AGENDA

1. APPOINTMENT OF CABINET COMMITTEES.

(e.g. Committee of Home Affairs.
Unemployment Committee.
Committee on Irish Affairs.
Committee on Housing.
Committee on Agricultural Policy.)

2. FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

(To invite the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Secretary for Scotland to report and advise the Cabinet at an early date.)

3. THE STRIKE ON THE RAILWAYS.

(a) To ask the Ministers principally concerned to report on the latest information, more particularly in regard to maintenance of supplies.

(b) To invite some Minister to become definitely responsible for all arrangements connected with the maintenance of supplies.)

4. TO ASK THE MINISTERS MAINLY CONCERNED TO EXAMINE AND REPORT AT AN EARLY DATE ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS OF URGENCY:

Anglo-Persian Oil Company
(Chancellor of the Exchequer,
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
The President of the Board of Trade,
The First Lord of the Admiralty.)

British Dyers.
(The Chancellor of the Exchequer,
The President of the Board of Trade.

(Contd.)
The Heads of the three Service Departments.  
The Lord President of the Council, as  
Head of the Industrial Research  
Department.)

(Signed) M.P. A. HANKEY,  
Secretary, Cabinet.

.......

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W. 1,  
January 23, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet
held at 10, Downing Street, on
WEDNESDAY, 23rd. JANUARY, 1924
at 4 p.m.

PRESENT:
The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.
Prime Minister and Secretary of
State for Foreign Affairs. (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. Viscount Haldane of Cloan,
K.T., O.M.,
Lord Chancellor.
The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P.
Chancellor of the Exchequer.
The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary
of State for the Colonies.
The Right Hon. Sir Sydney Olivier, K.C.M.C., C.B.
Secretary of State for India.
The Right Hon. Viscount Chelmsford, G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E., C.B.,
First Lord of the Admiralty.
The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P.,
Minister of Health.
The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of
Agriculture and Fisheries.
The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P., Secretary
for Scotland.
Colonel The Right Hon. J.C. Wedgwood, D.S.O., M.P.,
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
The Right Hon. F.W. Jowett, M.P., First
Commissioner of Works.

Sir M.P.A. Hankey, G.C.B. Secretary.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 1924, at 4 p.m.

CABINET PROCEDURE.—

Secretarial Arrangements.

I. The Prime Minister asked his colleagues to make every effort to secure punctuality in regard to Meetings of the Cabinet.

After hearing from the Prime Minister a short summary of the Secretarial arrangements under the previous Government, the Cabinet agreed—

(a) To adopt the principle of a Cabinet Secretary;

(b) That the Secretary should circulate a Memorandum in regard to his instructions as to procedure under recent Government;

(c) That, for the present, the Secretary should record Conclusions only, with such explanatory notes as are essential to render the Conclusions intelligible;

(d) That the Secretary should circulate the Conclusions in draft as soon as possible after the Meetings, and Ministers should return the draft with any necessary corrections, which should be embodied in a final draft to be submitted to the Prime Minister for approval;

(e) That Ministers should be responsible for making such communication as they deem necessary to their respective Departments in regard to the Conclusions of the Cabinet;

(f) That, in order to ensure that a correct list of the members present at Meetings of the Cabinet is available to the Press at the earliest possible moment, the Secretary should continue the previous practice of issuing the list at each Meeting as soon as the whole Cabinet has assembled.

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COMMITTEE OF HOME AFFAIRS.

Previous Reference:
Cabinet 54 (B3), Conclusion 1.)

2. After hearing from the Prime Minister the composition and some particulars as to the sphere of activity of the Cabinet Committee of Home Affairs under recent Governments, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Prime Minister should make further enquiries from the Secretary in regard to the scope of the work of the Committee of Home Affairs, with a view to a decision being taken later by the Cabinet as to whether it should be re-established, and, if so, what the composition of the Committee should be:

(b) That, in his Memorandum in regard to Cabinet Procedure (see Conclusion 1 (b) above) the Secretary should give details as to the work of the Committee of Home Affairs under the late Government, including a list of subjects discussed by the Committee.
3. The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That a Committee, composed as follows:—

- Mr Sidney Webb (President of the Board of Trade) (in the Chair).
- Mr Clynes (Lord Privy Seal)
- Mr Philip Snowden (Chancellor of the Exchequer)
- Mr Tom Shaw (Minister of Labour)
- Miss Margaret Bondfield (Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Ministry of Labour)
- Mr John Wheatley (Minister of Health)
- Mr Charles Trevelyan (Minister of Education)
- Mr Walter R. Smith (Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Board of Agriculture)
- Mr James Stewart (Under Secretary of Health for Scotland),

other Ministers, such as the Heads of the Service Departments, being invited to attend for consultation when the business rendered it desirable,

with Mr R.E. Howorth as Secretary,

should meet at once, with power to appoint Sub-Committees in order to investigate all aspects of the question of Unemployment and the connected question of Housing, and to make definite recommendations to the Cabinet as to what schemes for dealing with these subjects are practicable and desirable:

(b) That the Ministers at the head of all Departments which are in a position to make any contribution on the subject should furnish information to the Committee as to existing or possible schemes in regard to the questions before the Committee: Ministers' reports to be forwarded as soon as possible to the Secretary, at 2, Whitehall Gardens, for circulation to the Committee.

(NOTE: In all Departments where facilities exist, the Memoranda should be reproduced in the Departments, 50 copies being forwarded to the Secretary.)
4. The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That a Committee, composed as follows:

Mr Noel Buxton (Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries) (in the Chair),
Lord Parmoor (Lord President of the Council)
Sir Sydney Olivier (Secretary of State for India)
Mr Adamson (Secretary for Scotland)

should meet at once to enquire into the position of Agriculture, with full discretion to consult all the agricultural and urban interests concerned in such manner as they deem most convenient, and to make recommendations to the Cabinet:

(b) That the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be consulted as to the financial aspects of any recommendations before their submission to the Cabinet:

(c) That the Minister of Health should be consulted in regard to any proposals affecting rating before they are submitted to the Cabinet; any other Departments affected being consulted in the same manner.
5. The Cabinet agreed --

(a) That the various questions raised by ex-Servicemen should be enquired into at once:

(b) To take note that the Prime Minister had already instructed the Minister of Pensions to examine these questions in a sympathetic spirit and to take without delay any administrative measures within the power of his Department to mitigate the grievances and deal sympathetically with ex-Servicemen, subject to no additional expenditure being incurred without Treasury sanction:

(c) That the Minister of Pensions should be asked to prepare, for early consideration by the Cabinet, a Memorandum formulating the various questions of principle as well as of detail which require investigation, and containing all possible information and advice to the Cabinet as to the most convenient method of enquiry.
6. The Cabinet agreed —

That, with a view to an announcement by the Prime Minister of the Government's policy on the re-assembly of Parliament, Ministers, after consultation with their respective Departments, should prepare a list of measures which they would like to introduce. These lists should be forwarded to the Secretary of the Cabinet as soon as possible for circulation with a view to early consideration by the Cabinet, when the Prime Minister would make his proposals as to the policy to be announced.
7. The Cabinet agreed —

That the Chancellor of the Exchequer should examine the Estimates of the various Departments, with a view to making his proposals on the subject to the Cabinet at an early date.
FOOT-AND-MOUTH

3. The Cabinet invited the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Secretary for Scotland to examine the situation in regard to foot-and-mouth disease.

(Previous Reference: including the question of bacteriological and other forms of research, with a view to early report to the Cabinet.)
9. After hearing from the Home Secretary a report on the present position in regard to milk, food, coal supplies, and other matters arising out of the strike on the railways, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Home Secretary should keep the Cabinet informed as to all developments:

(b) That no Proclamation under the Emergency Powers Act should be issued without the approval of the Cabinet:

(c) That if the Home Secretary should deem the situation serious, he should consult the Prime Minister, who would then decide as to whether an emergency Meeting of the Cabinet should be held.
10. The Cabinet were informed that a number of photographers were assembled in Downing Street and had asked to be allowed to take a flashlight photograph of the Cabinet in the outer hall on the conclusion of the Meeting.

After consideration, the Cabinet agreed —

That a reply should be sent to the effect that the Cabinet were exceedingly obliged to the photographers, but that they regretted they were unable to accede to their request.
11. The Cabinet agreed —

That the Chancellor of the Exchequer should circulate, for consideration by the Cabinet, a Memorandum on the subject of the recent proposals for the sale of the British Government's shares in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company and for the amalgamation of that Company with other Companies, and that any other Ministers whose Departments were concerned (such as the Board of Trade, the Foreign Office and the Admiralty) should, at their discretion, circulate their views on the receipt of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Memorandum.
12. The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the President of the Board of Trade should circulate a report in regard to the present position of the British Dyestuffs Corporation:

(b) That the Ministers at the head of other Departments concerned, such as the Treasury, the Admiralty, the War Office, the Air Ministry and the Department of Industrial Research (Lord President of the Council), should, at their discretion, circulate their views on receipt of the Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade.
BROADCASTING. 13. The Prime Minister invited the Postmaster-General to make immediate enquiry into the question of Broadcasting and to report to the Cabinet on the subject.
14. The Prime Minister invited the Postmaster-General to examine into the present position in regard to the Imperial Wireless System and the negotiations with the Marconi Company, with a view to an early report to the Cabinet in the subject.

Reference: Cabinet 23 (23), Conclusion 4(d).
15. The Prime Minister invited his colleagues to consider, with a view to early discussion at the Cabinet, the question of what attitude the Government should take on the re-assembly of Parliament in regard to the appointment of the Chairman of Ways and Means and the Deputy Chairman, and, more particularly, whether it might not be desirable that the holders of these offices should be appointed by the House of Commons on grounds of their personal fitness for the post rather than for Party reasons.
IRELAND.

16. The Cabinet agreed, in accordance with the procedure of the late Government,

That the Secretary of State for the Colonies should see Mr Cosgrave, the President of the Irish Free State, and Sir James Craig, the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, who would come to London for the purpose, on the question of the boundary between the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies was asked to keep in touch with the Home Secretary on the subject, and to report the results of his negotiations to the Cabinet.
17. The Cabinet agreed —

That the question of the removal of the barrier erected at the entrance to Downing Street should be discussed between the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary.
19. After hearing from the Home Secretary a report as to the discussion of the question of salaries at a recent Party Meeting, and from the Lord Chancellor particulars of arrangements he had already made for the return to the Exchequer of a large part of his salary, the Cabinet agreed —

That the question of the salaries of Ministers, including the question of equalisation, should be discussed at an early meeting of the Cabinet.
FOREIGN POLICY. 19. The Secretary was instructed to place the question of Russia on the list of questions for early consideration by the Cabinet.

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 49 (23), Conclusion 4.)
20. The Cabinet agreed —

To meet again on Monday, January 28th, 1924, at 3 p.m.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

January 24, 1924.
PROVISIONAL AGENDA.

1. THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS, HOUSE OF COMMONS.
   (Reference: Cabinet 7 (24) 15.)

2. MINISTERS’ SALARIES.
   (Reference: Cabinet 7 (24)18.)

3. THE RAILWAY STRIKE.
   (Reference: Cabinet 7 (24)9.)

4. FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.
   (Minister of Agriculture and Secretary for Scotland to report.)
   (Reference: Cabinet 7 (24)8.)

5. COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE.
   (Chairman to report progress.)
   (Reference: Cabinet 7 (24)3.)

6. COMMITTEE ON UNEMPLOYMENT.
   (Chairman to report progress.)
   (Reference: Cabinet 7 (24)3.)

7. COMMITTEE OF HOME AFFAIRS.
   (Reference: Cabinet 7 (24)2.)
   (Signed) M.P.A. HAINNEY,
   Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
January 25, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on MONDAY, JANUARY 28th, 1924, at 3 p.m.

PRESENT

The Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.    
Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).

The Rt. Hon.    
Viscount Haldane of Clean, K.T., O.M., Lord Chancellor.

The Rt. Hon.    
Philip Snowden, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Rt. Hon.    
J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Rt. Hon.    
Sir Sydney Clivier, K.C.M.G., C.B., Secretary of State for India.

The Rt. Hon.    

The Rt. Hon.    
John Chestley, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Rt. Hon.    
Nicol Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Rt. Hon.    
William Adamson, M.P., Secretary for Scotland.

Col. The Rt. Hon.    

The Rt. Hon.    

Sir M.P.A. Hankey, G.C.B.                        Secretary.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on MONDAY, JANUARY 28th, 1924, at 3 p.m.

1. After further discussion of the question of the appointment of House of Commons officials, the Cabinet agreed --

(a) That the Chairman of Ways and Means should be nominated by the Prime Minister from the Labour Party, and that Mr Robert Young, the Member for Newton, was well qualified for the post:

(b) That in regard to the appointment of Deputy Chairman, the Prime Minister should consult the leaders of the Opposition Parties with a view to agreement on some Member to be chosen on grounds of personal qualifications for the post.
2. After a preliminary discussion on the question of pooling Ministers' salaries, the Cabinet agreed --

(a) That, in view of the responsible duties which will attach to the Lord Privy Seal as Deputy Leader of the House of Commons, provision should be made in the Estimates, in accordance with precedent in corresponding cases, for a salary at the rate of £5,000 a year:

(b) That any Minister who had occasion publicly to defend this provision, should draw attention to the fact that the Prime Minister was discharging the offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs but was drawing the salary for only one of these offices; consequently, the salaries of the Prime Minister and the Deputy Leader of the House of Commons under this arrangement would show a saving on the combined salaries of First Lord of the Treasury, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Lord Privy Seal in recent Governments:

(c) That, with a view to further consideration of the question of pooling, the Secretary should obtain from the appropriate Departments, and circulate, the fullest possible particulars as to the voluntary pooling arrangements entered into by members of the Cabinet in the Coalition Governments during the War. He should include any particulars he might be able to obtain as to what extent equalization was effected, having regard to such considerations as:

(i) The fact that Income Tax is charged on the salary of the office:

(ii) The varying burden of entertainment in different offices:

(iii) The difference in the amount of sacrifice of personal income made by various Ministers through taking office:

(iv) The burden imposed on those Ministers who had to maintain large official residences:

(d) In connection with the above, a report should be made as to the scope of the Government Entertainment Fund, as well as in regard to the incidence of the maintenance of the official residences of certain Ministers.
3. The Prime Minister informed his colleagues that, in view of the great pressure on his time, he had asked the Lord Privy Seal to act for him in matters relating to the strike on the railways.

The Cabinet were informed that negotiations were in progress with a view to a settlement, and there was some reason to believe that the parties were not very far apart.
4. The Minister of Labour drew the attention of the Cabinet to the threat of a docks dispute, in regard to which he had forwarded a Memorandum to the Secretary for distribution the same day (Paper C.P.-33 (24)).

The Cabinet agreed --

That the Minister of Labour should watch the situation carefully and should, at his discretion, either see the Chairman of the Port of London Authority himself or, if he thought advisable, request the Prime Minister to see him with a view to doing everything possible to avoid a deadlock.
5. The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries gave the Cabinet a summary of the present situation in regard to foot-and-mouth disease, which was now reduced to comparatively small dimensions, as well as particulars of the arrangements made for research at home and abroad.

After full discussion, the Cabinet agreed --

(a) That a Committee of practical experts should be appointed to ascertain what the results had been, both in the United Kingdom and in foreign countries, according as a policy of slaughter had been adopted, or otherwise, in cases of outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease; the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, in consultation with the Prime Minister, to take the necessary action.

(b) That the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, in consultation with the Lord Chancellor, should consider what steps could be taken to stimulate further bacteriological and other research into the origin of foot-and-mouth disease:

(c) That the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, in consultation with the Treasury, should examine into the possibilities of some scheme of insurance against foot-and-mouth disease:

(d) That the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries should make a public announcement in regard to the decisions recorded above in (a) and (b).
6. The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, as Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Agricultural Policy, gave the Cabinet a summary of the position in regard to his Inquiry. He hoped to be in a position to circulate a Memorandum of Proposals to the Cabinet at least a week before the meeting of Parliament.
7. The President of the Board of Trade, as Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Unemployment, reported the progress made by the Committee, which had appointed two Sub-Committees to deal respectively with Housing and Unemployment. He hoped to circulate a statement of the Committee's proposals, comparing them with what had been done by previous Governments, in time for consideration before the meeting of Parliament.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the Minister of Transport should be added to the Committee on Unemployment.
After consideration of the relevant passages of the Secretary's Memorandum (Paper C.P.-30 (24)), the Cabinet agreed --

That a Committee of Home Affairs should be composed as follows:--

The Lord Chancellor (in the Chair)
The Lord President of the Council
The Home Secretary
The Minister of Health
The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
The Financial Secretary of the Treasury
One of the Law Officers of the Crown

Mr R.B. Howorth, Secretary.

Other Ministers should be invited to attend if either their Parliamentary or Departmental interests were affected by the business before the Committee.

The function of the Home Affairs Committee should be, as in the past, to relieve the Cabinet of the detailed consideration of the large volume of legislative and administrative work referred to the Cabinet, while leaving to the Cabinet the ultimate decision on these questions.
9. The Prime Minister made a short statement to
the Cabinet on the subject of British relations with
France, in regard to which he was acting on the prin-
ciple that the Government wished to maintain entirely
friendly relations and believed that the French Govern-
ment would co-operate, but that this did not mean that they
had no policy of their own. Referring to an interview
with the French newspaper "Quotidien", abbreviated
versions of which had appeared in some of the British
newspapers, he stated that he had received information
from Paris to the effect that the general impression
had been good.
10. The Prime Minister reported that the policy of resuming relations with Russia was being proceeded with as rapidly as circumstances permitted, and that there was some prospect of negotiations being completed before the meeting of Parliament.
11. After consideration of a Note by the Chancellor of the Exchequer covering a Memorandum by the Treasury on the subject of the proposals for the purchase of the Government holding in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, the Cabinet agreed:

(a) To adopt the view of the Treasury that the proposals for the purchase of the Government holding should be rejected and that the proposed purchasers should be told that on no account would His Majesty's Government part with the shares:

(b) That the Treasury should make enquiry into the allegations of mismanagement of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company with a view to effecting improvements, if they should be necessary:

(c) That the Chancellor of the Exchequer should consult the Treasury as to the precise position of the negotiations and whether these had been broken off or not, with a view to an early announcement of the decision accorded above in (a).
12. The Prime Minister informed his colleagues that a Meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence had been arranged for Monday, February 4th at which he, himself, intended to take the Chair. Since he himself would be too busy to give continuous attention to the Committee he would ask the Lord Chancellor to act for him in normal circumstances.
13. The Cabinet invited the Chancellor of the Exchequer to circulate a Memorandum in regard to the Old age Pensions Act and the removal of the Thrift Disqualification.
14. The Cabinet agreed:—

To meet again on Monday, February 4th, at 3 p.m., the time of the Meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence being advanced to Noon on the same date.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.

28th January, 1924.
CABINET 2 (24).

Meeting to be held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. on Monday, February 4th, 1924, at 3 p.m.

AGENDA.

3 p.m. 1. RUSSIA.

To take note of the communication to the Russian Government.
(Circulated from the Foreign Office, January 31st, 1924).

2. MINISTERS' SALARIES.

Note by the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury
(C.P. 42 (24) - To be circulated).

3. UNEMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING.

Chairman of Committee to report progress.

4. AGRICULTURAL POLICY.

Chairman of Committee to report progress.

5. INDIA - LEAVE OF HIGH OFFICIALS - PROPOSED LEGISLATION.

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India,
(C.P. 39 (24) - already circulated).

6. THE DOCK DISPUTE.

Minister of Labour to report.

7. SCOTTISH LAW OFFICERS.

To be raised by the Prime Minister.

8. COURT APPOINTMENTS.

To be raised by the Prime Minister.

(Signed) K.P.A. HANKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
1st February, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet
held at 10, Downing Street, on MONDAY,
FEBRUARY 4th, 1924, at 3 p.m.

PRESENT:
The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.
Prime Minister and Secretary of
State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).

The Right Hon.
Lord Parmoor of Frieth,
K.C.V.O., K.C., Lord
President of the Council.

The Right Hon.
J.R. Clynes, M.P.
Lord Privy Seal.

The Right Hon.
A. Henderson, Secretary
of State for Home Affairs.

The Right Hon.
Stephen Walsh, M.P.
Secretary of State for War.

Brig.-General The Rt.Hon.
C.B. Thomson, C.B.E., D.S.O.,
Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon.
Sidney Webb, M.P., President
of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon.
Charles Trevelyan, M.P.
President of the Board of
Education.

The Right Hon.
Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P.,
Minister of Labour.

The Right Hon.
Vernon Hartshorn, C.B.E., M.P.,
Postmaster-General.

The Right Hon.
F.W. Cowett, M.P.,
First Commissioner of Works.

The Right Hon.
Viscount Haldane, K.T., C.M.
Lord Chancellor.

The Right Hon.
Philip Snowden, M.P.
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon.
J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary
of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon.
Sir Sydney Clivier, K.C.M.G.,
C.B., Secretary of State
for India.

The Right Hon.
Viscount Chelmsford, G.C.M.G.,
G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.B.,
First Lord of the Admiralty.

The Right Hon.
John Wheatley, M.P.,
Minister of Health.

The Right Hon.
Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister
of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon.
William Adamson, M.P.,
Secretary for Scotland.

C.C. The Right Hon.
J.C. Wedgwood, D.S.O., M.P.,
Chancellor of the Duchy of
Lancaster.

Lieut.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, C.V.O. .........................Secretary.
CABINET 9 (2d).

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1924, at 3 p.m.

RUSSIA. 1. The Prime Minister, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, informed his colleagues of the reasons which had led him, in accordance with what he knew was the general view of the Cabinet, to recognise the Russian Government immediately and without calling a special Meeting to consider the question. Two motives had actuated him. First, he had found that if he delayed matters to consult other Powers it would involve a postponement of three months. Second, he had learned that the representative Congress of Soviets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics dispersed on Saturday, February 2nd. By giving recognition before this meeting it had been possible to secure acceptance not merely by M. Chicherin and the officials of the Foreign Office at Moscow, but by the representatives of the Soviets of all the Russias, who had in fact sent a very cordial telegram of acceptance (Mr Hodgson, No. 12, February 3rd.)

The Cabinet approved the action of the Prime Minister, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in effecting a recognition of the Russian Government and securing its acceptance by the Second Congress of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Telegram to Mr Hodgson, Moscow, No. 10, of
February 1, 1924), and offered their congratulations on the promptitude with which it had been accomplished.
2. Arising out of the discussion on the question of the recognition of Russia, the Cabinet considered briefly the question as to whether, as a general rule, the Government should not submit large questions of foreign policy to Parliament before taking action.

After a short discussion it was agreed —

(a) That in the present case, as there had been the special grounds for urgency mentioned by the Prime Minister (See Conclusion 1), and as two political parties out of three had included the de jure recognition of Russia in their programme of electoral policy, there could be no question of the right of the Government to take action:

(b) That the general question could more conveniently be considered when the Cabinet discussed their attitude towards the Treaty of Lausanne (See later Conclusion 16).
3. The Cabinet had before them a Note by the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, giving particulars of the pooling arrangement adopted in 1917 in regard to Ministers' Salaries, the purposes of the Government Hospitality Fund, and the arrangements for the upkeep of Ministers' official residences and servants (Paper C.P.-42 (24)), as well as a Report by the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Remuneration of Ministers, 1920 (Paper C.P.-42-A (24)).

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That, in view of the fact that the salaries of Ministers are voted by Parliament, the decision as to what these salaries should be ought to rest with Parliament, and, consequently, that there was no object in setting up a Cabinet Committee further to consider the question:

(b) That the Treasury, after consultation with the Ministers occupying official residences, should consider whether more equitable and convenient arrangements could not be made in regard to the upkeep and maintenance of those establishments.
The President of the Board of Trade, as Chairman of the Committee on Unemployment and Housing, made a statement in regard to progress. The Committee were working at high pressure, and hoped, after consideration of the Reports of their Sub-Committees on Unemployment and Housing respectively, to settle their Final Report on Thursday, February 7th. The Report on Housing, however, would be ready on the following day (February 8th.).

The Cabinet were informed that the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Health had arranged to see representatives of the Building Trade Employers Federation and Trade Unions on Wednesday at 10 a.m., and it was desirable, if progress was to be made in regard to the provision of the additional labour required for Housing, that the Ministers concerned should have some general instructions before the meeting.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That before schemes for expenditure in connection with Unemployment and Building came before the Cabinet, the Treasury must have an opportunity of considering them in their financial aspects;

(b) To hold a special Meeting on Wednesday, February 6th, at 3 p.m., when the main question for consideration should be Housing;

(c) That at their meeting on Wednesday, the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Health should ask the representatives of the Building Trade Employers' Federation and Trade Unions what steps they could take to provide the necessary increase in labour on alternative assumptions, such as the building by the Government of 100,000, 150,000 or 200,000 houses.
5. The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, as Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Agricultural Policy, gave the Cabinet an advance summary of the recommendations his Committee proposed to make in regard to Agricultural Policy. Their suggestions included the following:

(i) Regulation of Agricultural Wages:

(ii) (a) Enquiry into agricultural conditions, etc., by County Agricultural Committees and Special Investigators:

(b) Enquiry into the methods of dealing with the marketing conditions described in the Reports of the Linlithgow Committee:

(iii) (a) Schemes for the better utilisation of the Agricultural Credits Act, 1923:

(b) Loans to Bacon Factories, Creameries and Marketing Societies already approved by the Treasury.

The Committee, however, wished to postpone making its recommendations as to the full policy until it had received the suggestions of a number of experts with whom it was in communication. For the moment, any announcement should be confined to recommendations which they were in a position to make definitely. The Committee had enquired into the possibility of a development of the transport of agricultural produce by parcels post, but had encountered difficulties. They were in communication with the Minister of Transport in regard to a Conference on Railway Facilities. They hoped to be able to make progress in three spheres of activity:—first, labourers' wages, to which the Government was committed; stimulating the provision of allotments; housing; and assistance to schemes of drainage and village waterworks; second, in the matter of co-operation: and, third, by the development of County Committees, to whom it was hoped to give the task of making a survey of agriculture within their Counties, coupled with efforts to
arouse public interest in cultivation, and, more particularly, in British agricultural produce. Proposals on the above lines would be cheap in comparison with any subsidy. The Committee recognised that the regulation of wages involved some risk of dismissals of labourers, but the officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries thought this risk to be slight, and palliatives for this might be found in the provision of drainage works, the control of middlemen's "rings" and the increased consumption of British-grown foods. There was no idea of a subsidy in connection with the regulation of wages.

The Cabinet agreed —

To invite the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries to prepare, for the use of the Prime Minister in connection with his statement of Government Policy in the House of Commons, and of the Lord Chancellor and the Lord President of the Council in answering enquiries in the House of Lords, a statement setting forth:

(i) The proposals of the Committee for immediate action:

(ii) The method in which it was proposed to deal with the regulation of wages, e.g., by legislation or, alternatively, by Trade Boards:

(iii) The further suggestions and enquiries which they were following up.
6. Arising out of the discussion on Agricultural Policy, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Lord Chancellor and the Lord President of the Council should confer with the Minister of Health as to the advisability of introducing in the House of Lords the Bill on which the late Government had consulted various local and other authorities concerned in the question of Valuation and Rating Reform:

(b) That the Bill should be examined by the Committee of Home Affairs.
7. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (Paper C.P.-39 (24), the Cabinet agreed --

(a) That the Secretary of State for India should have authority to prepare and circulate a Bill to give effect to the proposal to amend the Government of India Act in such manner as to permit certain high officials in India to take leave to Europe during their term of office:

(b) That the scope of the Bill should, as far as possible, be limited by its title, so as to avoid the raising of other amendments of the Government of India Act:

(c) That the Bill as finally approved should be introduced in the House of Lords.
8. After hearing from the Minister of Labour a report on the present position of the dock dispute, the Cabinet approved the attitude of the Minister of Labour in abstaining from intervention in view of the fact that the representatives of the employers and of the Trade Unions concerned were to meet on the following day.

The Cabinet authorised the Minister of Labour to take such action as he might deem expedient in the event of a breakdown of the present negotiations.
9. After hearing a report from the Prime Minister regarding his enquiries into the constitutional considerations involved in the appointment of the Scottish Law Officers, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) To approve the Prime Minister's decision to appoint as Lord Advocate a member of the Scottish Bar who was outside Party politics and would not have a seat in Parliament;

(b) To take note that the Prime Minister would consult the new Lord Advocate before appointing the Solicitor-General for Scotland, who would be selected on similar principles;

(c) To take note that the Secretary had been instructed to circulate a Memorandum prepared for the Prime Minister by the Lord President of the Court of Session, and that this was to be communicated to the Press;

(d) To concur with the Prime Minister that the new Lord Advocate should be asked to enquire into the question of the patronage pertaining to his office; to work out a plan for dealing with this patronage in future on sound and equitable lines; and, pending the adoption and putting into operation of such a scheme, to make appointments only with the consent of the Prime Minister, who would consult the Secretary for Scotland;

(e) To invite the attention of the Secretary for Scotland to the arrangements for the appointment of Crown Agents and other legal officials in Scotland, which had hitherto been made on purely political grounds.
10. The Prime Minister asked his colleagues to take note of the arrangements he had in contemplation in regard to the filling of the remaining Court appointments, namely, the Lord Chamberlain, Lord Steward, and the Master of the Horse.

He hoped that the present holders of these Offices would be willing to give an undertaking not to speak, vote, or act against the Government in the House of Lords, in which case his intention was to recommend to the King that they should retain their appointments. The constitutional position would be safeguarded if the Prime Minister himself made recommendations in regard to these appointments. As regards the Whips in the House of Lords, he proposed to ask the Leaders of the Party in the House of Lords to content themselves with two instead of the usual three Whips.
11. The Cabinet had under consideration a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India on points of the greatest immediate importance in Indian affairs, (Paper C.P.46(24)), which dealt inter alia with the present position in regard to Gandhi. It was explained that Gandhi has been out of prison for an operation for appendicitis and that the Viceroy was awaiting a report from the Governor of Bombay as to whether he was sufficiently recovered for the question of his future detention to be considered.

The Secretary of State for India read a further Note on the subject of Gandhi, prepared by the India Office, dated 4th February, 1924, copies of which were handed round at the Meeting (Paper C.P.54(24)); as well as a further telegram from the Government of India giving telegraphic correspondence on the subject with the Governor of Bombay.

After discussion based on the information contained in the above documents, the Cabinet agreed —

That the Secretary of State for India should have authority to inform the Government of India that the Cabinet had considered the question, and that they understood that the Government of India was in communication with Gandhi with a view to his release, after giving an undertaking on medical grounds that he will abstain from any political activities for six months; that this course would be consistent with the general view of the Cabinet, to whom the release of Gandhi would be agreeable; but that the Cabinet wished to leave full discretion in the matter to the Viceroy.
12. The Secretary of State for India drew the attention of the Cabinet to the question of the position of Indians in Kenya, which was referred to in his Memorandum on the Points of the Greatest Immediate Importance in Indian Affairs (Paper C.P.46(24)).

The Secretary was instructed to submit this question on the Agenda for the next meeting.
13. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Minister of Labour on the question of the admission of the Vienna State Opera Company for a ten weeks season, and the objections urged against this course by the British Opera Company, the Cabinet agreed —

That the question should be considered in the first instance by the following Cabinet Committee:

- Minister of Labour
- Lord Privy Seal
- Minister of Education
- Secretary for Scotland

who should be asked to report to the Cabinet.
14. The Cabinet agreed—

That the Postmaster General should have authority to set up a Departmental Committee composed as follows:—

Mr. Robert Donald (In the Chair).
One or other of the Law Officers of the Crown.
Mr. F.J. Brown, C.B., C.B.E., of the Post Office.
The Hon. R.H. Brand (or some other business representative with suitable qualifications),
Dr. Eccles

to consider and advise the Department without delay on the policy to be adopted as regards the Imperial Wireless Services, so as to protect and facilitate public interest.
15. The Cabinet agreed:—

(a) That the Secretary should circulate the Conclusions of the Imperial and Imperial Economic Conferences with a view to their consideration during the present week by the Cabinet, more especially from the point of view of the recommendations in favour of Imperial Preference.

(b) To notify the Treasury, Board of Trade, Inland Revenue and Customs Departments, to complete their consultations as soon as possible in order that they might be available for the Cabinet.
16. The Cabinet instructed the Secretary to arrange with the Foreign Office for the circulation of the Treaty of Peace with Turkey, signed at Lausanne on July 24th, 1923 (Cmd.1929), with a view to its early consideration by the Cabinet.
17. The Cabinet agreed —

That a Committee composed as follows:—

Colonel the Right Hon. J.C. Wedgwood, D.S.O., M.P., Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (in the Chair),

Mr W. Graham, M.P., Financial Secretary to the Treasury,

Mr Frank Hodges, M.P., Civil Lord to the Admiralty,

Mr J.J. Lawson, M.P., Financial Secretary to the War Office,

Mr Rhys Davies, M.P., Under-Secretary of State, Home Office,

Mr J.W. Muir, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Pensions,

Mr T. Jones (Secretary) —

should meet to examine the draft Pre-War Pensions Bill and report to the Cabinet as soon as possible what modifications in the Bill (if any) are desirable.
19. The Cabinet agreed -- 

(a) To approve the recommendation made by the Committee of Imperial Defence at a meeting the same morning in favour of the withdrawal from Egypt of one Brigade of Field Artillery:

(b) That the Secretary of State for War should not announce or take action in regard to this withdrawal until authorised by the Prime Minister, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
19. The Cabinet instructed the Secretary to place on the Agenda for their next Meeting the question of the Discharge of Industrial Staff, raised in a Memorandum by the First Commissioner of Works (Paper C.P. - 43 (24)).
20. The Cabinet invited the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Chancellor to discuss the question of introducing the Church of Scotland (Property and Endowments) Bill.

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 4 (24), Conclusion 7.)
21. The Cabinet agreed --

That after each Cabinet Meeting the Secretary should take the instructions of the Prime Minister as to the issue of a Commmunique to the Press in regard to the business discussed.
22. The Cabinet agreed to meet on the following dates:

Wednesday, February 6th, at 3 p.m.
Friday, February 8th, at 3 p.m.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
February 4, 1924.
CABINET 10 (24).

Meeting of the Cabinet, to be held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1924, at 3 p.m.

AGENDA.

3 p.m. 1. HOUSING. Report of Committee. (To be circulated.)

2. DISCHARGE OF INDUSTRIAL STAFF.
   Memo. by First Commissioner of Works
   (Paper C.P.-43 (24)). (Already circulated.)

3. THE AIR FORCE BILL.
   Note by the Secretary of State for Air
   (Paper C.P.-58 (24)). (Circulated herewith.)

4. PROPOSED PARLIAMENTARY BILLS.
   Note by the Secretary, covering List of Bills
   (Paper C.P.-60 (24)). (To be circulated.)

5. NATIONAL DEBT AND TAXATION
   (To be raised by the Prime Minister).
   . . .

(Signed) N.P.A. HANKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
February 5, 1924.
The attached Draft Conclusions are circulated by direction of the Prime Minister. It is requested that any corrections may be communicated to the Secretary not later than 12 Noon on Friday, 8th instant.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.

7th February, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet
held at 10, Downing Street, on WEDNESDAY,
FEBRUARY 6th, 1924, at 3 p.m.

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.,
Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).

The Right Hon. Lord Parmoor of Frieith,

The Right Hon. J.R. Clynes, M.P.,
Lord Privy Seal.

The Right Hon. A. Henderson, Secretary of State for Home Affairs.

The Right Hon. Stephen Walsh, M.P.,
Secretary of State for War.

Brig.-General The Right Hon. Lord Thomson, O.B.E., D.S.O.,
Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon. Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P.,
President of the Board of Education.

The Right Hon. F. Shaw, C.B.E., M.P.,
Minister of Labour.

The Right Hon. Vernon Hartshorn, C.B.E., M.P.,
Postmaster-General.

The Right Hon. F.W. Jewett, M.P.,
First Commissioner of Works.

The Right Hon. T. Balfour, K.T., O.M.,
Lord Chancellor.

The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P.,
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Clive, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
Secretary of State for India.

The Right Hon. Viscount Chelmsford, G.C.M.G.,
G.C.S.I., C.I.E., C.B.E.,
First Lord of the Admiralty.

The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P.,
Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P.,
Secretary for Scotland.

Col. The Right Hon. J.C. Wedgwood, D.S.O., M.P.,
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet,
held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1924, at 3 p.m.

PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS.

1. After hearing a statement from the Prime Minister,
the Cabinet agreed —

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 4
(24), Conclusion 7.)

Tuesday, February 12: The Prime Minister's statement of the Government's Policy,
and Debate thereon.

Wednesday, February 13: Supplementary Estimates.

Thursday, February 14: If, however, the House of Commons wished to continue the discussion on the Prime Minister's Statement of Policy, this should be agreed to: due warning to be given by the Chief Whip to Ministers whose Supplementary Estimates were liable to be taken.

Friday, February 15: Private Members' Bills.
2. After hearing from the Prime Minister a short statement in regard to the Treaty of Lausanne, the Cabinet agreed --

(a) That an early day should be arranged for the discussion of the Treaty of Lausanne Bill in the House of Commons:

(b) That the Prime Minister, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, should inform the House of Commons that there were certain provisions which the Government would prefer to have been dealt with in a different manner, but that the Treaty was an inheritance from their predecessors which it was impossible to amend at the present time; consequently, the Government must take the responsibility for obtaining the acceptance of the Treaty in its present form.
3. After a discussion as to whether the Government should adopt any particular attitude towards the Local Veto (Wales) Bill, to be introduced as a Private Bill by Mr Rhys Davies, M.P., in the House of Commons on Friday, February 15th, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That it was desirable, before finally defining the Government's attitude, to ascertain how far the Bill complied with the principles announced by the Labour Party.

*(NOTE. "It will place the drink traffic under popular control" — Labour Party's Appeal to the Nation, November, 1923.)*

(b) That the Committee of Home Affairs should advise the Cabinet as to the attitude to be adopted.
4. The Cabinet heard from the Minister of Health a statement of the present stage of development of the Government's Housing plans, which had been reached the same morning at a meeting of the Housing Sub-Committee of the Unemployment Committee.

Full particulars are contained in the Minutes of the Housing Sub-Committee.

The Cabinet then heard from the Chancellor of the Exchequer a statement of the financial aspects of the Housing proposals in their present stage.

(The Chancellor of the Exchequer undertook to circulate his statement to the Cabinet.)

After a preliminary discussion on the principles involved, the Cabinet agreed —

That the question of Housing should be remitted to the Unemployment Committee for further examination in the light of the discussion at the Cabinet, with a view to further consideration of the question at the next Meeting of the Cabinet on Friday, February 8th, when it was hoped that the broad lines of the Government's schemes for dealing with Unemployment as well as Housing would be presented as a whole.
5. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the First Commissioner of Works, raising, as a matter of principle, the question of the rights and duties of the Government in regard to the discharge of industrial staff. The question arose out of the case of a fitter in the Houses of Parliament, aged 59, who had been reported in January, 1923, as unfit to carry out his duties, but, in view of his long service in the building, had been retained for a year, until he was 60 years of age, in order that he might receive the best possible conditions of the Superannuation Acts (viz., a gratuity of £120). His fellow workmen claimed that the Department should still continue to carry him on his present job in spite of his disabilities, or place him on light duties at the same rate, and threatened, if he were discharged, to call a stoppage of work, which might extend to all Government buildings and involve all men employed on engineering services, such as heating, lighting, etc. (Paper C.P.-43 (24)).

The Cabinet agreed —

To authorize the First Commissioner of Works to adhere to the practice of his Department to discharge men who were unfit to carry out their duties.
6. The Cabinet had before them a Note by the Secretary of State for Air stating that it was essential that the Auxiliary Air Force and Air Force Reserve Bill should be introduced in the very early future (Paper C.P.-58 (23)).

The Secretary of State for Air made a full statement to the Cabinet in regard to the position of our Air Force for Home Defence, including comparative figures of the position at present and in 1925 and 1928 when the schemes approved by the late Government would mature.

After a discussion which extended to the general question of the Government's policy towards Defence as a whole, the limitation and the avoidance of competition in armaments, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the present position of our Air Force was an inheritance from previous Governments which it was impossible to avoid, and that the Auxiliary Air Force and Air Force Reserve Bill should be introduced:

(b) That the Secretaries of State for War and Air and the First Lord of the Admiralty should, as far as possible, clear up with the Chancellor of the Exchequer any outstanding points in regard to their Estimates, with a view to a special discussion at the Cabinet next week in regard to Defence Policy as a whole:

(c) That the Secretary should circulate to the Cabinet the Confidential Report made to the Imperial Conference of our Air position.
7. The Cabinet had before them a list of the Bills, forwarded by the various Government Departments, which it was desired to introduce in the forthcoming Session of Parliament (Paper C.P.-60 (24)).

The Cabinet agreed —

That the list of Bills should be remitted to the Committee of Home Affairs, with instructions to delete any Bills which were not essential, and to draw up an order of priority, keeping in view the importance of not congesting the Parliamentary Committees with Bills of secondary importance to the exclusion of more important measures. The Committee of Home Affairs should also arrange with the Departments for the drafting of any Bills which the Committee recommended for introduction but which had not yet been completed.
B. After hearing a statement from the Prime Minister, the Cabinet agreed:

(a) To approve in principle the setting up of a Treasury Committee, composed of bankers and representatives of business, commerce, labour, etc., to consider the burden of national debt in relation to the amount of money to be spent on social reform, industry, national defence, etc.

(b) That the Chancellor of the Exchequer should make suggestions to the Cabinet as to the Terms of Reference and composition of the Committee.

(c) That no action should be taken for setting up the Committee until the Cabinet had been consulted as to the points mentioned in (b).
DRESS FOR MINISTERS AT COURT.

9. The Prime Minister read to his colleagues a letter he had received from Lord Stamfordham in regard to the question of dress for Ministers at Court.

The Cabinet agreed —

That, in discussing the matter with Lord Stamfordham, the Prime Minister should endeavour to arrange that Ministers attending Levees should be permitted to wear black evening dress and knee breeches; that a panel of Ministers, who either already possess or are prepared to acquire the necessary uniform, should be formed, from which the three Ministers required to attend the King at Court functions would be drawn; and that Ministers who do not possess a Court uniform should be excused by the King from attending functions at which Court uniform is obligatory.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
February 6, 1934.
CABINET II (24).

Meeting of the Cabinet to be held at No. 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8th, 1924, at 3 p.m.

AGENDA.

3 p.m.

1. UNEMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING. (Paper C.P.-83(24))
   Report of Committee - (To be circulated).

2. AGRICULTURE.
   Draft Statement for Prime Minister, approved by the Agricultural Policy Committee (Paper C.P.-81 (24) - To be circulated).

3. UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.
   Memorandum by the Minister of Labour (Paper C.P.-45 (24) - already circulated).
   Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Paper C.P.-76 (24) - already circulated).
   No.1 Bill (Paper C.P.-79 (24) - To be circulated).

4. NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE.
   Memorandum by the Minister of Health (Paper C.P.-52 (24) - already circulated).

5. IMPERIAL AND IMPERIAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCES.
   THE PROPOSED PREFERENCES.
   Note by the Secretary (Paper C.P.-69 (24) - already circulated).

6. KENYA - POSITION OF INDIANS IN
   Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (Paper C.P.-46 (24) - already circulated).

7. BURNEY AIRSHIP SCHEME.
   (To be raised by the Secretary of State for Air.)

(Signed) M.P.A. HANKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1;
February 7, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, on FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8th. 1924, at 3 p.m.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).


The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.C.M.G., C.B., Secretary of State for India.


The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P., Secretary for Scotland.


The Right Hon. A. Henderson, Secretary of State for Home Affairs.

The Right Hon. Stephen Walsh, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

Brig.-General The Right Hon. Lord Thomson, G.B.E., D.S.O., Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon. Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P., President of the Board of Education.

The Right Hon. Tom Shaw, G.B.E., M.P., Minister of Labour.


Lient-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, G.C.B. Secretary.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1924, at 3 p.m.

RUSSIA.

1. Under instructions from the Prime Minister, a letter from M. Rakovsky to the Prime Minister, dated February 8, 1924, which constituted the official reply of the Union of Russian Soviet Social Republics to the British Note of de jure recognition, was handed round to the Cabinet at the outset of the Meeting.

The Prime Minister, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, drew the attention of his colleagues to the cordial character of this communication, and informed the Cabinet that he intended to send M. Rakovsky a memorandum of the outstanding points between the two Governments, with suggestions as to which should be dealt with direct between the Governments and which should be referred to the Joint Commission to meet in London. M. Rakovsky would then take these himself to Moscow.

The attention of the Cabinet was drawn to the recent communications of Mr Hodgson, the British Chargé d'Affaires at Moscow, in regard to the situation in Russia.

The attention of the Cabinet was also drawn to the claim in M. Rakovsky's letter that the authority of the Russian Government extends "throughout all the territories of the former Russian Empire with the exception of those which have been severed with the consent of the Soviet
Government and in which independent States have been
constituted".

The Cabinet took note, however, that the British
recognition was as stated in the British Note of February
1st.

(NOTE. "They recognise the Union of Socialist
Soviet Republics as the de jure rulers
of those territories of the Old Russian
Empire which acknowledge their authority".
Telegram to Mr Hodgson, No.16,
February 1st, 1924, para.1.)
FOREIGN POLICY. 2. The Prime Minister informed his colleagues that he had received a most cordial letter from M. Poincaré, intimating that the splendid relations between the two Governments would not be disturbed by the recent allegations in the Press in regard to certain decisions at the Peace Conference. The letter, however, was not intended for publication.
3. The attention of the Cabinet was drawn to the following Question to be asked in the House of Commons on Tuesday, February 12th:—

"37. Captain Reginald Terrell, - To ask the Prime Minister whether any members of the Cabinet are connected in any way with Trades Union organisation or work, and whether he proposes to apply to them the same rule affecting Cabinet Ministers in respect to directorship of public Companies".

The Cabinet agreed—

That the Prime Minister should reply to the effect that Cabinet Ministers had already applied to themselves in respect of Trades Union organisation or work the same rule as was applied in respect to directorship of public Companies.
4. After consideration of an Interim Report of the Committee on Unemployment (Paper C.P. - 83 (24)), the Cabinet agreed --

I. To approve the Report of the Committee, the principal recommendations of which are as follows:

(a) To take note of the Committee's view that the most hopeful solution of the Unemployment problem lies in the re-establishment of normal peaceful conditions throughout the world, and, in particular, in the removal of all impediments, whether political or otherwise, to the full reopening of normal trading relations with countries where such relations do not at present exist.

(b) That, subject to the examination of the draft Trade Facilities Bill by the Home Affairs Committee, authority should be given for the introduction of the Bill in the House of Commons as soon as possible after the re-assembling of Parliament.

(c) That the President of the Board of Trade, in consultation with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, should be requested to examine carefully the regulations under which export credits are given, with a view to amending any rules which unnecessarily restrict the beneficial operation of the Export Credits Scheme.

(d) To confirm the decision taken by the late Government to assist the Local Governments in carrying out the Kenya-Uganda railway scheme to the extent of a loan of £8,500,000 free of interest for five years, repayable thereafter by annual instalments spread over a period of 37 years, and to authorise the presentation to the House of Commons of the required Supplementary Estimate.

(e) To request the Secretary of State for the Colonies to submit, for consideration of the Unemployment Committee, his other proposals for undertaking Empire Development works.
(f) To request the Secretary of State for the Colonies to consider the advisability of formally approaching the Government of the Irish Free State with a view to seeing whether that Government would be prepared to take advantage of the Imperial Economic Conference terms.

(g) To take note of the Committee's opinion that the carrying out of a large Housing programme would materially contribute towards relieving unemployment, provided that it does not unduly deplete the resources necessary for general trade development.

(h) That the President of the Board of Trade and the Minister of Labour should be requested to enquire and present a joint report to the Unemployment Sub-Committee on the position and prospects of the above-named and any other basic industries where unemployment has been continuously severe over a long period.

NOTE. The industries referred to are: Shipbuilding, Heavy Engineering, Iron and Steel, Cotton.

(i) That the Minister of Transport should be authorised --

(1) To re-open negotiations with the Authorities interested in the scheme for the Liverpool-Manchester Road on the basis that the Government contribution should be fixed in accordance with terms agreed between the Minister and the Treasury.

(ii) To prepare for the consideration of the Unemployment Committee a programme of Works for the winter 1924-25; such programme to include, among other important undertakings, the North Orbital Road and the new Chertsey Road.

(iii) To prepare for the consideration of the Unemployment Committee a statement as to the practicability of relieving unemployment by means of:

(1) An extension of light railways, particularly in agricultural districts;

(2) Improvements in the existing Canal system.
(j) To request the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in consultation with the Minister of Transport, to examine the general question of the provision of further financial resources for the proposed new programme indicated in (d) above, particularly with a view to determining whether the existing limits within which the Road Fund can operate should be extended, and, if so, in what form Parliamentary sanction for such extension is necessary.

(k) To take note that the Committee propose in the near future to examine suggestions submitted to them by the Minister of Transport (C.U.-386 and C.U.-587) for undertaking a new road and bridge construction programme and also for stimulating employment by the improvement of existing highways.

(l) That, in order that the Unemployment Grants Committee may be able to continue to assist schemes on the loan basis, the Committee may be authorised to exceed the existing limit of £20,000,000 (the total value of such schemes to be assisted in 1923-24) by a further sum of £2,000,000, making £22,000,000 in all.

(m) That the Cabinet should approve in principle the policy of assisting works starting in the Spring and Summer months.

(n) That the Treasury, the Ministry of Health, the Scottish Office and the Unemployment Grants Committee be authorised to formulate proposals regarding the financial provision to be made during 1924-25 in respect of the Committee's various schemes, with a view to the issue of a circular to Local Authorities early in March, 1924.

(o) That the Unemployment Grants Committee be requested to submit for the consideration of the Unemployment Committee a memorandum on the proposals and difficulties of the present schemes under which financial assistance may be given to Public Utility Undertakings.

(p) The Committee understand that the Central Committee on Women's Training and Employment are considering the matter and will shortly be making proposals to the Ministry of Labour on the possibility of finding employment for some of the unemployed women, and these proposals will receive immediate consideration. Financial provision for these schemes will have to be made, and the Committee propose to consider this question in the near future.
(q) That a Committee composed of representatives of the Treasury, Board of Education, the Scottish Education Department and the Ministry of Labour, be authorised to prepare a report for the consideration of the Unemployment Committee on the whole question of Juvenile Unemployment, regard being had to matters such as the extension of the system of Juvenile Unemployment Centres, the lowering of the age limit in the Unemployment Insurance Act, and the raising of the school-leaving age.

(r) That the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries should be authorised to expend a further sum (over and above the £250,000 authorised by the late Government and now exhausted on commitments) in assisting outstanding land drainage works in relief of unemployment, and that work on the schemes be allowed to continue until 30th June, 1924.

(s) That the Scottish Board of Agriculture should be authorised to expend a further sum (over and above the sum of £30,125 already provided) for assisting works of land drainage, farm water supplies and improvements of farm roads in Scotland, and that work on the schemes be allowed to continue until 30th June, 1924.

(t) That the amounts to be provided under (r) and (s) above should be considered as soon as possible by the Unemployment Committee in connection with Departmental proposals referred to in the following paragraph.

(u) Steps have been taken to obtain from all Government Departments concerned with unemployment relief measures statements showing the type of work which each Department would wish to put forward assuming financial provision were available. As soon as the Departmental replies have been received, the Committee propose to consider them in detail, and they hope to be able to submit to the Cabinet a suggested programme of further works to be undertaken in the immediate future, together with estimates of the cost of the work and the amount of employment accruing.
II. To take note that the Secretary of State for India has telegraphed to the Government of India asking them to do everything possible to speed up orders to be placed in this country.

III. That in dealing with the question of Unemployment in the House of Commons on Tuesday, February 12th, the Prime Minister should draw attention to the fact that many of the works, such as road-making, would increase the value of private property in their vicinity, and should utter a warning in general terms that the Government were not prepared to see prices put up unfairly against either the Government or the Local Authorities, and that if this occurred they would not hesitate to deal with the question.

IV. That the question of the North-Western Motorway should be further considered by the Unemployment Committee.

V. That the Chairman of the Committee, in conjunction with the Minister of Labour, should send to the Prime Minister, if possible, before Monday February 11th, an estimate of the expenditure involved in the proposals of the Committee and of the number of men to whom they would give employment.
5. After consideration of the Report of the Unemployment Committee on Housing (Paper C.P.-89 (24)) and a Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Paper C.P.-85 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the general lines of the scheme proposed in the Report of the Unemployment Committee (Paper C.P.-89 (24)) (Appendix I), subject to the following variations:

(a) For the purpose of a general estimate, the figure of 9/- a week to be taken to cover rent and rates.

(Note. The 9/- compares with 8/- in the Report of the Unemployment Committee (Paper C.P.-89 (24), para. 5).

(b) The State share of the subsidy not to exceed an over-all average figure of £9 per house for the number of years eventually agreed upon (see below).

(c) That as regards the number of years during which the State subsidy of £9 would be payable, the Minister of Health, in his negotiations with the Local Authorities, should endeavour to secure a time-limit of 20 years, but, if he cannot obtain acceptance of this figure, he should have power to increase the time-limit. In this contingency he should make the best bargain he can, but in no event should he agree to the payment of the subsidy for more than 40 years.
8. The attention of the Cabinet was drawn, as a matter of urgency, to the recent action of the Minister of Health in rescinding the Order issued by Sir Alfred Mond in 1922 which required the Poplar Board of Guardians, in granting out-door relief, not to exceed the prescribed scale.

The Minister of Health gave the Cabinet a full account of the circumstances in which he had decided to rescind the Order, and the Lord Chancellor made a statement on the legal aspects of the question.

From these statements it was clear that the Order issued by Sir Alfred Mond in 1922 had for some time been a dead letter, and that powers for surcharging the Guardians existed under very ancient legislation.

The Cabinet agreed —

That, in view of the great public interest and the anxiety in financial circles which, in ignorance of the facts, had been aroused by this decision, the Minister of Health, in consultation with the Lord Chancellor on the legal aspects of the question, should prepare a statement for issue to the Press at the earliest possible moment, and preferably the same evening.

(See Appendix II.)
7. Arising out of the question referred to in the previous Conclusion, the Prime Minister made a strong appeal to his colleagues not to make public announcements on questions of great public interest, particularly when they were of a controversial character, without previous consultation with the Prime Minister, who would consider whether it was necessary to consult the Cabinet.
AGRICULTURAL POLICY.

5. After consideration of the proposals suggested by the Agricultural Policy Committee for announcement in Parliament by the Prime Minister (Paper C.P.-81 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the proposals as a basis for the Prime Minister's statement of Policy in regard to Agriculture (Appendix X.)
9. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Minister of Health on the subject of National Health Insurance (Paper C.P.-52 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

That the following Committee should be appointed —

The Minister of Health
The Secretary of State for the Colonies,
The Secretary for Scotland,

with power to add other Ministers (among whom the Financial Secretary to the Treasury should be included) —

to examine the questions raised in the Minister of Health's Memorandum (Paper C.P.-52 (24)), with power to consult the various authorities concerned and to submit definite proposals to the Cabinet.
10. The Cabinet had before them the following documents relating to Unemployment Insurance:

A Memorandum by the Minister of Labour, setting forth the points which call for immediate action in Unemployment Insurance, and other points which will need attention during the next Session (Paper C.P.-45 (24));

A Memorandum by the Minister of Labour, covering the draft of a Bill for abolishing the three weeks' "gap" in Unemployment Benefit (Paper C.P.-78 (24));

A Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Paper C.P.-78 (24));

A Memorandum by the Minister of Labour (Paper C.P.-86 (24)).

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) To approve the introduction in Parliament, as soon as it meets, of a Bill for abolishing the three weeks' "gap" in Unemployment Benefit;

(b) That the Prime Minister, in his Statement of Policy in the House of Commons on Tuesday, February 12th, should make a statement to the effect that the Government, after very careful consideration, had come to the conclusion that the existing restrictions on the grant of unconnected benefit to certain classes of applicants, namely, single men and women residing with relatives, married women, short-time workers and aliens with less than 10 years residence, were illogical and indefensible. Since the whole of the money both for covenanted and unconnected benefit was obtained under a contributory scheme, and the liability to pay contributions whilst in insurable employment was the same for all, the test of "need", which admittedly could not be applied to covenanted benefit, could not justifiably be applied to unconnected benefit. As the restrictions had been imposed by administrative action, the Government intended to remove them by administrative action. They intended, however, in no way to depart from the essential requirement that no-one is to receive unconnected benefit who is not "genuinely seeking whole-time employment and unable to obtain it".
IMPERIAL AND Economic. The question of the proposed Imperial Preferences, dealt with in the Summary of the Conclusions of the Imperial Conference (Cmd. 1990), included in Paper C.P.-16-24, was adjourned for consideration at a later Meeting of the Cabinet, when it was hoped that the views of the Departments concerned would be available.

Reference: Cabinet 9 (24), Conclusion 15.
12. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India on the points of greatest importance in India, which included, inter alia, a summary of the position in regard to Indians in Kenya (Paper C.P. 46 (24), pages 5 and 6).

The Cabinet were informed that the Secretaries of State for India and the Colonies had been in communication on the question, that the immigration question was smoothed over for the moment, but that on the constitutional question some need for consideration might possibly arise after the Government of India Colonial Committee had been appointed, if they so desire.
13. The Secretary of State for Air informed the Cabinet that he was not satisfied with the Barney Airship Scheme as adopted by the late Government; that £400,000 had been included in the Estimates for carrying out this Scheme; that he had written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer asking if this figure could be retained in the Estimates for airships; and that he hoped at an early date to be in a position to submit an alternative scheme under which airships would be developed on rational lines rather than by giving a subsidy and a monopoly to a public company.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the Secretary of State for Air should circulate a Memorandum on the subject and should send an advance copy to the First Lord of the Admiralty, whose views could then be laid before the Cabinet.
14. The Prime Minister informed the Cabinet that Mr Asquith, who had been approached by the Government Whip through the medium of the Liberal Whip, had not responded favourably to the proposal that the Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means should be selected from the Liberal Party. He (the Prime Minister) had now instructed the Chief Whip to make it clear to Mr Asquith that the aim of the Government was to approach towards a non-Party appointment and to try and arrange that every Party in the House should have some representative in the Chair who would be, as it were, training for the post of Speaker. The Conservative Party had two men who were trained, and his proposal would enable the Liberals, by nominating the Deputy Chairman, to train some Member of their Party, leaving to the Government Party what was essential, pending the development of a completely non-Party appointment, namely, the Chairman, who had the duty of fixing the time for Private Bills.

If Mr Asquith did not respond favourably to this further approach, he proposed to ascertain whether the Conservative Party would like to nominate a Chairman, provided that they were willing to make an acceptable nomination.

Chief Whip

-19-
15. The Prime Minister informed the Cabinet that since the appointment of the present Minister of Transport he had ascertained that, as the result of the Geddes Report on National Economy, the status of that Ministry had been reduced and it had not been presided over by a separate Minister, but had been supervised by a Parliamentary Secretary, who had worked under the nominal authority of some other Minister.

The Cabinet were informed that the present occupant had taken the Oath as "Minister of Transport".

The Prime Minister asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in concert with another Minister whom the Prime Minister would himself nominate later, to enquire into the question and make recommendations to him.
16. The Lord Chancellor drew attention to the Conclusions reached by the Committee of Home Affairs the same morning (H.A.O. 1st Conclusions (24)) (which had been circulated immediately before the meeting) making recommendations as to the order of priority in which the Bills submitted by the various Government Departments should be dealt with in the House of Commons.

The Cabinet agreed —

To consider this List at a future Meeting.
17. The Cabinet agreed —

To meet on Tuesday next, February 12th, at 12 Noon, for the purpose of considering such questions of urgency as the Prime Minister might wish to bring before them.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

February 8, 1924.
Housing.

Report of Unemployment Committee.

(1) The Committee have received Reports from the Housing Sub-Committee (C.U. 632 and U.U. 644) and after consideration of those Reports at their meetings on the 5th February, 1924 (C.U. 74th Conclusions) and the 7th February, 1924 (C.U. 75th Conclusions) have decided to present the following Report.

(2) Requirements.

The estimate of the number of houses required is a matter of some difficulty but clearly it must provide for three things - normal expansion of population, the overtaking of the accumulated shortage and the replacement of unsatisfactory houses.

For England and Wales the number of houses required to meet ordinary growth may be put at about 75,000. The Committee consider that a modest estimate of the accumulated shortage of small houses would be 300,000. As regards the replacement of bad houses, it may be estimated that there are 6,000,000 small houses in England and Wales and that the normal life of a house could not properly be put at more than 100 years. As, however, a large proportion of these houses, built during the period of rapid industrial
development, have still a considerable life, it would not be necessary at once to put in hand the full programme for the renewal of 60,000 houses per annum.

The Committee propose to adopt the following figures as representing an annual programme for a period of ten years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Houses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To make good the accumulated shortage</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide for the normal expansion of population</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To provide for renewals</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assuming that 50,000 houses per annum were required for Scotland, the total annual programme, for 10 years, would be 500,000 houses.

The problem may, therefore, be defined broadly as being to supply over a period say, of 15 years some 2,375,000 houses i.e. to secure in each of the fifteen years an average of, say 151,000 houses, which can be let at a rent which the workers who erect the houses can afford to pay from their wages.

In this connection it may be observed that the Chamberlain Scheme fails to meet the latter condition for under that Scheme the houses are to a large extent being built for sale and where they are being built by local authorities for letting, the rents charged are ordinarily too high for the ordinary worker.
(4) **Difficulties to be overcome.**

The primary difficulties to be overcome in carrying out a scheme of this kind are the shortages in labour and in certain kinds of material:

(a) **Labour.**

At the present time it is perfectly clear that there are not sufficient skilled men in the building industry to ensure the carrying out of a programme of the magnitude indicated. This no doubt results in a large measure from the instability of conditions in the building industry in the past. The President of the Building Trades Employers Federation stated a few days ago that in 1908 there were from 800,000 to 900,000 men employed in the industry, and that this number had been reduced to about half. In fact, with a greater population in 1924 than in 1908, the number of men in the industry was 450,000 less than it was 15 years ago. He was of opinion that the building trade could place at once 100,000 additional skilled workers to cope with the contract work offered. He considered that for 200,000 houses an additional 300,000 men would be required. These figures are probably on the high side but assuming that the demand for labour for commercial and other work than housing remains constant, it will certainly be
necessary to introduce into the industry a large number of additional skilled men.

(b) Materials.

The position as regards materials is not quite so serious though in the matter of bricks some considerable expansion of productive capacity would be required to guarantee the erection of 200,000 houses a year. The existing plant in the country would supply all the light castings and cement required and there is not likely to be any difficulty in regard to a supply of timber.

(5) Financing the scheme.

The Committee are convinced that arrangements must be made to secure that the houses provided can be let at rents roughly equivalent to those paid by the working classes before the war. Thus rents would vary with the locality but for the purpose of a general estimate the figure of 8/- a week to cover rent and rates may be taken. On the basis of an average cost of a house of £500, the annual loss would be, approximately £16 a year for 80 years or £38,000,000 for the total programme of 2,375,000 houses. If higher rents were attainable on the basis of letting the houses to those workers for whom they are intended, the total loss might be somewhat reduced. If the support of the local authorities to a policy of letting houses at a rent of the kind contemplated is to be secured, generous arrangements will have to be made as to the share of the loss to be borne by the State. This would have to be a matter of negotiation with the local authorities.
It is, of course, important in the interest of economy and proper management that the local authorities should have a definite financial interest in the scheme.

(6) **Broad conditions which the scheme must satisfy.**

The broad conditions which must be met if a scheme is to be a success are as follows:—

(a) The supply over a long period of such a number of houses as will overcome shortage, keep pace with normal demand and replace unsatisfactory dwellings by healthy houses.

(b) The supply of these houses at such rents that the ordinary worker will be able to live in them.

(c) Security for the workmen, builders and manufacturers of material who are asked to expand the resources of the industry, and for the local authorities who will be responsible for giving effect to the scheme.

(d) Protection against profiteering.

Every practicable step must be taken to guard against the great increase of prices which brought the Addison scheme to a standstill and in fact, rings of all kinds whether manufacturers, builders or workers must be prevented. The full co-operation of labour, builders, manufacturers and local authorities must be assured.
(7) Arrangements to be made with various interests.

(a) Labour. It will be necessary to approach the Unions to secure agreement in the adoption of the scheme to supply the labour necessary in increasing quantities to ensure that there will be no slacking and to guarantee that the launching of the scheme will not be used as a means of obtaining wages they would not have been able to secure but for the Housing Scheme. It will be possible to assure the representatives of the Unions that it is the intention to provide for a scheme which will guarantee them against unemployment for at least ten years, provided houses are delivered according to a reasonable timetable. It will also be possible to assure them that a primary object of the scheme is the provision of houses at rents which the ordinary workman will be able to pay.

There are two ways by which the number of men in the industry can be increased:

(a) By promoting men already in the industry to be craftsmen; and,

(b) By the addition of apprentices.

It should be practicable to secure with goodwill the addition of an appreciable number of craftsmen, possibly 25,000 by the promotion of labourers. The apprenticeship question is one of very great importance for the condition of the industry at present is that it is not providing for its ordinary growth. It is estimated that the number of apprentices in the trade at present does not exceed 21,000, while even under existing rules three or four times that number would be permitted. This question is already engaging the attention of a Committee of the Employers and Operatives, and it should
be practicable to secure a satisfactory solution. 

(b) Builders. The builders are again clearly interested in the guarantee of a definite programme covering a number of years, and they will require to be assured on this point if they are to make the necessary expansion of their arrangements and undertake to accept apprentices in large numbers. The importance of preventing inflation of cost through undue profits or otherwise will have to be impressed upon the builders. The fact that the Local Authorities who will be responsible in the main for carrying out the scheme will have the direct financial interest in the expenditure will serve as a valuable check against undue increasing of tender prices. It will be necessary, however, for the Departments to be able to assist Local Authorities in this matter, and the Departments should keep detailed records of costs which will enable checks to be applied. It may further be necessary to have in reserve a power of direct building by the State.

(c) Manufacturers of Materials. The manufacturers of materials also will be asked in view of the large programme to take steps to increase their production. So far as practicable they should adopt methods of standardisation and aim at low prices by mass production. It may be possible to secure some definite agreement on the subject of profits, and for this purpose it may be necessary in the near future to undertake costing investigations by accountants and other experts. In any event definite statutory powers must be taken providing for severe penalties against profiteering. It may even be necessary in the last resort to take powers to take over works closed down by an owner or to put down plant if supplies prove inadequate.
(d) **Local Authorities.** With the Local Authorities it will be necessary to obtain assurances of whole-hearted co-operation in the scheme, and especially acceptance of the principle that the houses are to be provided at a rent which the workman who builds the houses can afford to pay. This will probably in the main turn on a question of the amount of the Exchequer contribution and, as suggested above, it is proposed that this should be settled on lines which would be generous to the Local Authorities while giving them a direct incentive to economy.

(8) **Immediate steps to be taken.** An outline of a scheme which the Committee consider will fulfill all conditions and enable the programme to be carried out with success is set out below. Preliminary conferences have already taken place with representatives of the building trade employers and employed. Meetings with representatives of building materials manufacturers are being arranged and at a later stage negotiations with the Local Authorities will be undertaken.

**Outline of Legislation necessary for Scheme.**

i. **Provide for Immediate extension of the Chamberlain scheme from October, 1925 to October, 1928.**

This will start the scheme with a straight run of 5½ years under known and generous subsidy conditions. Provision would also be made for modifying the amount of assistance and for giving the assistance at different rates for say three categories of districts; assistance at highest rate to be given in districts considered most necessitous according to some tests. The modification of the amount of assistance would be made on the principle of so adjusting.
the annual Exchequer subsidy that the local authority would be able to let the houses at a low rent without throwing an undue burden on the rates while retaining the local authority's direct financial interest in their expenditure. It is proposed that the State share of the subsidy should not exceed an over-all average figure of £ per house for years. Such increased assistance would require to be given for all houses not contracted for or the construction of which was not started at the time the scheme was announced.

ii. Provide that if at the end of 1927 an average production exceeding 120,000 houses a year taken over for 2 years 1926 and 1927 had been reached for England and Wales and an appropriate figure for Scotland, Government assistance shall be continued for 3 years further from October, 1928, i.e., to October, 1931, but the Government in 1928 shall have the right to revise the rate of assistance in the light of the existing circumstances. This will make the continuance of Government assistance dependent on the industry delivering the goods and will be an incentive to local authorities to administer the scheme. The builders will have to deliver the houses at a reasonable price, the material makers must provide for the additional material required and the men will have to have arranged for the expansion of the personnel. If the scheme is killed by builders or material manufacturers or others inflating the price the Government will withdraw their assistance.
It is to be observed that the 120,000 to be aimed at at this stage is a minimum. In actual practice all the agencies concerned, the local authorities, the building industry and the suppliers of materials would make certain of the continuance of the scheme by exceeding, perhaps by a considerable margin, the minimum required.

iii. Provide further that if at the end of 1930 a production of not less than 150,000 houses a year, for England and Wales, and a proper figure for Scotland, has been reached over the two years 1929 and 1930 assistance will be available for a further 3 years to October, 1934, but the Government shall again have a right to review the rate of assistance for the ensuing 3 years.

iv. Provision to be made for a further term of 5 years provided that houses are built in numbers sufficient to secure that the average production of 150,000 a year for the fifteen years is obtained in Great Britain as a whole. The precise figures to be inserted in the Bill as regards Scotland need to be further considered and some adjustment as regards England and Wales may be required when fuller information is available as to the output of the industry and the rate of probable expansion.

v. Provide definite powers for dealing with profiteering in the event of the plan of making Government assistance dependent upon output failing to secure the provision of materials at reasonable prices.

(Signed on behalf of the Committee).

SIDNEY WEBB
Chairman.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
8th February, 1924.
The action of the Minister of Health in deciding to rescind the special Poplar Order of 1922 and to remit any surcharge made under it appears to have given rise to considerable misunderstanding. The Order in question was issued under Section 52 of the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834, and its effect was to limit the amount of outdoor relief to the scale laid down in Regulations issued under the Local Authorities (Financial Provisions) Act, 1921, for governing claims upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. The position which the Minister discovered was this:

"The Local Authorities (Financial Provisions) Act, 1921, had been superseded by the Local Authorities (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1923, and the scale prescribed by the Regulations under the former Act had been replaced by a statutory flat rate prescribed by the Act of 1923; this had not been interfered with. Hence the Order of 1922, though not rescinded, had, in fact, become obsolete, and experience had shown that it was in practice unworkable.

The results of the rescission are not all that appears to be commonly supposed. The action taken does not involve or imply any alteration in general Poor Law policy. The Poplar Board of Guardians will remain in exactly the same position as every other Board of Guardians in the country, and will be subject to precisely the same limitations and restrictions. Any expenditure on relief which is excessive or otherwise unlawful, whether incurred by the Poplar or any other Board of Guardians, will continue to be liable to disallowance and surcharge. Moreover, the claims of the Poplar Board of Guardians upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund will be restricted as before to the prescribed flat rate, and any expenditure in excess of that flat rate will fall upon Poplar alone."
CABINET.

Agricultural Policy.

Note by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

I circulate herewith for the information of my colleagues the proposals of the Agricultural Policy Committee suggested for announcement in Parliament by the Prime Minister.

N.B.

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries,

7th February 1924.
AGRICULTURE.

Proposals suggested for announcement in Parliament.

1. A definite statement that neither protective duties on food nor subsidies on the lines hitherto suggested can be adopted. Agriculture must be conducted on an economic basis without artificial supports from the public purse.

2. Wages. Machinery must be set up to provide for the payment of reasonable rates of wages to agricultural labourers. Wages must be a first charge on the industry and the Government cannot acquiesce in the continuation of a system under which the current rate of wages is fixed on the basis of what the least efficient members of the industry can afford to pay.

3. Co-operation. The Government desires to extend and develop co-operative organisations for the purchase and sale of agricultural requirements and produce on the lines recommended by the Linlithgow Committee. In particular, Parliament will be asked to provide funds for the purpose of making loans to assist in the establishment of bacon factories, creameries, egg collecting depots, fruit grading stations, cheese factories, slaughter-houses, auction marts, etc. It is proposed to appoint an Advisory Committee to the Ministry to consider and report on applications for loans.

4. Credit. The Government is examining the question whether further facilities should be provided for granting credit to farmers for working capital either under the Agricultural Credits Act or otherwise.

5. County Agricultural Committees. The Government proposes to make more use of these Committees, possibly on a reconstituted basis, for the promotion and development of agriculture in their districts. The Committees will be invited to use their influence to raise the standard of farming, to call public attention both to cases of new and successful enterprises by progressive
farmers and to any cases in which land is being mismanaged or misused; to advise as to the conduct of a campaign of publicity and propaganda to advertise British agricultural produce; to interest the general public in agricultural problems; to promote the fuller use of the educational and advisory service, and to assist in organising co-operative enterprises and better marketing facilities as well as developing schemes for the improvement of transport facilities, the provision of electrical power and light, and the revival of village life.

6. Allotments. The Government is anxious to assist and develop the allotment movement both in the urban areas and in those country villages in which insufficient provision is made at present for the needs of the population. The responsible Local Authorities will be urged and stimulated to make the fullest possible use of their powers in that direction.

7. Small Holdings. The schemes for the settlement of ex-service men on the land will be pressed forward and completed. With regard to rents, the Government recognises that in many cases rents were fixed three or four years ago when agricultural conditions were more favourable than they are at present and that consequently the original level of rents cannot be maintained. A thorough and systematic revision of rents is being carried out by consultation between the Ministry of Agriculture, the County Councils and the small-holders themselves, and in more than half of the counties in England and Wales this revision has been completed and a settlement satisfactory to all parties has been arrived at. The Government will make it their business to see that the revision of rents in the remaining counties shall be continued and completed with the minimum of delay.

The Government will also consider whether the scheme under which small-holdings for non-service men, which was in operation before the War, should not be revived in order to provide for the needs of many men all over the country who have the necessary knowledge and experience to become successful
small-holders, but who have been debarred for the last ten years from any opportunity of obtaining land.

8. **Research and Education.** The Government will lose no opportunity of developing and extending the provision for education and scientific research in the belief that the success of agriculture depends more than anything else on the personal qualities of those who occupy and cultivate the land of the country. The Government believes that while reasonable provision has already been made for the investigation of most of the purely scientific problems affecting agriculture, there is great need for more effort to bring home to the ordinary working farmers the lessons that science can teach, and to do more in the direction of practical research and experiments in connection with the economic problems of the industry. Further, it is suggested that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Linlithgow Committee, it would be advisable to attach marketing officers to the Agricultural Colleges, who could assist and advise farmers as to marketing problems. Funds could also be usefully spent in making grants to assist in the formation and maintenance of Farmers Account Keeping Societies, whereby bodies of farmers would be encouraged to combine to employ an accountant to keep their books on up-to-date lines.

The Government is examining all these possibilities of economic research and education and will consider whether further funds should not be provided for the purpose.

It may be added that the Secretary for Scotland has already appointed a Committee to advise on the organisation and finance of agricultural education and research in Scotland.

9. **Drainage.** It has been estimated that not less than 1,000,000 acres of land is seriously waterlogged and is consequently producing much less than it could if it was properly drained. The Government proposes to increase the provision of funds for drainage schemes and to extend the time during which such schemes can be carried out.
SECRET.

CABINET 12(24).

Meeting to be held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1. on Tuesday, February 12th, 1924 at 12 Noon.

AGENDA.

12 Noon. 1. PROPOSED PARLIAMENTARY BILLS.

H.A.C. 1st Conclusions (24)

2. WAR CHARGES VALIDITY BILL.

Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture, C.P. 99 (24)
Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade, C.P. 100 (24)
Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade, C.P. 77 (24)

3. WASHINGTON HOURS CONVENTION.

Memorandum by the Minister of Labour, C.P. 96 (24)

4. JUVENILE UNEMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE.

Composition of,

5. LABOUR AND SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL (PRIVATE NOTICE QUESTION)

(Signed)

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.

February, 1924.
The Prime Minister has instructed me to notify Ministers that among the questions he will raise at tomorrow's meeting of the Cabinet is the classification of Bills submitted by the Home Affairs Committee. (Paper No. H.A.C. 1st Conclusions (24) - already circulated).

(Signed) M. P. A. HANKEY.

Secretary, Cabinet.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
11th February, 1924.
The Prime Minister has instructed me to notify Ministers that among the questions he will raise at tomorrow's meeting of the Cabinet is the classification of Bills submitted by the Home Affairs Committee. (Paper No. H.A.C. 1st Conclusions (24) - already circulated).

(Signed) M. P. A. HANKEY.
Secretary, Cabinet.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
11th February, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, on TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12th, 1921, at 12 Noon.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).

Right Hon. Lord Parmoor of Frieth, G.C.V.O., K.C., Lord President of the Councils.


Right Hon. A. Henderson, Secretary of State for Home Affairs.

Right Hon. Stephen Walsh, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

General The Right Hon. Lord Thomson, C.B.E., G.S.O., Secretary of State for Air.

Right Hon. Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P., President of the Board of Education.

Right Hon. Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P., Minister of Labour.


The Right Hon. E.V., Jowett, M.P., First Commissioner of Works.


The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.O.M.G., C.B., Secretary of State for India.


The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P., Secretary for Scotland.


CABINET 12(24).

SECRET.

COPY NO. 1.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1924, at 12 Noon.

1. The Prime Minister informed his colleagues that it was probable that the House of Commons would rise early the same day, and that the Debate on his statement was likely to continue throughout Wednesday and Thursday, February 13th and 14th.

After consideration of a Note submitted to the Prime Minister by the Chief Whip, the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the following order in which the Chief Whip put down the Supplementary Estimates:

3. Class 2. Vote 34 ............ Secretary for Scotland.
4. Class 7 Vote 2 ............ Scottish Board of Health.
5. Class 1. Vote 3 ............ Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens.
6. Revenue Departments.
   Vote 3 ......................... Post Office.

The above order to hold for the first day of the Supplementary Estimates if the Debate on the Prime Minister's statement continued on Thursday, February 14th.
2. The attention of the Cabinet was drawn, as a matter of urgency, to the following Private Notice Question to be asked the same afternoon:—

"Sir William H. Davison: To ask the Prime Minister whether he can assure the House that neither he nor any member of the Government are any longer in any way connected with the Labour and Socialist International, commonly known as the Sozialistische Arbeiter Internationale, the decisions of which on all international questions are by its constitution binding on the representatives of affiliated bodies."

The Cabinet agreed —

That the Prime Minister should give the following answer:—

"In accordance with the constitution of the International, which is not commonly known, however, as the Sozialistische Arbeiter Internationale except for purposes of prejudice, no member of a Government can serve as a Member of its Committees.

The Labour Party is affiliated to this body and will carry out its obligations as stated in the programmes of the Party issued to the electors at the time of elections. The obligations of a Society affiliated to the International are similar to those undertaken by States on becoming Members of the League of Nations. The affiliation is purely voluntary and can be terminated at any time should necessity arise."

-2-
3. The attention of the Cabinet was invited, as a matter of urgency, to a question to be asked in Parliament on the following day as to whether the Government proposed to introduce legislation amending the Representation of the People Act to secure that Members shall not be elected on a minority vote.

The Cabinet agreed -

That the reply should be non-committal.
4. The Minister of Labour informed the Cabinet that, following the breakdown of direct negotiations between the parties concerned in the dock dispute, he had invited a joint meeting of employers and employed to take place at the Ministry of Labour at 2-30 the same day. He proposed to open the meeting with a few words, after which everything would be done to explore the possibilities of a settlement.

In this connection attention was drawn to the following Private Notice Question to the Prime Minister:

"Mr Renner:— To ask the Prime Minister whether his attention has been called to the imminence of the Dock Strike due to start on the 16th February; whether he is aware that negotiations in this matter are being seriously prejudiced by the answer given by the Minister of Health to the deputation from the Poplar Board of Guardians; and whether he will give an assurance that promises of full maintenance to people engaged in industrial disputes will not be sanctioned."

The Cabinet agreed—

(a) That the Prime Minister should reply to the Private Notice Question to the following effect:—

"The answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative and to the second part in the negative. With regard to the last part, the Government will act in accordance with the law as laid down by Statute and by the findings of the Courts."

(b) That a Committee, composed as follows:—

The Home Secretary (in the Chair),
The Secretary of State for the Colonies,
The Secretary of State for War,
The Secretary of State for Air,
The First Lord of the Admiralty,
The Minister of Transport,

should meet at the Home Office the same evening at 6 p.m. for the purpose of enquiring into the emergency organisation in the event of a strike.
5. The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, as Chairman of the Committee on Pre-War Pensions, informed the Cabinet that his Committee was about to report in favour of the Pre-War Pensions Bill of the previous Government.

The Cabinet agreed --

That the question should be discussed at their next meeting.
8. The Cabinet agreed —

That the President of the Board of Trade should be authorised to reply to a Question in Parliament in regard to the Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, to the effect that the Bill would be introduced either in the House of Commons or in another place.
7. The Minister of Health drew the attention of the Government to a question put down to the Prime Minister on the following day as to whether he proposed to advise the setting up of a Royal Commission to investigate the Medical Service under the National Health Insurance Act and kindred matters.

The Prime Minister said that if the question was put he would ask for it to be postponed for a week.
8. The Cabinet agreed —

To meet on the following day, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13th, at 9-30 p.m. in the Prime Minister's Room at the House of Commons.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

February 12, 1924.
CABINET 13(24)

Meeting to be held in Prime Minister’s Room, House of Commons, on Wednesday, February 13th 1924, at 9.30 p.m.

AGENDA.

9.30 p.m. 1. PROPOSED PARLIAMENTARY BILLS.
   (H.A.O. 1st Conclusions (24)
   Minute 1. — already circulated)

2. THE LOCAL VETO (WALES) BILL.
   (H.A.O. 1st Conclusions (24)
   Minute 2. — already circulated)

3. WAR CHARGES (VALIDITY) BILL
   Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade covering Draft Bill. (C.P.77(24) — already circulated).
   Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.
   (C.P.99(24) — already circulated).
   Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade.
   (C.P.100(24) — already circulated).

4. PRE-WAR PENSIONS.
   Report of Committee.
   (C.P.103(24) — to be circulated).

5. COMPOSITION OF JUVENILE UNEMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE.
   Ref: Cab.12(24) Conclusion 4 (q)

6. WASHINGTON HOURS CONVENTION.
   Memorandum by the Minister of Labour
   (C.P.26(24) — already circulated).

7. THE DOCK DISPUTE.
   (Minister of Labour to report on situation)

Whitehall Gardens,
February 12th 1924.

(Signed) M.P.A. HANKEY.
Secretary. Cabinet.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Prime Minister's Room at the House of Commons, on WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13th, 1924, at 9.30 p.m.

PRESENT:


The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. Stephen Walsh, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

The Right Hon. Sir Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P., President of the Board of Education.

The Right Hon. Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P., Minister of Labour.


The Right Hon. J.R. Clynes, M.P., Lord Privy Seal, (In the Chair).


The Right Hon. J.R. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.C.M.G., C.B., Secretary of State for India.


The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P., Secretary for Scotland.


1. In accordance with the recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs (H.A.C. 1st. Conclusions (24) 1) in regard to the order of priority of the Bills which the various Ministers desire to introduce in the present Session of Parliament, the Cabinet agreed --

(a) To give their general approval to the introduction of the Bills named in Lists (A1), (A), (B) and (C) (Appendix I.) subject to the usual examination of the Bills in detail by the Home Affairs Committee:

(b) As regards the Bills in List (A), as a matter of extreme urgency, to authorise the introduction in the House of Commons of the following Bills as soon as possible after the re-assembling of Parliament:

**Trade Facilities Bill.**

**Diseases of Animals (No.1) Bill.**

**Local Authorities (Emergency Provisions) Bill.**

**Poor Law Emergency Provisions Continuance Bill.**

**War Charges Validity Bill.**

**Unemployment Insurance (No.1) Bill.**
These Bills to be introduced in the form of the drafts recently circulated to the Cabinet, subject to any drafting alterations or other modifications in detail which may be found necessary:

(c) That the priority of the Burney Airship Scheme Bill should stand over pending the Cabinet decision on whether or not the Bill is to be proceeded with.

In approving the recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs as stated above, the Cabinet, while realising the objections to introducing a very large number of Government measures which might have to be abandoned for want of Parliamentary time, agreed that the List of Bills considered by the Committee of Home Affairs could not be regarded as excluding the introduction of such other Bills as might from time to time be found necessary. (See below, Conclusions 2 to 5.)
2. Arising out of the discussion of Government Bills (Conclusion 1 above) the attention of the Cabinet was drawn to the fact that if the present Government intended to implement the pledges of its predecessors in regard to Irish Compensation and Land Purchase, a Bill would require to be introduced at an early date to guarantee bonds to be issued in connection with the land purchase scheme in the Irish Free State.

After hearing from the Secretary of State for the Colonies an account of the present state of the negotiations in regard to the Boundary of Northern Ireland, and some particulars of the state of tension existing in the neighbourhood of the Boundary between the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland, the Cabinet agreed:

That the Secretary of State for the Colonies should be responsible for bringing before the Cabinet the question of a Bill in connection with the Land Purchase Scheme at the moment when he judged this expedient.
3 Arising out of the discussion on Government Bills (Conclusion 1 above) the Cabinet agreed:

That the Lord Chancellor and the Secretary for Scotland should concert an announcement to be made by them in both Houses of Parliament to the effect that the Government are considering favourably the introduction of the Church of Scotland (Property and Endowments) Bill, but require time to examine it in detail.
4 Arising out of the discussion of Government Bills (Conclusion 1 above) the Cabinet agreed:-

That the First Commissioner of Works should discuss with the Minister of Health the desirability of bringing in a Bill with a view to removing injustices in regard to the raising of rents, and that, if necessary, a Memorandum on the subject should be prepared for consideration by the Cabinet.
5. Arising out of the discussion on Government Bills (Conclusion 1 above) the Cabinet agreed:

That the Lord Chancellor should have authority to introduce in the House of Lords the Criminal Justice Bill and the Administration of Justice Bill.

(N.B. These are included in the List in Appendix I.A.)
6. In accordance with the recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs in regard to the attitude to be adopted by the Government towards a Private Bill to be introduced by Mr R.H. Morris, M.P., in the House of Commons on February 15th, to deal with the question of Local Veto in Wales, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the House of Commons should be reminded of the terms of the pledge given by the Labour Party at the recent General Election:

"That it will place the drink traffic under popular control",

that the Government should not oppose the Second Reading of Mr Morris's Bill, but at the same time would not put on their Whips in favour of the Bill, and that the Government should consider their attitude towards the Bill when it went into Committee.

(b) That the Lord Privy Seal should be responsible for notifying the general attitude of the Cabinet to the appropriate Minister, with a view to an announcement in the House of Commons.
7. The Cabinet had before them the following documents in regard to the War Charges (Validity) Bill:

A Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade, covering the draft of the War Charges (Validity) Bill, 1924, (Paper C.P.-77 (24).)

A Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, pressing for the exclusion of the milk charges from the Bill (Paper C.P.-99 (24).)

A Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade, urging that the Bill should provide for validating charges in respect of milk licences as well as all other charges of a similar character (Paper C.P.-100 (24).)

A Note by the Secretary, giving a summary of the decisions of previous Administrations on this question (Paper C.P.-107 (24).)

After hearing from the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries further particulars of the grounds on which he pressed for the exclusion of milk charges from the Bill, namely, that most representatives of Western Counties constituencies had pledged themselves to support the farmers in this matter, and that if the Government's plans in regard to farm labourers' wages were to have a reasonable prospect of success it was desirable to do everything possible to avoid increasing the resentment of the farmers, the Cabinet agreed —

That it was illogical to separate milk charges from the other charges which the Bill was intended to validate, and that if the House of Commons desired to make an exception in the case of milk it must take the responsibility for doing so; consequently, that the Bill should be introduced in the form attached to Paper C.P.-77 (24), that is to say, without excepting milk charges from the provisions of the Bill.
8. After consideration of the Report of the Cabinet Committee on Pre-War Pensions, together with the draft of the Bill prepared by the late Government, the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the introduction of the Pensions (Increase) Bill in the form attached to Paper C.P.-103 (24), subject to any necessary drafting alterations.
9. The Cabinet agreed --

That the Committee approved at its meeting on February 8th, for the purpose of preparing a Report for consideration of the Unemployment Committee on the whole question of Juvenile Unemployment, should be composed as follows:--

Miss Bondfield (Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Labour) (In the Chair),
Mr G.W. Alexander (Scottish Education Department),

together with representatives to be nominated by the following Ministers, who were asked to communicate the names to the Secretary of the Committee:
Mr T. Jones, of the Cabinet Office:--

The Chancellor of the Exchequer,
The Minister of Education,
The Minister of Health.
10. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Minister of Labour on the subject of the Washington Hours Convention (Paper C.P.–96 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

That an opportunity should be given for examination of the question by the Foreign Office and the Minister in charge of League of Nations questions, and that, subject to the concurrence of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a Conference of representatives of Governments should be held in London with a view to reaching a common understanding on the question of ratification.
11. The Minister of Labour gave the Cabinet particulars of the negotiations which were still in progress at the Ministry with a view to a settlement of the dock dispute.

The President of the Board of Trade gave his colleagues particulars of the position in regard to the supplies of meat, wheat and flour (Appendix II).

The Cabinet also had before them a Note by the Home Secretary, covering the Report of the Cabinet Committee in regard to emergency organisation in the event of an industrial crisis (Paper C.P.-102 (2d)).

After consideration of the above, the Cabinet agreed—

(a) To approve the Report of the Home Secretary's Committee on the Future of the Supply and Transport Organisation;

(b) That the general direction of special Government arrangements for dealing with emergencies arising out of industrial crises and of the planning of such arrangements in advance, should be entrusted to the Committee appointed by the Cabinet at the previous meeting, with the addition of the President of the Board of Trade and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster;

(c) That the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster should be the Chief Civil Commissioner;

(d) That members of the Cabinet Committee should therefore hold themselves in readiness to meet, if necessary, on Thursday, February 14th, to consider the information supplied by the President of the Board of Trade in regard to food stocks.
The attention of the Cabinet was drawn, as a matter of urgency, to the hostile attitude of the Liberal Party and the House of Commons towards the recent rescinding of the Order issued by Sir Alfred Mond in 1922 in regard to the granting of out-door relief by the Poplar Board of Guardians, as well as to the announcement by the Lord Privy Seal in the House of Commons on the same afternoon to the effect that a day would be given for a discussion of the action of the Government in relation to Poplar, and that the Government would afford Members the fullest opportunity of having the facts placed before them before the discussion took place.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Lord Privy Seal should report the position to the Prime Minister and explain to him the desire of the Cabinet to discuss the question before any further announcement was made:

(b) That the Minister of Health (in consultation with the Law Officers of the Crown if he deemed necessary) should prepare a full explanatory memorandum setting forth not only the legal position but also a recital of the facts of the case, with a view to its examination by the Cabinet before presentation to Parliament.
13. The Cabinet agreed —

(a) To approve the following programme proposed by the Chief Whip as to business in the House of Commons during the week commencing Monday, February 18th:

**Monday, February 18:**

- UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (No. 1) BILL; Second Reading.

  (NOTE: The Minister of Labour hopes to get all stages in one day.)

- DISEASES OF ANIMALS BILL, Money Resolution; Committee.

- TRADE FACILITIES BILL, Money Resolution; Committee.

**SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.**

**Tuesday, February 19:**

- DISEASES OF ANIMALS BILL; Money Resolution; Report.

- TRADE FACILITIES BILL, Money Resolution; Report.

**SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.**

**Wednesday, February 20:**

- DISEASES OF ANIMALS BILL; Second Reading.

- TRADE FACILITIES BILL; Second Reading.

  (NOTE: These orders will depend upon whether the Money Resolutions are passed in Committee on Monday.)

**Thursday, February 21:**

**SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.**

(b) That the Lord Chancellor should arrange at once for a Minister to take charge of the Unemployment Insurance Bill in the House of Lords.
14. The Postmaster-General informed the Cabinet that he had received a letter the same day from Mr Robert Donald, the Chairman of the Committee on Imperial Wireless Services, asking for an enlargement of the Reference to the Committee so as to enable it to consider the future of foreign wireless telegraphy in relation to Empire wireless.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the Postmaster-General should ask the Committee on Imperial Wireless Services to complete its Report, with a view to publication, on its present Terms of Reference, and then to proceed to prepare a Confidential Report on Foreign Wireless Telegraphy in relation to Imperial Wireless Telegraphy, for consideration by the Government, who would decide whether to publish it or not.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
February 13, 1924.
### APPENDIX. I.

**List (A 1).**

*Usual Compulsory Annual Bills.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill</td>
<td>Treasury.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Consolidated Fund (No. 3) Bill</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The Finance Bill</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>The Public Works Loans Bill</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>The Isle of Man Customs Bill</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>The Expiring Laws Continuance Bill</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>The Army and Air Force (Annual) Bill</td>
<td>War Office and Air Ministry.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**List (A).**

*Essential Bills of very great Urgency.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Trade Facilities Bill</td>
<td>Treasury.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Diseases of Animals (No. 1) Bill</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>War Charges Validity Bill</td>
<td>Board of Trade.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Unemployment Insurance (No. 1) Bill</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>West Indian Telegraph Bill</td>
<td>Treasury.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Pacific Cable Bill</td>
<td>Colonial Office.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Pensions (Increase) Bill</td>
<td>Treasury.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Administration of Justice Bill</td>
<td>Lord Chancellor's Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Criminal Justice Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Auxiliary Air Force and Air Force Reserve Bill</td>
<td>Air Ministry.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Factory Bill</td>
<td>Home Office</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>White Lead Bill</td>
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</table>

*Might be introduced in the House of Lords.*

*Ditto.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Bill</th>
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<th>Remarks</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Friendly Societies Bill</td>
<td>Treasury</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The County Courts Bill</td>
<td>Lord Chancellor's Office</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Merchant Shipping (International Labour Conventions) Bill</td>
<td>Board of Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Arbitration Clauses in Commercial Agreements (Protocol) Bill</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>The Bankruptcy and Companies Departments' Fees Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Unemployment Insurance (No. 2) Bill</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bill to implement the 48-hour week (International Labour Office Convention)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>The Iraq British Officials Guarantee Bill</td>
<td>Colonial Office</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>The Imperial Institute Bill</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bill to enable certain High Officials in India to take leave to Europe during their term of Office</td>
<td>India Office</td>
<td>Might be introduced in the House of Lords.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The China Indemnity (Application) Bill (1927)</td>
<td>Foreign Office</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>The Lausanne Treaty Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The Agricultural Wages Bill</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Diseases of Animals (No. 2) Bill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The School Teachers (Superannuation) Bill, 1924</td>
<td>Board of Education</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The Northern Ireland Land Purchase Bill</td>
<td>Home Office</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The Coroners' Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>The National Health Insurance Bill</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>The Rating and Valuation Bill</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>The Smoke Abatement Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Bill to authorise Local Authorities to provide insulin for persons suffering from Diabetes, &amp;c.</td>
<td>Scottish Office</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Bill to amend the Law relating to Smoke Nuisance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Reorganisation of Offices (Scotland) Bill</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Post Office (London) Railway Bill</td>
<td>General Post Office</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List (C).

**Purely Consolidation Bills.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Judicature (Consolidation) Bill</td>
<td>Lord Chancellor's Office</td>
<td>May be introduced in the House of Lords.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Real Property (Consolidation) Bills</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Ditto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The National Health Insurance (Consolidation) Bill</td>
<td>Ministry of Health and Scottish Office</td>
<td>Ditto.</td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Housing (Consolidation) Bill</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Ditto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Town Planning (Consolidation) Bill</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Ditto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Small Dwellings Acquisition Consolidation Bill</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Ditto.</td>
</tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Housing (Scotland) Consolidation Bill</td>
<td>Scottish Office</td>
<td>Ditto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Town Planning (Scotland) Consolidation Bill</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Ditto.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Small Dwellings Acquisition (Scotland) Bill</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Ditto.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**LIST (D).**

**Bills to stand over for further consideration at a later date.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Bill</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Crown Proceedings Bill</td>
<td>Lord Chancellor's Office.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Sale of Bread Bill</td>
<td>Board of Trade</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Measuring Instruments Bill</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The Coastguard Bill</td>
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<td>The Tree Planting Bill</td>
<td>Ministry of Transport</td>
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<td>The Pensions of Dominion Governors Bill</td>
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<td>The Malay States Probates Bill</td>
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<td>The Extradition and Fugitive Offenders Bill</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>The Agricultural Returns Bill</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>The University and College Estates Bill</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>The Ham Charities Bill, 1924</td>
<td>Board of Education</td>
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<td>The Probation of Offenders Bill</td>
<td>Home Office</td>
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<td>The Summer Time Amendment Bill</td>
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<td>The Wild Birds Bill</td>
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<td>Night Baking Bill</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>The Mental Treatment Bill</td>
<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>The Therapeutic Substances Bill</td>
<td></td>
<td>Might be introduced in the House of Lords</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>The Education (Scotland) Amendment Bill</td>
<td>Scottish Office</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Bill to reorganise the Sheriff Clerk and Procurator-Fiscal Services in Scotland</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Burgh Registers (Scotland) Bill</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Humane Slaughter of Animals (Scotland) Bill</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>The Barney Airship Scheme</td>
<td>Air Ministry</td>
<td>To await Cabinet decision on question of principle.</td>
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</table>
SUPPLIES OF MEAT, WHEAT AND FLOUR.

NOTE BY THE PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRADE.

In the absence of any means of procuring direct information as to stocks, these figures have been supplied by Sir Gordon Campbell as representing the Meat Importers of Great Britain, and Mr. Hutchinson, the President of the National Association of British & Irish Millers.

MEAT. The approximate stocks of frozen beef, mutton and lamb in London and Liverpool at the present time are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>London</th>
<th>Liverpool</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mutton</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>2,850</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lamb</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>4,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>550</td>
<td></td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>7,600</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In addition there may be small quantities at Manchester, Glasgow, Cardiff, Bristol, Hull, etc. but these are negligible.

On the assumption that motor transport is available for the delivery of these supplies from the stores to the retail shops, there is enough meat in sight to meet the normal consumption in Greater London for a week. It is thought that, under a system of informal rationing, this period could be doubled.

The same considerations apply to Liverpool, on the assumption that rather more home-killed meat will be available there.

As regards the big provincial towns, however, the situation is more serious. There is very little frozen meat in stock, and there would be no spare meat which could be railed from London or Liverpool. They would have to fall back on supplies of home-killed meat, which are naturally short at this time of year, and on pork and bacon, which is in more plentiful supply.

/WHEAT
WHEAT AND FLOUR. The contrast between London and provincial supplies is peculiarly marked in respect of wheat and flour. Generally speaking, supplies throughout the country are short, as recent imports have been from America, where the exchange makes the price high, and supplies from other quarters will not be available for the next two or three weeks. At this time of year, too, home supplies are practically negligible.

The normal consumption of flour, expressed in terms of wheat, in this country is 450,000 quarters a week. The average importation during the last two months has been roughly about 250,000 quarters. The quantity which has come into London has been in the neighbourhood of 120,000 quarters; so that it will be obvious that the amount in the rest of Great Britain is very small. London millers have supplies available for something like four or five weeks. In the North of England, it is stated that there are not supplies available for more than three or four days. This leaves out of account the supplies in the bakers' shops, which must be taken at from ten to fourteen days, at any rate in most places. In extreme cases, this marked inequality of distribution might be remedied by railing flour from one quarter to another.

13th February, 1921.
CABINET 14 (24).

Meeting to be held in the Prime Minister's Room, House of Commons, on MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18th, 1924, at 5 p.m.

AGENDA

1. THE DOCK STRIKE.

2. POPULAR.
   Ref: Cabinet 13 (24), Conclusion 12.
   Memorandum by the Minister of Health (Paper C.P.-114 (24)) - (To be circulated)

   Terms of Liberal Motion in the House of Commons (Paper C.P.-117 (24)) - (circular).

3. BRITISH DYED.
   Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade (Paper C.P.-41 (24)) - (Already circulated).

   Note by the Lord President of the Council, covering Memorandum by Sir F. Heath (Paper C.P.-49 (24)) - (Already circulated).

   Note by the First Lord of the Admiralty (Paper C.P.-71 (24)) - (Already circulated).

   Memorandum by the Lord Chancellor (Paper C.P.-110 (24)) - (Already circulated).

4. NAVY.
   (To be raised by the Prime Minister.)

(Continued)
5. IMPERIAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE. THE PROPOSED
PREFERENCES (Preliminary discussion.)

Note by the Secretary, covering Summary
of Proceedings of Imperial and Imperial
Economic Conferences (Paper C.P.-39 (24))
(Already circulated).

Note by the Secretary of State for the
Colonies, covering Memorandum by Lord
Arnold (Paper C.P.-112 (24)) — (Already
circulated.)

6. PROPOSED IMPERIAL ECONOMIC COMMITTEE.

Memorandum by the Secretary of State
for the Colonies (Paper C.P.-97 (24)) —
(Already circulated).

7. MOTHERS' PENSIONS.

Note by the Chancellor of the Exchequer,
covering a Memorandum by the Government
Actuary (Paper C.P.-115 (24)) — (Circulated
Already-circulated) herewith).

(Signed) H. P. A. HANKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W. 1,
February 16, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET

HELD IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S ROOM,

HOUSE OF COMMONS, ON MONDAY, 18TH,

FEBRUARY, 1924, AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.
Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).

Right Hon. Lord Parmoor of Frieth,

Right Hon. E. Clynes, M.P.,
Lord Privy Seal.

Right Hon. A. Henderson, Secretary of State for Home Affairs.

Right Hon. Stephen Walsh, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

G.-General The Right Hon.
Lord Thomson, C.B.E., D.S.O.,
Secretary of State for Air.

Right Hon. Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P.,
President of the Board of Education.

Right Hon. Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P.,
Minister of Labour.

Right Hon. Vernon Hartshorn, C.B.E., M.P.,
Postmaster-General.

The Right Hon. Viscount Haldane, K.C.V.O.,
Lord Chancellor.

The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P.,
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.C.V.O., C.B.,
Secretary of State for India.

The Right Hon. Viscount Chelmsford, G.C.M.G.,
G.C.I.E., K.C.I.E., C.B.E.,
First Lord of the Admiralty.

The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P.,
Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P.,
Secretary for Scotland.

Col. The Right Hon.
J.C. Wedgwood, D.S.O., M.P.,
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

The Right Hon. F.W. Jowett, M.P.,
First Commissioner of Works.

THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:

(For Item 1.)

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held in the Prime Minister's Room, House of Commons, on MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1924, at 5 p.m.

1. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Minister of Health, covering a draft which, if thought desirable, could be issued as a White Paper (C.P.-114 (24)), together with the terms of the Liberal Motion to be introduced in the House of Commons (C.P.-117 (24)), which were as follows:

"That this House regards the action of the Minister of Health in cancelling the Poplar Order and in remitting any surcharge that might be made under it as calculated to encourage illegality and extravagance, and urges that the only remedy for the difficulties of necessitous areas is to be found in the reform of London government."

After a full discussion of the whole question, the Cabinet agreed—

(a) That the Minister of Health should reply early in the Debate to the Liberal Motion, and that the Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Health should be prepared to take part in the Debate; and that the aim of the Government should be, if possible, to secure the withdrawal of the Motion without a Division;

(b) That the Government should refuse to accept the first part of the Motion, and that the Minister of Health should make it clear that the rescission of the Order was never intended in any way to encourage or condone slack administration;

(c) That, in regard to the second part of the Motion, the Minister of Health should inform the House that the Government were in favour of a revision of the Poor Law, which had been
included in the Labour Party's programme for many years, but that they required time to consider whether London should be dealt with as part of the larger question or whether, alternatively, the reform of London government should be dealt with first as a separate question:

(d) That the draft enclosed with the Minister of Health's Memorandum (Paper C.P.114 (24)) should form the basis of a White Paper the exact terms of which should be settled by the Minister of Health in consultation with the Attorney-General, and that the Parliamentary Paper should reach the Vote Office by Tuesday, February 19th.
2. The Minister of Labour gave his colleagues a detailed account of the events which had led up to the Dock Strike and of the efforts which he had made to effect a settlement. He informed the Cabinet that, with the approval of the Prime Minister, he had appointed the following Committee of Inquiry, -

Mr Holman Gregory, K.C. (Chairman),
Mr H. Boothman, J.P., and
Sir Andrew Duncan.

This Committee had been set up under the Industrial Courts Act, and its object was to inquire into all the facts, in order that the public might be fully informed.

The two parties to the dispute, whilst unwilling to maintain direct relations with one another after the Strike had begun, had agreed that the Ministry of Labour should keep in touch with both sides, and that if the Ministry thought a favourable opportunity offered for discussions with a view to settlement, they would both accept an invitation to take part therein.
3. Arising out of the discussion on the Dock Dispute, the Cabinet were informed that at a meeting of the Emergency Committee earlier in the day it had been agreed to seek the co-operation with the Government of the parties concerned in the Strike for the transport and distribution of essential foods and fuel, and the following conclusions had been reached:

(i) That the Secretary of State for the Colonies should see the leaders of the National Union of Railwaymen, and that the Minister of Transport should see the leaders of the Transport Workers' Union as soon as possible.

(ii) That the Minister of Transport should also arrange for an interview with Mr. J. Bromley, of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen.

(iii) That the Chief Civil Commissioner should not declare a state of emergency today but should wait until the result of the interviews arranged in (i) and (ii) were known.

(iv) The Committee should sit the next day at 4 p.m. to meet representatives of the National Union of Railwaymen and the Transport Workers' Union.

(E.C. (24) 2nd Conclusions.)

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That during the absence of the Secretary of State for Home Affairs the Secretary of State for the Colonies should act as Chairman of the Emergency Committee.

(b) That the question of the amount of wages to be paid to the dockers engaged in the transport and distribution of essential foods, fuel, etc., should be remitted to the Emergency Committee, which should be authorised, if absolutely necessary, to go to the length of guaranteeing that the workers so employed should receive the 2/-s additional wage which was the subject of the dispute.

(c) To take note that, in accordance with the practice adopted in similar instances in the past, the Secretary of State for
War had decided that when supplied were refused to the civil contractors for Army supplies, army lorries should be sent to fetch them, and that up to now no difficulty had arisen, either in the past or on the present occasion: also to approve the instructions given by the Secretary of State for War to the effect that officers should accompany the military lorries; that if opposition was offered, the officers should endeavour to obtain from the representatives of the strikers who refused supplies a written document, and that in any event any possibility of a collision between troops and strikers should be avoided, and if supplies were refused the lorries should return and the officers should ask for further instructions:

(d) To take note that the law in regard to relief during the Strike enabled Guardians to grant relief to dependants of strikers and to strikers themselves if in danger of suffering.
4. The attention of the Cabinet was drawn by the Chief Civil Commissioner to the fact that prices of food commodities were being raised in various parts of the country in consequence of the Strike.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the following notice should be issued to the Press the same evening:

"The Cabinet has had information from various parts of the country that meat and other prices are being raised by from 33 1/3 to 50%. There is no reason for this increase except the power of profiteers to extract from the public unjust prices. The Cabinet hopes that this notice will have the effect of stopping these increases, but in the meantime it has asked the Law Officers to consider the powers of the Government in this matter and to draft such emergency measures as may be necessary to prevent the exploitation of consumers owing to the present Strike."

(b) That the Law Officers of the Crown should take the action referred to in the Press Notice.
5. The Cabinet had before them the following documents in regard to the question of British Dyes:—

A Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade (Paper C.P.-41 (24)):

A Note by the Lord President of the Council, covering a Memorandum by Sir Frank Heath (Secretary of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research) (Paper C.P.-49 (24)):

A Note by the First Lord of the Admiralty (Paper C.P.-71 (24)):

A Memorandum by the Lord Chancellor (Paper C.P.-110 (24)).

The Cabinet agreed—

That a Cabinet Committee, composed as follows:—

The Lord Chancellor,
The Lord President of the Council,
The First Lord of the Admiralty,
The President of the Board of Trade,

should meet to examine the whole question of British Dyes and to submit proposals to the Cabinet.

(Mr. T. Jones, of the Cabinet Office, will act as Secretary.)
6. The Cabinet had under consideration the following
Motion to be raised in the House of Commons by Sir
Samuel Hoare, the late Secretary of State for Air, on
Tuesday, February 19th:—

"That this House, whilst earnestly desiring the further limitation of armament so far as is consistent with the safety and integrity of the Empire, affirms the principle enunciated by the late Government and accepted by the Imperial Conference that Great Britain must maintain a home defence air force of sufficient strength to give adequate protection against air attack by the strongest air force within striking distance of her shores."

The Cabinet agreed —

That the general attitude of the Government speakers towards the Motion should be to the following effect:—

That the Government were exploring the whole problem of defence and would give full weight to the points that might be made in the Debate; that the Government, having inherited from their predecessors certain responsibilities in regard to air defence, were carrying on the administration for the present without any break in continuity of policy; that the Auxiliary Air Force and Air Force Reserve Bill had been included among the Government measures of very great urgency; but that the opportunity of the introduction of the Estimates would be taken to make a full statement of the Government's policy on air defence.
7. The Cabinet agreed —

That the question of the proposed preferences should be discussed at their next meeting, and, unless matters of great urgency arose, should form the first item on the Agenda.

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 11 (24), Conclusion 11.)
8. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the subject of the proposed Imperial Economic Committee (Paper C.P.-97 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That they could not accept the recommendation of the Imperial Economic Conference in favour of setting up a Standing Economic Committee;

(b) That the alternative proposal in the Secretary of State’s Memorandum for the setting up of ad hoc Economic Committees was also inadvisable.

(NOTE: The responsibility for making such communications as they deem suitable to the Dominions and Colonies and to India, rests respectively with the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Secretary of State for India.)
9. After consideration of a Note by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, covering a Memorandum by the Government Actuary (Paper C.P.-115 (24)), the Cabinet agreed—

(a) That the Chancellor of the Exchequer should speak for the Government on the subject when Mr Dukes's Resolution is moved on Wednesday, February 26th:

(b) That the Chancellor of the Exchequer should favour the principle of Mothers' Pensions, but that, in view of the financial situation and of the close connection of this question with the reform of the Poor Law, he should use guarded language as to the immediate intentions of the Government. He should, however, indicate that the Government intended to take action to remove some of the defects of the Old Age Pension system.
10. The Cabinet agreed —

That, unless a Financial Resolution was required, the Lausanne Treaty Bill should be introduced, in the first instance, in the House of Lords.

(NOTE: The Secretary has ascertained from the Foreign Office that a Financial Resolution is required.)
11. The Cabinet agreed —

That, although the County Courts Bill would effect a saving of money, inasmuch as it involves financial considerations it must be introduced in the House of Commons and not in the House of Lords.
12. The Cabinet were informed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord of the Admiralty had agreed generally in regard to the Naval Estimates.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That a Cabinet Committee should be set up to consider, from the point of view of the Government's general policy, the following questions:

(i) The policy in regard to the replacement of Cruisers by the Admiralty,

—and—

(ii) The proposed Naval Base at Singapore.

(b) That the Prime Minister should settle the composition of the Committee.
13. After hearing from the Secretary of State for India a verbal report of the results of the inquiries he had conducted in concert with the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in regard to the salary and status of the Minister of Transport, the Cabinet agreed —

That the Secretary of State for India and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster should be asked to forward their report in writing to the Prime Minister for his consideration.
14. After a short discussion in regard to the demand in certain quarters for the issue of railway passes to Members of Parliament, the Cabinet agreed —

That the question should be left to a free vote by the House of Commons.
15. The Cabinet agreed —

That their next meeting should be held on THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21st, 1924, at 11 a.m.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

February 18, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Prime Minister's Room, House of Commons, on WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25th, 1924, at 9 p.m.

PRESENT :

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).

The Right Hon. Viscount Haldane, K.T., C.M., Lord Chancellor.

The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. Stephen Walsh, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

Sir Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P., President of the Board of Education.

The Right Hon. Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P., Minister of Labour.


The Following were also present:


CABINET 15 (24), CONCLUSION 1.

The Prime Minister has approved the following addendum:

(c) To take note that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had notified the Dominions that the whole question of the construction of a Naval Base at Singapore was to be referred to a Cabinet Committee, and that in the meantime, pending a decision, no expenditure was being incurred.

(Signed) M.P.A. HANKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W. 1,
February 21, 1924.
CABINET 15 (24).

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held in the Prime Minister's Room, House of Commons, S.W.1, on WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1924, at 9 p.m.

1. The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Terms of Reference to the Cabinet Committee, approved at the previous meeting, should be as follows:

(i) To consider Cabinet policy in respect of the requirements of the Navy during the next ten years as regards the replacement of units of the Fleet other than Capital Ships, and to make recommendations to the Cabinet in regard to these requirements:

(ii) To consider the necessity for a Naval Base in the Far East and the reasons which led to the decision to develop Singapore for this purpose, and to report whether the scheme should be proceeded with, and, if so, whether any substantial saving can be suggested in its cost.

(b) That the Committee should be composed as follows:

The Lord Privy Seal (in the Chair)
The Chancellor of the Exchequer,
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
The Secretary of State for War,
The Secretary of State for the Colonies,
The Secretary of State for India,
The Secretary of State for Air,
The First Lord of the Admiralty,

with the right in each case to be represented by deputy.
2. The Secretary of State for the Colonies, as Acting Chairman of the Supply and Transport Committee, informed the Cabinet that his Committee had received representatives of the Transport and General Workers' Union the same evening. He and his colleagues had made it perfectly clear that the Government were under an obligation to secure the food of the people, but that they would prefer to do it with the assistance of the Union now on strike. At the request of the representatives of the Union the Committee had put their request in writing, to the effect that the Union was asked to assist in the transport of the foodstuffs (excluding luxury foods and fruit) required to maintain the life of the people, the Government undertaking not to ask for more than was requisite for this purpose. An assurance was also sought that similar assistance should be given in the handling of mails inwards and outwards. Finally, the Union was asked to permit the return of the "Key Men" in charge of cold storage plant at Liverpool and elsewhere, who had been called out by the Union in retaliation for the alleged dismissal of corresponding men in London on the ground that they had declined to carry out work outside their normal duties.

In regard to the mails and the "Key Men" the Committee were encouraged to expect a favourable answer. The reply of the Union would be given at 1-30 p.m. on the following day. In the meantime, the Cabinet Committee was preparing alternative drafts of replies for the Prime Minister to make to questions in the House of Commons according as the response of the Union was favourable or otherwise. On the question of wages to strikers, who might be employed to handle essential supplies of food, the Committee had not found it necessary to use the powers
conferred on them by the Cabinet at the previous Meeting.

(Cabinet 14 (24), Conclusion 3 (b).)

The Cabinet were also informed that, while pressure was being put on the Union to assist in the transport of essential supplies as above, pressure was at the same time being exerted on the employers in the direction of a settlement.

The Cabinet agreed --

(a) That, in the event of an unsatisfactory answer from the Union, an announcement should be made to the following effect:

(i) Mails at Plymouth. The mails will be moved to the train. (It was agreed that the preliminary steps for this purpose should be taken in the morning.)

(ii) Key Men in Liverpool. Arrangements will be made, if necessary, for keeping the machinery going in the cold storage, and any necessary protection will be afforded.

(iii) Discharge and Transport of Foodstuffs. Adequate protection will be given as provided by the existing law for the purpose of handling essential foodstuffs.

(iv) Proclamation of Emergency. An emergency will be proclaimed forthwith, under the Emergency Powers Act, 1920, and the Government will not hesitate to use the powers which this will confer, including dealing with profiteering.

(b) That the Law Officers of the Crown should be responsible for drafting the Emergency Proclamation, and that they should consult the Home Office as necessary.

(c) That the Emergency Proclamation should be based on the corresponding regulations issued in previous emergencies of the same nature, but that the Law Officers should have full discretion to delete from them all objectionable, vindictive or inapplicable clauses, and should add a clause to deal with profiteering, the whole being issued under the Emergency Powers Act, 1920.

(d) That the Clerk of the Council should obtain the King's pleasure in regard to holding a Council on the following evening, in case of necessity, for the purpose of approving the necessary Proclamation and should make all arrangements.
(a) That the Postmaster-General should prepare arrangements for handling the mails in the unexpected event of a refusal by the Unions to undertake the task, but that he should put these arrangements in operation only after a refusal on the part of the Unions. The arrangements should be capable of being put in operation by telegram or telephone early in the afternoon of Thursday, February 21st, so that the House of Commons could be informed, if necessary, that steps had been taken to deal with this question.
3. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Minister of Health on the law and practice in regard to Poor Law Relief to Strikers, the Cabinet agreed —

That the Ministry of Health should issue no special circular on the subject applicable to the Dock Strike, but, if enquiries are made, they should assist Local Authorities to a knowledge of the law.
4. The Cabinet agreed —

That the representatives of the Government in the House of Lords should be authorised to speak in favour of the private Legitimation Bill to be introduced shortly in the House of Lords, but not to promise Government time to this measure.
5. The Cabinet agreed —

That the private Divorce Bill to be introduced in the House of Lords should be left to the free vote of the House, and that the representatives of the Government should express no official opinion thereon.
Meeting of the Cabinet to be held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on Thursday, February 21, 1924, at 11 a.m.

AGENDA.

11 a.m. 1. IMPERIAL AND IMPERIAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCES. (THE PROPOSED PREFERENCES.)

Note by the Secretary, covering Summary of Proceedings of Imperial and Imperial Economic Conferences (Paper C.P. 69 (24)) - (Already circulated).

Note by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, covering Memorandum by Lord Arnold (Paper C.P. 112 (24)) - (Already circulated).

2. TANGIER.

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Paper C.P. 123 (24)) - (Already circulated).

3. BRITISH CONCESSIONS IN CHINA.

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Paper C.P. 111 (24)) - (Already circulated).

4. AIRSHIP DEVELOPMENT.

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Air (Paper C.P. 104 (24)) - (Already circulated).

Memorandum by the First Lord of the Admiralty (Paper C.P. 118 (24)) - (Already circulated).

5. PALESTINE.

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Paper C.P. 121 (24)) - (To be circulated).

6. RENT RESTRICTIONS.

Joint Memorandum by the Minister of Health and First Commissioner of Works, covering Draft Bill (Paper C.P. 125 (24)) - (Already circulated).

7. THE DOMINIONS AND SINGAPORE.

Statement by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. (Contd.)
8. **CENSUS OF PRODUCTION.**

Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade (Paper C.P. 113 (24)) (Already circulated).

9. **HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.**

Consideration of Recommendations on the following subjects:-

(a) **The White Lead Convention.**
Reference H.A.C. 2nd Conclusions (24), Minute 1.

(b) **The West Indian (Telegraph) Bill.**
Reference H.A.C. 2nd Conclusions (24), Minute 2.

(c) **The Pacific Cable Bill.**
Reference H.A.C. 2nd Conclusions (24), Minute 3.

(d) **The Treaty of Peace (Turkey) Bill.**
Reference H.A.C. 2nd Conclusions (24), Minute 4.

(e) **The China Indemnity (Application) Bill.**
Reference H.A.C. 2nd Conclusions (24), Minute 5.

(f) **The Friendly Societies Bill.**
Reference H.A.C. 2nd Conclusions (24), Minute 6.

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(Signed) M. P. A. HANKEY.
Secretary to the Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.,
20th February, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21st, 1924, at 11.0 a.m.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.,
Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).

The Right Hon. Viscount Haldane, K.P., C.M.,
Lord Chancellor.

The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P.,
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. Stephen Walsh, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

Brig.-General The Right Hon. Lord Thomson, C.B.E., D.S.C.,
Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon. Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P.,
President of the Board of Education.

The Right Hon. Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P.,
Minister of Labour.

The Right Hon. Vernon Hartshorn, C.B.E., M.P.,
Postmaster-General.


CABINET 16 (24).

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet,
held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1924, at 11 a.m.

1. The Prime Minister informed his colleagues that
the Liberal Party was prepared to suggest Major Entwistle
for the post of Deputy Chairman of Committees, House of
Commons. The only difficulty was that the Liberals were
under the impression that the Deputy Chairman would have
to give up his professional practice as a Barrister.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That Major Entwistle would be acceptable,
and that the Lord Privy Seal should let it be known, through the usual channels,
that his name would be proposed as Deputy
Chairman to the House of Commons on Monday:

(b) That the Chief Whip should let the
leaders of the Liberal Party know that
the Government knew of no reason why Major
Entwistle should formally give up his
practice as a Barrister on becoming
Deputy Chairman.
2. The Minister of Labour made a full statement to the Cabinet as to the circumstances in which the Dock Dispute had been brought within sight of an immediate settlement, and of the terms on which it was hoped that a settlement would be reached. These terms included an increase to the wages of workers of 1/-s a day at once, and a second 1/- on the first Monday in June, the remission of the question of decasualisation to a Committee of representatives of employers and workers, with a Chairman nominated by the Minister of Labour, and were accompanied by a statement on the part of the representatives of both employers and employed that it was intended to be a real settlement in the industry. It only remained for the representatives of the Transport and General Workers' Union, who had their Executive Committee behind them, to consult their Delegate Meeting, and the results of that consultation ought to be known by 7 o'clock the same evening.

The Cabinet were also informed that the dockers at Plymouth had declined to handle the mails that morning.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) To place on record their cordial congratulations to the Minister of Labour for his important share in the favourable turn in the situation:

(b) That the Prime Minister, in reply to a Private Notice Question, should make a statement to the House of Commons to the effect that the representatives of both sides had agreed to terms which the Union spokesman had decided to put before their Delegate Meeting that evening with a recommendation in favour of agreement; that the Minister of Labour hoped to be able to communicate the terms of the agreement before the House rose that evening; that if this hope was fulfilled, work would be resumed at some of the ports tomorrow, and that, in the circumstances, the Government did not propose to put into operation any of the machinery it had been prepared to set up to secure a food supply to the public.
(c) That, in view of the inconsiderate pressure of the Opposition in the House of Commons on the previous day for information as to what steps the Government were taking, the Prime Minister should add to his answer a statement to the effect that he regretted he had not been able to give more information on that occasion, but that he now considered that had he done so it would have been most damaging to the negotiations for which the Government were responsible, and had he yielded there would have been no settlement today:

(d) That after the Prime Minister had made his statement, the Minister of Labour, subject to the permission of the Speaker, should publicly offer his thanks to the members of the Committee of Inquiry set up under the Industrial Courts Act, who, at the shortest notice and without regard to their personal convenience, had consented to serve thereon:

(e) That in view of the favourable turn in the negotiations, the Clerk of the Council should not take steps to ascertain His Majesty's pleasure in regard to a special meeting of the Privy Council for the purpose of approving Proclamations under the Emergency Powers Act, 1920:

(f) That, in view of the improved situation, it was unnecessary to take special steps for bringing supplies of yeast from Ireland to England.
(a) That, in view of the inconsiderate pressure of the Opposition in the House of Commons on the previous day for information as to what steps the Government were taking, the Prime Minister should add to his answer a statement to the effect that he regretted he had not been able to give more information on that occasion, but that he now considered that had he done so it would have been most damaging to the negotiations for which the Government were responsible, and had he yielded there would have been no settlement today:

(b) That after the Prime Minister had made his statement, the Minister of Labour, subject to the permission of the Speaker, should publicly offer his thanks to the members of the Committee of Inquiry set up under the Industrial Courts Act, who, at the shortest notice and without regard to their personal convenience, had consented to serve thereon:

(c) That in view of the favourable turn in the negotiations, the Clerk of the Council should not take steps to ascertain His Majesty's pleasure in regard to a special meeting of the Privy Council for the purpose of approving Proclamations under the Emergency Powers Act, 1920:

(d) That, in view of the improved situation, it was unnecessary to take special steps for bringing supplies of yeast from Ireland to England.
The Cabinet had before them the following documents relating to the recent Imperial and Imperial Economic Conferences:

- A Note by the Secretary, covering a Summary of the Proceedings of the Imperial and of the Imperial Economic Conferences (Paper C.P.-69 (24)).
- A Note by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, covering a Memorandum by Lord Arnold (Paper C.P.-112 (24)).

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Prime Minister, in reply to a Question in the House of Commons as to what action the Government proposed to take in regard to the recommendations of the Imperial and Imperial Economic Conferences, should explain that if a special time were allocated for discussion of the whole of the recommendations of the two Conferences, the time of the House, which was already barely adequate to the volume of business, would be wasted, since in any event the question of the proposed Preferences would inevitably be raised on the Finance Bill. In these circumstances the Prime Minister should ask the House of Commons to agree to the following procedure, namely:

A distinction should be drawn between those recommendations which, if adopted, would have to be incorporated in the Finance Bill, and the remainder. As regards the former category, those which the Government were prepared to accept should be included in the Finance Bill and discussed when that Bill was brought before the House. The inclusion of Preference proposals which the Government were unwilling themselves to adopt could be moved by Members of Parliament as amendments to the Finance Bill. The recommendations of the Imperial and of the Imperial Economic Conferences which lay outside the scope of the Finance Bill could then be discussed in Parliament, either in connection with the necessary legislation or as opportunity offers. If, however, after hearing the Prime Minister's statement, the House of Commons insisted on special time for the separate discussion of the recommendations of the Conferences as a whole, this would have to be conceded.

NOTE: It has been ascertained that this would only apply to proposals for increased preference in the case of existing duties. To cover new duties Budget Resolutions are required, and these could only be initiated by the Government. This point will require reconsideration, as the Opposition might reasonably complain that they have been deprived of an opportunity of discussing those proposals which involve increased new duties.
(b) That the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Secretary of State for India should make a confidential communication to the Dominions and India respectively in regard to the above procedure before the Prime Minister makes his announcement.

(c) That the Secretary of the Cabinet should arrange with the responsible Departments for the compilation, in consultation with all the Departments concerned, of a comprehensive Memorandum in regard to the Imperial and Imperial Economic Conferences, with a view to circulation to the Cabinet.
4. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on the Tangier Convention (Paper C.P.-123 (24)), the Cabinet agreed --

(a) That the Prime Minister, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, though not very well satisfied with the settlement, had no alternative but to submit the question for the favourable consideration of Parliament. In doing so he should give a résumé of the negotiations and should make it clear that since the present Government came into office he had declined to exercise any pressure either on France or Spain in the matter, but that the Foreign Office were relieved to have this longstanding and embarrassing question settled:

(b) That the Chief Whip should make arrangements for the discussion of the question in the House of Commons, if the House desired.
5. In view of the fact that additional Papers were being prepared on this subject by certain Departments, the question of British Concessions in China was postponed.
6. The Cabinet had before them the following documents in regard to Airship Development:

- A Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Air (Paper C.P.-104 (24));
- A Memorandum by the First Lord of the Admiralty (Paper C.P.118 (24)).

The Cabinet were informed that both the Admiralty and the Air Ministry were convinced of the great importance of proceeding with airship development, and that the difference of opinion arose in regard to the precise method in which this should be carried out.

After considerable discussion the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That a Committee composed as follows:
   - The Secretary of State for the Colonies (In the Chair),
   - The Chancellor of the Exchequer,
   - The Lord President of the Council,
   - The Secretary of State for Air,
   - The Secretary of State for War,
   - The First Lord of the Admiralty,

should meet to re-examine the Burney Airship Scheme and to decide whether that Scheme should be dropped, a fresh Scheme of Airship Development under Government control being substituted for it, or, alternatively, whether the Burney Airship Scheme should be continued, and, if so, on what terms:

(b) That the £400,000 included in the Air Ministry Estimates for next year should be dropped, but that a Supplementary Estimate should be introduced later, if necessary, for any Scheme of Airship Development which might be adopted as the result of the inquiries by the Cabinet Committee:

(c) That the question of the exact relations of the Admiralty and the Air Ministry in regard to Airship Development should be left for later consideration by the Committee of Imperial Defence, when the main question had been settled.
7. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Paper C.P.-121 (24)) in regard to the position in Palestine, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) To reaffirm the Balfour Declaration of November, 1917, the terms of which are as follows:

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

(b) That the question of the issue of a Palestine Loan, under some form of British guarantee, should be left for arrangement between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.
8. After consideration of a Joint Memorandum by the Minister of Health and the First Commissioner of Works in regard to a private Rent Restriction Bill presented by Mr Benjamin Gardner, M.P., which was down for Second Reading on Friday, February 22nd, the Cabinet agreed —

That the Minister of Health should limit himself to stating that the Government are generally in favour of the proposals of the Bill.
9. After consideration of a Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade on the question of a Census of Production (Paper C.P.-113 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

That the President of the Board of Trade should have authority to proceed as soon as possible with the arrangements contemplated by the previous Government for taking another Census of Production.
The Cabinet were informed that the Treaty of Peace (Turkey) Bill had already been introduced in the House of Lords, and that the Bill could be proceeded with pending
the passage of the Money Resolution by the House of Commons.

While taking note that the number of Bills on the Order Paper is already rather large, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) To approve the recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs (Appendix):

(b) That the Lord Chancellor and the Lord President of the Council should carefully consider what further Bills on the list could be dealt with in the first instance in the House of Lords.
11. The Cabinet were informed that, following a Majority Report of the Royal Commission on Honours, an Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Bill had been introduced in the House of Lords last Session in order to give effect to the recommendation that penalties should be imposed on persons offering to secure an Honour for a money payment or valuable consideration, and on persons promising payment or consideration in order to secure an Honour. This recommendation had been endorsed by Mr Arthur Henderson. The Bill passed through all its stages in the House of Lords, and was read a Second Time in the House of Commons on the 15th June. It failed to reach a Second Reading owing to the pressure of more urgent business. There was reason to believe that Sir Evelyn Cecil, M.P., would raise the question and enquire what was the Government's intention.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Bill should be introduced in the House of Lords.
12. The Cabinet were informed that considerable disappointment had been caused in the Labour Party by the decision not to have a photograph of the Cabinet, and many persons had expressed a desire to possess a photograph of the first Labour Cabinet.

After consideration, the Cabinet agreed—

That the Prime Minister should make arrangements with a first-class photographer for a private photograph to be taken of the members of the Cabinet. The copyright of the photograph would then become the private property of members of the Cabinet, each of whom would have a copy, and the expenses would be shared between the members. The Prime Minister should authorise the Labour Party Headquarters at Eccleston Square to receive copies, with a view to such distribution as he might deem advisable.
13. After hearing from the First Lord of the Admiralty a statement in regard to the importance of expediting tenders for naval construction unless large numbers of men were to be discharged at an early date, the Cabinet agreed —

That the ordinary procedure, according to which the Admiralty wait until after the passing of the Ways and Means Resolutions before calling for tenders, should be waived, and that the Admiralty should have authority to call at once for tenders for approved naval construction, and so enable work to be started immediately after Parliamentary sanction.
14. The Cabinet agreed —

That, in view of the large amount of Committee work involved in recent decisions, the next Meeting should not be held until THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28th, 1924, unless an emergency Meeting was required in the interval.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

February 21, 1924.
CABINET.

COMMITTEE OF HOME AFFAIRS 2 (24).

Conclusions of a Meeting of the above Committee, held in the Ministers' Conference Room, House of Commons, S.W., on Friday, February 15, 1924, at 11 a.m.

Present:

The Right Hon. Viscount Haldane, K.T., O.M., Lord Chancellor (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. A. Henderson, Secretary of State for Home Affairs.
Sir H. H. Sleseeer, K.C., Solicitor-General.

The following were also present:

Miss Margaret Bondfield, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Labour. (For Conclusion 1.)
Mr. A. V. Alexander, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Board of Trade. (For Conclusion 1.)
Sir Lionel Earle, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., C.M.G., Secretary, H.M. Office of Works. (For Conclusion 1.)
Mr. Malcolm Delevingne, K.C.B., Home Office. (For Conclusion 1.)
Mr. G. Stuart Robertson, K.C., Chief Registrar, Registry of Friendly Societies. (For Conclusion 6.)
Mr. F. J. Brown, C.B., C.B.E., General Post Office. (For Conclusions 2 and 3.)
Mr. F. D. G. Osborne, Foreign Office. (For Conclusions 4 and 5.)
Mr. G. W. Rendel, Foreign Office. (For Conclusions 4 and 5.)

Mr. B. C. Spoon, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury.
Sir Claud Schuster, K.C.B., C.V.O., K.C., Permanent Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Office.
Mr. V. A. H. Wellesley, C.B., Assistant Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office. (For Conclusion 5.)
Mr. H. Wolfe, C.B.E., Ministry of Labour. (For Conclusion 1.)
Mr. W. M. Graham Harrison, C.B., Second Parliamentary Counsel.
Mr. H. E. Pass, O.B.E., Assistant Secretary, Treasury (For Conclusions 2, 3 and 6.)
Mr. R. A. Wiseman, Colonial Office. (For Conclusions 2 and 3.)
Mr. C. W. Dixon, M.B.E., Colonial Office. (For Conclusions 2 and 3.)

Mr. Thomas Jones,
Mr. R. B. Howorth, Joint Secretaries to the Committee.
The White Lead Convention.

1. The Home Affairs Committee had under consideration the following documents relative to the ratification of the Geneva Convention as to the use of White Lead in painting:

- Memorandum by the Home Secretary C.P. 53 (24).
- Memorandum by the Lord President of the Council C.P. 90 (24).
- Memorandum by the First Commissioner of Works C.P. 106 (24).
- Memorandum by the Minister of Labour C.P. 109 (24).

In his Memorandum (C.P. 53 (24)) the Home Secretary recommended that the Government should decide in favour of the policy of ratification and suggested that an official announcement that the Government proposed to ratify the Convention and introduce the necessary legislation to give effect to its provisions should be made and that on the passage of the Bill into law the Government should formally ratify the Convention.

The Minister of Labour (C.P. 109 (24)) suggested, however, that the announcement should take the form that a Bill would be introduced as soon as possible, designed to give effect to the provisions of the Draft Convention and that should this Bill pass into law without amendments contrary to the provisions of the Draft Convention the Government then proposed to ratify the Convention. Unless the announcement was qualified as proposed the Government might be placed in an embarrassing position should Parliament introduce amendments into the proposed legislation in such a way that effect would no longer be given to all the provisions of the Convention.

With regard to the difficulties in the way of full ratification of the Convention referred to in Memoranda C.P. 53 (24) and C.P. 106 (24), the Committee were unanimously of opinion that the Government should ratify the Convention without any reservation or qualification.

The Committee were informed that, while there was reason to believe that the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia would not support the opposition to the Convention of certain Australian trade interests, that Government ought, as a matter of courtesy, to be notified of the British Government's decision respecting ratification before the decision is actually published.

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Cabinet—

1. That an official announcement should be made to the effect that a Bill would be introduced as soon as possible designed to give full effect to the provisions of the Draft White Lead Convention, and that, should this Bill pass into law without amendments contrary to the provisions of the Draft Convention, the Government then proposed formally to ratify the Convention.

2. That the Secretary of State for the Colonies should be authorised to communicate the decision of the Government to the various Dominion Governments prior to the public announcement referred to in (1) above, and that the Secretary of State for India should be authorised to make a similar communication to the Government of India.

3. That the Home Secretary should be authorised to circulate, for the consideration of the Home Affairs Committee, copies of a Draft Bill designed to give full effect to the provisions of the Draft Convention.
2. The Home Affairs Committee had before them a Memorandum (C.P. 80 (24)) by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury covering the Draft West Indian (Telegraph) Bill. As explained in the covering Memorandum, the Bill is required to enable the Treasury to provide the necessary capital for the manufacture and laying of the cables and for the necessary wireless plant required to carry out the proposed new telegraphic arrangements in the West Indies described in the Memorandum (C.P. 84 (24)) by the Secretary of State for the Colonies covering the Draft Pacific Cable Bill. A Financial Resolution would be required in the case of the present Bill, and as regards Clause 2 (2) the House of Commons would be informed that the rate of interest on the money borrowed under Clause 2 (1) would not exceed 5 per cent. The Committee agreed to recommend the Cabinet—

To authorise the introduction in the House of Commons of the West Indian (Telegraph) Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P. 80 (24).

3. The Home Affairs Committee had before them a Memorandum (C.P. 84 (24)) by the Secretary of State for the Colonies covering the Draft Pacific Cable Bill. The Committee were reminded of the present situation as regards telegraphic communications with the West Indies and of the need for urgent action on the lines described in the Secretary of State's Memorandum. The Committee agreed to recommend the Cabinet—

To authorise the introduction in the House of Commons of the Pacific Cable Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P. 84 (24), subject to any modifications which may be required to give effect to the result of negotiations as to the constitution and powers of the Pacific Cable Board now proceeding between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Dominion Governments represented upon the Board.

4. With reference to Cabinet 10 (24), Conclusion 2, the Home Affairs Committee had under consideration the Draft Treaty of Peace (Turkey) Bill (C.P. 105 (24)). The Committee agreed to recommend the Cabinet—

To approve the Treaty of Peace (Turkey) Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P. 105 (24), and to authorise the early introduction of the Bill in the House of Lords, unless Parliamentary considerations rendered introduction in the House of Commons necessary or desirable.

5. The Home Affairs Committee had under consideration a Memorandum (C.P. 95 (24)) by the Foreign Office covering the Draft China Indemnity (Application) Bill, 1924. The Committee were informed that this Bill is required to carry into effect the arrangements concluded in December 1922 with the Chinese Government, under which the proceeds of the British share of the Boxer Indemnity are to be devoted to purposes mutually beneficial to China and Great Britain instead of being ear-marked, as at present, for the reduction of the National Debt. The Committee were reminded of the urgency of the proposed legislation, and also of the intention to appoint a
Committee to investigate the allocation of the funds and the best means of securing their satisfactory administration as soon as the passage of the Bill into law is assured.

The Committee agreed to recommend the Cabinet—

To authorise the introduction in the House of Commons of the China Indemnity (Application) Bill, 1924, in the form of the draft annexed to C.P. 95 (24).

6. The Home Affairs Committee had before them a Memorandum (C.P. 62 (24)) by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury covering the Draft Friendly Societies Bill. The Committee were reminded of the urgent need for passing this Bill into law with the least possible delay, and it was also pointed out that since the Bill was approved by the Home Affairs Committee of the late Government, a suggestion has been made that opportunity should be taken to provide that the post of Chief Registrar, which has hitherto been confined to Barristers of twelve years' standing, should be open to Assistant Registrars, who are themselves usually either Barristers or Solicitors.

The Committee agreed to recommend the Cabinet—

To authorise the introduction in the House of Lords of the Friendly Societies Bill in the form of a draft annexed to C.P. 62 (24), subject to the addition of a clause giving effect to the suggestion that the post of Chief Registrar should in future be opened to Assistant Registrars.

7. The Chairman suggested that it might be convenient to Members of the Committee to have a fixed time and place for the future meetings, and proposed that the Committee should normally meet in the "Moses" Room, House of Lords, at 11 A.M. on Fridays.

The Committee agreed—

To adopt the Chairman's suggestion as to time and place of future meetings.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W. 1,
February 15, 1924.
Meeting of the Cabinet, to be held at
10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 28, 1924, at 11 a.m.

11 a.m. 1. IMPERIAL PREFERENCE.

(Procedure in Parliament in regard to
the proposals of the Imperial Economic
Conference.)

Ref: Cabinet 16 (24), Conclusion 3.

2. BRITISH CONCESSIONS IN CHINA.

Memo by the Secretary of State for Foreign
Affairs (C.P.-111 (24) - Already circulated).

Memo by the First Commissioner of Works
(C.P.-131 (24) - Already circulated).

Memo by the Chancellor of the Exchequer
(C.P.-138 (24) - To be circulated).

3. BRITISH DYES AGREEMENT.

Interim Report of Committee (C.P.-133 (24)
Already circulated).

4. LONDON TRAFFIC.

Memo by the Minister of Transport (C.P.-
130 (24) - Already circulated).

5. LAUSANNE TREATY (A question to be raised
by the Prime Minister).

6. COMMITTEE OF HOME AFFAIRS.

Consideration of Recommendations on
the following subjects:

(a) The Lead Paint (Protection against
Poisoning) Bill.
(H.A.C. 3rd Conclusions (24) 2.)

(b) The Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill.
(H.A.C. 3rd Conclusions (24) 3.)

(c) The Merchant Shipping (International
Conventions) Bill.
(H.A.C. 3rd Conclusions (24) 4.)

(d) The arbitration Clauses (Protocol) Bill.
(H.A.C. 3rd Conclusions (24) 5.)

(e) Post Office (London) Railway Bill.
(H.A.C. 3rd Conclusions (24) 7.)

(Sd.) M.P.A. HANKIN,
Secretary, Cabinet.
Meeting of the Cabinet, to be held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1924, at 11 a.m.

AGENDA.

The Prime Minister has approved the addition of the following subjects to the Agenda:

7. INDIAN AFFAIRS.
   (a) The question of Policy raised in the Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Paper C.P.-132 (24).)
   (b) The question of a Joint Select Committee of both Houses, - to be raised by the Secretary of State for India.

8. REPORT OF THE IMPERIAL WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY COMMITTEE.
   (Paper C.P.-137 (24)) - (For preliminary consideration).

9. RENT RESTRICTION.
   (To be raised by the Minister of Health).

(Sgd.) M.P.A. PANKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
February 27, 1924.
CABINET 17(24).

It is requested that any corrections to the attached Conclusions may be communicated to the Secretary not later than 12 Noon, Friday, the 29th instant.

NOTE. Conclusions 16 to 19 inclusive have not yet been submitted to the Prime Minister for approval.

(Signed) M.P.A. HANKEY.

Secretary,
Cabinet.

2, Whitchall Gardens, S.W.1.
28th February, 1924.
CABINET 17(24).

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28th, at 11 a.m.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).


The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.C.M.G., C.B., Secretary of State for India.


The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P., Secretary for Scotland.


The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. Stephen Walsh, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

Brig.-General The Right Hon. Lord Thomson, G.B.E., D.S.O., Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon. Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P., President of the Board of Education.

The Right Hon. Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P., Minister of Labour.


THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. H. Gosling, C.H., M.P., Minister of Transport (For Item 6).

Lient.-Col. Sir M.F.A. Hankey, C.C.B. Secretary.
CABINET 17 (24).

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1924, at 11 a.m.

1. The attention of the Cabinet was drawn to recent instances of leakage of confidential information: for example, in regard to certain naval matters, and to a proposal mentioned at a private Party meeting that the House of Commons should be asked to appoint a Select Committee on ex-ranker officers.

The Prime Minister appealed to all his colleagues to exercise the greatest discretion in mentioning confidential matters either publicly or privately, except in the course of official business.
2. The Cabinet agreed that the following general procedure, proposed by the Prime Minister, in regard to the recommendations of the Imperial Conference and the preferences, Imperial Economic Conference should be proposed to Parliament, subject to the agreement of Mr Baldwin and Mr Asquith:

Those of the recommendations to which this course was applicable and which the Government approved, should be included in the Finance Bill.

It would be in order to introduce, as amendments to the Finance Bill, some other recommendations of the same order but which were not included in the Finance Bill.

Parliamentary time would have to be provided for the discussion of a third category which did not come within the range of the first two; for instance, the resolution in favour of an Imperial Economic Committee.
3. The Cabinet agreed —

That the question of British Concessions in China, raised in Memoranda by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Paper C.P.-111 (24)), the First Commissioner of Works (Paper C.P.-131 (24)), and the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Paper C.P.-158 (24)), should be considered in the first instance by a Departmental Conference composed of representatives of —

The Treasury,
The Foreign Office,
The Office of Works,

which should be instructed to report its recommendations to the Cabinet.
4. After consideration of an Interim Report by the Cabinet Committee on British Dyes (Paper C.P.-133 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the President of the Board of Trade should be authorised to take such steps as he might deem advisable to avoid an agreement being reached by the British Dyestuffs Corporation with the German interests, and that he should have authority, in the last resort, to exercise the right of veto:

(b) That the question of the future of the British dye industry should be referred back to the Cabinet Committee for further consideration both of the ultimate arrangements for building up a British dye industry and of the interim arrangements for providing the trade with a supply of dyes adequate as regards price, quantity and quality:

(c) That the Minister of Labour and the First Commissioner of Works should be added to the Cabinet Committee.
5. The Cabinet were informed that the Treaty of Peace with Turkey, and the other instruments concluded at
Lausanne, were coming up for discussion in the House of
Lords the same afternoon.

The Cabinet were also informed that a strong attack
was developing in the House of Commons against the ratification of the Straits Convention. Further, that, in order to
obtain agreement to the Straits Convention, Lord Curzon
had made an explanation at Lausanne which gave a wider
interpretation to the Convention than the words used in
the instrument itself. The present Secretary of State for
Foreign Affairs had, however, given an answer in the House
of Commons to the effect that he could not be responsible
for any commitment outside the terms of the Convention
itself.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Prime Minister, as Secretary
of State for Foreign Affairs, should make
careful inquiry as to whether it would be
practicable to obtain the consent of the
Powers concerned to drop the Straits Con-
vention:

(b) That the Government representatives in the
House of Lords should endeavour to
adjourn the question at the end
of the Debate to take place the same day.
6. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Minister of Transport in regard to the London Traffic Bill (Paper C.P. -130 (24)), and after hearing from the Minister of Transport further details of his proposals and of the opposition which they were likely to meet from members of the Labour Party representing London constituencies and from certain elements in the Liberal Party, the Cabinet agreed --

(a) That a Bill, based on the proposals of the previous Government, but modified so as to include a larger representation of Labour on the Advisory Committee on London Traffic, which involved also an increase in the representation of Municipalities so as to give them a majority on the Committee, should be introduced with the least possible delay:

(b) That the details of the Bill should be examined at the earliest possible moment by the Committee of Home Affairs:

(c) That, in introducing the Bill, the Minister of Transport should make it clear that if the problem had not been so urgent, owing to the present congestion of traffic, the forthcoming Empire Exhibition, and to considerations affecting the earnings of tramway employes, the Government would have preferred to introduce a larger scheme connected with the general reform of London government; that, in order not to prejudice the introduction of the larger scheme, the Bill had been limited to three years, and that the interval would be occupied in studying the larger proposal:

(d) That after passing the Second Reading, the Bill should be sent to a Committee upstairs, where the Government would give technical assistance to the Committee in drafting:

(e) That the Government would undertake to give a Third Reading to the Bill in the form that it left the Committee.
7. After considering the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs (H.A.O. 3rd. Conclusions (24) Para. 2), and of a Memorandum by the Home Secretary covering the draft Bill (Paper C.P. 127 (24)), the Cabinet agreed --

That, unless the Lord President of the Council should be advised by the Home Secretary and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour that it was desirable to introduce the Bill in the House of Lords, the Lead Paint (Protection against Poisoning) Bill, in the form approved by the Committee of Home Affairs, should be introduced in the House of Commons.
8. The Cabinet approved the following recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs:

To authorise the introduction in the House of Lords of the Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, in the form of the draft annexed to Paper C.P.-72 (24), subject to any minor alterations which may be found necessary or desirable.

(H.A.O. 3rd. Conclusions (24), Para. 3.)
9. After consideration of the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs (H.A.C. 3rd. Conclusions (24) Para. 4) and of a Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade covering a draft Merchant Shipping (International Labour Conventions) Bill (Paper C.P.-74 (24)), and after taking note of a warning by the Secretary for Scotland that the Bill was likely to be opposed in the House of Commons at the instance of the fishing interests, the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the introduction in the House of Lords of the Merchant Shipping (International Labour Conventions) Bill in the form of the draft annexed to Paper C.P.-74 (24), subject to any drafting alterations which may be found necessary or desirable.
10. The Cabinet approved the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs (H.A.C. 3rd. Conclusions (24) Para. 5),

To authorise the introduction in the House of Lords of the Arbitration Clauses (Protocol) Bill, in the form of the draft annexed to Paper C.P.-73 (24).
11. The Cabinet approved the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs (H.A.C. 3rd. Conclusions (24) Para.7), -

To authorise the introduction of the Post Office (London) Railway Bill in the House of Commons in the form of the draft annexed to Paper C.P.-87 (24).
12. The Cabinet were informed that the School Teachers Superannuation Bill had been considered by
the Committee of Home Affairs (H.A.C. 3rd. Conclusions
(24) Para.1), but that, owing to the inability of the
National Union of Teachers to accept a compromise sug-
gested by the Committee of Home Affairs, it was now
proposed that there should be two separate Bills, one
for England and Wales, and the other for Scotland.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the question should be discussed,
in the first instance, between the Chancellor of
the Exchequer, the President of the Board of Education
and the Secretary for Scotland, after
which it should be dealt with by the
Committee of Home Affairs.
13. The Cabinet had under consideration a Memorandum by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in regard to Indian Affairs (Paper CP.-132 (24), together with a series of telegrams between the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy, which had been circulated to the Cabinet by the Secretary of State (Paper CP.-55 (24), Paper CP.-91 (24), Paper CP.-120 (24), Paper CP.-142 (24)).

The Cabinet were informed that a question was to be asked in the House of Lords the same afternoon as to whether it was proposed this Session to set up a Joint Select Committee of both Houses for the consideration of Indian Affairs, on the lines of corresponding Committees in previous Sessions of Parliament.

After full discussion of the proposal for a "round table" conference with representatives of the Indian interests concerned in the subject of the working of the Government of India act, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the policy of the Government should be, as already announced, to work towards Dominion Home Rule in India, but that, before taking any decision as to the next step in advance, or as to when it should be taken, the whole situation should be thoroughly explored. In the meantime every effort should be made to induce nationalists in India not to put pressure on the Government to take ill-considered or premature action before they had had time to examine the question in all its details;

(b) To approve the general line taken by the Secretary of State for India after consultation with the Prime Minister, both in his statement in the House of Lords on February 20th, and in his telegrams (Paper CP.-95 (24), Paper CP.-91 (24) and Paper CP.-120 (24)) to the Viceroy.

(c) That the Secretary of State for India should ask for a postponement for a week of the question to be asked in the House of Lords as to whether the Government proposed to set up a Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament on Indian Affairs, and that the question should be further considered at the next Meeting of the Cabinet.
14. Arising out of the discussion on Indian Policy, the Cabinet agreed --

That Ministers, before making public statements on large questions of policy, should, if circumstances permit, first bring the question to the notice of the Cabinet, particularly in cases where there was a possibility either of a divergence of view in any quarter or of uncertainty as to the policy of the Government.
15. After a preliminary consideration of a Report of the Imperial Wireless Telegraphy Committee—(Paper C.P.-137 (24), the Cabinet agreed—

(a) That the Postmaster-General should have authority to present the Report to Parliament, but should make it unmistakably clear that the Report was published for information only, and that the Government had not yet had time to consider it and had formed no opinion on the recommendations contained in the Report:

(b) That the decision of the Government should not be announced until after they had heard the views of the Dominions and India, to whom (the Cabinet were informed) the gist of the Report had been communicated:

(c) That the question should be considered as soon as the views of the Departments concerned were available.
16. The Cabinet agreed --

That the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of the Home Office should be authorised to indicate that the Government were in favour of a Second Reading being given to the Representation of People's Bill to be introduced by a Private Member on the following day, but that he should be very careful to avoid giving any indication as to what the attitude of the Government would be after the Bill had passed through Committee upstairs.
17. With a view to making clear the attitude of the Government in regard to Rent Restriction, the Cabinet agreed --

(a) That the Minister of Health should take as a basis Mr. Benjamin Gardner's (Private) Rent Restriction Bill, and, in consultation with the Secretary for Scotland, should draft such amendments to it as would bring it into consonance with the policy of the Government on this subject:

(b) That the Bill, as so amended, and the procedure to be adopted in regard to the question, should be remitted to --

The Prime Minister,
The Minister of Health,
The Secretary for Scotland.
The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the proposed Betting Tax should not be adopted by the Government:

(b) That the Chancellor of the Exchequer should arrange for a Question to be asked on the subject in the House of Commons on Tuesday, March 4th.
19. The Cabinet agreed --

That, unless an emergency meeting was required in the interval, the next meeting should be held on THURSDAY, MARCH 6th, 1924, at 11 a.m.

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Note.

As the Prime Minister has a political engagement on Thursday, he proposes to alter the date to WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5th, at 11 a.m.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.

February 28, 1924.
19. The Cabinet agreed —

That, unless an emergency meeting was required in the interval, the next meeting should be held on THURSDAY, MARCH 6th, 1924, at 11 a.m.

NOTE.

As the Prime Minister has a political engagement on Thursday, he proposes to alter the date to WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5th, at 11 a.m.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

February 23, 1924.
Meeting of the Cabinet, to be held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 1924, at 11 a.m.

AGENDA.

1. INDIA.
   (a) Proposed Joint Select Committee of both Houses on Indian Affairs.
       (Ref: Cabinet 17 (24) Conclusion 13.)
   (b) Proposals for dealing further with the present situation in India.
       Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (C.P.-151 (24) - to be circulated).

2. UNEMPLOYMENT.
   (a) Second Interim Report of Unemployment Committee (C.P.-143 (24) - already circulated).
   (b) Note on Training and Employment of Women (C.P.-148.A (24) - to be circulated).
   (c) Report of Juvenile Unemployment Committee (C.P.-148 (24) - to be circulated).

3. NECESSITOUS AREAS.
   Memorandum by the Minister of Health (C.P.-135 (24) - already circulated).

4. IRISH LAND PURCHASE GUARANTEE.
   Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies (C.P.-126 (24) - already circulated.)
5. **PALESTINE. PROPOSED SPECIAL LEGISLATION FOR TRIBAL AREAS.**

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies (C.P.-152 (24) - circulated herewith).

6. **POLICE PAY.**

Report of Committee (C.P.-154 (24) - to be circulated).

7. **CONCLUSIONS OF HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (H.A.C.4 (24).)**

(a) The Local Authorities (Emergency Provisions) **BILL.**

   (H.A.C. 4 (24), Conclusion 1.)

(b) The Measuring Instruments **Bill.**

   (H.A.C. 4 (24), Conclusion 3.)

(c) The Therapeutic Substances **Bill.**

   (H.A.C. 4 (24), Conclusion 5.)

(d) The Public Health (Scotland) Amendment **BILL.**

   (H.A.C. 4 (24), Conclusion 6.)

(e) The Re-organisation of Offices (Scotland) **BILL.**

   (H.A.C. 4 (24), Conclusion 7.)

   ... ...

(Signed) M.P.A. HANKEY,

Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

March 4, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet
held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1.,
on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5th, 1924, at 11 a.m.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.,
Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).


The Right Hon. J.R. Clynes, M.P.,
Lord Privy Seal.

The Right Hon. A. Henderson, M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs.

The Right Hon. Stephen Walsh, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

Brig.-General The Right Hon. Lord Thomson, C.B.E., D.S.C., Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon. Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P., President of the Board of Education.

The Right Hon. Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P.,
Minister of Labour.

The Right Hon. Vernon Hartshorn, C.B.E., M.P.,
Postmaster-General.

The Right Hon. V.W. Jowett, M.P.,
First Commissioner of Works.

The Right Hon. Viscount Haldane, K.T., C.M.,
Lord Chancellor.

The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P.,
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
Secretary of State for India.

First Lord of the Admiralty.

The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P.,
Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P.,
Secretary for Scotland.

Col. The Right Hon. J.C. Wedgwood, D.S.C., M.P.,
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Lt.-Col. Sir M.J.A. Hankey, C.C.B. .. . . .. . .. .. .. Secretary.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5th, 1924, at 11.0 a.m.

SINGAPORE.

1. The Prime Minister read to his colleagues a draft Statement, which had been approved by the Cabinet Committee the same morning, setting forth the Government's policy in regard to Singapore (Appendix). He made a special appeal to his colleagues not to mention the matter outside until the announcement was made in Parliament.

The Cabinet agreed—

(a) To approve the Statement of Policy in the Appendix:

(b) That the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Secretary of State for India should immediately communicate the gist of the Statement to the Governments of the Dominions and India respectively; it should be made clear to the Dominions that, in present circumstances, advantage would not be taken of the offer of the New Zealand Government to contribute £100,000 towards the cost of the proposed base.

(c) That no announcement in regard to the policy should be made until sufficient time had been given to enable the Dominions and India to send replies if they wished:

(d) That the Prime Minister should arrange for a Private Notice Question to be put to him at an early date to which he would reply to the effect that the Cabinet were considering the question of Singapore and were in communication with the Dominions and India, and that he did not expect to be in a position to give a reply in any event before Tuesday next, March 11th.
(e) That, in order to avoid further loss of Parliamentary time, every endeavour should be made to arrange that the House of Commons should debate the Statement on the Naval Estimates, which it was hoped might be introduced by March 21st.

(f) That no expenditure should be included in the Naval Estimates in respect of the development of the naval base at Singapore, but that, if necessary, the Admiralty should include a sufficient sum to complete certain work on ground taken over to prevent it becoming a mosquito swamp, and any expenditure involved in closing down the work already begun; and retransporting the stores, etc.

The First Lord of the Admiralty undertook to enquire and report as to particulars which had appeared in the Press on the previous day of a statement or lecture made to representatives of the Press in regard to matters affecting the establishment of a Naval Base at Singapore, such as the figures of British trade and shipping in Eastern waters.
2. After discussion of the proposal to set up a Standing Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament on Indian Affairs, the Cabinet agreed —

That, on the understanding that the Committee would be purely advisory, the Secretary of State for India should have authority to obtain the sanction of Parliament to the following Resolution giving the Terms of Reference to a Standing Joint Committee on Indian Affairs:

"That it is desirable that a Standing Joint Committee on Indian Affairs of both Houses of Parliament be appointed to examine and report on any Bill or matter referred to them specifically by either House of Parliament, and to consider, with a view to reporting, if necessary, any matter relating to Indian Affairs brought to the notice of the Committee by the Secretary of State for India."
3. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India in regard to the next move in Indian Affairs (Paper C.P. -151 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

(a) To suggest to Colonel Josiah Wedgwood that he should reply to the private telegram from Motilal Nehru, of the 22nd February, 1924, asking him to hold his hand for the present and to give the Government time to explore the many difficulties of the Indian situation:

(b) That a Cabinet Committee, composed as follows:

The Secretary of State for India (in the Chair),
The First Lord of the Admiralty,
The President of the Board of Trade,
The President of the Board of Education,
The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster,

should meet to consider Indian questions, with authority to consult members of the Secretary of State's Council and others.

The Secretary was instructed to mention the establishment of this Committee in the Press Communiqué.
After consideration of the Second Interim Report of the Unemployment Committee (Paper C.P.-143 (24)), the Cabinet agreed to approve the following recommendations:

1. That no alteration should be made in the existing terms (for which see Appendix to C.P.-75 (4)) of financial assistance given to local authorities and statutory bodies and other similar public utility undertakings.

2. That the Unemployment Grants Committee should be authorised to assist schemes on the loan basis during the autumn and winter of 1924/25 up to a maximum value of £20,000,000 in addition to the schemes to be approved in the immediate future for which sanction has been already given up to £23,000,000.

3. That the Unemployment Grants Committee should be authorised to assist schemes on the basis of 50% of the wages cost during the financial year 1924/25 to the additional extent of £250,000, this further amount to be accordingly provided for in the Committee's Estimates for 1924/25.

4. That the Unemployment Grants Committee should be authorised, as in the past, to assist schemes at discretion, the carrying out of which would be effected in not more than two years, and that this period should be extended to not more than four years in special cases with Treasury sanction; it being understood that the Cabinet would be favourably disposed to a liberal interpretation being placed by the Unemployment Grants Committee on the exercise of their discretion in the matter of schemes, the duration of which will not exceed two years.

5. That no alteration be made in the existing arrangements relative to the recruitment of labour through the local Employment Exchange.

6. That no alteration should be made in the present arrangements under which, while normally not less than 75% of the men employed on relief works shall be Ex-Service men, the Unemployment Grants Committee may modify the requirements as they think fit.
(7) That the Ministry of Labour Certificate as to Unemployment in the area be retained as one important factor in deciding whether the grant is to be made, but not so as to make the giving of the Certificate an essential condition of a grant by the Unemployment Grants Committee or the Ministry of Transport.

(8) That in future the following arrangements respecting the wages of relief works be adopted:

(i) Where the Local Authority undertakes the work by direct labour the rate of wages paid must not exceed the Local Authority's rate to its own workmen on similar classes of work, or the recognised District Rate (where such exists) if that is lower.

(ii) It being understood that the wages fixed by (i) above are to be the money wages, no account being taken of privileges or their money equivalent.

(9) That the Circular announcing the terms and conditions on which the Unemployment Grants Committee will give assistance in 1924/25 should be drafted with a view to the public being informed, so far as practicable, of the exact nature of the conditions under which the assistance is given.

(10) That the Unemployment Grants Committee should be authorised to adhere to their existing procedure as regards the use of imported materials on relief works.

(11) That general approval should be given to the new £13,500,000 Road and Bridge programme outlined in C.U. 636, on the understanding that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will examine with the Minister of Transport the question of the method by which the proposed new programme can best be financed, it being understood that this recommendation in no way precludes future discussion of the extent to which the proposed new road programme can best be financed.

(12) That the Minister of Transport should be requested to limit his commitments on the major schemes within the shortest possible period so as to be in a position to defer schemes wholly or in part in the event of a substantial improvement in the Unemployment situation taking place.
Electricity. 

That attention should be drawn to the desirability of the acceleration of the Mid-Lancashire, East Midlands and North-West Midlands (West Bromwich) schemes and that the Ministry of Transport should be requested to take steps to impress upon the Local Authorities concerned the importance, from the unemployment point of view, of proceeding with the schemes without further delay.

Railway, Dock, etc. Schemes.

That the question of giving financial assistance to the Railway Groups, so as to enable them to accelerate works is one of policy for the Cabinet to decide at some future date after the results of Conferences between Ministers and the Railway Groups are known. Before reaching a decision the Cabinet will no doubt have regard on the one hand to the alleviation of unemployment which would be afforded by the acceleration of Light Railway construction undertaken by the Railway Groups with Government assistance, and on the other hand to the grave political objections to special financial assistance being given by the Government to the Railway Groups.

Grimsby Fish Dock.

To take note of and approve the action taken by the Unemployment Committee in authorising the Minister of Labour, as a matter of urgency, formally to confirm the notification (given orally by him in pursuance of a decision of the Unemployment Committee) to a Grimsby deputation that on the facts before them the Government do not see their way to the grant of financial assistance to the North-Eastern Railway Company in respect of the construction of the Grimsby Fish Dock.

Tilbury Works.

That the President of the Board of Trade and the Minister of Transport should be authorised to interview the Port of London Authority and endeavour if possible to persuade the Authority to undertake the Tilbury works forthwith on Unemployment Grants Committee terms, suggesting that the Authority should approach the Unemployment Grants Committee, and should undertake that the Government would give further consideration to the matter if it ultimately transpired that the Unemployment Grants Committee were unable to grant the Authority assistance on the usual terms.

The Northern and Western Motorway.

That an announcement should be made in the House of Commons by means of Question and Answer that, while assistance by means of the Trade Facilities Act machinery has been open to the promoters of the Northern and Western Motorway
as to any other commercial venture, the promoters have been unable to satisfy the Trade Facilities Committee as to their share of the cost of the undertaking and it must now be understood that the scheme has no Government support.

(18) That, having regard to the political and other considerations involved, the Minister of Transport should submit to the Cabinet a statement of the position regarding trunk road reconstruction from the transport point of view, the statement to deal fully with the question of the restoration of the roads in question and the effect of such restoration on unemployment.

(19) That no alteration should be made in the present arrangements under which the Unemployment Grants Committee and the Ministry of Transport assist rural road undertakings.

(20) That no alteration should be made in the present arrangements under which the Unemployment Grants Committee assist approved land reclamation etc. schemes.

(21) That the Secretary of State for War should be authorised at once to place orders for engineering, textile and other stores provided for in the Army Estimates 1924/25, to a total value of £1,350,000.

(22) That the Secretary of State for Air should be authorised to accelerate, so far as practicable, the placing of orders for stores, works, etc., for which provision is made in the Air Estimates 1924/25, and which are indicated in Part I of the Air Ministry's Note annexed to C.U.-647.

(23) That the First Commissioner of Works should be authorised to expend a sum not exceeding £44,000 in carrying out the work specified in his letter of 4th February, 1924, annexed to C.U.-647, and that the necessary provision for this expenditure should be made in the Office of Works Estimates for 1924/25.

(24) That the provision of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for assisting land drainage, etc. works during the current season should be increased from £250,000 to £310,000.

(25) That the provision of the Board of Agriculture for Scotland for land drainage, etc. works in Scotland during the current season should be increased from £35,000 to £50,000.
(26) That the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries should be authorised to continue land drainage and water supply schemes next Autumn and for that purpose should arrange for the necessary priority work to be done during the coming Summer in order that the schemes might be able to start early in October.

(27) That the Scottish Board of Agriculture should be authorised to undertake land drainage etc. works in Scotland in the coming Autumn and Winter and that the necessary financial provision should be made in the Estimates for Unemployment Relief - the amount to be determined by the Treasury in consultation with the Secretary for Scotland.

(28) That the provision of the Forestry Commission for Unemployment relief works and grants schemes during the current season should be increased from £50,000 to £80,000. (See Conclusion 5.)

(29) That the extension of the present arrangements for assisting Public Utility Undertakings to ordinary private enterprise is only practicable (from the point of view of providing substantial employment) if the Government are prepared to offer assistance to all forms and varieties of private enterprise without any restriction as to the nature of the work undertaken. The adoption of such a policy is open to the gravest political, economic and financial objections and it is in the highest degree improbable that, even if adopted, unemployment would be permanently relieved or the public interest safeguarded.

(30) That the question of removing the existing bar to assistance being given to the Railway Groups, the only substantial public utility undertakings which are at present ineligible for Government assistance, should be considered after the results of the Conferences between Ministers and the Railways are known.

(31) To take note that the Unemployment Committee hope to be shortly in a position to report to the Cabinet on the following outstanding questions:

(a) Juvenile Unemployment.
(b) The position in certain basic industries.
(c) Unemployment among women.
(d) The Railway Groups and Unemployment Relief Undertakings.
32) That before definitely entering into major unemployment relief undertakings spread over a considerable period of time, Departments concerned should take care to secure the Government's commitments are limited within the shortest period compatible with efficiency and economy.

33) To authorise arrangements being made for the earliest possible announcement in Parliament of the proposals of the Government for the relief of unemployment, the announcement in question to cover the various recommendations contained in the Committee's Interim Report (Paper C.P.-65 (24) and in the Report now under consideration (Paper C.P.-143 (24), reference also being made to certain outstanding matters of which it was hoped to make a supplementary announcement in the near future. (See, for example, the Second Interim Report on Unemployment, Supplementary Note on the Training and Employment of Women (Paper C.P.-145 A. (24)).

The question of when the announcement should be made was left to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Labour.
5. With reference to Conclusion 4 (28), the Cabinet agreed --

That the Secretary for Scotland should place himself in communication with the Ministers at the head of the Departments concerned, with a view to the appointment of a small Expert Committee to consider the present position and the policy of the Government in regard to Afforestation, and should submit to the Cabinet (at their next meeting, if possible) proposals as to the Terms of Reference and composition of the Committee.
6. The Cabinet had before them a Report by the Unemployment Committee covering the Report of its Sub-Committee on the question of Juvenile Unemployment, and containing certain recommendations (Paper 0.P.-143 (24)).

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Minister of Labour, in preparing for the information and consideration of the Cabinet an Unemployment Insurance Bill, should be authorised to make provision in the Bill for the extension of Unemployment Insurance to juveniles as and when they begin to work for wages;

(b) That, during the preparation of the Bill referred to in (a), the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Education and the Secretary for Scotland, should examine the question of Juvenile Unemployment in all its bearings and report to the Cabinet;

(c) That as from April 1st, 1924, the Exchequer Grant in aid of Juvenile Unemployment Centres should, as an emergency measure, be raised to 100% for so long as unemployment among boys and girls remains on its present scale: on the clear understanding, however, that the grant will only be made in respect of approved expenditure and that the charges to be made by Local Education Authorities must include only out-of-pocket expenses (e.g., must not include rent of premises already occupied by them);

(d) That the Ministry of Labour, in conjunction with the Board of Education and the Scottish Office, should be requested to arrange to make special enquiries in selected areas as to the extent to which in fact there is unemployment and possibly demoralisation among boys and girls between 14 and 16 who have left school and have done no work, and as to the best way of dealing with such demoralisation if it exists;

(e) To take note that the President of the Board of Education is prepared, in particular areas where there is a grave problem of unemployed leavers, to invite the Local Education Authorities concerned to consider the submission of bye-laws raising the school leaving age to 15, with special arrangements for considering individual claims for exemption on such grounds as beneficial employment.
7. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Minister of Health in regard to the proposals of a Deputation that a grant should be made from State funds to necessitous Poor Law areas in accordance with what may be called the "East Ham Formula" (Paper C.P.—135 (24)), the Cabinet agreed—

(a) For the reasons given in the Minister of Health's Memorandum, to confirm the policy of the previous Government, namely, that no free grants should be made, but that where the strain on a Poor Law Authority is shown to be too great, assistance should be given by way of loan, if necessary, with interest and repayment of capital postponed for a period before the end of which the financial position of the Authority would be further considered and further relief afforded, if necessary, to the point even of writing off some or all of the advances (though this latter concession should continue to be kept in the background as much as possible in order to encourage the Authority to do its best to meet its difficulties):

(b) That the aim of the Government should be, as far as possible, to meet the needs of the situation by an extended Unemployment programme, and also through the medium of the Unemployment Insurance Acts by the reduction or abolition of gap periods and other similar measures:

(c) That in refusing the free grant the Minister of Health should refer to what had already been done, and to what the Government had in view as regards the general Unemployment Policy and the amendment of the Unemployment Insurance scheme:

(d) That the Secretary for Scotland should have discretion, if he thought fit, in view of the above Conclusions, to present a Memorandum to the Cabinet in regard to the case of Poor Law Authorities in necessitous areas in Scotland.
S. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the subject of the British guarantee for the bonds to be issued under the Irish Free State Land Act of 1923 (Paper C.P.-128 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

(a) To authorise the Chancellor of the Exchequer to introduce and proceed with a Bill to implement the undertaking of the British Government to guarantee the bonds to be issued under the Irish Free State Land Act of 1923.

(b) That the Secretary of State for the Colonies should be prepared to take charge of the Bill.
9. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies covering a Despatch from the High Commissioner in Palestine, in which it was proposed to enact an Ordinance to enable District Governors in Palestine to enforce the principle of collective responsibility upon Tribal sections in villages in Tribal Areas and, where necessary, to impose collective punishment (whether by fine or otherwise) for the misdemeanours of individuals (Paper C.P.-152 (24)), the Cabinet agreed to authorise the Secretary of State for the Colonies —

(a) To approve the draft Ordinance, subject to such verbal amendments as the Secretary of State for the Colonies might deem necessary;

(b) To invite Sir Herbert Samuel to review the whole question again during the coming year, with a view to submitting at its close such further recommendations as he may think desirable.
10. After consideration of the Report of a Committee which had been appointed by the Prime Minister as a matter of urgency, to examine the question of Police Pay (Paper C.P.-154 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

That the Home Secretary should be authorised to make the following announcement of the Government's policy as regards police pay questions at the forthcoming meeting of the Police Council:

(i) That it is not proposed to modify the existing arrangements as regards the pay and conditions of service of the police and that the arrangements under which economies are now being effected will be continued, and any proposals for terminating those arrangements will be resisted:

(ii) That no departure from the principle of standardisation is contemplated and that the Government reaffirm the attitude adopted by previous Governments on this question:

(iii) That the Government will approach the question of the terms on which new recruits are to be obtained with an open mind. While recognising that there is something to be said for and against the revision of the present arrangements, the Government invite the friendly co-operation of the Police Council in the examination of the matter.

In taking the above decisions the Cabinet was given clearly to understand that the question of the pay of new recruits for the Police Forces was kept open by Conclusion (iii).

The Home Secretary undertook to deal with the proposal in the Report of Lord Desborough's Committee (Appendix to C.P.-154 (24)) that any future review of the conditions of service in the Police should be dealt with by the machinery of the Police Council.
After consideration of a Memorandum by the Minister of Health (Paper C.P.-144 (24)) and the draft Local Authorities (Emergency Provisions) Bill (Paper C.P.-78 (24)) and the recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Minister of Health should be authorised to introduce forthwith in the House of Commons the Local Authorities (Emergency Provisions) Bill in the form of the draft C.P.-78 (24);

(b) That the Minister of Health should have discretion, if pressed, to reduce the period of the duration of the Bill from two years to one year.

(H.A.C. 4 (24); Para. 1.)
After consideration of a Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade covering the draft Measuring Instruments Bill (Paper C.P.-75 (24)) and the recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon, the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the introduction in the House of Commons of the Measuring Instruments Bill in the form of the draft attached to C.P.-75 (24) (subject to any drafting alterations which may be found necessary or desirable), on the understanding that it would not be possible for the Government to regard the Bill as of so urgent a character as to justify giving it any special precedence.

(H.A.C. 4 (24), Para. 3.)
13. After consideration of a Note by the Minister of Health, covering a draft Therapeutic Substances Bill (Paper C.P.-61 (24)), and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon, the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the introduction of the Therapeutic Substances Bill in the form of a draft circulated with C.P.-61 (24). The Bill to be introduced in the House of Lords unless the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury could arrange for its early introduction in the House of Commons.

(H.A.C. 4 (24), Para. 5.)
14. After consideration of a Memorandum covering a draft Public Health (Scotland) Amendment Bill (Paper C.P.-141 (24)), and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (H.A.C. 4 (24), Para. 6), the Cabinet agreed --

(a) That the Secretary for Scotland should enlarge the scope of the Bill by the addition of a Clause enabling its provisions to be extended by Order in Council to medicines and treatment for persons suffering from other diseases besides diabetes;

(b) To approve the introduction of the Public Health (Scotland) Amendment Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-141 (24) amended as above. The Bill to be introduced in the House of Lords unless the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury could arrange for its early introduction in the House of Commons.
15. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary for Scotland covering the draft Reorganisation of Offices (Scotland) Bill (Paper C.P.-70 (24)) and a further Memorandum dealing with savings to be realised by the Bill (Paper C.P.-147 (24)), as well as the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon, the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the introduction in the House of Lords of the Reorganisation of Offices (Scotland) Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-70 (24), on the understanding that the attention of the House would be drawn to the fact that the Government proposed to continue the Scottish Board of Health on existing lines subject to the specific modifications contained in Clause 2 of the Bill.

(H.A.C. 4 (24), Para. 7.)

The Cabinet were informed that in the course of Parliamentary debate it was by no means improbable that amendments would be moved suggesting the abolition of some of the Scottish Boards and their attachment to the Departments of the Under-Secretaries.

The Secretary for Scotland undertook to give careful consideration to this question.
The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Home Secretary on the subject of Summer Time (Paper C.P.-155 (2d), which was brought forward as a matter of urgency.

The Cabinet were informed that the opposition of the agricultural interests to Summer Time was now somewhat less than before, and that if Summer Time was to be continued they would prefer that it should be continued until the end of October.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the British delegates at the forthcoming Conference should be instructed to endeavour to obtain uniformity with France and Belgium on the basis of an extension of British Summer Time to the end of October, if possible:

(b) That the necessary legislation should be prepared after the forthcoming Conference with French and Belgian representatives, and that it should, if possible, be permanent.
17. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Home Secretary on the Guardianship of Infants (Paper C.P.-150 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

That, in fulfilment of an undertaking given by the Prime Minister in answer to a Question by Mrs Wintringham in Parliament on the 18th February, the Home Secretary should appoint a small Committee to consider the question and to confer with those who are supporting Mrs Wintringham's Bill and with those members of the House of Lords who have in previous Sessions supported a measure on the subject. The Committee should include one of the Law Officers and representatives of the Lord Chancellor and Home Secretary.
The attention of the Cabinet was called, as a matter of urgency, to the Merchandise Marks Bill to be introduced by a Private Member on Friday March 7th. In reference to the attitude of the Government towards this Bill, the Cabinet agreed—

(a) That the Government should take no action for supporting or rejecting the Bill:

(b) That the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries should be authorised, at his discretion, to express his own opinion in favour of the Bill, but to make clear that he was not speaking for the Government on the subject, and that he should give no indication whatsoever of the views held by his colleagues:

(c) That members of the Government should be free to vote either for or against the Bill, but should not take part in the Debate.
10. The attention of the Cabinet was drawn, and matter of urgency, to a Question to be asked in the House of Commons the same afternoon by Mr. Penny, as to whether the whole or any part of the damages awarded against the Defendants in a case of wrongful detention in an asylum, tried in the King's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice last week, is to be paid by the Crown.

The Cabinet agreed—

That the answer should be as follows:—

An appeal is being entered against the Judgment in this case. Under the Judgment a sum of £5,000 is to be paid to the Plaintiff by the Defendant Dr. Bond on or before Friday next. In accordance with the principle always observed when a public servant is sued in respect of actions taken in performance of his duty and the Crown undertakes the defence, this sum will be paid from public funds. An advance of £5,000 is accordingly being made from the Civil Contingencies Fund and the House will be asked to vote this sum and any further sum that may be found necessary by a Supplementary Vote on the Board of Control Estimates.

As the appeal is sub judice, it would not, I think, be possible to debate the case in the House pending the result.

The Cabinet were informed that the Minister of Health was considering the desirability of advising the King to appoint a Royal Commission to consider the question of the law relating to lunacy, as well as the Terms of Reference.
20. The attention of the Cabinet was called, as a matter of urgency, to the obstruction being offered in Parliament to the legislation necessary to carry on the King's Service, and it was suggested that the Government should, when they deem necessary, move the suspension of the Eleven O'clock Rule, even in cases where they had reason to anticipate its rejection, in order to throw on to Parliament the onus of holding up essential business.

The question was not discussed in detail, as the Lord Privy Seal was no longer present, but the Prime Minister undertook to take the matter up with the Lord Privy Seal and other Ministers concerned.
21. The Cabinet agreed —

That, in the absence of emergency business, the next meeting should be held on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 1924, at 11 a.m.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
March 5, 1924.
After consultation with Admiral of the Fleet Earl Beatty, the Prime Minister proposes some amendments to the Statement of Policy in regard to Singapore as approved by the Cabinet at their Meeting on March 5th.

The amendments are shown in the revised draft attached.

(Signed) M.P.A. HAMKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
March 8, 1924.
APPENDIX

STATEMENT OF POLICY IN REGARD TO SINGAPORE.

We have given careful consideration to the proposal to develop the create-athe Naval Base at Singapore. We have closely studied the reasons which led to the adoption of this project, and the arguments in support of its continuation naval defence. urged upon us from the point of view of technical-strategy.

We have, however, to consider the matter in a wider relationship, and have come to the conclusion that we cannot ask Parliament to proceed with this scheme. We are convinced that if we were to do so our action would exercise a most detrimental effect on our general foreign policy. As we have repeatedly stated, we stand for a policy of international co-operation through a strengthened and enlarged League of Nations, the settlement of disputes by conciliation and judicial arbitration, and the creation of conditions which will make a comprehensive agreement on limitation of armaments possible. As stated in the Prime Minister's letter to M. Poincaré of February 21st, - "Our task meanwhile must be to establish confidence, and this task can only be achieved by allaying the international suspicions and anxieties which exist today."

We are convinced, apart from any other considerations, that to continue the development of the Naval Base at Singapore would hamper the establishment of this confidence and lay our good faith open to suspicion. Whilst maintaining present standards in a state of complete efficiency, we take the view that it would be a serious mistake to begin new developments that could only be justified on assumptions
that would definitely admit that we had doubts in the
success of our own policy. As a result we should almost
inevitably drift into a condition of mistrust and competi-
tion of armaments in the Far East.

It is generally admitted that the Singapore Base is
an essential urged early as part of a complete defensive Pacific
strategy. Should the practical necessity for putting
such a strategy into operation arise by reason of the
condition of world politics and a return to attempts to
provide Imperial security primarily by armaments, the
whole question would have to be re-considered, but in
the opinion of His Majesty's Government that has not now
arisen, and it is the duty of His Majesty's Government
to try and prevent its arising.

We have every confidence in our policy, and we desire
to give it the best possible chance of success. As an
earnest of our good faith, therefore, we have decided
not to proceed with the Naval Base at Singapore.

(Jntd.) J.R.M.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
March 6, 1924.
SINGAPORE.

With reference to Conclusion 1 (d) on the subject of Singapore, reached at the Meeting of the Cabinet on March 5th, I am directed by the Prime Minister to inform members of the Cabinet that after further consideration, in consultation with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, of the undertakings in Parliament to consult the Dominions and India in regard to the Singapore Base, it is necessary to allow more time to the Dominions and India than was at first proposed, to enable them to express their views. The Dominions and India have been informed that the Government will be obliged to make their position clear at the latest on the Naval Estimates, which it is hoped to introduce on March 17th, but that, if possible, they would prefer to make the announcement next week.

The Prime Minister asks that, in the meanwhile, no confirmation will be given to the rumours in the Press on this subject.

(Signed) M. P. A. HANKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W. 1,
March 6, 1924.
Meeting to be held at 10, Downing Street, S.W. (1), on Wednesday, March 12th 1924, at 11 a.m.

AGENDA.

1. LONDON TRAFFIC BILL.

Memorandum by the Minister of Transport.
(C.P. 163 (24) - already circulated.)

Memorandum by the Minister of Labour.
(C.P. 170 (24) - To be circulated.)

2. IMPERIAL AND IMPERIAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCES - THE PROPOSED PROCEEDINGS.

Note by the Secretary, covering a summary of the Proceedings of the Imperial and Imperial Economic Conferences.
(C.P. - 69 (24) - already circulated.)

Note by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, covering a Memorandum by Lord Arnold.
(C.P. 112 (24) - already circulated.)

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.
(C.P. 140 (24) - already circulated.)

3. IMPERIAL WIRELESS SERVICE.

Memorandum by the Postmaster-General
(C.P. - 157 (24) - already circulated.)

Note by the First Lord of the Admiralty covering recommendations of the Imperial Communications Committee.
(C.P. 166 (24) - To be circulated.)

(To ascertain progress.)

4. RELATIONS OF THE NAVY AND THE AIR FORCE.

Note by the First Lord of the Admiralty.
(C.P. 151 (24) - already circulated.)

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Air.
(C.P. 166 (21) - To be circulated.)
5. **FORESTRY. APPOINTMENT OF EXPERT COMMITTEE.**

   Secretary for Scotland to submit proposals as to Terms of Reference and Composition of Committee.
   (Ref. Cabinet 18 (24) Conclusions 5.)

6. **KENYA.**

   Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.
   (C.P. - 171 (24) - To be circulated.)

7. **COMMUNICATION OF INFORMATION TO THE PRESS.**

   Note by the First Lord of the Admiralty.
   (C.P. - 162 (24) - already circulated.)

8. **CABINET MINISTERS AND EX-CABINET MINISTERS AND BY-ELECTIONS.**

   (To be raised by the Prime Minister.)

9. **UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BILL.**

   (To take note that a Cabinet Committee has been set up by the Prime Minister.)
   (C.P. 167 (24) - To be circulated.)

10. **THE COAL DISPUTE.**

    Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade.
    (C.P. 172 (24) - to be circulated.)

11. **MALTA - ELIGIBILITY OF EMPIRE EMPLOYEES IN MALTA AS CANDIDATES FOR THE MALTA LEGISLATURE.**

    Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.
    (C.P. 145 (24) - already circulated.)
12. CONCLUSIONS OF HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

(a) The Auxiliary Air Force and Air Force Reserve Bill.  
[H.A.C. 5 (24) Conclusion 1.]

(b) The Agriculture Returns Bill.  
[H.A.C. 5 (24) Conclusion 2.]

(c) The Town Councils (Scotland) Bill.  
[H.A.C. 5 (24) Conclusion 3.]

(d) The School Teachers' Superannuation Bill.  
[H.A.C. 5 (24) Conclusion 4.]

(H.A.C. 5th Conclusions (24) - already circulated.)

13. AN ADVANCE IN WAGES TO SKILLED MEN AT WOOLWICH.

Note by the Secretary of State for War.  
C.P. 175 (24) - To be circulated.)

14. INDIAN POLICY.

Note by the Secretary of State for India covering  
a Draft telegram to the Viceroy.  
(C.P. 164 (24) - Circulated herewith.)

(Sd.) M.F.A. HANKY,  
Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.I.,  
10th March, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12th, 1924, at 11 a.m.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).


The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.C.M.G., C.B., Secretary of State for India.


The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P., Secretary for Scotland.


THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. H. Gosling, C.H., M.P., Minister of Transport.

Mr. H. Gosling, C.H., M.P., Minister of Transport.

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Col. Sir M.A. Hankey, C.C.B., Secretary.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 1924, at 11 a.m.

THE LONDON TRAFFIC BILL.

1. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Minister of Transport (Paper C.P.-163 (24)) and a Memorandum by the Minister of Labour (Paper C.P.-170 (24)) on the subject of the London Traffic Bill, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That, having regard to the paramount necessity of taking some immediate steps to control London traffic, the proposals of the Minister of Transport were the most satisfactory that could be devised to meet the existing situation. The Bill, however, should be regarded as a stop-gap measure of an experimental character pending the passing of more comprehensive legislation. It should be made perfectly clear in the Bill that all the interests concerned would be represented on the proposed Advisory Committee, and that no particular transport company would be given a monopoly of licenses or of traffic;

(b) That, in accordance with the principle set forth in (a) above, the Minister of Transport, in preparing his Bill in regard to London traffic, should make provision for an Advisory Statutory Committee, composed of representatives of the Local Authorities and of Government and Police officials, power being given to the Minister to add as additional members unofficial persons connected with traffic interests, including Labour, for the consideration of all matters relating to the actual regulation of traffic;

(c) That the Bill should contain a Clause to the effect that the powers are granted to the Minister until such time as more extensive powers may be conferred on a single authority having jurisdiction over the Greater London area. The Minister
of Transport, however, should have authority, if pressed in Parliament, to concede a time limit of, say, one or two (but not to exceed three) years for the duration of the Bill.
2. The Cabinet had under consideration the following documents relating to the Imperial and Imperial Economic Conferences, namely:

- A Note by the Secretary, covering a Summary of the Proceedings of the Imperial and Imperial Economic Conferences (Paper C.P.-69 (24)):

- A Note by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, covering a Memorandum by Lord Arnold, on the subject of Imperial Preference (Paper C.P.-112 (24)):

- A Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in regard to the Conclusions of the Imperial Conference (Paper C.P.-139 (24)):

- A Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the subject of the Resolutions of the Imperial Economic Conference (Paper C.P.-140 (24)).

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) Imperial Preference. That a confidential communication should be made to the Dominions and India to the effect that the Resolutions of the Imperial and Imperial Economic Conferences had been carefully considered by the Cabinet; a certain number of them would fall naturally within the provisions of the Finance Bill, and, having regard to the fiscal considerations involved, the decisions of the Government in regard to this category could not be announced except in the Finance Bill itself or in the course of Parliamentary debate thereon. For the moment, therefore, the Government were not in a position to go further than to notify the Dominions and India confidentially that their attitude would be determined by the following considerations:

(i) In view of their many declarations on the subject, it would be impossible for a Labour Government to propose any new or increased taxation of food:

(ii) Insofar as taxes on food were already imposed, and continued to be imposed, in this country, the principle of Imperial Preference would continue to be observed by the present Government. This undertaking, however, was without prejudice to the retention of absolute freedom by the Government to propose to Parliament the removal of taxes on food if and when, from the point of view of general and financial policy, they deemed this expedient.
(b) Sugar. That in regard to sugar it should be made clear to all parties concerned that the Government could not admit the right of any Government to bind its successors and Parliament for so long a period as ten years in such a matter; that so long as a Duty was retained on sugar the Government, in accordance with (a) above, were willing to adhere to the principle of Imperial Preference. The Government could not admit, however that there had been any undertaking to maintain a Preference of \( \frac{1}{6} \), since the undertaking given by the Coalition Government in February, 1922, applied to the rate of Preference, namely, one-sixth, and did not stabilise the amount of the Preference:

(c) That a communication should be made to the Dominions and India in regard to those recommendations of the Imperial and Imperial Economic Conferences which, as indicated in the Memoranda of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, were being adopted and carried into effect, in order to remove any possible impression that the Government was rejecting all the recommendations of the Conferences:

(d) That the following members of the Cabinet, namely —

The Prime Minister,
The Chancellor of the Exchequer,
The Secretary of State for the Colonies —

should be asked,

(i) To draft a message to the Dominions and India. This might take the form either of a single message, or, alternatively, of two communications, namely, a telegram in regard to the immediate action proposed by the Government and a despatch setting forth the attitude of the Government in detail.

(ii) To consider the question of the Parliamentary procedure to be adopted, with a view to the Prime Minister making a communication to Mr Asquith and Mr Baldwin on this latter point.
3. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Postmaster-General in regard to the Imperial Wireless System (Paper C.P.-157 (24)), together with a Note by the First Lord of the Admiralty covering the recommendations of the Imperial Communications Committee on the Report of the Wireless Telegraphy Committee (Paper C.P.-166 (24)).

The Cabinet were informed that the views of the Governments of the Dominions and India were being obtained in regard to the Report of the Imperial Wireless Telegraphy Committee.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the Postmaster-General should have authority, while awaiting the views of the Dominions and India, to proceed with the preparation of his plans on the assumption that the Report of the Wireless Telegraphy Committee (Paper C.P.-137 (24)) was approved, subject to the recommendations of the Postmaster-General and of the Imperial Communications Committee (Paper C.P.-166 (24)).
RELATIONS

4. After consideration of a Note by the First Lord of the Admiralty (Paper C.P.-161 (24)) and a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Air (Paper C.P.-168 (24)) in regard to the relations of the Navy and the Air Force, the Cabinet agreed —

To invite the Lord Chancellor, as Chairman of the Committee of Imperial Defence, to enquire into the interpretation of any doubtful points in the Report of the Sub-Committee (consisting of the Earl of Hailfur, Viscount Peel and Lord Weir) of the Committee of Imperial Defence on the Relations of the Navy and the Air Force.

The Lord Chancellor was given full discretion to call for such evidence as he might require, and, if necessary, to consult the members of the Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence referred to above.
5. The Cabinet had under consideration a Report by the Secretary for Scotland in regard to his Conference with the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and representatives of the Forestry Commission, relative to the proposal that a small Expert Committee should be appointed to consider the present position and the policy of the Government in regard to Afforestation (Paper C.P.-175 (24)).

The general view of the Cabinet was that, having regard to the technical nature of the questions involved, which might extend to such matters as the relation of small holdings and land reclamation to afforestation, and the desirability that the members of the Inquiry should have leisure to visit the parts of the country affected, it would be advisable to adhere to the original proposal for an Expert Committee.

In these circumstances the Cabinet agreed —

To invite the Secretary for Scotland, in consultation with the Ministers concerned, to re-consider the question in the light of the Cabinet discussion and to make a fresh proposal.
6. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the subject of the position of Indians in Kenya (Paper C.P.-171 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the general proposals of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, namely, that for the moment, pending the arrival of the Committee to be sent from India, his only possible attitude was, as announced in Parliament, to be guided by the decisions published in the White Paper (Cmd.1922).
7. The Cabinet took note of a Memorandum furnished by the First Lord of the Admiralty in regard to articles which had appeared in the Press on the subject of a lecture given to representatives of the Press at the Admiralty on matters connected with the establishment of a Naval Base at Singapore (Paper C.P.-162 (24)).
8. The Prime Minister informed his colleagues that Mr Baldwin had approached him with an inquiry as to whether or not the Government intended to adhere to the old practice under which Cabinet Ministers did not take an active part in by-elections. He had intimated that if members of the Cabinet would abstain from making speeches in by-elections members of the former Cabinet would do the same.

The Cabinet agreed (by a majority)—

(a) That Cabinet Ministers should abstain from taking part in by-elections:

(b) That in communicating this decision to Mr Baldwin, the Prime Minister should make it clear that this only applied to members of the Cabinet during their term of office, and did not bind them to abstain from taking part in by-elections when out of office.
9. The Cabinet took note that as a matter of urgency the Prime Minister had requested the following Committee to examine the proposals relative to Unemployment Insurance, contained in a Memorandum (Paper C.P.—167 (24)) by the Minister of Labour, and to report thereon to the Cabinet as soon as practicable:

The Minister of Labour (in the Chair),
The Chancellor of the Exchequer
(or, in his absence, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury),
The President of the Board of Trade,
The Minister of Health,
The Secretary for Scotland,
The President of the Board of Education,
The Lord Advocate.
10. After consideration of a Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade, covering a Memorandum by the Secretary for Mines (Paper C.P.—172 (24)) in regard to the action of the Government if the present negotiations should not lead to a settlement of the dispute in the coalmining industry during the present week, the Cabinet agreed—

(a) That the President of the Board of Trade, the Minister of Labour and the Secretary for Mines should be asked to watch the situation, and that, in the event of a breakdown in the negotiations between the Miners' Federation and the Coal Owners, they should have discretionary authority, subject to the approval of the Prime Minister, to set up, at the most convenient moment, under the Industrial Courts Act, a Court of Inquiry composed of three persons unconnected with the coalmining industry, to consider the points at issue in the present dispute.

(b) That the President of the Board of Trade, the Minister of Labour and the Secretary for Mines should also make every effort to obtain as soon as possible a copy of the Minimum Wage Bill to be introduced as a Private Bill on Friday, March 21st, and that they should give careful consideration to the terms of the Bill and advise as to the attitude to be adopted by the Government towards it. If unable to obtain a draft of the Bill, they should have authority, if necessary, to warn the promoters that the Government would not be in a position to announce their attitude towards it.
After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the eligibility of Imperial employees in Malta as candidates for the Malta Legislature (Paper C.P.-145 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

That the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have authority to set up a Committee, including persons outside Government service, to inquire into the regulations governing the candidature for Parliament and for municipal bodies of persons in the service of the Crown (including sailors, soldiers and airmen, as well as Civil Servants, etc.) and to report whether any and, if so, what, changes should be made in the existing regulations. The Terms of Reference should be sufficiently wide to include the candidature of Imperial employees in Malta for the Malta Legislature.
12. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Air, covering the Auxiliary Air Force and Air Force Reserve Bill (Paper C.F.-153 (24)) and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (H.A.C.5 (Previous (24), Para.1), the Cabinet agreed —

To authorise the Secretary of State for Air to introduce forthwith in the House of Lords the Auxiliary Air Force and Air Force reserve Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.F.-153 (24).
13. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, covering the draft Agricultural Returns Bill (Paper C.P.-67 (24)), and the recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (Reference: Cabinet 17 (H.A.C. 5(24) Para. 2), the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the introduction in the House of Lords of the Agricultural Returns Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-67 (24) (including the present Clause 1 (7) requiring Regulations to be laid before Parliament).
14. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary for Scotland, covering the draft Town Councils (Scotland) Bill (Paper C.P.-146 (24)), and the recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (H.A.C. 5 (24), Para. 3), the Cabinet agreed —

To authorise the Secretary for Scotland to arrange with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury for the introduction in the House of Commons of the Town Councils (Scotland) Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-146 (24).
15. After consideration of a Note by the President of the Board of Education stating that it had been agreed between the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the President of the Board of Education, and the Secretary for Scotland, the Cabinet on the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs (H.A.C. 5 (24), Para. 4), the Cabinet agreed—

(a) To approve the introduction (as regards England and Wales) of the School Teachers (Superannuation) Bill, 1924, in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-92 (24), subject to the substitution in Clause I (1) of the 1st of April, 1926, for the 1st of August, 1926, and to any drafting alterations which may be found necessary or desirable;

(b) To approve the introduction of a separate Bill for Scotland, on the lines of the above Bill for England and Wales;

(c) To request the President of the Board of Education and the Secretary for Scotland to consider the form of the announcement to be made on the introduction of the Bill for England and Wales, it being suggested that the announcement should in general terms indicate that it was hoped that the interval allowed by the Bill would be utilised by all the parties concerned for the negotiation of a permanent settlement and would not be made an excuse for further delays.
The Cabinet agreed —

To meet at 5 p.m. the same day, at the House of Commons.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

March 12, 1924.
SECRET

CABINET 20 (24).

Meeting to be held in the Prime Minister's Room,
at the House of Commons, on Wednesday, March 12th, 1924,
at 5 p.m.

AGENDA.

1. PENSIONS OF RANKER OFFICERS.

2. AN ADVANCE IN WAGES TO SKILLED MEN AT WOOLWICH.
   To be raised by the Secretary of State for War.

3. INDIAN POLICY.
   Note by the Secretary of State for India
   covering a Draft telegram to the Viceroy.
   (C.P. 164 (24) - Circulated herewith)

4. SINGAPORE.
   To be raised by the First Lord of the Admiralty
   Copy of Telegrams from Dominions
   (C.P. 178 (24) - To be circulated)

(Signed) M.P.A. HANKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
12th March, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet
held in the Prime Minister's Room,
House of Commons, S.W.1., on WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 12th, 1924, at 5 p.m.

PRESENT: -

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.,
Prime Minister and Secretary of
State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).

The Right Hon. J.R. Clynes, M.P.,
Lord Privy Seal.

The Right Hon. A. Henderson, M.P., Secretary
of State for Home Affairs.

The Right Hon. Stephen Walsh, M.P., Secretary
of State for War.

Lieut.-General The Right Hon.
Lord Thomson, C.B.E., D.S.O.,
Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P.,
Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P.,
Minister of Labour.

The Right Hon. Vernon Hartshorn, C.B.E., M.P.,
Postmaster-General.

The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P.,
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary
of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
Secretary of State for India.

The Right Hon. Viscount Chelmsford, G.C.M.G.,
G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.B.E.,
First Lord of the Admiralty.

The Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P.,
President of the Board of
Education.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P.,
Secretary for Scotland.

Col. The Right Hon. J.C. Wedgwood, D.S.O., M.P.,
Chancellor of the Duchy of
Lancaster.

The Right Hon. F.W. Jowett, M.P.,
First Commissioner of Works.

CABINET 20 (24).

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held in the Prime Minister's Room, House of Commons, S.W.1, on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12th, 1924, at 5 p.m.

1. After hearing from the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War particulars of the claims to officers' retired pay of certain soldier pensioners who had received temporary Commissions in the Army during the War, as well as the War Office case as set forth in a White Paper issued on the previous day (Cmd. 2076), the Cabinet agreed —

That a meeting of the Labour Members of Parliament should be summoned for Thursday, March 13th, at 1.45 p.m., when the Prime Minister should set forth the whole of the facts as explained to him to the Cabinet, pointing out, in particular, that the pledges by himself and some other Ministers at the General Election had been given in regard to an incorrect and misleading statement of the facts. He should also make clear that, if the claims of these temporary Officers were conceded, it would be impossible to resist the corresponding claims of great numbers of officers and non-commissioned officers who had been promoted during the War, resulting in an incalculable expenditure.
2. The Secretary of State for War gave the Cabinet particulars of a claim he had received from representatives of the skilled workers at Woolwich for an increase in wages of 11/-s. a week. The Cabinet were informed that the Treasury had recently approved an advance to unskilled men varying from 1s.6d. to 3/-s. The Secretary of State for War said he had satisfied himself that the wages of these skilled workers were very low, and there was evidence to show that in many cases they were below the rate paid by other employers. He proposed, therefore, that the War Office should be authorised to grant an increase of 5s.6d. a week.

The Cabinet were informed that the proposed increase, if granted, would react on employees of other Departments, and more especially on the Admiralty, which might be involved to the extent of £600,000 a year, in addition to the £120,000 a year involved in the War Office proposal. They were also informed that hitherto the Government had always adhered to the standard rates of wages, and that in the view of the officials of the Ministry of Labour there was a special necessity not to depart from this at present, as negotiations were likely to be begun at an early date between the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the employers. If, before this negotiation, the Government had themselves authorised an increase above the standard rate, the impartiality of the Ministry of Labour, if called upon to mediate, might be put in question.

The Cabinet felt that, in view of the possible reaction of the War Office proposal on other Departments, the question required further exploration, and agreed —

(a) That the Lord Privy Seal, the Secretary of State for War and the Secretary of State for the Colonies should meet the representatives of the skilled men at Woolwich in friendly conference and should discuss with them the question of submitting their claim to arbitration by the Industrial Court (as contemplated
by the previous Government (Cabinet 4" (24), Conclusion 1); they should also mention to them the prospect of a movement towards a general increase in engineers' wages, and should ascertain whether, in the event of a general advance of wages, there would be a further claim by the Woolwich workers for an increase over and above anything now granted.

The Ministers referred to were authorised to assure the representatives of the Woolwich skilled workers that if the question were referred to the Industrial Court the Government would undertake that a decision should be given at an early date:

(b) That the Secretary of State for War should arrange the meeting proposed in (a):

(c) That the First Commissioner of Works, in receiving a similar Deputation representing the engineering employees of the Office of Works, should be authorised to inform them that the question of the wages of skilled engineers in Government employment was being examined in connection with the skilled workers at Woolwich, and that the Government had promised an early decision on the subject.
3. After consideration of a Note by the Secretary of State for India, prepared as the result of the meetings of the Cabinet Committee on Indian Affairs, and covering a draft telegram from the Secretary of State to the Viceroy, together with a Note by members of the Council of India, in which certain objections were formulated to the policy proposed therein (Paper C.P.-164 (24)), the Cabinet agreed --

(a) That the Secretary of State for India should be authorised to send, in the form of a private telegram to the Viceroy, the draft telegram attached to C.P.-164 (24) (amended as in (b)) asking for the Viceroy's advice on the feasibility and desirability of issuing through him an invitation to an Indian Delegation to visit this country in order to confer with a Committee of both Houses of Parliament, containing outstanding representatives of the three political Parties here, one representative of each Party in each House:

(b) That the following amendments should be made in the telegram attached to C.P.-164 (24):

Para. 5. Line 8. For the words "friendly relations" substitute the words "contact and understanding".

Para. 4. Line 4. After the word "delegation" insert "of principal sections of Indian reform parties".

Para. 6. Omit the words in square brackets -- "than such as might result from your own enquiry announced in Assembly".
4. Three issues in regard to Singapore were before the Cabinet.

The First Lord of the Admiralty raised, as a matter of urgency, the attitude he was to adopt in the House of Lords the following day, when Lord Balfour had announced his intention of interpellating the Government as to their policy towards the proposed naval base at Singapore. Lord Chelmsford had been given to understand that Lord Balfour's object in raising this question was to place on record his own views before going abroad at the end of the week, rather than to elicit a statement by the Government. He himself had told Lord Balfour that the views of the Dominions were not yet available. Since then, however, the replies of the Dominions had been received, though the reply from India was still outstanding.

Lord Chelmsford also raised a second question, which had been submitted to him by the Civil Lord and Parliamentary Secretary of the Admiralty, as to whether an additional expenditure of £15,000 ought not to be incurred on winding up the preliminary work on the new base, since, unless this were done, the full value of the expenditure already incurred in borings, etc., would not be available in the event of the work being resumed at some future date, either with a view to the establishment of a naval base or a commercial harbour.

The third question before the Cabinet was a suggestion by the Governor of the Straits Settlements that the Imperial Government should reimburse the actual amount paid by the Colony for the land required for the Singapore base, or the difference between that sum and what can be obtained by re-aliating the land (Paper O.P.-178 (24), No. VIII).

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the First Lord of the Admiralty should be authorised to inform the House of Lords that the question of the proposed naval base at Singapore was still under consideration by the Government, and should
seek to obtain the adjournment of the Debate until Tuesday, March 18th, or such date as might be selected for the discussion on Singapore in the House of Commons:

(b) That the replies from the Dominions (which were handed round at the meeting in C.P.—178 (24)) should be considered at the next Meeting of the Cabinet:

c) That their previous decision in regard to the limits of the expenditure to be incurred in winding up the work already commenced on the naval base 'See Cabinet 16 (24), Conclusion 1 (f)) should be adhered to:

d) That in regard to the land purchased in connection with the Singapore base the Secretary of State for the Colonies should be authorised to inform the Governor of the Straits Settlements officially that the Imperial Government were prepared to reimburse the local Government for any loss which the latter might sustain through the purchase of the land; and that at the same time he should send a confidential telegram to the Governor asking him not to alienate the land for the present, and that His Majesty's Government would be prepared to pay the Colony interest on the expenditure on the land so long as it was held.
5. The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That in the Debate in the House of Commons on Friday, March 14th, the Government should adopt a strong line against the Trade Union Act (1923) Amendment Bill to be introduced by a Private Member:

(b) That the Lord Privy Seal should be the spokesman for the Government.
6. The Prime Minister informed his colleagues that he had been in telegraphic communication with Lord Allenby on the subject of the action to be taken by His Majesty's Government in regard to the first meeting of the new Parliament in Egypt. As the result of his communications the following action had been taken:

(a) He had submitted to the King that His Majesty should consider the desirability of sending a personal telegram to King Fuad, but he had not yet received the King's pleasure on the subject.

(b) He had sent a personal telegram from himself to the Prime Minister of Egypt based on a draft proposed by Lord Allenby (Lord Allenby (Cairo) No. 62, March 9th, 1924).

(c) He had rejected a proposal that the Speaker of the House of Commons should be asked to send a telegram, as he felt that the course of Parliamentary debate might detract from the grace of the message.
The Cabinet agreed —

That provision should be made in the Public Health (Scotland) Amendment Bill to the effect that the scope of the Bill should be extended to diseases other than diabetes, not by Order in Council (as decided by the Cabinet - Cabinet 18 (24) Conclusion 14), but by an Order of the Board of Health, which should be laid for a fixed period before both Houses of Parliament, at the end of which it should come into operation automatically unless objection was taken.
NEXT MEETING OF THE CABINET.

8. The Cabinet agreed —

That the next meeting should take place on MONDAY, MARCH 17th, at 10-30 a.m.

S, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

March 18, 1934.
CABINET 21 (24).

MEETING of the Cabinet to be held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on Monday, March 17th, 1924, at 10-30 a.m.

AGENDA.

10-30 a.m. 1. SINGAPORE.

(Reference Cabinet 18 (24) - Appendix).
Copies of telegrams from the Dominion Governments,
C.P. 178 (24) - (Already circulated).
Note by the Secretary of State for India
covering Telegram from the Viceroy,
C.P. 166 (24) - (Circulated herewith).
Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the
Colonies,
C.P. 187 (24) - (Circulated herewith).
Note by the Secretary to the Cabinet,
C.P. 190 (24) - (Circulated herewith).

2. UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.

Memoranda by the Minister of Labour,
C.P. 169 (24) & C.P. 169A (24) - (Already circulated).
Memorandum by the Minister of Health,
C.P. 174 (24) - (Already circulated).
Interim Report of Committee,
C.P. 176 (24) - (Already circulated).

3. POOR LAW REFORM.

Memorandum by the Minister of Health,
C.P. 173 (24) - (Already circulated).

4. SAEGUARDING OF INDUSTRIES LEGISLATION.

Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade,
C.P. 165 (24) - (Already circulated).

5. INQUIRY INTO LUNACY ARRANGEMENTS.

Memorandum by the Minister of Health,
C.P. 185 (24) - (Already circulated).
6. NAVY ESTIMATES, 1924-1925.

Explanatory Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty,
C.P. 184 (24) - (Already circulated).
(Question to be raised by the Prime Minister).

7. NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE.

Memorandum by the Minister of Health,
C.P. 182 (24) - (Already circulated).

8. HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

Consideration of recommendations on the following subjects:

(i) Marriages (Validity) Provisional Orders Bill.

(ii) The Northern Ireland Land Bill.

(iii) The London Traffic Bill.

(iv) The Small Debt (Scotland) Bill.
Ref: H.A.C. 6th Conclusions (24), Minute 4.

(Signed) M.P.A. HANKEY,
Secretary to the Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
15th March, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet
held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1.,
on MONDAY, MARCH 17th, 1924, at 10.30 a.m.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.,
Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).

The Right Hon. Lord Parmoor of Frieth,

The Right Hon. J. R. Clynes, M.P.,
Lord Privy Seal.

The Right Hon. A. Henderson, M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
Secretary of State for India.

The Right Hon. Viscount Chelmsford, G.C.M.G.,
G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.B.,
First Lord of the Admiralty.

The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P.,
Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P.,
Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P.,
Secretary for Scotland.

The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P.,
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. J. H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Brig.-General The Right Hon. Lord Thomson, C.B.E., D.S.O.,
Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon. Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P.,
President of the Board of Education.

The Right Hon. Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P.,
Minister of Labour.

The Right Hon. Vernon Hartshorn, C.B.E., M.P.,
Postmaster-General.

The Right Hon. F. W. Jowett, M.P.,
First Commissioner of Works.

First three items only.

SGAPORE. 1. After consideration of the following documents in regard to the proposed naval base at Singapore —

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 20 (24), Conclusion 4.)

Telegrams from the Dominion Governments (Paper C.P.-178 (24):

A Note by the Secretary of State for India, covering a telegram from the Viceroy (Paper C.P.-186 (24):

A Note by the Secretary to the Cabinet, commenting on the telegram from the Viceroy (Paper C.P.-190 (24):

A Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, covering draft telegrams to the Dominions and a revised draft of the statement to be made in Parliament (Paper C.P.-187 (24)) —

the Cabinet agreed —

(a) To approve, for announcement in both Houses of Parliament, the revised Statement of Policy in regard to Singapore (attached to C.P.-187 and marked "B") (Appendix):

(b) To approve the draft message from the Prime Minister to the Dominion Prime Ministers in which it is explained that, after having carefully examined the replies of the Dominions, the Government feel bound to adhere to the policy already communicated to the Dominions, and setting forth the general lines of the statement that is to be made (Attached to the Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Paper C.P.-187 (24)) and marked "A") (Appendix):
(c) To authorise the Secretary of State for the Colonies to send to the Dominions the telegram attached to his Memorandum (Paper C.P.-187 (24)) and marked "C" (Appendix) immediately after the Prime Minister's message marked "A" has been despatched:

(d) That the Secretary of State for India should telegraph to the Viceroy with reference to the latter's telegram of the 7th March, 1924 (Paper C.P.-185(24)) pointing out the extent to which India had been consulted in regard to the proposed naval base at Singapore, and asking if, on further examination of the question, he could not give some expression of the views of the Government of India:

(e) That in regard to the publication of the telegrams from the Dominions on the subject of the Singapore base, the Prime Minister (in the House of Commons) and the First Lord of the Admiralty (in the House of Lords) should inform Parliament that the telegrams contained references to the attitude adopted by representatives of several of the Dominions at the Imperial Conference; that it had been agreed at the conference that nothing should be published without the approval of the Conference as a whole and under its direction (See Section VI of the Summary of Proceedings, Imperial Conference (Cmd.1387)); that in these circumstances the Government did not feel justified in promising publication of the telegrams, but that if Parliament should desire their publication subject to the excision of the paragraphs referring to the Imperial Conference, this should be done, provided the Prime Ministers of the Dominions would consent to this course; and that, if necessary, the deleted portions of the telegrams should be shown privately to the Leaders of the Opposition.
2. The Cabinet had before them the following documents in regard to the Unemployment Insurance Bill:

A Memorandum by the Minister of Labour (Paper C.P.-169 (24)), in which his proposals were outlined:

A Memorandum by the Minister of Labour giving a summary of the financial effect of his proposals (Paper C.P.-169 A (24)):

An Interim Report by the Cabinet Committee (Paper C.P.-176 (24)).

The Cabinet were informed that the Government Actuary had been indisposed and had not been able to examine the proposals in their financial aspects, but estimated that their examination might require as much as a month. It was generally felt that this estimate of the time required was excessive, and that the matter should, if possible, be expedited.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That having regard, on the one hand, to the small amount of Parliamentary time available before April 16th, when, in the absence of legislation, large numbers of unemployed persons would be deprived of benefit, and, on the other hand, to the importance of not wasting a day, it would be impracticable to secure the passage into law of a single comprehensive Bill covering the various contentious proposals of the Minister of Labour before Easter; consequently, that the Minister of Labour should provide two Bills, one dealing with the coming "gap", and the other with the remaining proposals:

(b) That the comprehensive Bill should be prepared, printed and introduced, covered by a Memorandum setting forth the proposals in detail:

(c) That the Bill dealing with the "gap" should be accompanied by a Memorandum explaining, inter alia, that the time available before April 16th was insufficient for the passage of the larger measure, and consequently this stop-gap Bill had had to be introduced:

(d) That the Minister of Labour should be authorised to include in his Bill provisions for securing payment of benefit continuously without arbitrary limits to genuine workers so long as they remain unemployed, in the manner indicated in detail in the Appendix
to his Memorandum (Paper C.P.-169 (84))
(which includes, inter alia, the arrangements for ensuring that payments are made only to persons genuinely seeking work and unable to obtain it):

(e) That the Minister of Labour should be authorised to provide in his proposed Bill that the weekly rates of benefit for men and women should be increased to 15/- and 15/- respectively, and the rate for each child to 2/-; the 5/- for a wife remaining unaffected.

(In approving the above recommendation by the Committee, the Cabinet took note of the reaction which the contemplated increase in the rates would have on National Health Insurance.)

(f) That the financial implications of the Bill should be satisfactorily settled before the Bill is introduced.

(NOTE: The Prime Minister states that it was his intention that the finance of the Bill should come before the Cabinet.)

(g) That the Minister of Labour should be authorised to make provision in his Bill for the extension of Unemployment Insurance to juveniles as and when they begin to work for wages. The proposed Bill also to contain provisions to secure the following:

That, as a condition of receiving benefit, juveniles shall be required to attend Unemployment Centres, if available.

That payment of benefits should be made direct to parents.

The financial aspects of the scheme of Juvenile Unemployment were held over for further consideration.

(h) That the Minister of Labour should be authorised to make provision in his Bill for the abolition without compensation of the refunds of contributions in certain cases at the age of 60.

(i) That the Minister of Labour should be authorised to include in his Bill a scheme of compensation for cases where rights may be said to have already accrued, on the lines suggested by him, namely, the payment to persons who are over 50 years of age and have paid 50 contributions at least of the present value of the excess value of their contributions over benefit which they have received, plus compound interest at 2½ per cent.

(It should be noted that the Cabinet authorised the Minister of Labour to make provision for this scheme in his original Bill, and not merely to concede it if pressed in Committee, as suggested by the Cabinet Committee.)
(j) That the Minister of Labour should be authorised to make provision in his Bill for the removal of the present disqualification for benefit in cases where workpeople are thrown out of work owing to stoppage due to trade disputes at the establishment at which they are employed, although they are taking no part in the dispute:

(k) That the Minister of Labour should first consult the various interests concerned in regard to his proposal to make provision in his Bill for the abolition of the existing statutory power to form special schemes for insurance by Industry for the future:

(l) That the Minister of Labour, in consultation with the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Secretary for Scotland, should be requested to ascertain the views of the agricultural interests as to the inclusion of agricultural workers in the Unemployment Insurance scheme, and, if so, as to the precise form which such inclusion should take:

(n) That the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Labour should be authorised to ascertain as soon as possible the views of the Railway Companies and the Railway "Conciliation" grades on the proposal to bring these grades in future into the Unemployment Insurance scheme:

(o) That, subject to further consideration of the questions of finance, both in regard to the Exchequer contribution and Juvenile Unemployment, as referred to above, the Minister of Labour should be authorised to prepare draft Bills in accordance with the above decisions, and to submit the Bills to the Cabinet Committee for detailed consideration as soon as practicable.
3. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Minister of Health (Paper C.P.—173 (24)) on the subject of Poor Law Reform, the Cabinet agreed——

Subject to the Prime Minister's concurrence, to approve the procedure proposed by the Minister of Health, namely:

(a) That the Minister of Health should at once set on foot enquiries to ascertain whether the Leaders of the other Parties are prepared to participate in a Conference between representatives of the three Parties in the House of Commons, with a view to arriving, if possible, at an agreed scheme of Reform:

(b) That the Minister of Health should have prepared a Memorandum to serve as a basis for discussion by the Conference:

(c) That the Memorandum should deal with the Poor Law question

   (1) primarily as it affects London,
   and

   (2) as it affects the country as a whole,

and should be based on the recommendations of the MacLean Committee, subject to the departures proposed in the Minister of Health's Memorandum.
4. After consideration of a Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade, on the subject of the Safeguarding of Industries Act (Paper C.P.-165 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the provisions of that portion of the Safeguarding of Industries Act, 1921, which relate to "depreciated currency dumping", shall be allowed to lapse on their expiration, that is to say, on the 19th August next;

(b) That, in view of the decision recorded above in (a), the recommendation of the Committee set up by the late Government under the Safeguarding of Industries Act in July, 1923, in favour of a Duty of 33 1/3 per cent. on imports of lace from all countries should not be adopted;

(c) That the President of the Board of Trade should be asked to advise the Cabinet as to the date at which he considered an announcement of this policy should be made.
The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Minister of Health, on the subject of the proposed Royal Commission on Lunacy Arrangements (Paper C.P.-185 (24)).

The Lord Privy Seal drew the attention of the Cabinet to a letter from the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (who was unavoidably absent from the Cabinet) to the Secretary suggesting the inclusion, in item (ii) of the proposed Terms of Reference to the Royal Commission, of the words "or compulsory detention" after the word "certification".

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That a Royal Commission should be appointed with the following Terms of Reference:

(i) To enquire into the existing law and administrative machinery in connection with the certification, detention and treatment of persons who are or are alleged to be of unsound mind:

(ii) To consider the extent to which provision is or should be made for the treatment without certification of persons suffering from mental disorder, and to make recommendations.

(The words underlined were added by the Cabinet to the proposal of the Minister of Health in C.P.-185 (24).)

(b) That the settlement of the composition of the Royal Commission should be left to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Health.
6. The statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty explanatory of the Navy Estimates 1924-25 (Paper C.P.-184 Explanatory (24)), had been placed on the Agenda at the request of the Prime Minister, who had been obliged to leave the Cabinet before this item was discussed.

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 10 (24), Conclusion 6.)

The First Lord explained that he had been in correspondence with the Prime Minister in regard to the statement, and he understood that the Prime Minister did not now wish to raise any question in regard to it.
7. The Cabinet had under consideration a Memorandum by the Minister of Health explaining the difficult position in which he was placed regarding the contracts with the Doctors under the National Health Insurance Scheme (Paper C.P.-165 (24)).

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the National Health Insurance Bill should be introduced by the Minister of Health as soon as possible, and that as a matter of extreme urgency the Bill, which is non-controversial, should, if possible, be passed into law before the 31st March:

(b) To concur with the Minister of Health that the Government are greatly indebted to the Approved Societies' Consultative Council for the assistance they have given to the Minister of Health.
After consideration of a Memorandum by the Home Secretary (Paper C.P.-160 (24), covering the draft Marriages (Validity) Provisional Orders Bill, and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (H.A.C. 6 (24), Para.1), the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the introduction in the House of Lords of the Marriages (Validity) Provisional Orders Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-160 (24).
9. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Home Secretary (Paper C.P.-177 (24)) covering the draft Northern Ireland Land Bill, and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (H.A.C. 6 (24), Para.2), the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the introduction in the House of Commons of the Northern Ireland Land Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-177 (24), on the understanding that if the Bill proves controversial it will not be proceeded with.
10. After consideration of a Note by the Minister of Transport, covering the draft London Traffic Bill (Paper C.P.-179 (24)) and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (H.A.C. 6 (24) Para.3), the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the introduction in the House of Commons of the London Traffic Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-179 (24), subject to the insertion of a provision to secure that any Regulations made under the Bill by the Minister of Transport which imposed duties on the Police should be subject to the prior concurrence of the Home Secretary.
After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary for Scotland, covering the draft of the Small Debt (Scotland) Bill (Paper C.P.-181 (24)), and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (H.A.C. 6 (24), Para.4), the Cabinet agreed —

To authorise the Secretary for Scotland to arrange with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury for the introduction in the House of Commons of the Small Debt (Scotland) Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-181 (24), subject to the substitution of the words "consists of" for the words "is in respect of", in line 6 of Clause 1; the deletion of the words in brackets in line 7 of that Clause, and the substitution of the word "thirty-five" for "thirty" in line 3 of Clause 2.
The Cabinet agreed —

That, unless a Meeting was required to deal with some question of urgency, the next Meeting should take place on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26th, at 11 a.m.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
March 17, 1924.
Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

With reference to the correspondence with the Dominion Governments concerning the Singapore base included in C.P.179(24) and to Cabinet 20(24) Conclusion 4, I circulate to my colleagues, after discussion with the Prime Minister, the following papers:

(a) a draft message from the Prime Minister to the Dominion Prime Ministers (Marked A), which I propose should be sent immediately after its approval by the Cabinet.

(b) a revised draft statement for Parliament (marked B), amended so as to include a summary of the Dominion replies. This is intended for use if it is decided to make a single comprehensive statement in Parliament.

(c) A summary of the Dominion replies by itself (drawn up for convenience in the form of a telegram and marked C), to be used should it be found preferable to make the Government's statement of policy (as
circulated on March 6th) by itself, and to leave the Dominion views to be made clear at a later stage in the Debate.

I propose to send the telegram marked C to the Dominions, immediately after the Prime Minister's message marked A has gone off - unless my colleagues desire to make any alterations in its terms.

(Intd.) J.H.T.

Colonial Office,
March 14th, 1924.
A.

DRAFT TELEGRAM.
to five Dominions.
(Copy to go to Irish Free State by despatch.)

SECRET AND URGENT. MARCH. SINGAPORE.

Following from Prime Minister for your Prime Minister begins. I brought your reply to my message of 5th March together with replies from the other Prime Ministers before Cabinet today. We are deeply sensible of sympathetic attitude which other parts of the Empire have shewn to the principles on which our proposed policy is founded even though all do not feel able to endorse the methods by which we consider that those principles can best be carried out. After having carefully examined replies we feel bound to make statement in Parliament following, with minor alterations, that in Secretary of State's telegram of 5th March. We are proposing however also to make clear to Parliament tenor of replies to my message of 5th March and Secretary of State for Colonies is telegraphing to you separately text of proposed summary. This procedure seems preferable to publishing complete text of correspondence since latter to some extent indicates trend of confidential discussions at Imperial Conference. Question of fuller publication can, if necessary, be considered later. I am forwarding copies. Communication to Parliament will be made on Tuesday afternoon March 10th. Similar message sent to other Prime Ministers. Ends.
We have given careful consideration to the proposal to develop the Naval Base at Singapore. We have closely studied the reasons which led to the adoption of this project, and the arguments in support of its continuation urged upon us from the point of view of naval defence.

We had, however, to consider the matter in a wider relationship, and came to the conclusion that we could not ask Parliament to proceed with this scheme. We were convinced that if we were to do so our action would exercise a most detrimental effect on our general foreign policy. As we have repeatedly stated, we stand for a policy of international co-operation through a strengthened and enlarged League of Nations, the settlement of disputes by conciliation and judicial arbitration, and the creation of conditions which will make a comprehensive agreement on limitation of armaments possible. As stated in the Prime Minister's letter to Mr. Poincare of February 21st, "our task meanwhile must be to establish confidence, and this task can only be achieved by allaying the international suspicions and anxieties which exist today."

It seemed clear, apart from any other considerations, that to continue the development of the Naval Base at Singapore would hamper the establishment of this confidence and lay our good faith open to suspicion. Whilst maintaining present standard in a state of complete efficiency, we take the view that it would be a serious mistake to be responsible for new developments that could only be justified on assumptions that would definitely admit that we had doubts in the success of our own policy. As a result we should almost inevitably drift into a condition of mistrust and competition of armaments in the Far East.

Having provisionally reached the conclusions which I have set out, we felt it our duty in view of the discussions at
the recent Imperial Conference to communicate with the Governments of the self-governing Dominions. We therefore put the position before them and invited their views. I propose to give the House a summary of these views. The Canadian Government tell us that they wish to refrain from any advice on the problem. The Irish Free State has adopted a similar attitude. As to Australia, New Zealand and Newfoundland I must explain quite clearly that their Prime Ministers wish, and indeed urge, us to proceed with the Base. The Commonwealth Government express cordial sympathy with our international policy of conciliation. They tell us that the desire in Australia is for a better understanding among the nations and a definite reduction of armaments on every possible occasion. They consider however that the action which we propose, instead of assisting the policy in view, will jeopardise it in that any reduction in the mobility of the Fleet will reduce our influence in the Councils of the Nations. If the development of the Singapore base (the intention to proceed with which was, they point out, well understood at the time of the Washington Conference) is now to be discontinued, Australia would rather see this step taken as a means for securing further international agreement for mutual reduction of armaments.

The New Zealand Government attach great importance to development of the Base, their opinion being founded mainly on grounds of naval strategy. Whilst laying stress on the view that its use is for defensive and not offensive purposes, they feel that the interests of the British Empire in the Pacific will be endangered should our capital ships be unable to operate in those waters, and that the time has not yet come to rely solely on the influence for peace of the League of Nations.

I should add that the Commonwealth Government have informed us of their readiness to submit proposals to their Parliament for a substantial contribution to the development of the base. New Zealand has already generously offered a first contribution of £100,000 towards it.

Lastly from South Africa we have heard from General Smuts
Smuts that our proposed policy which he describes as "a bold move towards enduring peace" meets with his wholehearted agreement. He feels that the authority of the British Empire as the protagonist of the great cause of appeasement and conciliation among the nations would be seriously undermined by the construction of the Singapore base.

From the above summary, I think I may claim that we have a large measure of sympathy in the Dominions with our international policy, even if all parts of the Empire do not feel able to endorse the methods by which we consider that that policy should be carried out. The criticisms are founded, in the main, on the conception that the Singapore base is essential as part of a complete defensive Pacific strategy. Should the practical necessity for putting such a strategy into operation arise by reason of the condition of world politics and a return to attempts to provide Imperial security primarily by armaments, the whole question would have to be re-considered, but in the opinion of His Majesty's Government that has not new arisen, and it is the duty of His Majesty's Government to try and prevent its arising.

We have every confidence in our policy, and we feel that a decision not to proceed with the Naval Base at Singapore will give that policy the best possible chance of success and is an earnest of our good faith.
C.

DRAFT TELEGRAM TO 5 DOMINIONS.

(Copy to go to Irish Free State by Despatch).

SECRET AND URGENT.

March, 1924.

Following is supplementary statement referred to in Prime
Minister’s message of today begins. “After we had provisionally
reached our conclusions we felt it our duty in view of the
discussions at the recent Imperial Conference to communicate
with the Governments of the self-governing Dominions. We
therefore put the position before them and invited their views.
I propose to give the House a summary of these views. The
Canadian Government tell us that they wish to refrain from any
advice on the problem. The Irish Free State has adopted a
similar attitude. As to Australia, New Zealand and Newfoundland
I must explain quite clearly that their Prime Ministers wish and
indeed urge us to proceed with the base. The Commonwealth
Government express cordial sympathy with our international policy
of conciliation. They tell us that the desire in Australia is
for a better understanding among the nations and a definite
reduction of armaments on every possible occasion. They consider
however that the action which we propose, instead of assisting
the policy in view, will jeopardise it in that any reduction in the
mobility of the Fleet will reduce our influence in the Councils
of the Nations. If the development of the Singapore base
(the intention to proceed with which was, they point out, well
understood at the time of the Washington Conference) is now to be
discontinued, Australia would rather see this step taken as a means
of securing further international agreement for mutual reduction
of armaments. The New Zealand Government attach great
importance to development of the Base, their opinion being founded
mainly on grounds of naval strategy. Whilst laying stress on the view that its use is for defensive and not offensive purposes, they feel that the interests of the British Empire in the Pacific will be endangered should our capital ships be unable to operate in those waters, and that the time has not yet come to rely solely on the influence for peace of the League of Nations.

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From the above summary, I think I may claim that we have a large measure of sympathy in the Dominions with our international policy, even if all parts of the Empire do not feel able to endorse the methods by which we consider that that policy should be carried out. Ends.
CABINET 22 (24).

MEETING of the Cabinet to be held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on Wednesday, March 26th, 1924, at 11 a.m.

AGENDA.

1. THE OMNIBUS AND TRAMWAY STRIKE AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES.

   (Minister of Labour to make a statement)
   Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade on Wages negotiations in the Coal Mining Industry, (C.P. 205 (24) - already circulated).

2. POOR LAW AUTHORITIIES IN NECESSITOUS AREAS IN SCOTLAND.

   Memorandum by the Secretary for Scotland (C.P. 189 (24) - already circulated)
   Memorandum by the Minister of Health, (C.P. 197 (24) - already circulated).

3. DOCKYARD DISCHARGES.

   Memorandum by the First Lord of the Admiralty, (C.P. 202 (24) - already circulated).

4. PROCEEDINGS OF THE RECENT COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

   Extracts from Letters from the Lord President of the Council to the Prime Minister, (C.P. 200 (24) - already circulated).

5. RENT RESTRICTION.

   (To ascertain the Position)
   Memorandum by the Minister of Health on Evictions, (C.P. 212 (24) - To be circulated).

6. HOUSING PROGRAMME.

   (To ascertain Progress).

7. TRAVELLING FACILITIES FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

   (To be raised by the Prime Minister)
6. THE TRADES UNION CONGRESS GENERAL COUNCIL AND LEGISLATION.

Memorandum by the Minister of Labour,
(C.P. 204 (24) - already circulated).
Memorandum by the Home Secretary,
(C.P. 210 (24) - To be circulated).

9. THE COUNTY COURTS BILL.

Memorandum by the Lord Chancellor,
(C.P. 206 (24) - already circulated).

10. SUPPLY AND TRANSPORT ORGANISATION.

Note by the Home Secretary covering Conclusions
of Sixth Meeting of Emergency Committee,
(C.P. 211 (24) - already circulated).

11. HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

Consideration of Recommendations on the following Subjects:

(a) The National Health Insurance Bill
(H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 1).

(b) The British Empire Exhibition (Amendment) Bill
(H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 2).

(c) The Imperial Institute Bill
(H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 3).

(d) The Borough Councillors (Alteration of Number) Bill
(H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 4).

(e) The Coast Guard Bill
(H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 5).

(f) The Sale of Bread Bill
(H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 6).

(H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) - already circulated).

(Signed) M.P.A. HANKLY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
25th March, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26th, 1924, at 11 A.M.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsey MacDonald, M.P., Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).


The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. J. H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.C.M.G., C.B., Secretary of State for India.


The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P., Secretary for Scotland.


THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. H. Gosling, C.H., M.P., Minister of Transport. (For Item 2 only).

Mr. E. Shinwell, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Mines Department. (For Item 1 only).

THE GOAL DISPUTE.

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 19 (24), Conclusion 10.)

1. The Cabinet had before them a Note by the President of the Board of Trade, covering a Memorandum by the Secretary for Mines, on the wages negotiations in the coalmining industry (Paper C.P.-205 (24)).

The Secretary for Mines gave the Cabinet particulars as to the latest developments in the dispute.

The Prime Minister, on behalf of his colleagues, expressed the confidence of the Cabinet in Mr Shinwell's handling of the situation.

The Cabinet agreed --

(a) That the Secretary for Mines should be authorised to continue negotiations with both parties to the dispute, and that if he thought that the Prime Minister could usefully intervene by seeing either or both parties, he should advise him accordingly:

(b) That, in the event of a breakdown in the present negotiations, the Secretary for Mines should, in accordance with the previous decision of the Cabinet (Cabinet 19 (24), Conclusion 10), arrange an immediate meeting of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Labour, the President of the Board of Trade, and himself, to take all the necessary
arrangements for setting up a Court of Inquiry, and that he should bring to the meeting a draft of the proposed composition of the Court and Terms of Reference:

(c) That the Secretary for Mines should have authority to consult and, if possible, obtain the consent of both parties to the dispute to his draft of the Terms of Reference, and that he should also endeavour to secure the agreement of both sides to accept in advance the decision of the Court of Inquiry.
2. The Minister of Labour gave the Cabinet full particulars of the developments which had led to the present omnibus and tramway strike in London, and of the present position. He informed his colleagues that an extension of the Strike to the London Underground Railways was threatened.

The attention of the Cabinet was drawn to a Private Notice Question to the Prime Minister by Viscount Curzon, inquiring what action the Government proposed to take to deal with the breakdown of the transport arrangements in London.

The Cabinet were informed that the Prime Minister had, the same morning, written a private letter to Mr. Ernest Bevin, the leader of the omnibus and tramway employees, expressing regret at the present situation and pointing out that any extension of the Strike was bound to draw in the Government.

During the meeting the Prime Minister received a reply from Mr. Ernest Bevin stating that he had arranged to see the Press in regard to the Strike at noon, but that if desired, he would postpone the meeting and see the Prime Minister first.

Shortly after Noon the Prime Minister left the Cabinet for a few minutes in order to meet Mr. Ernest Bevin and three of his colleagues. At this meeting the Prime Minister, with authority from the Cabinet, warned Mr. Bevin and his colleagues that in the event of an extension of the Strike the Government could not stand aside any longer. He also showed them a copy of the draft answer to Viscount Curzon's Question, which had been approved by the Cabinet and which was to the same effect (See Conclusion (a) below). Mr. Bevin and his
colleagues did not object to the draft Answer, but asked if the Prime Minister would add the following words thereto:

"particularly as I understand that last night the only outstanding point between the two sides was a matter of £130,000 per annum, and no question of principle."

After full consideration of the question in all its aspects, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Prime Minister should reply to the Private Notice Question to the effect that the Government recognised its responsibility to study the needs of the London public, and that, in view of the threatened extension of the dispute the Emergency Committee which deals with these matters was meeting at once to present proposals to the Cabinet; but that the Prime Minister still hoped it would be unnecessary for any action to be taken, particularly as he understood that the points in dispute had been reduced to a very considerable extent.

(The words underlined were adopted by the Cabinet in lieu of the addition proposed by Mr Bevin and his colleagues.)

(b) That the Cabinet Emergency Committee on the Supply and Transport Organisation should meet the same afternoon at 4.30 to consider the position in view of the omnibus and tramway strike, and to prepare proposals for the consideration of the Cabinet:

(c) To take note of the bearing on this question (to which their attention was invited by the Minister of Labour) of a proposal in Lord Askwith's Trade Disputes (Private) Bill, that a truce of 30 days should follow the appointment of a Court of Inquiry.
3. The Minister of Labour informed his colleagues that, in addition to the London omnibus and tramway Strike and the Coal dispute, a number of serious industrial disputes were threatening.

The Cabinet agreed --

That the Minister of Labour should circulate a Memorandum in regard to these disputes.
4. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary for Scotland (Paper C.P.-189 (24)) presenting the special case for making an Exchequer grant to Parish Councils in necessitous areas in Scotland, and of the remarks of the Minister of Health thereon (Paper C.P.-197 (24)), and after hearing the objections of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the proposal of the Secretary for Scotland, the Cabinet agreed —

That they could not differentiate between Scotland and England by approving an Exchequer grant to Parish Councils in necessitous areas in Scotland.
5. After consideration of a Memorandum by the First Lord of the Admiralty, suggesting that if the Cabinet desired to avoid the discharge of some 1,600 men in the Dockyards now under notice, the cost should be included in a Supplementary Estimate (Paper C.P. 202 (24)), the Cabinet agreed --

That, as the work which the Admiralty could give to the men about to be discharged was not represented as essential, they would not be justified in approving proposals which would involve a Supplementary Estimate, more especially as the facts of the case were within the knowledge of the Admiralty when the Estimates were approved only a few weeks ago. Consequently they could not reverse the decision to discharge the men in the Dockyards now under notice.
6. After consideration of extracts from letters of the Lord President of the Council to the Prime Minister, giving an account of the proceedings at the recent Meetings of the Council of the League of Nations at Geneva (Paper C.P.-200 (24)), and after hearing from the Lord President some further particulars of the Meetings, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) To take note with satisfaction of the report of the Lord President of the Council in regard to the proceedings of the recent Council of the League of Nations:

(b) To take note that the Lord President had found that the general opinion of the representatives on the Council was in favour of the admission of Germany to the League of Nations.
7. After consideration of a Memorandum by the
Minister of Health on recent evictions under the Rent
Restriction Act (Paper C.P.-213 (24)), and after
hearing from the Minister particulars of the causes of
these evictions, the Cabinet agreed —

To approve the proposals of the Minister
of Health and to authorise the Minister
to prepare for introduction in Parliament
a short Bill providing for —

(a) the repeal or modification of
paragraphs (iv) and (v) of
Section (5)(d) of the Rent and Mortgage
Interest Restrictions Act, 1923, so as
to extend to persons who were
landlords before the 29th June,
1922, the necessity, which already
applies to persons who became
landlords after that date, to
prove either that there is
alternative accommodation or
"greater hardship" as a condition prece-
dent to an eviction order;

(b) the prohibition of evictions owing
to non-payment of rent in cases
where the non-payment is due to
unemployment, unless the landlord
can satisfy the Court that greater
hardship would be caused by refusing
to grant an order for possession than
by granting it.
8. The Cabinet agreed —

That in regard to travelling facilities for Members of Parliament, the Prime Minister should be authorised to communicate to the House of Commons the figures of cost of free travelling facilities for Members between London and their constituencies, which had resulted from an inquiry by the Government, namely:— for first-class travel, approximately £70,550 per annum; and for third-class travel approximately £47,000. At this stage he should give no indication of the views of the Government, but should state that nothing could be decided until Parliament had discussed the question. When pressed, he should intimate that the Government would give facilities for a discussion on the subject.
After consideration of Memoranda by the Minister of Labour (Paper C.P.-204 (24)) and the Home Secretary (Paper C.P.-210 (24)) in regard to representations from the Trades Union Congress General Council asking to be furnished with copies of the Government's Unemployment Insurance, Washington Hours Convention, and Factory Bills, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That it would not be in accordance with the usual practice of Government Departments to furnish to outside bodies copies of Government Bills before they were communicated to Parliament, and that the request of the Trades Union Congress General Council should not be acceded to:

(b) To approve the draft letter included in the Memorandum by the Home Secretary (Paper C.P.-210 (24)), subject to the substitution, in the second paragraph, of the word "Parliament" for the word "Departments":

(c) That the reply to a Private Notice Question by Mr Neville Chamberlain, inquiring as to the communication to the Press on the previous evening of copies of the London Traffic Bill before copies were available for Members of Parliament, should be as follows:

"I regret this occurrence. The explanation is that it was felt, in view of the bearing of this Bill upon the present traffic dispute, that it was desirable that the public in general should have the provisions of the Bill before it this morning at the same time as the Bill itself was in the hands of Members of Parliament. Apparently it was not made clear to the Press that the copy communicated to it late last night should not be used for any messages circulated before this morning, and I am informed that a little after 10 o'clock today the contents of the Bill appeared on the tape."

NOTE. During the meeting of the Cabinet, a telephone message was received from the Trades Union Congress General Council, asking if the Prime Minister would receive a deputation on this subject.
10. The Cabinet agreed —
To meet for the discussion of the remaining subjects on the Agenda on Thursday morning, March 27th, at 10-30.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
March 26, 1924.
CABINET 23 (24).

MEETING of the Cabinet to be held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1, on Thursday, March 27th, 1924, at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA.

1. HOUSING PROGRAMME.

    (To ascertain Progress).

2. THE COUNTY COURTS BILL.

    Memorandum by the Lord Chancellor,
    (C.P. 206 (24) - already circulated).

3. SUPPLY AND TRANSPORT ORGANISATION.

    Note by the Home Secretary covering Conclusions of Sixth Meeting of Emergency Committee,
    (C.P. 211 (24) - already circulated).

4. INDIAN POLICY.

    Telegram to the Viceroy,
    (C.P. 164 (24) - already circulated).

    Telegram from the Viceroy,
    (C.P. 203 (24) - already circulated).

    Report of Cabinet Committee (If ready).

5. IRISH REPRESENTATIVE PEERS.

    Memorandum by the Lord Chancellor,
    (C.P. 207 (24) - already circulated).
6. **TRAMWAY AND OMNIBUS STRIKE.**

Report of Emergency Committee (if ready)

7. **HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.**

Consideration of Recommendations on the following subjects:

(a) The National Health Insurance Bill
   (H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 1).

(b) The British Empire Exhibition (Amendment) Bill
   (H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 2).

(c) The Imperial Institute Bill
   (H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 3).

(d) The Borough Councillors (Alteration of Number) Bill
   (H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 4).

(e) The Coast-Guard Bill
   (H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 5).

(f) The Sale of Bread Bill
   (H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) Minute 6).

   (H.A.C. 7th Conclusions (24) – already circulated).

(Signed) M.F.A. HANKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.,
26th March, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on THURSDAY, MARCH 27th, 1924, at 10.30 A.M.

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.,
Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).

The Right Hon.

The Right Hon.
J. R. Clynes, M.P.,
Lord Privy Seal.

The Right Hon.
A. Henderson, M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs.

The Right Hon.
Stephen Walsh, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

Brig.-General The Right Hon.
Lord Thomson, C.B.E., D.S.O., Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon.
Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon.
Charles Trevelyan, M.P., President of the Board of Education.

The Right Hon.
Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P., Minister of Labour.

The Right Hon.

The Right Hon.

Present for first two and last two items only.

Lieut.-Col. Sir M. P. A. Hankey, C.C.B. Secretary.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 1924, at 10.30 a.m.

1. The Cabinet had before them the Conclusions reached by the Cabinet Emergency Committee on the previous evening in regard to the action required for dealing with the London omnibus and tramway strike (Paper C.P.-218 (24)).

During the Meeting, copies of a draft Proclamation and draft Emergency Regulations under the Emergency Powers Act, 1920, were handed round.

The Home Secretary, as Chairman of the Emergency Committee, gave the Cabinet particulars of the measures proposed.

After considerable discussion the Cabinet agreed:

(a) To approve the draft Proclamation of Emergency submitted by the Emergency Committee (Appendix I), as well as the draft Message to Parliament (Appendix II):

(b) To approve the Code of Emergency Regulations (Appendix III) submitted by the Emergency Committee, subject to reconsideration by the Cabinet Committee of Regulation 16 on the subject of Compensation (See the following conclusion):

1
(e) That the Cabinet Committee should make further inquiry as to whether it was necessary and desirable to include Regulation 10, on the subject of Compensation, or whether some modification should be made therein:

(d) That the Clerk of the Council should immediately take His Majesty's pleasure as to the holding of a meeting of the Privy Council on the following day for the purpose of approving the Emergency Order in Council and the Emergency Regulations, and that the Lord President of the Council and the Secretary of State for Air should attend the meeting (which was to be held at Knowsley):

(e) That in regard to the organisation of alternative transport facilities, the Government should, for the present, confine its activities to providing means for the transportation of Government employees, hospital patients and similar essential services. The arrangement proposed by the Emergency Committee, that the Ministry of Transport should organise the use of char-a-bancs but not of omnibuses, should not be announced. In any public announcement it should be intimated that all vehicles that might be found necessary would be employed:

(f) That the Emergency Committee should, if possible, include in the Emergency Regulations power to regulate omnibus fares, if necessary:

(g) That as regards the general public, apart from (f) above, the Government would offer adequate protection to any omnibus, Tube or tram services that found themselves able to run. The proposal of the Committee to make a general appeal to the motor-owning public to render any assistance in their power was not approved. The Emergency Committee were asked further to consider the provision of facilities to the general public:
(h) That the protection which the Government could offer could not be supplied by the ordinary Police service, and that it would be necessary to employ Special Constables:

(i) That the arrangement made by the Emergency Committee, under which the Admiralty were at once to begin preparations for having the necessary Naval Ratings ready for use in power-stations, should be confirmed, but that no emergency action should be taken until after the issue of the Proclamation (See also Conclusion 9):

(j) That the Attorney-General should be added as a permanent member of the Emergency Committee.
2. After the decisions recorded in Conclusion 1 had
been taken, the Cabinet were informed that Mr Webb
and other representatives of the Electrical Trades
Union had called at 10, Downing Street.

The Prime Minister, accompanied by the Home
Secretary and the Minister of Labour, then left the
Cabinet and conferred with these gentlemen.

On his return, the Prime Minister informed his
colleagues that Mr Webb and his friends were anxious
to avoid being drawn into the Strike, and had intimated
that if Naval Ratings were put into Lots Road elec-
trical power-station the disturbance was likely to
spread to other power-stations. After the attitude of
the Government had been explained to them, Mr Webb and
his friends had made the suggestion that if the employ-
er would offer an increase in wages of 5/-s. a week to the
whole of the tramway men, with whom the Strike originated,
reserving the additional 3/-s. demand as a subject for
arbitration, the Electrical Trades Union might take the
view that there was no justification for continuing the
Strike. Eventually, Mr Webb and his friends had left to
visit Mr Ernest Bevin, of the Transport and General
Workers' Union, and afterwards Mr Bromley, of the
Amalgamated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen.

After some further discussion the Cabinet agreed --

(a) That the Prime Minister should invite
the following representatives of the
Unions directly or indirectly concerned
in the Strike to meet him at the House
of Commons the same evening at 6 p.m.;

namely,
Mr Ernest Bevin, the leader of the tramway and omnibus workers,
Mr Bromley, of the Amalgamated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen,
Mr Cramp, of the National Union of Railwaymen,
Mr Webb, of the Electrical Trades Union,

and that at this meeting the Prime Minister should, if he deemed expedient, having regard to Conclusion (b) below, sound them as to the possibility of a settlement on the lines of an immediate increase of £5/-a week to the whole of the tramway men affected by the Strike, the additional demand of £3/- being reserved for arbitration:

(b) That the Minister of Labour should immediately get into touch with the representatives of the employers concerned, with a view to sounding them, either personally or by arranging for an interview between the employers and the Prime Minister, as to whether they would be prepared to offer a settlement on the basis proposed in (a) above:

(c) That in reply to a Private Notice Question by Viscount Curzon, asking for further particulars as to the measures proposed by the Government for dealing with the Strike, the Prime Minister should intimate that the Government had not abandoned hopes of bringing together the parties to the dispute, and were conferring with all the organisations concerned. If possible, he would make a statement before the House rose.
3. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Lord Chancellor, setting forth the serious results which would follow if the County Courts Bill did not become law at a very early date (Paper C.P.-206 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

That the Lord Privy Seal should explain the urgency of this Bill to the Chief Whip, and should endeavour to arrange for the necessary Parliamentary facilities.
4. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Lord Chancellor, drawing attention to the anomalous position in regard to the representation of Ireland in the House of Lords by Irish Representative Peers (Paper O.P.-207 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

To accept the view of the Lord Chancellor that for the present no action should be taken.
5. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Minister of Health, covering the draft National Health Insurance Bill (Paper C.P.-196 (24)) and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (H.A.O. 7 (24), Para. 1), the Cabinet agreed --

To authorise the Minister of Health to arrange for the introduction forthwith in the House of Commons of the National Health Insurance Bill, 1924, in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-196 (24), with a view to the passage into law of the Bill on the earliest practicable date.
6. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade, covering the draft British Empire Exhibition (Amendment) Bill, 1924 (Paper C.P.-194 (24)), and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (H.A.G. 7 (24), Cabinet 2, Con. Para. 2), the Cabinet agreed to authorise the Parliamentary Secretary to arrange with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury for the introduction forthwith in the House of Commons of the British Empire Exhibition (Amendment) Bill, 1924, in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-194 (24).
7. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, covering the draft Imperial Institute Bill (Paper C.P.-195 (24)), and the recommendation of the Home Affairs Committee thereon (H.A.C. 7 (24), Para.3), the Cabinet agreed —

(a) To authorise the Secretary of State for the Colonies to arrange for the introduction of the Imperial Institute Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-195 (24):

(b) To take note that the Committee of Home Affairs accept in principle the offer of the Secretary of State for the Colonies to give the War Museum some additional space in the Galleries, if available.
6. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Home Councils Secretary, covering the draft Borough Councillors (Alteration of Number) Bill, (Paper CP.-153 (24)), and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs (Previous thereon (H.A.C. 7 (24), Para. 4), the Cabinet agreed —

To authorise the introduction of the Borough Councillors (Alteration of Number) Bill in the form of the draft annexed to CP.-153 (24), on the understanding that it would not be possible for the Government to regard the Bill as of so urgent a character as to justify giving it any special precedence.
3. After consideration of a Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade, covering the draft Coast-Guard Bill (Paper C.P.-192 (24)), and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (H.A.C. 7 (24), Para. 5), the Cabinet agreed—

To authorise the President of the Board of Trade to arrange for the introduction of the Coast-Guard Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-192 (24), on the understanding that it would not be possible for the Government to regard the Bill as of so urgent a character as to justify giving it any special precedence.
10. After consideration of a Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade, covering the draft Sale of Bread Bill (Paper C.P.-199 (24)), and the recommendation of the Committee of Home Affairs thereon (H.A.C. 7 (24), Para.6), the Cabinet agreed —

To authorise the President of the Board of Trade to arrange for the introduction of the Sale of Bread Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-199 (24).
After consideration of a telegram to the Viceroy of India (Paper C.P.-164 A (24)), a telegram from the Viceroy of India (Paper C.P.-203 (24)), a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (Paper C.P.-208 (24)), and a draft telegram to the Viceroy proposed by the Cabinet Committee, the Cabinet agreed--

That the Secretary of State for India should be authorised to send the following Private and Secret telegram to the Viceroy:

"I have now considered with my colleagues your private and secret telegram of 21st March. The idea underlying my telegram of 12th March was desire of Prime Minister and his Cabinet to establish contact and understanding between themselves and the leaders of Indian opinion. You and your colleagues do not agree to the plan we proposed with this object, but we imagine you are at one with us in desiring to attain it. Can you suggest any alternative plan which would seem to you preferable to that of His Majesty’s Government?"

The Prime Minister, who was out of the room when this decision was reached, subsequently expressed his agreement in the terms of the telegram.
PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS.
Previous Reference: Cabinet 18 (13), Conclusion 20.
WAR CHARGES VALIDITY BILL.
Previous Reference: Cabinet 13 (24), Conclusion 7.
WEST INDIES TELEGRAPHS BILL.
Previous Reference: Cabinet 16 (24), Conclusion 10 Appendix.

18. Arising out of the discussion on the Bills submitted by the Committee of Home Affairs, the attention of the Cabinet was drawn to the difficulty which was likely to be encountered, in the present state of Parliamentary business, in securing the passage of many of the measures already approved for introduction.

The Lord Privy Seal informed his colleagues that a programme of Parliamentary business for the present Session had been drawn up, and communications were taking place with the other Parties in the House of Commons with a view to expediting business, although up to the present time the other Parties had not been very accommodating.

The Cabinet invited the attention of the Lord Privy Seal to the importance of the following measures:

THE WAR CHARGES VALIDITY BILL.

THE WEST INDIES TELEGRAPHS BILL (which the Cabinet were informed, was down in the programme for April 10th.)
13. The Minister of Health made to the Cabinet a statement as to the progress which had been made in the regard to Housing Scheme. He read to his colleagues a Memorandum containing a forecast of the forthcoming Report of the House-Building Committee. He undertook to circulate the latter Report to the Cabinet confidentially.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That it was desirable for the Minister of Health to make a short general statement to Parliament in regard to the present position of the Government's Housing Policy, as a preliminary to a discussion of these proposals with the Local Authorities. The statement should not be for purposes of Parliamentary debate, but merely to give the House information before it was given outside. It could be explained to the House of Commons that details could not be given until they had been discussed with the Local Authorities;

(b) That the Lord Privy Seal should endeavour to arrange for this statement at an early date;

(c) To take note that the Minister of Health proposed to ask the Local Authorities to appoint a Committee to meet him, and to prepare his Bill after his discussions with the Committee.
14. The Prime minister asked members of the Cabinet to hold themselves in readiness for an emergency meeting at any time during the next 48 hours if the developments in connection with the tramway and omnibus strike should render this necessary.

Subject to this, the next meeting of the Cabinet was fixed for WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2nd, at 11 a.m.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
March 27, 1924.
APPENDIX I.

BY THE KING.

A PROCLAMATION.

GEORGE R.I.

WHEREAS by the Emergency Powers Act, 1920, it is enacted that if it appears to Us that any action has been taken or is immediately threatened by any persons or body of persons of such a nature and on so extensive a scale as to be calculated, by interfering with the supply and distribution of food, water, fuel or light, or with the means of locomotion, to deprive the community, or any substantial portion of the community, of the essentials of life, We may, by proclamation, declare that a state of emergency exists:

AND WHEREAS the present withdrawal of certain transport services ordinarily available to the general public in and around London does, in Our opinion, constitute a state of emergency within the meaning of the said Act:

NOW, THEREFORE, in pursuance of the said Act, We do, by and with the advice of Our Privy Council, hereby declare that a state of emergency exists.

GIVEN at Our Court at this

in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and twenty-, and in the

year of Our Reign.

God Save the King.
APPENDIX II.

MESSAGE TO PARLIAMENT.

GEORGE R.I.

The Emergency Powers Act, 1920, having enacted that if it appears to His Majesty that any action has been taken or is immediately threatened by any persons or body of persons of such a nature and on so extensive a scale as to be calculated, by interfering with the supply and distribution of food, water, fuel or light, or with the means of locomotion, to deprive the community, or any substantial portion of the community, of the essentials of life, His Majesty may, by proclamation, declare that a state of emergency exists; and the withdrawal of certain transport services ordinarily available to the general public in and around London having in His Majesty’s opinion, constituted a state of emergency within the meaning of the said Act:

His Majesty has deemed it proper, by proclamation made in pursuance of the said Act and dated the day of to declare that a state of emergency exists.
APPENDIX 111

EMERGENCY REGULATIONS, 1924.

Arrangement of Regulations.

1. Power to take possession of land, etc.
2. Road Transport
3. Tramways and light railways.
4. Power to direct traffic on highways.
5. Priority in transport.
6. Driving licences.
7. Gas, water and electricity.
8. Lights.
10. Injury to property.
11. Employment of His Majesty's Forces.
14. Effect of notice of intention to take possession of property.
15. Delegation of powers.
17. Penalties
18. Arrest without warrants, &c.
19. Attempts to commit offences.
20. Effect of regulations on contracts.
21. Interpretation.
22. Printing of regulations.
At the Court at

PRESENT,

The King's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

Whereas by the Emergency Powers Act, 1920, it is provided, amongst other things, as follows:-

"1. (1) If at any time it appears to His Majesty that any action has been taken or is immediately threatened by any persons or body of persons of such a nature and on so extensive a scale as to be calculated, by interfering with the supply and distribution of food, water, fuel, or light, or with the means of locomotion, to deprive the community, or any substantial portion of the community, of the essentials of life, His Majesty may, by proclamation (hereinafter referred to as a proclamation of emergency), declare that a state of emergency exists.

"No such proclamation shall be in force for more than one month, without prejudice to the issue of another proclamation at or before the end of that period.

"(2) Where a proclamation of emergency has been made the occasion thereof shall forthwith be communicated to Parliament and, if Parliament is then separated by such adjournment or prorogation as will not expire within five days, a proclamation shall be issued for the meeting of Parliament within five days, and Parliament shall accordingly meet and sit upon the day appointed by that proclamation, and shall continue to sit and act in like manner as if it had stood adjourned or prorogued to the same day.

"2. (1) Where a proclamation of emergency has been made, and so long as the proclamation is in force, it shall be lawful for His Majesty in Council, by Order, to make regulations for securing the essentials of life to the community, and those regulations may confer or impose on a Secretary of State or other Government Department, or any other persons in His Majesty's service or acting on His Majesty's behalf, such powers and duties as His Majesty may deem necessary for the preservation of the peace, for securing and regulating the supply and distribution of food, water, fuel, light, and other necessities, for maintaining the means of transit or locomotion, and for any other purpose essential to the public safety and the life of the community, and may make such provisions incidental to the powers aforesaid as may appear to His Majesty to be required for making the exercise of those powers effective:

"Provided that nothing in this Act shall be construed to authorise the making of any regulations imposing any form of compulsory military service or industrial conscription:

"Provided also that no such regulation shall make it an offence for any person or persons to take part in a strike, or
peacefully to persuade any other person or persons to take part in a strike."

And whereas a proclamation of Emergency under the said Act has been made by His Majesty, and is now in force;

And whereas in pursuance of the powers above recited it is expedient to make such provision as hereinafter appears;

Now therefore, His Majesty is pleased, by and with the advice of His Privy Council, to order, and it is hereby ordered as follows:-

1. It shall be lawful for the Board of Trade, and any other Department approved by His Majesty for the purpose, and any person duly authorized by a department on whom powers are conferred by or under this regulation, where it appears necessary to do so, to take possession of any land, buildings or works (including works for the supply of gas, electricity or water and of any sources of water supply) and any property (including plant, machinery, equipment and stores) used or intended to be used in connection therewith.

2. (1) The Minister of Transport may by orders—
   (a) regulate, restrict, or give directions with respect to, the use for the purposes of road transport or the sale or purchase of any horses or vehicles in use or capable of being used for the purpose of road transport;
   (b) take possession of any such horses or vehicles as aforesaid, or require them to be placed at the disposal of the Minister, or of any person specified by the Minister in that behalf, either absolutely or by way of hire, and either for immediate or future use;
   (c) require persons owning, or having in their possession or under their control, any such horses or vehicles as aforesaid to make to the Minister, or to any person specified by the Minister in that behalf, returns giving the prescribed
particulars with respect to those horses and vehicles, and require any such returns to be verified in the prescribed manner;

(d) require persons owning, or having in their possession or under their control, any such horse or vehicle as aforesaid to give notice in the prescribed manner before disposing thereof, or allowing it to pass out of their possession or control;

(e) prohibit the carriage of goods of any class by road, and prescribe the radios or distance within which goods or goods of any class may be carried by road;

(f) provide for the giving of directions with respect to the carriage of goods on any particular vehicles, or by any particular route or to any particular clearing house or depot;

(g) regulate the priority in which goods are to be carried by road and vehicles used for the purposes of road transport;

(h) prescribe the conditions on which, and the rates at which, horses or vehicles may be hired for the purposes of road transport and goods carried by road, and the conditions on which goods so carried or to be carried are to be loaded or discharged;

(i) make such other provisions in relation to road transport as appear to the minister necessary or expedient.

(3) Any order under this regulation may be made so as to apply either generally to all horses and vehicles, or to horses or vehicles of any class, or to horses or vehicles belonging to any particular owner.

(4) For the purpose of testing the accuracy of any return made to the minister under this regulation, or of obtaining information in the case of failure to make a return, or to give any prescribed notice, any person authorized in that behalf by the minister may enter any premises belonging to or in the occupation of the person who has made or has failed to make the return, or on which the person so authorized has reason to believe that any horses or vehicles with respect to which a return has been required under this regulation are kept, and may carry out such inspection and examination (including the inspection and examination of books) as he may consider necessary for testing the accuracy of the return, or for obtaining such information.

(4) No individual return or part of a return made, and no information obtained, under this regulation, shall without lawful authority be published or disclosed by any person except for the purpose of a prosecution under this regulation.

(5) If in any case the minister is of opinion that it is expedient to obtain information from any person in connection with any horses or vehicles, the minister may, without making an order for the purpose, require or authorize any person on his behalf to require that person to furnish him or any person so authorized with that information, and where the minister or any person so authorized so requires any information to
be furnished the provisions of this regulation shall apply to
information furnished and the furnishing of the information as they
apply to returns made and the making of returns.

(6) In this regulation the expression "prescribed" means prescribed
by an order made under this regulation, and the expression "horse"
includes "mule".

3. (1) The Minister of Transport for the purpose of making the most
efficient use of the materials or plant belonging to a tramway or
light railway undertaking may by order require the whole or any part
of the rolling-stock, materials and plant, including permanent way,
of any such undertaking to be placed at his disposal or at the disposal
of any person or body of persons named by him.

Where any such order has been made the Minister or any such
person or body of persons may take possession of such portions of the
rolling-stock, materials or plant of such undertaking as they may
require and may remove them and make use of them for the purposes of
any other tramway or light railway.

(2) The Minister of Transport may by order restrict in such manner
as may be specified in the order the traffic on any tramway or light
railway.

(3) If any person fails to comply with the provisions of any order
made under this regulation or wilfully hinders or impedes the execution
of any such order he shall be guilty of an offence against these
regulations.

5. Where with a view to preventing congestion of traffic, on, or
excessive damage to, public highways the Minister of Transport
considers it is expedient to do so, he may by order regulate or
provide for the regulation of transport on public highways, and may
by such order provide for directions being given for prescribing
the routes to be followed and restricting the types of vehicles to
be used, and if any person affected by the order fails to comply
with the provisions thereof or with any directions given thereunder
he shall be guilty of an offence against these regulations.

6. Without prejudice to any other powers possessed by him,
whether under these regulations or otherwise, the Minister of
Transport may by order regulate the priority in which passengers or
goods are to be carried by railway, light railway, tramway, or canal.

7. (1) It shall be lawful for the Board of Trade, the Minister of
Health and the Minister of Transport respectively by order to
require the owners of any undertakings for the supply of gas, water,
and electricity to comply with any directions given by the Board
or Minister as to the supply thereof.
(2) Where any such order has been issued, or where in pursuance of the powers conferred by any of those regulations possession has been taken of any works for the supply of gas, water or electricity, it shall be the duty of the owner of the undertaking and of every officer and servant of the owners and where the owners are a company of every director of the company to comply with any directions which may be given by the Board or Minister, and any person failing so to comply shall be guilty of an offence against those regulations.

(3) The powers of the Board of Trade and the minister of Health under this regulation may in Scotland be exercised by the Secretary for Scotland.

8. - (1) The Board of Trade may by order direct that all lights of any specified class or description shall be extinguished or their use restricted to such extent, between such hours, within such area, and in such places of entertainment, hotels, clubs, or other premises as may be specified in the order, and if any person having control of any light, or occupying or having control of, or managing, or being in charge of, premises in or in connection with which any light is used, acts in contravention of any such order, he shall be guilty of an offence against those regulations.

(2) The Board of Trade or the minister of Transport may by order direct that the use of lights in public vehicles shall be restricted to such extent as may be specified in the order, and if any person being in charge of any public conveyance in which any light is used acts in contravention of any such order he shall be guilty of an offence against those regulations.

9. - (1) The Board of Trade may by order prohibit or regulate the sale, supply, delivery or use of motor spirit, and require any person owning or having the power to sell or dispose of motor spirit to place the same at the disposal of the Board or of any person authorised by them.

(2) In this regulation the expression "motor spirit" includes any inflammable liquid substance capable of being used for the purpose of driving motor vehicles.

(3) If any person contravenes or fails to comply with any provision of any order made under this regulation he shall be guilty of an offence against those regulations.

10. - (1) If any person injures, or does any act calculated to injure, or to prevent the proper use or working of, any public building, railway, canal, bridge, road, tramway, vehicle, telegraph or telephone line, cable, or plant, mine, shop, factory, waterworks, gasworks, electric generating station, or any works or plant used or adopted for use for the production, supply, storage, or transport of food, fuel, munitions, water, light, heat, or power, he shall be guilty of an offence against those regulations.

(2) If any person approaches or is in the neighbourhood of or enters any such place as aforesaid with intent to injure thereof he shall be guilty of an offence against those regulations; and notwithstanding that no such act or injury is committed by him, he
Employment of His Majesty's Forces.

11. - Where a Secretary of State by order has declared that any service is a service of vital importance to the community, it shall be the duty of every person subject to the Naval Discipline Act or to military law or to the Air Force Act to obey any command given by any superior officer in relation to employment upon or in connection with such service, and every such command shall be deemed to be a lawful command within the meaning and for the purposes of the Naval Discipline Act, the Army Act and the Air Force Act.

Billeting.

12. - During the continuance in force of these regulations the powers conferred by section 109A of the Army Act and section 109A of the Air Force Act with respect to billeting may, notwithstanding that directions have not been given for embodying all or any part of the Territorial Army be exercised in the same manner in all respects as if such directions had been given, and shall have effect in relation to officers and men of the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines acting with or attached to any body of His Majesty's military or air forces in all respects as if they were officers and soldiers or officers and airmen of such military or air forces.

Obstruction of officers.

13. If any person obstructs, knowingly misleads, or otherwise interferes with or impedes, or withholds any information in his possession which he may reasonably be required to furnish from, any officer or other person who is carrying out the orders of any Government Department or who is otherwise acting in accordance with his duty under these regulations he shall be guilty of an offence against these regulations.

Effect of notice of intention to take possession of property.

14. Where any department, or any person authorised by a department, has, in pursuance of powers conferred by any of these regulations, issued a notice that that department or person has taken or intends to take possession of any movable property, any person having control of any such property who, without the consent of that department or person, sells or removes or secretes the same or any part thereof, or parts therewith in any way contrary to any conditions imposed in any licence, permit, or order that may have been granted in respect thereof, shall be guilty of an offence against these regulations.

Delegation of powers.

15. Any Government Department on whom powers or duties are conferred or imposed by these regulations may make arrangements with any other Government Department for the exercise by that Department of the powers or duties, and in such case that Department and the officers thereof shall have and may exercise the same powers and duties as are by these regulations conferred on the first mentioned Department and the officers thereof; and the Minister of Health, or as respects
Scotland the Secretary for Scotland, may, by arrangement with any
Government Department on whom powers or duties are conferred or
imposed by these regulations, confer or impose on any local
authorities and their officers any powers and duties in connection
with the enforcement of these regulations, and any powers and duties
necessary to provide for the due discharge of any functions assigned
to local authorities by any Government Department under these
regulations.

16. - The compensation payable in respect of any property which is
requisitioned or of which possession is taken under these regulations
shall be such as may be determined in default of agreement by a
single arbitrator appointed in England by the Lord Chancellor and
in Scotland by the Lord President of the Court of Session, and in
assessing the amount of compensation payable in any particular case,
regard shall not be had to any increase in the value of the
property which is due to the emergency nor to any consequential loss.

17. - (1) If any person contravenes or otherwise fails to comply with
any of the provisions of these regulations or any order or direction
made or given thereunder, or is guilty of an offence against these
regulations, or obstructs any police or other officer or any other
person in the execution of his duties under these regulations, he
shall be liable on summary conviction to imprisonment with or
without hard labour for a term not exceeding three months, or to a
fine not exceeding one hundred pounds, or to both such imprisonment
and fine, and shall be liable to forfeit to the Crown any goods or
money in respect of which the offence was committed.

(2) Where the person guilty of any such offence is a corporation,
company or society, any director, officer, or trustee, or other
person concerned with the management thereof, shall be guilty of the
like offence unless he proves that the offence was committed without
his knowledge or consent.

(3) For the purpose of the trial of a person for an offence
against these regulations, such offence shall be deemed to have been
committed either at the place in which the same actually was committed
or at any place in which the offender may be.

18. - (1) Any police constable may arrest without warrant any person who
so acts as to endanger the public safety, or who is guilty, or is
suspected of being guilty of an offence against these regulations.

(2) Any police constable may, if authorised by order of a
Secretary of State or of a chief officer of police, enter, if need
be by force, any premises or place suspected of being used for
purposes of endangering the public safety, and may search any part
of such place or premises and may seize and detain anything found
therein which is suspected of being used for such purposes as
aforesaid, for the keeping of which in such place or premises
involves the commission of an offence against these regulations,
and may deal with the things so seized in such manner as the
Secretary of State may determine.
(3) Any police constable may search any person whom he believes to be in possession of, or to be using or carrying any article, the possession, use or carrying of which by such person is an offence against these regulations, and may seize and detain any such article found on such person.

(4) Any police constable may stop and search any vehicle which he has reason to suspect to be used for any purpose prejudicial to the public safety, or contrary to these regulations, or to be carrying any article, the possession, use or carrying of which is an offence against these regulations, and may seize and detain any such vehicle or any such article found therein.

(5) In the application of this regulation to Scotland "the Secretary for Scotland" shall be substituted for "a Secretary of State".

19. - Any person who attempts to commit, or solicits or incites, or endeavours to persuade another person to commit or procure, aids, or assists or does any act preparatory to, the commission of any act prohibited by these regulations, or any order, directions, rules, or other instrument made thereunder, shall be guilty of an offence against these regulations.

20. - If the fulfilment by any person of any contract is interfered with by the necessity on the part of himself or any other person of complying with these regulations or any order or direction thereunder, that necessity shall be a good defence to any action or proceedings taken against that person in respect of the non-fulfilment of the contract so far as it is due to that interference.

21. The Interpretation Act, 1889, shall apply to these regulations as though they were an Act of Parliament.

22. - (1) Where by any Order in Council or by any Resolution of both Houses of Parliament, for the time being in force, any regulations or words are directed to be added to or omitted from these regulations, or to be substituted for any other regulations or words in these regulations, then copies of these regulations, printed under the authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office, after such direction takes effect, may be printed with regulations or words added or omitted or substituted for other regulations or words, as such direction requires, and with the regulations and paragraphs thereof numbered in accordance with such direction; and these regulations shall be construed as if they had, at the time when such direction takes effect, been made with such addition, omission or substitution.

(2) A reference in any document to these regulations or to any provisions thereof shall, unless the context otherwise requires, be construed as referring to these regulations as amended by any Order in Council or Resolution of both Houses of Parliament for the time being in force.

33. - (1) The powers conferred by these regulations shall be in addition to and not in derogation of any prerogative right or other power vested in His Majesty.
(2) Any powers conferred on any department or person by any of these regulations shall be in addition to and not in derogation of any other powers of that department or person whether conferred by statute, regulation or otherwise.

(3) Any order, direction or instrument which may be made or given by any government department or other authority under these regulations may be added to, revoked or varied from time to time by such department or authority while these regulations continue in force.

(4) References in these regulations to a person authorised to act on behalf of any department shall include the holder for the time being of any office designated for the purpose by the department.

Short title. 84. — These regulations may be cited as the Emergency Regulations, 1924.
MEETING of the Cabinet to be held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. (1), on Wednesday, April 2nd, 1924, at 11 a.m.

AGENDA.

1. THREATENED INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES.
   (Reference Cabinet 22(24) Conclusion 5).
   Note by the Minister of Labour
   (C.P.216(24) — already circulated).

2. UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.
   Memorandum by the Minister of Labour covering Draft Bill.
   (C.P.225(24) — already circulated).
   Report of Cabinet Committee.
   (C.P.224(24) — To be circulated).

3. IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS.
   Memorandum by the Home Secretary.
   (C.P.214(24) — already circulated).

4. IMPERIAL WIRELESS SERVICE.
   Memorandum by the Postmaster-General
   (C.P.226(24) — to be circulated).

5. AGRICULTURAL WAGES.
   Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture & Fisheries covering draft Bill.
   (C.P.217(24) — already circulated)
   Memorandum by the Minister of Labour.
   (C.P.220(24) — already circulated).
   Notes by the Minister of Labour.
   (C.P.220A(24) — already circulated).
   Recommendations of Home Affairs Committee.
   (H.A.C.1(24) Conclusions 1(2) — already circulated)
   Report of Cabinet Committee.
   (C.P.225(24) — to be circulated)
6. DATE OF CABINET DISCUSSION ON THE BUDGET.

7. RENT AND MORTGAGE INTEREST RESTRICTION BILL 1924.

Recommendations of Home Affairs Committee.
(H.A.C.8(24) Conclusion 2. - already circulated)

(Signed) M.P.A. HANKEY.

Secretary, Cabinet.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.(l)
March 31st 1924

CABINET 24 (24).

Meeting to be held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1., on Wednesday, April 2nd, 1924, at 11 a.m.

ADDITIONAL ITEM FOR AGENDA.

IRISH BOUNDARY COMMISSION.
(To be raised by the Secretary of State for the Colonies).

(Sgd). M.P.A. HANKEY,
Secretary to the Cabinet.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.l.
April 1st, 1924.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2nd, 1924, at 11 A.M.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).


The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.C.M.G., C.B., Secretary of State for India.


The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P., Secretary for Scotland.


THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:

Sir Patrick Hastings, K.C., M.P., Attorney-General. (For Item 1).

Liet.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, C.C.B. Secretary.
IRELAND.

Boundaries of Ulster.

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 13 (24), Conclusion 2.)

1. The Secretary of State for the Colonies informed the Cabinet that it now appeared probable that the Irish Free State Government would agree to a renewal of the Conference in regard to the boundary between Northern and Southern Ireland, but that the Government must be prepared for the possibility of failure to reach agreement at the Conference. In this case it was of great importance to avoid giving any impression that the British Government were not prepared to carry out the Treaty. It was almost certain, however, that if the appointment of a Boundary Commission in accordance with Article 12 of the Irish Treaty was proposed, the Government of Northern Ireland would refuse to nominate a Commissioner. The situation which would then arise required careful consideration.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the Lord Chancellor and the Law Officers of the Crown should be asked to advise the Cabinet on the following question:—
"When a Commissioner has been appointed by the Government of the Irish Free State and the Chairman of the Commission has also been appointed by the British Government, but the Government of Northern Ireland persists in refusing to appoint a Commissioner, will the Boundary Commission be sufficiently constituted so as to be competent to determine the boundaries under Article 12 of the Treaty?"
2. The Secretary of State for War brought before the Cabinet, as a matter of great urgency, the question of certain amendments which were to be moved in the House of Commons to the Army and Air Force (Annual) Bill, 1924, in regard to which a Memorandum was handed round at the outset of the Meeting (Paper C.P.—232 (24)).

The amendments put down by four members of the Labour Party and one member of the Liberal Party provided for the removal of the death penalty in the case of certain offences, and their effect, if carried, on the discipline of the Army was regarded very seriously by the Military Members of the Army Council.

After considerable discussion, the Cabinet agreed—

That the Secretary of State for War should explain to the House of Commons the very serious difficulties involved by the amendments, and that he should be authorised to inform the House that the Government required further time for consideration of the question and were not in a position to introduce amendments in this direction in the Bill now before the House. Further, that the Army Council would be invited to examine the question very fully, with a view to the introduction, if possible, of some amendments next year, and to report to the Cabinet what amendments would be required in the Army and Air Force Acts in order to provide that in time of peace a soldier charged with a crime punishable by ordinary law shall be tried before a civil tribunal.
3. Arising out of the discussion on the Army and Air Force (Annual) Bill, the Cabinet considered the question as to whether their advisers were entitled to ask that their views, if adverse to the policy of the Government, should be stated in Parliament.

In this connection the Cabinet were reminded that this course had been followed in the case of the decision on the subject of the Singapore Base, but it was explained that a departure from normal practice had been made in this instance because the Government had only been in office a very short time and the views of their technical advisers were well known to their predecessors, who had reached a decision contrary to that of the present Government.

The Cabinet agreed —

That, as a matter of principle, the Government ought not to announce the opinions of their advisers in Parliament.
4. After taking note of a Memorandum by the Minister of Labour on the present position of a number of threatened trade disputes (Paper O.P.-216 (24)) and of a Note by the President of the Board of Trade covering a Memorandum by the Secretary for Mines, on the wage negotiations in the coalmining industry (Paper O.P.-229 (24)), the Cabinet passed to a discussion on the causes and tendencies of the present industrial unrest. Attention was drawn in particular to recent instances of sectional strikes, not recognised by the Trades Unions concerned, among the shipyard workers at Southampton and the builders at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, as well as to symptoms of Communist agitation and propaganda. While recognising that the present industrial unrest is partly the result of a reaction after a long period of trade depression accompanied by wage reduction and a lowering of the standard of living, the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That, with a view to an early decision as to the best method by which the Government could bring home both to employers and workers the detrimental effect on the economic recovery of the country of industrial unrest and uncertainty (whether due to the action of the employers in refusing timely discussion of legitimate demands or to unjustifiable strike action by the workers), the Prime Minister should invite representatives of the Trades Union General Council to meet representatives of the Cabinet for an informal discussion on the industrial position:

(b) That the Prime Minister should select some of his colleagues to accompany him at the above meeting, which should be held either at 10, Downing Street, or in the Houses of Parliament:

(c) That in reply to a Private Notice Question to the Prime Minister by Major Colfox as to the protection which the Government intends to afford against threats and violence at Wembley, the Minister of Labour should be authorised to reply
that "The fullest measure of protection against violence will be provided":

(d) That the First Commissioner of Works should circulate to the Cabinet a Minute amplifying suggestions he had made to the effect that in negotiations with their employes the Government should deal with representatives of the Trades Unions concerned, rather than with shop-stewards and others of their employes who at present were accustomed to represent the workers and who made claims in excess of what were recognised by the Trade Unions concerned.

(e) That as regards the Coal Dispute, the Terms of Reference to the Court of Inquiry proposed by the Miners' Federation were too narrow, but that the question at this stage should be left to be dealt with by the Mines Department of the Board of Trade.
5. After consideration of a memorandum by the Minister of Labour, covering two Unemployment Insurance Bills, Nos. 2 and 3, one a comprehensive measure dealing with a number of points, and the other a short stop-gap Bill drawn to avert the cessation of benefit in a large number of cases on April 16th (Paper C.P.-223 (24)), together with the Report of a Cabinet Committee thereon (Paper C.P.-224 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

(a) To approve generally the Second Report of the Unemployment Insurance Committee (Paper C.P.-224 (24)), including the recommendations in regard to Juvenile Employment (which involves the reversal of the previous decision of the Cabinet that payment of benefits for juveniles between 14 and 16 should be made direct to parents (Cabinet 21 (24), Conclusion 2 (g)), subject to the question of the amount of the Exchequer contribution being remitted for consideration, in the light of the Government Actuary's report, and for decision, to:

The Prime Minister,
The Chancellor of the Exchequer,
The Minister of Labour;

(b) That, subject to the above, the Minister of Labour should be authorised to introduce the Unemployment Insurance No. 2 Bill and the Unemployment Insurance No. 3 Bill in the form of the drafts annexed to C.P.-223 (24), with any drafting or other modifications (not affecting the main principles of the Bills) which may be found necessary or desirable.
6. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Home Secretary on the subject of Irish Political Prisoners (Paper C.P.–214 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

That, in view of the effects which any alteration at this moment in the status of the Irish political prisoners might have on the situation in Ireland and on the action of the Irish Free State Government in their attempts to apprehend the persons responsible for the recent outrage in Queenstown, further consideration of this question by the Cabinet should be adjourned for a month.
7. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Postmaster-General, circulated late on the previous evening, as to what would be involved in this country and in the Dominions and India if the recommendations of the Imperial Wireless Telegraphy Committee were carried out (Paper C.P.-226 (24)), the Cabinet agreed --

That, with a view to a decision being reached at the next Meeting of the Cabinet, the Postmaster-General’s Memorandum (Paper C.P.-226 (24)) should be examined by the following Committee:

The Postmaster-General,
The Chancellor of the Exchequer,
The Secretary of State for the Colonies,
The First Lord of the Admiralty,
The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.
DATE OF THE CABINET DISCUSSION ON THE BUDGET.

8. The Cabinet were informed that the House of Commons would probably rise on April 16th., and that it would re-assemble for the discussion of the Budget on Tuesday, April 29th.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the Chancellor of the Exchequer should make his statement to the Cabinet on the subject of the Budget on Saturday, April 26th, at 11 a.m.
The Cabinet agreed —

That their next Meeting should be held on Monday, April 7, 1924, at 11 a.m.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

April 2, 1924.
CABINET 25 (24).

Meeting to be held at 10, Downing Street, S.W. (1), on Monday, April 7th, 1924 at 11 a.m.

AGENDA.

1. UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.
   (a) Memorandum by the Minister of Labour covering a Report by the Government Actuary.
       (C.P.240 (24) - To be circulated).
   (b) Leakage to the Press of the Government Proposals.
       (To be raised by the Prime Minister).

2. RENT AND MORTGAGE INTEREST RESTRICTIONS BILL, 1924.
   Recommendations of Home Affairs Committee.
       [H.1.C.8 (24) Conclusion 2 - Already circulated].
   Substituted Draft for Clause 1.
       [C.P.241 (24) - To be circulated].

3. INDUSTRIAL COURTS (AMENDMENT) BILL.
   Note by the Minister of Labour covering draft Bill.
       [C.P.232 (24) - Already circulated].
   Memorandum by the Minister of Labour
       [C.P.239 (24) - To be circulated].

4. AGRICULTURAL MASTII.
   Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture & Fisheries,
       [C.P.217 (24) - already circulated].
   Memorandum by the Minister of Labour
       [C.P.220 (24) - already circulated].
   Notes by the Minister of Labour
       [C.P.220.A (24) - already circulated].
   Recommendations of Home Affairs Committee
       [H.1.C.8 (24) Conclusion 1 (2) - already circulated].
   Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture & Fisheries
       [C.P.225 (24) - already circulated].

5. IMPERIAL AIRWAYS SERVICE.
   (Reference Cabinet 24 (24) Conclusion 7.)
   Memorandum by the Postmaster-General
       [C.P.226 (24) - already circulated].
   Report of Cabinet Committee
       [C.P.224 (24) - already circulated].
3. REINSTATEMENT OF MEN DISMISSED FROM THE POLICE AND PRISON SERVICES IN CONNECTION WITH THE STRIKE OF 1919.

Memorandum by the Home Secretary.
(C.P.250(24) already circulated).

7. TRAVELLING FACILITIES FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

(reference Cabinet 22 (24) Conclusion 8). To be raised by the Prime Minister.

8. HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CONCLUSIONS.

(a) Hours of Industrial Employment Bill
(H.A.9.3 (24) Conclusion 1.)

(b) Leave of High Officials in India Bill
(H.A.9.3 (24) Conclusion 3).

(E.A.9/0th Conclusions (24) already circulated)

(Signed) M.P.A.HANKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.(1)
4th April 1934.
CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on MONDAY, APRIL 7th, 1924, at 11 A.M.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).


The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Lord Olivier, K.C.M.G., C.B., Secretary of State for India.


The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Noel Buxton, M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P., Secretary for Scotland.


The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. Stephen Walsh, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

Brig.-General The Right Hon. Lord Thomson, C.B.E., D.S.O., Secretary of State for Air.

The Right Hon. Sidney Webb, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. Charles Trevelyan, M.P., President of the Board of Education.

The Right Hon. Tom Shaw, C.B.E., M.P., Minister of Labour.


THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. H. Gosling, C.H., M.P., Minister of Transport. (For Item 11).

Lient.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Bankey, G.C.B. .................................... Secretary.
CABINET 25 (24).

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W. 1, on MONDAY, APRIL 7, 1924, at 11 a.m.

PUCKTUALITY. 1. The Prime Minister made an appeal to his colleagues for punctuality in regard to Cabinet business.

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 7 (24), Conclusion 1.)
2. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Minister of Labour, covering copies of the two Unemployment Insurance Bills and of the Government Actuary’s Report on the larger Bill (Paper C.P.-240 (24)).

The Cabinet were informed that the new Exchequer contribution would not begin to operate until the scheme became solvent. The Exchequer contribution would form a higher percentage of the total than at present, but there would be a diminution in the total amount contributed.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the inclusion of juveniles between the ages of 14 and 16 would bring in an annual income of £1,500,000, and that the total expenditure on benefits to juveniles from 14 to 16, on the share of the expenses of the administration, and on the contribution to the cost of Juvenile Unemployment Centres, would only be £550,000. It was explained, however, that the juveniles would from the first be accumulating their unemployment benefit and would therefore obtain individual advantages as well as participation in an improved scheme of Unemployment Insurance derived from this lowering of the age of entry.

The Cabinet agreed —

To authorise the immediate circulation to Parliament of Unemployment Bill No. 2 and Unemployment Bill No. 3.

(The Secretary was instructed to telephone this information to the Minister of Labour, in order that the Bills might immediately be released.)
LEAKAGE OF INFORMATION. 3. The attention of the Cabinet was called to the serious leakage which had occurred in regard to the contents of the draft of the Unemployment Insurance Bills before those Bills were ready for presentation to Parliament.

(Previous Reference: Cabinet 19 (24), Conclusion 7.)

The Prime Minister made an urgent appeal to Ministers to exercise the utmost discretion about prematurely communicating information in regard to Government Bills to persons outside the Government, and to do their best to check leakage in their respective Departments.
4. The Cabinet had before them the recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs in regard to the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill, 1924 (H.A.C. 8 Reference: Cabinet 22 (24), Conclusion 2.) and a Note by the Secretary, covering a proposed amendment to the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill as well as an outline of the Parliamentary Position, prepared by the Lord Privy Seal (Paper C.P. 245 (24)).

The Prime Minister informed the Cabinet that on the previous evening he had held an informal meeting with those of his colleagues who would be principally concerned in dealing with the question of Rent Restriction in the House of Commons, with a view to preparing proposals for consideration by the Cabinet.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the Prime Minister should announce in the House of Commons that if the Second Reading of the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill was passed, the Government would move an amendment to Clause 1, which would then read as follows:

"Notwithstanding anything in the section which by section four of the Rent and Mortgage Interest Restrictions Act, 1923, is substituted for section five of the principal Act (which substituted section is in this Act referred to as section five), a court shall not make or grant an order or judgment for the recovery of possession of a dwelling-house to which the principal Act applies, or for the ejectment of the tenant thereof on the ground of non-payment of rent in any case where it appears to the court that the non-payment is due to the inability of the tenant to obtain employment, unless the court is satisfied that the tenant has had a reasonable opportunity of applying to the local Poor Law Authority for relief, and the Authority has had an opportunity of considering any such application."

(b) That the spokesmen for the Government in the Parliamentary Debate should be authorised to state that, if the Bill were passed, the Government would take such administrative
action as might be necessary to secure that Boards of Guardians in England and Wales, and Parish Councils in Scotland, when granting relief to unemployed persons, should take rent into consideration:

(c) That the Government spokesmen in the Debate should resist all idea of a State grant to Local Authorities for the purpose of carrying out Clause 1 of the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill, and should take the line that the relation of local to Imperial taxation is a separate question which cannot be dealt with in relation to this or any other particular Bill but must be considered as a whole. In this connection it should be made clear to the House of Commons that the proposals of the Government in regard to Unemployment Insurance, which include a 20 per cent. increase of benefits and the abolition of gaps, will result in the grant of additional benefits to the unemployed estimated at £10,000,000 per annum and that these changes cannot fail to reduce the expenditure of Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils by an amount far exceeding any additional burden resulting from the obligation which the Government propose to place upon Local Authorities of including in relief which they grant to the unemployed a specific item in respect of rent:

(d) That the Division on the Second Reading of the Bill need not be regarded as a question of confidence. In the event of an adverse vote the Government would accept the decision of the House and the Opposition Parties would accept responsibility for their action before public opinion:

(e) That the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Secretary for Scotland should be prepared to speak in the Debate, but that the order in which they should speak should be left until the Debate had begun.
5. In connection with the discussion on the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill, 1924, the First Eviction Commissioner of Works read to the Cabinet a Memorandum (Paper O.P.-242 (24)) in regard to a particular case, typical of many on the housing estates under his charge, which was of special importance in view of the provisions of the above Bill. The case in question concerned the tenant of a Government-owned house who was seriously in arrears of rent, who was unemployed, whose case had been before the Court (which had granted an Eviction Order), but who up to the present time had not been evicted even though his record was a thoroughly bad one.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the matter was one for decision by the Department, but that, on general principles, if a tenant's record was a bad one, an Eviction Order should be allowed to take its course, subject to such warning as the Department, having regard to the circumstances of the case, might think it desirable to issue.
6. In connection with the discussion on the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill, 1924, the question was raised as to the adequacy of the Cabinet procedure for ensuring that Government measures were discussed in a sufficiently critical spirit before introduction in Parliament.

In the course of the discussion it was pointed out that, subject to one exception, the procedure laid down by the Cabinet had been followed in the case of the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill, 1924. On Tuesday, March 25th, the Cabinet had discussed a Memorandum by the Minister of Health which had been circulated on the previous evening, and the general principle had been approved. The draft Bill had been circulated to the Cabinet on the afternoon of March 27th and had been discussed on the following morning at the Committee of Home Affairs. In the case of both the Cabinet and the Committee of Home Affairs, therefore, the relevant papers had only been circulated on the evening preceding the discussion. At the Committee of Home Affairs only two of the regular members, besides the Chairman, had been present, and these had not included either of the Law Officers. Moreover, owing to the pressure of Parliamentary business, the Bill had been circulated to Members of Parliament before the recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs had come before the Cabinet for approval.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the Secretary should arrange to meet the Law Officers and the Chief Parliamentary Draughtsman, and should ask them to suggest some improvement in the present procedure, with a view to having all Government Bills examined from a critical point of view, preferably by a lawyer who was also a politician, before introduction in Parliament.
7. The Cabinet had before them a note by the Minister of Labour (Paper C.P.-222 (24)) covering the Industrial Courts Amendment Bill, introduced by Lord Askwith in the House of Lords and to be discussed on the following day; together with a Memorandum by the Minister of Labour thereon (Paper C.P.-239 (24)).

The Prime Minister read to his colleagues the following notes which he had prepared as the basis of a possible speech on the Bill:

1. This extraordinary crop of disputes does raise questions other than those by individual disputes of even great magnitude.

2. The sympathetic strike policy has never been supported by Labour Party; I myself having written and spoken against it for many years.

3. If pursued it will knock the foundations from present code of Trade Union law.

4. A reaction must follow when Trade Union will lose the gains of many fights.

5. Once Government gets some pressingly urgent concerns off its hand, e.g., Housing, Unemployment, it proposes to undertake a thorough investigation, but it is perfectly certain that this Bill will not do. Under British conditions it would be a dead letter or defied, and then it could not be put into operation. It is another "Mond Order".

(Intd.) J.R.M.

The suggestion was made that any condemnation of the sympathetic strike policy should be referred to, if at all, only in the most cautious and non-commital terms.

The Cabinet agreed —

(a) That in the Debate in the House of Lords the principles of the Bill should not be supported by the Government speakers. They should explain that if they thought the Bill was likely to bring about peace the Labour Party would be only too glad to adopt it, but this was not the Government’s view; nor was such a conclusion supported by the experience of similar legislation in the Dominions. They should base their attitude on the Memorandum of the Minister of Labour (Paper C.P.-239 (24)) and the Prime Minister's Memorandum quoted above;

-8-
(b) That the Government should undertake a thorough investigation of the question of the means for settlement of industrial disputes, when some of the more immediately pressing questions had been dealt with.
AGRICULTURAL

3. After consideration of the following documents on WAGES:

A Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, covering draft Bill (Paper CP.-217 (24)):

A Memorandum by the Minister of Labour (Paper CP.-220 (24)):

Notes by the Minister of Labour (Paper CP.-220-A (24)):

Recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs (H.A.C. 6 (24), Conclusion 1 (2)):

A Memorandum by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries (Paper CP.-225 (24)) --

the Cabinet agreed --

That the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries should have authority to introduce the Agricultural Wages Bill, revised in accordance with the recommendations of the Agricultural Policy Committee, and with such drafting amendments as may be found desirable after consultation with the Minister of Labour.
9. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Postmaster-General on the subject of the Imperial Wireless Service (Paper C.P.-226 (24)) and the Report of a Cabinet Committee thereon (Paper C.P.-234 (24)), the Cabinet agreed —

(a) To approve the following recommendation (No. 3) of the Cabinet Committee:

"That before any further announcement is made of the policy of His Majesty's Government as regards Imperial Wireless Service, the Cabinet Committee, composed of the Postmaster-General, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, should be authorised to interview and negotiate with the representatives of the Marconi Company on the following bases:

(i) That the principle of State-ownership and operation of wireless stations in Great Britain for communication with the Dominions is decided upon:

(ii) That the ownership and administration of wireless stations in the Dominions is similarly left entirely for decision by the Governments of the Dominions:

(iii) That the State-owned stations in Great Britain will be prepared to provide an efficient service for wireless communication with any stations to be erected in the Dominions:

(b) That, in its negotiation with the Marconi Company in regard to communication between Great Britain and foreign countries, the Cabinet Committee, without necessarily disclosing the extent of its powers at the outset of the negotiations, should be authorised to go as far as is provided below:

"That wireless communication between Great Britain and foreign countries will be open to private enterprise as heretofore under license, the conditions of which to be settled by the Postmaster-General:"
(c) That consideration of the remainder of the recommendations of the Cabinet Committee should be postponed until the Secretary of State for the Colonies had communicated with the Dominions in regard to the proposal that the alternative suggested in Recommendation (3) of the Wireless Telegraphy Committee should not be adopted.
10. After consideration of a Memorandum by the Home Secretary in regard to the demand for reinstatement of men dismissed in connection with the Strike of 1919 (Paper C.P.-230 (24)), the Cabinet concurred generally in the view of the Home Secretary and agreed —

That they could not assume the responsibility of approving the reinstatement of the dismissed strikers.
11. The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Minister of Labour covering the draft Hours of Industrial Employment Bill (Paper C.P.-221 (24)), a Memorandum thereon: (Previous Reference: by the Minister of Transport (Paper C.P.-228 (24)) and Cabinet 13 (24), Conclusion 10.)

It was pointed out to the Cabinet that the present tendency of their legislation was rather in the direction of imposing burdens on industry, and that, although each individual Bill might be unobjectionable, cumulatively they might produce an awkward psychological effect on public opinion.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the consideration of the Hours of Industrial Employment Bill should be postponed until after the conference recommended by the Committee of Home Affairs between —

The Minister of Labour,
The Minister of Transport,
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury.
INDIA.  12. After consideration of a Memorandum by the
Secretary of State for India covering the draft Leave
of High Officials in India Bill (Paper C.P.-227 (24))
and the recommendations of the Committee of Home Affairs
(Previous Reference: thereon, the Cabinet agreed --
Cabinet 13 (24), Conclusion 1.) To authorise the Secretary of State
for India to arrange for the introduction in the House of Lords of the Leave
of High Officials in India Bill in the form of the draft annexed to C.P.-227
(24), subject to any minor or drafting alterations which may be thought
necessary or desirable.
DATE OF THE 13. The Cabinet were informed that the King was anxious that as many Ministers as possible should be present at the opening of the British Empire Exhibition on April 23rd. It was pointed out that, as Ministers would have to break their holiday to keep this engagement, it would be very inconvenient if they had to return again for a Meeting of the Cabinet on Saturday, April 26th, as previously arranged.

British Empire Exhibition.

The following arrangements were agreed to:-

(a) The Chancellor of the Exchequer should take a convenient opportunity to discuss his Budget proposals with the Prime Minister:

(b) The Chancellor of the Exchequer should explain his Budget proposals to the Cabinet on the morning of Tuesday, April 29th, at 11 a.m., at a meeting at which the Prime Minister would be unable to be present.
14. The Cabinet had a further discussion in regard to travelling facilities for Members of Parliament, in view of the forthcoming discussion on the question in the House of Commons on Thursday, April 10th.

The Cabinet were informed that the cost of first-class season tickets to all Members of Parliament between London and their constituencies would be £70,000 per annum for twelve months. It was estimated that the cost of vouchers for each journey, on the basis of first-class week-end fares, would be about £60,000 per annum on the assumption that Parliament sat for 40 weeks and that each Member travelled every week.

After some discussion the Cabinet agreed —

(a) That the question should be remitted to

The Lord Privy Seal,
The Secretary of State for the Colonies,
The Minister of Labour,
The Minister of Education,
The Minister of Transport,

who should make recommendations to the Prime Minister as to the line to be taken by the Government in regard to the alternatives of the grant of season tickets or vouchers, or a combination of season tickets for the shorter journeys and vouchers for the longer journeys, as well as the question of sleeping accommodation for Members whose constituencies involve night journeys:

(b) That the Prime Minister, in consultation with the above Committee, should have authority to decide the question on behalf of the Cabinet.
15. The Cabinet agreed —

That, unless an emergency meeting were required for any question, the next meeting should be held on TUESDAY, 15th, APRIL 1924, at 10 a.m.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,

April 7, 1924.
NOTES OF A MEETING held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1., on SUNDAY, APRIL 6th, 1924, at 7 p.m.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (In the Chair).


The Right Hon. J.H. Thomas, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. Philip Snowden, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. John Wheatley, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. William Adamson, M.P., Secretary for Scotland.

Lieut.-Col. Sir M.P.A. Hankey, G.C.B. Secretary.
The Conference had before them the following documents:

An Outline of the Parliamentary Position in regard to the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill, circulated by the Lord Privy Seal (Appendix I):

A Note by the Lord Privy Seal, covering the Report of an Inter-Departmental Conference on the question of Financial Assistance to Local Authorities (Appendix II):

A Memorandum by the Lord Privy Seal, covering the draft of a Memorandum it was proposed to send to the Opposition leaders (Appendix III). This contained the following draft amendment to Clause 1 of the Bill:

"Clause 1, Page 1, Line 18: Leave out from "that" to the end of the Clause, and insert 'the tenant has had a reasonable opportunity of applying to the local Poor Law Authority for relief and the Authority has had a reasonable opportunity of considering any such application'."

The first subject of discussion was the above amendment. It was pointed out that the amendment would be subjected to considerable criticism in the House of Commons. The Government would be pressed to state their case in favour of the Clause as amended. It was true that they would be able to show that a considerable number of evictions were being applied for and granted, more particularly in Scotland. They would not, however, be able to show that the evictions were due to inability to pay rent by unemployed persons. On the contrary, the whole of the evidence tended to show that this was not the case. In this connection attention was drawn to the following statement in the Departmental Memorandum in Appendix II:
It is the general practice of Boards of Guardians, when assessing relief, to take the rent payable by the applicant into consideration, either expressly or in fixing an inclusive scale. The more usual practice is for a definite sum to be earmarked as payable in respect of rent.

The above applied to England, and the Departmental Conference had promised further information in regard to Scotland. The following supplementary note was read in regard to Scotland:

"It is understood that in Scotland evictions on the ground of non-payment of rent are very rare in the case of persons in receipt of Poor Relief.

Speaking generally, the scales of relief are considered to be sufficient to enable the recipients to meet current rent.

It follows from the above that an obligation on Parish Councils to give such measure of relief as will enable rents to be paid would not impose any appreciable extra burden on Parish Councils, provided, of course, that the Councils remain the judges of what amount of relief is necessary to attain this object."

It was pointed out that the Opposition were known to have figures for Sheffield, and possibly other places, which would confirm the above evidence, that the evictions were due not to non-payment of rent but to other causes, including more particularly the Chamberlain Act, which was provided for in the later Clauses of the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill. It would be pointed out in debate that Clause 1 was unnecessary, and an attempt would be made to discredit the Government on this ground. It would further be pointed out in debate that the Government had considerably shifted their ground. By the original Clause 1 they had cast the burden on to the landlords; then they had said it should be paid from public funds. When pressed as to what they meant by this they had suggested the Poor Law Authorities, but when asked if the whole burden was to fall on to the Local Authorities they had said they would consider the matter later.
The result was that the House of Commons was in considerable confusion on the subject, and it was possible that Clause 1 as at present drafted might result in still greater confusion. The case of the Opposition would then be that they had wanted to help in removing the hardship on the unemployed, but the Government had not been able to help them.

After some discussion, Sir Aubrey Symonds (Second Secretary to the Ministry of Health) was introduced. In reply to a number of questions, Sir Aubrey Symonds said that the Minister of Health, who had inherited the powers of the Local Government Board in regard to Poor Law administration, was definitely prohibited by Statute from ordering relief in particular cases. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Health was empowered by Order to direct Boards of Guardians to take certain considerations into account in dealing with Poor Law Relief. At present, if a person was destitute in regard to lodging, it was the duty of the Guardians to provide him with lodging just as much as with food or clothing when granting out-relief. The Boards of Guardians, however, had to consider whether it was a case for out-relief or whether it should be dealt with by indoor-relief. They also had to consider whether the amount of the rent payable was appropriate to the circumstances of the claimant. The Ministry of Health could, and did when necessary, issue orders dealing with the duties of Boards of Guardians, enjoining them when giving out-relief to take into consideration the rent the claimant was paying. Under the Order now in force certain particulars had to be obtained in regard to applicants for relief, and these included particulars as to the home of the applicant, among which rent was taken into account. There was also an Order
prohibiting the payment of rent direct to the landlord. Some Boards of Guardians gave a certain amount of relief with an additional allowance for rent. Others gave so much for relief and some proportion, such as one-half, for rent, while others granted an inclusive amount. A recent Deputation to the Ministry from Sheffield had stated that in that city 10/- of the inclusive amount was granted in respect of rent.

Sir Aubrey Symonds said that, so far as he knew, there were practically no cases where a recipient for relief had been evicted on grounds of non-payment of rent due to unemployment. There had, of course, been evictions for other causes. In consequence of a recent Question in Parliament the Ministry had investigated the cases of eighteen persons in a particular workhouse who were alleged to be there owing to non-payment of rent from unemployment, and it had been found that not a single case was this the cause.

Sir Aubrey Symonds stated that the Ministry had knowledge indirectly that a good many people came before the Courts in connection with eviction claims who had never applied for Poor Law Relief and did not wish to apply for it. From his own knowledge, however, he could say that a good many County Court Judges, probably, indeed, a majority, before making an Eviction Order would give the occupier an opportunity to apply for Poor Law Relief.

Questioned as to what advantages Clause 1 of the Bill (as amended) would give, Sir Aubrey Symonds said that, apart from consequential action to ensure that the Poor Law Authorities did take rent into consideration, it would give a clear direction to County Court Judges in England, and Sheriffs in Scotland, that before granting an Eviction Order they must give the tenant an opportunity to apply to the
Delete the last line on page 5 and the first two lines on page 6

and

Substitute the following:-

"the application. If they refused, the application would not have been considered, and consequently the Government could not make an order for possession. The Guardians could not be accused of any dereliction of duty in refusing to consider the application, because ex hypothesi the applicant could not be deprived of his lodging. Hence the result would be to throw the landlord back into the position in which he would have been under the original unamended Bill, and the opposition lawyers would most probably seize upon this point."

(Signed) M. P. A. HANKEY,
Secretary, Cabinet.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
7th April, 1924.
Poor Law Authorities. In addition, it would give the same direction to the Bench at Petty Sessions, which dealt with houses with smaller rents. The Bill would be in effect a direct prohibition to these to give an Order until an opportunity had been given to the tenant to apply for Poor Relief. It would be an order to them and a hint to the Judges and Sheriffs. Consequentially to the passing of this Bill it would be necessary to make it clear to the Guardians that they should take lodging into consideration when fixing the amount of Poor Relief. He believed that this could be done by administrative order.

Considerable discussion then took place in regard to the terms of the proposed amendment.

It was pointed out that the present wording only provided that a Court should not grant an Eviction Order unless the local Poor Law Authority had a reasonable opportunity for considering the application of the tenant for relief. An adverse County Court Judge might interpret a "reasonable opportunity" very freely. For example, he might say that if the question had been on the Agenda of the Board of Guardians that constituted a "reasonable opportunity"; and even if the Board of Guardians had never considered the case the Eviction Order might be given. In order to meet this difficulty it was proposed to alter the amendment to read as follows:

"the tenant has had a reasonable opportunity of applying to the local Poor Law Authority for relief and the Authority has considered such application".

Sir Aubrey Symonds, who was called in again for consultation on this point, suggested that the new wording was open to another objection. A Board of Guardians which wished to evade its obligations might refuse to consider the application and the Eviction Order might be given
It was generally felt that a good deal might be made of this point in the House of Commons.

After considerable discussion it was agreed to submit the amendment to the Cabinet in the following form:

Clause 1, Line 18: Leave out from "that" to the end of the Clause, and insert:—

"The tenant has had a reasonable opportunity of applying to the local Poor Law Authority for relief and the Authority has had an opportunity of considering any such application".

(NOTE: The word "reasonable" has been omitted from before the word "opportunity" in the last line.)

Financial Assistance to Local Authorities.

After consideration of the Departmental Memorandum (Appendix II), it was agreed that the Government should resist all idea of a State grant to Local Authorities. In the course of the Debate it should be pointed out that the Government measures in regard to Unemployment Insurance, including, as they do, a 20% increase of benefits and the abolition of all "gaps", would result in the grant of additional benefits to the unemployed estimated at £10,000,000 per annum. These changes could not fail to reduce the expenditure of Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils by an amount far exceeding any additional burden resulting from the obligation which the Government propose to place upon Local Authorities of including in the relief which they grant to the unemployed a specific item in respect of rent. It should further be pointed out that the question of the relation of local to Imperial taxation was an entirely separate question which must be dealt with as a whole and independently.
After consideration of the Lord Privy Seal's Memorandum (Appendix III), it was agreed that the Lord Privy Seal should forward a copy of the revised amendment to Clause 1 of the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill both to Mr Asquith and to Mr Baldwin, with a short covering letter, without any Memorandum, and that Mr Clynes should endeavour to see Mr Asquith before the meeting of the Liberal Party at Noon on the following day, in order to seek his support to the Government in moving the Closure on Monday, April 7th.
The Conclusions may be summarised as follows:--

(a) That the following amendment to Clause 1 of the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill should be submitted to the Cabinet:

Clause 1, Page 1, Line 18: Leave out from "That" to the end of the clause, and insert:-- "the tenant has had a reasonable opportunity of applying to the Poor Law Authority for relief and the Authority has had an opportunity of considering any such application".

(b) That, before the Committee Stage of the Bill, the Minister of Health and the Secretary for Scotland should ascertain definitely whether in England and Wales and Scotland respectively it was practicable by administrative action to secure that the Poor Law Authorities shall, when granting relief, give such relief as may be necessary to protect the tenant from eviction on the ground of non-payment of rent.

(c) That the Lord Privy Seal should forward to Mr Baldwin and Mr Asquith a copy of the proposed amendment to Clause 1 of the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill as given above in (a).

(d) That the Lord Privy Seal should see Mr Asquith and ask his assistance to the Government in moving the Closure on Monday, April 7th.

(e) That the Government should resist all idea of a State grant to Local Authorities for the purpose of Clause 1 of the Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Bill and should take the line that the relation of local to Imperial taxation is a separate question which must be dealt with as a whole.

(The Meeting adjourned at 10 p.m.)

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
April 7, 1924.
CABINET

RENT AND MORTGAGE INTEREST RESTRICTIONS BILL

SECRET. Outline of Parliamentary Position. (Circulated by the Lord Privy Seal.)

I circulate for the information of my Colleagues the following outline of the successive changes in the Parliamentary position in regard to this Bill.

The discussion on the second reading was opened last Wednesday, and after the speeches of Mr. Neville Chamberlain and Mr. Asquith, it seemed clear to those who heard them that the Bill would be defeated unless an assurance was given by us to the House that steps would be taken to throw upon the community the burden of paying the rent of unemployed workmen threatened with eviction. I accordingly had a discussion in my room with the following of my colleagues, who alone were then immediately available in the House of Commons; the Minister of Health, the Secretary for Scotland, the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Chief Whip. There was also present at this meeting the Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Prime Minister.

We reached the unanimous conclusion that I should give an assurance to the House that we were willing to substitute in Committee an amended clause in substitution for the existing Clause 1, which would throw the burden upon the community, or if this were not possible we would take other steps to secure this end. All my colleagues agreed that by whatever means it could be done we should secure shelter for families threatened with eviction rather than let the Bill be defeated.

On Thursday I stated in the House that a further announcement would be made on Friday. Before the Prime Minister left the House on Thursday I showed him the notes on
on which my statement would be based. I immediately got into touch with the Parliamentary Draftsman in charge of the Bill, and in the absence of Mr. Wheatley, with his Principal Assistant at the Ministry, who at my request on Friday morning had an interview with the Solicitor General for Scotland and the Under Secretary for Scotland in regard to the doubtful points which had been raised on the previous evening in regard to the position in Scotland.

I then communicated to Mr. Speaker the terms of the statement that I intended to make at the conclusion of business for that day. This statement I made at 4 O'clock in the terms recorded in Hansard this morning. Immediately on the conclusion of my statement Mr. Neville Chamberlain put the following question:—

"Is it the intention that the final verdict shall rest upon the parish council in Scotland, and the board of guardians in England, as the case may be, or has he in mind some recourse to national funds in aid of the local authorities."

to which, in accordance with the advice which I had received from the technical and legal officers whom I had consulted, I replied:—

"The intention is that, in the case of Scotland as of this country, the burden should rest upon the local authorities."

Mr. Kirkwood then made a speech in which he said that the Prime Minister had given "a guarantee that it would be a national charge", and in which after abusing all of us he demanded not local but Exchequer support, saying, "the House will back up brave and courageous men - but jellyfish!"

In referring to his speech in my reply I said:—

"I have stated that, in the first instance, this charge will be borne by the local authorities. I have not said one word to indicate the view that the Government is opposed to recouping the local authorities from State funds. That is a question which, of course, the Government will be prepared to examine."
Here I had in mind the fact that if our Bill became law the local authorities would certainly press for some State assistance, and that we must be prepared in due course to examine that question. I felt convinced that we could not enlist the aid of our own party for this Bill if we rejected absolutely the possible prospect of ultimate aid being given to local authorities. I urged, however, that to meet the urgent necessities of threatened and distressed workmen somebody must provide the money, and the Bill took the swiftest course to supply a remedy.

Mr. Chamberlain then put the following further question:

"When the right hon. Gentleman speaks about recouping the local authorities, does he mean that he is going to advance money to them from national funds or does he mean that the charge shall rest in the last instance upon national funds and would therefore require a Money Resolution?".

To which I replied:

"It is really too early to discuss the method or the procedure. This is not the time to determine whether money will be advanced or refunded after actual payment".

My colleagues will realise from the above that the effect of my statement did not go beyond an assurance that the question of State Aid to local authorities would be considered at a later date should the necessity therefore arise.

J. R. CLYNES.

5th April, 1924.
In order that my colleagues might have before them the views of the Departments concerned on the question of the possible grant of assistance to Local Authorities from public funds, I summoned a meeting this morning at which there were present: – Sir George L. Barstow (Treasury) Mr. John Lamb, C.B. (Under Secretary for Scotland) and Sir Aubrey Symonds, K.C.B. (Second Secretary, Ministry of Health.)

The Memorandum which I circulate herewith was drawn up by these officers and in my view represents fairly the two courses either of which the Government might adopt.

I should like to make it clear that for the reasons stated in the Memorandum the official view was strongly against any grant being made to Local Authorities at the present time. The alternative suggestion put forward at the conclusion of the Memorandum was however included at my express wish as being the least objectionable form in which a concession might be made if the Cabinet deemed it essential that some gesture towards the Local Authorities should be made.

J.R. CLAYES.

5th April, 1934.
According to the information of the Ministry of Health, practically no evictions are taking place in England and Wales on the ground of non-payment of rent in the case of persons in receipt of poor law relief.

It is the general practice of Boards of Guardians when assessing relief to take the rent payable by the applicant into consideration, either expressly or in fixing an inclusive scale. The more usual practice is for a definite sum to be earmarked as payable in respect of rent.

As regards Scotland there is no reason to suppose that a materially different practice prevails, but enquiry is being made on this point, and a further note on this subject will be circulated.

The immediate financial effect, therefore, of the adoption of the suggestion put to the Government on Friday in the House of Commons that Local Authorities should be recouped in respect of the additional expenditure incurred by them in respect of rent would be small.

On the other hand, it is only fair to urge that, the proposals of the Government in regard to unemployment insurance embodied in the two Bills that are about to be brought before the House of Commons, including as they do a 20% increase of benefits and the abolition of all gaps, will result in the grant of additional benefits to the unemployed estimated at £10,000,000 per annum. These changes
changes cannot fail to reduce the expenditure of Boards of Guardians and Parish Councils by an amount far exceeding any additional burden resulting from the obligation which the Government propose to place upon Local Authorities of including in the relief which they grant to the unemployed a specific item in respect of rent.

On general grounds it would, in the opinion of all the Departments represented, be most undesirable to embark on a system of Government subsidy in aid of rents which would be likely to have most serious financial and economic consequences. Moreover there would in view of the varying practice in different parts of the country be almost insuperable technical difficulty in assessing the extra cost incurred by Local Authorities in respect of the particular item of rent.

The conclusion drawn from the above considerations was that the Government would be on perfectly secure ground if they were to take up the position that no case had at present been made out for the grant of further State Assistance to Local Authorities, having regard to the great relief which will be given to Local Authorities by the unemployment insurance proposals.

If, however, it is thought unavoidable to make some announcement of financial concession by the Government it was felt that it should be made clear that experience must first be gained of the actual effect of the new proposals, and that the Government is entitled in this connection to take into account the effect of their unemployment proposals. Any conditional promise of assistance on these lines should also
also be limited to the case of the "necessitous areas", for it is only in those areas that it can be reasonably represented that their financial resources might prevent them from making an adequate rent allowance; but whatever concession may eventually be granted, it was generally agreed that the problem should not be definitely linked up with the question of rent, which is only one of the factors to be taken into account in connection with Poor Law Relief but that it should be treated on a general basis.
At the conclusion of the short debate following my statement yesterday afternoon I was asked by Mr. Baldwin to circulate a White Paper before Monday showing exactly the nature of the Government's proposals. Owing to the shortness of the time available I could not undertake to lay a White Paper but I indicated that I should be willing to make known before the Second Reading the terms of the amendments which the Government intended to move in Committee. More than that clearly was impossible, as the actual terms of the amendment could not be definitely settled until after Monday's Cabinet.

After the House had actually risen I was again pressed on this question and I undertook that by Question time a short Memorandum explaining the nature of the Government's proposed amendments, together with the terms of the amendments, should be handed to Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Asquith. I think that there would be considerable objection in including in this Memorandum any question of the grant of assistance from public funds to Local Authorities even if the Government decided later to adopt such a course, as were we to do so I think that we might again find ourselves faced with a ruling by the Speaker that a Money Resolution would be required in the case of the present Bill to carry our wishes into effect.

For these reasons I suggest that the Memorandum to be communicated to the Leaders of the Opposition should not go beyond the terms of the statement attached hereto.

5th April, 1924.

J.R. Clynes.
If the Bill is given a second reading the Government propose on the Committee Stage to put down an amendment to the following effect:-

Clause 1, page 1, line 18, leave out from "that" to the end of the Clause, and insert "the tenant has had a reasonable opportunity of applying to the local Poor Law Authority for relief, and the authority has had a reasonable opportunity of considering any such application."

It will be noted that the amendment contains two proposals: first to omit certain words from the Bill, and secondly to insert other words in substitution.

The words proposed to be left out embody the principle on which the main objection to the Clause was founded, namely that the burden of unpaid rent was to fall on the landlord.

The new provision to be inserted does not in terms place the burden on the local authority but indicates that the tenant may look to them for help and provides that he must have an opportunity of so doing.

It is not proposed to insert any amendments in the present Bill dealing with the duty of the local Poor Law Authorities in this matter.

The Government, however, will take steps, either by administrative action, or, if any legislation is found to be necessary, by a separate Bill, to secure that the Poor Law Authorities shall, when granting relief, give such relief as may be necessary to protect the tenant from eviction on the ground of non-payment of rent.