroplanes go away their effect is rather forgotten. Even the natives are becoming accustomed to the effect of aeroplanes, and are beginning to learn how to take care of themselves. So there is a good deal to be said from the point of view of the difficulties that will arise in their use. I know Waziristan very well; it is most unsuitable for the employment of aeroplanes; it is full of difficulties, and I can quite understand that the wily natives were not very much upset by them. Our Indian frontier is covered with that very difficult sort of country. Afghanistan, too, is very rugged, and offers a lot of difficulties to aeroplanes. If you do everything from a base at a distance of a couple of hundred miles, I maintain that you rather lose your effect owing to the intervals of time between attacking squadrons.

AIR COMMODORE BROOKE-POPHAM: There is one point I would suggest might be thought of, and that is the co-operation of tanks with aeroplanes. It seems to me that the use of tanks might very well do away with the necessity for a line of communications and thus tying the central portion of your Air Force to a road, river or railway. You could get tanks to move fairly quickly across country to bring up supplies, protecting themselves during the journey, and they would probably be able to defend the aerodromes when they reach them. Two of the speakers have referred to people getting used to aeroplanes and not being afraid of them any more. I maintain that that was not the experience of the War on the Western Front. As far as I can make out, the more people were bombed by aeroplanes, or even heard them over their heads at night, the more they got worried about them, and I rather fancy that was the same in London, although I was not here. There is one little point about thinking aerially that I should like to refer to. We are used to walking along the road at four miles an hour and only moving in two dimensions, and it is very difficult for people suddenly to alter their brains completely and to think in three dimensions at two miles a minute, which is what the aeroplane does. One often hears even people who have been in the Air Force for a long time say: "I could no more do that than fly." One brings it out quite unconsciously. It shows that nobody's brain has yet become properly attuned to thinking aerially and thus realizing what the potentialities of the Air Force are.

COLONEL B. L. ANLEY: I should like to ask the lecturer one question. I think he said there were twenty-three different trades required for the upkeep of an aeroplane. At a former lecture delivered at this Institution on the subject of man power it was mentioned that even at the present moment the Royal Air Force has extreme difficulty in getting these specialist tradesmen. I should like to know whether there is any possibility of maintaining one hundred aeroplanes at present, for instance, and not in the future, as the lecturer was dealing with the present and not the future.

WING-COMMANDER GOSSAGE, in reply, said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, first of all I want to deal with the point which Major Waterhouse raised. I entirely agree with his remarks on the subject of the traditions of the British Empire compared with those of the late Imperial German Empire. I feel sure that we cannot exercise this threat until the occasion occurs. If a state of unrest develops which warrants intense aerial action, then I think we ought to use it. He is quite right, no doubt, in saying that news of what happens to the tribes in one portion of one of our overseas possessions may not spread to the tribes which inhabit another portion of it. I grant him that. But if news does not travel as he suggests, I do not think that the outbreak of revolution in, say, the east will necessarily cause

a similar outbreak in the west, and therefore I think that within the bounds of the normal means of inter-communication of the native countries the effect of the lesson will be learned. If punishment is administered in one portion of a locality, the surrounding villages which would normally break out into rebellion in that locality will hear about it soon enough. One has to localize things. It is not necessary to administer a lesson in, say, the west, if the people in the west are not going to break into rebellion when the people in the east do. Both Major Waterhouse and Colonel Kelly referred to the frontier of Afghanistan. That was an instance which I quoted in the lecture as being almost a failure from the air point of view.

With regard to the question of the despatch of a column (of which Major Waterhouse made mention), which goes out to support a Political Officer if he gets into trouble. I do not see the slightest reason why the Air Force should not carry out that function. As I said before, they can carry the troops, and I think that would be an instance in which they would be most useful. If the Political Officer wants assistance which does not warrant intense bombing operations carried out by aircraft, they can quite easily be employed in landing troops. The main thing is to give the impression of ubiquity and speed. If the Political Officer asks for bombing action, give it him at once; if he asks for troops, send them to him at once. That brings me to the question of the employment of troops, a subject to which Colonel Kelly referred. I said that here we must have troops. We want 7,900 of them in Mesopotamia to guard the aerodromes of our ten squadrons. It is much better to have them as shown on the map on our basic lines of communication, where there is very little risk of their being cut off from one another. A certain number of troops are shown on the map as attached to Baghdad—3,400. Those are required to reinforce the various detachments which, it is considered, should still remain as outlying posts.

I want to make it quite clear that the scheme which I have illustrated on the board is what I consider to be a halfway-house scheme. We have made a concession to the military here by saying: "Very well, you can maintain detachments at the places where the green dots appear on the map. If you have to maintain them there we say we can keep them supplied and also keep constant watch over them."

Ten squadrons were suggested to guard against the difficulty which Colonel Kelly suggested of having six aeroplanes behind the line for every one on the line. Ten squadrons with their active machines have got their requisite reserves. The reserves which we keep at the present moment are 150 per cent. machines reserve, and we send out 100 per cent. wastage each year to all these overseas possessions; so that I think we can guarantee always to have, at any rate, 50 per cent. at least of these machines serviceable for action. The other point which I wish to impress again is that if we are going to keep any of these places at all we are faced with the question of keeping them in the cheapest manner, and I make so bold as to say that the air is a cheaper means of preserving order in a country than the present expensive military method. With regard to the question of trades, which was raised by the last speaker, I think I am right in saying that the only trades from which we are not easily able to obtain men at the present time are the wireless trades. If you give us the money and the opportunity I do not see the slightest difficulty in maintaining the hundred aeroplanes only to which the speaker referred. If you have the money and the opportunity it can be done.

THE CHAIRMAN (Major-General Sir N. M. Smyth): Ladies and Gentlemen, it is usual for the Chairman to endeavour to summarize the results of the discussion. There are two points that struck me particularly in the very interesting lecture that has been delivered and the remarks that have followed it. I think the *argumentum ad crumenam*, or the argument of the purse, is one of great importance at the

present time, and will bear weight with the Treasury and the public. It therefore seems to me that some endeavour should be made to carry out the principles which have been proposed by the lecturer. It appears to be desirable that, as this is purely an experiment, the proposals should be tried in their entirety in one district only, and, if possible, in Mesopotamia. At the same time we must guard against the danger of injuring women and children and non-combatants, a point which was hinted at by Major Waterhouse. I think it is most important that in fighting against such people as Arabs, who are very highly civilized and fight as gentlemen always, we should avoid waging war upon non-combatants. With regard to the moral effect of aeroplanes upon natives, it seems to me that we do not need to trouble much about that. It may be of use to send about messengers in the air and to impress the natives with the enormous power that we have in the Air Force, but what we really want to do is in a case of emergency to obtain decisive results by attacking the enemy with every possible means at our disposal.

In conclusion, I propose a hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer, and I ask you to show your approval in the usual way.

The resolution of thanks was carried by acclamation.

AIR COMMODORE BROOKE-POPHAM: Ladies and Gentlemen, before you go I am sure you will join with me in according a hearty vote of thanks to Major-General Sir N. M. Smyth for presiding over the meeting this afternoon.

The resolution of thanks was carried by acclamation, and the meeting terminated.