WAR CABINET.

NOTE OF A CONVERSATION IN THE ROOM OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR, WAR OFFICE, ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 1918, AT 11.15 A.M.

Present:-

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War;

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff;

Major-General Sir G.H.W. Macdonogh, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence: (For first part);

Major-General R. Hutchinson, D.S.O., Director of Organisation: (For second part);

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet.
THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to an article published by the "Morning Post" on May 14th, from their Paris Correspondent, suggesting that General Mackensen was coming to the Western front with 600,000 men from the Russian front, and that 500,000 Austrians had been concentrated in the Tyrol for an attack on the Italian front.

GENERAL MACDONOUGH said that General Mackensen was a bogey who was always reported to be everywhere except where he really was. He was said to have appeared on the Western front, on the Italian front, and on the Turkish front, while all the time he was at Odessa. He himself estimated that 11 good divisions could still be brought over by the Germans from the Eastern front. The total number of German divisions on the Eastern front was 34, but except for the 11 he had mentioned they were indifferent material. They could be completed to full strength, however.

The Prime Minister inquired how the Germans could maintain these large forces. At the outset we had been told that they had only 400,000 reserves, and their casualties must already amount to that.

GENERAL MACDONOUGH agreed that the casualties could not be much below 400,000, but he pointed out that this figure did not include returned wounded, of whom there were large numbers, not only from the present battle, but from the battles of last autumn. In addition, perhaps as many as 50,000 prisoners were returning from Russia. Count Mirbach had only recently protested to M. Trotsky against the slow rate at which the prisoners were returning. The Germans were not releasing any Russian prisoners.

The alleged number of 500,000 Austrians in the Tyrol was absurd. The Austrians now had 49 ½ divisions on the Italian front and 78 divisions altogether. They were, however, reorganising their Army, and instead of the old plan of 4 battalions...
in a regiment, and 4 regiments in a division, the new divisions would be reduced to 9 battalions. Consequently, the number of 100 Austrian divisions which the King of Spain had lately asserted that he knew to exist, was not an impossible figure. Some of the Austrian troops might be unreliable, but it had to be borne in mind that a large proportion of the malcontents had laid down their arms earlier in the War.

Except for artillery, there were no Austrians on the Western front. On the Italian front we had as yet no definite news of a forthcoming Austrian offensive. There had been some strengthening of the Austrian forces in the Trentino, but nothing like half a million. The most probable front of attack on the Italian front was East of Lake Garda, towards Verona, down the Val Lagarina. Tactically, however, this was a difficult front on which to attack, and he doubted if the Austrians could achieve much without German assistance.

GENERAL WILSON pointed out that the greatest sign of weakness in Austria was in their failure to attack since March 21. This must be very galling to the Germans, particularly as they knew that British and French and even Italian divisions had been withdrawn from that front.

GENERAL MACDONOUGH said that there were no German divisions on the Austrian front, and at present there were not more than 2 German divisions unaccounted for. On the Western front.

On the Palestine front there were 5000 Germans in what is known as a Pasha formation. He had received reports of German and Austrian troops going down the Bagdad railway. The number was given as 70,000, but this was probably greatly exaggerated, and he thought an outside correct estimate would be 10,000. The reports came both from Constantinople and Eski Sheir. The destination of these troops was probably Palestine. Sooner or later, no doubt, the Germans would try and drive us out there.
GENERAL WILSON thought our position was all right in Palestine. The Indian troops with which the British divisions were being diluted, though not equal to Germans, had shown themselves capable of dealing with Turks.

GENERAL MACDONOUGH informed the Prime Minister that such information as he had pointed out led to the conclusion that German public opinion was not satisfied with the offensive. He produced a telegram from a reliable agent indicating that Hindenburg regarded it as a mathematical certainty that he would capture the Channel Ports by August.

GENERAL WILSON pointed out that he had always told the Prime Minister that the Germans would not attempt an offensive on the Western front unless they did feel confident that they could achieve a great success. General Foch did not share this view.

INTERCHANGE OF INTELLIGENCE WITH THE FRENCH.

The agent’s letter referred to above led to an inquiry by the Prime Minister as to the arrangements for exchanging intelligence between the British and French Staffs.

GENERAL MACDONOUGH said that there was a regular interchange of all intelligence except the most secret from agents.

THE PRIME MINISTER considered that the French General Staff should receive the gist of information even from the most secret sources, although care should be taken to cover the source from which it came.

GENERAL MACDONOUGH undertook to see that General Foch had a paraphrase of the agent’s information quoted above.

GERMAN FORCES ON EASTERN FRONT.

GENERAL MACDONOUGH said that he estimated the number of German rifles on the Russian front at 350,000, of whom about one-third were really good troops. According to a telegram just received the Russians claimed to have 150,000, but he doubted whether the number was so large or whether they were of any value.

(GENERAL MACDONOUGH withdrew).
FIGHTING STRENGTH ON THE WESTERN FRONT ON THE 1st JANUARY, 1917, AND 1st JANUARY, 1918.

LORD MILNER said that a mistake had been discovered in the figures given by Mr. Macpherson as the basis of his statement in the House of Commons that the fighting strength of the British Army on the Western front was greater on January 1, 1918, than on January 1, 1917. As a matter of fact, the fighting strength had been less on January 1, 1918. It had transpired that the figures given to Mr. Macpherson included British troops on the Italian front. As the Prime Minister had used Mr. Macpherson's statement in his speech on May 9, he felt bound to let him know.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that he could not be held responsible for an error which had been made in General Maurice's Department.
GENERAL HUTCHISON said that the United States troops were coming along well. He had found all the officials very modest, admitting that they had made serious mistakes in the past, and doing their best to repair them. They were, to a great extent, in the hands of General Pershing. General Pershing, however, could not feed more troops than those provided in his original programme. Hence, the American troops that were attached to British units could not be fed unless they remained with us. The Americans had pressed us to give them more ships so that they could feed more men, but Mr. Thomson had declined. Mr. Stettinius had told him that the American artillery programme was going to break down. This was due to their having neglected the advice given them when they entered the war. They had plenty of trained artillery personnel, but no guns for them. The first thing to be done, therefore, was to induce the Americans to train their artillery as infantry, replacing them in July by the new drafts that were now being called up. In May the Americans had arranged to call up 250,000 men. The American General Grewther, who dealt with these matters in the War Department, had told him that he could have called up 400,000 men, but for the shortage of clothing and equipment. The Administration was reluctant to call up men until they could be fed and clothed, lest the inadequacy of their arrangements should be discovered.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested it might be helpful to the Americans for him to make a speech pointing out how, in the early part of the War, our own men under training remained for a long time without uniform or equipment.

GENERAL HUTCHISON agreed that this would be useful.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that we might have 150,000 men here for training.

GENERAL HUTCHISON pointed out that we were limited as to numbers by shipping, and it was better to bring trained men,
sufficient numbers of whom were available, to fill all the ships. No one in the American War Department had appeared to know how many trained men there were, but General Jervey at the War College had given the number as 420,000 infantry. 17 regiments of these were earmarked for home defence. GENERAL HUTCHINSON had persuaded the Americans not to lock up the men in these 17 regiments, but to use them for drafting purposes, as well as for training and Home Defence. In addition there was one cavalry division on the Mexican border commanded by General Moore. Colonel House had told him that there would be no shortage of trained men, and that all available shipping would be sent over filled with men. He had not seen President Wilson. Mr. Daniels, the Secretary of the Navy, who was a distant relative of his, and was formerly inclined to limit the American effort, had now publicly declared himself in favour of enlisting every man they could. Arrangements had been made to call up men as fast as possible up to 1,500,000, which was the limit sanctioned by Congress. GENERAL HUTCHINSON had told them that they ought to have 5,000,000 men examined, classified, and ready to be called up. The American military drafting and training machinery was inadequate. They had tried to train men in battalions and divisions before they were trained as individuals. Among the most notable persons engaged on military matters, GENERAL HUTCHINSON mentioned Mr. Stettinius, General Goethals, both of whom were Under-Secretaries; General Jervey, who corresponded partly to the Director of Staff Duties, and partly to the Adjutant General, and General Marsh, the Chief of the General Staff, the latter of whom, however, had not greatly impressed him. GENERAL HUTCHINSON said that the troops on board the "Acquitania" had been excellent. The older officers took matters seriously, and were anxious to do their bit, but the young officers had not impressed him favourably. He had found officers of all ranks anxious to
fight in one Army with the British. He drew attention to the propaganda in the United States of America to belittle the British effort.

As a result of this discussion, the following Conclusions were reached:

(1) General Hutchinson undertook to give the Prime Minister a report containing suggestions for expediting the despatch of troops from the United States of America;

(2) The Secretary was directed to invite Mr. Graeme Thomson to submit a report as to any improvements that could be made in the shipping arrangements;

(3) The Prime Minister undertook, on receipt of the two above reports, to consider the advisability of sending a private telegram or private letter to Lord Reading, impressing on him the improvements that could be made;

(4) The Chief of the Imperial General Staff undertook, after communicating with Field Marshal Haig, to give the Prime Minister a sketch programme forecasting the number of American troops that ought to be brigaded with the British army on various dates.

(GENERAL HUTCHINSON withdrew).
LIAISON WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

There was a short discussion as to the liaison arrangements with General Pershing.

GENERAL WILSON pointed out that, in view of General Foch's position as General-in-Chief, it was difficult for us to attach a superior officer to General Pershing's staff.

COMMAND OF THE HOME FORCES.

There was some discussion on the question of the Command of the Home Forces, in the course of which a suggestion was made that General Sir William Robertson might be offered the post of Commander-in-Chief in India, in order to release General Sir Charles Monro for Command at home.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

May 14, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 DOWNING STREET, S.W., ON THURSDAY, MAY 16, 1918, at 11 a.m.

Present:--

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War:

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet.

AMERICAN COOPERATION.

GENERAL WILSON said that he had ascertained from Field Marshal Haig that by June 1st, there would only be 3 American battalions in the line, and these for instruction only. He had received a letter from General Bridges which indicated that there was very considerable chaos in the American Military Administration, and it was very difficult to ascertain facts and figures.

THE PRIME MINISTER said, he had, on his visits, he had found G.H.Q., rather inclined to belittle the American battalions.

GENERAL WILSON said the same applied to General Foch. He had four United States divisions practically under his orders, but he was only using one in the battle and one, one brigade was at present in the line, somewhere in the region of Montdidier.
MAN-POWER.

IRELAND.

GENERAL WILSON said he had received a letter from General Foch asking him to send over more men. The principal untouched source he could think of was Ireland, but this depended on what the Government's policy was to be. If the Government did not intend to enforce Conscription he might be able to draw as many as 20,000 trained men from Ireland.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that this depended on the result of Field Marshal French's Proclamation on Friday. The first thing was to enforce the law. Only yesterday he had seen Mr. Arthur Lynch, M.P., who was passionately pro-French, and consequently passionately pro-Ally, and who had lately seen a good deal of the Sinn Feiners in Ireland. He said that the Sinn Feiners were rather tête montée. They really thought that they could beat the British Army, not by regular fighting, but by guerilla methods. Side by side with a certain childishness they had a lot of natural cunning, and Mr. Lynch had thought that this might easily be underestimated. They did not intend to fight in the towns, but to withdraw at once to the country where they had lots of clever guerilla leaders. They had a large number of rifles, having received small consignments steadily during the last year or two. Mr. Lynch had not mentioned that they had machine-guns, but he had been confident that they would fight. Mr. Lynch had thought that the insurrection might be delayed for two months, although it might come off within a fortnight. THE PRIME MINISTER had been careful to tell him nothing of our counter plans.

GENERAL WILSON said that, apart from Ireland, the only source from which men could be sent immediately, were 46,000 elderly men used for fatigue duties in training camps, from which perhaps 20,000 might be taken.

CONCLUSION.

(1) General Wilson undertook to write to Lord French on the subject and communicate what the Prime Minister had told him, without mentioning the source of his information.
It was agreed that, in the circumstances, fighting men should not be withdrawn from Ireland until the result of Lord French's Proclamation was seen.

**THE HIGHER COMMAND -- MR. OUTHWAITE'S QUESTION.**

At LORD MILNER'S suggestion it was agreed that:

The answer to Mr. Outhwaite's question in regard to the Higher Command should be that no change has taken place or is contemplated.

"THE MORNING POST".

GENERAL WILSON drew attention to the articles in "The Morning Post". He said that this journal was much read by the younger Staff Officers. It did a good deal of harm, as it was engendering hatred of the Prime Minister and the Government.

LORD MILNER considered steps would have to be taken to stop this. If a warning was of no value it might be necessary to stop the paper.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that if Colonel Hepington were a German Agent he could hardly assist the enemy more. He was continually speaking of the possibility of an invasion of this country, which would tend to keep us from sending men to France. Similarly, he was making an outcry about sending the young men out as reinforcements, and this would have a similar tendency; he was suggesting an invasion of France through Switzerland, which would tend to induce the French to divert troops; and finally he was making trouble between Staff Officers and Regimental Officers.

**THE MILITARY SITUATION ON THE WESTERN FRONT.**

GENERAL WILSON said that the first requisite for the Germans was good weather. By this time they probably had from 50 to 55 divisions ready for the offensive. In 10 days or a fortnight they might have 70. They would have to balance the advantages to them of delay in preparing and bringing up new divisions against the disadvantage that time would enable us
to bring up American troops and to dig and wire our defences. Fortunately, the Germans did not know how slowly the American troops were coming along. For a proper roulement the Allies required no less than 156 divisions, as he had stated in his lecture on the Versailles war game. This was why we so urgently needed men to keep our divisions in being. At present we had 9 divisions entirely out of action. When the divisions dropped to 3,000 infantry, they were merely kept as cadres, and the infantry were used as drafts.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that there were 4 points on which he felt that he himself and the War Cabinet ought to be satisfied. The points were as follows:

1. Whether the less efficient Corps and Divisional Commanders had yet been weeded out?
2. Whether the positions behind the lines were really being prepared?
3. Whether care had been taken to provide against positions being abandoned by retiring troops without a blow?
4. Whether proper arrangements had been made for the demolition of bridges, culverts, etc?

He was very anxious that we should not fail in the West because the Government had shirked the unpleasantness of insisting on being informed on these matters. He was inclined to think it was part of the duty of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, on behalf of the War Cabinet, to see that these things were done, and he thought he would be quite justified in making inquiries. Only on the previous day an Officer who had on another occasion given good advice had told him that the digging behind the lines was, to a large extent, a sham.

THE CORPS, DIVISIONAL, AND BRIGADE COMMANDS.

GENERAL WILSON said that he believed about 20 changes had been made in Brigades and Divisions. The practical difficulty was that neither he nor Lord Milner really knew who the good men were. They had to depend on reports.

LORD MILNER agreed in this, and said that he and General
Wilson were perpetually trying to find out about the men in Command.

GENERAL WILSON said that an Officer like General Plumer, for example, would at once remove anyone in whom he had no confidence.

CONCLUSION.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to give the Prime Minister a list of the changes that had been made in the Corps, Divisional, and Brigade Commands.

POSITIONS BEHIND THE LINES.

LORD MILNER said that General Wilson had already sent experts, on behalf of the War Cabinet, to examine the water protection behind the lines.

GENERAL WILSON said that they had examined not only the areas, but the potentialities of the various rivers.

CONCLUSION.

After some discussion, it was agreed that:

Lord Milner should arrange for Sir Ernest Moir to visit the Army, and advise as to whether the labour was being applied in the best possible way, and whether labour-saving devices were being used to the utmost in constructing trenches behind the lines, and generally to report on the work being done on defensive positions.

Lord Milner undertook to consider whether General Stewart should accompany Sir Ernest Moir, or whether it would be better to employ him independently with a view to getting the most out of the labour in France.

THE MANNING OF REAR POSITIONS.

GENERAL WILSON said that he had received a letter from General Lawrence about the manning of the Third line trenches, which really answered the question the Prime Minister had asked. General Lawrence had explained that the British divisions holding an average of 5,000 yards a piece could not be organised in sufficient depth to man the Third line trenches as well as the outpost line and the main position. It had consequently been arranged that the French divisions in reserve should man the Third line trenches, and if the British troops were compelled to fall back they would pass through the Third lines manned by the French.
THE BLOWING UP OF BRIDGES AND CULVERTS.

The Prime Minister said that we ought not to stand interference with the French in the destruction of bridges and culverts. If they tried to prevent their destruction, we ought to reply that it was necessary for the safety of the Army.

GENERAL MAURICE.

Lord Milner read a draft of a letter he proposed to send to General Maurice impressing on him the great importance in his journalistic work of not giving information to the enemy. The Prime Minister agreed that the letter was a very suitable one to send.

MEXICO.

General Wilson, adverting to Mr. Balfour’s remarks, said that, as a matter of fact, the General Staff had been in frequent communication with the Foreign Office on the subject, and Mr. Balfour had himself taken the Chair at several meetings to discuss this question.

THE COMMAND OF THE HOME FORCES.

The proposal, made on the previous day, that:

- General Monro should be appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces, and that his place should be taken in India by General Robertson, was agreed to.

- Lord Milner undertook to communicate this information to his colleagues, either personally and independently, or at the War Cabinet on the following day, after which he would see the King.

General Wilson said that he had taken over, as a temporary measure, the responsibilities of the Command of the Home Forces.

THE WESTERN FRONT.

THE DISPERSION OF BRITISH AMONG FRENCH DIVISIONS.

There was a long discussion on questions connected with the dispersion of the British divisions among French divisions.
In the course of this discussion, GENERAL WILSON explained the reason why it was necessary to send British divisions to hold part of the French front. General Poincaré, in spite of representations that had been made to him, insisted on the brunt of the fighting being taken by British divisions. This did not mean that he was not using French divisions, but he did not put the French divisions in until the British divisions had been practically knocked out. At the present time there were only 4 British divisions that had not been engaged in the battle. General Wilson had recently suggested that General Poincaré should relieve some of the British divisions on the III. Army front with French divisions, as an attack was expected on that front. General Poincaré, however, had declined. French divisions were in reserve, and, in due course, British divisions, as they were knocked out, would be relieved. The result of this was that, in order to provide for a proper roulement among the French divisions, we had to take over a portion of the French line. GENERAL WILSON did not dispute that this was an inevitable corollary to the policy of bringing up French divisions to support the attack on our front. One point, however, on which he thought we ought to insist was that the British divisions should not be dotted about among the French divisions, but should be grouped together. For example, we had lately taken over a portion of the French line South of the Oise, on a Corps front of 4 divisions, and to this he offered no objection. The opposite course of dotting the divisions about singly along the French line was open to grave objection, and, in his opinion, if persisted in, might eventually break the Alliance. It was bound to lead to friction. Every point of contact between the two Armies was apt to be a point of friction. As long as the divisions were together, they could be supplied by the British supply Services. But in the case of single divisions, it was difficult to justify a separate line of supply. The French would
then insist on supplying them, and this was almost bound to lead to trouble. Even if at first the French gave the troops the supplies to which they were accustomed, they would probably get into the practice of giving French supplies, to which our men were unaccustomed. The French troops were accustomed to different supplies at different hours, and the whole system was different. Consequently, he thought we ought to insist on grouping those divisions which were holding part of the French line. A second point on which General Wilson laid some stress was unduly mixing our divisions with the French. He had no doubts of the bona fides either of General Foch or M. Clemenceau, who simply desired to win the battle, but either of these might any day be superseded, and their places taken by men of entirely different calibre. In these circumstances, a state of affairs which was quite secure now might become a serious danger. If the French could induce us to allow them to supply divisions scattered through their lines they would insist on controlling the ports through which the supplies were brought, and they might even want to control the merchant ships which brought the supplies. There were tendencies in this direction which ought to be resisted. General Pershing was abetting the French in their aims by his desire for a pooling of all resources. The reason for this was that the number of troops he could feed by the French Southern ports was limited, and consequently he wished to get a part use of the Northern ports for the American Army, in order that he might thereby avoid putting American troops in the British Army and increase the strength of the American Army.

Another point on which General Wilson insisted was that British divisions sent to occupy part of the French line, when filled up, should be brought back to the British Army. He insisted very strongly on the preservation of the British Army as a separate entity.
LORD MILNER supported General Wilson's arguments against the dispersion of divisions, particularly on the ground that we should not abandon our control over their supplies. No one had been a stauncher advocate of Allied cooperation than he, but he could not countenance handing over Supply to the French. As an instance, he pointed out the need of having our own hospitals. There would be a great outcry if any breakdown of French medical arrangements resulted in suffering to our troops. He could foresee very serious friction if the supply were made over to the French. He, therefore, intended to resist the pressure of the French, and to insist on the creation of a British Supply Depot in the Argonne. Sooner or later he thought the Prime Minister would have to be prepared to tackle M. Clemenceau on the question.

THE PRIME MINISTER urged that the first consideration was to win the battle; nothing must be done which handicapped General Foch in this respect. If General Foch wished to relieve a particular French division which had particular characteristics, it might be difficult for him to do so if he was debarred from replacing it by a British division. If it involved a re-shuffling of divisions, it might involve delay. General Foch, he pointed out, probably, rightly or wrongly, regarded the French Army as better than the British. Consequently, he intended the British to break the brunt of the attack, reserving his best troops for the later stages. The Americans would not be here in large numbers before the autumn, and consequently if the British Army were, to a great extent, knocked out in the next stage of the battle, as a large part of it would be, the brunt of the fighting in July, August and September would devolve upon the French. He considered it very important that they should be in a fit condition to sustain this effort, and nothing should be done which would handicap General Foch in this respect. For his part he hoped that the French would take a very big share in
the battle, as he did not want the British Army to be so re­duced that next year we should find ourselves the third Mil­itary Power on the Western front. As regards the possibility of an alternative French Government to M. Clemenceau, he point­ed out that any successor would probably be easier to deal with, and he, therefore, did not take so gloomy a view of the mixing of British and French divisions as Lord Milner and General Wilson. He asked them to take these considerations into account before the question was finally settled.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

May 16, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on FRIDAY, MAY 17, 1918, at 11.15 a.m.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War:

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet:

Lieutenant-Colonel L.S. Amery, M.P., Parliamentary and Personal Military Secretary to the Secretary of State for War:

GENERAL MAURICE.

LORD MILNER read out a reply from General Maurice to the letter which he had sent him on the previous day, (See X-2), which was of a satisfactory character. In it General Maurice said he would not indulge in any recriminations or attempt to reopen his case, unless officially requested to do so, and that he would regard the Censor as a help and not as an enemy.

AMERICAN COOPERATION.

THE PRIME MINISTER read out a telegram from Lord Reading (No. ), in which he stated that the numbers that would be sent during May would exceed the totals hitherto given. He estimated approximately that a total of 250,000 troops of all kinds would be sent during the month, of whom 180,000
would be infantry, machine-gunners, and engineers, including replacements.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he wished to be sure that Sir Douglas Haig was disposed to make the best and prompt-est use of these American reinforcements. He had been told that only 3 battalions would be fit to serve with the British Army by the first week in June. It seemed to him that so long a period of training, in addition to their previous training of six months or so in America, was hardly necessary. He would very much like General Foch to have a look at these troops himself. General Wilson might also, if he was over in France, take an opportunity of looking at them. If the resistance to their early use came not from Sir Douglas Haig, but from General Pershing, it would be necessary to apply pressure to overcome it.

LORD MILNER stated that there had been 20,000 of these infantry reinforcements in France by the end of April, including some 12 or 13 battalions. Some of this first lot, however, had been pretty rough, and hardly knew how to handle a rifle. This may have partly accounted for Sir Douglas Haig's reluctance to use them without a good deal of further training.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that General Dawney, who was responsible for the training in France, had just come over. He thought he could extract from him a pretty good opinion as to the real value of these troops and the time required for training them.

THE WESTERN FRONT.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that the Germans had moved one division away from opposite the Belgians to some point further south in the line. There had been other small movements affecting 2 divisions. Altogether the Germans now had 48 fresh or recuperated divisions in hand for the attack. They were hard at work on intensive training in the same areas as before the attack of March 21. They would have a good moon for mass-
ing their troops at night from now till May 23. We, however, now had very good aeroplane flares for showing up the roads at night.

LABOUR IN THE TRENCHES.

LORD MILNER reported that he had discussed the matter with Sir Ernest Moir (see X-2), who was disposed to do anything that the Government wished, but had first to see his partner.

With regard to General Stewart, LORD MILNER was not quite clear yet whether he should accompany Sir Ernest Moir. He was inclined to think that it would really be best to put him at the Head of the whole of the railway transportation.

RAILWAY TRANSPORTATION IN FRANCE.

LORD MILNER pointed out that General Stewart, though primarily a contractor, would be able to effect great economies, not only in the labour required for railway work, but in the whole railway organisation. When Sir Eric Geddes had inaugurated his Railway Service in France, it was under conditions of urgency, which involved the creation of an enormous establishment which was not justified by present conditions. There were something like 13 Brigadier Generals at present on the Railway Staff in France. General Nash was now in Paris on the Inter-Allied Committee, which was laying out the general plans of the railway work required on the whole Western front. He was doing very good work there, and he did not feel disposed to bring him back, more particularly as he also, like Sir Eric Geddes, had rather large ideas of the Staff required. He considered General Stewart the best man for the purpose. He had an enormous capacity for getting work done. The only criticism against him was that he lacked aggressiveness in dealing with the Military Authorities. To meet this defect it would be necessary for him to have a strong military backing at G.H.Q.
GENERAL WILSON suggested that General Stewart should be put under the Quartermaster General at G.H.Q. This was the best solution in the opinion of the military, generally, including General Lawrence.

THE PRIME MINISTER and LORD MILNER both agreed that General Travers Clarke, the Quartermaster-General at G.H.Q., would amply supply the element of aggressiveness which General Stewart lacked. It was a further advantage that General Travers Clarke wanted General Stewart for that purpose.

GENERAL WILSON pointed out that Sir Eric Geddes and Sir Sam Fay would probably both raise a considerable protest against the idea of railways being put back under the Quartermaster-General.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that the essential thing was to make the system fit in with the characteristics of the men available and the needs of the present situation, and that there was no question of principle involved.

CONCLUSION.

General Stewart should be appointed as Head of the whole of the Railway Transportation in France, and that this Service should be replaced under the Quartermaster-General in France.

Lord Milner undertook to push the matter forward.

GENERAL WILSON AND GENERAL FOCH.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that General Wilson should have another talk before long with General Foch, in order to ascertain General Foch's plans for dealing with the German attack, more particularly in the contingency of the attack succeeding.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that General Foch had at last been induced to face the possibility of that contingency and to make plans for it. He understood that a letter from General Foch, suggesting his coming over, was on its way to him.
Booth was seeing Sir Douglas Haig yesterday and today, and would probably want to see him after that. If the letter did not arrive, he would telegraph to find out.

LORD MILNER said that he had already suggested General Wilson going over early next week. He had been anxious, however, to get certain other matters settled here before going over.

RUSSIA.

THE PRIME MINISTER reported that he had had a conversation on the previous day with Mr. Leslie Urquhart, whom Sir A. Steel Maitland had brought to see him. Mr. Urquhart was positive that any force could go straight through Russia like a hot knife through butter. His view was that the Germans were aiming at getting across to the Caspian and so utilising the Volga Fleet for getting down the produce of Siberia, as well as copper, zinc, &c., from the Urals. THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that, as the United States did not seem disposed to do anything, it might be possible to get the Canadian Government to send a force of engineers, &c., to Vladivostock, and that these, combined with the Czecho-Slavac infantry, a few battalions of Japanese, and such French Officers as were there, might make a sufficient international force to take action.

COLONEL AMERY mentioned that he had recently had a conversation with Dr. Benea, Secretary of the Czecho-Slavac National Council, who had stated that the Czecho-Slavac troops at Vladivostock might be induced to take part in international operations in Russia, but only if they were assured that this would bring them directly against the Austrians or Germans, and did not mean their taking part in civil war in Russia itself. He suggested that possibly the Australian Government might also send a detachment of engineers.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that General Poole was just starting for Russia, and was determined to do what he could to
bring about active military operations there. He was quite
sanguine as to raising a large army.

THE PRIME MINISTER referred to the fact that Mr. Lindley
was also going, and apparently had no belief that anything
could be done at all in Russia.

CONCLUSION.

It was agreed that:-

The question whether Mr. Lindley ought to
go at all to Russia should be raised at the
War Cabinet immediately afterwards.

UKRAINE.

GENERAL WILSON read a telegram to General Masdonagh from
an Agent who, in the past, had given trustworthy and useful
information, stating that the Central Powers were now get­
ting very substantial assistance from the Ukraine. 600 car­
loads a day were going through to Austria, which was at pres­
ent getting four-sevenths of the total food from the Ukraine,
the remainder going to Germany. The cost of living in Aus­
tria had gone down considerably, food was plentiful, and food
cards were now hardly being used. The Austro-Hungarian crop
prospects were also good. Fats and soap were still very
scarce. Germany was busy organising the Ukraine and sending
large quantities of agricultural machinery to Odessa, with
the idea of finally displacing American machinery. His in­
formant mentioned that he saw 5,000 Austrian prisoners a day
coming back from Russia. On the other hand, the bulk of the
released Russian prisoners were staying on in Germany and
Austria for wages. Some 50 per cent. of the Roumanian oil­
wells were now in working order.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
May 17, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W.,
on MONDAY, MAY 27, 1918, at 11.15 a.m.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O.,
Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet:


THE MILITARY SITUATION.

GENERAL WILSON’S remarks on the German attacks on the Chemins des Dames and the Belgians are not reproduced, as they were repeated at the War Cabinet later in the morning. (War Cabinet 418).

AMERICAN COOPERATION.

The discussion on this subject is not reproduced, as the gist of it was repeated at the War Cabinet later in the morning, when General Harrington was present to give further details. (War Cabinet 418).

FUTURE MILITARY POLICY.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he would like to have a picture of the situation next year, as it appeared to General Wilson. At the present time we were having the utmost difficulty in working up the Allied Forces on the Western
front to an equality with the enemy. Could General Wilson, he asked, see the time when the Allies would once more be as strong as 3 to 2 against the enemy?

GENERAL WILSON said that the situation presented itself to him somewhat as follows:—We had before us two months of real anxiety. Provided we could surmount these two months they would be followed by two more months of serious, though diminishing anxiety. By the end of September we might hope, if all went well, to reach a time when our anxiety for the security of the Allied position on the Western front had practically disappeared. We should then have to devote ourselves to building up forces on the Western front for a tremendous and crushing blow at the enemy, which would take much time. It would be a great mistake to launch our blow until it had been fully prepared. We must indulge in no operations of the Passchendaele type in this period. Consequently, between the time when our anxieties had been relieved and we would be able to strike a decisive blow on the Western front, a long period must exist. He was examining the situation on the basis that this period might be employed for striking a blow in one or other of the outlying theatres.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that the Germans could not afford to allow the Turks to be knocked out.

GENERAL WILSON agreed, and said that one of the objects of our blows in the outlying theatres would be to draw the enemy from the Western front.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that by that time the shipping position ought to be again restored, which would render this policy the more practicable.

GENERAL WILSON agreed and pointed out that the Indian Government were raising 91 new battalions, which would facilitate operations of the kind he had in view. He hoped that, when the first rush of infantry and machine-gunners had been
brought from the United States of America, he might be able to bring a few additional railway companies to France, thereby releasing a few extra railway battalions for preparing our communications in the outlying theatres.

**CONCLUSION.**

GENERAL WILSON undertook to give the Prime Minister a Memorandum on the whole subject.

**ITALY.**

GENERAL WILSON drew attention to a telegram he had received that morning from General Cavan, indicating that the Italian Intelligence Department believed that 10 German divisions were being concentrated on the Italian front, which had caused the Italians to desist from their proposed offensive. General Macdonogh did not confirm this report, and believed it to be very unlikely, and was sending a telegram in this sense to Italy. GENERAL WILSON pointed out that this was not the first occasion on which the Italians had taken alarm at such rumours, which was deplorable.

**THE WESTERN FRONT.**

GENERAL WILSON considered that the enemy had most to gain by postponing his attack till the first fortnight in June, as by these means he would be able to rest sufficiently for a renewed offensive the last of the divisions which had been knocked about in the Ypres battle. If he attacked on a very large front, without very great depth, the attack would not last more than a fortnight, but by shortening the front of attack he might prolong it. On a front from Arras to Villers-Brettonaux, namely, 60 kilometres, with 100 divisions available, he could make the original attack with 40 divisions, with 2 reliefs of 50 divisions apiece behind, and in this case the attack might be prolonged for quite a month.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

May 27, 1918.
WAR CABINET.

NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 1918, at 11 a.m.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Milner, G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War:

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O.,
Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet:

Lieutenant-Colonel L.S. Amery, M.P.,

THE GERMAN OFFENSIVE.

LORD MILNER reported that, when he had seen M. Clemenceau on the morning of the 27th, the latter had not taken a very gloomy view of the offensive and had, in fact, intimated that he was glad that the Germans had attacked and had not compelled the French to do so. In Lord Milner's opinion the serious aspect of the situation lay in the possibly shaky state of French moral. The recent strikes had been decidedly ugly. They were definitely anti-war strikes, with the object of forcing from the Government a declaration as to its War Aims.

GENERAL WILSON concurred in the anxiety expressed by Lord Milner with regard to the strike situation, and thought that it was possibly for this very reason that the Germans had decided to throw their weight upon the French. From a purely military point of view, if this was indeed the German
main effort, and the French troops fought well, the general position was one with which we could be satisfied. The communications on the German side would be bad, unless and until they could get the Soissons-Rheims railway in working order. In any case, he would much sooner see the Germans in Chateau Thierry than in Doullens.

As regards the immediate situation, GENERAL WILSON expected that the Germans would get Soissons that day, and possibly Rheims as well. They were at Venizel, 1½ kilometres outside Soissons. So far 16 German divisions had been identified, but General Macdonogh and Intelligence G.H.Q., considered that there were probably another 20 behind.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that he had telegraphed three questions:

(1) To ascertain the temperature at General Foch's Headquarters?
(2) How the French troops were fighting? and
(3) How General Foch envisaged the future?

COMMUNICATION WITH GENERAL FOCH.

In connection with the above, THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the absence of direct communication with General Foch's Headquarters.

GENERAL WILSON explained that he had tried to arrange this, but had been put off owing to the idea that General Foch was about to change his Headquarters, and for various other reasons.

CONCLUSION.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to make a further effort to secure direct communication with General Foch's Headquarters.

CAMOUFLAGE.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the extraordinary success with which the Germans had concealed their offensive up to the last moment, and suggested there might, after all, be something in the suggestion put forward by Mr. Solomon that they had some specially successful means of camouflage, even if the
particular device suggested by Mr. Solomon was too fanciful.

GENERAL WILSON did not think that there was anything more in the surprise than the abundance of cover provided by the wooded country on this front, and the excellence of the German railway system. Our own attacks at Arras, Messines, and Cambrai had been complete surprises.

GAS SHELLING.

In connection with the very heavy gas shelling now used by the Germans, more particularly with mustard gas, which lingered for some time, THE PRIME MINISTER raised the question how the Germans themselves crossed the infected zone? It was suggested that possibly the Germans might use some ointment which protected the more vulnerable parts of their person from the effect of the mustard gas, or else that they definitely selected certain sectors of the front for gassing and certain others for passing through, thus going round the infected patch, done as they had been in the case of Armentières.

CONCLUSION.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to look further into the matter.

THE AMERICAN TROOPS.

LORD MILNER reported that he had inspected one of the American divisions now attached for training purposes to General Rawlinson's Army. They were fine men, very keen, but also very raw. He had not been much impressed by the Senior Officers, but the younger ones seemed very intelligent. Relations with the British troops were excellent. The training ground was well chosen. He thought that they wanted at least a month or six weeks' more training, though they might be available at a pinch even earlier. He understood that one of the divisions which he had not seen was rather more advanced than the others.

With regard to the manner in which they were to be employed in action, he had understood from Sir Douglas Haig that they were to be trained by the cadre divisions, but that when
trained they were to be attached, first by battalions, and afterwards by regiments (brigades) to our fighting divisions.

GENERAL WILSON was not quite sure whether this plan had not been changed. He had received a telephone message from which he understood that at General Foch's instance it was now arranged that the cadre divisions should go into the line with their American infantry, as soon as the training of the latter was complete. He was, however, expecting a letter from Sir Douglas Haig on the subject.

As regards the actual numbers, LORD MILNER stated that there were now 90,000 American troops behind our line mainly consisting of infantry and machine-gunners, and that we were shortly to have a total of 10 divisions -- (12,000 infantry and 3,000 machine-gunners per division) -- which was about as much as we could handle.

GENERAL WILSON reported that he had had a telegram from General Headquarters with reference to the questions asked on the previous day (War Cabinet 418). There were now attached to the British force in France the equivalent of 57 1/2 battalions and 65 machine-gun companies, or about 70,000 fighting soldiers in all. Of these none were fit for the line at present, and 12 battalions would be fit for the line in six weeks' time.

THE PRIME MINISTER expressed astonishment that, in view of the past training of these troops and the fact that 20,000 of them had already been a month in France, it would be so long before they were available to put into the line.

LORD MILNER also considered that a rather pessimistic view. Undoubtedly it would be desirable to give the troops that amount of training, but they could be ready sooner if it was absolutely essential to put them in.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that what he wished to have was a clear statement bringing out the position both at the present time and, say, on the 1st August;
(a) As to the number of American troops brought over to France: and
(b) As to the numbers actually passed into the fighting line.

Further, he would wish very much to know what President Wilson really had in his mind with regard to the conduct of the War for next year.

GENERAL WILSON explained that the War Office were working out a statement which would cover most of the questions with regard to the American position.

THE MILITARY POSITION DURING THE NEXT FEW MONTHS.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he was anxious to have a conspectus of the situation during the next four months from the point of view of actual numbers. He wished to know what our estimated losses might be during the period, what we could fill up with from British and American sources, and how we should stand at the end of each successive month.

GENERAL WILSON pointed out that a statement which would cover these points was being prepared. General Harrington was, however, waiting for the letter from Sir Douglas Haig, in order to ascertain exactly what was going to be done with the American divisions.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION IN THE WAR OFFICE.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the difficulty of getting satisfactory information of a statistical character from the War Office. Nobody seemed responsible for supplying it, and the figures produced were continually varying, as, for instance, in the case of the figures produced to the Man-Power Committee. In the Ministry of Munitions he had had at his hand Mr. Layton, who was an Officer specially responsible for furnishing him with full statistical information at a moment's notice on any aspect of the work of the Ministry, and he suggested that something of the same sort could be arranged in the War Office.
CZECHO-SLOVAKS.

LORD MILNER reported that M. Clemenceau had been quite willing to agree to our having the complete control over the Czecho-Slovak troops at Archangel and Murmansk and generally to our settling the policy with regard to the extent to which they should be used there or sent to Europe. With regard to those at Vladivostock, however, he was determined to have them brought over to France. He did not consider that they would want to fight in Russia, or would care to fight alongside with the Japanese.

THE PRIME MINISTER explained that it was decided at a Meeting with M. Pichon on the previous day to carry 4,500 a month to Vancouver, of whom the first 4,500 would be in France by September. The matter, however, would be definitely settled at Versailles. It had been assumed throughout the discussion that the Czecho-Slovaks could only be brought over at the expense of American troops.

LORD MILNER pointed out that, as a matter of fact, the American supply would probably be nearly exhausted in two months' time, so that there would be plenty of room then for shipping Czecho-Slovaks eastwards from America in the shipping now bringing American troops. In any case, he was not sure that the trained Czecho-Slovaks would not be more useful in France than the same number of untrained Americans. He thought it was necessary to ask the Japanese to help to get them shipped to Vancouver, and did not think that this would be taken by the Japanese to mean that we had abandoned all idea of intervention in Siberia.

GERMAN INTENTIONS IN PALESTINE.

THE PRIME MINISTER reported a message he had received from a Turkish source, which had proved accurate on previous occasions, that 30,000 Germans with 60 batteries were leaving for Asia, presumably, Palestine, and the message advised us not...
to push too far, but to hold on to the conquered territory. 50 aeroplanes, with six instructors, but no pilots, were also being sent down. The message added that the recent visit of the Emperor Charles to Constantinople had been entirely run by the German Ambassador, and that Enver held rather aloof.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that information received by General Macdonogh pointed to the possibility of as many as 70,000 Germans going southwards.

**MEETING OF THE SUPREME WAR COUNCIL.**

LORD MILNER drew attention to the physical difficulties, in the present state of the traffic on the roads, of getting the Supreme War Council assembled. He was in favour of reducing the number of those going to a minimum, and of investigating the possibility of going by way of Havre and thence by special train.

THE PRIME MINISTER also drew attention to the undesirability of drawing away General Foch and other soldiers from their pressing duties in the middle of the great battle, and suggested the possibility of the Meeting taking place at some point in the neighbourhood of General Foch's Headquarters, which could be accessible by motor from Dieppe.

**CONCLUSION.**

It was decided to ascertain General Foch's convenience in the matter.

...
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on THURSDAY, MAY 30, 1918, at 11 a.m.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War:

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet:

Lieutenant-Colonel L.S. Amery, M.P.,

THE GERMAN OFFENSIVE.

GENERAL WILSON reported that 24 German divisions had been identified so far. Of these 4 had never been in action at all; the remaining 20 had been in action on the Somme, and had all had at least a month's rest. All these divisions belonged to the Crown Prince's Army. Behind these the Crown Prince had, of his own Army, 5 quite fresh divisions, and 13 which had not yet had a complete month's rest. The Crown Prince, in fact, had 35 divisions to draw upon for the offensive, without touching upon Prince Rupprecht's army to his right. The latter had 105 divisions all told. If, in the next few days, it was clear that the Crown Prince was not drawing upon Prince Rupprecht's army, we might reasonably conclude that the latter was contemplating an offensive against the British part of the line.
General Foch had brought altogether 24 divisions to face the offensive, mostly drawn from North of the point of attack, but not North of the Somme. He had, however, warned Sir Douglas Haig that he might have to withdraw General Maistre and the whole or part of the D.A.N., and that Sir Douglas Haig would have to form a reserve of his own.

The Prime Minister and Lord Milner both expressed the opinion that, when sufficient French troops had been drawn South, the Germans would attack us.

The Prime Minister quoted an article of Herr Dernbourg's, which indicated that the Germans had great contempt for our leadership.

Meeting on the Supreme War Council.

The Prime Minister stated that, in answer to a telephone message suggesting the possible postponement of the Supreme War Council, Monsieur Clemenceau had replied that General Foch insisted upon holding it. The British party would go to Dieppe. Whether the Meeting would take place at or near Dieppe, or at Versailles, was not yet clear.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
May 30, 1918.
WAR CABINET.

NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W.,
on WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 1918, at 11.30 a.m.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State
for War:

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O.,
Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

Lt.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet:

Lt. Col. L.S. Amery, M.P.

THE MILITARY SITUATION.

GENERAL WILSON read a communication from Field Marshal
Sir Douglas Haig signed by General Lawrence, dated June 4,
1918, (O.A.D.861/1) covering telegrams exchanged between
General Foch and Sir Douglas Haig. In view of the develop-
ment of the attack towards Paris, and the withdrawal of
French reserves in this direction, General Foch had asked
Sir Douglas Haig to send 3 divisions from his Reserve, with
a view to establishing astride the Somme west of Amiens,
whence they might be used as a reserve for either the French
or British Armies. Sir Douglas Haig had replied that he
was taking steps at once to comply with General Foch's re-
quest, but wished to enter a formal protest -- in view of
the situation on his own front and the withdrawal from the
British area of the French reserves, and of the American
divisions -- against the removal of any portion of the British Army from his Command until it was definitely established that most of the reserves available for the Crown Prince from Prince Rupprecht's command had been absorbed into the battle. Sir Douglas Haig further pointed out to General Foch that the enemy's preparations for an attack on the British Front were well advanced, that he could not afford to cede ground between the Somme and the Lys, and that North of the Lys in the Ypres salient he would have to fight under unfavourable conditions. Under the circumstances, the removal beyond his reach of any part of his already inadequate reserves might be disastrous. The telegram concluded with the request that the 9th Corps and the remainder of the 19th division might be withdrawn West of Amiens for reconstitution. GENERAL WILSON drew attention to the fact that Field Marshal Haig had made a protest against the orders given him. He himself considered that, under the circumstances, there was only one course open, and that was for the Northern part of the British forces to fall back on the flooded line of St. Omer, and so shortening the front to be held. He was absolutely convinced that we were not in a position to hold the present line against the attack that Prince Rupprecht, who still had divisions in reserve, could deliver against us. General Foch still insisted on his formula that no foot of ground should be given. But on this point Generals Pétain, Antoinette, Field Marshal Haig, as well as General Wilson himself, were against him. The formula had already led to the mishap on the Chemin des Dames, and a consequent extension of our line by over 30 miles. If the formula were persisted in General Foch would lose the War. In his opinion, the British Army had not a single chance against Prince Rupprecht under such conditions. General Foch's
request really raised the issue which he understood had been settled by the unanimous agreement of May 2, that if it came to a choice between defending the Channel Ports and maintaining the French line, we should decide upon the latter. He once again laid the utmost stress on the necessity of taking this step immediately, and apprehended that, even now, it might be too late.

LORD MILNER considered that General Foch was right in bringing these divisions astride the Somme. But it was a necessary consequence of this step that we should begin to come back on the North. In view of the strength of Prince Rupprecht's reserves, and the possibility of his attacking both at Montdidier and in the North, it was impossible for us to hold so long a line. By shortening the line we would create new reserves which would replace the ones taken from General Byng's Army. The swing-back had to begin, and so far did not involve giving up the Channel ports, though it imperilled Dunkirk, and raised the question of what the Belgian Army was to do. GENERAL WILSON said he had discussed the latter point with General Antoiné, who said he could fix it up with the Queen of the Belgians in half-an-hour.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the fact that the American troops, in spite of their lack of training, had apparently met the new German style of fighting very well. This style was practically the old Boer method of individual stalking with the substitution of the machine-gun for the rifle, and, in dealing with it, troops who were used to open country and not trench stale, had an advantage. He was sure the Americans could be put into line more quickly than had been contemplated, and there were 10 divisions of them already available, or available shortly.

GENERAL WILSON pointed out that 5 of these were already in line, but agreed it was worth while pushing the Americans forward as quickly as possible.
THE PRIME MINISTER considered that the issue with regard to the withdrawal to the St. Omer line was too serious to be settled without a formal decision. He wished to have, first of all, an immediate formal decision from the War Cabinet, to be followed by an Allied Council of War.

...

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 5, 1918.
WAR CABINET.

NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W.,
on WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 1918, at 2.30 p.m.

P R E S E N T:-

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner,
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of
State for War:

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B.,
D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial
General Staff:

Lt.-Col. Sir L.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet:

Lt.-Col. L.S. Amery, M.P.,

IRELAND.

THE PRIME MINISTER mentioned that Mr. Long had stated there
were now 101,000 troops in Ireland, which seemed an unnecess­
ary number in view of the recent Proclamation and the postpone­
ment of the question of Conscription.

C O N C L U S I O N.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to find out from Lord French
what serviceable troops, and of what categories, could
be spared from Ireland.

U T I L I S A T I O N O F A M E R I C A N G U N N E R S.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that we had lost a great many gun­
ners.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that General Pershing might be
approached with the suggestion that some of the surplus Amer­
ican gunners now in France should have a course of training
with our guns.
GENERAL WILSON pointed out that the American gunners training behind the line for field guns were using French guns, and were earmarked for the French, but he might certainly apply for gunners to use with our heavy guns.

CONCLUSION.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to approach General Pershing on the matter.

THE MILITARY SITUATION.

LORD MILNER, resuming the morning's discussion, pointed out that the fact that we have to let 3 of our divisions go astride the Somme gave us an occasion for putting the screw on General Foch to agree to the shortening of the line on the North. With regard to that he wished to suggest that there might possibly be an intermediate line short of the St. Omer line, which would be equally short, if not shorter, and would also be partially protected by floods. He would like the matter to be carefully gone into before a decision was taken.

THE PRIME MINISTER said it was essential that both Lord Milner and General Wilson should go over and insist upon a reconsideration of General Foch's present decision at a Council of War, justifying the demand for such a Council by the new situation created by the demand for the 3 divisions. They would no doubt concentrate, in the first place, on persuading General Foch to sanction the shortening of the line; failing that, he suggested that they should press for retaining some, at any rate, of the American divisions till new American divisions were available; thus two or three might be allowed to go, but the others kept back till further American divisions were ready to take their place.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that one of the American divisions was just starting for Alsace. These American divisions were the ones which had been with British divisional cadres, and they were taking with them all the gear of the British divisions.
but not the British cadres, so that the latter were available to be immediately refilled with another 12 American battalions apiece and to start away at once with the training of additional American divisions.

LORD MILNER suggested that the most natural thing was to remove the American divisions behind the Amiens-Montdidier front, but foresaw difficulties in the way of getting General Foch and General Pershing to agree to a change in the programme which had already been settled.

GENERAL WILSON thought that General Foch probably did not think the Americans good enough for the battle area and preferred to send them to a quiet part of the line and get back their equivalent in French divisions. For a similar reason he was unwilling to agree to General Wilson's suggestion that the divisions of the D.A.N., should be brought down behind Amiens. As regards the latter, General Foch might possibly think that as long as they were there it gave him a better say in refusing the British demand for a shortening of the line.

CONCLUSION.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to make arrangements at once for himself and Lord Milner to cross on the following day, providing General Foch could attend, and, if possible, also M. Clemenceau. The place of Meeting to be somewhere in the Montreuil-Abbeville region.

ITALY.

THE PRIME MINISTER raised the question whether General Wilson should go on to Italy. The real crisis was not likely to take place till the Germans saw our reserves being withdrawn, and he might consequently have time to be back from Italy before then.

CONCLUSION.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to consider the question and meanwhile telegraph to Italy.

POSSIBILITY OF EVACUATING TROOPS FROM FRANCE.

There was some discussion of the rate at which troops could
be transported from France in the eventuality of a sudden disaster.

THE PRIME MINISTER undertook to speak to Mr. Graeme Thomson with a view to the Admiralty and the Ministry of Shipping making a study as to what would be the maximum of troops that could be got out of France in an emergency.

...
THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.,
Chancellor of the Exchequer:
(for the latter part only):

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner,
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of
State for War:

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O.,
Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

Lt.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet:

Lt.-Col. L.S. Amery, M.P.,

IRELAND.

THE PRIME MINISTER mentioned that Field Marshal French
had already given instructions for certain drafts to leave
Ireland for France.

FORCES AT SALONICA.

GENERAL WILSON drew attention to a somewhat misleading
telegram (No. 485) sent by the Foreign Office to Lord Gran-
ville, stating that there was no intention of weakening the
Allied forces at Salonica.

CONCLUSION.

It was decided to bring up the matter at the
War Cabinet.

THE MILITARY SITUATION.

There was a further discussion on the question of the
withdrawal of 3 divisions from Sir Douglas Haig to the reserve behind Amiens and the sending of 5 American divisions to Alsace.

GENERAL WILSON pointed out that a withdrawal even as far as the Bergues line would save 3 or 4 divisions, and though it would eventually deprive us of the use of Dunkirk, it would not give the use of it to the Germans. He mentioned that a great deal of the stuff had been moved away from Dunkirk already, and that arrangements had been made so that the place could be very quickly destroyed as far as its usefulness to the enemy went. If General Foch was not prepared to accept a withdrawal on the North now, he thought it would be only reasonable to ask him to agree that if Sir Douglas Haig sent three divisions across the Somme, he should be allowed to use his own discretion in the North as to the best way of fighting his own battle. This would leave Sir Douglas Haig free to draw in his left as soon as he saw signs of a strong German concentration against him. This would involve warning the Belgians, which could be done by General Antoine or General Plumer, both of whom got on much better with the King and Queen than General Foch did.

There was also some further discussion of the alternative of leaving the American divisions, or most of them, and using them to replace 4 divisions of the D.A.N., in the Northern sector, which could then take the place of the French divisions General Foch wished to bring up from Alsace. The Americans did not like to go down to Alsace, and the whole proceeding would take much longer. It was concluded that, in any case, General Foch would have to make some concession, either agreeing to a withdrawal now, or to giving Sir Douglas Haig a free hand to withdraw when necessary, or else leave the Americans in the British area in place of the divisions of the D.A.N.,
RUSSIA.

Attention was drawn to the fact that no really definite military declaration had been secured from General Poch at the Meeting of the Supreme War Council in favour of intervention.

CONCLUSION.

LORD MILNER and GENERAL MILSON undertook to secure such a declaration from General Poch.

...

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 6, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on MONDAY, JUNE 10, 1918, at 11.15 a.m.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War:

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

The Rt. Hon. Sir Auckland Geddes, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service:

(For "Man-Power" only).

Lieut.-Col. L.S. Amery, M.P.,

THE MILITARY SITUATION.

General Wilson reported that the news so far was not unsatisfactory. The French claimed to have punished the Germans heavily, and though they had pushed in a depth of some 6,000 yards on a frontage of 30,000 yards, they had very difficult country in front of them. Only 11 German divisions had been identified so far, including, however, two of the best from Prince Rupprecht's reserve. He was not inclined to think that this was the big attack, or, at any rate, the only attack. Three new German divisions had been reported in or immediately behind the Bailleul, and he suspected the German plan might be to try and draw away our reserves both to the North and to the South before making a decisive attack on the Arras-Amiens front. General Foch himself was
rather inclining towards that opinion, at any rate, he had warned General Petain to be prepared to send divisions northwards in rear of the British line.

Generally speaking, he foresaw another two months of great anxiety. If we could hang on approximately on our present line till the beginning of August, that anxiety would begin to diminish, and would be gone by October.

LORD MILNER reported that he had discussed the question of falling back to St. Omer with General Plumer, who was very strongly opposed to the idea from the point of view of its effect on the moral of his own troops, and more particularly of the Belgians. He certainly did not consider it necessary, as far at any rate as the situation on his own front was concerned.

American Cooperation.

GENERAL WILSON raised the question of the allotment of such American troops as arrived in France during the present month.

THE PRIME MINISTER and LORD MILNER agreed that, in view of the withdrawal of the 5 divisions previously sent us, all Americans arriving in June up to a total of 10 divisions in any case would come to us. With regard to the replacements for these divisions, GENERAL WILSON mentioned that large camps were being formed in England, as the area immediately behind our line in France was getting too congested. With regard to the shortage of horses and rolling kitchens, he thought this could be surmounted. A reduction was being made of the horses in the artillery wagons to meet this necessity, and as regards the cooking, they could do with dixies for the time being.

The New "B" Divisions.

GENERAL MILSON stated that, in view of Sir Douglas Haig's reluctance to make up divisions from the 60,000 "B" men we propose to send from England, he had ordered Sir Douglas Haig
to send 3 cadre divisions over to England, with a view to making up the divisions on this side. No very large extra transport requirement was involved in bringing back the cadres, and he thought the divisions could be organised more quickly on this side. He hoped, in fact, to be able to send the first division back within a fortnight of the bringing over of the cadre, and the others soon after. He proposed to utilise some of the trained men who might be released from Ireland to stiffen these divisions.

GERMAN TROOPS FOR THE EAST.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that the Divisional Headquarters of the German 217th Division had sailed for Batoum, and General Macdonogh considered that probably the whole of the division was going to the Caucasus.

ITALY.

GENERAL WILSON reported that there were no signs of any German troops going to Italy. He was awaiting a telegram from General Diaz as to the latter's plan.

MORAL STIMULANTS FOR THE TROOPS.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the skilful way in which the Germans made use of any successes they gained by circulating them among the whole of their forces in order to keep up their spirits, and asked whether enough of the same sort was done in our Army? He thought a great deal might be made of the steady arrival of the Americans, and of any incidents which showed that they were good fighting troops. No troops liked to feel that they had an empty battlefield behind them.

CONCLUSION.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to look into the matter, but suggested that our Officers, and possibly some of our men had got into the way of paying more attention to the enemy communiqués than to any information circulated by our own Authorities.
INFORMATION TO THE PRESS.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the annoyance which had been caused in France by press statements apparently based on the statements of the General Staff, to the effect that the French troops had not fought well.

GENERAL PILSON pointed out that, in the case of the "star" newspaper, they had put in the very opposite of what they had been told, and that it was impossible to forestall that sort of abuse.

THE PRIME MINISTER, however, still considered that not sufficient care was exercised in these statements, and referred to a document from the same source supplied to Mr. Barnes for the purpose of a speech, which had fortunately been suppressed in time.

CONCLUSION.

LORD MILNER undertook to let the Prime Minister see copies of the actual statements made to the press on behalf of the General Staff.

MANN-POWER.

THE PRIME MINISTER read some extracts from a letter which had been sent to Lord Burnham, purporting to give the views of the French Government, which reproduced, in exaggerated form, the current French view that we still maintain an enormous force in this country, and set up an unduly high standard of fitness, by which we limit the numbers available for France.

GENERAL PILSON mentioned that Colonel Roure, the French Officer who had come over to investigate the matter, had, he understood, been pleased with what he had seen. He gathered that the Adjutant General was working hard to make it clear to the French that these large numbers were not, as a matter of fact, available in the Home Army.

SIR AUCKLAND GEDDES said that he had just been conferring with Colonel Roure, and his French colleague, and found them...
very hurt at the reception they had met with at the War Office, and which he thought must have been due to some misunderstanding. Their impression so far was that a good many men could still be got out of the Home Forces. They were particularly struck by the large numbers of A. men (about 74,000) who were unavailable as being either in cadres or undergoing specialist training. With regard to the question of men in civil life, he had gone through corresponding classes of needs in England and France, and shown that the proportions retained in civil life, both in France and in England, were substantially the same. The French Officers had not had the slightest idea of the extent of our Naval requirements, or of our Naval casualties. They had also begun by crediting this country with nearly 2 million more males than it possessed, which accounted for much of the mistaken impression with which they had started.

THE PRIME MINISTER thought it would be a good thing if he saw the French Officers himself after they had gone more fully into the matter.

...
GENERAL WILSON mentioned that Sir Douglas Haig was re-constituting the whole of the 5 divisions which had been through the Champagne fighting, 3 immediately and the other 2 as soon as he could fill them with the battalions which were coming from Egypt and Salonica. He was also reconstituting 2 second-class divisions with B. men, who had been sent out before the 60,000. (See X-lq). With 2 cadre divisions training 5 American divisions, that left only 2 cadres instead of 3 to send back to England for training B. men. If these shaped well General Wilson proposed to make up the 3rd division 1.
of B. men with cadres in England; otherwise, he would send
the balance of B. men as drafts to France; in this way we
should shortly have in France 87 first-class divisions (in­
cluding 10 Colonial divisions); 2 B. divisions formed in
France; 2 or 3 B. divisions formed in England; and 2 cadres
training American troops, or a total in all of 61 or 62 divi­sions. In other words, our divisional position, allowing for
divisions brought to France from Egypt and Italy, would be
substantially as before.

AMERICAN COOPERATION.

With regard to the allotment of American troops arriving
in France during the present month (See X-10), GENERAL WILSON
reported that as he had some doubt whether the Americans real­ly meant to allot them to the British zone for training, he
had made inquiries and had just received a telegram from Gen­eral Wragstaff with General Pershing to the effect that it was
not contemplated that any American divisions arriving this
month were to come to the British zone in replacement of the
5 which had begun their training with British cadres, but were
now being transferred to the French and trained in French
cadres.

LORD MILNER admitted that, at the present moment, we were
not, as a matter of fact, in a position to handle more Ameri­can troops, and that the French had probably a much larger
supply of surplus cadres or officers who could help the train­ing of American troops.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that if we had any heavy
fighting in the near future, as was probable, we should cer­tainly have some more cadres available for training Americans.
In any case this seemed to him a going back on our whole agree­ment with the Americans and he considered that it was essen­tial that a protest should be made.

2.
GENERAL WILSON said he had discussed the matter with General Du Cane, who was going over that day fully seized of the point and would raise it at once with General Foch.

AMERICAN GUNNERS.

With reference to the suggestion that General Pershing should lend us the services of American gunners for training, and to make good our deficiencies, GENERAL WILSON reported that he had not yet heard anything further. (X-).

CONCLUSION.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to telegraph to General Lawrence to find out what action he had taken with General Pershing in the matter and with what result.

MAN-POWER.

GENERAL WILSON stated that he understood Colonel Roure's report was going to be unfavourable to the War Office. His opinion apparently was that the Army Council were squandering their man-power in auxiliary services. He gathered that Colonel Roure had no intention of showing his report to us.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that it was essential that he should see Colonel Roure, and have his report, or, at any rate, his views in writing, and that if he refused to do so, he would at once telegraph to Monsieur Clemenceau protesting against a breach of the agreement under which Colonel Roure was sent over.

CONCLUSION.

THE PRIME MINISTER undertook to see Colonel Roure that afternoon.

REARWARD SERVICES.

With reference to the above, THE PRIME MINISTER considered that Colonel Roure was probably right with regard to the waste of our man-power. Various reports showed that the present Labour organisation was very defective. Sir Robert Borden had also pointed out to him that the Canadian Corps had both in putting out wire and in trench work done ten times as much as
any corresponding unit of the British Army, and had formed a very low opinion of the engineering arrangements of the Army generally.

It was pointed out that the Canadians had enjoyed advantages in the shape of being always kept together as a Corps and mostly in the same place, although it was held that even these advantages could not account for more than a part of the difference.

LORD MILNER said that this really opened up the whole large question of the Rearward Services, which he had been attempting to get settled in spite of very considerable opposition from Sir Eric Geddes, General Nash, and Sir Douglas Haig. What was required was both a better distribution of our labour and a better system of inspection. Our railway service had been organised on the basis of an advance to the Rhine, and was much too extravagant for present conditions. He considered that what was really needed was a single big administrative branch to cover both the Q.M.G’s Department, the R.E., work, and the railways.

THE PRIME MINISTER admitted the need of a re-organisation, and considered that it was also most essential to secure a really first-class man as Head of the whole engineering work. What was required was a Todleben.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that he had suggested General Harper as suitable for that post.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that possibly the Chief Engineer of the Canadian Corps, who had done such remarkable work with his Corps, might also be considered. A big civil engineer with some military experience was probably the best man for the task.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

June 12, 1918.
THE SITUATION IN FRANCE.

GENERAL WILSON reported that the French were fairly satisfied with the position. All his information convinced him more and more that the Germans meant to deliver their blow North of Amiens. The Director of Military Intelligence was not certain whether the whole of the Crown Prince's reserves had yet been used up, but in any case General Wilson thought that the Germans would continue the battle on the present front until the whole of their
reserves were used up, in other words, possibly for another week, in order to draw down all they could of General Foch's reserves, before they struck against us.

LORD MILNER suggested that possibly the German blow might be directed to separating the two Armies South rather than North of Amiens, the Germans first pressing the French back on the environs of Paris and then striking westwards towards Rouen and Havre.

GENERAL WILSON replied that, wherever they struck, General Foch was determined to keep the two Armies in contact, and had made his arrangements accordingly. In answer to questions by the Prime Minister, GENERAL WILSON stated that the forthcoming offensive might be expected to begin about the 31st, and last until July 5th. The Germans would then require at least a month's rest before they could make another attack. Our own new crop of men would only begin to be available to fill up our Divisions from the middle of August onwards, so that if the battle began again on the 5th August we should have to depend upon the Americans.

AMERICAN CO-OPERATION.

LORD MILNER stated that the five American Divisions now with our Army would amount to about 100,000 men by the beginning of August. By that time there would, of course, be a good many more American troops in France. There were six Divisions coming this month, but the question was whether they would be attached to us.

THE PRIME MINISTER considered it essential that we should make a fight in order to secure the ten Divisions which had been originally allotted to us.

In answer to the Prime Minister, GENERAL WILSON admitted that some of the five American Divisions now with us might have to be put into the line even before the 5th July, although it might be murder to do so.
FRENCH MORAL.

THE PRIME MINISTER reported that M. Zakharoff, a friend of M. Clemenceau's, in a conversation with him had assured him that, although M. Clemenceau might fall, France was bound to go on. The women of France were absolutely sound, and, as long as they were so, no French statesman could breathe the word "Peace". He thought that probably M. Briand or M. Barthou would come in.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that M. Clemenceau was again urging very strongly that we were not playing our part as regards the provision of men.

THE THREAT TO PARIS.

GENERAL WILSON reported that the population of Paris was now quite determined that they ought to go on whether Paris came under shell-fire or not. What would be serious would be the railway situation if once the Germans got as far as Senlis or Meaux, and could get the Ceinture Railway under shell-fire, as that railway was now carrying practically all the traffic between North and South. There were some single lines, of very limited capacity, near Paris, and General Nash was going over to see which of them could be doubled. GENERAL WILSON suggested that it was of great importance that the Prime Minister should get into touch with President Wilson, and find out what he was prepared to do if the French lost Paris and if the general situation became critical. It was essential to know whether the United States were prepared to go on in all circumstances.

JAPANESE INTERVENTION IN RUSSIA.

GENERAL WILSON reported that, when he was over in France with Lord Milner in the previous week, M. Clemenceau had stated that he hoped to get an answer from President Wilson, on the
subject of Japanese intervention in Russia, within 48 hours, through an American channel. Failing such an answer, he would agree to General Foch's name being quoted in a telegram in favour of intervention, or to General Foch sending a message himself. Apparently no such answer had come, and he now gathered that M. Clemenceau did not wish General Foch to send the message.

LORD MILNER said that M. Clemenceau was very reluctant, in view of the great influence which General Foch's name carried with President Wilson, to make too free use of it. He was afraid that we had really lost the tide in connection with intervention, owing to the fighting that was going on between the Czecho-Slovaks and the organised prisoners of war in Siberia.

THE PRIME MINISTER considered that M. Clemenceau was not really very eager about Japanese intervention at this moment, because he doubted whether President Wilson really would take any action, and because he was more anxious to get his Czecho-Slovaks away.

2, Whitelhall Gardens, S.W.,
June 13, 1918.
NOTES of a CONVERSATION held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.,
on FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 1918, at 11-15 a.m.

PRESENT:-

The Prime Minister (In the Chair),
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner,
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State
for War,

General Sir Henry H. Wilson, K.C.B.,
D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff,

Lieut.-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet,

Lieut.-Colonel L.S. Amery, M.P.

THE MILITARY SITUATION.

GENERAL WILSON reported that 1½ German Divisions were said
to be on their way to Petchenga, and the Germans were reported to
be constructing three railways, one to Kem, the second to Kandalak-
sha and the third to Petchenga. Unless President Wilson sanctioned
effective Japanese intervention in Siberia quickly, he feared we
should probably have to withdraw General Poole's force. Meanwhile,
the Americans had not yet answered our specific request for a
regiment and certain other items for the defence of Murmansk.

GENERAL WILSON's report was subsequently repeated at
Imperial War Cabinet 17.
THE PRIME MINISTER stated that the last telegram with reference to General Pershing's intention to train all the remaining American troops himself was a complete reversal of the whole agreement arrived at. General Foch apparently was not himself clear how the position stood. It was essential that we should take action.

LORD MILNER said that a very careful answer would have to be given, and we should have to know clearly what we wanted. His own idea was that we should insist that there should always be five American Divisions training with us, and that as soon as one lot was taken away another should be sent to replace it. That was probably as much as we required in the general interests of the Alliance.

Sir M. HANKEY mentioned that he had just heard from Mr Graeme Thomson that he now had shipping available to bring over 320,000 Americans during July and August, but did not know whether the men would be there.

Lord Milner undertook to discuss the matter with General Wilson, and to prepare a careful reply to General Pershing.

LORD MILNER said that he felt obliged to send a telegram to M. Clemenceau, putting our immediate military effort in its most favourable light, drawing attention more particularly to what we had done to re-constitute our Divisions, to send men over to France, and to comb out the Army in France itself.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he had been discussing the ratio of combatants to rationed strength with Colonel Roure, who had criticised our Air Force and Artillery and Labour Battalions in this respect.

GENERAL WILSON pointed out that our Air Force was better than the French, and able to keep a much larger proportion of its
machines in the air, chiefly because of the larger supply of mechanics available to overhaul and tune up the machines.

It was generally agreed that there was some happy medium between the French inadequacy of personnel to look after the machines and our abundance.

General Wilson undertook to go into the matter with General Sykes.

General Wilson mentioned that he had tried to get 3,000 men out of the anti-aircraft establishment in Great Britain, but that General Robertson had refused to be responsible for the defence of Great Britain if that were done.

Lord Milner stated that the Artillery figures in France certainly seemed very high, the total given being 307,000.

General Wilson explained that these included a considerable number of men in light repair-shops, etc., who were doing work for the Artillery that was being done in France by people in plain clothes.

General Wilson suggested that probably 100,000 men could be got out of the Navy if that were properly combed out. He thought the Navy ought to be obliged to give a return.

Sir M. Hankey mentioned that the War Cabinet had already decided three times to have such a return from the Navy. Nothing but a definite order would get the return.

The Prime Minister said that Sir E. Geddes was by no means happy with the Parliamentary side of his present position, and might resign if too hard pressed. He thought, meanwhile, a good deal could be done with the Air Force and the Artillery.

Sir M. Hankey undertook to produce a return showing our war effort in all branches.

Sir R. Borden's Criticisms.

The Prime Minister mentioned that he had been talking to General Currie, and gathered from him a general impression of wooden-headedness at Headquarters, and a reluctance to sanction
things like light railways, wiring of communication trenches, etc., which all proved to be essential afterwards. He had also laid stress on the inferiority of our work in wiring and trenching, and the actual inferiority of the wire used by us as compared with the German wire. The Prime Minister thought it was impossible to leave the criticisms raised by Sir R. Borden, which would probably be endorsed by Mr Hughes, undealt with. Serious notice would have to be taken of them. His own idea was to suggest that the matter should be gone into by a small Committee, consisting of the Prime Ministers and the Secretary of State for War, with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff as his Military Adviser.

Lord Milner entirely agreed with this suggestion.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.

June 14, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on MONDAY, JUNE 17, 1918, at 11.15 a.m.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War:

General Sir H.E. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet:

Lieutenant-Colonel L.S. Amery, M.P.

ITALY.

GENERAL WILSON said that the news as far as it went was good. The foot-holds which the Austrians had secured across the Piave at the Montello and elsewhere had been reduced, and there was the possibility of their being thrown back into the Piave. In that case it might be possible for the Italians to take in hand the postponed attack on the Asiago. Altogether 20 divisions had been identified, all of them exactly where our information had placed them. There were 2 more divisions, which had recently been engaged in suppressing riots in Bohemia, had also arrived on the Italian front.
MAN-POWER.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that another relative statement of the strength of the combatant troops on both sides in France should be made out. The last statement made had left 10 British divisions out of account altogether as knocked out by the fighting, but had made no corresponding deduction from the German strength. His own calculation was that within a fortnight or so the Allied combatant strength in France would be very little, if at all, short of the German combatant strength.

LORD MILNER expressed doubt whether the more recently arrived American divisions could fairly be reckoned at their numerical strength, more especially as they had no guns. There was also the very uncertain factor of what the real French strength was. Monsieur Clemenceau had recently written to him to say that the French divisions contained only 6,000 infantry.

GENERAL WILSON suggested that, from the military point of view, the sound rule was to give the enemy the advantage of the doubt in one's calculations.

THE PRIME MINISTER said he preferred basing his calculation on the actual facts. Our danger was in rushing to extremes. Last year we had always assumed that the Germans were collapsing.

AMERICAN COOPERATION.

GENERAL WILSON referred to the fact that 2 of the American divisions, which were due to be sent down to the Vosges, were being put into the line by General Foch near Meaux, and, as far as he understood, by battalions.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that General Foch had, intentionally or unintentionally, "done" us in the matter.
LORD MILNER explained that he had been talking to an officer on General Pershing's Staff, who reported that, what between the British saying that they were the only people who could train the Americans, and the French saying that only they could do it, as the British had proved their incapacity at the Somme, General Pershing was so confused that he thought it safest to train his troops himself. As far as he himself was concerned LORD MILNER said he would be quite happy if we always have 5 or 6 American divisions with the British Army.

GENERAL FOCH'S STAFF.

THE PRIME MINISTER reported that this same American Officer had drawn attention to the absence of any proper Staff at General Foch's Headquarters. This had been responsible for considerable confusion, more particularly in transportation arrangements.

GENERAL WILSON agreed, and considered that the simplest thing would be if General Foch would take over General Petain's Staff, more particularly on the railway and transportation side.

THE PRIME MINISTER made it clear that it would not meet the case if General Foch merely made use of a Staff that still remained General Petain's, and was biased in the interests of General Petain's Army. We were entitled to ask Monsieur Clemenceau that General Foch should have an independent Staff.

GENERAL WILSON explained that he certainly meant that if General Foch took over General Petain's Staff the latter would have to fit himself out with another Staff.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that as regards questions like transportation there ought also to be a British Representative on the Staff.

CONCLUSION.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to send the Prime Minister a draft for a letter to be sent to Monsieur Clemenceau.
VERSAILLES.

COLONEL AMERY suggested that what was really required was that Versailles should exercise relatively to General Foch the functions which the Chief of the Imperial General Staff exercised relatively to a British Commander-in-Chief.

THE PRIME MINISTER concurred, but expressed the view that Versailles had been let down considerably, and needed strengthening and being taken more seriously.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 17, 1918.
NOTES of a CONVERSATION held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 1918, at 11.15 a.m.

Present:-

THE PRIME MINISTER (In the Chair);

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War;

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff;

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet;

Lieutenant-Colonel L.S. Amery, M.P.,

THE ITALIAN FRONT.

GENERAL WILSON read a telegram from Italy indicating an improvement in the situation on the Piave, an Italian counter-attack having interrupted the Austrian occupation of the right bank and reoccupying the river front along the length of a kilometre in the region of Salerno. There was also some improvement on the Montello. The Italians were reported to be fighting well.

It was agreed that:-

If the improvement was maintained, a telegram of congratulation might be sent from the Imperial War Cabinet.

General Wilson undertook to raise the question again, if desirable. He also proposed to send a personal letter of congratulation to General Diaz.
THE WESTERN FRONT.

Mischievous speeches in Parliament.

THE PRIME MINISTER read a letter from Mr. Geoffrey Dawson of "The Times", drawing attention to indiscreet and mischievous speeches made the previous evening in Parliament by Messrs Pringle, Hogge, and Holt, suggesting the desirability of withdrawing our Army from France. Mr. Dawson had already taken steps to try and keep any report of the speeches out of the London morning papers.

COLONEL AMERY put himself in communication with the Director of Military Intelligence, who undertook to take steps with a view to preventing the sending abroad of copies of the Hansard in question; of arranging, if possible, with the Speaker for an alteration in Hansard; and for communicating with the Press Bureau to prevent a reference to these indiscretions getting into the Provincial papers. COLONEL AMERY saw Mr. Bonar Law, who undertook to discuss with the Speaker with a view to something being said privately to the offending Members.

JAPANESE INTERVENTION.

In connection with a telegram received from General Bridges saying that President Wilson still demurred, in spite of the efforts of General Berthelot and Monsieur Delaney, the French Ambassador at Tokio, to the idea of Japanese intervention, LORD MILNER urged the necessity of action, and pointed out that the Japanese were probably prepared to go now with very slight encouragement, although he considered they wanted something better than a demand for a series of pledges with regard to their intentions, unaccompanied by any promise of support. He thought it urgent to have another try at the Americans.
THE PRIME MINISTER urged the necessity of weighing very carefully the danger of setting Russia against us. This was one of the cases where a mistake might prove fatal. If Germany once got the gigantic man-power of Russia into her hands, the Allies would be bankrupt. In his opinion, the right thing would have been to have utilised the Czecho-Slavs as a nucleus of a democratic anti-Bolshevist movement in Siberia, which could have formed a Government, and then invited the Japanese in to help. If Siberia was once in hand it might be possible to save Russia as well, especially as Siberia controlled the food supply. What was needed was somebody who could help organise and inspire such a movement, someone like Chinese Gordon, with a streak of genius in him. In this connection the names of General Knox and Mr. Leslie Urquhart were suggested, the idea being that they, with certain other Officers, should make their way into Siberia as civilians, with plenty of money at their disposal, reverting to military rank if the development of the situation made that desirable.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 19, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on MONDAY, JUNE 24, 1918, at 11.15 a.m.

Present:-

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):
The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War:
Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Maurice Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet:
Lieutenant-Colonel L.S. Amery, M.P.,

APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF OF GENERAL STAFF, HOME FORCES.

THE PRIME MINISTER asked the meaning of an appointment he had seen announced in the newspapers of General Romer as Chief of the General Staff. Did this, he asked, apply to the British Expeditionary Force, and, if so, why he had heard nothing of it up till now?

LORD MILNER explained that General Romer's appointment was as Chief of the General Staff in the Home Command, and had no reference to the British Expeditionary Force.

TANKS FOR ITALY.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to a request that had been made from Italy for Tanks to be sent to assist the Italian Army in overcoming the Austrian machine-guns. He said he had also seen that Tanks had been asked for on an earlier occasion.

LORD MILNER said that, as far as he knew, the requests now made to us to supply Tanks to Italy were the first made to the British Government. The earlier request, to which the Prime Minister drew attention, had been to the French Government, and as far as he knew no simultaneous request had been made to us.
LORD MILNER undertook to inquire whether Tanks could now be furnished.

AMERICAN ASSISTANCE.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to a telegram from General Bridges at Washington stating that the present intentions of the United States Government appeared to be to send only 2 divisions a month from August onwards. He also drew attention to the previous telegram to the effect that all the American troops now being sent over were being retained by General Pershing for the use of the American forces. This, he said, appeared to be tantamount to refusal on General Pershing's part to comply with the opinions expressed by the Supreme War Council. American troops were pouring into France, but we had no guarantee that they would be available for the present battle. He asked if the Secretary of State for War or the Chief of the Imperial General Staff had done anything to clear up this situation?

LORD MILNER expressed doubts as to whether General Pershing had in any way been consulted about the intention to send only 2 divisions a month from August onwards. He reminded the Prime Minister that the Supreme War Council had, as yet, expressed no opinion as to what should happen after the end of July. He had been considering the desirability of asking Monsieur Clemenceau to get General Poch to send a telegram to America on this subject.

With regard to the earlier telegram referred to by the Prime Minister, his own view was that at the present time we were not in a position to train any more Americans than the 5 divisions of infantry and machine-gunners which were now in France, or arriving there.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE SUPREME WAR COUNCIL.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he had received a telegram from Monsieur Clemenceau in regard to the next Meeting of the Supreme War Council, in which he had drawn attention to the necessity of clearing up the situation as regards American reinforcements, and had suggested that the next Meeting should be held on July 1st.
This was very inconvenient to himself, owing to the Imperial War Cabinet. He suggested that there were strong reasons for asking Monsieur Clemenceau to come to England.

In the subsequent discussion on this subject it was pointed out that General Foch would probably not be able to come to England, and this would deprive the Supreme War Council of much of its importance if the Meeting were held here. It was also suggested that there would be considerable advantages if some of the Dominion Prime Ministers could meet General Foch. The suggestion was made that the Imperial War Cabinet might adjourn for a week to enable the Dominion Prime Ministers to visit their troops in France, and that possibly in connection with these visits it might be arranged for them to meet General Foch. It was pointed out that probably neither Monsieur Clemenceau nor General Foch realised how great was the contribution of the Dominions to the effort on the Western front, and that if so any false impression on the subject might be corrected by a meeting.

THE PRIME MINISTER and LORD MILNER agreed that, on the whole, it would be necessary for the next Meeting to be held at Versailles, but that before sending a reply the Dominion Prime Ministers should be consulted.

THE WESTERN FRONT.

There was some conversation as to the reasons why the Germans had not attacked on the Western front, and the view was expressed that they were probably carefully preparing some new surprise. It was pointed out that they had had some two months in which to prepare an attack on the British front, and there appeared to be no reason why they should delay their attack, if it was to take place in the North. The delay, therefore, created some supposition that they might be reorganising their forces with a view to a further attack in the South on the French front. It was suggested that the defeat of the Austrians on the Piave might compel the Germans to send forces to their assistance, but, on the other hand, the view was expressed that the Austrians had been driven
into retreat less by the active defence of the Italians than by the difficulty of conveying supplies, ammunition, and reinforcements across the flooded river.

RUSSIA -- THE QUESTION OF JAPANESE INTERVENTION.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he had seen the Japanese Ambassador, who had given him some idea of the immense political difficulties which confronted the Japanese Government, apart from the attitude of the United States, in obtaining a decision to intervene. The Government had first to convince a Committee of both Parties, then they had to convince the Elder Statesmen, and finally the Emperor. Moreover, there was considerable hostility to the scheme on the part of an important Opposition Leader, who had declared himself against intervention, although two of his newspapers were in favour of it. These difficulties, he pointed out, to a certain extent, explained the slowness of Japan in taking any initiative.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.
June 24, 1918
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION held at 10 Downing Street, on WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 1918, at 11.20 a.m.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War;

Lt.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet;

Lt.-Col. L.S. Amery, M.P.,

THE REDUCTION OF GERMAN DIVISIONS.

SIR MAURICE HANKEY drew attention to the Versailles summary of June 22, in which it was stated that the Germans had recently disbanded 2 divisions on the Western front, bringing their total strength down from 207 to 205. Another division of Landsturm was now no longer reckoned as a division, so that the German total was now down from 242 to 239 divisions.

CZECHO-SLOVAKS.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the undesirability of shipping away Czecho-Slovaks from Vladivostock at a moment when the rest of their force was forming the nucleus of a possible counter-revolution in Siberia, and when those at Vladivostock might do good work in preventing stores being shipped away by the Bolshevists, as had happened at Archangel. He suggested that though it might be necessary to ship 4,000 or 5,000 away to satisfy M. Clemenceau, it would be better to procrastinate about the rest.

AMERICAN COOPERATION.

LORD MILNER suggested that it was very desirable to be able to bring forward at Versailles a simple formula on which the future raising and despatch of the American Army could be based. He had made inquiries as to shipping, and ascertained that 250,000 a month could be brought over. The formula he would suggest was that 300,000 men a month should be raised, 250,000 men a month brought over, and that these should include 6 divisions a month for General Pershing.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 26, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION held at 10 Downing Street, on WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 1918, at 11.30 a.m.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair):
The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War;
Lt.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet;
Lt.-Col. L.S. Amery, M.P.,

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2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W., June 26, 1918.
WAR CABINET.

NOTES OF A CONVERSATION held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 1918, at 11 a.m.

PRESENT:-

The Prime Minister (in the Chair),

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War,

Lieut.-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet,

Lieut.-Colonel L.S. Amery, M.P.

POSSIBLE FAILURE OF EUROPEAN ALLIES.

There was a short discussion on the conditions under which the War would have to be carried on if by any chance our European Allies were unable to continue.

Lord Milner undertook to go into the question from the point of view, more particularly, of the defence of Egypt and the East, and of the shipping situation, in the event of military operations being confined to the East.

AMERICAN COOPERATION.

The PRIME MINISTER raised the question of the precise nature of the points we should raise at Versailles.

LORD MILNER said that General Foch and General Pershing had sent a joint telegram asking for six Divisions a month. He understood this meant six Divisions all found, with artillery
and transport. What he wished to have clearly agreed upon was that the present arrangement, by which five American Divisions were in training with the British Army, should be regularly maintained. The Divisions need not always be the same Divisions, and if Sir Douglas Haig was able to arrange the training facilities it might be possible to ask for more than five Divisions.

The Prime Minister pointed out that we had equipped the last lot of American Divisions, who had left us taking our transport with them. Was it to be understood that we were always to equip the American Divisions in this fashion and then lose the transport? That was obviously a matter on which a definite arrangement was desirable. Similarly, he wished something could be arranged about the training of surplus American gunners with British and French batteries.

.......

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 28, 1918.
WAR CABINET.

NOTES OF A CONVERSATION held at 10 Downing Street, on MONDAY, JULY 1, 1918, at 11 a.m.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.,
Chancellor of the Exchequer:

Major-General C.H. Harington, C.B.,
D.S.O., Deputy Chief of the General Staff:

Brigadier General P.F. de B. Radcliffe,
C.B., D.S.O., Director of Military Operations.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet.

AMERICAN FORCES.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to our ignorance as to what use General Pershing was making of the large forces being brought over from the United States of America in our shipping. He had heard that in a week or two General Pershing would have 4 more divisions ready to go into action, but he did not know whether this information was reliable. If correct it was of great importance, as it would mean that the Americans had the infantry and machine-guns of no less than 17 divisions in France. It was unsatisfactory, he said, that we had not better information on the subject. He inquired whether the 7 American divisions in the line were complete with their artillery?

GENERAL RADCLIFFE and GENERAL HARINGTON said that within the last few days they had learned that the last of the 7 American divisions had been completed in all respects in regard to artillery. They said that we had a very good representative at General Pershing's Headquarters, and they

Undertook to take steps to obtain complete information as to the use to be made of the American forces.
PLAN OF OPERATIONS FOR 1919.

THE PRIME MINISTER asked what was being done in regard to the preparation of the military plans of operations in 1919?

GENERAL HARINGTON read a telegram that had just been received from General du Cane giving some indication of General Foch's views on the subject. General Weygand had told General du Cane that it was not proposed that the American troops should take over a section of the line this year, but that next year, when the question of a serious offensive would be raised, the matter would have a new aspect. The telegram also mentioned that American troops would be utilised in any offensive operations General Foch might consider desirable this year. GENERAL HARINGTON said that the General Staff had been carefully considering the question of offensive operations for next year, more particularly in connection with the Tank programme, with a view to a representation being eventually made to General Foch. This had involved a very careful consideration of the question of Tanks, and that it had been decided that the Tank organisation should be brought into the Army organisation, instead of being outside. Moreover, the Tank programme had been carefully coordinated with the programme of other material. What was being aimed at was an attack by divisions, of which 10 would be British. It was hoped to train the Tanks beforehand. The next step was to submit the scheme to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, who had not yet gone into it fully, and GENERAL HARINGTON hoped to have his plan ready on his return. After this he hoped that a general plan would be submitted to General Foch for his consideration, and that it would explain the proposed use of Tanks with the British Army and the extent to which we could supply Tanks to assist our Allies.

THE PRIME MINISTER asked if operations in other theatres had been considered? He asked if the General Staff were sure that the Germans were not going to break off operations on the Western front and go elsewhere, for example, to Russia, just as Napoleon
after concentrating his forces at Boulogne, when he recognised that the invasion of England was impossible, had diverted them eastwards. He asked what the General Staff would do in such an event? Would they merely go on hammering at the western front, or would they follow the German lead? He asked if they had considered the possibility of knocking out Austria, or Turkey? Would it not be possible, he asked, to get rid of Germany's Allies before concentrating on Germany herself?

MR BONAR LAW, in this connection, drew attention to two telegrams that had been received from Sir Rennell Rodd in regard to an alleged Austrian peace move.

GENERAL HARINGTON said the General Staff had not overlooked these possibilities, and that elaborate railway programmes were being worked out in order to have an alternative plan to meet different contingencies.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that if the Americans concentrated a great Army on the western front next year, it might be possible for our Army to follow out its traditional rôle of operating on the outskirts of the war area. He asked if anybody was studying the bearing on the question of man-power, equipment, lines of communication, &c.?

GENERAL HARINGTON said a great deal of work had been put into the lines of communication. Among other things it had been arranged that a larger proportion of reserve stores than heretofore should be kept in this country.

THE PRIME MINISTER then asked if anyone was studying the question of German camouflage? Had anybody been turned on to study that question? He pointed out that every success the Germans had won had been due to a surprise.

GENERAL HARINGTON said he could supply a very good report on that. He also had a very good report from General Mitchell on the subject of the Austrian attempt to apply German methods. This report was particularly instructive, because the Austrian failure had enabled us to discover a good deal of what they had aimed at.
THE PRIME MINISTER then asked what steps were being taken to organise the training of our troops for next year's operations? He pointed out that the German successes had been, in the main, due to superior training.

GENERAL RADCLIFFE said that the German training was on the whole less specialised than ours. Before our attacks last year troops had been rehearsed on prepared ground and had been instructed in models, plans, &c. This, he said, had tended to atrophy the capacity of our troops for open warfare.

GENERAL HARINGTON said that General Maxse, who was a most excellent trainer of troops, had just been appointed for this specific object.

THE PRIME MINISTER then asked for a Memorandum on the lessons of the present campaign. He suggested that Versailles, if properly strengthened, could be used a great deal more than at present. He considered that it must have a stronger staff.

SIR MAURICE HANKEY suggested that it would be difficult to get really practical results from Versailles unless General Hoeh was associated with it in some way or another.

THE PRIME MINISTER asked that:

Separate Memoranda might be prepared on all the subjects mentioned above, and General Harlington and General Radcliffe undertook that this should be done.

THE DIVISION RE-FORMED IN ENGLAND.

GENERAL HARINGTON told the Prime Minister that the new divisions which had been re-formed in England out of the cadres of divisions sent back from the front and filled up mainly with B. men and with a sprinkling of A. men were inferior in quality. Reports stated that the physique of the men was poor, and that they lacked training.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that the Germans did not put their older men into special divisions, but that they mixed them up with the younger men in other divisions, and he understood the French were now doing the same thing.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on FRIDAY, JULY 12, 1918, at 11 a.m.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair);

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War;

The Rt. Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer;

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff;

Lieutenant Colonel L.S. Amery, M.P.,

WESTERN FRONT.

GENERAL WILSON explained that the divisions of the D.A.N., had now been removed. As regards infantry, Sir Douglas Haig was glad to be quit of these particular French troops, who had shown themselves very reluctant to dig, and otherwise unsatisfactory, and was much happier with the Americans which would replace them. As regards artillery, Sir Douglas Haig had brought up the guns of the British divisions in the Champagne, so that the situation was substantially unaltered. In spite of the possibly very heavy odds of 100 to 45 divisions which Sir Douglas Haig might have to encounter, he was more satisfied about the situation than before. Our preparations for defence had greatly improved, the troops had had a certain amount of rest, and the new railways, as well as the railway through Amiens, were now working. General
Rawlinson considered that the recent little advance at Hamel had pushed back the German guns to the width of the whole valley further away from Amiens. GENERAL WILSON was, however, writing a strong letter to General Foch laying stress on the seriousness of the menace to which the British front was exposed.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that it might be better if General Wilson's letter were couched in the form of a report, and if he himself sent it to General Foch in order to lay stress upon his right to communicate with General Foch, and to remind the latter that he was just as much responsible to the British Government as to the French.

MR BONAR LAW suggested that though M. Clemenceau did not send to us copies of all the letters he wrote to General Foch, it might be a good thing if a copy of the Prime Minister's letter were sent to him.

It was decided that:

The Prime Minister should write to General Foch, as suggested, and should send a copy of the letter to M. Clemenceau.

AMERICAN COOPERATION.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the fact that the French had secured the bulk of the American divisions for themselves. In view of the danger to which our front was exposed, he considered they had too large a proportion, and wished, in any case, to be assured that General Foch's reserves were so disposed as to enable help to reach the British front quickly. He also observed that M. Clemenceau had more than hinted that he was getting hold of the American divisions in order to compel us to re-fill our own. This was an unjustifiable attempt to put pressure upon us.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
July 15, 1918.

2.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on TUESDAY, JULY 16, 1918, at 11 a.m.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair);
The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War;
General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.C., Chief of the Imperial General Staff;
Lt.-Colonel Sir M.F.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet.
Lt.-Colonel L.S. Amery, M.P.,

THE WESTERN FRONT.

GENERAL WILSON reported that he had just heard that the Germans had taken Beaumont, east of Rheims. There had been fighting in Sil- lery on the previous day. The French position on the Montagne de Rheims was very strong. They had two lines, one on the slopes and one on the crest. He understood that the French counter-attack had not been carried out yesterday. Probably it was not necessary. The news generally was good, but it was by no means clear yet what the enemy were doing. So far 26 infantry divisions and one cavalry division had been identified, and, of the former, 12 had been identified east and 14 west of Rheims. Probably at least 36 divisions had actually been engaged. Of those identified 9 came from Prince Rupprecht's Army, 6 of them being identified in the Champagne sector. Only 5 of the divisions identified were divisions which had hitherto been in the line; the others belonged to the reserve of one or other of the groups of armies. The French so far had 37 divisions, not including 2 Italian divisions, engaged.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the fact that Sir Douglas Haig was of the opinion that the attack in the Champagne was not a
serious one, and that Prince Rupprecht, who might still have 25 divisions in the North, might be intending to attack the British front. General Smuts had reported that things were very much better. This, he assumed, probably referred to General Foch's plans for moving the British divisions round to the Champagne, and he imagined that they were now going to the Marne, or possibly being sent back to our front.

It was agreed that:

The matter should be further discussed at the Committee of Dominion Prime Ministers that afternoon on General Smuts' return.

THE ITALIAN SITUATION.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that, in view of the possibility of the Germans, if they failed on the West, striking at Italy in the autumn, that Lord Cavan might take the advantage of the present lull in the operation to come home and discuss the whole matter with the Committee of the Prime Ministers.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that Lord Cavan was coming home in any case in about 10 days' time.

THE HIGHER COMMAND.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to a letter from a Canadian Officer, addressed to Sir Robert Borden, speaking very adversely of the Higher Command, and appealing to Sir Robert Borden to set the matter right. The question was one which the Dominion Prime Ministers had raised at the opening Meetings of the present Session of the Imperial War Cabinet, not on the strength of newspaper opinion, but on the reports of their own soldiers. The Committee of Prime Ministers had been specifically appointed to deal with this question, and it was necessary for the British Government to be able to produce a definite answer. The Government must either reply that it was satisfied with the present command, or announce that it meant to carry out changes. Our own reports, from many
quarters, as well as from Colonel Roure's report, showed that our whole organisation was unsatisfactory and wasteful. He doubted whether the change in putting the railways under General Travers-Clarke had been an improvement, and was inclined to think that the whole matter of the Services behind the lines might be better put under a civilian administrator. In any case, the whole question ought to be fully discussed with the Dominion Prime Ministers.

LORD MILNER said that short of heroic remedies all that was possible was being done to improve the organisation of the Army. The question of making a change in the chief command had been repeatedly discussed, but he was not yet clearly convinced that a better substitute could be found.

MAN-POWER.

SIR MAURICE HANKEY drew attention to an important Paper from the Ministry of Munitions (G.T-5114), which had just come in, as well as to the new Programme for the Air Force (G.T-5096), and the need for a general revision of the whole man-power situation. In this connection he brought forward the following letter which he had received from General Smuts:

"My dear Hankey: I trust the Air Programme on today's Agenda will not be dealt with apart from a general consideration of the man-power question which is being raised simultaneously by the War Priorities Committee in a resolution taken on Friday, and the Ministry of National Service in a paper to be circulated shortly. I understand the Ministry of Munitions is also putting forward a paper from the Munitions point of view. All these might be considered together, and thereafter the question could be reviewed in detail by the old Man-Power Committee.

Yours sincerely, J.C.Smutts, 15th July, 1918."

It was decided that:

The question would have to be dealt with by the Committee of Prime Ministers at an early date.

GREEK SUPPLIES.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the delays which he understood had occurred in connection with the equipment of the Greek Army, and thought that the whole matter should come up before the War Cabinet at an early date.

Lord Milner undertook to have a report prepared on the question with a view to a discussion at the War Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

July 16, 1918.
WAR CABINET.

NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W.,
on WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 1918, at 11.30 a.m.

Present:-

The Prime Minister (in the Chair);

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O.,
Chief of the Imperial General Staff;

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet;

Lieutenant-Colonel L.B. Amery, M.P.,

TIME OF CONVERSATIONS.

In view of the fact that Lord Milner was detained at an
Army Council Meeting, THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that it
might be desirable to fix definite regular times of meeting
for these conversations.

THE WESTERN FRONT.

GENERAL WILSON reported that so far only 30 divisions had
been identified, though probably 10 more had been engaged. The
additional 4 identified since the preceding day all belonged to
the Crown Prince's Army. The fact that the divisions identi-
fied had not, for the most part, been in the line before, might
be evidence of a serious attack, implying, as it did, that the
fresh reserves were pushed forward through the line. It was
not quite clear how far this was really a heavy attack which
had not come off. The French claimed to have put down their
barrage on the German infantry just before they started, and
to have inflicted 60,000 casualties on the sector East of
Rheims. They also reported a heavy attack on their own ex-
treme right. The German forces were apparently under the com-
mand of General von Mudra, who apparently replaced General
Fritz von Below. General von Mudra had commanded the Metz
corps before the War, and had been in charge of the fighting
on the East bank of the Meuse at Verdun.

THE PRIME MINISTER expressed considerable doubt whether this
was really the big attack, and suggested that 9 Rupprecht di-
visions identified up to date might only have been camouflage
divisions. He drew attention to Sir Douglas Haig's view that
an attack on both sides of Kemmel, in a strength of 16 to 18
divisions, was imminent in 3 or 4 days' time, and that Sir
Douglas Haig was trying to get back 2 of the divisions asked
for by General Foch.

GENERAL WILSON said that General Foch had promised to study
this point.

THE PRIME MINISTER thought that some action should be taken
in the matter, not only to get back our own divisions, but to
press for more American divisions. Sir Douglas Haig was not
anxious to press for them at this moment, but his own opinion
was that unless pressure were applied nothing would be done.
In any case, he thought an answer was due to General Wilson's
letter to General Foch, and his own letter to M. Clemenceau
supporting it.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to send a telegram
to General Du Cane, to the effect that
the Imperial War Cabinet were anxious
to see action taken with regard to the
American troops, especially in view of
the report as to a possible attack on
Kemmel.

ALBANIA.

GENERAL WILSON said that the average depth of advance had
been from 15 to 20 miles, but there was no reason why the
Allied Forces should not go as far as the River Skumbi and occupy the heights beyond so as to secure the road up the valley to Lake Ohrida. The Austrians had sent a division away from opposite the Italian front to relieve the situation in Albania. Attention was drawn to the action of the French General Staff in trying to discourage the Italian advance for political reasons.

**THE ITALIAN SITUATION.**

THE PRIME MINISTER mentioned that he had heard from General Delmé Radcliffe that Lord Gavan might not be coming back till August, and suggested that it would be better for General Wilson to telegraph urging him to come back before that in order to have an opportunity of talking about the Italian situation with the Dominion Prime Ministers.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to telegraph accordingly.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

July 17, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W.,
on THURSDAY, JULY 18, 1918, at 11 a.m.

PRESENT:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair):
The Rt. Hon.
The Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.,
Secretary of State for War:

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O.,
Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

Lt.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet:

Lt.-Col. L.S. Amery, M.P.,

THE WESTERN FRONT.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that General Foch had begun a counter-attack that morning on a front of 40-45 kilometres between Torcy and Nouvron, i.e., on the Western front of the Chateau Thierry salient. The number of enemy divisions identified was now reduced to 27, of which only 7 belonged to Prince Rupprecht’s Army, while 7 were divisions originally in line West of Rheims, and 13 belonged to the Crown Prince’s Reserve. It was quite possible that an exchange between divisions of the Crown Prince’s Reserve and Prince Rupprecht’s Reserve had taken place, so that the identification of divisions of the latter did not necessarily mean that his total strength was reduced. As regards the British divisions, 2 had been detrained at Arcy-sur-Aube, and were marching up to the line Chalons-Epernay, the other two were detraining on the line Claremont-Senlis. While there was no evidence that this was the big attack, there was some possibility that the French were right in claiming that they had caught a serious attack East of Rheims before it started.
There was also no definite evidence of the attack in the Kemmel sector referred to by Sir Douglas Haig. General Plumer had 12 British and 3 American divisions to meet this attack, and ought to be perfectly safe, more particularly if G.H.Q. were right in their view that the German divisions now in the line were not worth very much.

THE PRIME MINISTER was inclined to think that General Foch had been too hasty in bringing the British divisions round behind his own front. If it should turn out that he had let us down in this matter, it would wreck the unity of command.

LORD MILNER and GENERAL WILSON both suggested that there was no proof that General Foch had let the British Army down, and that the failure of the German attack might have been due to the very fact that General Foch had moved all his divisions down so quickly.

THE PRIME MINISTER thought that it would be a good thing in any case for him to get an answer from M. Clemenceau to his letter without waiting for General Foch's letter to General Wilson, which was understood to be on its way. A telegram might begin with congratulations to M. Clemenceau on the success of the French troops, or with a reference to the fact that a separate telegram of congratulation was being sent on behalf of the Imperial War Cabinet.

... . . .

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

July 18, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on FRIDAY, JULY 19, 1918, at 11 a.m.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair):
The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War;
General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff;
Lt.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet;
Lt.-Col. L.S. Amery, M.P.,

THE WESTERN FRONT.

GENERAL WILSON said there were still only 28 divisions identified, and he was more strongly of the opinion that this was not the real German offensive.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that the French were now so close to the railway at Soissons that the Germans were deprived of the use of this line, and might have great difficulty in maintaining themselves in the salient South of the Aisne, unless they made an effort to drive back the French and free Soissons.

GENERAL WILSON thought that, from the German point of view, the French counter-attack might be by no means unwelcome. Some 22 French divisions were already engaged in it as against something like 10 German divisions, and it might be worth while abandoning all the ground they had gained South of the Chemin des Dames in order to embroil and use up the French reserves and leave Prince Rupprecht free for a heavy blow against the British front.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that if Ludendorff were really strong enough to manage that the German Crown Prince should be defeated in order to enable the Crown Prince of Bavaria to win a great victory, he would be the biggest General in the world.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

July 19, 1918.
THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the latest telegrams which indicated that the French were intending to get the whole of the American Army into their sector. He was convinced that this was part of the political game which General Foch was playing at M. Clemenceau's instigation. The whole object of it was, by depriving us of the support of the American troops, to force us to keep up our present total of 59 divisions regardless of the effect upon our industries and national life generally. It was intolerable that the French should attempt to put the screw upon us in that way and he was determined that if this continued he would ask the authority of the Cabinet to refuse the French any ships for the conveyance of American troops to France. Lord Reading had just telegraphed that it would be impossible to bring over the promised 100 divisions next year for want of shipping. We might conceivably, by a great effort, try and find more shipping at the expense of other national services, but we certainly could not do that if the French game was what he
believed it to be. He drew attention to the fact that we had already crippled our agriculture and our coal mining, the latter to such an extent that ships were lying idle in Cardiff and ships from South America had to go round by the United States to pick up coal, that our aeroplane production was down 40% during the present month and our tank production down to half the programme. He was determined to call a halt to this process of putting the screw on us. He would have to give the reasons quite plainly to M. Clemenceau though not to the United States.

LORD MILNER agreed but thought it was true that if we could put the screw on our own people to the extent which the French did, we could get more men, and on absolute figures the French had a case against us.

COLONEL AMERY mentioned that he had been told on the previous day by the Chairman at Cammell Laird's that his men were only working 32 hours a week and that 2,000 of them were absent from the Sheffield works every day.

THE PRIME MINISTER admitted these defects of the "black squad" but the fact remained that they produced more than the shipwrights of any other nation.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that General Foch was definitely asking for the number of British divisions he could reckon on for the coming winter and spring and this request was on its way to us through Sir Douglas Haig.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that this necessitated our definitely laying down our own plans both as to the theatre of war in which we want our troops to fight and the number of divisions we were to keep up. We had made no promise to keep up 59 divisions beyond the next big attack. He had asked General Foch if he would be content if we kept up the number of divisions and lowered them to the French standard.

LORD MILNER pointed out that the British military view was unanimous in the reduction in the strength of the battalions.

THE PRIME MINISTER persisted that we could not keep up the
59 divisions to full strength till November. In any case, we ought to stop sending out the boys of 18½ in the autumn.

GENERAL WILSON agreed.

**LEAVE FOR BRITISH TROOPS.**

THE PRIME MINISTER also drew attention to the necessity of securing for our troops during the winter a reasonable amount of leave corresponding to that secured by the French. It would be intolerable if our men had to stick in the trenches the whole time and the French were getting leave in large numbers.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to consider the question of leave and to see what definite representations could be made to the French to secure our position in the matter.

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2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.

July 26, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION AT 10, DOWNING STREET, S.W.,
on SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1918, at 10.30 a.m.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair):
The Rt. Hon. Sir R.L. Borden, G.C.M.G., K.C.,
Prime Minister of Canada:
The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War:
The Rt. Hon. A.J. Balfour, C.M., M.P.,
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs:
The Rt. Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P.,
Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs:
General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O.,
Chief of the Imperial General Staff:
Mr. John Anderson, C.B.,
Secretary, Ministry of Shipping:
Mr. E.J. Foley, Joint-Director, Ministry of Shipping:
Lt.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet:
Lt.-Col. L.S. Amery, M.P.

ALLIED INTERVENTION IN SIBERIA.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to the latest telegrams from Mr. Lockhart urging the dangers of further delay in the matter of intervention and suggested that their contents ought to be communicated to President Wilson. It was important in view of all the arguments from the other side which were forwarded to the President, to keep on pouring the right stuff into President Wilson.

LORD ROBERT CECIL explained that these telegrams were sent to Lord Reading in any case and that he no doubt used his discre-
tion in communicating them to the President.

Mr. Balfour undertook to see that the substance of these particular telegrams was immediately conveyed to President Wilson.

Lord Robert Cecil explained the substance of a conversation which he had had with the Japanese Ambassador who had communicated to him the Japanese reply to the American proposal. This reply had accepted the proposal but had reserved the Japanese Government's right to increase the contingent, as the Japanese public would regard the strict limitation of their contingent in the manner proposed as treating their motives with suspicion, and had also pointed out that it was impossible on military grounds to lay down beforehand exactly how many troops would be required for a military operation. The Ambassador had explained that as a matter of fact the Japanese Government intended to send one division of 12,000 men to Vladivostock at once, and another division a little later for the purpose of guarding the railway. He added that the Japanese proposed shortly putting forward a declaration of their disinterestedness.

In the course of the conversation a further telegram came in from Lord Reading stating that the United States regarded the Japanese answer not as an acceptance but as a counter proposal. He considered that the Japanese point with regard to the restriction of numbers was not so serious, and might be met with by the despatch of more American troops. On the other hand, the Japanese demand for greater freedom from the detailed restrictions imposed in the American proposal was more seriously viewed by the President. He did not consider the President would give way on this point, and thought that in the end the Japanese would accept the American formula. This formula, which implied that the Japanese should merely be there to hold territory or railheads behind the Czecho-Slovaks, could not be carried out.
in practice as a military operation, as the President himself was beginning to realise.

The PRIME MINISTER pointed out that whether this attitude on the part of the United States would involve delay or not before an agreement was arrived at, it was essential to send whatever forces were available to help the Czecho-Slovaks at once. He drew attention to a telegram from Sir C. Greene (No. 604) giving the relative forces of the Bolsheviks and Czecho-Slovaks in Eastern Siberia, which showed that the former were considerably superior in numbers and equipment. The Prime Minister asked what measures were being taken to expedite the despatch of Canadian troops which had already been discussed.

GENERAL WILSON mentioned that the British Battalion on its way to Vladivostock would arrive there on August 2nd. As regards the Canadian troops, arrangements had been carried on with General Mewburn, who was, however, a little annoyed because, during his absence in France, a War Office telegram on the matter had, in the course of the ordinary routine, been transmitted from the Colonial Office to the Governor-General instead of to himself.

SIR ROBERT BORDEN agreed that General Mewburn had been annoyed by the incident. He had no wish himself to make a point of it but he understood that Canada was to send 3 Battalions and some Artillery and Engineers.

MR. POLEY explained that there was shipping for some 10,000 men in the Pacific which could be collected at Vancouver. Some it was, however, at the China end of the journey and might take a month or more to reach Vancouver. There ought, however, at any one moment, to be at least two ships at or near Vancouver, and with these it ought to be possible to get away
three Battalions in a few days. The actual journey to Vladivos-
took took 16 days.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that as the matter was one of great urgency Sir Robert Borden might take the whole mat-
ter in hand on behalf of the Imperial War Cabinet, giving such instructions as he thought suitable both to General Mewburn and to the Ministry of Shipping.

SIR ROBERT BORDEN undertook to take the matter in hand at once in consultation with General Mewburn.

GENERAL WILSON undertook to nominate at once a War Office representative to be at Sir Robert Borden's disposal for any information he might require from the War Office point of view.

MR FOLEY was instructed to ascertain at once what shipping was at or near Vladivostock and communicate this information to Sir Robert Borden, and generally to hold himself at Sir Robert Borden's disposal with regard to this business.

SIR ROBERT BORDEN asked whether any awkwardness might occur if the Canadian troops arrived at Vladivostock before the American-Japanese discussions were over and before any proclamation had been issued.

It was pointed out that in any case one British battalion would already have arrived, and that the Japanese independent proclamation of disinterestedness would probably also have been published by then.

A short discussion followed on the Draft Allied proclama-
tion which had been framed by Dr. Harold Williams, Sir George Buchanan and Mr. Okulitch in language appropriate to the Russian taste.

AMERICAN CO-OPERATION ON THE WESTERN FRONT.

THE PRIME MINISTER drew attention to a telegram from Lord Reading stating that the Americans were not likely to be able to furnish more than 80 divisions in 1919 instead of
LORD MILNER added that even with regard to these they would have to be dependent upon us for shipping, and that there were very serious difficulties about horses and other matters.

THE PRIME MINISTER asked, in reference to recent telegrams from General Milne, what was General Wilson’s opinion about the contemplated September offensive in Macedonia?

GENERAL WILSON pointed out that General Milne was rather in favour of something being done, or at any rate of our being prepared and in a position to do something if a favourable opportunity offered. This, in General Milne’s opinion, involved sending out more troops, ammunition, etc., in order to bring the force up to fighting pitch. There would be more Greek troops available by the end of September, and no doubt the French meant mainly to use the Serbians and Greeks. There was some discussion as to the direction in which the proposed offensive might take place.

It was pointed out that the direction which would give the greatest results, i.e., advance up the Vardar valley, presented the greatest difficulties from the tactical point of view and enable the enemy to bring up reinforcements from Germany with the least possible delay.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.
July 27, 1918.
HE POLICE STRIKE.

(Sir Maurice Hankey only arrived towards the end of the discussion).

(1) SIR GEORGE CAVE drew attention to the risk that if the question of the police strike were not settled at once it would be raised at the Trades Union Congress next week, and might lead to sympathetic strikes in many quarters.

GENERAL WILSON suggested that an offer should be made to the strikers either to bring them back as individuals, or, in the event of their declining, to take them as Privates for the Army. He understood that this would raise difficulties of policing London, but by enlisting special constables and making some use of the Military, it ought to be possible to surmount this difficulty.
SIR GEORGE GAVE asked if the Prime Minister would see Sir Edward Henry, who was at 10 Downing Street?

THE PRIME MINISTER replied in the negative. He said he would wish to discuss the question of Sir Edward Henry when the present crisis was over.

Mr Bonar Law said the important thing was to get the country behind the Government, and then they would have no difficulty in getting special constables.

The Adjutant General expressed doubts as to whether there were enough individuals with leisure to act as special constables.

Sir George Gave thought that ample could be obtained among the middle classes if the country was behind the Government. He himself felt it was essential to give the men some means of collective representation of their grievances.

The Prime Minister said he had asked Sir Frederick Wodehouse on the previous evening what means of representation they had, and it really appeared that they had none.

The Secretary pointed out that the Police had precisely the same means of collective representation as the Army, that is to say, they could make representations through their Inspectors' and Superintendents, whose task it was to acquaint the superior Officers of any grievances.

The Prime Minister did not consider this by any means adequate. He said that the decision as to the action to be taken should be postponed until he had seen the men's representatives, who, he heard, were shortly coming to Downing Street. Until he had ascertained the temper of the men it would be premature to reach a decision.

The Western Front. (2) General Wilson said he had heard from Sir Douglas Haig that Marshal Foch proposed to press on with the successful
operations on the British front. He was sending 2 divisions of Americans to relieve the Canadians.

THE PRIME MINISTER reminded General Wilson that last year we had lost about 150,000 men at Bullecourt. To allow the Canadians to be sacrificed as the Australians had been last year in attacking in this difficult region would be sheer folly. He thought that some indication should be given that the War Cabinet did not want a repetition of last year's experience. If the Americans got badly smashed up it would be as bad as in the case of the Canadians, since in that case General Pershing would never send any more men to the British line.

GENERAL WILSON expressed general agreement. He was not aware as yet as to whether the fighting at Bullecourt had been really heavy. The stiff fighting reported by the Press at various points had really only engaged small bodies of troops. Apart from the points where we were in touch with the Hindenburg line the fighting was not very heavy, as our troops were advancing across open country without much resistance. When he had discussed the situation with Field Marshal Haig on Monday, Sir Douglas had made it clear that he did not mean to press his operations if they involved heavy casualties.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff undertook to telegraph to Field Marshal Haig warning him that the War Cabinet would not approve of heavy casualties being incurred by British or American troops in attacks on the Hindenburg line involving heavy casualties whether to British or American lines.

(3) GENERAL WILSON gave a sketch of the plans which Marshal Foch had intended to undertake with the American forces. He himself and Field Marshal Haig had not agreed with Marshal Foch on this matter, and had wanted to attack at the point (which he indicated) where they considered that a more
important strategical objective presented itself.

In reply to the Prime Minister he said that a difference of opinion had arisen between Marshal Foch and General Pershing as to the employment of the American forces. General Pershing wanted to carry out certain operations with an American Army under his own immediate command. Marshal Foch, however, did not consider the American staff work sufficiently advanced to render this advisable. In the neighbourhood of Chateau Thierry, the Americans had only just avoided a serious disaster, owing to defective staff work. Marshal Foch, consequently, wanted to employ part of the American forces with the British and part with the French, leaving only one Army under General Pershing's command. He himself and Field Marshal Haig agreed with Marshal Foch in this matter, and Sir Douglas Haig had talked very straight to General Pershing on the subject. General Pershing had, nevertheless, been entirely uninfluenced by the views of his colleagues, and it was he, and not Marshal Foch, who had removed the American divisions from Sir Douglas Haig's Command. When he left France he had understood that General Pershing's view was to prevail. This morning, however, he had received a guarded message from Field Marshal Haig in the sense that Marshal Foch was now more inclined to agree with the views of General Wilson and himself. General Wilson was unable to say whether this telegram referred to the strategical point of attack, or to the distribution of American forces, but, at any rate, it seemed to indicate a satisfactory tendency. In his own opinion, if General Pershing insisted on making an attack with American troops only, he would either meet the Germans in large numbers in strongly fortified positions, and suffer heavy casualties, or else his advance would collapse at a relatively early stage, owing to inadequate staff work. It was a very difficult thing from a staff point of view to
supply an Army of several hundred thousand men when it reached any distance from the railhead. The German staff work in the advance from Mons, at the beginning of the War, had been marvellous in this respect. It had also been extremely good after the attack of March 21. Nevertheless, on both occasions the advance had been brought to a standstill largely owing to the difficulties of supply.

In reply to the Prime Minister he said that Marshal Foch would choose the point for General Pershing's attack, even though he did not impose his wishes as regards the distribution of the American divisions.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

August 31, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1918, at 11 a.m.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair):
Admiral Sir R.E. Wemyss, G.C.B., C.M.G., K.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.
Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B., Secretary, War Cabinet.

THE FLANDERS COAST.

Admiral Wemyss explained that Ostend and Zeebrugge were now of considerably less importance to the enemy than was formerly the case. In the earlier part of the War their submarines had used these ports freely. This was no longer the case. The Admiralty had authentic information that only a small number of enemy submarines now attempted passage of the Straits of Dover, and they were practically manned by volunteers. They had actually made use of the Folkestone gate to pass through. Although the influence of the enemy submarines operating from Zeebrugge was not entirely negligible, nevertheless, even if these ports were entirely blocked it would no longer make any great difference to us.

Sir Eric Geddes explained that these ports had formerly been used mainly for short-distance submarines. Since March, however, no less than 24 out of 43 based on the Flanders coast had been destroyed. The Admiralty had lately discovered 7 enemy sunk submarines which had not been counted as certainties by the Admiralty.
ADMIRAL WEMYSS explained that the enemy had not made as much use of these ports as might have been expected, for attacking our cross-Channel transports. Since December no attempt had been made. The fact was it was easy enough for the enemy to get into the Channel, but difficult to return. Moreover, the blocking of the ports had probably hampered the surface craft a good deal. The question which the Admiralty were now asking themselves was as to what was the value to the Germans of holding this coast. From a naval point of view there did not appear to be much in it. The Admiralty had been discussing whether it was not possible that the Germans might retire from the Flanders coast altogether if they were compelled to shorten their lines.

SIR ERIC GEDDES pointed out that if the naval appreciation of the situation was correct the incentive for the enemy to keep the Flanders coast was not great.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that this fitted in with some information he had received. He understood that in a few days time a speech would be made in Germany to the effect that the German Government had definitely decided to relinquish their holdings on Belgium after the War.

ADMIRAL WEMYSS drew attention to the significance of the recent changes in the Staff and Command of the German Navy. The Commander-in-Chief of their Grand Sea Fleet had gone to the German Admiralty, and there had been an entire change of Staff both in the Fleet and at the Admiralty.

In reply to the Prime Minister, he said that there was no physical indication that the Germans were likely to retire from the Flanders coast.

SIR ERIC GEDDES summed the situation up by stating that the enemy's surface craft have done very little good on the Flanders coast; the short-distance submarines have been so knocked about as to be of little value; the continual bombardment...
from the sea and by aircraft had made the Flanders coast a very uncomfortable place; and the only attraction for long-distance submarine craft was the barracks and repair facilities. He proposed to make a confidential statement to the Press on this subject.

THE PRIME MINISTER agreed that this should be done, but laid stress on no suggestion being made that either Zeebrugge or Ostend were likely to be evacuated. He was very anxious that the public should not be encouraged to believe this as they were last year during the Flanders offensive.

THE FIRST LORD agreed to be careful in this respect.

ADMIRAL WEMYSS said that the idea of setting the Press to work on the matter was rather to put the idea into the minds of the Germans that these ports were of not much value to them. With this in view care would be taken to avoid any indication that the articles were inspired.

MINING IN THE NORTH SEA.

ADMIRAL WEMYSS explained to the Prime Minister on a chart the position of the North Sea minefields laid by our Navy. He said that the safe passages which had been left for our own vessels had, to some extent, been mined by the enemy, so that we could not use them as freely as formerly. He described a minesweeping operation that had been carried out by our Fleet on the night of the 31st. August. The trouble was that the Germans had delay-action mines which were timed to come up into position long after they had been laid, and sometimes after a minefield had been swept. Another minesweeping operation was being carried out today by one of our squadrons. ADMIRAL WEMYSS then described on a chart the arrangements for the Northern barrage. So far as the Admiralty information went the only craft that had tried to effect a passage had been damaged by our mines. He then explained in some detail the arrangements.
by which the Western end of the barrage was provided for and
the passages which would be used by the Scandinavian convoy.

(I t is not considered advisable
to make any note of these high-
ly secret arrangements).

He pointed out that if the enemy could not pass through the
Western end of the barrage without risk he would be obliged to
use either the Westray Firth or the Pentland Firth, in both of
which submarine navigation was impracticable.

THE BATTLE CRUISER DISPOSITIONS.

ADMIRAL WEMYSS explained certain naval dispositions that
had been made to meet the possibility of German cruisers en-
deavouring to pass out into the North Sea. He added that an
American squadron had been based at Beagheaven in connection
with the protection of convoys.

MINE PROTECTION OF THE EAST COAST.

ADMIRAL WEMYSS explained on a chart the mine barrage that
had been created for the protection of the North-East Coast
of England.

ANTI-SUBMARINE DEVELOPMENTS.

ADMIRAL WEMYSS explained certain new developments of the
hydrophone which are now being tested on a practical scale in
the North Sea.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
September 3, 1918.
NOTES OF A CONFERENCE at 10 Downing Street, S.W.,
on SATURDAY, October 19, 1913, at 10.45 a.m.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.,
Chancellor of the Exchequer:

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner,
G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of
State for War:

Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, K.T.
G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E., Command-
ing-in-Chief, British Armies in
France:

General Sir H.H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O.,
Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

General Davidson:

(The Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P.,
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs:

Present at the
end of the
Meeting only.

(Admiral Sir R.E. Wemyss, G.C.B., First
Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff:

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet.

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THE PRIME MINISTER asked Field Marshal Haig to outline his suggestions as to the terms of an armistice.

FIELD MARSHAL HAIG made the following reply:

In the event of the enemy asking for an armistice the nature of the reply should depend greatly on the answers which we can make to the two following questions:

1. Is Germany so beaten that she will accept any terms dictated by the Allies?

2. Can the Allies continue to press the enemy sufficiently vigorously during the coming winter months to cause him to withdraw so quickly that he cannot destroy the railways, roads, etc., up to the German frontier?

A very large part of the German Army has been badly beaten, but the whole Field Army has not yet been broken up. Owing to the large number of Divisions of which it consists general disorganisation (which follows a decisive defeat) is not yet apparent.

In my opinion the German Army is capable of retiring to its own frontiers and holding that line against equal or even superior forces.

The length of that line is about 245 miles as against the front of 400 miles which he was holding only a week ago.

The situation of the Allied Armies is as follows:

The French Army seems greatly worn out. Many of the rank and file seem to feel that the war has been won. Lille, Roubaix, Tourcoing and other big centres of industry have been taken. Reports say that many of their men are disinclined to risk their lives. Certainly neither on the right nor on the left of the British have the French attacked vigorously during the past six weeks. Even in July it was the British and American Divisions which carried the French forward on the Marne. Next year a large proportion
of the French Armies will probably be Black!

The American Army is disorganised, ill-equipped and ill-trained with very few N.C.O.'s and officers of experience. It has suffered severely through ignorance of modern war and it must take at least a year before it becomes a serious fighting force.

The British Army has fought hard. It is a veteran force, very confident in itself but its infantry is already 50,000 under strength. If infantry effectives could be maintained and rest given during winter it would remain what it is now, the most formidable fighting force in the world. On the other hand with diminishing effectives we must expect moral to decline.

If the French and American Armies were capable of a serious offensive now, the Allies could completely overthrow the remaining efficient enemy divisions before they could reach the line of the Meuse.

They are not. We must reckon with that fact as well as with the fact that the British Army alone is not sufficiently fresh or strong to force a decision by itself.

This means that the Allies are not in a position to prevent the enemy from doing an immense amount of material damage to railways, roads, etc., during the winter months and during his retirement.

The advance of the Allies, when active operations again begin, will, therefore, be greatly hampered and progress must be slow.

In the coming winter, too, the enemy will have several months for recuperation, and absorption of the 1920 class, untouched as yet.

So we must conclude that the enemy will be able to hold the
the line which he selects for defence for some time after
the campaign of 1919 commences.

To sum up then:

A careful consideration of the Military situation on
the Western Front, and keeping British interests in view,
forces me to the conclusion that an armistice with Germany
should be concluded on the following basis:

1. Complete and immediate evacuation of Belgium and
   occupied French territories.

2. Alsace and Lorraine must also be evacuated and
   Metz and Strasburg handed forthwith to the Allies.

3. Rolling-stock of French and Belgian railways
   or equivalent to be returned, inhabitants
   repatriated etc.

The effect of this would be that the Allied Armies
would be established on the enemy's frontier with their
communications intact and adequate rolling-stock.

From such a position a resumption of hostilities would
enable the war to be prosecuted under favourable conditions
on the enemy's soil. Moreover, with Metz, Strasburg,
and Alsace-Lorraine in our possession the Allies would be
in a position to invade South Germany. The military
and political advantages of an advance in this direction
would be very considerable.

MR. BONAR LAW observed that this amounted to
a complete defeat to the enemy. No nation would ever
accept such terms unless they were in desperate straits.
So far as he could see there was nothing in the
military situation to compel him to accept such terms.
FIELD MARSHAL HAIG pointed out that the enemy might think that the Allies were stronger than they were in reality.

MR. BONAR LAW said that the question was largely a psychological one, namely, whether after the lapse of some months, the moral of the enemy or of the Allied nations would be the stronger.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that the real point was whether the German moral would be strong enough to enable them to resume the offensive, in the event of a breakdown of Peace negotiations, to recover the territories they had evacuated under the terms of the armistice.

MR. BONAR LAW pointed out that it would be necessary in addition, to obtain security for the Navy. If we did not obtain possession of the German Fleet and the submarines under the terms of the armistice we might have to continue the War for that purpose.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that the enemy would be no better off at the end of an armistice in a naval sense than he was now. After a break of, say, two months, during which none of the Allied ships had been sunk, and hundreds of thousands of tons had been built, the Allies, and not the enemy would be the better off. The enemy would only have improved his position by 6 or 7 submarines.

MR. BONAR LAW said that the question was whether we could allow peace to come without entirely altering the present balance of naval strength. Otherwise, all the old controversies would arise as to the number of ships of various classes possessed by Great Britain and Germany respectively. While admitting that Field Marshal Haig was only concerned in the military aspects of the question, MR. BONAR LAW said they could not be separated from the naval question, since it might be necessary to continue the War on land in order to secure the naval conditions we desired.
LORD MILNER thought it probable that the enemy would never be able to pull himself together for a new military effort after we had once secured possession of the territories Field Marshal Haig had proposed as the conditions of an armistice.

MR. BONAR LAW said that, nevertheless, we must completely reverse the naval situation, and in view of the difficulty of starting the war after an armistice, we should secure this as part of the terms.

SIR MAURICE HANKEY said that, in a conversation he had had the previous day with Mr. Balfour and Lord Robert Cecil, it had been pointed out that we should have to hold gauges as security for the payment by Germany of what was required for the reparation and restoration of Belgium and North France. Unless such gauges were held the enemy might refuse to carry out the bargain, and if the principle was accepted that there could be no reopening of hostilities after an armistice, we must have these gauges in hand as part of the terms of an armistice.

LORD MILNER suggested that we might occupy German territory on the left bank of the Rhine above Coblenz, as a pledge for all that we required.

MR. BONAR LAW considered that this would meet all objections.

GENERAL WILSON pointed out that under Field Marshal Haig's terms we should hold no gauge. He was convinced that once the "Cease fire" sounded, the War would never start again. Hence, it was important to have in hand some gauge which could be given back to Germany after all the terms of the Peace Treaty had been fulfilled.

MR. BONAR LAW pointed out the enemy would never give up that unless they were beaten.
THE PRIME MINISTER did not think on the evidence furnished by Field Marshal Haig that they were sufficiently defeated to concede such terms.

MR. BONAR LAW pointed out that it depended upon the estimate the enemy made of the Allies strength. If they were now in a panic, as seemed not improbable, this might be the psychological moment to secure very favourable terms.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out the danger of losing a good bargain through asking too much. We know exactly what we required, and if we obtained that we should be safe.

GENERAL WILSON said he wished to get as a gauge the whole of the Saar Valley up to the Rhine.

LORD MILNER asked Field Marshal Haig how far he hoped to advance before being stopped by bad weather?

FIELD MARSHAL HAIG said, we ought not to stop operations, At the present time our troops had secured very good billets, not only in the district round Lille, but in the villages in the region of Le Cateau. If there was no armistice we ought to continue pressing the enemy.

In reply to the Prime Minister he said that the Allies ought to be able to press the enemy back as far as the line of the Meuse, although the unforeseen so often happened in war that it was dangerous to prophesy.

In reply to Mr. Bonar Law he said that he had begged Marshal Foch to send him American troops to reinforce his own, but General Pershing had declared that he was short of effectives. The two divisions of Americans which had been left with him were now weak and had had to be withdrawn.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out the absurdity of their being any shortage of men in the American Army. 250,000 men were being brought over every month, and British ships alone were carrying
carrying from 150,000 to 190,000 men a month. In these conditions, it was preposterous that only 2 divisions were given to the British Army. The only way to press the Americans was to threaten to withhold our shipping. He thought that when Colonel House arrived in this country he ought to be told straight that the Americans were making a mess of it. At present the American press were sending out the most absurd accounts of the prowess of their Army, and President Wilson was probably being misled. In his last Note, President Wilson had spoken of the supremacy of the troops of the United States of America and their Allies, or some such phrase. It was very important that Marshal Foch should talk very straight to Colonel House.

FIELD MARSHAL HAIG said he had done his utmost to get General Pershing to leave the 5 divisions which had been attached to the British Army. General Pershing's only reply had been to take 3 of the divisions away. This had occurred while British troops were actually marching up to the battle zone, and the American troops had impeded their communications.

FIELD MARSHAL HAIG said it was important to know what the French troops were thinking. Now that Lille and a great part of North France had been recovered this was of special importance. The French troops had not fought particularly well in Flanders.

GENERAL WILSON then read a Note he had received from General Du Cane in regard to Marshal Foch's ideas on the subject of an Armistice. (Appendix).

LORD MILNER said his own proposal for occupying territory up to the west bank of the Rhine above Coblenz was very similar to Marshal Foch's, only did not include the bridgeheads.

THE PRIME MINISTER said it was quite certain the enemy would not consent to the occupation of this territory.

LORD MILNER suggested that they might do so if American troops were put in instead of French, or, possibly, even British troops.
THE PRIME MINISTER thought that the threat of a continuation of the blockade would be much more effective as a gauge.

GENERAL WILSON expressed doubt as to whether the French and Americans would agree to a continuation of the blockade after hostilities had ceased.

THE PRIME MINISTER then referred to Italy. No doubt the Italians would want the evacuation of the Trentino and Istria, as their terms for an armistice. The Austrians might be in such a deplorable situation as to give up anything, but the Italian Army had certainly done nothing to justify such a claim.

[At this point there was some reference to a proposition by General Seely for utilising gas on a large scale in the event of a breakdown of an armistice].

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that with the gas referred to by General Seely a very big coup might be achieved before many months were over.

GENERAL WILSON thought that something might be achieved with it, but it would be unwise to count too much on it.

(THE FIRST SEA LORD entered at this point).

THE PRIME MINISTER asked the First Sea Lord's views on the question of an armistice.

ADmiral Wemyss said that he had consulted the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet as to what conditions he would want for an armistice, and in making this request he had avoided biasing him by suggesting any terms. Admiral Beatty had replied that we ought to demand the surrender of two out of three squadrons of the German battleships, which, in his view, should be brought to our ports. These squadrons contained the newest of the German battleships. In addition, he demanded the surrender of all battle cruisers, a certain number of light cruisers, and 50 destroyers, in addition to.
all the German submarines. The Board of the Admiralty, Admiral Wemyss continued, held the view that the submarines were on a different plane to surface craft, owing to moral and practical reasons they considered that all the German submarines should be surrendered, and not merely the 60 suggested at Versailles. The figure of 60 had been based on the consideration that the maximum number of German submarines that had ever been out at one time was calculated at 35. 30 was a figure rarely reached. This figure had been doubled, and it had been thought that in practice this was the maximum number that could be obtained, as at any moment a large proportion were always laid up and immobile. The Board of the Admiralty also considered that the blockade should continue, that all surface craft should be withdrawn into harbours, and bases designated by the Allies.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that this amounted to abject surrender.

ADMIRAL WEMYSS agreed. He said that some Members of the Board held that the question of occupying Kiel and the Kiel Canal should be considered. Personally, he did not agree, as he regarded this as a military rather than a naval question, since the Army would have to occupy these points.

LORD MILNER suggested that it was a peace rather than an armistice condition.

THE PRIME MINISTER asked Field Marshal Haig what would be the effect on our Army if we insisted on very stern terms such as had been suggested and the enemy refused?

FIELD MARSHAL HAIG reminded the Prime Minister that a year ago the Army had been asking what they were fighting for. -- (THE PRIME MINISTER interpolated that this was one of the reasons why he had made his War Aims speech) -- If the Army could be kept up to strength, he had no doubt that their moral
would be perfectly all right. We knew, however, that the
Army could not be kept up to strength, and with reduced
numbers, he thought the effect on the moral of the Army, of
a very stiff demand on the part of the Allies resulting in
a prolongation of the war, would be bad.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that the Navy must keep these
considerations in view. The whole question really was
whether, at the end of an armistice, we should be in a better
military position than before.

LORD MILNER said we should be in an awkward fix if the
enemy replied affirmatively to the naval conditions outlined
by the First Sea Lord, but made this conditional on cessation
of the blockade. He suggested it would be better to allow
the enemy to retain his submarines in order to retain the
blockade.

MR. BONAR LAW thought it very doubtful whether America and
France would agree to a continuation of the blockade if the
enemy had been compelled to surrender his submarines.

THE PRIME MINISTER pointed out that the cessation of the
blockade would place the enemy in a better position than
before the armistice, and this, therefore, contravened the
general principle on which we were considering the question.
On the face of it, however, such terms as had been outlined
by the First Sea Lord could only be accepted by a nation that
was beaten to the dust.

GENERAL WILSON asked the Prime Minister to put himself in
the position of the German governing classes. They had not
got command of the sea, as they had hoped to do, and they had
lost their communication with the East. They would see that
sooner or later they were bound to lose and might accept
almost any terms.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that pride would overrule reason
if the terms were too stiff.
LORD MILNER said that the enemy might accept part of the terms offered them, and not the remainder.

THE PRIME MINISTER thought that the enemy might accept the terms propounded by Field Marshal Haig.

ADmiral Wemyss said that the military analogy was very valuable to the Admiralty in considering the naval conditions of an armistice, and he asked if he could be informed of the Field Marshal's conditions.

(At this point MR. BALFOUR entered).

SIR MAURICE HANKEY, at the request of the Prime Minister, read the terms propounded by the Field Marshal.

FIELD MARSHAL HAIG said that the principle he acted on was that the enemy should not be in a better position at the end of an armistice than he was in now. Under present conditions he was able to destroy the railways and all means of communication in his retirement. Under an armistice he would evacuate these railways, leave them intact, and hand back the large amount of rolling stock which he had taken from the French and Belgians.

(At this point several of the questions that had been discussed previously were again raised for the benefit of Mr. Balfour.)

ADmiral Wemyss said that the submarine question was a complicated one. If the War came to an end now we should not have perfected our anti-submarine methods of warfare. Great improvement had been made, but our measures were not yet complete. He foresaw that it would be difficult to make the same progress in time of peace as in time of war. Of course, there was no question of prolonging the War to enable us to do this, but, nevertheless, if we had not done so the submarines would remain a menace to the whole world. This was really the argument for insisting on a surrender of the enemy submarines. It was on the Prime Minister's principle that fighting could never be renewed after an armistice that he proposed the surrender of all the submarines as a condition of an armistice.
THE PRIME MINISTER said the great principle in regard to the armistice was to get in hand everything that you required. We already had the German Colonies. By the Field Marshal's terms we should get possession of everything else that we required on the Western front. In the event of peace negotiations breaking down, the enemy would then have to take the initiative to recover what he had given up, and not the Allies.

MR. BALFOUR pointed out that the Allies would not have Poland in their hands. President Wilson had committed himself to the establishment of an Independent Poland, and we had, to some extent, committed ourselves also.

LORD MILNER asked if we could go on fighting for that? There was general agreement that we could not, but MR. BALFOUR pointed out that we should be in great difficulties.

LORD MILNER suggested that the blockade would be a sufficient gauge to ensure the establishment of a free Poland. The economic pressure of the blockade was tremendous.
On my return to-day I spoke to General WEYGAND on the subject of the conditions of armistice advocated by Marshal POCHE. The next step rests with the enemy, and it is possible that he may shortly address a request for an armistice to the General-in-Chief of the Allied Forces in France. Therefore I thought it desirable to ascertain whether Marshal POCHE wished to discuss the matter formally with the C.-in-C., so that in the event of the occasion arising action might be taken without delay that had been agreed upon beforehand.

General WEYGAND told me that so far Marshal POCHE had not discussed with him the question of obtaining the views of the Allied Commanders-in-Chief on this subject, but that he would speak to him about it at once.

General WEYGAND said that Marshal POCHE's views on the question of armistice were based on two principles:

1. The conditions must be such that if the armistice is broken off we must be able to continue the war under more favourable circumstances than at present.

2. If the armistice leads to peace negotiations, the conditions of the armistice must be such as to ensure that the conditions of peace will be loyally carried out, that is to say, the armistice must place in our hands pledges of value.

Marshal POCHE thinks that these conditions would be satisfactorily fulfilled, so far as the Western Front is concerned, if the enemy were to withdraw at once from all occupied territory, including ALSACE-LORRAINE, and if Allied troops were to occupy enemy territory up to the RHINE, with bridgeheads beyond.

General WEYGAND also said that Marshal POCHE was firm on the point that the conditions of armistice could not be settled by the Allied Governments without reference to him as General-in-Chief, and that the conditions must be communicated to the enemy through him. He considers this necessary in order to ensure
ensure the interests of the Allied Armies under his command in the event of hostilities being renewed.

I also understood from General Weygand that Marshal Foch considers that the conditions of armistice in other theatres and at sea form separate questions, and that it is not necessary for the whole to be combined before being communicated to the enemy.

(Sd.) J.P. Du Cane.

Lieut.-General,
British Military Representative,
with Marshal C-in-C. Allied Forces.

17th October, 1918.
WAR CABINET.

NOMINEE A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W.,
on MONDAY, October 31, 1918, at 11.15 a.m.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. A. B. D. w. R. H., M.P. ,
Chancellor of the Exchequer;

The Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour, C.M., M.P.,
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs;

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, C. M. B.,
C.O.M.E., Secretary of State for War:

Admiral Sir R. B. Denys, C. M. B., C. M. C.,
C.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the
Naval Staff:

Admiral Sir David Beatty, C. M. B., C. M. V. O.,
C.O., Commander-in-Chief, Grand Fleet;

General Sir H. H. Wilson, K.M.C., D. S. O.,
Chief of the Imperial General Staff:

Field Marshal Sir D. H. E. B. D., C. M. B., D. S. O.,
K.C.I.E., Commander-in-Chief of the British
Armies in France:

Major-General J. H. Davidson, C. M. B., D. S. O.,

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir H. A. Hersey, C. M. B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet:

NAVAL AND MILITARY CONDITIONS ON AN ARMISTICE.

A preliminary discussion was held in regard to the naval
and military conditions of an armistice, but as the proceed­
ings are entirely covered by the record of War Cabinet 489A,
it has not been considered necessary to prepare a special
record.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
Oct. 21, 1918.
THE GERMAN REPLY TO PRESIDENT WILSON'S SECOND NOTE.

The Conference discussed Mr. Barclay's telegram from Washington, No. 4754, in regard to the German reply to President Wilson's Second Note.

THE PRIME MINISTER was apprehensive from the terms of this telegram that President Wilson, under the influence of the bellicose attitude of the American public, would send such a reply that German opinion would be strengthened and Allied opinion would be weakened. The question arose, therefore, as to whether any further message should be sent to President Wilson to reach him before he sent any further Note.

MR. BALFOUR read the draft of a telegram which he had prepared, the gist of which was that the British Government hoped that the lines of the President's reply would be, first,
to decline further controversy, and, second, to state that
the conditions of an armistice must be such as to prevent
the resumption of hostilities in conditions more favourable
to the enemy than those at present prevailing, and that,
consequently the terms of an armistice must be laid down by
the Naval and Military Authorities.

LORD READING calculated from the dates of the various
communications that it would be impossible for such a tele­
gram to reach Washington before President Wilson had issued
his reply.

CONCLUSION

It was accordingly decided --
To take no further action.

MR BALFOUR said that he had had a visit from M. Cambon, who had explained that the French Government
of an Arm­
istice. were considerably exercised over our action with regard to
an armistice with Turkey. M. Cambon had pointed out that the
terms of an armistice with Turkey had been drawn up in Paris
and agreed to by the British, French, and Italian Governments.
They included 22 points. The British Government had, without
consulting its Allies, decided that an armistice could, in
the last resort, be concluded by accepting only 4 points. M.
Cambon had represented that in form, at any rate, this was
incorrect. MR BALFOUR said that he had discussed the question
with M. Cambon for three-quarters of an hour. He had re­
mined him that practically all the armies operating against
Turkey were British, to say nothing of the bulk of the naval
forces. He had reminded him that the British were not con­
sulted about General Franchet d'Esperey's negotiations
with Bulgaria. On merits he thought that M. Cambon saw that
the British Government had acted rightly, and he had under­
taken to do his very best to put matters right with the
French Government.
THE PRIME MINISTER explained the situation to Lord Milner, and said that, in his view, it would be very desirable that Lord Milner should proceed at once to Paris to discuss two points with M. Clemenceau:

(i) To persuade M. Clemenceau not to make difficulties about the armistice with Turkey;

(ii) To make representations to him urging him to move Marshal Poch to talk straight to Colonel House about the American Army.

On the first point he urged that Lord Milner should remind M. Clemenceau of the arguments adduced by Mr. Balfour, and particularly of the action taken by the French in the case of Bulgaria, notwithstanding that the first flag of truce had been sent in to General Milne, and notwithstanding that the British forces in the Balkans were just as large as the French. In spite of these considerations, General Frenchet d'Esperey had not even consulted General Milne at all; he had ignored him. In the case of Turkey, the forces were almost entirely British. Moreover, we were dealing with a different Government from that believed to be in power at the time of the Paris discussions. The present Government was inviting the Allies to cooperate with them in throwing off the Germans. The circumstances that applied in Paris were very therefore not applicable now.

On the second point, he wished Lord Milner to impress upon M. Clemenceau the facts mentioned by Field Marshal Haig, namely, that during the present year the staff work of the Americans was so inferior as to prevent them from achieving any considerable results, and that unless a drastic change of method were made they would not be materially better next year. THE PRIME MINISTER said that from all the information
which reached him, the American failure had completely upset Marshal Poch's great strategical plan for the present year. He should remind M. Clemenceau how, after President Wilson had agreed that American troops should be brigaded with British and French troops, General Pershing had stepped in and overruled him. The result was that an amateur army was fighting a professional army. General Pershing had refused to brigade his troops with British and French; he had refused to interlard American brigades with British and French divisions; he had refused General Weygand's plan of using French staff officers to correct the American inexperience, and, unless a change was made, the same thing would happen next year. The result would be that great numbers of brave men would die like flies without achieving any considerable results. He advised Lord Milner to mention the stories about horses dying, and there being insufficient horses to bring up the artillery. He should say that a first-class military scandal was threatening, for the facts were getting known in American circles even in London. He should make a strong appeal on these lines that M. Clemenceau should use all his influence with Marshal Poch to make a representation on this subject to Colonel House.

GENERAL WILSON said that Mr. Hughes had been to see him this afternoon. Mr. Hughes had heard that the 2 American divisions were going to be pulled out of the line, because General Pershing refused to keep them up to strength. Mr. Hughes had warned him that if the Australians were sent in again in these conditions they might refuse to fight.

THE PRIME MINISTER suggested that Lord Milner, without mentioning such details, should give a general warning to M. Clemenceau that both the British and French armies would be greatly discouraged if some action was not taken to enable the American Army to pull its proper weight. It was essential
that the representations should come from Marshal Foch.

**LORD MILNER undertook** --

To proceed on the following day to Paris.

The Conference agreed:

(i) That Lord Milner should proceed at once to Paris:

(ii) That the Chief of the Imperial General Staff should send a message to General Spears in Paris, asking him (through the British Ambassador, if possible) to let M. Clemenceau know that very evening that Lord Milner was coming over to discuss the question of the Turkish armistice:

(iii) That the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should send a telegram to Lord Derby announcing Lord Milner's impending visit, and that a telephone message had been sent through General Spears.

4, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.

Oct. 24, 1918.
WAR CABINET.

NOTES OF A CONVERSATION at 10 Downing Street, S.W.,
on MONDAY, November 25, 1918, at 12.30 p.m.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair):

The Rt. Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B.,
G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for War:

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, K.C.B.,
Secretary, War Cabinet.

THE FORTHCOMING CONFERENCE IN LONDON.

The Prime Minister decided that:

(1) The Secretary should draft a telegram to be sent from
the Prime Minister to Colonel House and M. Orlando,
stating that M. Clemenceau was coming to London next
Sunday, December 1, and that he hoped that they would
also be able to come, as there were matters of great
importance for discussion:

(2) The Secretary should draft a telegram from the
Prime Minister to M. Clemenceau informing him that
Colonel House and M. Orlando had been invited to
come to London, and urging that Marshal Foch should
accompany him, as there were a number of points con­
nected with the carrying out of the armistice and
the occupation of enemy territory on which his opinion
would be of great value:

(3) The time of M. Clemenceau's arrival should be noti­
fied to the newspapers, which should be encouraged
to induce the populace to line the route and give
him a reception. If Marshal Foch should accompany
M. Clemenceau, the Secretary of State for War should
arrange for a military display.

THE OCCUPATION OF VIENNA AND BUDAPEST.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he regretted the decision of
the War Cabinet that British troops should not take part in
the occupation of Vienna and Budapest. (War Cabinet 506, Minute 3
He felt, that the outward and visible sign of conquest was occu­
and if French and Italian troops were utilised mainly for the occupation of Austrian territory, it would leave behind the impression that the French and Italians had been mainly responsible for the allied victory. As a matter of fact, the British Empire had been mainly responsible for our victory, and the tendency was for us to leave it to M. Clemenceau and Marshal Foch and Colonel House to get the credit and to settle the fate of the world.

LORD MILNER said that he was apprehensive that we might get into serious difficulties by the occupation of Austrian territory. Already immense demands were being made for British troops in all parts of the world — Archangel, Murmansk, Siberia, the Caucasus, Turkey, &c. Moreover, very large numbers of men were being brought home in connection with demobilisation, coal, and for other purposes. All these demands fell on the fighting men. Although the British Army abroad numbered some 1,700,000 men, only a proportion of these were fighting troops, and he did not want to see them scattered too widely.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that there were advantages in not demobilising too quickly, as it would be difficult to absorb all the men at once. This strengthened his argument in favour of taking part in the occupation of such places as Vienna and Budapest. He did not ask that the War Cabinet should reverse their decision, but he thought that they should reserve their final judgment until they had heard M. Clemenceau's arguments in favour of occupying these places.

LORD MILNER agreed that it would be desirable to have a conversation with M. Clemenceau on the subject.

THE ARMY AND THE GENERAL ELECTION.

THE PRIME MINISTER impressed on the Secretary of State for War the great importance of making the best possible
arrangements for the soldiers abroad to record their votes and for ensuring that the election addresses and literature of the various candidates should reach their hands. He pointed out that if a large number of soldiers did not record their votes, and it transpired that they had not been given the fullest possible opportunities, the Army Administration and the Commanders themselves would come in for severe criticism at home.

LORD MILNER said he quite agreed in this view, and undertook, on his forthcoming visit to G.H.Q., to impress on Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig the great importance of this subject.

LORD MILNER added that he believed at least 70 per cent of the soldiers ought to record their votes. He hoped not less than 1 million men would do so. The only difficulty would be in the case of men absent from their units or moving on detached service.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

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French views of British army: power 10 (June 10); Colonel Russian report 11 (June 12)

Future military policy: Gen. Wilson's observation on preparing for a defensive counter; how
should the critical point of the present offensive be successfully

- forced; a memorandum on the subject to be prepared 4 (May 27)
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Grades, Sir E. his parliamentary position 13 (June 16)

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German divisions, mixing of young and older men in. 67 (July 1)

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- Troops for Palestine 5 (May 29)
- Troops for the Caucasus: the 219th Division 18 (June 15)
- Plans for 1919: possibility of their diverting their operations to the East. 19 (June 15)
- Feeding and training among their troops: moral standards 19 (June 15)
- Feeding and training compared with British 19 (June 15)
- Methods, Austrian attempt to apply. 19 (July 1)
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busy organizing tea commerce in the Otranto 5 (May 14)

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Higher Command: Mr. Autlward's question to the H.G. Command 2 (May 16)

- Letter from a Canadian officer to Sir R. Barker commenting adversely on, 21 (July 16)

Hogge, Mr.:

Parliamentary in Ulster: 15 (June 19)

Home forces:
- Appointment of Chief of the General Staff 15 (June 19)
- Command of; release of Gen. Sir C. Monro from the
- Command in India X 1 (May 15); appointment of Gen. Monro
- agreed to; responsibilities taken over temporarily by Gen. Wilson
- 2 (May 16)

Home forces:
- French need that an unduly large force is maintained in
- Their Country 10 (June 16); Colonel Bourne's report 11 (June 16).
- Col. White's criticism 13 (June 16)
- Horses, shortage of, for the American Army in France 10 (June 16)

Hutchinson, Gen. Report on progress in the formation of the American Army 1 (May 18)
Imperial War Cabinet: adjournment for a week suggested to meet troops in France, and to meet Gen. Foch 16 (June 24)
Indian Command: suggestion that it be offered to Gen. Sir W. Robertson (May 15); his appointment in place of Gen. France agreed to (May 15).

Indian troops: 91 new battalions to be raised (May 27).

Information to the Press: Prime Minister to see dossier of actual statements made on behalf of the General Staff (June 10).

Exchange of intelligence between British and French staffs (Aug 15).
Italian front. Asiago: possibility of the Italians taking in hand their postponed attack 14 (June 17).

Austrian retreat, ceased 16 (June 24).

Lian front. Prato: Austrian offensive 14 (June 17) 15 (June 17).

Italian offensive, possibility of its being taken in hands 14 (June 17).

Italian situation 21 (July 16) 22 (July 17).
Italian front. Austrian Concentrations in the Vipol - suggested attack in the 'Morning Front' 1 (May 15). Austrian divisions on the, 14 (June 11).

Fake map - the most probable line of Austrian attacks (May).

Supposed German Concentrations of 10 divisions at (May 27) : no signs of any German troops going to, 10 (June 10).

(Gen. Diaz' plan 10 (June 10).

Austrian offensive : foothold secured by the Austrians across the river reduced; possibility of the Austrians carrying out their proposed attack on the kia in a 20 enemy division. Arrival of 2 more Austrian divisions 14 (June 17): improvement of the situation on the plain at Salita and Montello. Message of congratulation the sent of improvement maintained, 15 (June 18).
Italy: messages of congratulations to France.

Italy: no signs of any German troops going to, 10 (June 10)

Italy: possibility of attack by the Germans on the centre, if they fail in the West.

21 (July 16)

Italy: question whether Gen. Wilson should go to, 8 (June 8)

Italy: landed for, 16 (June 24)

Italy: telegram from Lord Curzon indicating that the Italian Intelligence Dept. believed that 10 German divisions were being concentrated on the 16th front, which had caused the Italians to retreat from their offensive on May 31.
Japanese intervention in Russia; no reply from President Wilson; M. Clemenceau unwilling that Gen. Foch should send a message or that his name should be quoted 12 (June 12); 13 (June 13).

Japanese intervention in Russia; political difficulties of the Japanese Government in obtaining a decision 16 (June 27).

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Kundenoff, Gen., military policy of, 26 (July 26).

Man power: another relative statement of the strength of the combatant troops
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Man power: paper from Ministry of Munitions: Programmes for the Air Force,
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Man power: French view that we maintain an essentially large Home
Force, and an unduly high standard of Potency, thereby
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anti reception at the War Office: misconception of the
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Col. Revers's report to be unpalatable to the War Office, as
that he would refuse to show it to the British authorities.
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Man power: M. Clemenceau alleged we are not doing our part as regards the
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Navy: C. I. S. considers 100,000 men might be joined
from the Navy: repeated requests for a return to
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Macedonitis, General: statement with regard to report that Gen. Mackensen was coming to the Western front with 600,000 men from the Russian front. Half a million Austro-Huns concentrated in the Tyrol. German casualties and available reserves. Austro-Hun forces on the Italian front. German troops in Palestine. German confidence in the success of the offensive. Interchange of intelligence between French and British staffs. German and Russian troops on the Russian front. X (May 15)

Macedonitis, September offensive on. Gen. Milani's views. Difficulties of an advance in the Van der Velde Valley. 26 (July 27)

Macpherson, Mr: statement in his statement in H of Commons on the fighting strength on the Western front on 1 June 1917 to 1 Jan 1918. (May 15)

Mackensen, Gen: report that he was coming to the Western front with 600,000 men from the Russian front. (May 15)

Maurice, Gen: draft of letter from Lord Milner, informing on how the importance of his journalistic work of not giving information to the enemy. 2 (May 16). His reply, giving satisfactory assurances. 3 (May 17).
Military position during the next four months (June–Sept.): Prime Minister's request for a conference 5 (May 28). Pan-African forces in critical position until October 12 (June 30).
Monro, Gen. Sir C. suggested that the offer of the Home Command on 1 (May 15); his appointment to the Home Command agreed to (2 May 16)

Monro, Sir Ernest, to visit the Army in France, and advise upon the application of labour on defensive fortifications 2 (May 16), 3 (May 17).

Moral Stimulants for the Troops: enemy and Allied communications 15 (May 16).
Moral of the French: recent disaster 5 (May 20).
Morning Post: article on May 14, suggesting that Gen. von Mackensen was coming to the Western front with 300,000 men from the Russian front, and that half a million Austrians were concentrated in the Isonzo for attacks on Italy 1 (May 15).
Articles in the: their poisonous effect; miscellaneous tendency of Col.ophontron’s articles 15 (May 16).

Mustard gas: German methods of causing infectedJones 5 (May 29).
Naval man-power requirements (Britain): French misconceptions.

Navy: C.I.G.S. suggests that probably 100,000 might be considered from combat-out from 13 (June 14).

Navy: Man power in the; repeated requests for a return 13 (June 15).
Nineteen hundred and nineteen, plan of operations for, July 1.
Operations, plan 9, for 1917, (July 1)

Bushwaite, Mr., question to Mr. Commons, in regard to the Higher Command. (May 16)
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Palestine, German troops in; reports of Austria and German troops going through the Baghdad railway 1 (May 15); message from a Turkish source that 30,000 with 30 batteries were leaving for Palestine 5 (May 29).

Indian troops in; their fighting qualities 1 May 15.

German aeroplanes, artillery, and troops for 5 (May 29).
Paris, threat &; the population determined to go on whether Paris can
under fire or not; serious situation if the Prussian Reuling
came under fire; importance of ascertaining Prussian
intentions if the French should lose Paris. (June 13)

Parliamentary indecisions; speeches by Mereos, Pange, Hesse & Holt hope
that the British Army should be withdrawn from France. (June 13)
Pressing. Gen: liaison officers with his Staff. 1 (May 15)

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President Wilson and Japanese intervention in Russia 12 (June 15) 13 (June 16)

President Wilson: importance of ascertaining his intentions if the French showed love Paris 12 (June 12)

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Prime Minister to theshown actual offence 10 (June 10)

Press Bureau: suppression of reports of speeches in Parliament supporting withdrawal of British Army from France 15 (June 15)

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Prisoners of war (German and Russian) release of 1 (May 16)
Railway Transportation in France (May 17)

Knapps for France A (May 27)
Repton, Col.: miscellaneous tendency of his articles in the 'Morning Post' 2 May 6

Reinforcements from (British and American) for the Western front during this period June-Sept, Conscription of, at May 27

Aberdeen, Gen. W.: suggestion that he be spared the command in India 1 May 15, his appointment to the Indian Command in place of Gen. monarch agreed to 2 May 16

Wren, General: appointment as Chief of the General Staff, Home Forces 16 June 24
Russia: Allied intervention in; military declaration from Gen. Torch & Webb.

Telegram from Mr. Lockhart urging the dangers of further delay to
suggesting that they should be communicated to President Wilson;
conversation between Lord R. Cecil & the Japanese Ambassador;
Japanese reply to American proposal; reservation of their right to
increase their contingent; Canadian troops for Siberia; shipping
for their transport across the Pacific 26 (July 27).

Russia: Consulate, Germany 21st Berolin to the 10 (June 10)

Russia: Czech-Slovak troops at Archangel & Murmansk, control by Sir
of Vladivostok; their employment in the
arrangement for their transport via Vancouver,
May 29; M. Clemenceau's anxiety to
them away 12 (June 13).
Russia: Mr. Leslie Urquhart's conversation with the Prime Minister with regard to measures for countering German penetration 3 (May 17)

D. B. D. Borne: his views as to the future possibilities with regard to the co-operation of Czecho-Slovak troops 3 (May 17)

International Force for 3 (May 17)

Australia engineers for 3 (May 17)

Gen. Poole enquires as to raising a large army 3 (May 17)

Mr. Lindley questions whether he should go to Russia to be with the Eastern Front 3 (May 17)

Japanese intervention: no reply from Pres. Wilson to H. Cleminshaw 3 (June 24)

H. Cleminshaw reminding H. Wilson: should send a message to the effect that the issue should be quoted 10 (June 15); 13 (June 18)

President Wilson still opposes the idea 26 (June 19)

Japanese intervention on political difficulties of the Japanese Govt. in obtaining a decision 16 (June 24)

Mussmann's 15 (June 14) request to the Americans for a regiment for the defence of 13 (June 14)

Siberia: Canadian troops for 25 (July 27)

Siberia: rejection Bolchevs and Czech forces on 20 (July 27)

Siberia: organisation of an anti-Bolchev movement: suggested by the Prime Minister, Gen. Kears and Mr. Leslie Urquhart mentioned as agent 15 (June 19)

Ukraine: telegram to Gen. Macdonogh from a trustworthy agent with regard to supplies for the Central Powers; Germany busy organizing commerce in the Ukraine 3 (May 17)
Russia: Vladivostok: not desirable to ship Czech. Slovaks from 21st June.

19 (June 26): British battalion for Vladivostok 25 (July 25).
Russian forces on the Eastern front (May 15)

Prisoners (released) remaining in Austria & Germany (May 17)
Salonica, Allied forces at: misleading telegram from Foreign Office to Lord Granville 9 (June 6)

- the contemplated September offensive: General Milne's views 26 (July 27)
- Vardar Valley, tactical difficulties of an advance in the 26 (July 27)

Shipbuilding, slanders 26 (July 26)

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- Canadian troops to Vladivostok 28 (July 27)

Siberia (see Russia)

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- allocation of man power questions 21 (July 18)
Stewart, General; Labour in France; question whether he should accompany Sir E. Moore, or be employed independently. 2 (May 13)

3 (May 17)

Statistical information at the War Office. 5 (May 27)

Steel workers: slackness at Sheffield. 25 (July 28)

Strike of Metropolitan Police. 27 (Aug. 31)

Supreme War Council. July meeting; date and locality. 15 (June 24)

Supreme War Council, meeting of, difficulties of reaching. Suggestions for holding at near Gen. Foch's headquarters. 5 (May 27)

Question of postponement. Gen. Foch invites upon its being held. 6 (May 30)

Supreme War Council. Permanent Military Services. Suggestion that they should assume a relative to Gen. Foch for the duration of C.E. 8 (June 17)

Supreme War Council. A stronger staff for. 17 (July 1)

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Association of Gen. Foch with. 19 (July 19)
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Tanker: plan of operations for 1919 19 (July 1)
Transport: preparations evacuation of troops from France in an emergency 5 June 1915

of American troops 13 June 1915

Travers, Clarke, General; suggestion that Gen. Stewart should be associated with him for railway transportation work in France 3 May 1917

Turkey: how elimination from the war 17 July 1917

Tyrol, alleged Austrian concentration in May 1917
United States: indication importance of arriving in what they are prepared to do of the French. Paris and the situation becomes critical. 12 (June 13).

and Japanese intervention in Russia. 12 (June 13), 13 (June 14).

Jordan Valley: difficulty of an advance in, 26 (July 27).

Versailles, permanent military advisors at suggestion that they should intervene relatively to Gen. Foch. The functions of C.I.E.S. 14 (June 17)

Association of Gen. Foch with Thys in 19 (July 1).

A stronger staff fur 19 (July 1).
War effort: Secretary of War Cabinet statements to produce a return showing our war effort in all branches 13 (June 14). Maintenance of our Army in France 25 (July 26).

War Office, statistical information on the 5 (May 29).

Sir R. Borden's criticisms 19 (June 14).

Western front: American divisions (7) in the line, complete with artillery 19 (July 1).

Western front: American divisions: strength of 15 (June 17).

Western front: American divisions, then removed to Alsace, 6 (June 5) 9 (June 6). 21 (June 21).

Western front: American division, movements & training of, 8 (June 5) 9 (June 6).

Western front: American division, replacement by British Cadres 8 (June 5).

Western front: American generals, utilization of surplus & replace our losses 8 (June 11) (June 12). Training with British & French batteries 18 (June 21).

American divisions, equipment, & transport for a France 18 (June 3).

Western front: Allied divisions throughly to face the Germans; possibility of a draft on Sir D. Haig's reserve under Gen. Maurice 6 (May 30).

American troops, their success in meeting the new German tactics 9 (June 5) 14 (June 17). Beauraing agreement, protest by Sir D. Haig on 12 (June 5).

Belgian Army, positions, on the event of the shortening of the British line 7 (June 5) 9 (June 6).

Bergues line, withdrawal to, 9 (June 5).

Bailleul: 3 new German divisions reported near 10 (June 9).

"B" divisions 10 (June 10).

Borden, Sir R: Criticism of our enquiring & prepared service 10 (June 10).

British man-power for the: French occurs 10 (June 10).

British divisions, state of: reconstitution of the 5 divisions which had been through the Champagne fighting: reconstitution of divisions with 'B' men; restoration of our divisional position 11 (June 12).

British front, delay in the German attack 16 (June 25).

British divisions, action of from French front 22 (July 17) 23 (July 18).
Western front. American cooperation: allotment of troops arriving during June, to British & French armies; replacements: Camps in England: shortage of horses and kitchens 10 (June 10.) Doubt is expressed by Gen. Pershing's intention to allot them to the British zones for training. Gen. Fay came to keep the point with Gen. Tasker 11 (June 12.) 2 American divisions with the British Army expected to amount to 100,000 more by beginning of August. Some of the 5 divisions will the British might have to be kept in the line before the 5th July 12 (June 13.) (continued below.)

Arras-Amiens front. German plan to throw rear reserves to the North of Somme before making a decisive attack on it. Gen. Pétain warned to prepare to send divisions to the North. Gen. Nielson announced that the Germans meant to attack their New North of Amiens. Lord Milner suggests that it, South of Amiens, Gen. Foch determined to prevent the separation of the British and French armies: forthcoming offensive expected about the 21st June 12 (June 13.)

American co-operation (cont.): Gen. Pershing's intention to train the remaining American troops himself, a reversal of the agreement arrived at; Lord Milner to discuss the matter with C.I.O.S. & prepare a reply to Gen. Macinlay 13 (June 14.) Two American divisions, due to be sent to the Vosges, put into the line near Meaux; training of American troops: Gen. Pershing said to be confused by British and French claims, and therefore considers it essential to train them himself 14 (June 15.) 

Telegram from Gen. Bridges stating intention of American Gov't to send only two divisions a month from August onwards; no opinion expressed by Staff War Council as to what should happen after July, desirability of getting Gen. Foch to send a telegram to America on this subject 15 (June 24.) formula on which future raising and dispatch of American troops could be based 17 (June 27.)
Western front: Allied Canadian strength 132 (June 17)

American cooperation (cont.); points to be raised at Versailles; regular maintenance of 5 divisions in training with British Army (transport of American divisions in France); training of disciplining gunners with British & French Batteries 16 (June 23); our ignorance up to date re Gen. Pershing is making 4 American forces in France; information to be obtained from Gen. Pershing's Head quarters 17 (July 1); Plans of operations for July 20

Battles of American divisions secured by the French 20 (July 12)

American divisions removed from Sir D. Haig's command by Gen. Pershing 27 (3) (Aug. 1)

Western front: Artillery personnel: total of 309,000 18 (June 14)

Artillery (British) from Champagne transferred to British front 20 (July 4)

Amiens, German guns pushed further away from 20 (July 9)

American divisions, under proportion of, with the French 20 (July 9)

French attempts to get the Whole American Army into their sector 25 (July 26)

American to operation: French efforts to get the American troops into their sector; the promised 100 divisions: impossible to bring them over by means of shipping 25 (July 26)

Telegram from Gen. Reading intimating that only 80 divisions were likely to be sent in 1919 26 (July 26)

American Forces, Marshall Task's plans for an undertaking with... 27 (3) (Aug. 31)

American Staff work... 27 (3) (Aug. 31)

Australian losses at Bullecourt in 1919... 27 (3) (Aug. 31)
Western Front (British): D.A.N. divisions withdrawn and replaced by Americans, 20 (July 12)

(British): Artillery of British divisions in Champagne transferred to 20 (July 12)

(British): Si D. Haig more satisfied about the situation 20 (July 12)

(British): defensive preparations 20 (July 12)

(British): communication from C.I.O.S. to Gen. Foch being

British Army: maintenance of 59 divisions; Gen. Foch's object to make us keep them up by supplying us with the support of American troops; supplying our agricultural, ammunition, and munitions output 25 (July 25)

British battalions, strength 25 (July 25)

British divisions, reductions to the French standards 25 (July 25)

(British): Marshal Foch proposes to press on with the successful operations on the British front; Prime Minister recalls our loss of about 60,000 men at Bullecourt last year, and deprecates similar losses to the Canadians and Americans on this occasion. Telegram to Si D. Haig warning him that the War Cabinet would not approve attacks on the Hindenburg Line involving heavy casualties to the British or American troops 27(2) (Aug. 31)

Bullecourt: Australian losses in 1917 27(2) (Aug. 31)
Western front: American cooperation: small number of troops in the area.

2 (May 16) - Telegram from Lord Reading giving estimated number of troops to be dispatched during May. Prime Minister's estimates with regard to their early use in the area.

3 (May 17) - American cooperation: discussion (not reproduced) (May 27).

4 (May 18) - American troops: lost Flinnes stage on a division attached to Gen. Rousset's army. 5 (May 19) - American troops: advance of their deployment in the area. 6 (May 20) - Members attached to British Force v. Macedon, attached to British Force v. Macedon.

Camouflage: German concealment of their offensive. M. Solomon's suggestion. 5 (May 29) - Changes in Divisions and Brigade Commands. 6 (May 30) - Canadian Chief Enquiries as chief of the White Engineering background.

10 (June 2) - Demolition of bridges, culverts etc. - French interference.

2 (May 15) - Dispersal of British among French divisions.

Dunkirk evacuation: 9 (June 6) - Evacuation of troops from France in an emergency: Transport possibilities. 5 (June 5) - Dominion Prime Ministers, suggested visit to, 10 (June 20) - Engineering arrangements. Sir R. Buildingsvisit. 11 (June 12) - 12 (June 14) - Engineer in Chief for the 11 (June 12) - French divisions, infantry strength of 16 (June 17).

Gen. Foch's formula that no ground should be yielded: announced by Gen. Wilson 9 (June 5) - Gen. Foch's strategy: discussion: opinion of C.I.O. S. 9 (June 5) - discussion resumed 8 (June 5).
Western front: Fighting strength on 1 Jan. 1917 - 4,500,000. Macpherson's statement in H. of Commons 1 (May 15). French reserves. German effort to deviate them to the South before attacking the British 12 (June 15).


German attack on the British front; speculation on the situation 16 (June 15). German attack: Gen. Wilson, on the advantage to the enemy of postponing until June 1, speculation on the direction of the attack if made on a large or a small front 4 (May 27).

German offensive; Lord Milner's account of M. Clemenceau visits; Gen. Wilson's opinion that the army could be satisfied with the position if this were the enemy's main effort, and the French troops fought well; the Somme - Rheims battle; capture of Somme v. Pozzal, Rheims anticipated 5 (May 27)

German Crown Prince's reserves 23 (July 18)

German division in the offensive 5 (May 27) 6 (May 30)

German offensive. The Crown Prince's army, divisions available. 6 (May 30)

German opinion of British leadership 6 (May 30)

German tactics: new style of fighting 7 (June 5)
Western front: French counter attacks between the two Armies began
23 (July 18) : 24 (July 19)

French counter attacks: C.I.G.S. duties it may suit the German
plans by using up the French resources and leaving
onic Rupprecht free for a blow against the British front.
24 (July 19)

Foch, Marshal: plans which he intended undertaking with
the American forces; difference of opinion with Gen. Pershing.
27 (5) (Aug. 31)

Foch: Gen: his formula that no ground should be yielded
Renounced by Gen. Wilson 7 (June 5): his strategy discussed.
Opinion of C.I.G.S. 7 (June 5): discussion resumed.
8 (June 5)
Western front: German offensive 8-11 W. of Rheine. Beaumont battle
fighting in Sillery. French position on Montagne de Rheine.
Sir D. Haig believes the attack is not serious. 22 (July 16)
22 (July 17)
Western front: Haig, Sir D. and Marshal Foch's plans for an undertaking with the American forces 27(3)(Aug. 31)

Western front: Hindenburg line, attack on. Telegram to Sir D. Haig. Warning him that War Cabinet would not approve attack involving heavy casualties to British or American forces 27(2)(Aug. 31)
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Western front: Kœthen (field) for the American Army 10 (June 10)

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Manpower: Another statement of the relative strengths of the combatant troops on both sides required 14 (June 17)
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Western front: Plan of operations for 1919: use of American troops: not proposed but they should take over a section of the line this year: Tanks: possibility of the Germans devoting their operations to other theatres; question of the British army operating on the outskirts of the enemy area: man-power, man equipment, and lines of communication: in relation to that policy; German Camouflage; training of our troops: memorandum on the lessons of the present campaign asked for: stronger staff for Verdun: separate memo and on all the above subjects to be prepared 19 (July 1)
Western front in France and Italy: Article in 'Morning Post' May 14, suggesting that Gen. Macdonough was coming to the Western front with 600,000 men from the Russian front, and that half a million Australians were concentrated in the Iser to prepare for an attack in Italy. Discussion between Prime Minister, C.I.G.S., and Gen. Macdonough. X 1, (May 14).

Gen. Foch's Staff 14 (June 17)

Gas shelling by the Germans: 5 (May 29)

German Army, Prime Minister's reasons: 12 (June 13), 23 (July 14)

Fighting strength on 1 Jan. 1917 and 1 Jan. 1918. Minutes in M.P. machinery statement to the House of Commons. 1 (May 24)

German attack, probability of its success: Gen. Foch's decisions and conference with Gen. Wilson. 3 (May 20)

German divisions: 1 (May 19), 3 (May 19), 5 (May 19).

Gen. Foch's headquarters, direct communication with 5 (May 19)

Gen. Foch's policy with regard to the use of British divisions in reinforcing the front. 2 (May 16)

Gen. Foch's preparations for three divisions from S.E. 2 (May 16)

German division moved from the Belgian front to a point further south. 48 divisions in hand for the attack. Their infantry training; measures formassing their troops by night. 3 (May 17).

General Foch & Wilson, suggested conference between with regard to the continuance of the German attack. 3 (May 17)

Labour in the trenches. 2 (May 16), 3 (May 17).

Manning of near positions. 2 (May 16).

Military situation on the number of German divisions ready for the offensive; the factor of delay; number of Allied divisions required for a breakthrough. 2 (May 16).

Minister gas. 5 (May 29)

Prime Minister's queries as to breeding out of inefficient commanders; preparation of positions behind the lines; provision against abandonment of positions, and arrangements for demolition of bridges, culverts. 2 (May 16).
Western front: military situation during the next four months (June-Sept).

Prime Minister's request for a compromise (May 29): Gen. White processed a critical period until October 10 (June 10).


Open warfare (June 5).

Perhahy General, and Marshal Foch's plans for an undertaking with the American forces 27/3 (Aug. 31).
Western front: positions behind the lines; water protection 2 (May 16)

Prince Rupprecht's Army: number of divisions; probabilities of an offensive by 6 (May 30); C.I.G.S. convinced that we are not in a position to hold the present line against an attack by 7 (June 5)

Prince Rupprecht's reserves in the Montdidier-Noyon attack 15 (June 10); in the Abbeville attack 22 (July 17) 23 (July 18)

railway organisations on the 11 (June 12)

Communal services, reorganisation of; meals of main force 11 (June 12)

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re-enforcements from Ireland 8 (June 8) 9 (June 9) 10 (June 10) 11 (June 11)

Shortening of the British front considered necessary by C.I.G.S. (June 5)

Sir D. Haig protests against the removal by Gen. Foch of any portion of the British Army from his command until Prince Rupprecht's reserves available for the Crown Prince have been absorbed into the battle front and that enemy preparations for attack on British front are well advanced 7 (June 5)

Sir D. Haig, claims to freedom of action; in the North 9 (June 6)

St. Omer line. Gen. Wilson considers the only course open to the Northern part of the British force is to fall back on the flooded line of St. Omer 9 (June 5) Lord Wolseley's suggestion of an intermediate line 8 (June 5) 9 (June 6) (over)
Western front. St-Omer line (cont.): Gen. Plumer opposed to the idea of falling back on the St-Omer line 10 (June 10)

Western front: separation of British and French Armies: Gen. Foch determined to keep the two Armies in contact, and making his arrangements accordingly 12 (June 13)
Western front, reinforcements for: letter from Gen. Foch asking for more men.  
- May: question of withdrawing troops from Ireland. 2 (May 16) 
- Rheims, possible capture of, 6 (May 29)

Sir D. Haig protests against withdrawal by Gen. Foch. Foch sends troops from under his command, in view of preparations for attack on the British front. 2 (June 5)

Sir D. Haig's reserves; Gen. Foch needs them, divisions to be used at the Somme and Amiens to be used as a British or French reserve. 7 (June 5)

8 (June 5) 9 (June 6)

Sir Ernest Moore advises on the best application of labour on defensive positions. 2 (May 16); 3 (May 17)

Seizures - Rheims railway. 5 (May 29)
- Seizure anticipated capture of, 6 (May 29)
- Supplies for British divisions in the French line. 2 (May 16)
- Seizure, the French store the railway at. 14 (July 19)

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Treveling: Sir R. Brodoin's visitations. 11 (June 12) 13 (June 12)

von Haefflin, Gen. 22 (July 17)

Western front, withdrawal of British Army from France, suggested in speech to Parliament by M. H. H. H. Hold. 15 (June 19)

Wiring: Sir R. Borden's criticisms. 11 (June 12) 13 (June 12)
Western front: withdrawal in the Northern area 3 (June 5) 8 (June 5) 9 (June 5)
Wilson, General: suggested conference with Gen. Foch with regard to plans for dealing with the German attacks in the event of the latter being successful. 5 (May 19)

Future military policy. Observations on preparing for a decisive campaign. How should the critical period of the present offensive be successfully passed? (May 29)

Question of his going to Italy. 8 (June 5)

Withdrawal of the British Army from France, suggested in speeches at Parliament. 15 (June 19)
Lacharoff, M., assurance with regard to French morale (June 13)