WAR CABINET PAPERS (309-378 inclusive).

January 1st, 1917, to March 30th, 1917, with Subject Index.
WAR CABINET PAPERS (309-378 inclusive).

January 1st, 1917, to March 30th, 1917, with Subject Index.
Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, January 1, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).


The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

The Right Hon. Sir E. Carson, K.C., M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 4 to 19).

The Right Hon. The Earl of Derby, KG., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 19).


The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 3 and 4).

Sir L. Worthington Evans, Bart., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Munitions (for Minute 4).

The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., President of the Board of Trade (for Minutes 3 and 4).

The Right Hon. G. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour (for Minutes 3 and 4).


Professor W. G. Adams (for Minute 1).

Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 2 to 17).

Sir L. Chiozza Money, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Shipping (for Minutes 16 and 17).

Mr. Graeme Thomson, C.B., Director of Transports and Shipping, Ministry of Shipping (for Minutes 16 and 17).

The Right Hon. R. E. Protcher, M.V.O., M.P., President, Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (for Minute 1).

Sir A. Lee, K.C.B., M.P., Food Production Department (for Minute 1).

Mr. R. B. Greig, LL.D., Commissioner of the Scottish Board of Agriculture (for Minute 1).

The Right Hon. Lord Rhondda, Food Controller (for Minute 1).

Major E. A. Belcher, Ministry of Food (for Minute 1).

Mr. R. H. Carr, Ministry of Food (for Minute 1).

Sir A. Steel-Maitland, Bt., M.P. (for Minute 19).


Colonel E. D. Swinton, C.B., D.S.O., Assistant Secretary.

Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Fleet Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.
Potato Guarantees for 1918.

1. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Lord Rhondda (Paper G.T.-3155) in regard to the arrangements for the 1918 potato crop in Great Britain.

Lord Rhondda said that the scheme had been agreed to by the English and Scottish Boards of Agriculture. It was proposed to make a differentiation in price between England and Scotland, whereby the purchase prices in Scotland would be 10s. lower than those paid in England and Wales. The justification for the lower price in Scotland was partly on account of the difficulty of transportation, which would now be undertaken by the Government; partly because it would be following the ordinary custom of the trade; and partly because Scottish farmers got higher prices for their seed when they sold it, and also obtained the seed cheaper. In this matter of price the Scottish farmers who had been consulted were satisfied.

The War Cabinet decided that—

Lord Rhondda's scheme for potato guarantees should be adopted, and that an announcement should be made in the Press in accordance with his suggestion.

British Museum Acquisition for Air Ministry.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 303, Minute 13, Lord Curzon drew attention to the decision, which had been reached during the absence of the Prime Minister, that the British Museum should be taken over for occupation by the Air Ministry. He laid stress on the arguments against taking over the British Museum, and pointed out that a storm of criticism on the subject was beginning to arise.

On the other hand, it was stated that there was no other suitable accommodation that could be obtained elsewhere for the Air Ministry.

The Prime Minister undertook to see the First Commissioner of Works, and, if there was any other suitable building available, to raise the question for reconsideration.

The Labour Situation: The 12½ per cent. Bonus Question.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 305, Minute 14, Sir Auckland Geddes called attention to the bad atmosphere that was existing in connection with the 12½ per cent. increase. There was a general demand that everyone must now have the same increase.

Mr. Barnes said that in all parts of the country there were men in receipt of the increase who were working alongside others who were not getting it. The rest of the trade unions were determined to secure what the Amalgamated Society of Engineers had obtained.

The President of the Board of Trade said that, in his opinion, there were only two courses open to the Government: either to wait for strikes, which were sure to come, or to admit that a blunder had been made and give way all along the line.

The War Cabinet decided that—

A meeting should take place on the same day at 6.30 p.m. to discuss this question of wages, when, in addition to the members of the War Cabinet, the Minister of Munitions, the President of the Board of Trade, and the Minister of National Service should also be present.

Imports of Cotton for 1918.

4. The President of the Board of Trade, in reference to his Memorandum on the Imports of Cotton for 1918 (Paper G.T.-3132), explained that on the 1st December, 1917, the Cabinet Committee on the Restriction of Imports had recommended that the imports of cotton to be permitted in 1918 should be increased by 50,000 tons over the imports in 1917. On the 5th December the War Cabinet
had decided (War Cabinet 292, Minute 14 (e)) that cotton imports during 1918 should not be increased until the question of using cotton operatives and weaving sheds for aeroplane work had first been examined by the President of the Board of Trade in consultation with the other Departments. In consequence of this decision, a meeting was held on the 7th December between representatives of the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Munitions, the Aeronautical Supplies Department, and the Ministry of National Service, and in accordance with the findings of this meeting the President of the Board of Trade recommended, for the sanction of the War Cabinet, that imports of cotton, on the basis of an increase of 50,000 tons as compared with 1917, should be allowed.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The recommendations of the President of the Board of Trade, as set out in his Memorandum (Paper G.T.-3132), should be accepted.

At a later stage, the Minister of Munitions urged that the above decision should be reconsidered, in view of the fact that every ton of imports taken up for food or cotton implied a ton taken off the munitions which would be available for the British armies. He pointed out that the engagements entered into in July 1917 between the Ministry of Munitions and the War Office, for the supply of munitions, had already been cut down and would be still further dangerously reduced if the proposed increase in the import of cotton were to be carried out. While the ore available from Spain was falling short, the Minister of Munitions had been disappointed in his hopes of obtaining steel and nitrates from America, owing to reasons of exchange. In the British Isles we had, or should have in the immediate future, the necessary plant for making all the shells and fuses promised, the necessary labour, and would also have the guns to fire the shell and the personnel to man the guns. Mr. Churchill could imagine nothing worse than that the Army should suffer from lack of munitions owing to the import of goods for the civil population. He considered that it would be better, if it were found necessary, to support the cotton operatives who would be thrown out of work by lack of raw material by paying them the same wage for shorter hours.

The Prime Minister said that there was another alternative to cutting down cotton, and that was to reduce the amount of barley imported for brewing.

The War Cabinet decided that—

Their previous decision, as above, should be adhered to, but that the question of whether an equivalent reduction could be made in the amount of barley imported for brewing should be referred to the Restriction of Imports Committee for report.

The Supreme War Council.

5. The Prime Minister stated that he had been in communication with M. Clemenceau relative to the next meeting of the Supreme War Council, and had expressed a wish that alternate meetings should be held in Paris and London, with a view to the members of the two Governments becoming better acquainted with the Departmental policies which were being pursued. He had received a letter from the President of the Council to the effect that his health prevented his making the journey to London at the present time unless it were urgently necessary; that he was performing the double functions of President of the Council and Minister of War, and suggesting that, as the Supreme War Council with all its Staff was established at Versailles, it would be more advantageous that the meeting should be held at that place. The
Prime Minister was of opinion that it was imperative that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should be present at the next meeting of the Supreme War Council, but that his health at the present moment would prevent him from crossing the Channel.

The Prime Minister undertook to send a personal telegram to M. Clemenceau, again urging him to accede to his request to attend a meeting of the Council in London, based primarily on the grounds of the temporary indisposition of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

6. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that, according to his information, the Germans in Petrograd had obtained control of a direct wire between Petrograd and Berlin with a view to the transmission of cipher messages.

7. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff informed the War Cabinet that information had been received from General Guillaumat that he had found the British and Italian troops on the Salonica front well equipped, but that the contrary was the case as regards the French troops, and he was taking steps with a view to the necessary improvement being made.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 305, Minute 7, the Secretary of State for War informed the War Cabinet that he had just received from Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig a report on the operations in the vicinity of Cambrai. He added that the report was very lengthy, and undertook to circulate it as soon as possible.

The War Cabinet requested—

Lord Derby to refer the report, in the first instance, to General Smuts, in order that the latter might examine it before it was presented to the War Cabinet.

9. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that one German division had been transferred from the Trentino to Alsace.

10. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that General Plumer had reported that the recent attack by the French had been extremely well carried out. It had extended over a front of 2,000 metres, and had resulted in the capture of 1,400 Austrian prisoners.

11. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that General Allenby had reported having captured, in his recent action, 39 officers and 711 other ranks, and having buried 1,006 enemy dead. He added that, in his opinion, General Allenby's operations had been brilliantly carried out.

12. With reference to War Cabinet 308, Minute 6, the First Sea Lord informed the War Cabinet that information had been received from Alexandria to the effect that 17 officers and 500 men had been lost in the sinking of the transport "Aragon," and that presumably the remainder, approximately 1,600, had been saved. Information had been received that all the women on board had been rescued. He added that 18 men were missing from the destroyer "Attack." Admiral Wemyss pointed out that the approaches to Alexandria were such that the laying of mines was far easier than sweeping.
13. The First Sea Lord reported the following actions with enemy submarines:

(a.) A ship was attacked by an enemy submarine in the vicinity of the Straits of Dover, and shortly afterwards a heavy explosion took place, indicating that the submarine had been destroyed in one of our mine-fields.

(b.) One of our submarines had engaged two enemy submarines in the vicinity of Horns Reef, and had fired two torpedoes at one of the latter, an explosion being heard.

14. With reference to War Cabinet 294, Minute 17, the First Sea Lord informed the War Cabinet that the Admiralty had given directions that Admiral Sunley was to leave Russia in company with the British Ambassador, and that they had issued orders that Commander Cronbie, in charge of the submarines, was to remain in Russia for the present.

15. In reference to Paper G.T. 3158, the First Sea Lord stated that the Americans had asked to have the use of the "Aquitania" and "Mauretania" for the conveyance of troops to Europe. The former was at present fitted as a hospital ship and could carry 4,000 troops; the latter was capable of carrying 3,700. Admiral Wemyss pointed out that the main difficulty as regards the employment of these ships was that their use of Liverpool was restricted, owing to that port being required for the "Olympic" and "Vaterland," and that they would therefore have to use Brest as the port of disembarkation, and Southampton as a port of coaling. He added that if the "Aquitania" was to be used for carrying troops, foreign Governments would have to be informed that she was no longer a hospital ship.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The matter should be settled in consultation between the Admiralty, the War Office, and the Shipping Controller.

16. In reference to a Memorandum on this subject by the Shipping Controller (Paper G.T.-3110), Sir Leo Chiozza Money asked for the decision of the War Cabinet as to the future employment of Russian-owned ships of the Russian Steam Mercantile Marine, the control of which had, up to recently, been vested in a joint Committee representing the Ministry of Shipping and the Transportation Department of the Russian Government Committee. The Russian Committee had now been dismissed. The ships were at the present moment actually being employed by the British Government, and the questions to be settled were:

(a.) Whether they were to be so employed in future.
(b.) To whom any payment for their use was to be made.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Ministry of Shipping should continue to make use of these ships until a question on the subject was raised by the Russian Government; and that, if necessary, force should be used in dealing with the crews if any trouble arose with the Russian sailors.

The point as to payment was left open.

17. In reference to a Memorandum by the Shipping Controller (Paper G.T.-3143), Sir Leo Chiozza Money reported to the War Cabinet that the matter had been settled by the resolute men going ashore.
18. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Lord Curzon on the future of the German and Turkish territories captured in the War (Paper G.182).

The point was raised as to whether it would be advisable to convey a copy of this Memorandum to the President of the United States.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The matter should be brought up again during the following week, after the members had had time to study the subject.

19. In reference to telegram B764, dated 26th December, 1917, from General Poole to Colonel Byrne (Paper G.T.-3127), Sir Arthur Steel Maitland explained that he gathered that General Poole was in favour of the appointment of a representative who could deal with finance in relation to its bearing on commerce, rather than a financier pure and simple; further, that a financier of wide repute was not required, but one who was capable of diagnosing the situation and recommending to the British Government what steps were desirable with a view to preventing the Germans acquiring control of Russian commerce and supplies.

The War Cabinet decided—

To approve General Poole's recommendation in principle, and that the matter of details and the selection of the individual should be carried out by the Foreign Office in conjunction with Sir Arthur Steel Maitland.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 1, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 310.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, January 1, 1918, at 6.30 P.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions.
The Right Hon. Sir Albert Stanley, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.
The Right Hon. G. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour.
Sir David Shackleton, K.C.B., Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour.
Sir Stephenson Kent, K.C.B., Director of the Department of Labour Supply, Ministry of Munitions.
Sir Alan Anderson, K.B.E., Controller, Admiralty.
Mr. U. Wolff, Ministry of Munitions.
Major J. W. Hills, M.P.
Mr. G. Campbell, Ministry of Munitions.
Mr. C. S. Hurst, Ministry of Munitions.
Mr. W. J. Larke, Ministry of Munitions.

Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.

The Labour Situation: The 12½ per cent. dilemma.

The War Cabinet continued the discussion begun at War Cabinet 309, Minute 3.

Mr. Barnes stated that the Cabinet Labour Committee had met at 3 P.M. that afternoon, and had endeavoured to unravel the difficulty occasioned by the 12½ per cent. increase to certain time-workers. The usual telegrams had been received regarding threatened stoppages of work. Several strikes had actually commenced: bricklayers were out in Glasgow, and steel-smelters were not lighting up the furnaces, and so resumption of work after the holidays would be delayed. The number of applications received by the Committee for consideration was so great that it was impossible for them to go on dealing with the cases at issue in the same way as they had been attempting to do in the last few days. On the other hand, he was of opinion that it was quite impossible to deal with the cases in bulk; each
trade would have to be considered by itself. Hitherto the Committee had kept clear of any piece-work applications. The only case affecting piece-workers that had been approached was that of the Belfast shipyard workers, to whom an increase had been given by the Committee on Production. This case was up for re-hearing this week. It was a somewhat special case, owing to the fact that many of the Belfast men were only working three days a week because of the shortage of material. The Labour Committee recommended that the Cabinet should issue a declaration, to be made on behalf of the Government. The War Cabinet Labour Committee found that there was no logical stopping-place for the extension of the 12½ per cent. bonus by the inclusion of all munition workers, but this fact could not be put in a declaration. They thought that discretion might be left to negotiations within the limit of all munition workers as ordinarily understood. Other kinds of workers must negotiate advances in wages, including the extension of the 12½ per cent. bonus, in the usual way—through their employers or through an agreement with the Ministry of Labour. It was quite impossible to extend wages advances over the whole country without examination into each separate case. Mr. Barnes felt that the whole labour world was on edge in regard to the question, and he read a letter from the President of the Board of Education regarding the position at Sheffield, which showed that the most fantastic notions were being circulated by a small knot of revolutionaries. For instance, it was being said that the situation had been engineered by the Government for the purpose of creating a revolution in order that the Government might shoot down the revolutionaries. Mr. Barnes then read to the Cabinet two alternative drafts, which should form the basis of the Government's declaration. One had been drawn up by himself (Appendix), and the other by Sir Auckland Geddes. The main difference between the two consisted in the inclusion, in Sir Auckland Geddes's proposed declaration, of a definite assurance to be given by the Government that they would take the whole of the excess profits, instead of only 80 per cent., as at present.

The Prime Minister stated that he had seen Mr. George Terrell, M.P., who represented a certain Federation of Employers. The suggestion put to him by the latter was that, before deciding the question, which affected all the employers of the country, it was absolutely essential that the employers should be heard and consulted. The Government had to consider what would be the effect of the proposed declaration upon the working of the whole industrial machine of the country. He gathered that the case of the employers could be summarised as follows:

(a.) There were numerous cases where little or no profit was being made by employers before the War, and that the taking of the whole of the excess profits would consequently act most unfairly between employers whose business was flourishing before the War and those whose business was not then flourishing;

(b.) Many of the employees were earning four or five times the wages that they were making before the War, these increases in wages being far in advance of any increase corresponding to the rise in the cost of living.

It would be quite impossible for the Government to include a statement that they would take the whole of the excess profits without hearing the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was absent in Paris. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had strong views upon this question, and he gathered that the latter's opinion was that, if all the excess profits were taken, nothing would be left to the employers of this country for the purpose of developing and extending their business. The Prime Minister added that he had promised to see some of Mr. Terrell's people on the following day.
Sir Albert Stanley stated that, in his opinion, it was both just
and necessary that the employers should be consulted before any
declaration, such as was proposed, was made by the Government.
Mr. George Terrell's organisation did not represent all the employers
of the country, and he suggested that a selected list of representative
employers should be drawn up by the Board of Trade, and that they
should be interviewed by the Cabinet, if possible, this week.

Sir Auckland Geddes stated that the sentiment regarding excess
profits now prevailing among the wage-earners of the country was
profound, and vitally affected the reception that would be given to
the Government proposals regarding man-power and recruiting.

Mr. Churchill stated that, in his opinion, it was just and right that
the whole of the excess profits should be taken, but he quite agreed
that the employers should be seen first, and that the question should
not be settled without a clear understanding with the employers.
The policy of the War Cabinet Labour Committee laid down that
the Ministry of Munitions should have power to extend the 1\(\frac{1}{4}\)
per cent. bonus or its equivalent over the whole of the munitions industry
in cases where the Ministry of Munitions considered that such an
extension should be made. As regards time-workers, two-thirds of
the area concerned had already been covered, and an extension to the
remaining one-third would involve the State in a further expendi­
ture of about 8,000,000 a year. As regards piece-workers, he
understood that the Trades Union leaders agreed that no wide
extension of the 1\(\frac{1}{4}\) per cent. bonus or its equivalent was desirable
or necessary. The piece workers would have to be dealt with by
adjusted piece-rates in each trade separately, where the rates were
so low as to be no longer an inducement. The Trades Union
Advisory Committee were of opinion that employers should settle the
terms with their piece-workers while the Ministry only dealt with
time-workers. There were forty strikes threatening, but in nearly
every one of these cases the classes affected would obtain the advance
under the proposed extension. He felt that the problem of the
piece-workers could be left to work automatically. In many cases
the piece-work earnings were so high that there was little or no risk
of a strike, as the piece-workers, by going out for two weeks, would
lose more money than they could hope to gain by any advance for a
long period.

Sir Albert Stanley pointed out that there was considerable
danger that the demand would spread from the munition workers to
the mines and railways, particularly the latter. It was impossible
to prevent the railwaymen in the shops making a demand for the
1\(\frac{1}{4}\) per cent. increase, as the men engaged in munition work in
railway workshops could not be treated differently from munition
workers, and once any man in the railway workshops was given the
1\(\frac{1}{4}\) per cent. increase all the others would press for a similar
increase.

Mr. Barnes pointed out that the only shops touched at present
were the Great Central Railway shops at Gorton.

Mr. Churchill urged that any consideration of the wages of
railwaymen should be treated as part of a special railway agreement.
The only hope was the establishment of a ring of separate trade
agreements.

Sir Albert Stanley stated that Mr. J. H. Thomas, M.P., was
opposed to the extension of the 1\(\frac{1}{4}\) per cent. to the railway
workshops.

In this connection Sir David Shackleton pointed out that the
railway shops were only partially controlled by Mr. J. H. Thomas's
union; the craft unions had a considerable membership.

Sir Auckland Geddes stated that the position as regards railway-
men had already been turned on another flank, namely, by the
National Maritime Board's, of which Sir Leo Chiozza Money is
Chairman, somewhat sudden grant of an increase in the wages
[1365—310]
of seamen on railway boats. The difficulty appeared to be that, unless some stand were taken, the demands would extend by similar methods from one industry to another, until every kind of extraneous trade was included.

The Prime Minister stated that, as far as he could see, it was now impossible to stop. We were not in a position to face a serious strike, as there was no logical ground upon which to take the strike. Mr. Roberts agreed with this view, and stated that the question had become psychological. The wage-earners of all kinds had got this question into their heads, and there was no stopping it.

Sir Edward Carson added that it appeared like a flame in a forest, which would extend until the whole forest was consumed, and involve the State in an expenditure of countless millions.

Sir David Shackleton pointed out that, owing to the present situation, a nest of trouble was being created in every industry. A municipal employer had pointed out to him that many different rates of wages were being paid in their works at the present moment. Some men had got 12s. advance, others 16s., others 20s., some had already got the 12½ per cent. advance, while others had not. The Belfast employers and employed were combining to exploit the public by agreeing, without any consultation with the Government, to large increases in wages, but the Committee on Production had refused to sanction the agreement.

Sir Alan Anderson stated that the shipbuilding employers had informed him that, in their opinion, the 12½ per cent. increase would have to go round all time-workers in the shipyards, and that concessions would then have to be made to men paid by results. The only way in which the Government could get anything back would be to increase and extend the principle of payment by results. He would like to see an extension of the principle of premium bonus.

In this connection Mr. Roberts stated that it would be impossible to bribe the men to agree to an extension of the system of premium bonus.

Sir David Shackleton added that the 12½ per cent. increase had done more to kill the premium bonus principle than anything else in the last ten years. It was quite impossible now to get the men to withdraw their opposition to the system of payment by result. They considered the refusal to extend the 12½ per cent. to piece-workers and premium-bonus workers a penalty on higher wages due to increased effort.

The War Cabinet decided—

(a.) That, before taking any final decision, the views of representative employers should be heard.

Sir Albert Stanley undertook to assemble a suitable deputation to wait upon the Prime Minister on Thursday or Friday afternoon next.

(b.) Meanwhile the Minister of Munitions to have authority to negotiate within the general area of munitions trades, with a view to defining, both by extension and interpretation, the scope of the existing Orders, with power to include any such trades, provided always that the extension was limited to time-workers.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 2, 1918.
APPENDIX.

Draft Statement by the Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The Government find it necessary to place certain facts before the nation. The collapse of Russia and the weakening of Italy has thrown upon us a great strain and a great duty. It is therefore no time for wage scrambling or profiteering. The Government has come to the conclusion that neither one nor the other can continue. The idea that any class has a right to make money out of the nation's needs must be combated wherever it appears. If it be found that the Government have not sufficient power to see to this without additional legislation, then that legislation will be sought.

The Government are doing all in their power to deal with the food situation. A determined effort is being made to abolish the food queues. The Local Committees are being armed with additional powers, and are being encouraged to use those powers to the fullest extent so as to distribute food on the basis of share and share alike.

Advance of wages have recently been given by the Government to certain sections of workmen in the engineering and shipbuilding trades. These advances arose out of an honest intention to remedy an admitted anomaly. In practice it has been found impossible to keep them within the original limits, and this has led to much agitation and trouble. It is imperative now, however, to come to a stop. Limits must be set to the area within which these wage advances can be paid. There are certain outstanding negotiations taking place as between the Minister of Munitions and the workpeople concerned. The Minister has therefore been directed to convene trades' conferences in certain cases in order to ascertain whether and to what extent any consequential change is called for.

Beyond this, advances of wages can only be negotiated in the usual way on proof of increased cost of living, or in the form of payment by results, or for some very exceptional cause. The best way in which the mass of the British people can be helped through the present grave period in our national fortunes is, not by raising wages all round, but by keeping down the cost of living by every means in human power, and by preventing any class or section making money out of the war. It is to that the efforts of the Government in the new year will be constantly directed.
WAR CABINET, 311.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.,
on Wednesday, January 2, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.
The Right Hon. George N. Barnes, M.P.
The Right Hon. Sir Edward Carson, K.C., M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State
for War (for Minutes 1 to 8).
The Right Hon. C. Addison, M.D., M.P., Minister of Reconstruction (for
Minutes 9 to 13).
Major-General F. B. Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for
Minutes 1 to 5).

The Western Front. 1. THE Director of Military Operations informed the War
Cabinet that another German division had been transferred from
the Russian front to Flanders, making a total increase of eleven, on
balance, since the beginning of October 1917, and raising the total
number of German divisions now on the Western front to 157.

Lord Derby stated that the War Office were sending out to
France not only as many "A" men as possible, but also a consider-
able number of men of lower category. Combing-out was also taking
place with regard to the troops in Ireland.

The Director of Military Operations stated that one good
German fighting division had been moved from the British front
down to Rheims, which was regarded by the French as one of the
points threatened.

Palestine. 2. With reference to War Cabinet 309, Minute 11, the Director
of Military Operations stated that information had been received

[1355—311]
from General Allenby that his total casualties during the 27th, 28th, and 29th December, 1917, were, approximately, 1,500, which was largely exceeded by the number of Turkish prisoners and Turkish dead.

Mesopotamia

3. The Director of Military Operations stated that the Russian General Bicharakhov had proceeded to Kermanshah with a view to rallying any loyal Russian troops in that vicinity, and was confident that his efforts would be crowned with success. General Maurice stated that we were making the necessary arrangements to feed any larger force that might be raised. General Bicharakhov had asked that facilities might be given for Russian officers in England and France to proceed to join him in Mesopotamia, and arrangements were being made to that end.

The Italian Front.

4. The Director of Military Operations stated that snow was falling heavily on the Italian front, and that it was already 4 feet deep in the Asiago district. He added that the Italians had cleared the Austrians out of the Zenson bend.

The Caucasus.

5. The attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to a telegram from Colonel Jack relative to the state of affairs in the Caucasus, pointing out the importance of railway communications.

It was remarked that little news was forthcoming from French sources as to the situation in Southern Russia, and that there was not that interchange of information between the French and British Governments which was so essential.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(a.) The War Office should arrange with the military advisers to the Supreme War Council for a regular interchange of information between the French and ourselves in regard to military reports on the situation in the respective British and French spheres in Russia, the Foreign Office providing the necessary political information through the military advisers to the Supreme War Council.

(b.) The War Office should communicate Colonel Jack's and General Candolle's reports to the Supreme War Council, for transmission to the French Government.

Loss of Transport "Osmanieh."

6. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff reported that the casualties from the transport "Osmanieh," which was sunk in the vicinity of Alexandria, were approximately as follows:—

- 2 officers and 123 other ranks missing,
- 54 other ranks killed,
- 7 Sisters killed and 1 missing.

Crew.—10 missing out of a total of 126, 12 naval ratings missing out of a total of 45 on passage.

Total casualties, 209 out of a total of 1,142 on board.

Loss of Transport "Aragon."

7. In continuation of War Cabinet 309, Minute 12, the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff stated that the latest figures for casualties on the transport "Aragon" were as follows:—

- Officers, 2 killed, 5 missing,
- Other ranks, 90 killed, 365 missing,
- Crew, 19 missing.

As regards the men missing from the "Attack," only 10 were missing, and not 18, as previously reported.
Drilling in Ireland.

8. The War Cabinet had under consideration a Memorandum by the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Paper G.T.-2845) as to drilling in Ireland, and the action to be taken with regard to any men that might be arrested in consequence of this breach of the Defence of the Realm Regulations.

The War Cabinet decided—

To refer the matter for settlement between the War Office, the Home Office, and the Irish Office.

Commercial and Industrial Policy: Lord Balfour of Burleigh's Report

9. The War Cabinet had before them the Final Report of the Committee, presided over by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, on Commercial and Industrial Policy after the War (Paper G.T.-2891), together with a Memorandum by the Minister of Reconstruction (Paper G.T.-3087).

The Secretary of State for the Colonies said that it was important to consult the Dominion Governments before publishing the Report.

Dr. Addison, while anxious for the early publication of the Report, for the reasons given in his Memorandum, agreed that the delay of two months involved in communicating with the Dominions and India was not open to objection, and would provide a good parliamentary answer.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Secretary of State for India should communicate the Report to the several Dominions and to India, and should urge them to express their views by telegraph. Subject to no serious objections being made, the War Cabinet decided that the Report should then be published.

A Psychological Offensive: Propaganda

10. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Sir Edward Carson (Paper G.T.-2941), and a Memorandum by Dr. Addison (Paper G.T.-3031), in regard to a psychological offensive.

It was pointed out that, since these Memoranda had originally been circulated, the circumstances had changed by the publication of the peace proposals between the Russians and Germans.

It was generally agreed that a public statement of our war aims was becoming increasingly important, which statement should take the form of a counter-offensive, and it was mentioned that several draft statements were in course of preparation.

In regard to the German colonies in the Pacific, Mr. Long pointed out that before the war the populations were, for economic reasons, friendly to Germany, and now they were pro-Entente. With regard to Canada, the anxiety in that country was in connection with the possibility of Germany acquiring wireless stations and submarine bases throughout the world.

In regard to Dr. Addison's Memorandum dealing with the machinery for the dissemination of propaganda, the Minister of Reconstruction was invited to place himself in communication with the Director of the Department of Information.

The general question was adjourned for consideration in connection with the deliberations of the War Cabinet on the subject of peace proposals.

Russia

11. The War Cabinet took note of a despatch published in the "Daily News" on that day from Mr. Arthur Ransome, the "Daily News" correspondent in Petrograd, who is himself in full sympathy with the Bolshevik movement, announcing the threatened breakdown of the Bolshevik peace negotiations of the Central Powers.
It was suggested that M. Trotzki was, perhaps, finding himself face to face with an impossible situation involving a general peace at the expense of Russia, and that possibly Mr. Arthur Ransome's despatch was a signal that M. Trotzki would like to get into touch with the Allies with a view to extricating himself from his difficulties. Another theory was that M. Trotzki was endeavouring to get the Socialist parties of the different countries into a conference in order to extend the scope of his fanatical attacks on the existing order of civilisation.

Considerable difference of opinion was expressed about the motives animating M. Trotzki, but it was generally agreed that it would be desirable to secure more information.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should telegraph to the British Ambassador at Petrograd, advising him to get in touch with Mr. Ransome, in order, if possible, to ascertain the precise meaning of his article in the "Daily News," and what M. Trotzki was aiming at.

Palestine: Propaganda.

12. It was suggested to the War Cabinet that scant use had been made, for propaganda purposes, of the capture of Jerusalem.

Sir Edward Carson stated that a vast amount of propaganda had been despatched abroad.

On the other hand, it was pointed out that comparatively little use had been made of this material by public speakers in this country. It was suggested that material of interest on this subject should be sent to the clergy and ministers of all denominations with a view to its use in the churches.

Sir Edward Carson undertook to take the matter in hand.

Coal Deposits in Ireland.

13. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Minister of Reconstruction (Paper G.T.-3036), and a Memorandum by the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Paper G.T.-3095), dealing with the question of boring for coal in Ireland.

The War Cabinet approved the proposals contained in these Memoranda and authorised—

The Minister of Reconstruction to take the necessary action in consultation with the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W., January 2, 1918.
SECRET.

WAR CABINET, 312.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, January 3, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

The Right Hon. Sir Edward Carson, K.C., M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, C., M.P., Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Minister of Blockade.

Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minute 1).


Sir A. D. Steel Aitland, B.A., M.P. (for Minute 6).

Mr. Stanley Baldwin, M.P., Treasury (for Minutes 5 and 7).

The Hon. Sir Edward Kemp, K.C.M.G., Minister of Overseas Military Forces from Canada in the United Kingdom.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 5).

Major-General Sir F. B. Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for Minutes 1 to 4).

The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 6 and 7).

The Right Hon. C. Addison, M.D., M.P., Minister of Reconstruction (for Minutes 6 and 7).

The Right Hon. Sir A. Stanley, M.P., President of the Board of Trade (for Minutes 6 and 7).


Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgis, Assistant Secretary.
1. THE Prime Minister welcomed Sir Edward Kemp to the meeting of the War Cabinet.

2. Sir Edward Kemp stated that the 100,000 men the Canadian Government proposed to raise by conscription were now civilians and could be reckoned as over and above the number now in the recruiting depots. Before further drafts could be made, the consent of Parliament would have to be obtained. There was a strong feeling in Canada that the United States, with their large reserves of man-power, should now do their share.

3. The Secretary of State for the Colonies expressed the opinion that there was very little chance of obtaining many more recruits from New Zealand.

4. The Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that the news from Russia was not encouraging, although a hitch had occurred in the peace negotiations. He then read telegram No. 4 from Petrograd, dated 1st January, 1918, in which the British military attaché said that M. Trotzki had postponed the re-assembly of the Joint Conference, as the Germans had tried to trick him; also differences had arisen over the "no annexation" clause. M. Trotzki maintained that the enemy delegates at Brest-Litovsk agreed to evacuate the occupied territory in order to allow the population to select their form of government without pressure. The enemy stated that assemblies of notables in Poland and Courland had already declared their wish for independence, while remaining in the sphere of the Central Powers. It was stated that Kühlmann was in Berlin endeavouring to induce the German General Staff to agree to M. Trotzki's wishes. The telegram stated, in conclusion, that M. Trotzki and his friends had so ruined the Russian army that if he does break off negotiations the enemy will advance a few kilometres and capture his guns. Telegram No. 5 was also referred to, in which the British Ambassador stated that the Bolsheviks had discovered a German plot, and that they might have to break off negotiations, and they therefore wanted to know what assistance might be expected from America should they have to go on with the war.

The Prime Minister asked the Director of Military Operations whether he would prefer the Russians to continue in the war at the price of the loss of the guns, as described by the Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, or a separate peace.

General Maurice replied that he would prefer the former, as, though there was little hope from the Northern Russian front, the situation in the South would keep the Austrians engaged.

Mr. Long suggested that it might be worth while for the War Cabinet to obtain information from a certain Mr. Lattimore, an Englishman who had just returned from Petrograd, where his brother, a bookseller, still resided. Lattimore could put the Prime Minister in touch with M. Trotzki.

During the meeting the Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and General Smuts saw Mr. Lattimore in an adjoining room, but, as a month had elapsed since he had left Petrograd, no information of special value was elicited, beyond an expression of Mr. Lattimore's personal opinion that M. Trotzki was an honest idealist.
5. General Smuts raised the question of the position, in a scheme of priorities, of the naval and mercantile shipbuilding programmes.

The War Cabinet confirmed the decision which they had taken on the 5th February, 1917 (War Cabinet 58, Minute 1), by which the Naval programme had been partially cut down, but, subject to that reduction, had retained priority over merchant shipbuilding.

6. With reference to War Cabinet 248, Minute 12, the War Cabinet had before them interim report No. 6 of the Committee appointed to consider the question of an Economic Offensive (Paper G.-177).

Sir Edward Carson explained that the report gave additional reasons for the policy—already approved by the War Cabinet—of denouncing commercial treaties. He drew special attention to paragraph 5 of the report, dealing with the state of opinion in the House of Commons. In view of the criticism of, and opposition to, the Non-ferrous Metal Bill and the Imports and Exports Temporary Control Bill, it was most desirable that a statement of the general commercial policy of the Government should be made as early as possible, in order that the significance of each Bill, in relation to the policy as a whole, should be appreciated. It was most undesirable that the measures connected with the economic offensive and with post-war reconstruction should become entangled with the fiscal controversies which had agitated the country before the war.

Dr. Addison said he thought, when the position was explained to business men, they would recognize at once the necessity of the proposed legislation. It was not necessary at this stage to commit ourselves to the details of the control of trade beyond intimating that imports and exports would be regulated by licence.

Sir Albert Stanley stated that the Bill dealing with imports and exports could be considered without any declaration on the Government's general policy in the future. Power to extend the control of imports and exports to the period after the stoppage of hostilities was absolutely essential to prevent chaos. On the question of the control of raw materials, he hesitated about making any Government declaration, because of the enormous difficulties of putting such control into effective operation. The matter was at present before him at the Board of Trade, but so far no solution of the difficulties involved had been discovered.

Mr. Long said that he was certain that the Dominion Governments would give the most favourable consideration to any proposals for control of materials within the Empire, which might be placed before them.

Lord Robert Cecil said that it was essential to have the power of suspending the most-favoured-nation clause, in order to enable us to fulfill our obligations to our Allies. The rebuilding of Belgium, for example, could not take place without such a suspension.

Mr. Churchill said that he was in agreement with the measures proposed, in so far, and only in so far, as they were war measures and necessary for the wearing down of the enemy.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(a.) The Imports and Exports Control Bill should be considered by Parliament at the earliest possible date;
(b.) A convenient opportunity should be found at an early date for a statement of the general commercial policy of the Government in relation to the war and to the transition period immediately following the war;
(c.) The Report of the Economic Offensive Committee (Paper G.-177) be approved, but that such approval should not
compromise the political and economic views of anyone agreeing to it, the measures proposed being accepted as essential as a war measure for bargaining in the peace negotiations and for the rationing of materials in the transitional period at the close of the war.

7. The War Cabinet had before them the seventh interim report of the Economic Offensive Committee, dealing with new issues of capital (Paper G.-183).

Sir Edward Carson explained that it was not proposed to abolish the New Issues Committee at present acting for the Treasury, but that there should be a right of appeal to a Committee of Ministers by the Minister responsible for any Department whose recommendation had not been accepted by the New Issues Committee.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The matter should be adjourned until the Chancellor of the Exchequer could be present.

8. The Prime Minister said that the War Cabinet had had several conversations on the subject of the action to be taken in regard to the statement issued by the enemy on the 25th December of their negotiations for peace with the Bolshevik Party in Russia. Although the Allies were not in diplomatic relations with the Bolsheviks, and did not recognise their authority to treat for peace on behalf of Russia, these negotiations had resulted in an important declaration of policy by the Central Powers. The War Cabinet had felt that we ought not to pass this declaration by unnoticed. We ought to take advantage of it to issue such a declaration of our own war aims as would maintain our own public opinion, and, if possible, lower that of the enemy. In fact, the view to which the War Cabinet inclined was to issue a declaration of our war aims which went to the extreme limit of concession, and which would show to our own people and to our Allies, as well as to the peoples of Austria, Turkey, and even Germany, that our object was not to destroy the enemy nations. He thought that there was a general agreement of the War Cabinet as to the kind of terms which we could offer. They must include the restoration of Belgium, and reparation for all the damage inflicted on that country. The same applied to Serbia and Roumania. Germany had as yet not even offered complete restoration of Belgium, for there were phrases in the enemy statement which suggested the possibility of the retention of garrisons and economic control. Much less had Germany made any suggestion of reparation. On this point we might hope even to secure the assent of the Russian Bolsheviks. The next point brought us on to much more disputable ground, namely, Alsace-Lorraine. Whatever might be the opinions held by individuals as to the probability that France could realise the whole of her war aims in this respect, it would be dangerous at this stage of the war to suggest the contrary. We should treat Alsace-Lorraine as a matter in which we would support the wishes of the French democracy, who were making very great sacrifices. In regard to Italy, we could indicate in general terms our support to the Italian claims to be united with the peoples of Italian nationality now under Austrian rule, without specific reference to the whole of the Italian war aims. Some reference ought to be made in our statement to such races as the Italians, Croats, Slovaks, Czechs, &c, who are under Austrian rule, and who seek some form of autonomy. A statement should also be made in favour of an independent Poland.

The most difficult point, so far as we were concerned, related to the German colonies. We must remove the impression, sedulously
spread about by German propaganda, that we were merely trying to annex more territory to an over-gorged Empire. He thought that the War Cabinet were in general agreement that our proper course would be to express our willingness to accept the application of the principle of self-determination to the captured German colonies. Precisely how the principle was to be applied need not now be discussed, but there were chiefs and heads of tribes who could be consulted. The same principle might be applied in the case of Mesopotamia—which was occupied by Arabs and not by Turks—and in the case of Palestine, which had a very mixed population. Our attitude should be that we were not going to hand these territories back to the Germans or Turks unless their inhabitants expressed a preference for German or Turkish rule. The first step to be taken, therefore, was to draw up a statement of the case for the consideration of the War Cabinet, in accordance with the democratic principles enunciated by the Bolsheviks and to some extent accepted by the enemy.

The next question which arose was as to whether we were to discuss the question with all our Allies before publishing a statement. This would take some weeks, and it would be very difficult to draw up a document to which general assent would be given which did not lack virility and individuality. Hence, if an answer was to be given promptly, this course was unsuitable, and we ought to adopt President Wilson’s plan of an independent statement. If this was agreed on, the question arose as to the form which our answer should take. Should it be a note, and, if so, to whom should it be addressed? We could not send a note to M. Trotzki, since we were not in diplomatic relations with him; neither could we send it to Count Czernin, because that would involve opening negotiations with the enemy. An alternative was to issue an official statement. Our Allies might justly complain if we took this course.

A second alternative was to make a statement in the form of a speech. Speeches were constantly made by political leaders of all the Allies, and there was no obligation to consult them before making a speech.

The suggestion that had been made to him was that, in the course of the negotiations which Sir Auckland Geddes was conducting with the trades union leaders on the subject of man-power and the release from certain pledges entered into earlier in the war, it should be arranged that the Prime Minister should read a carefully weighed statement of the War Cabinet’s policy. This was the more easy to provide for, since it was understood that the trade unionists would raise the question of war aims in the course of the discussions with Sir Auckland Geddes. If the War Cabinet agreed to such a statement, it should, in his opinion, be couched in terms which would provide a counter-offensive to Count Czernin’s recent statement, and which would weaken the enemy. The Germans had got their blow in first in this peace offensive, but there were not lacking signs that it was beginning to expend its force. Personally, he did not believe that the enemy’s statement was a bond fide peace offer. Its object was to sow dissension among the Allies and to rally the German people.

Sir Edward Carson drew attention to an article in the “Cologne Gazette” which indicated alarm on the part of the Germans lest they should be taken at their word in regard to their statement of peace terms.

Mr. Barnes stated that he attached great importance to the psychological effect which would be produced at home by the issue of a full and reasoned statement of our war aims.

Lord Robert Cecil said that he would like an opportunity to express his views at full length, both in regard to the form and substance of the statement to be issued. He warned the War Cabinet that the speeches of Ministers in this country, and
particularly those of the Prime Minister, were very closely scrutinised by our Allies. He was opposed to any unnecessary delay, but he urged that the subject should be most carefully weighed before a decision was taken.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies urged that, before any statement were made, he should communicate the general lines of it to the Governments of the self-governing Dominions.

The Prime Minister agreed, and suggested that Mr. Walter Long should tell the Dominions the reasons for making the statement. He thought that the press should be warned that this was intended as a counter-offensive to Count Czernin's statement.

One point which he proposed to add, if the War Cabinet agreed, was that if the Russian democracy had not taken the responsibility of entering into negotiations with the enemy by themselves, we should have stood by them, as we intended to stand by the French democracy.

This was agreed to.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(1.) The question should be adjourned until 5 p.m.
(2.) Mr. Barnes, who was to take the chair at Sir Auckland Geddes's conference with trade unionists in the afternoon, should endeavour to secure an opportunity for the Prime Minister to make his statement on Saturday, if an earlier moment could not be arranged.
(3.) Before the meeting at 5 o'clock, the Secretary should reproduce and circulate the three draft statements prepared respectively by Mr. Philip Kerr, under instructions from the Prime Minister, General Smuts, and Lord Robert Cecil.
(4.) The Secretary of State for the Colonies should be authorised to telegraph to the self-governing Dominions informing them that a statement was to be made, and explaining the reasons for this course.

Obligations to Our Allies:

Sir Edward Carson said that he found great difficulty in following what our obligations were to our Allies, and suggested that a synopsis should be made by the Foreign Office showing (with maps) the obligations we had undertaken. Sir Edward Carson said it would be a great help if he could give a paper of this sort to the Chairman of the Newspaper Proprietors' Association (Sir George Riddell).

The Prime Minister thought the latter suggestion inadvisable.

Attention was drawn to a Memorandum prepared in the Colonial Office (Paper G.T.-3174) on the subject of the disposal of the German colonies.

Mr. Long said that the re-establishment of Germany in the Pacific would expose the United States of America and Canada to great danger, and would involve an additional burden on Great Britain.

The Prime Minister suggested that a copy of this paper should be sent to the President of the United States of America.

The question was postponed for the further discussion agreed to on Tuesday, the 1st January, 1918 (War Cabinet 309, Minute 18).

The War Cabinet decided however, that—

In the meantime the Foreign Office should prepare a synopsis, with maps.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 3, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 313.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, January 3, 1918, at 5 P.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. Sir E. Carson, K.C., M.P.

The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The following were also present:


The Hon. Sir Edward Kemp, K.C.M.G., Minister of Overseas Military Forces from Canada in the United Kingdom.


War Aims: 1. With reference to War Cabinet 312, Minute 8, the War Cabinet continued their discussion on war aims. The first question discussed was the form which the statement should take. It was generally agreed that, if the House of Commons had been sitting, that would be the proper place for the Prime Minister to make a statement. It was suggested, and generally admitted, that there would be some adverse criticism to a statement made to the trade unionists, as suggested at the morning meeting, on the ground that it would give undue importance to the trade unionists as compared with the other sections of the community who were equally affected. On the other hand, it was pointed out that no other convenient opportunity offered itself, and that it would be advisable to take advantage of it. On the whole, therefore, it was agreed that a statement to the trade unionists was desirable.

Communication 2. The Prime Minister informed the War Cabinet that before making a public declaration of the nature proposed, he had thought it his duty to communicate with the Leader of the Opposition. He had seen Mr. Asquith that morning, and had explained the whole position to him, and had indicated the general lines that the Government's declaration was likely to take. Mr. Asquith had quite agreed that Count Czernin's declaration ought to be treated seriously, and be given a considered reply, and that a declaration should be made by the Government. He had seen the difficulties of issuing any sort of Note or statement, and though he had made some criticisms of
the proposal to make a public statement to the trade unionists, as had been urged at the War Cabinet, he had not opposed this course. Mr. Asquith had also agreed in the general lines of the statement it was proposed to make, though he had laid stress on the importance of the exact phraseology.

The Prime Minister said that, in seeing Mr. Asquith, following on his conversation with the Labour Leaders on the previous Friday, he had aimed at securing national support in the action the War Cabinet proposed to take.*

The Proposed Statement.

3. In regard to the text of the proposed statement, the War Cabinet had before them three drafts, namely:

1. Lord Robert Cecil's draft (G.T.-3181).
2. General Smuts' draft (G.T.-3180).
3. Mr. Philip Kerr's draft summarising General Smuts' (G.T.-3182).

Lord Robert Cecil read his statement, which was discussed in some detail.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies uttered a caveat against laying too much stress on the principle of self-determination. It was not his province to say what the effect would be in India or Egypt; but there were some of the Crown Colonies which would certainly be affected; as one example, he mentioned Cyprus, where an agitation has long been carried out for union with Greece, and where the Greek section of the inhabitants are mainly adherents to King Constantine. It was suggested that this difficulty would be surmounted by confining the principle of self-determination to the territories actually affected by the belligerent operations.

The Prime Minister urged that the War Cabinet should not neglect to consider the drafts from the point of view of their value as a counter-offensive to the German peace move. He did not in the least underrate the suggestion made by some Members of the War Cabinet that the statement should be drawn up so as to be of real value in the ultimate peace negotiations. In his opinion, however, the terms which we were bound to set out in the document were not such as Germany could accept. He reminded the War Cabinet that, at the moment, Germany was in the hour of triumph, and this was the atmosphere of the German people. In these conditions, no German Government could concede all that we were bound to insist on. Hence, it was essential that this statement should be regarded rather as a war move than as a peace move. In this connection it was important to bear in mind its effects on Germany's Allies. There would be a great difference between an Austria that desired to fight and one that was lukewarm. In the former case Austria might send 300,000 men to the Western front. In the latter they would be a nominal army such as Russia had been for the last 18 months. Similar considerations applied to Turkey. The publication by the Bolsheviks of the Allied Treaties affecting Turkey had had a great effect in that country. What kept the Turks fighting was the fear of dismemberment and of losing Constantinople. If they knew that they would retain the Turkish part of their Empire they might be much less inclined to fight.

Lord Curzon suggested that it was undesirable to differentiate between the statement regarded as a peace or a war measure. In

* Note by the Secretary.—It will be observed that by the presence of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, General Smuts, and Sir Edward Kemp. Imperial participation in the decision was secured so far as this was possible in the urgent circumstances of the moment. See also the decision in War Cabinet 312, Minute 8, that the Secretary of State for the Colonies should communicate with the self-governing Dominions in regard to this statement.
reality it was both. It was a genuine and sincere attempt to secure a reasonable peace, but he agreed that, in the present temper of the Germans, it was not likely to lead to much. Lord Robert Cecil expressed similar views.

The suggestion was made that both Lord Robert Cecil’s and General Smuts’ statements were too long.

Among the points of detail that were discussed, Lord Robert Cecil urged the importance of not using any phrases which would lead Roumania to think that we had in any way abandoned our obligations towards her. We had laid great stress on the sanctity of treaties, and we ought not to suggest in any statement that we would not carry out a treaty until we had been released from our obligations by the nation concerned. Moreover, at the moment, Roumania was a very important factor in the war, being, indeed, the only barrier between the Germans and the great resources of South Russia.

Lord Robert Cecil also uttered a warning against any suggestion that we would not carry out our treaties to Italy. Signor Giolitti and his adherents were sedulously propagating the rumour that the British Government would not keep its obligations in Italy, and it was important not to encourage this idea.

Another point of detail related to Montenegro, which it was generally agreed should be omitted from the statement, as the best solution of the Montenegrin question might be its incorporation in Serbia.

Mr. Barnes, entering towards the end of the Meeting, gave some account of the trade unionist meeting. After he himself had promised a statement on war aims by the Prime Minister, Mr. J. H. Thomas had intervened and urged all the arguments against the proposal raised at the Cabinet in the morning. In the result Mr. Barnes had thought it advisable not to carry a resolution asking for a statement on war aims by the Prime Minister, and the question had been left open.

Further consideration was adjourned until the following day.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

January 4, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 314.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, January 4, 1918, at 5 P.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the EARL CUKZON of KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., M.P.

The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MONTAGU of FLETCHER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.

The following were also present:—

The Right Hon. LORD H. CECIL, K.C., M.P., Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Mr. PHILIP KERR.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

War Aims. 1. With reference to War Cabinet 313, Minute 1, the War Cabinet resumed their discussion on war aims. The Prime Minister said that he had seen M. Albert Thomas that morning, and had shown him his rough draft of the statement he proposed to make on the morrow to the trade unionists. M. Thomas had said that this would suit France.

The Prime Minister said that he had arranged to show the draft, as approved by the War Cabinet, to Mr. Asquith and Lord Grey on the morrow. If the War Cabinet agreed he proposed to state in his speech that he had recently had the opportunity to consult the Leader of the Opposition and the Leaders of Labour, and that he had consulted such representatives of the Dominions as were available, and that what he said might be taken as representing the views of the nation.

This was agreed to.

The Statement. 2. The Prime Minister then proceeded to read the statement which he proposed to make, which was based partly on Lord Robert Cecil’s (G.T.-3181), and partly on General Smuts' draft (G.T.-3180).

Subject to certain amendments the new draft was approved, and is reproduced in the Appendix.
3. With reference to War Cabinet 313, Minute 3, it was agreed that the passage dealing with the principle of self-determination of races should be modified so as to apply, not to all races indiscriminately, but merely to the settlement of the New Europe.

4. Some discussion took place as to a passage in which the Prime Minister proposed, as agreed by the War Cabinet (War Cabinet 312, Minute 8), to notify the Russian Bolsheviks that if they had not taken the responsibility of entering into negotiations with the enemy by themselves, we should have stood by the Russian democracy, as we intended to stand by the French democracy. The Prime Minister gave as his reasons for including this statement that it was necessary to give warning to the Bolsheviks that we did not any longer consider ourselves bound to fight on in Russian interests, so that there should be no misunderstanding on the subject in the future; also, that he wished to give a hint to the enemy in the same direction. Against this it was urged that the statement would be somewhat discouraging to our friends in Russia, who still wished to fight on in the interests of the Allies as a whole.

It was pointed out that the prevention of Courland and Lithuania falling into the hands of the Germans was an important Allied interest, since if this occurred the Baltic would become more than ever a German lake. For many years past one of the greatest dangers to peace had been the desire of Russia to reach open water. If the Baltic were entirely under German control, the Black Sea exits practically subject to Turkish control, and Vladivostock very possibly in the hands of the Japanese, Russia would have no outlet except in the Arctic Ocean. It was impossible to imagine that this vast amorphous nation, when it recovered from its present prostration, would be content with these conditions, and Russian lack of access to the ocean might prove a constant source of future wars. In fact, a settlement on these lines was not consistent with a just and durable peace.

The Prime Minister undertook to find a form of words which would meet both points of view.

5. There was some discussion as to the manner in which Austria should be alluded to in the statement. After referring to the legitimate claims of Italy, Serbia, and Roumania, the Prime Minister had proposed to insert a phrase indicating that, subject to the fulfilment of our war aims in regard to these countries, we considered the existence of a strong Austria to be desirable. His main object was to give a clear indication to Austria that we did not wish to destroy her, and to make her people lukewarm in the war, thus deterring her from using her strength actively against us. Against this it was urged that our Allies on the borders of Austria-Hungary might be discouraged.

It was decided—

To include some milder phrase than that used in the original draft in the sense that, subject to the fulfilment of the legitimate claims of our Allies, we felt that Austria-Hungary should be in a position to exercise a powerful influence in South-East Europe.
6. With reference to War Cabinet 313, Minute 3, there was some further discussion as to the manner in which Roumania should be alluded to in the statement. Eventually, it was decided that—

A suitable reference should be made to the Balkans as a whole, indicating that the boundaries of all Balkan States should be settled on an ethnographical basis, and full reparation made to Serbia and Roumania for damage done in Serbian and Roumanian territory.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 310, Mr. Barnes stated that the labour situation arising out of the 12½ per cent. increase to certain time-workers was daily becoming more threatening. Telegrams from all quarters continued to pour in. This situation was proving one of the main obstacles to the success of the negotiations of the Minister of National Service with the trade unionists. In the absence of some decision from the War Cabinet as to a statement of Government policy on the subject, the War Cabinet Committee on Labour found itself unable to cope with the situation. Every day, however, the position was changing, and the composition of a suitable statement became more complicated. He urged that the matter should not be postponed.

The Prime Minister asked Mr. Barnes to formulate the policy he proposed with precision, and to bring it before the War Cabinet at an early date.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.
January 4, 1918.
APPENDIX.

WHEN the Government invite organised Labour in this country to assist them to maintain the might of their armies in the field, its representatives are entitled to ask that any misgivings and doubts which any of them may have about the purpose to which this precious strength is to be applied should be definitely cleared, and what is true of organised labour is equally true of all citizens in this country without regard to grade or avocation.

When men by the million are being called upon to suffer and die and vast populations are being subjected to the sufferings and privations of war on a scale unprecedented in the history of the world, they are entitled to know for what cause or causes they are making the sacrifice. It is only the clearest, greatest, and justest of causes that can justify the continuance even for one day of this unspeakable agony of the nations. And we ought to be able to state clearly and definitely not only the principles for which we are fighting but also their definite and concrete application to the war map of the world.

We have arrived at the most critical hour in this terrible conflict, and before any Government takes the fateful decision as to the conditions under which it ought either to terminate or continue the struggle, it ought to be satisfied that the conscience of the nation is behind these conditions, for nothing else can sustain the effort which is necessary to achieve a righteous end to this war. I have therefore during the last few days taken special pains to ascertain the view and the attitude of representative men of all sections of thought and opinion in the country. Last week I had the privilege not merely of perusing the declared war aims of the Labour Party, but also of discussing in detail with the Labour leaders the meaning and intention of that declaration. I have also had an opportunity of discussing this same momentous question with Mr. Asquith and Viscount Grey. Had it not been that the Nationalist leaders are in Ireland engaged in endeavouring to solve the tangled problem of Irish self-government, I should have been happy to exchange views with them, but Mr. Redmond, speaking on their behalf, has, with his usual lucidity and force, in many of his speeches, made clear what his ideas are as to the object and purpose of the war. I have also had the opportunity of consulting certain representatives of the Great Dominions Overseas.

I am glad to be able to say as a result of all these discussions that although the Government are alone responsible for the actual language I propose using, there is national agreement as to the character and purpose of our war aims and peace conditions, and in what I say to you to-day, and through you to the world, I can venture to claim that I am speaking not merely the mind of the Government but of the nation and of the Empire as a whole.

We may begin by clearing away some misunderstandings and stating what we are not fighting for. We are not fighting a war of aggression against the German people. Their leaders have persuaded them that they are fighting a war of self-defence against a league of rival nations bent on the destruction of Germany. That is not so. "The destruction or disruption of Germany or the German people has never been a war aim with us from the first day of this war to this day. Most reluctantly and, indeed, quite unprepared for the dreadful ordeal we were forced to join in this war in self-defence, in defence of the violated public law of Europe, and in vindication of the most solemn treaty obligations on which the public system of Europe rested, and on which Germany had ruthlessly trampled in her invasion of Belgium. We had to join in the struggle or stand aside and see Europe go under and brute force triumph over public right and international justice. It was only the realisation of that dreadful alternative that forced the British people into the war. And from that original attitude they have never swerved. They have never aimed at the break up of the German peoples or the disintegration of their State or country. Germany has occupied a great position in the world. It is not our wish or intention to question or destroy that position for the future, but rather to turn her aside from hopes and schemes of military domination and to see her devote all her strength to the great beneficent tasks of the world. Nor are we fighting to destroy Austria-Hungary or to deprive Turkey of its capital, or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace, which are predominantly Turkish in race.

Nor did we enter this war merely to alter or destroy the Imperial constitution of Germany, much as we consider that military autocratic constitution a dangerous
anachronism in the twentieth century. Our point of view is that the adoption of a really democratic constitution by Germany would be the most convincing evidence that in her the old spirit of military domination had indeed died in this war, and would make it much easier for us to conclude a broad democratic peace with her. But, after all, that is a question for the German people to decide.

It is now more than a year since the President of the United States, then neutral, addressed to the belligerents a suggestion that each side should state clearly the aims for which they were fighting. We and our Allies responded by the Note of the 10th January, 1917.

To the President's appeal the Central Empires made no reply, and in spite of many adjurations, both from their opponents and from neutrals, they have maintained a complete silence as to the objects for which they are fighting. Even on so crucial a matter as their intention with regard to Belgium they have uniformly declined to give any trustworthy indication.

On the 25th December last, however, Count Czernin, speaking on behalf of Austria-Hungary and her Allies, did make a pronouncement of a kind. It is indeed deplorably vague. We are told that " it is not the intention " of the Central Powers " to appropriate forcibly " and occupied territories or " to rob of its independence " any nation which has lost its " political independence " during the war. It is obvious that almost any scheme of conquest and annexation could be perpetrated within the literal interpretation of such a pledge.

Does it mean that Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, and Roumania will be as independent and as free to direct their own destinies as the Germans or any other nation? Or does it mean that all manner of interferences and restrictions, political and economic, incompatible with the status and dignity of a freed self-respecting people, are to be imposed? If this is the intention then there will be one kind of independence for a great nation and an inferior kind of independence for a small nation. We must know what is meant, for equality of right among nations, small as well as great, is one of the fundamental issues this country and her Allies are fighting to establish in this war. Reparation for the wanton damage inflicted on Belgian towns and villages and their inhabitants is emphatically repudiated. The rest of the so-called "offer" of the Central Powers is almost entirely a refusal of all concessions. All suggestions about the autonomy of subject nationalities are ruled out of the peace terms altogether. The question whether any form of self-government is to be given to Arabs, Armenians, or Syrians is declared to be entirely a matter for the Sublime Porte. A pious wish for the protection of minorities " in so far as it is practically realisable " is the nearest approach to liberty which the Central statesmen venture to make.

On one point only are they perfectly clear and definite. Under no circumstances will the " German demand " for the restoration of the whole of Germany's colonies be departed from. All principles of self-determination, or, as our earlier phrase goes, government by consent of the governed, here vanish into thin air.

It is impossible to believe that any edifice of permanent peace could be erected on such a foundation as this. Mere lip service to the formula of no annexations and no indemnities or the right of self-determination is useless. Before any negotiations can even be begun, the Central Powers must realise the essential facts of the situation.

The days of the Treaty of Vienna are long past. We can no longer submit the future of European civilisation to the arbitrary decisions of a few negotiators striving to secure by chicanery or persuasion the interests of this or that dynasty or nation. The settlement of the new Europe must be based on such grounds of reason and justice as will give some promise of stability. Therefore it is that we feel that government with the consent of the governed must be the basis of any territorial settlement in this war. For that reason also, unless treaties be upheld, unless every nation is prepared at whatever sacrifice to honour the national signature, it is obvious that no Treaty of Peace can be worth the paper on which it is written.

The first requirement, therefore, always put forward by the British Government and their Allies, has been the complete restoration, political, territorial, and economic, of the independence of Belgium and such reparation as can be made for the devastation of its towns and provinces. This is no demand for war indemnity, such as that imposed on France by Germany in 1871. It is not an attempt to shift the cost of warlike operations from one belligerent to another, which may or may not be defensible. It is no more and no less than an insistence that before there can be any hope for a stable peace, this great breach of the public law of Europe [1365—314]
must be repudiated, and, so far as possible, repaired. Reparation means recognition.

Unless international right is recognised by insistence on payment for injury done in defiance of its canons, it can never be a reality. Next comes the restoration of Serbia, Montenegro, and the occupied parts of France, Italy, and Roumania. The complete withdrawal of the alien armies and the reparation for injustice done is a fundamental condition of permanent peace.

We mean to stand by the French democracy to the death in the demand they make for a reconsideration of the great wrong of 1871, when, without any regard to the wishes of the population, two French provinces were torn from the side of France and incorporated in the German Empire. This sore has poisoned the peace of Europe for half a century, and until it is cured healthy conditions will not have been restored. There can be no better illustration of the folly and wickedness of using a transient military success to violate national right.

I will not attempt to deal with the question of the Russian territories now in German occupation. The Russian policy since the Revolution has passed so rapidly through so many phases that it is difficult to speak without some suspension of judgment as to what the situation will be when the final terms of European peace come to be discussed. Russia accepted war with all its horrors because, true to her traditional guardianship of the weaker communities of her race, she stepped in to protect Serbia from a plot against her independence. It is this honourable sacrifice which not merely brought Russia into the war, but France as well. France, true to the conditions of her treaty with Russia, stood by her Ally in a quarrel which was not her own. Her chivalrous respect for her treaty led to the wanton invasion of Belgium; and the treaty obligations of Great Britain to that little land brought us into the war.

The present rulers of Russia are now engaged, without any reference to the countries whom Russia brought into the war, in separate negotiations with their common enemy. I am indulging in no reproaches; I am merely stating facts with a view to making it clear why Britain cannot be held accountable for decisions taken in her absence, and concerning which she has not been consulted or her aid invoked. No one who knows Prussia and her designs upon Russia can for a moment doubt her ultimate intention. Whatever phrases she may use to delude Russia, she does not mean to surrender one of the fair provinces or cities of Russia now occupied by her forces. Under one name or another—and the name hardly matters—these Russian provinces will henceforth be in reality part of the dominions of Prussia. They will be ruled by the Prussian sword in the interests of Prussian autocracy, and the rest of the people of Russia will be partly enticed by specious phrases and partly bullied by the threat of continued war against an impotent army into a condition of complete economic and ultimate political enslavement to Germany. We all deplore the prospect. The democracy of this country meant to stand to the last by the democracies of France and Italy and all our other Allies. We shall be proud to fight to the end side by side by the new democracy of Russia, so will America and so will France and Italy. But if the present rulers of Russia take action which is independent of their Allies we have no means of intervening to arrest the catastrophe which is assuredly befalling their country. Russia can only be saved by her own people.

We believe, however, that an independent Poland, comprising all those genuinely Polish elements who desire to form part of it, is an urgent necessity for the stability of Western Europe.

Similarly, though we agree with President Wilson that the break up of Austria-Hungary is no part of our war aims, we feel that, unless genuine self-government on true democratic principles is granted to those Austro-Hungarian nationalities who have long desired it, it is impossible to hope for the removal of those causes of unrest in that part of Europe which have so long threatened its general peace.

On the same grounds we regard as vital the satisfaction of the legitimate claims of the Italians for union with those of their own race and tongue. We also mean to press that justice be done to men of Rumanian blood and speech in their legitimate aspirations. If these conditions are fulfilled Austria-Hungary would become a Power whose strength would conduce to the permanent peace and freedom of Europe, instead of being merely an instrument to the pernicious military autocracy of Prussia that uses the resources of its allies for the furtherance of its own sinister purposes.

Outside Europe we believe that the same principles should be applied. While
we do not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homelands of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople—the passage between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea being internationalized and neutralized—Arabia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine are in our judgment entitled to a recognition of their separate national conditions.

What the exact form of that recognition in each particular case should be need not here be discussed, beyond stating that it would be impossible to restore to their former sovereignty the territories to which I have already referred.

Much has been said about the arrangements we have entered into with our Allies on this and on other subjects. I can only say that as new circumstances, like the Russian collapse and the separate Russian negotiations have changed the conditions under which those arrangements were made, we are, and always have been, perfectly ready to discuss them with our Allies.

With regard to the German colonies, I have repeatedly declared that they are held at the disposal of a Conference whose decision must have primary regard to the wishes and interests of the native inhabitants of each colony. None of those territories are inhabited by Europeans. The governing consideration, therefore, in all these cases must be that the inhabitants should be placed under the control of an administration acceptable to themselves, one of whose main purposes will be to prevent their exploitation for the benefit of European capitalists or Governments. The natives live in their various tribal organisations under chiefs and councils who are competent to consult and speak for their tribes and members, and thus to represent their wishes and interests in regard to their disposal.

The general principle of national self-determination is therefore as applicable in their case as in those of occupied European territories. The German declaration, that the natives of the German colonies have, through their military fidelity in the war, shown their attachment and resolve under all circumstances to remain with Germany, is applicable not to the German colonies generally, but only to one of them, and in that case (German East Africa) the German authorities secured the attachment, not of the native population as a whole, which is, and remains, profoundly anti-German, but only of a small warlike class from whom their Askaris, or soldiers, were selected. These they attached to themselves by conferring on them a highly privileged position as against the bulk of the native population, which enabled these Askaris to assume a lordly and oppressive superiority over the rest of the natives. By this and other means they secured the attachment of a very small and insignificant minority whose interests were directly opposed to those of the rest of the population, and for whom they have no right to speak. The German treatment of their native populations in their colonies has been such as simply to justify their fear of submitting the future of those colonies to the wishes of the natives themselves.

Finally, there must be reparation for injuries done in violation of international law. The Peace Conference must not forget our seamen and the services they have rendered to, and the outrages they have suffered for, the common cause of freedom.

One omission we notice in the proposal of the Central Powers, which seems to us especially regrettable. It is desirable, and indeed essential, that the settlement after this war shall be one which does not in itself bear the seed of future war. But that is not enough. However wisely and well we may make territorial and other arrangements, there will still be many subjects of international controversy. Some, indeed, are inevitable.

The economic conditions at the end of the war will be in the highest degree difficult. Owing to the diversion of human effort to warlike pursuits, there must follow a world-shortage of raw materials, which will increase the longer the war lasts, and it is inevitable that those countries which have control of the raw materials will desire to help themselves and their friends first. Apart from this, whatever settlement is made will be suitable only to the circumstances under which it is made, and, as those circumstances change, changes in the settlement will be called for.

So long as the possibility of dispute between nations continues, that is to say, so long as men and women are dominated by passioned ambition and war is the only means of settling a dispute, all nations must live under the burden not only of having from time to time to engage in it, but of being compelled to prepare for its possible outbreak. The crushing weight of modern armaments, the increasing evil of compulsory military service, the vast waste of wealth and effort involved in warlike preparation, these are blots on our civilisation of which every thinking individual must be ashamed.
For these and other similar reasons, we are confident that a great attempt must be made to establish by some international organisation an alternative to war as a means of settling international disputes. After all, war is a relic of barbarism, and, just as law has succeeded violence as the means of settling disputes between individuals, so we believe that it is destined ultimately to take the place of war in the settlement of controversies between nations.

If, then, we are asked what we are fighting for, we reply, as we have often replied—We are fighting for a just and a lasting peace—and we believe that before permanent peace can be hoped for three conditions must be fulfilled.

First, the sanctity of treaties must be re-established; secondly, a territorial settlement must be secured based on the right of self-determination or the consent of the governed; and, lastly, we must seek by the creation of some international organisation to limit the burden of armaments and diminish the probability of war.

On these conditions the British Empire would welcome peace, to secure those conditions its peoples are prepared to make even greater sacrifices than those they have yet endured.

*January 4, 1918.*
WAR CABINET, 315.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Saturday, January 5, 1918, at 4 p.m.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

The Right Hon. Sir E. Carson, K.C., M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions.

Sir Stephenson Kent, K.C.B., Ministry of Munitions.

Mr. U. Wolff, Ministry of Munitions.

Mr. C. S. Hurst, Ministry of Munitions.

Mr. G. Campbell, Ministry of Munitions.

Mr. J. C. Spencer, Admiralty Shipyard Labour Department.

Mr. G. M. Hodgson.

The Right Hon. G. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour.

Sir D. J. Shackleton, K.C.B., Secretary, Ministry of Labour.


The Right Hon. Sir A. H. Stanley, M.P., President, Board of Trade.

Mr. G. Calterop, Coal Controller.


Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain C. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
The Labour Situation: 12½ per cent. Bonus Dilemma.

1. With reference to War Cabinet 314, Minute 7, Mr. Barnes stated that the Labour situation arising out of the grant of 12½ per cent. increase to certain time-workers was daily becoming more troublesome. The latest menace was a threat by the Electrical Trades Union to call their men out that day unless they were granted an advance of 12½ per cent. on their time rates. A strike had been for the moment averted by Sir George Askwith undertaking to meet the men on Monday. About one-seventh of the electricians were already covered by the recent increase. The electricians employed by the Ministry of Munitions, by public utility companies, by the municipal corporations, and hospitals were all making common cause. He (Mr. Barnes) had called the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the seriousness of the departure involved in the Government granting a subvention in aid of wages to private industries. He had also urged the War Cabinet (War Cabinet 310, Minute 1) to issue a proclamation in the most public manner declaring that the Government would go "so far and no further" in their concessions. Every day's delay meant heavier burdens on the Government's back. He was still in favour of issuing a proclamation. It would be possible in the proclamation to indicate limits within which the negotiations for the extension of the 12½ per cent. should operate; trade conferences could then be summoned, and the matter be dealt with in detail.

Mr. Bonar Law said that the suggestion to subvent the wages of private industries directly was a most dangerous one, for once the workpeople got the notion that they were dealing with the Treasury and not with employers there would be no end to their demands, and future strikes would be against the Government. The urgent case of the electricians might be met by an undertaking that, in cases where the power did not already exist, the Government would obtain authority for the raising of prices to the consumers.

Mr. Churchill urged the War Cabinet to consider the problem before them as a whole. It had been proposed a fortnight ago to extend the 12½ per cent. bonuses in the shape of an advance of 7s. to the whole of the piece-workers in the munition trades. The Sheffield employers had proposed to pay 7s. over top rates. He considered that a great error, for although special treatment was required for some piece-workers, an indiscriminate bonus would be unfortunate. It was necessary to speed up the application of the original decision to the persons embraced by it, and to make agreements with as many trades as possible. In that way a barrier could be erected between specific trades and the industrial world generally and a landslide blocked. An overtop advance was not practicable; the right policy was to plough through the difficulties in detail day by day, and by trade agreements limit the range of application of the 12½ per cent. bonus. The Labour Co-Ordinating Committee set up by the War Cabinet had no administrative machinery to give effect to its findings. Negotiations to be effective had to be carried out in the places and with the people affected. On Tuesday last the War Cabinet (No. 310) had restored his administrative authority, and a conference had been held with the Steel Trade, in which some thirty strikes were threatening. In that trade, which was very well organised, there was the best chance of a model agreement. They found the Union animated by goodwill and definitely opposed to the wholesale extension to piece-workers of the bonus, and agreeable to the merging in the bonus of the advances already granted. An agreement had been concluded with the Steel Trade on the previous day, and the proposals had that day been put to a mass meeting of steel makers in Sheffield—the most disaffected centre—and the men had been ordered to resume work on Monday. In the same area the Shop Stewards had called a meeting in favour of a general strike; that
meeting was proceeding at that moment, but such telephonic reports as had come to hand indicated that the men were well in hand. A trade agreement had thus been reached, and if we threw the leaders over now we could not expect them to stand by the Government in future. He was certain that the only sound policy was to go on lighting inch by inch for trade agreements, and in fact, they were not very far from the settlement of the main munition trades, given reasonable time. These were the trades chiefly affected by the impending comb-out. With regard to the electricity, Mr. Churchill's view was that the advance should be extended to those who had not already received it, and as to the railways, it might be possible for them to be handled by the Railways Executive without upsetting the miners.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to a suggestion made to the Prime Minister by a deputation of employers, that they would not mind the Government taking the whole of their excess profits if more satisfactory arrangements were made as to depreciation. The depreciation at present allowed for some kinds of machinery was, they alleged, ridiculously inadequate. The suggestion, Mr. Bonar Law stated, was most plausible on the surface, but it was really very complicated, and it might involve the employers really paying 50 per cent, excess profit instead of 100 per cent. What the employers really wanted was a valuation of their stocks at pre-war prices. Such a subterfuge would be unmasked in the House of Commons and could not easily be defended. It had to be remembered that the excess profits tax was a tax on all businesses, whether their prosperity was specially due to the war or not, and in view of the present value of money, the 20 per cent, left hardly secured more than pre-war profits. The employers were endeavouring to influence the Minister of Reconstruction, and a suggestion had been made that the 20 per cent, might be put into reserve for the development of businesses after the war.

Sir Albert Stanley stated he found the employers more willing than he had anticipated to make some sacrifice for the sake of industrial peace.

Sir Auckland Geddes stated that he regarded the matter primarily from the point of view of man-power. He did not think there was any hope of industrial peace until either the 12½ per cent, bonus was withdrawn or extended over the whole field of men employed by or on behalf of the Government. The Trade Union leaders knew that the demand for increases was largely unjustifiable, but they had no shadow of control over the rank and file. He favoured the issue of a Proclamation by the Government, admitting that an error of judgment had been made, that the increase had been granted in order to remedy an admitted anomaly, that it had been extended beyond its legitimate sphere, that the Government would see justice done, and would not allow privileged positions to be set up in certain trades, and some machinery would be provided for dealing, trade by trade, with the situation which had arisen. The country was suffering from a multiplicity of Government Authorities issuing decisions, and the result was a perfect tangle of wages agreements and of protections from recruiting. In the Proclamation the Government ought to emphasise three points—

1. War Aims,
2. Profiteering,
3. Food Prices,

or rather two points, in view of the Prime Minister's speech that morning, viz.—

1. Profiteering,
2. Food Prices,
which were contributing to the prevailing unsettlement. The Ministry of Munitions, though it covered a wide field, did not cover anything like the whole field; there were, e.g., the railways and coal mines. Other piece-workers were going back on to time rates and were doing less work per man than they were doing a month ago. He was anxious to check the growing strength of the rank and file movement, and by means of a Proclamation make it clear that the extension of the 12½ per cent. to an industry was not due to the power of the local leaders.

Mr. G. H. Roberts did not believe that a universal application of the 12½ per cent. could be resisted. It had become an obsession among the workers. The premium bonus men were not yet in, but soon would be, and they would be followed by the piece-workers. The utmost that seemed possible was to confine the advance to 12½ per cent. The position of the Ministry of Munitions was a comparatively easy one, but their trades naturally affected all other trades throughout the country. The position could be settled by negotiating trade by trade, but probably they would be forced to deal with the railways, and possibly with the agricultural labourers.

Mr. Churchill stated that he agreed substantially with the line taken by Mr. Barnes. He did not want to extend an invitation to fresh trades to come forward. The agricultural labourers were not coming forward. After all, there was a special case for the munition workers who were about to be combed out; it was desirable to increase the attractive power of the munitions trades in view of the comb-out.

The War Cabinet were generally agreed—

(a.) On the desirability of issuing a Proclamation substantially on the lines indicated by Mr. Barnes, and appointed the following Committee of Ministers, in consultation with their advisers, to draft the Proclamation for consideration by the War Cabinet on Monday afternoon next:

Mr. Barnes.
Mr. Churchill.
Sir Albert Stanley.
Sir Auckland Geddes.
Mr. G. H. Roberts.

(b.) Mr. Bonar Law undertook to circulate a Memorandum dealing with excess profits from the point of view of Treasury and the Inland Revenue.

(c.) Sir George Askwith was empowered to settle the difficulty with the electricians and their authorities, and, if necessary, to say that the Government would allow the companies and authorities concerned to raise their prices by Act of Parliament where required, and would assist with loans.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 314, Minute 1, the Prime Minister informed the War Cabinet that he had shown the draft statement of War Aims, as approved by the War Cabinet, to Mr. Asquith and Lord Grey that morning. It had been considered line by line and certain alterations, chiefly verbal, and none of substance, had been made in the draft.

The War Cabinet decided—

(a.) That the Prime Minister’s statement should be telegraphed verbatim to foreign countries, as well as to the Dominions, as arranged by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.
That a telegram should be sent by the Foreign Office to the British Ambassador, Washington, directing him to notify the United States Government for the personal information of the President, that for the last week or two the Prime Minister and the War Cabinet have been in negotiation with the trades in regard to the release of the Government from certain pledges made earlier in the war, such release being indispensable to the development of our man-power for military purposes. The negotiations had reached a point at which success turned mainly on the immediate publication of a statement on War Aims by the Government. After consulting the leaders of the Opposition and the Labour leaders, the Prime Minister made an important national statement of War Aims to the Trades Unionist Conference that morning. The British Ambassador should explain that there was not time to consult our Allies in regard to the text of the statement, which, however, they would find to be in accordance with President Wilson's declarations.

The Secretary was instructed to take the necessary action.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W. 1,
January 6, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 316.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, January 7, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.
Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.
The Right Hon. Sir Edward Carson, K.C., M.P.

Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.

Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.
Captain L. F. Burrows, Assistant Secretary.
Submarines.

1. The First Sea Lord of the Admiralty stated that there were no great changes in the naval situation. An explosion had occurred whilst a patrol boat was attacking a submarine, but it was not yet known if the submarine was sunk. A hospital ship had been torpedoed in the Bristol Channel, but there was no loss of life, with the exception of three Lascars.

Stores at Vladivostock.

2. The First Sea Lord stated that the "Suffolk" had been ordered to Vladivostock, first calling at Sasebo, with instructions to act with the Japanese authorities and report on the situation. Lord Robert Cecil said he thought that the Japanese ultimately intended to seize Vladivostock, but that they would not do so at present.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the Germans were reorganising their army on the Western front, and the formation of additional corps and one additional army had now given it the character of an offensive force. No more divisions had, however, been moved over from Russia recently, though the Germans had twenty-eight more divisions on the Western front than they had this time last year.

Poland.

4. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that a French report from Russia indicated that difficulties were being encountered in the formation of the Polish army.

Salonica: Condition of Russian Troops.

5. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff informed the War Cabinet that General Guillaumat had reported that the condition of the Russian units at Salonica was most unsatisfactory, and that he (General Guillaumat) suggested sending these units to Tunis.

Health of Troops.

6. Lord Derby stated that he had received a disquieting telegram from Sir Ronald Ross (the tropical disease expert) regarding the health of the troops at Salonica. The telegram stated that the men were saturated with malaria, and 15,000 of them should be removed immediately. At present troops could not be relieved in that theatre at a rate exceeding 2,000 a month.
7. A suggestion was made that the Weekly Casualty Report did not give sufficient details regarding the number of sick.

Sir Edward Carson stated that he had asked the Director-General of Medical Services to rectify this several times, but with no result.

Lord Derby promised to look into the matter.

Lord Derby added that the hospitals at Salonica were very good indeed, and, although there was a shortage of doctors, it was not a serious one.

8-15. The War Cabinet conferred with Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig on various questions connected with the position on the Western front, and also the question of troops for Home Defence. (Owing to the secrecy of the matters dealt with, no Minutes have been printed.)

Russia. 1.6. Lord Robert Cecil reported that Mr. Lockhart, our late Consul-General in Moscow, was now in this country, but would be proceeding to Petrograd at the end of that week to take up his duties as the channel of communication with the Bolshevik party.

In the meantime Lord Robert Cecil had given instructions to our Embassy at Petrograd to get someone outside the Embassy into touch with M. Trotzki, the selection being left to our present representative at Petrograd. He added that a difficult situation was being created in London by a demand that the funds and documents of the Russian Embassy should be handed over to M. Litvinoff. Lord Robert Cecil was strongly opposed to the idea, as the funds of the Embassy would probably be spent by M. Litvinoff in spreading Bolshevik propaganda in this country. He understood that no fault could be found on personal grounds with M. Litvinoff.

The Prime Minister drew attention to a press report which went to show that M. Trotzki was quarrelling with the Germans, and that the Social Revolutionary Party, who were the only alternatives to the Bolsheviks, were quite as likely, if not more likely, to give in to German demands as was M. Trotzki.

16. Lord Robert Cecil reported that Mr. Lockhart, our late Consul-General in Moscow, was now in this country, but would be proceeding to Petrograd at the end of that week to take up his duties as the channel of communication with the Bolshevik party.

In the meantime Lord Robert Cecil had given instructions to our Embassy at Petrograd to get someone outside the Embassy into touch with M. Trotzki, the selection being left to our present representative at Petrograd. He added that a difficult situation was being created in London by a demand that the funds and documents of the Russian Embassy should be handed over to M. Litvinoff. Lord Robert Cecil was strongly opposed to the idea, as the funds of the Embassy would probably be spent by M. Litvinoff in spreading Bolshevik propaganda in this country. He understood that no fault could be found on personal grounds with M. Litvinoff.

The Prime Minister drew attention to a press report which went to show that M. Trotzki was quarrelling with the Germans, and that the Social Revolutionary Party, who were the only alternatives to the Bolsheviks, were quite as likely, if not more likely, to give in to German demands as was M. Trotzki.

17. Lord Robert Cecil reported that information had been received that some of the present Roumanian Ministry were anxious to make a separate peace. The King of Roumania was prepared to dismiss these Ministers if we wished him to do so. M. Clemenceau was in favour of this course. Lord Robert Cecil gathered that the Chief of the Imperial General Staff did not anticipate any Austro-German advance against the Roumanian army, at any rate for two or three months. He had little faith in the ability or determination of the Ukraine to resist such an advance, and the fifteen good divisions of the Roumanian army constituted the only military force which prevented the Germans advancing into the Ukraine and obtaining supplies. He added that if we left it to the discretion of the Roumanian Government it would seem inevitable that they would make a separate peace. They could only be kept in the war by pressure from us and from France.

Lord Milner pointed out that, if Roumania stayed in the field, a certain number of Austro-German divisions, which could otherwise be released for service elsewhere, would be tied up upon that front. It was doubtful whether it would suit German policy to overrun Roumanian territory by force, as it appeared inevitable that, sooner or later, Roumania would form part of the Central Bloc. He agreed that the Ukraine was a feeble reed upon which to lean, but there was an outside chance
of something materialising in that country if Roumania held on; whereas if Roumania went out, any idea of rallying the Ukraine would be at an end.

The Prime Minister added that the retention of the Roumanian army in the field gave the Austrians an excuse for resisting the German demands for the transfer of Austrian troops to other theatres of war.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should communicate the view of the War Cabinet—viz., that we should do all in our power to keep Roumania in the war—to the French Government, with a view to joint representations being made to Roumania to this intent.

(Sir Edward Carson wished his dissent from this decision to be recorded, and expressed the view that the Roumanians ought now to be allowed to make a separate peace.)

Next Meeting of the Supreme War Council.

18. Captain Amery reported that three important reports are now being prepared by the Military Advisers to the Supreme War Council, namely—

(a.) The Turkish situation;
(b.) The Western front;
(c.) The general military situation;

would be ready by the end of that week.

The Prime Minister pointed out that it would not be feasible to hold a meeting of the Supreme War Council until these reports had been received and considered by the War Cabinet. He therefore proposed that the next meeting of the Supreme War Council should not be held before Thursday week next, the 17th January, 1918.

This was agreed to.

2. Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
   January 7, 1918.
APPENDIX.

Paraphrase of Telegram No. 42 to Lord Bertie (Paris).

Foreign Office, January 7, 1918, 7 p.m.

The following personal message from the Prime Minister to M. Clemenceau:

I consider it advisable that the next meeting of the Supreme War Council should be postponed until the further reports from the Permanent Military Advisers have been received and been considered by the several Governments. This should not mean more than a week or ten days delay. At this moment I do not think there is any need for a discussion between the Allied Governments on the question of the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk, though it may turn out that such a discussion will be necessitated later.

Practically all the outstanding questions turn on the decision to be taken on the broad lines of our future military policy. I recognise that from the French point of view one of the most urgent of these questions is that of the extension of the British line, and I understand that the Permanent Military Advisers are now considering their report. The taking over of a portion of the French line already agreed to between General Petain and Field-Marshal Haig is about to commence; we should, in the meantime, ask the Permanent Military Advisers to hasten the completion of their reports, both on the question of taking over the line and of the general military policy.

General Wilson has been communicated with in this sense. Instructions have been given to His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris to send a copy of this telegram to the British section at Versailles.
WAR CABINET, 317.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, January 7, 1918, at 3.30 P.M.

Present:

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P. | The Right Hon. SIR EDWARD CARSON, K.C., M.P.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. W. S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Minister of Munitions.
SIR STEPHENSON KENT, K.C.B., Ministry of Munitions.
Mr. U. F. WOLFF, Ministry of Munitions.
Mr. C. S. HUERT, Ministry of Munitions.
Mr. G. CALTHROP, Coal Controller.
Mr. R. H. FOX, Admiralty Shipyard Labour Department.
Mr. G. M. HODGSON.

The Right Hon. G. H. ROBERTS, M.P., Minister of Labour.
SIR D. J. SHACKLETON, K.C.B., Secretary, Ministry of Labour.
The Right Hon. SIR A. STANLEY, M.P., President, Board of Trade.
SIR ALAN ANDERSON, K.B.E., Controlier, Admiralty.
Mr. J. C. SPENCER, Admiralty Shipyard Labour Department.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKER, K.C.B., Secretary.
Mr. THOMAS JONES, Assistant Secretary.
Captain E. ABRAHAM, Assistant Secretary.

THE LABOUR SITUATION:

1. With reference to War Cabinet 315, Minute 9, the War Cabinet had before them a draft proclamation prepared by Mr. Barnes (G.T.-3241), and a General Formula for time-workers and for piece-workers, which had been considered by the Committee of Ministers, but upon which it had not been possible to agree (G.T.-3241 A); and also the draft heads of a proclamation, to which the Committee as a whole had agreed (G.T.-3241 B).

Mr. Barnes said that the Committee was divided on the question whether piece-workers should, or should not, be included in the General Formula.

[1365-317]
Mr. Churchill said he could not agree to the whole of the General Formula dealing with time-workers. A series of demands, backed by threats of strikes, were reaching the Departments. Each Department was racing against the others in an attempt to reach a solution. It was impossible in such a situation to reach a settlement which would finally arrest the disturbance caused by the 12½ per cent. bonus. The Government should declare its policy, and then entrust one Minister with full authority to carry it out.

Mr. Barnes urged that the important decision required from the Cabinet was whether premium bonus workers and piece-workers were to receive advances corresponding more or less to the advances granted to the time-workers. It was not so material which Department gave effect to the decision.

Mr. Guy Calthrop and Sir David Shackleton said they were agreed as to the General Formula for time-workers.

Sir Albert Stanley said the difficulty was that the General Formula for time-workers did raise the question of how far the 12½ per cent. advance should go. The moment, for example, the advance was extended to any of the railway workers, it might be demanded by all, and although the Railway Executive might hope to confine the advance to men working on the construction or repair of carriages, engines, or wagons, the view taken by Mr. J. H. Thomas was that it would be impossible so to confine it. He (Sir A. Stanley) thought that while each Department should negotiate in detail, no Department should grant advances without the approval of some one co-ordinating authority. He was against granting the 12½ per cent. to all time-workers, and against issuing a proclamation.

Sir Auckland Geddes said he thought that the Committee set up by the Cabinet for the co-ordination of Labour Disputes should be superseded by one authority like the Minister of Labour, who could be represented at negotiations.

Sir Alan Anderson and Mr. Guy Calthrop concurred in this view.

Mr. Churchill said that he did not disagree with the proposed machinery, but he was most strongly against the granting of all-round advances to piece-workers, which he believed the Minister of Labour was ready to grant. To do so would be to squander public treasure, and to bring the Government back to the original position where an attempt was made to redress the grievances of the skilled time-workers. The right policy, in his opinion, was to conclude special trade agreements, and to include therein certain limited classes of piece-workers.

The attention of the War Cabinet was called to the hardship on piece-workers who were unable to work full time for lack of material, as had been the case in Belfast shipyards, whose claims were now being considered by the Committee on Production.

Sir Alan Anderson said that the grant of 12½ per cent. had upset the class of workers which it was most desirable to encourage. Unless some encouragement were given to the piece-workers, it would be impossible to obtain an increased output. It was easy to over-rate the importance of the money-cost in comparison with the goodwill and the productive energy of the men.

The proposed 7s. was a compromise, and was really less than the full equivalent of the 12½ per cent. He thought a settlement could be made at that figure now (7s.), if it were made quickly.
Mr. G. H. Roberts was prepared to endorse the General Formula as if the settlement were not made now, the Government would be forced to concede the 12½ per cent. all round.

A suggestion was made that agreement might be reached on the following lines—

(a.) Each Department should negotiate and settle with its own workmen.

(b.) Such settlement should be limited by the maximum rates laid down in the General Formula (G.T.-3241 A).

(c.) Such settlement should not be concluded without the assent of the Ministry of Labour.

(d.) The Ministry of Labour should be represented at the negotiations.

(e.) The Co-ordinating Committee on Labour Disputes would thus give place to the Ministry of Labour, and where Cabinet intervention was required, Mr. Barnes would act for the War Cabinet, and would only bring matters before the War Cabinet at his discretion, and in cases of special urgency or difficulty.

Mr. Churchill urged that if the principle of wholesale extension of advances to piece-workers were conceded, it would be impossible for his Department to carry on negotiations, and he would prefer that the whole of the negotiations and the responsibility for them should be transferred to the Ministry of Labour. His statutory powers in this regard could be transferred by a short Bill.

The opinion was expressed on the other hand, that there was a provision in the Munitions of War Acts, by which the Minister of Munitions could delegate powers.

Sir David Shackleton said he advocated the restoration of the Committee on Production to its original position as a Court of Appeal. It had experience and knowledge, and its personnel could be strengthened if required by a rush of work, in order to expedite its decisions. The essential condition for its success and rapid working was that its decisions should be loyally supported by all the Departments concerned, and that they should strenuously oppose all attempts to upset the determinations reached by the Committee. The Ministry of Labour had never approved the granting of an advance, in cases of a strike, without first insisting on the men resuming work. If that condition were not fulfilled, the Government should be prepared to face a strike. With regard to the advance of 12½ per cent. the Committee on Production, in order to be consistent with its previous decisions, could not refuse to grant it, to time-workers, and if a settlement could be concluded with the premium bonus men and the piece-workers, on the basis of 7s., it would be a gain of nearly 2s. 6d. to the Government.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(1.) All applications for an increase in war advances and wage disputes arising therefrom shall be referred for decision to the Ministry of Labour, who may refer them to the Committee on Production.

The Ministry of Labour will have discretion to ask the Department concerned to carry on any necessary negotiations, but the final decision will in all cases rest with the Ministry of Labour.

(2.) In deciding all claims for 12½ per cent. bonus or its equivalent the adjudicating authority shall work with-
in the limits and on the lines laid down by the following formula—

**General Formula for Maximum Concession for the Settlement of the 12½ per cent. Question.**

(i.) To plain time-workers included in the concession—

(a.) To workers who have received not more than 20s. war advance—the equivalent of 12½ per cent. on earnings.

(b.) To workers who have received over 20s. war advance—sufficient to produce an equivalent to the 20s. plus the 12½ per cent. on earnings; that is to say, that in the case of workers who have received war advances in excess of 20s. such excess shall merge in the 12½ per cent. on earnings.

(c.) Workmen who have received the equivalent of 20s. war advance plus 12½ per cent. on earnings, or more, are not affected by this settlement.

(ii.) To premium bonus workers included in the concession—7s. on existing war advances.

(iii.) To piece-workers included in the concession—7s. on existing war advances, or its equivalent in piece rates.

(iv.) Any settlement under (ii) or (iii) shall be on the clear understanding that no one shall by the receipt of this concession in addition to previous war advances receive more than 12½ per cent. on his present earnings, or 27s. as a total war advance, whichever is the less.

(v.) In all cases where war advances have been given otherwise than by the Committee on Production or similar award, application must be made through the usual channel and readjustment can be made within the above limits.

(3.) The co-ordinating Committee on Labour Disputes should be replaced by the Ministry of Labour after dealing with any outstanding business.

(4.) Mr. Barnes should have full powers to decide on behalf of the War Cabinet in cases referred to him by the Ministry of Labour, bringing to the War Cabinet at his discretion only cases of extreme urgency or difficulty.

(5.) No proclamation should for the present be made, but when a suitable opportunity occurred the Prime Minister might make a public statement on the general labour policy of the Government.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

January 7, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 318.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, January 8, 1918, at 11.30 a.m.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

The Right Hon. Sir Edward Carson, K.C., M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 5 to 13).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 5 to 14).

Major-General F. B. Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for Minutes 5 to 13).

The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 10 and 13).


The Right Hon. W. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minutes 4 and 10).

The Right Hon. R. E. Prothero, M.V.O., M.P., President, Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (for Minute 4).

The Right Hon. Lord Rothermere, President, Air Board (for Minutes 1 and 2).

The Right Hon. Lord Rhondda, Food Controller (for Minute 4).

Mr. U. F. Wintour, C.B., C.M.G., Secretary, Ministry of Food (for Minute 4).


Vice-Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 5 to 13).

Sir Leo G. Chiozza Money, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Shipping (for Minute 4).

Commander the Hon. Lionel Fletcher, R.N.R., Ministry of Shipping (for Minute 4).

The Right Hon. Sir G. Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minutes 10 and 14).

The Right Hon. Sir A. Mond, Bart., M.P., First Commissioner of Works (for Minute 1).

Sir Lionel Falle, K.C.B., C.M.G., Secretary, H.M. Office of Works (for Minute 1).

Sir A. Durant, M.V.O., H.M. Office of Works (for Minute 1).


Sir F. Kenton, K.C.B. (for Minute 1).

The Most Rev. His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury (for Minute 1).


Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain C. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.

Fleet Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.
The British Museum : Acquisition for Air Ministry.

1. With reference to War Cabinet 309, Minute 2, the War Cabinet, at the request of Lord Curzon, re-examined the decision of the acquisition of the British Museum for occupation by the Air Ministry.

The Secretary pointed out that the decision of the War Cabinet, after the last discussion on this subject, had leaked out immediately after the meeting. Sir Alfred Mond had addressed a remonstrance to him on this occurrence.

Sir Alfred Mond said that, on the day following the discussion, he had been besieged by newspaper reporters.

The Archbishop of Canterbury said that the decision to use the British Museum as the offices of the Air Ministry appeared to have been reached on insufficient information, and on a misunderstanding of the facts. It had been erroneously supposed that all the space required by the Air Ministry would be available; that the changes could be made without interfering with the Library; and that the time occupied in removal would not be lengthy. He protested that to treat the Museum in the way proposed—namely, by removing its collections for the sake of accommodating a War Department in the vacated space—would give a most mischievous impression, and would be permanently discreditable to England. Many of the treasures were in any case to be placed in even greater security than the present basement affords, but the proposal now made went very much further, and the further proposal he characterised as an outrage against the culture of the country, unless there was no other building available.

Sir Frederic Kenyon, the Director and Principal Librarian of the British Museum, said that he had been informed by the Office of Works that it would take two months before the receptacles for the collections would be ready for use; it would be three weeks before the packing-cases began to be received, and in the meantime no progress could be made. It would be several months before the collections could be packed and removed. The work would have to be done by expert packers, for it would be impossible to put in an ordinary firm of furniture removers. Sir Frederic Kenyon urged the following points in regard to the unsuitability of the British Museum being used as a Public Department, &c., smoking never being allowed in the Museum; all the rooms were gangway rooms; if part of the collections remained there, the Museum officials must continue to have access to them. Upon being asked as to whether he could suggest any other building that could be taken over for the Offices of the Air Ministry, Sir Frederic Kenyon said a suggestion had been made that the Bethlehem Hospital, more commonly known as the Bedlam Lunatic Asylum, should be used; but the War Cabinet felt that this would hardly be suitable accommodation.

The First Commissioner of Works recapitulated the circumstances in which he had given his original advice to take over the British Museum. The Air Ministry had asked for 190,000 square feet, and had said that the large galleries of the British Museum were exactly what they wanted. It was estimated that the British Museum could be sufficiently cleared in from two to three months, without great disturbance. Since then a new and important factor had arisen. The Air Ministry's demands for space had been reduced from 190,000 square feet to 87,000 square feet. This new figure was a much more manageable proposition, and he thought that the matter should now be reconsidered.

The Prime Minister stated that the War Cabinet concurred in the view expressed by the Archbishop and Sir Frederic Kenyon, and had only reached their previous decision because they were advised that there was no other suitable accommodation available. The interests of the Air Ministry were absolutely vital to our national safety, and time was of the essence of the problem.
Now, however, it was clear that a new factor had arisen in the reduction of the Air Ministry’s requirements.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(a.) In view of the reduction in the requirements of the Air Ministry, the First Commissioner of Works should reconsider the question of taking over the British Museum.

(b.) In this reconsideration he should not be debarred from utilising some of the accommodation of the British Museum, preferably for the housing of a non-combatant Department, if by these means accommodation would be rearranged.

(c.) Lord Curzon should announce this decision in the House of Lords when the question was raised on the following day.

*Danger from Bombs.*

The Air Minister drew the attention of the War Cabinet to the danger from bombs which threatened at present in the British Museum. Sir Sidney Calvin had advised the Trustees two years ago to remove the treasures.

The War Cabinet decided, in view of the fact that the enemy are evidently dropping bombs indiscriminately, that—

The Secretary should draw the attention of the Trustees of the British Museum to the great danger which was being run.

*Dissolution of Air Organisation Committee.*

The War Cabinet had before them a Note by General Smuts (Paper G.T.-3197), in which he pointed out that the Air Organisation Committee had been appointed by the Cabinet (War Cabinet 229, Minute 12) to undertake the preliminary work of the establishment of the Air Ministry. As most of the subjects with which the Committee had dealt had been settled in agreement with the Departments concerned, and as the consideration of the remaining questions might now be left to the Air Council, General Smuts recommended that the Air Organisation Committee might now be dissolved.

The War Cabinet approved the dissolution of the Air Organisation Committee.

*Transatlantic Fish Supplies.*

With reference to War Cabinet 217, Minute 19, the War Cabinet had before them a Report of the Committee on Transatlantic Fish Supplies (Paper G.T.-3177), which Committee had been appointed to examine and report upon Memorandum by Mr. Prothero on the desirability of the British Government securing supplies of frozen fish from Newfoundland and Canadian companies, at an agreed price and subject to inspection, for the period of the war, and for a year or eighteen months afterwards.

Mr. Prothero said that the Committee reported in favour of the scheme. There appeared, however, to be some difficulty in the matter of finance. A suggestion had been made that payment in six months might be arranged, but the Treasury had taken the view that this arrangement would not be satisfactory to them.

Mr. Wintour said that he had just seen Sir Edward Morris, who thought that the difficulty could be overcome by the Newfoundland Government themselves providing the necessary finance in the shape of a permanent loan. A draft telegram to the Newfoundland Government had been prepared, in conjunction with Sir Edward Morris, in the following sense—

“For some considerable time negotiations have been in progress between the British Government and Eastern Canada and Newfoundland for fresh fish frozen to be sent to..."
Britain. The British Government would be very glad to obtain additional supplies of frozen fish from Newfoundland, and would be prepared to enter into a contract for as much fish as Newfoundland can supply, and as they can provide shipping for. The only difficulty up to the present has been one of exchange, but it is suggested that this difficulty might be overcome if the Newfoundland Government were willing to finance the operations for the period of the war and for a reasonable time afterwards, to be agreed upon by mutual consent. It would be necessary to this purpose that the Newfoundland Government should furnish credits from which payment may be made in Newfoundland for all fish delivered under the contract; the British Government in their turn guaranteeing repayment after the war to the Newfoundland Government.

If the above cable were approved by the War Cabinet, he, Sir Edward Morris, would himself cable to the Newfoundland Government urging them to accept the solution proposed, on the understanding that the British Government in their turn would, within the equivalent amount, provide sterling for Newfoundland’s sterling debt obligations in London.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he would have no objection to this arrangement being carried out. As regards Canada, it was hoped that Lord Reading, on his forthcoming Mission to the United States, would be able to facilitate matters.

The War Cabinet decided that:

A telegram in the above sense should be sent by the Colonial Office to the Newfoundland Government.

In this connection the Prime Minister pointed out that, if the enemy refused to treat our statement of War Aims as a basis for negotiation, the war might be a very long one. In these circumstances food would become an important factor in the situation, and all questions of this kind ought to be examined with the greatest care, with a view to doing all that could be done to supply the people with essential foods.

5. Questioned as to the report of an intended German landing in England, and the concentration of troops for that purpose in Holstein, the Director of Military Operations expressed the opinion that the troops in Holstein were there in depots for ordinary training and not for the purpose suggested. These depots, moreover, had been drawn on to reinforce the Western front.

6. In reply to a question as to the number of aeroplanes at General Allenby’s disposal, the Director of Military Operations stated that General Allenby had four squadrons and unquestionable superiority in the air over the Turks. Bombing raids on their communications were of frequent occurrence.

The Secretary of State for War stated that a fifth squadron for Egypt was in preparation, and old machines had been replaced by new ones.

7. It was suggested that the Admiralty might co-operate usefully in this activity by the employment of seaplanes, with a base in Cyprus. There was great advantage in harrying the Turks, and, if possible, in damaging their scanty and irreplaceable rolling-stock.

General Smuts pointed out that Mudros, which was a more suitable seaplane base than Cyprus, had been selected as a base for operations of this kind, though with a different objective. He added that, in view of the policy of bombing on the Western
front, the suggestion must be governed by the number of Handley-Page machines that could be spared from that area.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Air Policy Committee should re-examine the possibility of utilising the seaplanes from Cyprus or elsewhere for operations against the Turkish communications in Syria and Palestine.

8. With regard to the question as to the replacement of old aircraft in Mesopotamia, the Director of Military Operations stated that the particular type of machine asked for by General Marshall was not available, but that modern machines were being sent out, and that the Air Force in that area was being raised to three squadrons.

9. The First Sea Lord stated that the British S.S. "Braeneil" reported having, on the 7th instant, rammed an enemy submarine, which could be regarded as sunk.

10. With reference to War Cabinet 293, Minute 14, the War Cabinet had before them the following documents—


(b.) A Memorandum by Mr. Churchill (Paper G.T.-2433—Reference War Cabinet 281, Minute 3).

(c.) Observations by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (Paper G.T.-3078).

(d.) Observations by the Foreign Office (Paper G.T.-3079).

(e.) A Memorandum by the Naval Staff (Paper G.T.-3170).

The Secretary of State for War, speaking after discussion with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, strongly urged that the Report should not be published, as it would give most valuable information to the enemy.

This view coincided with that of the Admiralty.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies stated that feeling in the self-governing Dominions was altogether against the publication of these Reports, as had been shown in the case of the publication of the First Report and of the Report of the Mesopotamia Commission.

The Minister of Munitions stated that if, for public reasons, it was inadvisable to publish the Report, he would raise no opposition on personal grounds. But he made a strong appeal for the rehabilitation of Sir Ian Hamilton, in particular with reference to charges which the Report clearly showed to be unfounded. He had been unemployed for two years, with a stigma on him. Some action should be taken, either by the publication of the truth or by some recognition, to vindicate him.

It was asked if Sir Ian Hamilton could not be employed in the Home Forces.

The Secretary of State for War stated that, at the moment, in view of his rank and seniority in the Service, this appeared to be difficult.

The suggestion was then made that he might be employed on a Mission.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(a.) It was not in the public interest to publish the Report for the present.

(b.) The Secretary of State for War should consider the possibility of employing General Sir Ian Hamilton.

11. Sir Edward Carson brought to the notice of the War Cabinet a Paper (G.T.-3171) which he had written in connection with German overtures to Spain, and mentioned that the accompanying document had recently been handed by M.
Clemenceau to Lord Milner. It appeared, as regards propaganda in Spain, that M. Clemenceau had mentioned the possibility of the French and English combining, or at any rate working more closely together in this matter.

The War Cabinet took note of the statement as regards the German overtures, and, as far as propaganda was concerned, requested—

Sir Edward Carson to consider the matter and to deal with it as he thought fit.

12. The War Cabinet had under consideration the Report of the Northern Neutral Committee (Paper G-186) in relation to Holland.

The Naval and Military Representatives that were present at the meeting explained that, under the existing arrangements, a certain number of officers and men of both Services were locked up in England although their services were urgently required for other purposes.

The War Cabinet accepted the recommendations of the Committee, and, as regards the embargo placed on officers and men of the Navy and Army, requested—

The First Lord and the Secretary of State for War to furnish a Joint Report on the subject, setting out any proposals which they may have to offer as to the retention in future of only a nucleus force in the United Kingdom for the service under consideration.

13. The War Cabinet had under consideration an Agreement (Appendix) between the British Government and the American Government concerning the joint production of 1,500 or more tanks, under which Great Britain had to provide plates, track-shoes and rollers, guns, machine-guns, and ammunition, and in return the American Government guaranteed to replace the steel provided by the British Government for armour-plate in the form of ship-plates on or about the date of delivery of armour-plate to the factory, on the basis of ton per ton.

Sir Eric Geddes was informed that the execution of the Agreement entirely depended on the Americans supplying at the proper dates an equivalent amount of ship-plates, so that there should be no interference with the shipbuilding programme.

The War Cabinet endorsed the Agreement.

14. With reference to War Cabinet 253, Minute 5, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for War (Paper G.T.-3207) dealing with the large increase in the value of land in the immediate neighbourhood of land acquired by the Government for the erection of works for war purposes.

The Secretary of State for War explained the desirability of securing this increased value for the State, and submitted the draft of a Clause to give the necessary powers, which might be inserted in the Bill to amend the Defence of the Realm (Acquisition of Land) Act.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(a.) The proposed additional Clause should be provisionally approved.

(b.) The Secretary should circulate to the War Cabinet a copy of the Bill as thus amended.

2. Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 8, 1918.
APPENDIX.

Heads of an Agreement between the British Government and the
American Government concerning the Joint Production
of 1,500, or more, Tanks.

WHEREAS it is considered desirable by the American and
British Governments to co-operate in the use of their respective
resources for the production of the war machines known as the
Tanks:

And whereas the British Minister of Munitions (on behalf of
the British Government) has appointed Lieutenant Colonel A. G.
Stern, C.M.G., and the Commander-in-Chief, American Expeditionary
Forces (on behalf of the American Government), has appointed
Major J. A. Drain, U.S.R., as Commissioners, to investigate the
possibilities of such joint production, and these Commissioners have
made a joint recommendation to their respective Governments;

It is hereby agreed as follows:

The above-mentioned Commissioners are authorised by their
respective Governments—

1. To build a factory in France, the cost of which is to be
defrayed in equal parts by the British and American Governments.
The factory to be of sufficient capacity to produce 300 completed
Tanks per month and capable of extension to at least 1,200 a
month.

The construction materials for the factory to be obtained in
France and in England.

The unskilled labour for the erection of the factory to be
supplied by the British Government, and to be Irish, Chinese, or
Portuguese, or such other as may from time to time be available.
Skilled labour to be supplied by the American or British Govern­
ments, as the Commissioners may elect.

2. To arrange for the production of, and to produce, 1,500 Tanks
during the year 1918, or as many more as may be required and
authorised by the respective Governments, and to arrange for the
provision of the components for these Tanks in the United States
and Great Britain substantially as follows:

In the United States: Engines complete, with starter and
clutch, radiator, fan and piping, silencer, electric lighting, dynamo
and battery, propeller shaft, complete transmission, including main
gear box, brakes, roller sprockets, gear shifting and brake control,
track links and pins, rear track sprockets, hub and shafts, front idler
hub and shafts, track roller, track spindles and bushings.

In Great Britain: Bullet and bomb-proof plates, structural
members, track shoes and rollers, guns, machine guns and mountings,
ammunition racks and ammunition.

3. The respective Governments undertake to give the necessary
priority in respect of material, labour, shipping, and other require­
ments to enable the programme to be carried out in the most expeditious manner.

4. It is understood that the Tanks produced by the factory are
to be allocated between the United States, France, and Great
Britain according to a determination to be reached later between
these three Governments, provided that the first 600 Tanks produced
shall be allocated to the United States, and provided further that
the United States and Great Britain shall each take one-half of the
Tanks not taken by France, unless unequal allocation between them
shall be subsequently agreed upon.
Price of Tanks.

5. The price which shall be charged to France, the United States, and Great Britain, should there be an unequal allocation between the United States and Great Britain, shall be 5,000L. per Tank, which price shall be subject to adjustment at the close of the operations occurring under this Agreement and the liquidation of all assets upon a basis of actual cost, such actual cost to include no charge for overhead by either Government.

6. The capital necessary to carry on this programme is to be supplied in equal parts by the American and British Governments. Expenditure in France will, in the first instance, be paid by the British Government.

Materials purchased in Great Britain will be paid for by the British Government.

Materials purchased in the United States of America will be paid for by the American Government.

An adjustment of the accounts will be made every six months.

7. It is further agreed that the American Government will replace the steel provided by the British Government for armour-plate. The replacement to be made in the form of ship-plates on or about the date of delivery of armour-plate to the factory and to be on the basis of ton per ton, the necessary allowance for difference in value to be made in the adjustment of the accounts.

December 20, 1917.
WAR CABINET, 319.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Wednesday, January 9, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.
The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The following were also present:—

Major-General F. B. Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for Minutes 1 to 4).
Fleet Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.
Captain L. F. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.

The Director of Military Operations reported that bad weather prevailed in all theatres of war. In Italy, General Plumer reported that there were no signs of any attack. In the Turkish theatre the weather was a less favourable factor both in Palestine and Mesopotamia, and the floods in the Baghdad area prevented a detachment of our forces joining up with the Russians.

1. The Director of Military Operations gave the following particulars in regard to the American forces in France. He stated that their actual fighting force was 58,000 rifles and machine-gunners, the equivalent of about four American divisions. There was also a considerable number of United States troops on the lines of communication. Training establishments had also been instituted on a considerable scale, with a view to augmenting their trained forces in the future more rapidly. The following were the guns in the possession of the United States forces in France:—

- 144 field guns
- 12 medium
- 9 heavy

[1365—319]
3. The Secretary of State for War stated that Sir William Robertson had proceeded to France with a view to seeing General Pershing, and he was sending instructions to him that, during his stay, it was highly desirable that he should see General Leonard Wood, of the American Army, who had recently been sent across from the United States.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 299, Minute 10, the First Sea Lord stated that information had been received from the Geneva Red Cross that 61 more men had been saved from the vessels that were sunk in the Scandinavian Convoy on the 12th December, 1917. They belonged to the crews of H.M.S. "Partridge," the armed trawlers "Tokio" and "Livingstone," and the British steamer "Cordova."

5. The Chancellor of the Exchequer informed the War Cabinet that the Second Report of the Select Committee on National Expenditure contained the recommendation—

That the Treasury should hold a series of enquiries into the numbers and organisation of the large clerical staffs recruited by the various Departments during the war.

Mr. Bonar Law stated that, in his opinion, more useful results would be obtained by the appointment of one Committee to enquire successively into the various Departments, rather than by the appointment of a number of separate Committees enquiring into separate Departments. He therefore proposed to appoint a Committee with the following Terms of Reference:

To enquire into the staffing and organisation of the Departments which have recruited large clerical staffs since the beginning of the war, and more particularly the new Ministries created for war purposes, to take evidence from these Departments and to report what measures, in the opinion of the Committee, should be taken to improve the organisation of the Departments to prevent overlapping and effect economies.

The Select Committee had also recommended—

That the Treasury, without attempting a detailed control over the terms of individual contracts, should determine from time to time the rates of profits, and should satisfy themselves that the principles adopted as settling the conditions of contracts were sound.

Mr. Bonar Law was of opinion that a small Committee of business men should be appointed to enquire into this matter and to make recommendations, and suggested the following Terms of Reference:

1. To enquire into the steps which have been taken by the Admiralty, War Office, and Ministry of Munitions, to control contract prices and to limit profits.
2. To consider in what respect the practice of these Departments can be co-ordinated and improved in the public interest.
3. To make any other recommendations which they deem desirable in the public interest.

The War Cabinet approved the appointment of these two Committees.
6. The attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to Mr. Lindley's telegram No. 57, from Petrograd, suggesting that the British Government should enter into relations with all the de facto regional authorities in the country.

The War Cabinet decided, however, that—

It would be better for the present not to commit ourselves so far, and to continue our present policy of communicating with the Bolshevik Government through Mr. Lockhart, as decided by War Cabinet 316, Minute 16.

7. Lord Derby brought to the notice of the War Cabinet that there was a firm in Denmark, which was in process of liquidation, which manufactured a very excellent machine-gun of the Lewis type, and he recommended that we should enter into negotiations with the firm with a view to obtaining such supplies as might be requisite to supplement our present machine-guns. Having regard to the fact that the gun in question had been supplied to the enemy countries, and, further, that there were branch manufactories in Norway and Russia, Lord Derby did not recommend that an enhanced price should be paid. He added that he understood that arrangements might be made by which the necessary machinery and Danish workmen skilled in the manufacture of this gun could be imported into England.

The War Cabinet authorised—

The Secretary of State for War, in conjunction with the Departments concerned, to enter into negotiations with a view to meeting their necessary requirements as regards this type of machine-gun.

8. The War Cabinet had under consideration a letter from M. Clemenceau to the Prime Minister (Paper G.T.-3250) as to the appointment of two British Ministers to the Inter-Allied Council on Imports and Tonnage. M. Clemenceau had stated that the French Government had designated M. Clementel, the Minister of Commerce and Shipping Transport, and M. Loucheur, Minister of Munitions, to represent it on this Council.

Lord Robert Cecil stated that he was making enquiries, from the Departments concerned, as to the details and work that this Council would be called upon to carry out.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Acting-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to report to them on the subject at the earliest date.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 318, Minute 10, the Secretary raised the question as to the communication of the decision of the War Cabinet to the Chairman of the Dardanelles Commission.

The War Cabinet directed—

The Secretary to see the Chairman of the Dardanelles Commission, or to send him a confidential letter setting out the War Cabinet's decision.

10. With reference to War Cabinet 300, and the revised draft Report on Man-Power (Paper G.-185), the correctness of certain
of the figures contained therein was questioned, and the War
Cabinet therefore decided to request—

    General Smuts to enquire into the matter, in consultation with
    the War Office officials and the Minister of National
    Service, and to report on the subject as soon as possible.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 9, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 320.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, January 11, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair).

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C.

The Right Hon. the EARL OF CUZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minute 1).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 10).

The Right Hon. H. W. FORSTER, M.P., Financial Secretary, War Office (for Minute 8).

Major-General Sir R. D. WHIGHAM, K.C.B., D.S.O., Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 2 to 5).

Major-General Sir F. B. MAURICE, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for Minutes 1 to 9).

Major-General R. HUTCHISON, D.S.O., Director of Organisation, War Office (for Minute 11).

The Right Hon. Sir G. CAVE, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minutes 9 to 11).

The Right Hon. Sir A. STANLEY, M.P., President of the Board of Trade (for Minutes 11, 13, and 14).

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

Mr. THOMAS JONES, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. BURGOE, Assistant Secretary.

Captain CLEMENT JONES, Assistant Secretary.
1. THE attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to the headlines in the "Evening News" of the previous day, "U-Boats—Serious Situation," "More Food Cargoes Lost," and similar headlines to articles in this and other recent editions of newspapers in this vein.

It was pointed out that these headlines and articles would form the finest possible propaganda for the enemy. At the present time, when the war had become a struggle between nations, the said articles were highly detrimental.

The Prime Minister stated that he had already spoken to the editor of the "Times," and had asked him to make representations to Lord Northcliffe on the subject.

The Secretary of State for War stated that he had been in communication with the Hulton group of newspapers.

It was suggested that a special report might be drawn up, for communication to the press, giving typical extracts from the British press as reproduced in Germany. Against this it was pointed out that the result would show that all the British newspapers were equally quoted in the German press.

It was stated that speeches and questions, especially supplementary questions, in Parliament were often the best propaganda for enemy purposes.

In this connection attention was drawn to the proclamation, published in the "Herald" of 12th January, by M. Litvinoff, the representative in this country of the Russian Bolsheviks Commissary for Foreign Affairs. It was pointed out that if this proclamation had been published in the form of a leaflet it would have been stopped, and it was inconsistent to allow propaganda by newspaper and to prohibit it by pamphlet. On the other hand, the suggestion was made that the old policy of not attempting to suppress articles of this kind was the better one, since suppression merely served to drive the trouble underground and rendered it in reality more formidable. It was also suggested that if the "Herald" was to be prosecuted the "Evening News" and "Evening Standard," whose headlines were much more harmful to the morale of the nation, ought to be treated in a like manner.

The War Cabinet felt that the issue of a circular on the subject would not be of much use, as the newspapers had received so many circulars that they did not always pay attention to them.

The War Cabinet agreed that—

(a.) The best plan would be for the Prime Minister to see the proprietors or editors of the offending newspapers and appeal to them to adopt an attitude more consistent with the public interest.

(b.) As regards any action to be taken against the "Herald," the Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should see Mr. Barnes and the Home Secretary.

2. The Director of Military Operations stated that two more German divisions had been brought over from the Russian front, and that two divisions, previously thought to be on the Western front, had now been identified there. It was also thought that two divisions from the Italian front were now on the Western front, thus making a total of 161 certain, and 163 possible, German divisions opposing the Franco-British forces in France. The total number of enemy divisions moved from Russia to the Western front since October 1917 was 27, but this number did not include the divisions brought over to Italy.

3. The Director of Military Operations drew attention to the fact that there was an enemy concentration on the Cambrai–Rheims
front, 18 divisions being held in reserve on this sector. General Maurice stated that there was no evidence of an enemy attack being imminent, and his personal opinion was that the Germans would not be ready before February. This view was borne out by the fact that the 18 German divisions were distributed over a considerable area behind the line.

4. General Maurice stated that up to the present the Germans had not had a supreme Commander-in-Chief on the Western front, but the recent rumours of the appointment of such an officer (Field-Marshal von Woyrsch) were not improbable.

Palestine and Arabia.

5. The Director of Military Operations reported that the Arabs had made further attacks on the Hejaz Railway with good results. He also informed the War Cabinet that aeroplanes from General Allenby’s force had bombed the railway east of Jericho.

The Black Sea Fleet.

6. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff stated that, according to the report of a Russian officer who had just returned from Sevastopol, 32 officers, including Admiral Novitski, were murdered in the recent disturbances in the Black Sea fleet.

Loss of H.M.S. Destroyer “Racoon.”

7. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff stated that the destroyer “Racoon” ran aground on the 9th instant on Lough Point Islands, and a later report stated that she had evidently foundered.

Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Pay.

8. The War Cabinet had before them the Third Report of the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Pay Committee (Paper G.-138).

The War Cabinet, after some discussion and explanation of points of detail by Sir Edward Carson, accepted the recommendations contained in the Report, and instructed—

Dr. Macnamara and Mr. H. W. Forster to prepare a statement, based on the Report, for publication in the press on the following morning.

Air Raids.

9. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for War, covering a Resolution from the inhabitants of Sheerness asking for the provision of cover and indemnity from Air Raids (Paper G.T.-3263).

In this connection the War Cabinet discussed the possibility of an enemy attack on London on a grand scale, not merely by a force of 20 or 30 machines, but by, say, 500 machines, which might result in a conflagration with which the Fire Brigade might be unable to cope. They also discussed the possibility of a direct attack on the Admiralty or other Government buildings in the same neighbourhood.

General Smuts said that these questions had been considered by his Committee. The prevailing opinion, however, was that, though attacks must be expected, nevertheless, taking all the evidence available into account, it did not seem likely that an attack on a really big scale, such as that suggested, would be made.

Lord Derby said that General Trenchard had expressed similar views.

On the other hand, it was stated that Admiral Mark Kerr held that a big attack was probable.
As regards bomb-proof shelters, the attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to a previous discussion on the subject (War Cabinet 288, Minute 18) on 30th November, when it had been decided not to proceed further with bomb-proof shelters, but to authorise the local authorities to provide splinter-proof shelters.

The War Cabinet further discussed the possibility of increasing our air offensive against Germany. It appeared that our raids into the enemy's country had had a very useful effect, both there and here, and the opinion was expressed that these raids should, if possible, be continued and increased.

Attention was also called to the slow rate at which the Americans were rendering assistance in the supply of aeroplanes. Until July it would be necessary for us to provide the Americans with machines.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that the question raised in the memorandum by the Secretary of State for War could not be disposed of without fuller information on these wider aspects of the question. They therefore decided—

(a.) To request the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, Home Defence, to furnish a report on the defences of London against an enemy air raid on a big scale;

(b.) To request the Air Minister to furnish a report on the output of machines, with a view to increased offensive against German towns;

(c.) To consider Lord Derby's memorandum (Paper G.T.—3263) in regard to shelters, when the reports referred to in (a) and (b) have been received.

10. The Prime Minister said that he had been informed that valuable arable land had been taken over by the Services, especially on the East Coast. A good many complaints have been received from farmers. In view of the vital importance of increasing the home-grown food supply, it was essential that valuable arable land should not be taken over by the Admiralty, War Office, Ministry of Munitions, or the Air Ministry.

Lord Derby agreed that there had been complaints but he thought, since Sir Howard Frank had been appointed Director-General of Lands, the grievances had ceased to exist.

The War Cabinet decided—

To pass the following resolution, which should be shown first to the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Air Ministry for their concurrence in its precise terms:

"In view of the serious position of the country's food supply and the necessity of making the best possible use of land which is capable of producing food, it is decided that no lands shall be taken over by the Admiralty, the War Office, the Ministry of Munitions, or the Air Ministry for purposes connected with the war without the consent and approval of the Director-General of Lands. If, however, he is unable to approve and the Government Department concerned still consider that it is essential for military or naval exigencies that the land should be taken, the matter shall then be referred to a Cabinet Committee for decision."

11. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Sir Auckland Geddes (Paper G.T.—3164) and a Memorandum by Dr. Addison (Paper G.T.—3272) in regard to the restriction of non-essential industries.
The Secretary stated that the restriction of non-essential industries had been agreed to in principle by the Cabinet Committee on Man-Power, and had been referred, for the preparation of a detailed scheme, to the Minister of National Service, in consultation with the Government Departments concerned.

Sir Auckland Geddes said that he had had conversations with the President of the Board of Trade and the Minister of Labour on the proposals submitted in his Memorandum, and that they were in entire agreement as to the action which should be taken. There were two questions: firstly, the restriction of new businesses, and secondly, the restriction of existing businesses. To restrict new businesses would be a popular move; to restrict existing businesses would entail a certain degree of hardship. It was proposed that Clause (A) of the Draft Regulations should read—

"To prohibit or restrict persons from establishing any new retail business, or a new branch of any existing retail business, without a licence from the Minister of National Service."

The War Cabinet approved this proposal.

With regard to existing businesses, it was proposed to deal with any particular industry as occasion arises, in consultation with the Board of Trade and the Ministry of Labour and other Government Departments concerned. In any case where the Government Departments concerned were agreed that it was desirable to restrict the manufacture or sale of goods in order to secure the transference of labour to essential industries, the President of the Board of Trade would arrange that he and the Minister of National Service should meet representatives of the trade (employers and workmen). In default of a satisfactory arrangement being arrived at by voluntary co-operation, the matter should be referred to the War Cabinet.

The War Cabinet approved this proposal.

12. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Admiralty (Paper G.T.-3208), and a Memorandum by the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Paper G.T.-3269), in regard to the Imperial and Local Defence of Ireland.

In his Memorandum, Mr. Duke, pointed out that, in his opinion, it was likely that a frank discussion of the problems of defence with the Sub-Committee of the Convention by capable officers would lead to their making a very useful report to the Convention, and to agreement in the Convention upon reasonable conclusions.

Lord Derby said that General Callwell had given evidence on behalf of the War Office.

The War Cabinet decided that—

There was no objection to a representative of the Admiralty giving evidence before the Sub-Committee of the Irish Convention.

13. The President of the Board of Trade drew the attention of the War Cabinet to the probability of unemployment from now on, owing to the closing down of industries and the restriction of raw materials. He instanced the fact that there were to-day about 30,000 cotton operatives out of employment. Either the Government should take some action or the unemployed would be driven to the workhouse. His Department had no authority at present for spending money in administering relief, but he suggested that a Committee of Ministers should be appointed to submit a scheme.

Sir Auckland Geddes agreed that there would be some unemployment where industries were restricted, but he did not think that it would be on a large scale, owing to the general shortage of labour.
When an industry was closed there was always a small residuum of labour unemployable elsewhere, but it was mostly female labour.

The War Cabinet decided that—

A Committee composed of—

The President of the Board of Trade (Chairman),
The Minister of National Service,
The Minister of Labour,
Colonel Byrne (Secretary),

should be appointed to consider the question and submit a scheme.

14. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade, dealing with the position of the linoleum and oilcloth industry in relation to shortage of linseed-oil, and of other materials, especially cork (Paper G.T.-3283), together with a Note by the Secretary of the War Priorities Committee (Paper G.T.-2258).

Sir Albert Stanley stated that no substitute for linseed-oil had been found, and that the linoleum manufacturers would have to close down their works if their stocks were requisitioned and not replenished. It was regrettable that no adequate warning had been given by the Ministry of Food of their intention to commandeer stocks. He would be prepared to forgo some tonnage assigned to cotton rather than subject the linoleum industry to such sudden and drastic treatment as was proposed.

Mr. Wise, of the Ministry of Food, stated that the linoleum manufacturers had known for some months that the situation was becoming increasingly serious. During the last month the situation had, in fact, become much more grave because of the decision to cut down imports during 1918, and because of the difficulty of the Treasury in financing shipments of linseed from the Argentine and elsewhere. In view of the general shortage of oils and fats, the Ministry of Food had found it necessary to limit the use of vegetable oils to the two most essential needs, viz., the production of margarine and glycerine. It had also to be borne in mind that the consumption of oil for edible purposes had greatly increased.

General Smuts stated that the position had been discussed by the War Priorities Committee, and while he himself was inclined to leave in the hands of the manufacturers the 6,000 tons of linseed oil requisitioned by the Food Controller, which they had in stock, the Committee were of opinion that the oil situation was so bad that there was no alternative but to face the closing down of the linoleum trade.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(a.) The 6,000 tons of linseed oil now in possession of the manufacturers should be rationed among them, priority being given to Government requirements, and consumption spread over a period.

(b.) The President of the Board of Trade should place himself in communication with the Shipping Controller in regard to the possibility of arranging for further shipments at the expense of cotton or some import other than food.

(c.) The President of the Board of Trade should inform the manufacturers of the above decisions.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 11, 1918.
SECRET.

WAR CABINET, 321.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, January 14, 1918, at noon.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.G.

The Right Hon. A. Balfour, M.P.

The Right Hon. Sir Edward Carson, K.C., M.P.

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.O.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.


Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.


The Right Hon. R. Munro, K.C., M.P., Secretary for Scotland (for Minutes 12 and 13).

Mr. P. J. Rose, Scottish Office (for Minutes 12 and 13).


Major P. Lloyd Greame, Ministry of National Service (for Minute 12 and 13).

The Right Hon. W. Hayes Fisher, M.P., President of the Local Government Board (for Minutes 12 and 13).

Sir J. Seymour Lloyd, K.B.E., Ministry of National Service (for Minutes 12 and 13).

Lieutenant-Colonel F. Sinclair, Ministry of National Service (for Minutes 12 and 13).


Mr. I. G. Gibbon, Local Government Board (for Minutes 12 and 13).


Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.

Major-General E. D. Swinton, D.S.O., C.B., Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. Burgis, Assistant Secretary.

[365-321]
1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 320, Minute 2, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the number of German divisions on the Western front had risen to 163 certain, and 165 probable.

2. The question was once more raised as to whether everything possible was being done by the Allies to meet the enemy's concentration on the Western front.

It was pointed out that the Allies still possessed a considerable numerical superiority, and that everything was being done, by means of drafts, to bring up to establishment the British divisions now in France.

3. The attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to telegram No. 20 from Odessa, dated the 12th January, 1918, indicating a deterioration in the situation in South Russia, and that Bolshevik influences were gaining ground in the Ukraine.

4. The First Sea Lord stated that bad weather was taking a heavy toll of our warships. Two destroyers, the "Opal" and the "Narborough," had been lost near the Pentland Firth, and so far no trace of them had been found.

5. The First Sea Lord stated, in answer to a question, that he saw no hope at present of an increase in the rate of production of destroyers, but that new ones were being put into commission at the rate of about six per month.

6. The First Sea Lord stated that the British submarine "G-8" was overdue, but that he had not yet given up hope that she might yet return to port.

7. The First Sea Lord confirmed the rumour that some weeks ago a pilot ship, with twenty pilots on board, had been sunk in the Mersey by a German submarine.

8. The Secretary obtained the sanction of the Prime Minister to publish in the press an announcement regarding the War Priorities Committee, which had received the approval of General Smuts.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 319, Minute 3, the War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (Paper G.T.-3327) regarding his recent interview in France with General Pershing on the subject of the suggested use of American battalions with British divisions.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the Shipping Controller had accompanied him to France, and that he had definitely ascertained that the best use was not now being made by the Americans of French ports. He instanced the fact that some of the ships sent to Brest were not suitably loaded. An American shipping expert was coming to London that day to go into the various problems with the Ministry of Shipping. He added that we could make arrangements for the landing of some American troops at Southampton, and for the transportation of these troops across the channel in smaller vessels. The question of Admiralty escorts for this
purpose, however, presented serious difficulty. He admitted that his report presented a somewhat gloomy account of the present state of things, but feared it was accurate. General Pershing was over-worked, and responsibility of a political character was being thrown on to him by the President, by leaving the question of American incorporation in British divisions to him. He was glad to report that both M. Clemenceau and General Petain took a reasonable and helpful line. M. Clemenceau realised the language difficulty in incorporating American battalions in the French Army. He gathered that M. Clemenceau would welcome our suggestion, provided it led to an increase in the amount of American assistance rendered available on the Western front.

Mr. Balfour reported a private conversation he had had with Admiral Sims, who shared the view taken by the British authorities. He added that he was of opinion that it was most important to get American troops sent to British ports, and so to France.

Lord Reading stated that he had received a letter written by Mr. Mackay, giving an even gloomier statement, with regard to the prospects of American shipbuilding, than that submitted by our representative, Sir Thomas Royden. The difficulty appeared to be that there was no system of delegating authority at Washington, and everything had to be referred to the White House for decision. Ex-President Roosevelt was daily attacking the Government for their delays in settling vital matters. In regard to the "Liberty" engine for aeroplanes, tests already made before Lord Reading left America were favourable, but these were not so severe as those practised in our service.

General Smuts pointed out that the only satisfactory test would be a long-distance flight. With regard to the incorporation of American troops in British divisions, he thought that the President desired to be fortified, in making his decision, by a recommendation from his Military Advisers.

Lord Robert Cecil added that it was impossible to over-estimate the harm done in America by Lord Northcliffe's letter, which drew an unfavourable and inaccurate contrast between American powers of organisation and British.

Lord Derby stated that if American troops could be sent to this country, it would be possible for us to clothe, equip, and arm at least 150,000.

Lord Reading added that sooner or later he thought that President Wilson must be guided by the English view. The difficulty was that every American Mission sent to this country became very strongly anglicised. Admiral Sims was an instance in point. The President still hesitated to submit their advice to the American public, as American sentiment was so strongly in favour of separate national organisation.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Prime Minister should send a personal message to the President, through Colonel House, again urging our proposals regarding the suggested incorporation of American troops in British divisions, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff to provide the Prime Minister with the necessary material for the telegram.

10. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs informed the War Cabinet that a private message having been received to the effect that President Wilson would welcome some expression of approval from the Prime Minister on his recent declaration to Congress, he had sent, with the Prime Minister's approval, a telegram congratulating President Wilson on the beneficent effect which his speech had produced throughout the world.
11. The Secretary of State for War brought before the War Cabinet the desirability of more effective representation of the United States of America in Europe. At present none of the representatives of the United States in Europe could decide anything without reference to Washington, nor could they be relied upon to carry weight at Washington.

Lord Reading was urged to do what he could in the United States of America to carry this suggestion into effect.

12. The War Cabinet had before them a Draft Bill entitled National Registration Amendment Bill (Paper G.T.-3318).

Mr. Hayes Fisher explained that the objects of the Registration Bill were to secure the registration of boys who were not now registered. Many boys now reaching the age of 17 were not registered, and it was essential, for the continuance of recruiting, that this step should be taken. The only proposal in the Bill regarding which he felt considerable doubt was that contained in clause 5, namely, the compulsory registration of Irishmen arriving in Great Britain from Ireland. He feared that this proposal might arouse suspicion that conscription was about to be applied to Ireland, and the sole result would be that a number of Irishmen would probably refrain from coming to this country to take part in civil occupations.

Sir Auckland Geddes added that, although it was most desirable from the point of view of the knowledge of his Department concerning the available pools of civil labour, he agreed that any step which prevented Irishmen coming to this country to take part in such industries as agriculture would be unfortunate.

The Secretary for Scotland stated that the effect of the clause would be to frighten away Irish labourers engaged in agriculture in Scotland and to prevent others from coming to that country—a most unfortunate result.

The War Cabinet approved the draft Bill, with the exception of the part of sub-section 2 of clause 5 dealing with Irish immigrants, which should be deleted.

13. The War Cabinet had before them a draft Bill amending the Military Service Acts (G.T.-3304). The Secretary for Scotland drew attention to clause 2, sub-section 2, which gave the power to the Minister of National Service to override other Ministers in regard to the withdrawal of men in their department for military service.

It was pointed out, however, that Ministers were often placed in a difficult position in regard to the selection of men, in their service, for military service, and that it would be desirable that this discretion should be vested in some other Minister.

The War Cabinet approved the draft Bill.

14. The War Cabinet held a short preliminary discussion regarding the present situation in the Irish Convention.

It was pointed out that an important meeting of the Convention was to take place on the following day, and it was agreed that the position reached should not be discussed in detail until the results of this meeting were known.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 14, 1918.
Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.,
on Tuesday, January 15, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. Sir Edward Carson, K.C., M.P.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.
The Right Hon. Sir G. Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minutes 18 and 19).
The Right Hon. Lord Newton (for Minute 1).
Sir W. Guy Granet, Director-General of Movements and Railways (for Minute 13).

Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 2 to 9).
The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 11 to 16).
The Right Hon. Lord Rothermere, Air Minister (for Minute 12).
The Right Hon. J. Hodge, M.P., Minister of Pensions (for Minutes 18 and 19).
Lieutenant-Colonel the Right Hon. Sir Matthew Nathan, G.C.M.G., Secretary Ministry of Pensions (for Minutes 18 and 19).

Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.
Fleet Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.
Captain C. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
1. The War Cabinet had before them the Agreement reached between the delegates of the British and Ottoman Governments on the subject of prisoners of war and civilian prisoners, together with a Memorandum by Lord Newton (Paper G.T.-3335).

During the discussion Lord Newton indicated that the impression prevailing among Turkish political agents at Berne, derived from what they knew of the Entente political statements, was that the total destruction of the Turkish Empire was intended. In this respect the Prime Minister's last speech must have had a beneficial effect.

The Secretary of State for War stated that he felt some misgiving as to the undertaking that Eyoub Sabri, who was a friend of Talaat and a very prominent member of the Committee of Union and Progress, should be included in the first batch of prisoners. It was pointed out that any departure from this understanding might be regarded as a breach of faith, and that it had been intimated on good authority that Eyoub Sabri's influence might possibly be utilised, when he was repatriated, against Enver.

The War Cabinet decided—

(a.) That the Foreign Office should ratify the Agreement on the part of the British Government.

(b.) That no announcement should be made until the Turkish Government had also ratified the Agreement.

(c.) To place on record their thanks to Lord Newton and General Belfield for the successful issue of their negotiations.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 282, Minute 2, the War Cabinet adverted to a proposal, contained in the Draft Report of the Cabinet Committee on Man-Power, that some assistance in the form of man-power should be obtained from Italy, in return for the assistance given by the Allies. It was urged that the request for men to work behind our lines in France should be put forward on the basis of a *quid pro quo* for the troops, guns, ships, coal, and wheat supplied to Italy by this country.

In connection with this question, it was stated that, although Italy had great reserves of men, her internal situation was such as to give great cause for anxiety. It was suggested that the best way of removing this condition, and of establishing a solid claim to Italian gratitude hereafter, would be to furnish the Italian Government with the means of improving the pay and separation allowances of the Italian soldiers.

Lord Milner undertook to go into the question on behalf of the War Cabinet, with a view to the formulation of a definite scheme as a basis for negotiation with the Italian Government.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that Yarmouth had been bombarded from the sea for five minutes on the previous evening. About twenty shells of 4-inch calibre were reported to have fallen in the town. The casualties reported up to the present were:

- Killed: 2 men, 1 woman.
- Injured: 5 men, 4 women, 1 child.

Four houses were badly damaged. The Town Hall, some malting buildings, and some sixteen dwelling-houses were slightly damaged.

The First Sea Lord stated that the vessels which bombarded Yarmouth were reported to be four destroyers. The Rear-Admiral of the Harwich force had immediately been informed and instructed to send out one light cruiser and four destroyers, but this force had returned without sighting the enemy. The Vice-Admiral, Dover, and the Commander in-Chief at the Nore were also informed. News from this side had not yet been received.
4. With reference to War Cabinet 321, Minute 1, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that, according to information from the agents of the Russian General Staff, a continuous transfer of troops, in the form of 'odd units,' was taking place from the German forces on the Eastern front to the West. The transfer of German troops to France from Italy was also proceeding, and it was considered that a large part of Von Below's army had been transferred to the Western front. This General, who had commanded in Italy, was now known to have a Command in France. There were now known to be 164 German divisions on the Western front, and the probable number was 166, if not 170. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff also stated that Austrian artillery was being moved to Flanders.

5. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that information derived from Russia was to the effect that a German offensive on the Western front would not take place for several months, but that it would occur in any case before America could give effective aid. The main offensive would be in Flanders, and would be accompanied by a demonstration in the South. In this connection there was information from Copenhagen that the German General Staff had renounced its intention of an immediate offensive on the Western front owing to the difficulty of the internal situation in Germany and the bad weather.

6. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that from the same source came a report that fresh mutinies had taken place at Wilhelmshaven and Kiel, and that attempts had been made against the lives of officers.

7. The attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to telegram No. 22 from Berne, suggesting the probability of an attack by the Bulgarian army on the Balkan front.

   The Chief of the Imperial General Staff pointed out that Berne was not a particularly good source of information, and that there was no confirmation of this intelligence. Nevertheless, he did not consider the rumoured attack at all improbable.

   The Secretary of State for War stated that our troops were fairly well up to strength, but, as the War Cabinet had already been informed, many of the troops were seriously weakened by malaria.

   The War Cabinet decided that—

   (a.) The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should ascertain, for the information of the War Cabinet, from the Permanent Military Advisers at Versailles, or other sources, to what extent the French troops had been brought up to strength.

   (b.) The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should ascertain General Milne's opinion of General Guillaumat, the new French Commander-in-Chief at Salonica.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 321, Minute 4, the First Sea Lord stated that one survivor of the destroyer "Opal" had been picked up, but that he was in a bad condition.

9. The First Sea Lord stated that at present there was only one German submarine operating in the English Channel.
The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that he had nothing to add to the published information concerning the air-raid on Karlsruhe. It was pointed out that the communique did not attribute to this raid the quality of a reprisal, although the adoption by the Government of a policy of reprisals had been announced. This kind of raid against such places as Karlsruhe and Stuttgart, which widely from the bombing of open towns in Belgium differed constituted an act of war against the enemy troops occupying them.

The War Cabinet decided that—

In future the War Office, or other Department concerned, should arrange that official communiques in regard to air-raids of this nature should mention that they were undertaken as a measure of reprisal.

The War Cabinet had under consideration Joint Note No. 5 to the Supreme War Council, by its Military Representatives, on the situation in Russia, and took note of the views expressed therein.

The War Cabinet had under consideration Joint Note No. 7 to the Supreme War Council, by its Military Representatives, on the question of aviation.

General Trenchard pointed out that the situation was such at present, owing to the uncertain factor with regard to the output of American machines, that it was not practicable at the present moment to draw up any co-ordinated plans with a view, for instance, to the speedy creation of inter-Allied strategic formations and their employment, and that, if an attempt was made in this direction, plans would be unreliable and out of date very quickly. As regards America, the situation ought to be clearer by next July, and he suggested that the appointment of any Inter-Allied Expert Committee should be deferred until then. General Trenchard suggested that the Military Representatives to the Supreme War Council should be furnished with all the information that was available on the subject of the air resources of the Allies, and that further information should be sent from time to time as it was forthcoming. He added that there were very few officers available who had an intimate knowledge of the air situation, and that if one of those was attached to the Supreme War Council he would very soon be insufficiently posted as regards the developments that took place from day to day.

Lord Rothermere endorsed the views of General Trenchard as regards the impossibility at present of getting anything definite as to the output from America as regards aeroplanes, &c., and pointed out that as regards bombing plans the French were strongly opposed to any reprisals in this direction; further, that bombing arrangements in themselves were not difficult to co-ordinate.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that, although the Air co-ordination to its fullest extent was not at the present moment practicable, yet it was highly desirable that each section of the Supreme War Council should have attached to its staff an officer who had considerable knowledge of the Air organisation, &c., and they therefore requested—

The Air Minister to arrange the appointment of such an officer, who should be changed from time to time, so that the Military Representatives to the Supreme War Council might be kept as fully informed as possible as to the possibilities of aerial attack and defence.
13. The War Cabinet had under consideration Joint Note No. 8 to the Supreme War Council, by its Military Representatives, on the subject of transportation.

Lord Derby pointed out that the War Cabinet had already decided that General Nash should make enquiries into the transportation problem as it presented itself on the Western front, &c. (War Cabinet 302, Minute 8), and it was highly undesirable, as General Nash had already started his investigations, to appoint an Inter-Allied Expert Committee to go into the question. He recommended that, before any action should be taken by the War Cabinet, they should receive General Nash's report on the subject.

It was pointed out that the carrying out of this duty by General Nash had been approved by the French and Italian Governments, and that, moreover, Colonel House had agreed to the proposition.

The War Cabinet decided that—

Before taking any further action on the recommendations set out in Joint Note No. 8, the report of General Nash should be awaited, and that, on its receipt, a copy should be forwarded to the Military Representatives to the Supreme War Council with a view to their putting forward, if considered necessary, any further recommendations on the subject.

14. The War Cabinet had under consideration Joint Note No. 9 to the Supreme War Council, by its Military Representative, on the subject of Tanks.

The War Cabinet approved the appointment of the Inter-Allied Expert Committee as recommended by the Military Representatives, and requested—

The Secretary of State for War and the Minister of Munitions to arrange for the appointment of a suitable officer.

15. The War Cabinet had under consideration Joint Note No. 10 to the Supreme War Council, by its Military Representatives, on the subject of the extension of the British front.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that, on the receipt of a copy of this Note, he at once called upon Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig for any remarks that he might have to offer on the subject, and they had just been received.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The report of Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig should be circulated, and the question again brought before the War Cabinet at an early date.

16. The War Cabinet directed—

The Secretary to forward the following telegram to the Military Representatives to the Supreme War Council, Versailles:

"In order to secure the advantage of the experience of other Allied armies, the Military Representatives at Versailles are requested to report as soon as possible on the economising of man-power, casualties and tonnage, which might be effected by the fullest and most scientific employment of machine-guns, automatic rifles, tanks, and other mechanical devices."
17. The Chancellor of the Exchequer brought to the notice of the War Cabinet a Memorandum (Paper G.T.-3339) he had written on the subject of Russian Credit and Treasury Bills, in which it was pointed out that, as the Treasury were not willing in 1915 to make an advance for the purpose of keeping up the Russian exchange, that Department had suggested that the money should be taken up from the Bank of England, with the result that acceptances to the amount of 7,500,000L were arranged. It was now contended, and undoubtedly with truth, that this money was provided not in the ordinary way of business, but in order to meet the wishes of the Government, and that therefore the Government should bear the liability. Although Mr. Bonar Law was unable to admit that we had any legal liability, he did not consider that the whole of whatever loss had eventually been incurred should fall upon the Government, and he proposed, therefore, to make the best arrangements he could with the firms which had accepted these bills—subject to the avoidance of any appearance of treating them meanly.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that there was also an amount of 10,000,000L of Russian Treasury Bills issued by the Bank of England on behalf of the Russian Government, in regard to which it was stated in the prospectuses that the issue was made with the approval of His Majesty's Government. He proposed to adopt the same course in dealing with these.

The War Cabinet approved the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposals in these matters.

18. In connection with his Memorandum (Paper G.T.-3329) as to recent Bolshevist propaganda, Sir George Cave requested instructions from the War Cabinet as to—

(a.) Whether a check should be put upon M. Litvinoff's correspondence, and whether he should be warned that if he pursues his propaganda it may be impossible to permit him to remain in this country.
(b.) Whether any newspaper publishing any further propaganda of the same nature should be vigorously dealt with by way of seizure or prosecution.
(c.) Whether the Government preferred to rely upon counter-propaganda.

Sir George Cave added that the Bolshevist propaganda, as now carried out, committed distinct breaches of the Defence of the Realm Regulations, and was of such a nature that, if similar action was taken in enemy or Allied countries, it would immediately be stopped, and that in the past he had deported men from this country for less objectionable propaganda than that under consideration. He understood that M. Litvinoff had been invited to attend a Trade Union meeting at Nottingham in the near future, with a view to addressing the delegates that would assemble there, and he (Sir George Cave) was of opinion that this Bolshevist agitation would have a bad effect on the people of Great Britain in general. He drew the attention of the War Cabinet to the headings that appeared on the front page of some of the Labour papers; in the case of "The Herald," there was printed in large type "A People's Peace—Now or Never."

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs pointed out that the difficulty was that if M. Litvinoff was deported it would be impossible to keep up our existing relations with the Bolsheviks in Petrograd, and he mentioned that the situation there at present was extremely critical, owing to the trouble which had arisen between the Diplomatic Corps and the Bolshevik Government relative to the arrest of the Roumanian Minister. Mr. Balfour said that he had just received a telegram from Petrograd to the
effect that the whole of the Allied Diplomatic Corps in that city had recently made a most solemn protest against the arrest, and that possibly the result would be that all the Diplomatic Corps would have to leave.

The question was raised as to whether the matter could be treated from the point of view of giving M. Litvinoff all the privileges that are consistent with Diplomatic custom.

The opinion was expressed that it was doubtful if the enemy propaganda was doing much real harm amongst the British people as a whole.

The Minister of Pensions was of opinion that the suppression of the Labour papers would not have any bad effect, and instances were quoted of the stoppage of newspapers under the Defence of the Realm Regulations in connection with propaganda, the form of stoppage in one case being the refusal to supply paper for printing purposes.

Mr. Balfour suggested that, before taking any decision as regards M. Litvinoff, he should consult our Allies as to what action they would be prepared to take under similar circumstances, and should also communicate with the British Chargé d'Affaires in Petrograd with a view to obtaining an expression of his opinion as to the effect the deportation of M. Litvinoff would have on the Bolshevik Government.

The War Cabinet decided—

That the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should make the inquiries which he suggested, and the matter should be brought up again at an early date.

19. With reference to “War Cabinet 279, Minute 9, the War Cabinet had under consideration memoranda by the Secretary of State for War (Paper G.T.-3239) and by the Minister of Pensions (Paper G.T.-3239 a) as to the action to be taken in regard to informing the relatives of men who had been shot for cowardice.

Lord Derby informed the War Cabinet that he had carried out the provisions of the War Cabinet decision (War Cabinet 279, Minute 9), but he thought that the form of communication as approved therein was a matter of mistaken kindness, as, by some means or another, at a later date the relatives became acquainted with the reasons which led to the death of the men in question, and consequently, according to the custom amongst the poorer classes, considerable expenses were incurred in connection with In Memoriam cards.

Mr. Hodge endorsed this view, and recommended that the War Cabinet decision referred to above should be reversed.

It was pointed out, however, that the new procedure had been explained in Parliament, and had been accepted.

Mr. Hodge pointed out various difficulties that he had to contend with in this connection, with regard to pensions or compassionate allowances for the wives and children, &c., of the men under consideration, as well as of those who lost their lives owing to less heinous forms of misconduct.

The view was generally held that, if a man's life was taken for disciplinary reasons, the relatives should not be made to suffer.

As regards the form of communication when men were shot for cowardice, the War Cabinet decided—

To adhere to their previous decision.
17. The Chancellor of the Exchequer brought to the notice of the War Cabinet a Memorandum (Paper G.T.-3339) he had written on the subject of Russian Credit and Treasury Bills, in which it was pointed out that, as the Treasury were not willing in 1915 to make an advance for the purpose of keeping up the Russian exchange, that Department had suggested that the money should be taken up from the Bank of England, with the result that acceptances to the amount of 7,500,000£ were arranged. It was now contended, and undoubtedly with truth, that this money was provided not in the ordinary way of business, but in order to meet the wishes of the Government, and that therefore the Government should bear the liability. Although Mr. Bonar Law was unable to admit that we had any legal liability, he did not consider that the whole of whatever loss had eventually been incurred should fall upon the Government, and he proposed, therefore, to make the best arrangements he could with the firms which had accepted these bills—subject to the avoidance of any appearance of treating them meanly.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that there was also an amount of 10,000,000£ of Russian Treasury Bills issued by the Bank of England on behalf of the Russian Government, in regard to which it was stated in the prospectuses that the issue was made with the approval of His Majesty’s Government. He proposed to adopt the same course in dealing with these.

The War Cabinet approved the Chancellor of the Exchequer’s proposals in these matters.

18. In connection with his Memorandum (Paper G.T.-3329) as to recent Bolshevist propaganda, Sir George Cave requested instructions from the War Cabinet as to—

(a.) Whether a check should be put upon M. Litvinoff’s correspondence, and whether he should be warned that if he pursues his propaganda it may be impossible to permit him to remain in this country.

(b.) Whether any newspaper publishing any further propaganda of the same nature should be vigorously dealt with by way of seizure or prosecution.

(c.) Whether the Government preferred to rely upon counter-propaganda.

Sir George Cave added that the Bolshevist propaganda, as now carried out, committed distinct breaches of the Defence of the Realm Regulations, and was of such a nature that, if similar action was taken in enemy or Allied countries, it would immediately be stopped, and that in the past he had deported men from this country for less objectionable propaganda than that under consideration. He understood that M. Litvinoff had been invited to attend a Trade Union meeting at Nottingham in the near future, with a view to addressing the delegates that would assemble there, and he (Sir George Cave) was of opinion that this Bolshevist agitation would have a bad effect on the people of Great Britain in general. He drew the attention of the War Cabinet to the headings that appeared on the front page of some of the Labour papers; in the case of “The Herald,” there was printed in large type “A People’s Peace—Now or Never.”

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs pointed out that the difficulty was that if M. Litvinoff was deported it would be impossible to keep up our existing relations with the Bolsheviks in Petrograd, and he mentioned that the situation there at present was extremely critical, owing to the trouble which had arisen between the Diplomatic Corps and the Bolshevik Government relative to the arrest of the Roumanian Minister. Mr. Balfour said that he had just received a telegram from Petrograd to the
effect that the whole of the Allied Diplomatic Corps in that city had recently made a most solemn protest against the arrest, and that possibly the result would be that all the Diplomatic Corps would have to leave.

The question was raised as to whether the matter could be treated from the point of view of giving M. Litvinoff all the privileges that are consistent with Diplomatic custom.

The opinion was expressed that it was doubtful if the enemy propaganda was doing much real harm amongst the British people as a whole.

The Minister of Pensions was of opinion that the suppression of the Labour papers would not have any bad effect, and instances were quoted of the stoppage of newspapers under the Defence of the Realm Regulations in connection with propaganda, the form of stoppage in one case being the refusal to supply paper for printing purposes.

Mr. Balfour suggested that, before taking any decision as regards M. Litvinoff, he should consult our Allies as to what action they would be prepared to take under similar circumstances, and should also communicate with the British Charge d’Affaires in Petrograd with a view to obtaining an expression of his opinion as to the effect the deportation of M. Litvinoff would have on the Bolshevik Government.

The War Cabinet decided—

That the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should make the inquiries which he suggested, and the matter should be brought up again at an early date.

19. With reference to War Cabinet 279, Minute 9, the War Cabinet had under consideration memoranda by the Secretary of State for War (Paper G.T.–3239) and by the Minister of Pensions (Paper G.T.–3239A) as to the action to be taken in regard to informing the relatives of men who had been shot for cowardice.

Lord Derby informed the War Cabinet that he had carried out the provisions of the War Cabinet decision (War Cabinet 279, Minute 9), but he thought that the form of communication as approved therein was a matter of mistaken kindness, as, by some means or another, at a later date the relatives became acquainted with the reasons which led to the death of the men in question, and consequently, according to the custom amongst the poorer classes, considerable expenses were incurred in connection with In Memoriam cards.

Mr. Hodge endorsed this view, and recommended that the War Cabinet decision referred to above should be reversed.

It was pointed out, however, that the new procedure had been explained in Parliament, and had been accepted.

Mr. Hodge pointed out various difficulties that he had to contend with in this connection, with regard to pensions or compassionate allowances for the wives and children, &c, of the men under consideration, as well as of those who lost their lives owing to less heinous forms of misconduct.

The view was generally held that, if a man’s life was taken for disciplinary reasons, the relatives should not be made to suffer.

As regards the form of communication when men were shot for cowardice, the War Cabinet decided—

To adhere to their previous decision.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 15, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 323.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Wednesday, January 16, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. George N. Barnes, M.P.

The Right Hon. Sir Edward Carson, K.C., M.P.

The Right Hon. A. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 7).

Admiral Sir R. E. Weymouth, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 1 to 7).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 7).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 5).

General Sir W. R. Robertson, G.C.B., K.C.V.O., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 5).

The Right Hon. Lord Rhondda, Food Controller (for Minutes 9 to 12).

Mr. U. F. Wintour, C.B., C.M.G., Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Food (for Minutes 9 to 11).

The Right Hon. C. Addison, M.P., Minister of Reconstruction (for Minute 12).

The Right Hon. R. Munro, K.C., M.P., Secretary for Scotland (for Minute 12).


Major the Hon. Waldorf Astor, M.P., (for Minute 12).


Mr. F. J. Willis, C.B., Local Government Board (for Minute 12).

The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 8 to 10).

The Right Hon. Austen Chamberlain, M.P. (for Minutes 9 to 11).

Mr. H. Fountain, C.M.G., Board of Trade (for Minute 8).


Sir E. Cornwall, M.P., National Health Insurance (for Minute 12).

The Right Hon. Sir T. Whittaker, M.P., (for Minute 8).

Mr. J. M. Keynes, C.B., (for Minutes 9 to 11).

Sir Rowland Bailey, C.B., M.V.O., I.S.O., Deputy Chairman, Royal Commission, Importation of Paper (for Minute 8).


Fleet-Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgis, Assistant Secretary.
1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that he had received a telegram from General Berthelot, which stated that a German General from Siberia had arrived at Kieff, and was taking steps to organise a force, composed of Austrian prisoners. General Berthelot had protested against this. The telegram also stated that there was little fear of enemy offensive action on the Roumanian front.

The Italian Front.

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the Italians captured 250 prisoners on the 14th instant, and had succeeded in occupying a summit in the vicinity of Mount Asolone, but, owing to heavy shell-fire, it had subsequently had to be evacuated.

Co-operation of the United States of America.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 321, Minute 9, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff read a telegram from General Pershing (Paper G.T.–3349) (Appendix), which stated that General Pershing had recommended to his Government that the proposal that American battalions should be incorporated in British divisions should be given serious consideration, and, if adopted, carried out under certain conditions. The telegram concluded with a request for information to be supplied to the United States Government regarding the strength of the British armies, and a statement setting out the resources of the man-power of the British Empire.

The War Cabinet authorised—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff to send a telegram communicating this information to General Pershing, pointing out that the total of our armed force amounted to no less than 1 in 8, or 1 in 9, of the population.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff was instructed to include in his figures the number of men in the Navy; to make a reference to our efforts in regard to the additional burdens imposed upon us by maintaining nearly the whole of the maritime transport of our European Allies; and also to draw attention to the great industrial effort which was being made by Great Britain.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 320, Minute 9, attention was again called to the slow progress being made in the development of the United States of America aerial programme. It was stated that the "bottle-neck" of the United States programme was likely to be in regard to the assembly of the parts into complete machines on this side. The number of United States of America mechanics who had been sent over to England was not large, and it was stated that there was some risk of blame being attached to us for any failure in this respect.

In this connection Mr. Barnes, as an engineer, pointed out that it would be impossible to assemble the machines properly unless the same men who had made them in the United States were available for the purpose.

The following figures were quoted in regard to the British and French aerial output compared with that of the enemy:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Aerial</th>
<th>British and French Output</th>
<th>German Output</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aeroplanes on the Western front</td>
<td>4,700</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British and French aeroplanes on the Western front</td>
<td>4,700</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In view of the slow rate of progress in the completion of the American programme, these figures were not regarded as providing a sufficient margin of safety.

The War Cabinet decided—

To hold a Special Meeting in the near future to consider the whole position in regard to aerial output.

6. The First Sea Lord read a telegram received from the Commander-in-Chief, China, which stated that a bottle had been found in the sea, containing two papers which gave information regarding a German raider which was on her way last August to mine a number of British harbours in the Pacific. The second paper gave a description of the raider.

The First Sea Lord stated, in answer to a question, that he had no information regarding the German raider, but that there had been time for her to return to a German port.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 316, Minute 2, the First Sea Lord stated that he had received a telegram from H.M.S. "Suffolk," now at Vladivostock, which stated that the general situation there was peaceful, but that Bolshevik influence was very strong amongst the garrison, fleet, and workers. The suspicion aroused by the arrival of a Japanese warship had been dispelled by the arrival of the "Suffolk." The telegram concluded by saying that the garrison and navy were in a state of anarchy, and that officers had been reduced to the ranks, in accordance with M. Lenin's decree.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 109, Minute 8, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Sir Edward Carson (Paper G.T.-33 L1) calling attention to the reduction in the imports of paper and the consequent cutting down of the supply to newspapers which will be necessary. He had conferred with the Department of Information, which issued many publications abroad, and with the Newspaper Proprietors' Association. There was general agreement that large economies could be made by stopping unnecessary publications, by preventing waste, especially in Government Departments, by using an inferior quality of paper and smaller type, and by a more energetic collection of waste. He recommended that a small Committee should be appointed, under an independent Chairman, to examine the demands of Government Departments and the possibility of establishing a system of priority in distribution.

Sir Thomas Whittaker, a former Chairman of the Paper Commission, was of opinion that the Government Departments were guilty of much waste, especially those which issued Departmental journals. There should also, he thought, be a severe reduction in the number of Parliamentary papers issued. The Paper Commission had accumulated much valuable experience, and it might serve as an advisory body to a Chairman or Controller able to give his whole time to the task.

Sir Rowland Bailey, in the absence, through illness, of Sir Henry Birchenough, the Chairman of the Paper Commission, agreed that more drastic action was essential. Sir George Toulmin's Committee in the House of Commons had done useful work in various ways, but it had not taken upon itself to decide whether a particular publication was or was not necessary. Much had been done by the Paper Commission by going into the provinces and organizing campaigns against waste. Sir Henry Birchenough had prevailed on important trades, like the soap trade and the tobacco trade, to make substantial savings.
Mr. Churchill said that he had been in communication with representatives of the Newspaper Proprietors’ Association, with a view to strengthening the organisation for the collection of waste. He had been pressed to extend the machinery under the control of the Ministry of Munitions, and he was, in fact, preparing a memorandum on the subject for the War Cabinet. He did not wish to duplicate existing machinery if the work was already being done well. It was most desirable in his view to support to the utmost the supply of paper to the newspapers, as they were indispensable to to the maintenance of public spirit during the war.

The War Cabinet decided—

To appoint a Committee, consisting of—

Sir Edward Carson (Chairman),
Mr. Churchill,
Sir Albert Stanley,
Mr. Hayes Fisher,
Sir F. Atterbury,
Sir H. Birchenough,
Sir Thomas Whittaker,
Sir Rowland Bailey,

...to review the whole question, Sir Edward Carson to be authorised to take decisions on behalf of the War Cabinet at his discretion.

Priority of Finance in the United States.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 297, Minute 1, the War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Paper G.T.-3292) dealing with the question of financial priority for the Food Controller’s programme.

Lord Rhondda said he was prepared to accept the interpretation of the War Cabinet’s decision as set forth by Mr. Bonar Law in his memorandum.

Mr. Churchill said that a position had been reached when a choice had to be made between importing one commodity rather than another, although both were in a high degree necessary for the prosecution of the war. The decision must rest with the War Cabinet. He was bound to point out that the munitions position was very serious. In 1918 the Germans would become more powerful than we were in artillery. A series of decisions had been taken by the War Cabinet prejudicial to the supply of fighting material. There had been a cut of 500,000 tons of steel. We were not getting more than two-thirds of the ore programme from Spain. In America we were held up by want of dollars. Nevertheless, cotton was still being imported, and on a higher scale in 1918 than in 1917. The cumulative effect would be to make a great military effort impossible. His Council were alarmed at the absence of any definition of limits within which the purchases of the Food Controller were to be exercised. In the past we had given 40,000 tons a month of shell steel to France, and were continuing this for the month of January, but it would be now necessary to refer the French to the United States. The French had nearly exhausted their supply of nitrates. The Italians had exhausted their stocks. Our reserve of 350,000 tons had been brought down to 100,000 tons, which was very low in view of the long voyages entailed. If the United States Government were going to fail us in the air and with men, the least they could do was to provide us with dollars, so as to furnish munitions for our fighting forces.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain said that he found himself in the position of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in relation to the spending Departments. Each demand presented separately to the American Board could be justified by substantial arguments, which, if regarded alone, were unanswerable. Inasmuch as all the demands could not be met, the American Board required instructions from the War Cabinet as to the order of priority and the quantity
to be allowed at a given time. At the end of December we had put forward our requirements for dollar credits on the basis of the reduced demands of the Departments. To finance all the demands maturing in January would have required 275,000,000 dollars. Owing to delay in effecting purchases and to other causes, he thought it would be possible to get through on 235,000,000 dollars, but at the moment we were only being offered credit for 180,000,000 dollars. Further, inasmuch as, owing to delay in purchasing, &c., we had not obtained the commodities expected, our needs in February and the ensuing months would be correspondingly greater. Mr. Crosbie, who was acting for the United States Government, confronted with our demands, replied that if they were met he would have little or nothing left for the other Allies, and he was pressing that a considered programme should be put forward by the three Western Allies, together with the United States. Mr. Crosbie was under the impression that by such a co-ordination a great deal of waste could be eliminated, and the joint demands reduced. He (Mr. Chamberlain) agreed with Mr. Crosbie. By such machinery the Americans would learn how much was being done for the French. We ought not to provide materials for France without obtaining compensation in material or dollars from the United States. We had, perhaps, done too much for France, as was illustrated by her willingness to surrender 700,000 tons for munitions, from the tonnage of 2,000,000 assigned for food. Would it not be possible to set up at Versailles, for example, a Military Supply Commission, on which the Americans would be represented, to draw up the most urgent needs for a common campaign? If this were done, Mr. Crosbie would probably honour his demands, as he did those of the Wheat Commission.

Mr. Churchill urged that it was very difficult to apply a satisfactory standard to military requirements. The greater the munitions available, the greater and more frequent were the attacks that could be made upon the enemy. With food it was different, because a minimum standard of subsistence could be laid down.

It was pointed out, on the other hand, that some agreement as to military needs for a particular campaign was practicable. When these needs were defined, they could then be examined in the light of the available tonnage, and correspondingly reduced in the order of urgency. When that stage had been reached, with the co-operation of the experts of the United States, it would be possible to convince them that the dollars were absolutely indispensable if the campaign was to be carried out. It was better, therefore, to begin from the side of military needs than from the side of dollars.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer thought that, on the whole, the best policy was to continue the arrangements now in existence, that is, to go on ordering the goods which we deemed to be absolutely essential, partly on account of the fact that orders often did not take immediate effect and consequently had not to be paid for at the anticipated dates, and partly trusting to our being able to convince the United States that they ought to find the money as an alternative to breaking the exchange.

The War Cabinet decided—

To instruct the Chairman of the American Board as follows:—

(1.) Purchases by the Food Controller of the essential minimum supply of foodstuffs in the United States shall have priority of allocation from the available credits;

(2.) No new commitments shall be entered into in the United States by other Departments, unless they are small in amount and in the judgment of the Chairman of the Board of quite exceptional urgency, until the aggregate of requirements has been brought within the figure of the credits which it is expected to receive from the United States Treasury after allowing for exchange;
(9.) The Board shall consider with the Army Council the possibility of suspending the further purchases of remounts for a period of three months;

(10.) The Board shall consider with the Army Council and the Ministry of Munitions the suspension of further purchases of mechanical transport in the United States;

(11.) The Board shall consider with the Ministry of Munitions the possibility of the cancellation or postponement of delivery under existing contracts;

(12.) These instructions may be confidentially communicated by the Chairman of the Board to the representative of the United States Treasury.

10. The War Cabinet authorised—

The Minister of Munitions to explain to M. Loucheur our inability to continue the supply of steel to France on the same scale as hitherto.

11. The War Cabinet instructed—

The Secretary to represent to the First Commissioner of Works the urgent importance of providing suitable office accommodation for the Inter-Allied Council.

12. The War Cabinet had before them the following documents dealing with maternity and child welfare:

- Memoranda by Dr. Addison (Papers G.T.-2458 and 3359).
- Memoranda by Sir E. Cornwall (Papers G.T.-2460 and 3348).
- Memorandum by Mr. Long (Paper G.T.-2527).
- Memoranda by Mr. Hayes Fisher (Papers G.T.-2372, 2514, and 3332).

Mr. Hayes Fisher said he was anxious to have the permission of the War Cabinet to introduce the Maternity and Child Welfare Bill, which he had prepared, in order to give to the local authorities in England and Wales powers which were already enjoyed in Scotland and Ireland. An important deputation from these local authorities had waited upon him quite recently, asking for powers to enable them to give milk to expectant mothers, to provide lying-in homes, and similar agencies. The Bill was a small one, and would easily pass through the House of Commons. It was not a rival to any attempt to co-ordinate the health services of the country under one Cabinet Minister.

Dr. Addison objected to the Bill as at present drafted because it extended new powers to hundreds of Rural District and small Urban District Councils, who could not possibly provide the agencies required nor the expert services to run them. The Bill would create fresh vested interests, which it would be difficult to remove when an attempt was made later on to secure a larger unit of health administration. The Bill, if proceeded with, should be amended so as to make the local authorities, for the purposes of the Act, at least as large as the authorities under the Education Act of 1902. Further, provision should be made for the co-option of persons, other than members of local authorities, with special experience, including, for example, members of Insurance Committees. Thirdly, before any scheme was put into operation the prior approval of the Central Authority should be secured. He did not agree with Mr. Hayes Fisher that the Bill would not be vigorously opposed in the House of Commons. The representatives of the Insurance
Committees would press for representation on the administering authority, particularly as they were now dealing with domiciliary medical attendance.

Sir Edwin Cornwall believed that the Approved Societies would not support the Bill in its present shape. They were strongly interested in the provisions of maternity benefit. Any encroachment on their sphere of influence would arouse opposition, but it might be possible to come to terms with them.

Lord Rhondda was in favour of the Bill, provided that it was clearly understood that it would not prejudice the prospects of establishing a Ministry of Health. He believed, however, that the present Bill, as now framed, would be strongly opposed by the Approved Societies.

The War Cabinet decided—

To refer the Maternity and Child Welfare Bill to the following Committee:

Mr. Hayes Fisher (Chairman),
Dr. Addison,
Lord Rhondda,
Mr. H. A. L. Fisher,
Mr. Walter Long,
Sir Edward Cornwall,

for consideration and report.

13. With reference to the Government proposals dealing with military service and man-power, as set forth by Sir Auckland Geddes in the House of Commons on the 14th January, the Prime Minister read telegrams which had been received from the representatives of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers asking that a deputation should be received to discuss the arrangements come to with the Government on the 5th May, 1917.

The War Cabinet decided—

To refer the matter to Mr. Barnes and Sir Auckland Geddes to frame a suitable reply, and to decide whether and by whom the deputation should be received.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 16, 1918.
APPENDIX.

(G.T.-3349.)
(Secret.)
01/135/388.

Secretary, War Cabinet.

WITH reference to my memorandum, numbered as above, dated 12th instant, to the War Cabinet, regarding American battalions for British divisions, I now forward a copy of a telegram which I have received from General J. J. Pershing, commanding American army in France, in reply to a paper I addressed to him on the 10th instant from Paris. I attach a copy of my paper of the 10th January for information.

War Office, January 15, 1918.

(Signed) W. R. ROBERTSON, C.I.G.S.

(Translation.)
(Confidential.)

January 14.
General Sir William Robertson, Chief of Staff, British Army.

1. With reference to our conference in Paris, I have forwarded by cable to Washington the substance of your memorandum of 10th January.

My cable suggested that your request for battalions of infantry for service with British army, three battalions for each of fifty divisions, be given serious consideration, and, if adopted, that following points be carried out. First, that the plans be regarded as a temporary measure to meet a probable emergency. Second, that as soon as practicable the remaining troops of our divisions thus temporarily disorganised be brought over and the divisions be reorganised for service with our own army. Third, that the division, brigade, and regimental commanders and their staffs of such infantry be sent over for training with corresponding British units. Fourth, that the infantry be taken from those divisions that could not otherwise be transported until after June. Fifth, that only such battalions or other units be attached to British Army as could be provided with sea transportation by the British Government. Sixth, that the transportation of such battalions should in no way interfere with the present plans and means of transporting American Army to France. Seventh, that above proposition controllable entirely apart and separate from any plans for sending over our own forces in our own ships through Brest, Southampton, or otherwise. Eighth, that battalions loaned to British are to be returned to the American Army when called for, probably when the remaining troops of the divisions to which they pertain are brought over.

2. Information has been received from Washington that two ships, the "Mauritania" and the "Aquitania," have been mentioned as available for transporting these extra troops. It is my understanding also that we may still take advantage of the offer made by the Commander-in-Chief, British Army, regarding areas of training for American troops and their supply by British Army during periods of training and so forth as presented in the memorandum by General Butler.

3. In view of the national sentiment in our country against service under an Allied flag at this time, it is deemed of the utmost importance, if the above plan is to be considered by our Government, that the British Government state its purpose to exert every energy to keep its own forces as strong in man-power as possible. Only with this general understanding in America would the foregoing plans meet with approval there. I have cabled the substance of this view to Washington, and would request a full statement from you as to British resources in this regard, including those at present available and to become available during this year. This information is desired in order that our Government may have all the facts before making a final decision on the important question now under advisement.—Pershing.
General J. J. Pershing,
Commanding American Army in France.

In accordance with your wishes, I forward this memorandum explanatory of the request of the British Government that you will consider the question of supplying some American battalions for temporary employment with British infantry brigades. We have verbally discussed the matter at some length during the last two days, and as you are aware the present request is the same as that made to Colonel House by Mr. Lloyd George on the 2nd December last, except that it now refers to battalions only and not, as previously, to companies or battalions.

It is obvious that Germany may be expected to strive her utmost, if not to win outright, to place herself at any rate in a winning position during the next seven or eight months. Russia's defection enables her greatly to strengthen her forces on the West or Italian front, or on both, and for the last three months German divisions have been coming over as quickly as they can be transported. Italy is still weak and will probably continue to require British and French assistance. The man-power of France is rapidly diminishing. The British divisions are being reduced from 12 to 9 battalions because of the shortage of men, and it will be difficult for us to maintain at strength even the 9-battalion division throughout the year. There are already 28 more German divisions on the West front than a year ago; there are 11 fewer British and French divisions (gone to Italy), making a net gain to Germany of 39 divisions; she can easily bring over 40 more divisions by May, as well as a large number of heavy guns, and, as shown above, the British divisions will in future have 25 per cent. less infantry in them than in 1917. The situation is therefore becoming very serious, and it is with considerable anxiety that the British and French authorities look forward to the summer, because, even if we hold up the German attack, as we hope to do, our divisions may become so attenuated and exhausted in the process as to be fit for little employment afterwards. In other words, if France and England do not receive substantial American military assistance before the summer, the assistance America is now preparing may come too late to admit of the Entente securing the kind of peace for which they are fighting.

I understand that you cannot give any definite opinion regarding the amount of your assistance owing to the uncertainty as to shipping and other things, but that the arrival of 15 divisions by the end of June is the most you hope for; while, of course, several of these divisions will not be ready to fight for some months later. In view of probable developments, this forecast is, in my opinion, much too small to ensure the hostile attack being adequately met. For this reason the British Government earnestly hope that serious consideration will be given by you to their request for help.

The main difficulty in making your help available lies in sea-transport, and from this point of view it is clear that to bring from America a given number of men with all necessary equipment, horses, &c., as complete divisions means an infinitely greater shipping effort than to bring the same number of men as battalions, and without transport of any kind—which could be found by us. Having regard to the general critical situation and to the shortage of our man-power, my Government is prepared in order to secure infantry reinforcements immediately to run very considerable risks in the reduction of our present stocks of food and war material, in the hope that later on the American commercial fleet as it gradually increases may be able to give compensation for cargo shut out by the carriage of the reinforcements. All could be done without in any way interfering now or in the future with the transport for the American army as at present arranged, and it is estimated that 150,000 additional men (or 150 battalions) could be brought over within three or four months of the time it is decided to permit of their employment in the manner indicated. Whether the battalions would be brought to England or to France for training, is a matter, with several others, which can be settled later. They would in any case be trained under your officers, of course. After being used by battalions in brigades for a sufficient time to become efficient they could, if you so desired, be used as brigades in British divisions under their own Brigadiers; and later on, if and when required by you, the brigades could be recalled from the British divisions and go to form American divisions.

Everything possible would be done to meet your wishes in this and all other respects, although you will, I am sure, understand that it would not serve any very useful
purpose to put these American units into British formations unless they could remain there for a reasonable period of time—say four or five months.

The great difficulty which confronts you in acceding to the above request is the very natural one of national sentiment, and the desire to retain national identity. This is fully appreciated by the British Government, who feel that if America can accept the proposal she will thereby display the greatest possible magnanimity and sacrifice. It is, however, a matter of national sentiment on the one hand, and, on the other, of Germany establishing herself in a winning position if your assistance does not arrive in time.

I understand that you have some 45 divisions in course of formation, and that to find the battalions I have ventured to suggest you would have to break into these divisions. But it is practically certain that at least 15 of the 45 cannot reach France this year, and therefore they will be idle till 1919—if the war lasts as long. Further, I may say that when raising our new Armies, we were compelled to break up two of these Armies in order to send the battalions as such to France. Had we not done so we could not have held our own in 1915.

You have made two alternative suggestions:—

(a.) For us to bring over divisions in place of battalions.
(b.) To withdrawn all our infantry from a certain number of divisions and replace them with your battalions.

I have already dealt with (a) in discussing transport, and the two or three extra divisions which the available tonnage would bring would not, I feel sure, be deemed by my Government sufficient justification for the risks incurred in providing the tonnage. With respect to (b), the effect would be still to leave the divisions partly American and partly British; the change would involve the divisions being out of action for several weeks; and it would have to be made probably at the most critical period of the year. In fact, I do not think it would be possible to attempt making it at the time.

I trust that the above explanation makes everything clear, and I am sure that in the general interest you will give it careful attention. As you are aware, the French Prime Minister feels equally with the British Government the inestimable value of the proposal, and has no desire whatever to raise difficulties in regard to its application to the French Army as well as to the British Army. His only wish is that you should do all you can to help either the French or the British.

(Signed) W. R. ROBERTSON, General, C.I.G.S.

Paris, January 10, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 324.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, January 17, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The Right Hon. A. Bona Law, M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 10).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.


Lieutenant-General Sir J. S. Cowans, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., M.V.O., Quartermaster-General to the Forces (for Minute 13).


Mr. Andrew Weir, Surveyor-General of Supply, War Office (for Minute 13).


Mr. I. G. Gibbon, Local Government Board (for Minute 13).

Major the Hon. F. E. Guest, D.S.O., M.P., Joint Parliamentary Secretary, Treasury (for Minute 10).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 8).


The Right Hon. Sir J. Maclay, Bart., Shipping Controller (for Minutes 15 to 18).

The Right Hon. C. Addison, M.D., M.P., Minister of Reconstruction (for Minute 13).

The Right Hon. Lord Rhondda, Food Controller (for Minute 13).

Mr. U. F. Wintour, C.B., C.M.G., Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Food (for Minute 13).

Sir L. Worthington Evans, Bart., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Munitions (for Minute 13).

Sir A. Lee, G.B.E., K.C.B., M.P., Director-General, Food Production Department (for Minute 13).

Sir A. D. Hall, K.C.B., Secretary, Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (for Minute 13).

Lord Edmund Talbot, M.V.O., D.S.O., M.P., Joint Parliamentary Secretary, Treasury (for Minute 10).

Mr. J. Parker, M.P., Lord Commissioner of the Treasury (for Minute 10).


Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Fleet Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain the Hon. W. Omsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
Chinese Troops for the Western Front.

1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the question of employing Chinese troops on the Western front had been raised by the Americans, who proposed to refer the question to the Permanent Military Representatives at Versailles.

Attention was drawn to the previous War Cabinet decision on this subject (War Cabinet 273, Minute 17), to the following effect:

"The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should reply to General Foch that His Majesty's Government would support the proposal to employ Chinese pioneer battalions up to the number of forty battalions on the Western front, provided that the French Government employed either French, Chinese, or Japanese tonnage. His Majesty's Government would be unable to provide special escorts. Therefore, unless the transports bringing the Chinese could be fitted into British convoys, it would be necessary for the French Government to provide the escort."

Abyssinian Troops.

2. The Prime Minister read a personal telegram indicating that on his forthcoming visit M. Clemenceau would raise the question of enlisting and employing Abyssinian troops.

The Prime Minister asked the Chief of the Imperial General Staff to consider the matter and advise the War Cabinet.

Withdrawal of French Divisions from Italy.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that, according to information received from Colonel Spiers, it was not at present General Pétain's intention to ask for the recall of any French divisions from Italy.

Italian Labour for the Western Front.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 322, Minute 2, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that a message from the British Ambassador in Rome had been received to the effect that General Foch had secured 100,000 Italian workmen for France.

Transfer of German Troops to the Western Front.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 322, Minute 4, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that, from information derived from General Knox, the Germans were transferring field and heavy artillery, scouting aircraft detachments, and ammunition stores from the Russian front, which they intended to leave without reserves. They were even dismantling railroads on that front to transfer the rails to the West. One more division had arrived on the Western front.

Roumania.

6. The Bolshevist ultimatum to Roumania was referred to. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff observed that the Bolshevist Government had little force to back it up, but that if the Ukraine were to cut off Roumanian supplies the Roumanian forces would be in a serious situation.

Submarines "G-8" and "H-10."

7. With reference to War Cabinet 321, Minute 6, the Deputy First Sea Lord stated that the British submarine "G 8," now nine days overdue, must be considered as lost. A Harwich report had been received that submarine "H 10" was also overdue and was being searched for by H.M.S. "Lurcher." He pointed out that
submarines on patrol in bad weather were more liable to accident than submarines on a passage.

8. Questioned as to German submarines sunk in the English Channel, the Deputy First Sea Lord said that two German submarines were thought to have been caught in the Dover minefield, but that this was not yet substantiated, and could not be for some time.

9. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs drew attention to two telegrams received from Mr. Lindley, Petrograd, regarding the position of the Corps diplomatique in Petrograd. The possibility of the arrest of our Embassy Staff had appeared, and, accordingly, Mr. Lindley had destroyed a number of cyphers and documents, and, in the event of the Bolsheviks pushing matters to an extreme, he was preparing for the destruction of the remaining cyphers.

Mr. Barnes stated that when he had mentioned the name of Trotsky at his meetings in Scotland during the past week, it had been received with cheers. Since then he had gathered that a communication from Mr. Henderson, the Chairman of the British Labour Party, had been addressed to the Bolsheviks. These and other circumstances led him to believe that a public statement of our policy towards the Bolsheviks ought to be made.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said that, from a purely Foreign Office point of view, there would be great advantages in cutting off all relations with the Bolsheviks. The latter had broken their treaty with the Allies, had repudiated their debts to us, and were openly trying to raise revolutions in all countries. The Italian Government were anxious that this course should be taken. On the other hand, we still had great interests in Northern Russia, and a number of British subjects there whose position had to be considered. It was therefore necessary that communications of a practical kind should take place through agents. He was quite clear that we could not give full recognition to the Bolsheviks until they could show that they were representative of the Russian people.

Mr. Balfour then read his reply, given in the House of Commons on the previous day, to questions put by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald and others.

Mr. Barnes expressed himself satisfied with this reply.

10. The Chancellor of the Exchequer informed the War Cabinet that he had received a resolution from the Labour Party, asking that the consideration of the Military Service Bill should be postponed until the middle of the following week, by reason of the fact that a number of the Labour Members could not be present in the House of Commons owing to a Conference of Miners' Delegates. He had had a personal conversation on the subject with Mr. Arthur Henderson, who informed him that his attitude to the Bill was one of strict neutrality.

Mr. James Parker, M.P., said that several of the Labour Members who would necessarily be absent until Wednesday of next week, such as Mr. Adamson, were strong supporters of the Bill.

Major Guest doubted whether it would be possible to get the second reading of the Bill this evening, owing to the fact that there was a likelihood of a certain amount of obstruction on the part of Members such as Mr. Pringle and Major David Davies, who, he thought, would raise the question of the Higher Command in France. Two amendments were down upon the Paper, one in the name of certain Ulster Members, who would probably press their amendment to a division, and another amendment in the name of Mr. Hogge. It was therefore unlikely that the Speaker would be in a position to give the closure until the following day.
Sir Auckland Geddes thought that the best policy would be to go straight forward with the Bill. Any sign of wavering would give an opportunity for the Opposition to pull together, and at present the press was favourable. The responsible Trades Union leaders had been consulted for a month, and the Bill was urgent.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Bill should be pressed forward, and should be taken, if necessary, on Friday next, and again on Monday.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 322, Minute 15, the War Cabinet had under consideration the following documents on the subject of the proposed extension of the British front in France:

(a.) Joint note No. 10, by the Military Representatives, Supreme War Council;

The War Cabinet decided that—

This question could not be settled until the War Cabinet were fully acquainted with the grounds on which the Military Representatives based their recommendations; and directed—

The Secretary to telegraph to General Smuts asking him, before leaving Versailles, to obtain from the Military Representatives full particulars as to the reasons that led them to put forward the recommendations in question, and, in addition, to ask the Military Representatives to send a memorandum of their reasons.

12. With reference to War Cabinet 308, Minute 11, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff brought to the notice of the War Cabinet the need of a very early decision being taken with regard to future operations in Palestine (vide Paper G.T.-3347 on the subject).

The War Cabinet directed—

The Secretary to telegraph to General Smuts, asking him to call upon the Military Representatives to the Supreme War Council to hasten their report, as the matter required immediate consideration.

13. The War Cabinet had before them the following documents:

Memorandum by the President of the Board of Agriculture (Papers G.T.-3062 and 3338).
Memorandum by the Food Controller (Paper G.T.-3279).
Memorandum by Dr. Addison (Paper G.T.-3345).
Memorandum by Mr. Hayes Fisher (Paper G.T.-3353).
Memorandum by the Secretary of State for War (Paper G.T.-3358).

Mr. Andrew Weir explained that for some time past the War Office had developed an organisation, complete in every detail, for dealing with waste products in the army, and it would be quite feasible to expand this so as to embrace civilian waste-products. The organisation was under the chairmanship of the Quarter-Master-
Parliamentary Procedure.

Representatives of various Government Departments could be added where they did not already exist.

Lord Rhondda urged that an Inter-Departmental Committee, with an independent chairman, was required to deal with the problem as a whole.

Mr. Wintour pointed out that it would be very undesirable to have the control of the slaughter-houses, now under the Ministry of Food, placed under the control of the War Office organisation. Further, it was most important that waste should be prevented in the slaughter-houses rather than waste-products should be salvaged in the homes.

Sir Worthington Evans said that the Ministry of Munitions did not wish their organisation for dealing with scrap metal disturbed. It was doing considerable and valuable work and could be extended.

Dr. Addison mentioned that Lord Salisbury's Committee was also interested in the question, and should be represented in any organisation set up.

The War Cabinet asked—

Lord Derby to convene representatives of the Departments concerned, to examine the whole problem and report.

The Building and Purchase of Merchant Ships Abroad.

Transfer to Ministry of Shipping.

The War Cabinet asked—

Lord Derby to convene representatives of the Departments concerned, to examine the whole problem and report.

14. The Secretary drew the attention of the War Cabinet to a memorandum by the Minister of Reconstruction with reference to the decision of the War Cabinet on the 7th June, 1917, that Parliament should be asked to appoint a Select Joint Committee of both Houses to consider the machinery of parliamentary procedure in the period following the termination of the war (War Cabinet 157, Minute 13).

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he did not regard the Select Committee as practicable, and had arranged that Dr. Addison should confer with the Government Whips on the subject.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The question should be postponed until a further communication was received from the Minister of Reconstruction.

15. The War Cabinet had before them a joint memorandum by the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Shipping Controller, recommending that the responsibility of the building and purchase of merchant ships abroad should be undertaken by the Ministry of Shipping, to whom the Director of Overseas Purchase and his staff would be transferred (Paper G.T.-335 7).

The Secretary explained that, before the present Government came into office, this responsibility had rested with the Board of Trade. On the establishment of the Ministry of Shipping it had been transferred to that Department. On the appointment of Sir Eric Geddes as Controller of the Admiralty in charge of all shipbuilding, mercantile as well as naval, it had been transferred to him (War Cabinet 136, Minute 11). The present proposal was put forward as the result of actual experience.

The War Cabinet approved the transfer.

16. The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Shipping Controller (Paper G.T.-3244) in regard to stopping the transport of coolies from North China to France.

In his memorandum Sir Joseph Maclay submitted that, in view of the present tonnage situation, the question of stopping the entire
import of coolies should be immediately considered. In addition to the great relief which would be afforded on the Trans-Atlantic run, where it was not at present possible to meet the American troops’ requirements, there was the heavy transit across the American Continent. Further, it was estimated that 10,000 additional American troops might be brought per month (without baggage) if the coolie traffic was entirely stopped.

Sir Joseph Maclay said that on his recent visit to France he had inspected a certain amount of Chinese labour, and he was satisfied that four Chinese were not doing the work of more than one man. There seemed to be a total lack of organisation for dealing with coolies, consequent, to a great extent, on the want of suitable fore­men, with a knowledge of Chinese, to take charge. In his opinion, the Chinese now in France, if properly handled, were more than capable of doing all the work which it was intended should be done by the 150,000 which it was intended to import. The Shipping Controller said that he had seen Chinese labour working in gloves and overcoats. They were over-fed and under-worked. They were becoming loafers and loungers, and were under no proper control. They were treated as Europeans rather than Asians.

Lord Derby said that, while he was in agreement with much of the Shipping Controller’s criticism about the lack of control, he could not agree to stopping entirely the importation of Chinese coolies. They were the only men on long three-year contracts. Other labourers, e.g., from India, were on short contracts, and therefore, in the long run, required as much tonnage for their conveyance as the Chinese. The whole question of the control of labour in Northern France was under consideration, and he was sending out a man of experience to report on the matter. Lord Derby added that he would consent, if the Shipping Controller agreed, to reduce the importation of coolies by bringing only those actually enlisted, and thereafter 2,000 a month.

Sir Sam Fay suggested that officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway, familiar with handling Chinese labour on the western portions of that railway should be allowed to take charge of dealing with the coolies.

The Adjutant-General said that General Travers Clarke, the newly appointed Quarter-Master-General in France, who was now in England, was going to take over the work of supervision and control of labour in North France. If the demands of France were to be met we could not stop the importation of Chinese. We had already stopped the importation of labour from the West Indies and South Africa, and from India, unless the men signed on for the duration of the war. The only other possible source of supply appeared to be Italy, where labour was expensive.

The War Cabinet decided that—

A meeting should be held on the following day, 18th January, 1918, at 3:30 p.m., when the Secretary of State for War, the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Shipping Controller, with their advisers, including General Travers Clarke, should attend and submit their views to the Prime Minister.

The Puller Use of Dieppe as a Port for the British Expeditionary Force.

17. The Shipping Controller informed the War Cabinet that on his recent visit to the French ports he had been struck by the enormous quantities of stores, inflammable and otherwise, that were piled up near Calais. Having regard to the comparative nearness of Calais to the German lines, and to the great danger from hostile aircraft, which might any day cause the most serious damage, he suggested that greater use should be made, if possible, of the port of Dieppe.
The War Cabinet concurred in this view, and decided that—
The Admiralty, in consultation with the War Office, should investigate the possibility of developing the port facilities at Dieppe to the utmost extent.

18. The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Shipping Controller (Paper G.T.-3352) regarding the possibility of discontinuing the shipment of road stone to France. The present programme provided for the shipment of—

   (a.) 5,000 tons of slag per week; and
   (b.) 4,500 tons of road stone.

These quantities represented only about 10 per cent. of the requirements of the army in France, the remainder being obtained by local quarrying.

Lord Derby said that he would agree to discontinuing the shipments of slag, but that he could not agree to stopping the shipments of stone, as it was required, inter alia, for making cement for pill-boxes, &c.

The Shipping Controller said that he had seen General Nash on the subject, who had told him that the difficulty of obtaining supplies locally was one of rail haulage.

While taking note of Lord Derby's strong dissent, the War Cabinet decided that, in view of the vital necessity of saving tonnage—

The Shipping Controller should stop the provision of tonnage for both the slag and the stone.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 17, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 325.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, January 18, 1918, at 4:30 P.M.

Present:

The PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair)

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C.

The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.

The Right Hon. SIR E. CARSON, K.C., M.P.

The following were also present:—


Vice-Admiral SIR R. E. WEMYSS, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff.

Rear-Admiral S. R. FREMANTLE, C.B., M.V.O., Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff.

Rear-Admiral LIONEL HALSEY, C.B., C.M.G., Third Sea Lord.

Rear-Admiral A. L. DUFF, C.B., Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff.


Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

Naval Policy.

1. THE War Cabinet discussed with the First Lord and several of the Naval Lords of the Admiralty the question of our future naval policy. In this connection they had before them a very secret memorandum by the First Lord entitled “Naval Situation in the North Sea,” dated the 17th of January, 1918,* which the First Lord explained had been considered by and expressed the views of the Board of the Admiralty. The War Cabinet also had read to them an important and most secret despatch from the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet to the Admiralty in regard to the situation in the North Sea.¹

The First Lord of the Admiralty amplified the statements of policy contained in the above documents, and the First Sea Lord explained fully the strategical policy both of the main operations and of anti-submarine warfare, and the interaction of one upon the other. The First Sea Lord and Third Sea Lord gave particulars as to the matériel available at the different periods of 1918 for carrying out the policy proposed by the Board of the Admiralty. Particulars were also given of the extent of the co-operation of the United States Navy. After a number of

* Owing to their great secrecy these documents have not been reproduced or circulated.
questions had been answered by the Lords of the Admiralty the War Cabinet—

Approved the policy of the Board of the Admiralty as set forth in the documents referred to.

2. The War Cabinet had a preliminary discussion on the question of the programme of new naval construction for 1919. In this connection they had before them the programme of Warship and Auxiliary Construction, dated 17th January, 1918, as proposed by the Board of the Admiralty.*

In the course of the discussion it transpired that some portion of the new vessels proposed would not be in commission before the end of the war, unless it is very much prolonged. The War Cabinet did not under-rate the importance of a *post bellum* naval supremacy, but before taking a final decision they felt it was imperative to ascertain the reaction of the naval proposals on other programmes of actual war construction.

They, therefore, decided that—

Before sanctioning the Naval Programme for 1919, it was necessary that they should have before them particulars of the amount of the raw material and man-power required to be accumulated for this Programme in 1918 and 1919, in order that they might ascertain the effect it would have on the Programmes of other Departments.

The First Lord of the Admiralty undertook to furnish the War Cabinet with these particulars.

The War Cabinet approved certain anti-submarine measures proposed by the Admiralty, and authorised their execution.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

January 19, 1918.

* Owing to its great secrecy this document has not been reproduced or circulated.
WAR CABINET, 326.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, January 21, 1918, at noon.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 and 2).
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.
Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 1 and 2).
Sir Auckland Geddes, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service (for Minute 5).
Captain the Hon. F. E. Guest, D.S.O., M.P., Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (for Minute 5).
Lord Edmund Talbot, M.V.O., D.S.O., M.P., Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (for Minute 5).

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Dally Jones, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.
Fleet Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.
Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.
Captain L. F. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.

1. With reference to War Cabinet 323, Minute 7, the First Sea Lord stated that, according to a cable received from H.M.S. "Suffolk" at Vladivostock, the partial demobilisation of the garrison is being taken in hand by the Officer Commanding, Military District, who is loyal to the Allies; the militia regiments are also being disbanded, and the movement up to the present has received the support of the Soviet.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 324, Minute 5, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff informed the War Cabinet that two more divisions had been transferred from Russia to the Western front, making in all a total of 167 enemy divisions on the Western front. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff added that not more than five German divisions were now on the Italian front, and that there were, perhaps, fewer than this number.
3. With reference to War Cabinet 317, Mr. Barnes informed the War Cabinet that the question of revising the lower-priced piece rates had been carefully considered, but that it had not been found practicable to carry it out within a reasonable time. He stated that a proposal had been laid before him by the Committee on Production that an increase of 7½ per cent. should be given to the piece-workers as an equivalent to the 12½ per cent. given to time-workers in certain munition industries. In the majority of cases the 7½ per cent. would be equivalent to an increase of rather less than 7s. per week, calculated on an average wage. He proposed that the award in the case of Belfast, which was shortly to be made public, should be issued simultaneously with a statement, made by the Government, which would enable the Ministry of Labour to deal on similar lines with cases which were parallel to that of Belfast.

It was pointed out that the question of output was so much involved in this matter that, although it would necessitate an increased expenditure of some millions of pounds, yet the award would mean a far greater saving as regards future output, which would fully justify the expenditure of the extra millions.

The War Cabinet approved the action proposed by Mr. Barnes.

The Weekly Summary of Intelligence: Western Front.

4. The Prime Minister brought to the notice of the Secretary of State for War the Summary of Military Intelligence which was issued by the War Office the previous week, and stated that in its present form it was calculated to create panic, as the facts as presented did not include certain vital considerations and statistics. It indicated, for instance, that the balance of strength to the enemy had been increased to no less than fifty-one divisions. From figures that he had since obtained from the War Office, it appeared that between January 1917 and the present time our strength had increased, on the whole, comparatively, to the extent of 310,000 men, to which must be added the number of troops the United States had in France. On the other hand, it was admitted that the French forces were down 200,000. An instance was given in the case of the apparent increase of twelve German divisions; this was not a correct statement of fact, as these divisions had simply been regrouped without any increase in the total rifle strength. It was further mentioned that the battalions in the German army had been reduced from 1,000 to 750.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the twelve divisions should have been made allowance for in the summary, and that, as regards the reduction of battalions, the real strength of the German battalion was now 850, 100 of the same being in support. The French, however, had also reduced their battalions to 750. General Robertson said that he had always felt some doubt as to the strength of the German forces compared with the Allied strength, and he held the view that they were more numerous than we had hitherto laid down. He added that he was now having careful enquiries made on a different basis from that which had hitherto been pursued, and that as soon as possible he would furnish the War Cabinet with a return showing the revised figures.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 324, Minute 10, the Prime Minister read a letter which he had received from Nottingham, from the Labour Party Executive Committee. The letter bore the signatures of some who were pacifists, and others who were undoubtedly strong pro-war men. They expressed their serious warning against hastily pressing forward the Man-Power Bill,
having regard to the dangerous state of feeling amongst the workmen; the men coming from all parts of the country to Nottingham for the Conference said that the rank and file did not yet understand what was proposed, and were very angry. The secretaries and shop stewards were doing all they could to prevent an outburst, but they all said they were under the utmost apprehension of a spontaneous and tumultuous "down tools." They feared that taking the Committee stage this week, in the absence of a number of Labour members, would lead to an outburst of a regrettable kind in the country, whereas another week's talking might enable the men to be got in hand.

Sir Auckland Geddes said that he did not believe that anything would be gained by delay. Labour was expecting the Government to climb down, and his own feeling was that it would be wise for the Government to go straight forward, as had been decided, and take the Committee stage of the Bill at once. He agreed that it would be desirable, on the Third Reading of the Bill, that some of the points made by the Prime Minister during the Secret Session should be restated. He suggested that the letter, together with the signatories, should be made known to the House of Commons, and that the imperative need of obtaining men should be given as the reason for pressing forward the Bill.

Lord Edmund Talbot and Captain Guest concurred in the view expressed by Sir Auckland Geddes.

On the other hand, it was argued that it would be wise to yield to an appeal of the kind made by the Labour Party Executive to the Prime Minister without publication, because such a course might induce the Labour Party to act graciously. If it were known that the Labour Party had asked the Government to postpone the matter for a few days, and the Government had refused, there would be strong grounds for resentment. The very fact of the appeal being made in the way it was, might be taken as an indication that the Labour Party Executive were in a friendly and not a hostile mood.

After further discussion it appeared that the balance of opinion was in favour of proceeding forthwith with the Bill.

The War Cabinet decided—

To adhere to their previous decision that the Bill should be pressed forward.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 21, 1918.
Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, January 21, 1918, at 6 P.M.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The Right Hon. Sir Edward Carson, K.C., M.P.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade.

The Right Hon. Sir George Buchanan, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.


Major-General Sir G. M. W. McDonough, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence.

Major-General A. W. F. Knox, Military Attaché to the Russian Embassy.

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Dally Jones, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.

Fleet Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.

Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.
we should postpone a rupture as long as possible, as it was quite clear that the Bolsheviks provided the Germans with more difficulties than would be presented by the Social Revolutionaries. From the point of view of postponing a separate peace between Russia and Germany, and stopping the Germans getting supplies out of Russia, it would appear that the Bolsheviks were more likely to effect such a policy than any other party in Russia. The Bolsheviks, however, appeared determined to spread what he described as "passionate propaganda" in this country, and also in Germany. He had been informed by Mr. Leeper that the Bolsheviks are convinced that social and political conditions in Germany are very bad, and that internal trouble is inevitable in the near future. This information is given them by one Radek, an International Jew of the same type as Trotzki, who is in close touch with the German Socialist Parties. Two views were current regarding Trotzki: one view was that he was in the pay of the Germans, and was playing the German game; the other view, which seemed to be the more probable, was that he was a genuine fanatic bent on spreading the doctrines of revolution throughout the world, but particularly in the two countries which he regarded as Imperialistic, viz., England and Germany.

Sir George Buchanan stated that he had always advocated a policy which would prevent an open breach with the Bolsheviks. On the other hand, it was clear that we should, sooner or later, have to choose between a rupture and complete reciprocity in everything. For instance, if we did not allow Mr. Litvinoff to send cypher telegrams, Trotzki would stop our representatives in Petrograd from sending cypher telegrams. He would sooner see a rupture than allow Bolshevik propaganda to be carried on on a large scale in this country, as such propaganda was dangerous, and attractive to those who had nothing to lose. He thought that it was clear that the Germans would like to see a rupture between us and the Bolsheviks, and would like our representatives at Petrograd to be withdrawn, in order to give them a clear field. Any step towards recognition by us would be exploited by the Bolsheviks in their own interests. Regarding the Social Revolutionaries, he thought that, although more correct in their methods, they were less of a nuisance to the Germans. The Social Revolutionaries had no backbone, and were, if anything, more anxious than the Bolsheviks to make a separate peace with Germany. Two things tended to cause him to modify his view that we should, if possible, avoid a rupture with the Bolsheviks, namely, the recent maltreatment of the Constituent Assembly by the Bolsheviks, and secondly, the possibility of the Japanese or Americans, or both, giving effective military assistance to those elements in Southern Russia who were inclined to resist the Bolsheviks. In any event, he thought that the Bolsheviks would not ask us for assistance.

Questioned regarding the military situation, and the possibility of preventing the Germans obtaining food and other supplies from Southern Russia, General Knox stated that, in his opinion, a volunteer army in Russia was impossible. Quite seventy per cent. of the Russian troops on the Northern and Western fronts had disappeared since the Revolution. As regards the possibility of the Germans obtaining supplies from Southern Russia, he thought that, even assuming a separate peace, it would be fully six months before the Germans could obtain anything important from Southern Russia. However, after six months they could obtain practically all their requirements, which would in effect break down the blockade. The only way to prevent this eventuality was the creation in Southern Russia of some effective force to resist German force. As regards the land, very little sowing had been done on landlords' property in South Russia, which meant that, unless the Germans could organise and get
possession of this land before April, very little surplus corn would be available for export from Russia. The district of real importance was the Donet coal basin and whoever had effective possession of this was in a position to hold up the transport and resources of practically the whole of Russia, but the high prices which the Germans would offer would draw grain to enemy countries rather than to North Russia. A number of Russian officers had spoken to him in Petrograd with regard to the possibility of joining General Kaledin. As long, however, as we appeared to be giving any form of recognition or support to the Bolsheviks, it was not likely that they would take this step. Our dealings with the Bolsheviks undoubtedly decreased the effectiveness of the moral and material support we were giving to the Cossacks.

General Macdorogh stated that it would appear that the Russian armies were rapidly melting away. The Germans were preparing to advance their line to Pskov, without meeting any form of resistance. Sixty per cent. of the Baltic fleet had deserted, and even on the Roumanian front the Russian troops were being evacuated at the rate of twelve full trains a day, leaving material and guns behind. As to the available resources in Southern Russia, a man who had been in the Ukraine as recently as last October had informed him that there were large quantities of cattle in that part of Russia.

Lord Robert Cecil reported that considerable difficulties had been experienced in getting financial assistance to the Cossacks and other friendly persons in South-Eastern Russia. In this connection he drew attention to two telegrams that had been received from Major Keyes, in which he suggested that if we could advance 3,000,000£ to an un-named capitalist it would be possible for us to get control of five banks that had branches in the friendly territory, which would enable us not only to finance the Cossacks, but also to obtain control of important industrial resources in Southern Russia.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer felt some difficulty in making such an advance to an unknown person, even on Major Keyes' recommendation.

General Knox stated that the unknown capitalist was probably Mr. Poliakoff, who was subsequently ascertained to be a Jewish banker of Rostov-on-Don, and who was known to General Poole.

Mr. Balfour then stated that he expected grave difficulties with the Bolsheviks over the question of recruiting Russian Jews in this country in the British Army.

In this connection Sir George Buchanan added that many of the Russian Jews who had been repatriated to Russia in the last few months had carried on propaganda against us.

The War Cabinet were informed that the Foreign Office were preparing Memoranda on the questions of Japanese intervention and recruitment of Russian Jews, and the War Cabinet decided—

To await the circulation of these Memoranda before coming to any further decisions.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 22, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 328.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, January 22, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:
The PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade.
The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, KG., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.
Lieutenant-General Sir J. S. COWANS, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., M.V.O., Quarter-Master-General to the Forces (for Minutes 16 and 17).
Major-General A. S. COLLARD, C.B., Deputy Controller, Admiralty (for Minute 19).
Mr. ANDREW WEIR, Surveyor-General of Supply, War Office (for Minutes 16 and 17).
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minute 18).
The Right Hon. Sir G. CAYE, M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minute 18).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 13 and 14).
SIR ALAN ANDERSON, K.B.E., Controller, Admiralty (for Minute 19).
The Right Hon. SIR J. MACLAY, Bart., Shipping Controller (for Minutes 16 and 17).
Mr. GRAEME THOMSON, C.B., Director of Transports (for Minutes 16 and 17).
SIR LYNDEN MACASSEY, K.C., K.B.E., Admiralty Shipyard Labour Department (for Minute 19).
The Right Hon. G. H. ROBERTS, M.P., Minister of Labour (for Minute 18).
Mr. O. F. Ray, Ministry of Labour (for Minute 19).
The Right Hon. SIR A. C. GEDDES, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service (for Minute 19).
Major P. LLOYD GRIEME, Ministry of National Service (for Minute 19).
SIR E. WYLDBORE SMITH, Chairman, Commission internationale de Ravitaillement (for Minutes 16 and 17).
Sir J. F. BEALE, K.B.E., Secretary, Wheat Commission (for Minutes 16 and 17).

Lieutenant-Colonel W. DALLY JONES, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.
Captain the Hon. W. ORMSEY-GORE, M.P., Assistant Secretary.
Captain CLEMENT JONES, Assistant Secretary.
Mr. THOMAS JONES, Assistant Secretary.
Captain E. ABRAHAM, Assistant Secretary.
Salonica.

1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the enemy had made a strong attack on the Greek positions west of the Vardar, after a heavy preliminary bombardment, and that the attack had been everywhere vigorously repulsed with loss.

Training of American Troops.

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff informed the War Cabinet that, according to a French report from New York, the training of American infantry had not yet passed beyond individual firing instruction. The training of the artillery was still very much behindhand. There was a noticeable lack of discipline. 145 British officers and 140 N.C.O.'s were employed as instructors, and 50 more officers and N.C.O.'s were under orders for the same purpose.

American Military Co-operation.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 323, Minute 3, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs raised the question of the despatch of American troops to the Western front. It was stated that, in the opinion of those best qualified to know, a private message from the Prime Minister to the President of the United States would be opportune on the subject of despatching American troops by battalions. The War Cabinet decided that—

   The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should draft a private message from the Prime Minister to the President of the United States, appealing to him to adopt the British view of the form in which America could best assist the Allied cause.

The Western Front.

4. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the French Military Attaché in Madrid had been told by the King of Spain that the Germans, after considerable discussion, had finally decided to make a big attack on the Western front.

Transfer of German Troops.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 326, Minute 2, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that another enemy division from the Bukowina had been identified at La Bassée, making an ascertained total of 168 on the Western Front, and perhaps from 170 to 175.

Roumania.

6. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the Roumanian Army was securing its hold on the railway communications in Bessarabia, but that the Ukrainians were not showing a favourable disposition towards the Roumanians. It was pointed out that the news of the withdrawal of German troops from the Bukowina suggested that the Roumanian Army should be able to hold out against any forces at present opposed to them. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff agreed that this appeared to be so.

The Caucasus.

7. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that there were 41 British officers and 76 N.C.O.'s at Baghdad about to start for the Caucasus. He also stated that he had inspected certain officers and N.C.O.'s about to start for that area from England. Russian officers were also leaving England for the Caucasus, and General Baratoff hoped to raise a force to co-operate with General Marshall.
The Italian Front.

8. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that another sector on the Piave front was to be occupied by British troops.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 324, Minute 4, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the Italian Government were despatching the men secured by General Foch for work in France, and that 15,000 had started. 25,000 were to be employed at work on aircraft.

General Cadorna.

10. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that, according to the French Ambassador in Rome, General Cadorna would be recalled from Versailles as an enquiry into his conduct of the operations was about to begin. In this connection it was suggested that the Prime Minister should telegraph to Signor Orlando asking him to allow General Cadorna to remain at Versailles for the forthcoming meeting of the Supreme War Council.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should telegraph to the British Ambassador in Rome, urging that if General Cadorna were to be recalled before the meeting of the Supreme War Council there should be some other fully accredited Italian representative appointed in his place.

Italy's War Aims.

11. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs informed the War Cabinet that the Marquis Imperiali had expressed to him the great disappointment caused in Italy by the scanty reference in the Prime Minister's recent speech to Italy's war aims. There was to be, on the 27th instant, a meeting, either in Turin or Milan, to promote the war enthusiasm of the nation, and some encouraging message from England on that occasion would be helpful.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The best method of meeting this object would be for the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to draft a message of encouragement from the Prime Minister to Signor Orlando, to be read at that meeting.

Provision for Lady Maude.

12. With reference to War Cabinet 279, Minute 5, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that he anticipated opposition in Parliament to the granting to General Maude's widow of 25,000£ in addition to the pension of 500£ a year to which she was entitled.

It was pointed out that the pension was hers of right and could not be reduced, and it seemed that the Government was pledged to her in the matter of the grant.

Some doubt was expressed on the latter point, and the Secretary of State for War agreed to inform the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in his communication to Lady Maude, he had committed the Government to any definite sum.

It was agreed that this subject should be brought again before the War Cabinet.

The "Goeben" and "Breslau".

13. The Deputy First Sea Lord read a full telegraphic report of the events connected with the sortie of the "Goeben" and "Breslau" on the morning of the 20th January. The bulk of this information had been communicated to the Press. Prisoners from the "Breslau" expressed intense dislike to the Turks, and
they had anticipated being sent back to Germany on the conclusion of the raid, which had been intended as a demonstration against the Islands in order to hearten the Turks, whose moral was very low. The "Breslau" had been struck by no less than from six to eight mines. The damage to the "Goeben" had been caused by one mine. The mines into which these ships had run were British mines of early type. The "Goeben" had grounded on a spit of sand, and the damage to her appeared serious. Fog had prevented operations by aircraft against the "Goeben" during the forenoon of Monday, the 21st January. At that time the "Goeben" was still in the same position. Heavy smoke was still coming from her funnels, which seemed to indicate that she was able to use her steam. The size of the hole would decide whether she could be re-floated or not. Even if re-floated, she was not likely to be of much use, as she could not be docked at Constantinople for substantial repair. The two British destroyers engaged had done very fine work.

The War Cabinet decided that—-

The information derived from the prisoners concerning the moral of the Turks should not be published.

Hong Kong.

14. The Deputy First Sea Lord also read a despatch from the Rear-Admiral at Hong Kong, stating that the Captain of the Russian ship "Orel" had sent him the following information:—

(a.) Ships will probably unable to meet their obligations here on account of lack of credit.
(b.) He may want to send about 100 men of Maximalist tendencies back to Russia.
(c.) He dare not in any case go back to Vladivostock with his midshipmen on board, as they would be murdered.
(d.) He may offer to place his ships and services of those officers and men who elect to remain in them at the disposal of British Government for such service as may be required of them.

The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that the Rear-Admiral at Hong Kong had consulted with the Governor, who concurred with him in the desirability of requesting instructions in case any of the above eventualities arose. The relations on board between officers and men were not entirely satisfactory.

Military Service Bill:
Negotiations with the Amalgamated Society of Engineers.

15. A letter was read from Mr. Wardle, M.P., addressed from the Labour Party Conference at Nottingham, to Mr. Barnes, suggesting that the Prime Minister should address a meeting of the delegates of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers who were meeting in London to discuss their attitude towards the Military Service Bill.

Mr. Barnes said that he was endeavouring to get into touch with Mr. Brownlie, of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, who was in charge of the delegates, and would communicate with the Prime Minister as soon as he had obtained further information regarding the attitude of the delegates. He strongly recommended that the Prime Minister should not offer to attend the meeting, but thought that if an invitation was issued to the Prime Minister the matter should be carefully considered, in consultation with Sir Auckland Geddes.

Greece:
Supplies for.
Government were not carrying out their part of the bargain in regard to supplies to Greece.

Referring to Table (B) of the Memorandum, as regards the supply of artillery, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that it had been agreed that the nine batteries "de pièces longues" should be supplied by the French; of the nine batteries of howitzers referred to in the Memorandum, 12 guns had been sent, eight were now going from France, and, of the remainder, sixteen were awaiting shipping at Woolwich.

Mr. Graeme Thomson said that the Ministry of Shipping could arrange to take everything that was offering in this respect. As regards the hospitals, these had been shipped. The wagons referred to had not been shipped because the Greeks had not yet selected which pattern of lorries they wanted. It was clear that some misunderstanding had arisen among the Departments concerned as to the supply of rolling stock which had not been shipped to Greece. In this connection telegrams from Lord Granville (Nos. 52 and 64) were read, from which it appeared that the pretext given by M. Venizelos as to why the Greek Army could not even be partially mobilised was because of the failure of the British Government to supply the railway transport which had been promised.

With reference to our undertaking to ship 282,000 tons of wheat up to the end of June next, it was not clear whether the wheat and oats for the embodied troops were to be regarded as an additional amount. In view of the great importance of equipping the Greek army so that they may be mobilised to withstand an attack which might be made by the enemy at any time on the Salonica front, the War Cabinet requested—

Lord Milner to examine the list of supplies item by item, and to see what could be done to accelerate shipment.

Lord Milner undertook to call a meeting the same afternoon, at which the War Office should be represented, when he would examine the question and draft a message for the Prime Minister to send in reply to M. Clemenceau, a copy of which should be sent by the Foreign Office to Lord Granville, to be shown to M. Venizelos.

Supply of Oats to the Italian Army.

17. With reference to War Cabinet 273, Minute 18, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Sir E. Wyldbore Smith (Paper G.T.-3372) on the subject of Oats for Italy.

It was pointed out in the Memorandum that for the first quarter of this year, and particularly in the months of January and February, the situation had become acute. The monthly requirements of the Italian army, based on a very low ration, was 60,000 tons. As against this figure the estimated arrivals (military) during January, February, and March, amounted to 20,000, 15,000, and 42,000 tons respectively. In view of the fact that the oats situation in this country and in France was relatively much better than in Italy, Sir E. Wyldbore Smith suggested that some of the floating cargoes of oats en route to this country should be diverted to Italy, and that representations should be made to the French Government with a view to their taking similar action.

The Quartermaster-General said that it would be possible to divert one floating cargo, namely, that of the S.S. "Henley," amounting to 4,650 tons, now en route to Salonica, but that it would not be possible to spare any cargoes en route to the British Army in France, because the reserves there were down to 11 days on the 18th January, and the situation was critical.

These considerations gave rise to the question as to whether the British ration of oats should not be reduced. It appeared that whereas the Italian ration averaged 3 lbs. per horse, and
the French ration 7 lbs., the British ration was 12 lbs. These were average amounts for light and draught horses. If the British average was reduced from 12 lbs. to 10 lbs., namely, one-sixth, the saving on the present consumption of 86,500 tons per month would be tantamount to a reduction of about 14,000 tons per month. When last year the ration of oats was cut down by one-half, the mortality amongst horses went up from 2 per cent. to 5 per cent.

The Shipping Controller suggested that the large amount of oats said to be available in Ireland, which had been estimated at about 300,000 tons were not yet forthcoming.

Sir John Beale pointed out, however, that owing to their failure to obtain maize, the Irish had been feeding oats to pigs, and it was impossible to buy any except small quantities for seed purposes. The difficulty of obtaining supplies in Ireland was increased by the lack of transport and threshing facilities.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that the whole question of the supply and distribution of oats for both civil and military purposes, including the ration for horses, required further consideration, and, in view of the relative stocks in the Allied countries, directed—

The Secretary to place the question on the Agenda Paper for the next Paris Conference.

In the meantime they decided that—

(a.) The Shipping Controller should divert the steamship "Henley" to Italy;

(b.) The Secretary of State for War should make arrangements to supply a further 10,000 tons of oats to Italy as soon as possible;

(c.) The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should make representation to the French Government with a view to their also sending assistance to Italy by the diversion of a cargo or cargoes of oats.

18. With reference to War Cabinet 322, Minute 18, the War Cabinet had before them the following documents:—

Memorandum by Sir George Cave (Paper G.T.-3329).
Memorandum by Mr. G. H. Roberts (Paper G.T.-3360).
Note by Mr. Long (Paper G.T.-3379).

Foreign Office telegrams—
Paris No. 84, of the 17th January, 1918.
Rome No. 46, of the 17th January, 1918.
Washington No. 243, of the 17th January, 1918.

Sir George Cave called attention to a leaflet printed for the British Socialist Party for circulation to the Labour Party at the Nottingham Conference. The leaflet was a clear breach of the regulations; it had been seized by the police, and a prosecution was under consideration. Copies of "The Call," containing the substance of the leaflet, had also been seized. It was evident that the presence of M. Litvinoff was being exploited in the interests of pacifism, and it was desirable to come to some decision as to the treatment to be meted out to him by the Government.

Lord Robert Cecil said that, in his view, one of two courses should be adopted: complete freedom of speech, or drastic all-round repression. He believed free speech to be the wiser policy. To suppress small newspapers only gave them and their teachings a tremendous advertisement. As to M. Litvinoff, he ought to be dealt with in the light of the Government's general policy towards the Bolsheviks. To drive him out of the country
would be tantamount to a declaration of war against the Bolsheviks. On the other hand, he could be repatriated, like any other Ambassador, as a person not liked by His Majesty's Government. He had discussed the matter with Sir George Buchanan, who, on the whole, rather assented to the view that the longer a decision was postponed the better.

Mr. G. H. Roberts said he agreed with the course taken in the particular instance by the Home Secretary. There was no doubt that the propaganda of the British Socialistic Party, backed in this case by the Independent Labour Party, was tending to undermine the moral of the people. He agreed that the house-to-house distribution of leaflets was a most damaging method of propaganda. But he would like to lay stress, not on the need for repression, but on the great need for a counter-offensive, especially in the columns of the smaller provincial papers.

The War Cabinet decided—

(a.) To approve the action which was being taken by the Home Secretary, who should, if possible, seize the machinery of the offending press;

(b.) That efforts should be made to supply the local newspapers with material on the lines indicated in the Memorandum of the Minister of Labour;

(c.) That no action should be taken for the moment in respect to M. Litvinoff.

19. The War Cabinet had before them the following documents:

Memorandum by the Admiralty on Labour for Merchant Shipbuilding (Paper G.T.-3408).


Sir Alan Anderson called attention to paragraph 47 of the Draft Report on Man-Power, and urged that a decision should be reached at once (without prejudice to a decision on the rest of the Report) with regard to the release of 20,000 skilled men from the army for shipbuilding. It was now some three months since steel began to arrive in the quantity required, and it was becoming more and more obvious that the limiting factor in carrying out the shipbuilding programme was this supply of skilled men. More unskilled men than could be properly be absorbed were at present arriving at the shipyards, and the bad effect of such a momentary surplus on the minds of the employers and of the men ought not to be overlooked.

General Macready said that it was impossible, until the card index for the whole army had been completed, to say what number of skilled men was likely to be available. Further, it must be borne in mind that at the moment the infantry was short by over 100,000 men, and that during the first sixteen days of January fresh recruits had numbered only 8,300, of whom two-thirds were boys of eighteen. He doubted whether 20,000 skilled men for shipbuilding could be found.

On the other hand, it was pointed out that the position of the army in France was likely to be improved in view of arrangements now in progress with the United States Government.

Sir Auckland Geddes said it was impossible to give any satisfactory estimate of the number of skilled men available at home and in France. Many were probably not fit for general service. He had asked the War Office to make preparations for the release of skilled men from the Home army, and a War Cabinet decision was now required.
The War Cabinet decided that—
The 20,000 men for shipbuilding now asked for should be released from the forces at home and overseas, from all categories, but excluding officers and warrant officers.

20. With reference to War Cabinet 327 and to telegrams No. 1494A, dated the 17th January, 1918, and No. 2148, of last year, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was authorised to send the following telegram to Mr. Lindley for Major Keyes:

"The Government are so anxious to give immediate financial assistance to our friends that if the advance can be utilised immediately to assist them, and on the understanding that the unnamed financier is P——, the Government will sanction the proposal. You see therefore that we are prepared to take this course entirely on your advice."

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 22, 1918.
SECRET.

WAR CABINET, 329.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, January 23, 1918, at 10:30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. George N. Barnes, M.P.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minutes 5 to 13).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 5 to 13).

Major-General Sir G. M. W. Macdonogh, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence (for Minutes 5 to 13).

Brigadier-General A. W. F. Knox, Military Attaché to the Russian Embassy (for Minute 5 to 13).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 5 to 11).

Mr. W. A. S. Hewins, M.P., Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minute 4).

The Right Hon. Lord Rhondda, Food Controller (for Minute 3).

Mr. Andrew Uthwatt, Ministry of Food (for Minute 3).

Mr. G. J. Wardle, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (for Minutes 1 and 2).

The Right Hon. Sir A. H. Stanley, M.P., President, Board of Trade (for Minutes 1, 2, and 4).

The Right Hon. Sir George Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minutes 3 and 12).

Sir Evan Davies Jones, Bart., Board of Trade (for Minute 4).

The Right Hon. G. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour (for Minutes 1 and 2).

Sir David Shackleton, K.C.B., Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour (for Minutes 1 and 2).

The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 1 and 2).

Sir L. Worthington Evans, Bart., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Munitions (for Minute 4).

Mr. F. C. Kelkaway, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 1 and 2).

The Right Hon. Sir A. C. Geddes, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service (for Minutes 1 and 2).

Sir Stephenboson Kent, K.C.B., Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 1 and 2).

Sir Lynden Macassey, K.B.E., K.C., Admiralty Shipyard Labour Department (for Minutes 1 and 2).

Sir T. Munro, Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 1 and 2).

Mr. Noel E. Peck (for Minutes 1 and 2).

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Dally Jones, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgh, Assistant Secretary.
With reference to War Cabinet 326, Minute 3, the War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Minister of Munitions, together with the views of certain officers of his Department (Paper G.T.-3417), conveying the following suggestion as an alternative to the action proposed by the Committee on Production—

"Piece-work prices and premium bonus-time allowances, which do not enable the men concerned to earn amounts reasonably in excess of those earned by time-workers in receipt of the 12½ per cent. bonus, shall be revised."

Mr. Churchill recalled the discussion which had taken place at the War Cabinet on the 7th January, 1918 (War Cabinet 317, Minute 1). It was not then known what view would be taken by the trade union leaders. Since then, the Trade Union Advisory Committee had passed a resolution in favour of extending the 12½ per cent. over the time-workers, against a uniform advance to all piece-workers, but favouring the revision of low piece-rates. The Ministry of Labour had been impressed by this resolution, and had made a public statement of the policy which they intended to follow. It was with surprise, therefore, that he (Mr. Churchill) had read the decision of the War Cabinet on Monday last (War Cabinet 326, Minute 3) agreeing to an increase of 7½ per cent. to piece-workers generally. That was a very serious decision, and a reversal of the policy announced to the public. It would cost the country between 30 and 35 million pounds, and would immediately react, not only on time-workers, but on women workers, who always shared in piece-work advances. It was important that the Cabinet should remember that shipyard labour, which it was specially desired to appease, was a small fraction of the total number of workers affected by the decision. Whereas only some 900,000 were being given the advance of 12½ per cent., the extension to piece-workers would raise the number to over 3,000,000. There was no general demand for the advance which the Cabinet was now offering; the leaders were against it, and large numbers of men who would receive it did not deserve it. He recommended the Cabinet to adhere to the policy which had been publicly announced, and to deal with special cases as they arose, and particularly to make an attempt to revise low piece-rates. The general labour position was infinitely more manageable than it was five weeks ago, and with care, patience, and the provision of the necessary machinery, a gradual solution of the present difficulties could be achieved. There was a further reason why the Cabinet should not grant an advance at the moment; the Government was on the eve of serious trouble with the labour movement in connection with the Military Service Bill. The present grant should be kept in hand as a means of mollification later on.

Mr. Barnes reminded the War Cabinet that they had entrusted the Ministry of Labour with power to settle with the piece-workers within the limits of 7s. The 7½ bonus now proposed was roughly the equivalent of 7s. It was quite true that the Trade Union Advisory Committee had adopted the resolution referred to by Mr. Churchill, and if that policy had been pursued at first a solution might have been reached; but difficulties had accumulated with each day's delay, and cases had come up so rapidly that the Committee on Production had decided it to be impossible to deal with them except by some general overhead advance. The position in Belfast was particularly serious. A strike had only been prevented by Sir George Gibb promising that his award would be made immediately, but the Committee on Production was rightly unwilling to issue its award without knowing whether it was to apply generally or not. The men on the Clyde and Tyne would certainly demand to share in any award made to Belfast. He (Mr. Barnes) would not object to a limit being placed so that the most highly paid men should not share in the advance, but a
decision must be taken at once, otherwise the Committee on Production would be overwhelmed.

Sir Lynden Macassey pointed out that the award to the time-workers was having a bad effect on the production of the piece-workers, who were now reverting to time-work, and men who were engaged on new shipbuilding construction were reverting to repairs. Examples were quoted of men who did specific jobs on the premium bonus rates in 28½ hours who were now on time-rates taking 56½ hours.

Mr. G. H. Roberts emphasised the importance of bringing the workmen back to payment by results, in the interest of increased output, and, in reply to a question whether the grant of 7½ per cent. would do this, he stated that the employers whom he had consulted were of that opinion. The employers believed that it was better to settle on a basis of 7½ per cent., now, with men's good will, than to be forced later to concede 12½ per cent. in an atmosphere of ill will. It was true that the Trade Union Advisory Committee had passed the resolution referred to, but it was significant that they had completely failed to restrain their unions from demanding 12½ per cent. The leaders, in fact, had little or no influence on the situation. The cases to be dealt with were so numerous that a general formula was indispensable. The advance in the form of 7½ per cent. was preferable to a money advance, because the men were accustomed to a percentage system, and were suspicious that the 7½ was some subterfuge. He was certain that if the advance was not immediately conceded there would be such a serious upheaval that the Government would be forced to grant the 12½ per cent., and would have to do so to men irritated by delay.

Sir Auckland Geddes said that he adhered to the views he had expressed at previous meetings, viz., that the decision should be left to the Ministry of Labour, and that sooner or later, the 12½ per cent. would have to be conceded all round. Employers were most anxious to have to deal with one Government Department, and if the Ministry of Labour had not the necessary machinery, then the Ministry of Munitions should contribute some of its staff to the Ministry of Labour. The policy proposed by Mr. Churchill would have been preferable had there been time for negotiation, but there was no time available.

Sir Stephenson Kent was convinced that a general grant, even of 12½ per cent., would not bring peace, but rather would initiate a new series of demands, because the disabilities of the time-workers and the low piece-rate workers would still be unremedied. It was the man working on low piece rates who was reverting to time rates. The Ministry of Munitions had found it possible to arrive at a settlement with the steel trade in a Joint Conference of Employers and Trade Unionists lasting two days. Given good will there should be no insuperable difficulty in adjusting low piece rates. He wished it were possible to get right away from the 12½ per cent. formula.

Sir David Shackleton pointed out that it was quite impracticable, at a time like the present, to attempt a revision of piece rates: they involved complicated questions of materials, machinery, and men, and would mean negotiations running into many months.

Mr. Kellaway believed that the recommendation of the Ministry of Labour did not remove the hindrance to increased production.

The War Cabinet, in coming to a decision, had in mind their previous decision to entrust the problems under consideration to the Ministry of Labour. They were also impressed with the supreme urgency of increasing the output of tonnage, even at great financial cost to the nation.

The War Cabinet confirmed the decision arrived at at the meeting held on Monday, the 21st January, 1918 (War Cabinet 325, Minute 3).
Mr. Churchill believed the decision was one which would not only not lead to an increase of output, but would unsettle the time-workers throughout the whole munitions industry.

2. Mr. G. E. Roberts called the attention of the War Cabinet to a dispute which had been going on for some time in the London area in regard to the establishing of a district rate for sheet-metal workers of 1s. 1d. per hour. This claim had been put to arbitration on no less than six occasions, and in each case it had been held that the claim was not established. He had received on the previous day a deputation representing the officials of the union and the men. If the demand of the men were conceded, the total war advance which they would obtain would amount to 40c. per week as against 27s. 6d. (including the 12½ per cent.) received by the engineers on plain time-work. Some forty-four firms had, in every case without the consent of the Government, paid the 1s. 1d., or more. Some three firms in aircraft manufacture were refusing to make the concession, and in their refusal were supported by the Government Departments concerned and the Employers' Association. The amount in dispute was not very large, but the principle involved was very serious, for if the new rate were conceded for this industry, similar claims would follow from the general engineering and shipbuilding industries, and a new cycle of advances would be started, creating a similar disturbance to that set up by the 12½ per cent. bonus. He had informed the representatives of the men that he had no power to grant their demand for a 1s. 1d. per hour rate, but he had undertaken that, in so far as their demand for a war bonus and the 12½ per cent. were concerned, he would expedite a settlement of any outstanding claims. He intended to refer the question of the 12½ per cent. to the Committee on Production as soon as the strike terminated.

Sir Stephenson Kent represented the views of Sir William Weir, the Director-General of Aircraft Production. The limit of output at present in the aircraft industry, so far as the manufacture of aeroplanes was concerned, was the output of the sheet-metal working departments, and this applied very definitely to the output of large bombing machines. At the present rate of output the London Aircraft Factories were turning out approximately 150 machines per week, and every week the sheet-metal workers were out on strike this number of machines was lost. Next, some of the London aircraft builders supplied metal fittings for many aircraft firms all over the country, and this represented a further loss of some 50 machines per week. Next, a large number of radiators were made in the London district by sheet-metal workers, and the influence of this might easily represent the loss of an additional 50 machines per week. Accordingly, the continuance of the strike meant the loss of approximately 280 machines per week, including a number of the most valuable machines for the early spring campaign. In his view they were not warranted in incurring such a loss of output by withholding 2d. an hour from a few firms. On the other hand, in view of the recent interruptions of work in various branches of the aircraft and engineering industries, he would be prepared to face a strike of two or three weeks' duration if such a course would guarantee a settled labour atmosphere for the future.

In reply to a question it was stated not to be possible to obtain the necessary sheet metal from France, owing to the labour required on the material, the varieties of design, &c.

The War Cabinet took note of the situation, but came to no decision.
3. The War Cabinet approved the action proposed by the Food Controller to deal with offences against the Food Control Orders, as set forth in Paper G.T.-3384, viz.—

That a short Bill should be introduced under which offenders should, in addition to being liable to the Criminal Law, become debtors to the Crown in respect of the amount, or double the amount, of any excess price charged by them above the fixed minimum price.

4. The War Cabinet had before them Interim Report No. 8 of the Economic Offensive Committee, dealing with a scheme for the development of the British dye industry (Paper G.-187).

Sir Albert Stanley summarised the recommendations set forth in the Report, and stated that, broadly, the object was to give the Board of Trade, in dealing with the dye industry, powers similar to those enjoyed by the Ministry of Munitions in relation to industries controlled by that Department. It was desired to make this country as independent as possible of supplies from Germany. To do this it would be necessary that financial advances should be made to private firms engaged in the dye trade, with the object of promoting developments and extensions. These advances might be in the form of grants or loans. The Board of Trade should retain powers to regulate such developments and extensions; to limit profits; to decide the kinds and quantities of dyes to be manufactured; to regulate by licence the import of dyes after the war; and to secure priority for materials and labour, and to provide for the exemption of chemists and chemical engineers from military service, as set out in the memorandum of the Board of Trade. It was an essential accompaniment to any scheme adopted that some effective assurance should be given that the importation of dyes into this country should be prohibited except under licence for a considerable period after the war. The powers already exercised by the Board of Trade to restrict the importation of a commodity as a whole (so long as they do not discriminate between the countries of origin) do not depend on emergency legislation, but on the Customs Consolidation Act, and will therefore continue after the war without further legislation. In reply to a question whether, if the recommendations now put forward were adopted, this country could be made completely independent of German dyes, Sir Albert Stanley said that it was a question of degree, and that it was desirable to make as much progress as possible during the war.

Sir Evan Jones believed that, if the authority now asked for were given by the War Cabinet, it would be possible in a few years' time to make the industry self-supporting, and the country to all intents and purposes independent of the German supply. The class of dye in use before the war was to a considerable extent devoted to what might be called "luxury trades." That class was not likely to be so much in demand after the war. It was important that this country should have ample plant and suitable organisation to produce dyes for which there would be a big world-market. There was reason to think that the dyes which were now being accumulated in Germany would not be in such general demand after the war as before. At any rate, we ought to be in a position to compete, but without obtaining the powers now asked for, we would not be in such a position.

The War Cabinet considered the difficulty of giving, without legislation, the assurance asked for to private firms—an assurance which would lead them to invest large sums of money—which might be repudiated by subsequent Governments.
The War Cabinet decided—
(a.) To approve the recommendations set forth in the Interim Report.
(b.) That a statement should be made by the Leader of the House in explanation of the policy adopted.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 328, Minute 16, the discussion of the question of furnishing supplies to Greece was resumed in the light of the information furnished by Lord Milner's enquiries.

Lord Milner pointed out that everything that Greece had asked for, with the exception of rolling-stock, and 36 tractors, the supply of which had been dependent on Treasury consent, had either been already shipped to that country or was in readiness to go. Last November the wheat requirements for the whole of Greece were gone into, and a compact was drawn up to supply 282,000 tons of wheat between that date and the end of June. Lord Milner stated that, previous to the above agreement, we had undertaken, in August and September, to supply, if possible, 5,000 tons of wheat per month for military requirements. The question now arose as to whether this 5,000 tons per month was included in the 282,000 tons before mentioned, or not. Lord Milner said that the latter allotment ought to cover the needs of the army as well as those of the civilian population. In answer to a question, Lord Milner said that not only was the supply of the 282,000 tons actually being met out of the Allied pool, but that Greece had priority over our other Allies. M. Venizelos was said to be satisfied with this arrangement.

The War Cabinet decided that—
Lord Milner should draft a telegram, for the approval of the Prime Minister, to be sent to M. Clemenceau, stating that the British Government had gone into the question of supplying 5,000 tons of wheat per month to Greece over and above the 282,000 tons which it was agreed to supply between November 1917 and the end of June 1918, and considered that the military requirements were included in the total amount to be so supplied.

6. The Secretary of State for War informed the War Cabinet that he had issued orders for the oat ration for horses of all British forces everywhere to be reduced by 2 lb. This reduction would mean a saving of half a million tons of shipping. Lord Derby requested, therefore, that this matter should not be brought up at the forthcoming meeting of the Supreme War Council at Versailles.

7. The Secretary of State for War stated that he proposed, subject to the approval of the medical authorities, that the scale of rations of troops stationed at home should be modified forthwith so as to embrace two classes:
(a.) Troops under training or otherwise in preparation for service overseas, and mobile formations actually employed in home defence;
(b.) All other troops at home.

In the case of (a) the present home service scale of rations will be maintained. In the case of (b) the following reductions to be made at once:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Reduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meat</td>
<td>from 12 oz. to 8 oz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>from 2 oz. to 1 oz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon</td>
<td>from 2 oz. to 1 oz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea</td>
<td>from ½ oz. to ¾ oz.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This reduction, if carried out, would mean a saving of—

2,000 tons of meat per month.
500 tons of sugar per month.
500 tons of bacon per month.
60 tons of tea per month.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for War to make the suggested reductions after consultation with the medical authorities.

Artillery from Russia to be used in Roumania.

8. The Secretary of State for War read a telegram which M. Clemenceau had received from General Berthelot, to the effect that the Roumanian General Staff were studying the question of forming three new divisions to replace the Russian divisions which were being withdrawn from the Roumanian front. The telegram stated that General Tcherbatscheff was prepared to give the necessary artillery to these new divisions by withdrawing it from the Russian divisions, if the Allies approved. M. Clemenceau had informed the Secretary of State for War that he was sending the necessary authorisation to General Berthelot, and asked that the British Government should do the same.

The War Cabinet considered that the man on the spot should be trusted, and approved the suggestion that material should be taken over from the Russian divisions that had been withdrawn on the Roumanian front, and he supplied to the Roumanian army. Russia being credited, and Roumania being debited, with the value of the same, and requested—

The Secretary of State for War to communicate to M. Clemenceau the War Cabinet's decision.

The Italian Front.

9. The Director of Military Intelligence stated that, according to information received from prisoners, an attack on the line held by the French near Astico might be expected during the first fortnight in February.

Serbs from Russia at Salonica.

10. The Director of Military Intelligence stated that a number of Serbs had arrived at Salonica from Russia, and were already incorporated in the Serbian army.

The "Goeben" and "Breslau."

11. With reference to War Cabinet 328, Minute 13, the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff informed the War Cabinet that the air attacks on the "Goeben" were still being continued, and it was known that a certain number of direct hits had been obtained. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff read a telegram from Vienna (through Geneva) which stated that the "Goeben" may be considered as lost, but that efforts were being made to save the bigger guns, whilst the ammunition had been thrown overboard. The question was asked whether news of the disaster to the "Goeben" and the "Breslau" had reached Constantinople, and

The Director of Military Intelligence was instructed to take the necessary steps for the news to be spread in Constantinople.

Russia: Anglo-Russian Military Service Agreement.

12. The War Cabinet had before them a Paper by Mr. Balfour on the subject of the conscription of Russian subjects in this country (Paper G.T.-3411).
Mr. Balfour explained the difficulty which had arisen in the working of the convention agreed between His Majesty's Government and the late Russian Government. Under the Act of Parliament upon which the convention was founded, power was given, without appeal, to the Ambassadors in both countries to grant exemptions from military service. M. Litvinoff, the representative of the Bolshevik Government, would undoubtedly exempt all the East End Jews from military service, if he could. This would create an intolerable position in the East End, where these Russian Jews were making large sums of money by supplanting British shopkeepers who had been called up for military service.

General Macdonogh stated that there were about 25,000 of these Russians of military age in this country, of whom only about 4,000 had so far been called up. From the counter-espionage point of view, it was most desirable that these aliens should be either got into the army, interned, or deported to Russia. The majority of them were Jews. He had accordingly seen Dr. Weizmann, the President of the English Zionist Federation, who had expressed the opinion that it was important that the Jewish regiment, to which these Russian Jews were usually sent, should be despatched to Palestine at the earliest possible date. Orders had accordingly been given to the regiment, which was now stationed at Plymouth, to prepare for service overseas, and transport was being awaited. He feared that a majority of the remaining East End Jews cared very little for Zionism, and were only anxious to make profits. Under the convention an option was given to these aliens either to serve in the British army or else to return to Russia. The tonnage difficulty prevented the latter alternative being made use of in practice, and this fact was known to a good many of the aliens.

Lord Derby stated that there had been some trouble in the Jewish regiment at Plymouth, but on being addressed by their Commanding Officer, Colonel Paterson, who had a great hold over them, they were unanimous in desiring to proceed to Palestine to fight. He hoped that the Government would remain firm, and continue to enforce the Military Service Acts in regard to these Russians. Rather than allow them to remain in the East End, he thought that, failing their being got into the army, the most practical suggestion would be to send them to a concentration camp at Aberdeen or Hull, to await transport to Russia, and that they should be made to understand distinctly that they would not be allowed to return to this country.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Military Service Acts should continue to be applied to Russian subjects in this country, and that, in the event of it being impossible to get all of them into the army, they should be sent to camps, as suggested by Lord Derby, and be made to understand that their return would not be permitted.

The working out of this decision was to be left to an Inter-Departmental Committee, to be arranged by Lord Derby, consisting of representatives of—

The War Office,
The Foreign Office,
The Home Office,
The Ministry of National Service.

13. The War Cabinet had before them the question of a date for the next meeting of the Supreme War Council at Versailles. After consultation as to a date which would give time for the representatives of Italy to be present, it was agreed that Wednes-
day, the 30th January, would be a suitable date, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was requested to—

Send a telegram to Paris suggesting that the next meeting of the Supreme War Council should be held at Versailles on Wednesday, the 30th January, 1918.

With reference to subjects that might be considered at the meeting of the Council, it was decided that—

(1.) The Prime Minister and Lord Milner represent the British Cabinet at that Council, and that full powers be given them to decide all questions relating to—

(a.) The extension of the British front, and

(b.) The disposition and command of the General Reserve on the Allied Western front.

(2.) In view of the statement produced by the Secretary of State for War, the supply and distribution of oats should not be submitted to the Supreme War Council.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 23, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 330.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.,
on Thursday, January 24, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 2 to 6).
The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minutes 2 to 5).
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 5).
Major-General Sir G. M. W. Macdonogh, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence (for Minutes 3 to 6).
The Right Hon. W. H. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minutes 1 and 2).
The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minute 1).
Mr. W. T. Layton, C.B.E., Ministry of Munitions (for Minute 1).
Sir E. Wyldhore Smith, Chairman, Commission internationale de Ravitaillement (for Minute 1).

Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 3 and 4).
Sir Leo G. Chiozza Money, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Shipping (for Minute 1).
Sir Percy Bates, Ministry of Shipping (for Minute 1).
Mr. J. A. Salter, Ministry of Shipping (for Minute 1).
The Right Hon. Sir A. Stanley, M.P., President of the Board of Trade (for Minute 1).
The Right Hon. Lord Rhondda, Food Controller (for Minute 1).
Mr. W. H. Beveridge, C.B., Ministry of Food (for Minute 1).
Sir J. F. Beale, K.B.E., Secretary, Wheat Commission (for Minute 1).

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Dally Jones, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.
Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.
Captain L. F. Burges, Assistant Secretary.
Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.
The Tonnage Situation.

1. THE War Cabinet had before them the following documents on the subject of the tonnage situation:—

(a.) Tonnage for cereals: Memorandum by the Ministry of Shipping (Paper G.T.-3388).
(b.) Tonnage for food: Memorandum by the Food Controller (Paper G.T.-3415).
(c.) Tonnage for nitrates: Memorandum by the Ministry of Munitions (Paper G.T.-3364).

Lord Rhondda explained that, with regard to the import of cereals, the Shipping Controller was not fulfilling his authorised programme, and that only by drastic cuts in the tonnage requirements of the Ministry of Munitions could the necessary cereals be obtained.

It was pointed out that the cutting down by the War Office of the oat ration to the army (War Cabinet 329, Minute 6) should relieve the situation to a considerable extent, which would be increased if the War Office were to reduce the oat ration to 9 lbs., and not 10 lbs. as proposed.

Sir Leo Money pointed out that this would not affect the shipping position in February and March, and little relief could be expected before May from the reduction of the oat ration.

Sir John Beale stated that on the 1st February there would be only twelve weeks' supply of cereals in the country, six weeks of this supply being on the farms, and that on 1st May he did not anticipate having in hand more than a four weeks' supply apart from that on the farms. This, in his opinion, was not a sufficient margin of safety. With regard to oats, there was no reserve at all for civilian purposes, but only enough for the supply to the army.

Sir Leo Money drew attention to p. 4 of Paper G.T.-3388, which showed that there would be a cereal shortage of 179,000 tons in the month of February alone, and asked for the War Cabinet's approval of the proposals made in the paper to give priority to food.

Mr. Churchill then drew attention to the position of the Ministry of Munitions in regard to this question, and stated that it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain the supply of munitions to the army owing to the fact that priority of tonnage was now being given to food and to the demands of the Admiralty. He would very much like to know whether the cutting down of the tonnage allotted to munitions was to be temporary or permanent, and he thought the War Cabinet should realise that, although his demands had been cut down to a certain figure, he had received in reality little more than half of that figure. He was working on the basis of a maximum production, and he would like the War Cabinet to be quite clear on this point.

Lord Derby supported the view expressed by Mr. Churchill.

Sir Leo Money said, in reply to Mr. Churchill, that, as the Cabinet had been already informed, a general tonnage deficit of large dimensions would obtain in each month of the year.

The Prime Minister said that the great factor of the war this year would be either military or moral, and, as far as he could see at present, he was inclined to think it would be the latter. Food was our first line of defence. Labour was already inclined to demand the cessation of hostilities, and the food position, unless improved, would aggravate this demand. It would be impossible to let the nation down over food. He did not mean by this that the output of munitions should be dangerously reduced. There was a minimum below which it was impossible to go. The tonnage question they had to face was one which had both a temporary and a permanent aspect as regards deficiency. With regard to supplying tonnage to our Allies, the Prime Minister thought that we should make a certain allotment to each Ally, and then leave the Ally to decide which commodity should have priority.
Mr. Long, while making reservation as to his powers of controlling oil tonnage, to which Lord Rhondda had agreed in the Memorandum, called attention to the transport difficulties in the United States of America. Steamers had been kept waiting in American ports for cargoes of wheat which could not be brought up from the Middle West to the quayside. He suggested that the United States Government should be asked to give priority for transport of foodstuffs over the railways. He then made some suggestions for relieving the food situation in this country. He thought that the inequality of distribution was the cause of a good deal of dissatisfaction, and that if there were an improvement in the internal transport of the country this dissatisfaction might, at any rate, be lessened. Also there was a good deal to be said for the idea of getting people, whose presence was not absolutely necessary in towns, to live in the country. There was no doubt that the food supply in the country was better than in the towns.

Lord Rhondda stated that while he appreciated the action taken by the Ministry of Shipping to give effect to the priority of food laid down by the Cabinet, this action (as set out in the Ministry of Shipping Memorandum) did not fully meet his requirements, and, in particular, did not provide for the purchase of the additional bacon placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Food by Mr. Hoover.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(a.) The Restriction of Imports Committee should reassemble and investigate the whole position regarding the different claims of the Food Controller, the Minister of Munitions, and other Departments.

(b.) The requirements of the Admiralty should be gone into separately by a body to be determined, in order to see if it were possible to effect a reduction in their demands upon the Ministry of Munitions.

(c.) The proposals contained in Paper G.T.-3388 were approved.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 240, Minute 9, a short preliminary discussion took place upon the situation that had been created in Parliament by the adoption of Lord Selborne's amendment in favour of proportional representation by a majority of 90 in the House of Lords.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that, as the result of consultation with the Home Secretary, he had formed the view that, if proportional representation were introduced into the Bill, it would not be possible to pass it during this Session, as the Boundary Commissioners would be required to recommence their investigations, which would take many weeks. He thought the House of Commons would reject most emphatically the proposal put forward by Lord Balfour of Burleigh that the franchise and the registration portions of the Bill should be passed into law while the clauses dealing with redistribution should be incorporated in a separate Bill to be passed in the next Session. In his opinion, the House of Commons would reject the Lords' amendments dealing with proportional representation by even bigger majorities than when the subject was debated in the Lower Chamber. He thought that a possible line of compromise would be found in the acceptance of the Lords' amendments dealing with the alternative vote.

Lord Curzon expressed the view that little would be gained by a discussion until it was known definitely what line the majority of the House of Commons would take.

Lord Robert Cecil expressed the hope that, whatever happened, the Government Whips would not be put on in the House of Commons against proportional representation.
Allies' Intentions for Arab Countries.

3. The Prime Minister called the attention of the War Cabinet to a telegram from Sir Reginald Wingate (No. 154 of the 22nd January, 1918), in which Sir Reginald Wingate said that, in the present critical state of Arab feeling, he was convinced that vague or general assurances about the future of the Arabs are not only ineffectual but harmful, and that explicit denials of enemy assertions are necessary in order to restore confidence in the Entente's good intentions. He asked if he might be authorised to notify King Hussein officially as follows:

1. That His Majesty's Government is still determined to secure Arab independence and to fulfil the promise made through him at the beginning of the Hejaz revolt.
2. That His Majesty's Government will countenance no permanent foreign or European occupation of Palestine, Iraq (except the province of Basrah), or Syria after the war.
3. That these districts will be in possession of their natives, and that foreign interference with Arab countries will be restricted to assistance and protection.

Lord Curzon said that the Middle-East Committee met every Saturday to consider questions relating to that part of the world.

Lord Curzon undertook to bring Sir Reginald Wingate's telegram before the Committee for examination at their next meeting.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 329, Minute 11, the First Sea Lord had nothing new to add to the previous reports in regard to the bombing attacks on the "Goeben."

In connection with the possibility (if hitting the "Goeben" by indirect fire over the Gallipoli Peninsula, the First Sea Lord said that this question had been studied at the Admiralty, but, in view of the fact that our ships would have to anchor in mine-fields off the Peninsula and be exposed both to enemy submarines and also to Turkish gunfire from the shore, the operation had not been considered practicable.

5. It was generally felt by members of the War Cabinet that a good deal of public anxiety was being aroused on the subject of the promotion to higher ranks in the Army of officers who had entered military service for the first time since August 1914. There appeared to be a general feeling that undue bias was given in favour of the selection for the higher commands and staff to officers of the old Regular Army. Criticism came more particularly from the Universities, which had supplied some of the most capable and active brains in the country, whose services were not being utilised to the best advantage of the nation and the Army. It was understood that the President of the Board of Education had strong views upon this subject.

Lord Milner stated that he was informed that only three officers who had had no previous military experience before the war had reached the rank of Brigadier-General, and none had reached the rank of Major General.

Lord Derby stated that it was extremely difficult to obtain accurate statistics upon this point, but that he was sympathetic to the policy of making the best use of civilian intelligence in the Army. Experience showed that only regular soldiers with long military experience were able to deal with an emergency problem such as had arisen at Cambrai. He informed the Cabinet that he had to make...
a speech upon the subject of War Office administration on the following Tuesday, in which he hoped to deal with this question.

Lord Derby said that he would be prepared to give the War Cabinet the substance of what he intended to say on Monday.

6. The War Cabinet resumed the general discussion on our policy in regard to Russia upon the lines dealt with in War Cabinet 327.

Mr. Balfour recapitulated the statement of our policy which he then made, adding that a telegram had been sent to Mr. Lindley at Petrograd, informing him that His Majesty's Government left it to his discretion as to when he and his staff should leave Petrograd should an emergency arise.

Lord Robert Cecil stated that, while he fully concurred in the present policy of His Majesty's Government, he thought that the question should be more fully considered, in view of the strong representations made by General Knox that the effect of our maintaining even informal relations with the Bolsheviks tended to discourage friendly elements in South Russia.

The War Cabinet adjourned the discussion of this subject to a special meeting of the War Cabinet to be held in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Room at the House of Commons at 6 p.m. that evening.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 24, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 331.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, January 25, 1918, at 6 P.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. George N. Barnes, M.P.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.

Major-General Sir F. B. Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for Minutes 1 to 5).

Lieutenant-General Sir J. S. Cowans, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., M.V.O., Quarter-Master-General to the Forces (for Minutes 6 to 10).

Brigadier-General Sir A. R. Crofton-Atkins, C.B., C.M.G., Director of Supplies and Transport, War Office (for Minutes 9 and 10).

Brigadier-General Sir G. K. Cockerill, C.B., Sub-Director of Military Intelligence, War Office (for Minute 12).

Sir Reginald Brade, K.C.B., Secretary, War Office (for Minute 12).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 6 to 8).

The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 9 to 12).

The Right Hon. Sir A. H. Stanley, M.P., President, Board of Trade (for Minutes 9 to 11).

The Right Hon. Sir George Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minute 12).

The Right Hon. G. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour (for Minutes 9 to 12).

Captain the Hon. Frederick Guest, M.P., D.S.O., Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (for Minute 12).

Mr. Gerard Fiennes, War Aims Committee (for Minute 12).

Major J. W. Hills, M.P., Ministry of Munitions (for Minute 12).

Mr. W. H. Beveridge, C.B., Ministry of Food (for Minutes 9 and 10).

Mr. W. H. P. Woodroffe, Ministry of Food (for Minutes 9 and 10).

Mr. G. E. P. Murray, C.B., Secretary, Post Office (for Minute 9).

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Dally Jones, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Fleet-Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.

Captain F. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.

[1365—331]
1. THE Director of Military Operations reported a successful Arab raid near Medina, ending in the capture of a small Turkish convoy.

2. The Director of Military Operations read a passage from a report by General Guillaumat concerning the present condition of the French forces on the Salonica front. They were, according to this report, short of supplies, and the troops were suffering from hunger. These conditions did not apply to the Italian and British troops. This state of affairs was serious, and would lead to public complaint in France before long.

   General Maurice stated that, according to figures checked at Versailles, the French troops on the Salonica front were 28,000 men below strength. Drafts amounting to 20,000 men were, however, being despatched.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 328, Minute 3, the Director of Military Operations read extracts from a French report concerning the state of the American Army. It was expected that there would be 8 divisions in France in March, 14 in June, and 28 in September 1918, and 28 in January 1919, but these divisions would require six months' training in France before they would be fit to take an active part in operations. Hence, by July only 4 trained divisions could be counted on, and by October only 8, with perhaps 4 half-trained divisions fit for a quiet sector. At the present moment there was one efficient division, and a second was now about to receive its first trench training.

   It was asked whether these figures were independent of the 150,000 lately promised. The answer was in the affirmative.

   It was also asked whether these 150,000 men would be as slow to become efficient as the divisions referred to in the French report.

   The Director of Military Operations pointed out that battalions could be trained in one-sixth of the time required for the training of a division. If the transport of these troops began at once, we should have some of these battalions in the line in May.

   The Secretary of State for War expressed a fear that the tonnage available for the transport of these troops was going to be cut down. He also adverted to the very backward state of the training of the American infantry.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 329, Minute 13, the Director of Military Operations read a telegram from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, and suggested that the Prime Minister should see Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig before discussing at Versailles the extension of the British front.

   The War Cabinet instructed—

   The Director of Military Operations to inform Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig that the Prime Minister would see him at Versailles on Tuesday next, 29th January, 1918.

   The Director of Military Operations pointed out that the decision to be taken now concerning the extension of the British front should not be affected by the expectation of American reinforcements, as there could not be enough Americans in line to modify the situation seriously before June.
Joint Note No. 12.

5. The War Cabinet had under its consideration Joint Note No. 12 from the Military representatives at Versailles, and a telegram from Sir William Robertson, dated 25th January, 1918 (Paper G.T.-3440), referring to it.

General Maurice gave some information about the present strength of the Turkish forces and other matters bearing upon the above.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that the question of the general scheme for military operations for the year 1918 raised by the Joint Note should be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of the Supreme War Council at Versailles, and gave full authority to the Prime Minister and Lord Milner to represent the War Cabinet in connection with any decision that might be arrived at by the Supreme War Council.

6. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that the mines which caused the loss of the two German torpedo-boats "A. 75" and "A. 77," as reported in the press, were probably British.

7. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that it was reported that a German submarine had probably been blown up by mines off the Start.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 330, Minute 4, the Deputy First Sea Lord stated that 49 British aeroplanes had attacked the "Goeben" between 8 A.M. on the 23rd and 8 A.M. on the 24th instant, and that 72 cwt. of bombs had been dropped on her, on the ships and boats round her, and on the aerodrome at Galata. Four direct hits with heavy bombs were reported on the "Goeben," and one which sank a small ship alongside her. He also stated that two British submarines had arrived in the neighbourhood of the Dardanelles, and that the Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean was also in that area.

9. The War Cabinet had before them memoranda on the Control of Road Transport by the President of the Board of Trade (Paper G.T.-3396), and by the Minister of Reconstruction (Paper G.T.-3435).

Sir Albert Stanley stated that the attention of the Board of Trade had been drawn to the desirability of co-ordinating various forms of horse and mechanical road transport, so that more effective use could be made of them. It was proposed to set up a Road Transport Board, consisting of representatives of each of the following Departments:

- Board of Trade (Petrol Control Department),
- Board of Trade (Horse Transport Department),
- Ministry of Munitions,
- Ministry of Food,
- War Office,
- Post Office,

And that the Terms of Reference should be:

"To co-ordinate the work of the existing Government Departments in connection with road transport; to determine what further measures are necessary to ensure the most economic use of road transport vehicles and their efficient
Food Allowances to Railway Workers.

10. The attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to the position of certain railwaymen who, owing to the long and irregular hours they were obliged to work, were put to great inconvenience at the present time in obtaining food when away from home.

Sir John Cowans thought it would be quite possible for the War Office to assist this special class of workers from army stores, by issuing allowances of food to the Railway Executive, for distribution.

The War Cabinet approved the suggestion put forward by the Quarter-Master-General.

Compensation to Railwaymen.

11. Sir Albert Stanley called attention to the demand for special compensation which was being pressed by certain classes of railwaymen who had to continue working during air raids. At present they were only entitled to be dealt with under the Workmen's Compensation Act, whereas they wished to be put on an equality with soldiers.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The demand of the railwaymen, as put forward by the President of the Board of Trade, should be conceded.

Propaganda at Home.

12. The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by Sir Edward Carson, on Propaganda at Home, covering communications from Major-General Swinton and Lord Denbigh (Paper G.T.-3419). Sir Edward Carson was strongly of opinion that the most valuable form of propaganda in this country would be lectures by wounded officers and by escaped prisoners of war.

Lord Derby was strongly opposed to the suggestion, on grounds of discipline. If officers were allowed to lecture on behalf of the War Aims Committee, it would be impossible to resist demands from pacifists to use private soldiers as speakers at their meetings. It was a question largely of uniform. If the men were not in uniform, their value as speakers would be greatly diminished.

General Cockerill said he had discussed the matter with the Director of Personal Services, and they were agreed that the proposal would react injuriously on army discipline. At present, if soldiers are found attending a meeting, they are ordered to move on by the Provost-Marshal. A very awkward situation might arise in cases of disagreement between soldiers in the audience and officers on the platform.
Mr. Churchill said it should be possible for the Government, with all its machinery, to make its propaganda far more effective than that of the pacifist organisations. The objections to the present proposal could be met by forbidding any soldier in khaki to lecture except by the special authorisation of the Army Council.

Captain Guest stated that the War Aims Committee was constantly being asked for speakers with experience of the war. He would like to submit to the War Office a list of officers and men with experience of the war and of public speaking who could be attached to the War Aims Committee for a short experimental period.

Mr. G. H. Roberts said he would like to see such men used for propaganda, but it would be difficult to withhold permission from men opposed to the war. He was of opinion that the proposal would lead to trouble.

Sir George Cave agreed that there would be an outcry, but he thought the gain was sufficiently great to outweigh the opposition.

Lord Robert Cecil thought the arguments for and against the scheme were very evenly balanced, but on the whole he favoured it.

It was pointed out that the War Cabinet could not overlook the fact that the Government had become definitely and officially responsible for propaganda. The Government was, in effect, running a Propaganda Department and financing it, and it was competent, therefore, to give instructions to soldiers attached to the Department.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The War Office should release officers and men for short periods for the service of the War Aims Committee.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
January 20, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 332.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, January 28, 1918, at 11 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P.

The following were also present:—

The Right Hon. LORD R. CECIL, K.C., M.P., Acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minute 2).

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

Captain the Hon. W. ORMSBY-GORE, M.P., Assistant Secretary.

The Turkish Theatre of War.

1. The War Cabinet deputed—

General Smuts to proceed to Egypt, with full power on their behalf to confer with Generals Allenby and Marshall, or their representatives, the Naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, the Government of Egypt, and any other authorities in regard to the military situation in the Middle East, and to advise the War Cabinet as soon as possible on the best use and co-ordination of all our resources in that theatre, with a view to the most vigorous prosecution of the war against Turkey.

The Secretary was directed—

(1.) To ask the Chief of the Imperial General Staff to arrange for General Marshall or his representative to meet General Smuts and to render him every possible assistance;

(2.) To notify the Admiralty, in order that they should also make all possible arrangements to assist General Smuts;

(3.) To notify the Foreign Office, in order that the High Commissioner in Egypt may be informed.
2. With reference to War Cabinet 230, Minute 2, a further discussion took place regarding the situation that had been created by the Lords' amendment dealing with proportional representation.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer informed the War Cabinet that the Home Secretary, in his speech, would refrain from dealing with the merits of proportional representation, but was bound to point out the effect that any inclusion of proportional representation would have on the fate of the Bill. The matter would be left to a free vote of the House of Commons. Members of the Government would be free to take what line they chose in the debate.

The view was expressed that the proposals in the Bill as it left the House of Commons, in regard to the alternative vote, would have to be dropped.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The attitude of the Government should be further considered by the War Cabinet when the result of the vote in the House of Commons was known.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S\W.,
January 28, 1918.
WAR CABINET. 333.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, January 29, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The following were also present:


Major-General Sir R. D. Whigham, K.C.B., D.S.O., Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 9).

Major-General Sir G. M. W. Macdonogh, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence (for Minutes 1 to 9).


Major-General Sir F. C. Shaw, K.C.B.; Chief of the General Staff, Home Forces (for Minute 1).

Major-General E. B. Ashmore, C.M.G., M.V.O., Home Forces (for Minute 1).

The Right Hon. H. W. Forster, M.P., Financial Secretary, War Office (for Minute 9).

The Right Hon. Lord Islington, G.C.M.G., D.S.O., Acting Secretary of State for India (for Minute 9).


The Right Hon. R. Munro, K.C., M.P., Secretary for Scotland (for Minutes 12 and 13).

Rear-Admiral G. F. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 9).

The Right Hon. W. H. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minutes 11 to 13).

The Right Hon. Sir G. Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minute 1).


The Right Hon. Lord Rhondda, Food Controller (for Minutes 12 and 13).

Mr. E. F. Wise, Ministry of Food (for Minutes 12 and 13).

The Right Hon. R. E. Prothero, M.V.O., M.P., President, Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (for Minutes 12 and 13).

Mr. T. H. Middleton, C.B., Food Production Department (for Minutes 12 and 13).

Mr. R. B. Greig, LL.D., Scottish Office, (for Minutes 12 and 13).

Professor W. G. Adams.

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Dally Jones, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
REFERRING to the air raid on London during the previous night, Major-General Ashmore said that three parties of German aeroplanes, totalling between 12 and 15 machines, crossed the coast, but that, according to his information, only three to five of these machines reached London. One German machine was engaged by our airmen and was destroyed at Brookford on its return journey over Essex. General Ashmore reported that we had 70 machines up during the raid, and that three or four of our airmen managed to engage the Gothas at quite close quarters. This showed a great improvement in effort on previous raids. General Ashmore expressed the opinion that when we had better search-lights, which were expected shortly, and when our airmen, who were improving every day, had had a little more practice, the Germans would find great difficulties when making a raid on London.

With regard to casualties, Sir George Cave stated that he was afraid between 40 and 50 people had been killed and a number wounded. There had been a stampede at Bishopsgate Goods Station, where women and children had been trampled to death.

The opinion was expressed that if this panic was mentioned in a press report, attention should be drawn to the fact that the stampede occurred among foreign-born inhabitants.

Sir Edward Henry reported that the greatest number of casualties had occurred in consequence of a direct hit on an air-raid shelter in Long Acre, 22 people being killed and 87 wounded. He then gave details as to where other bombs had fallen.

The question was asked as to whether it was advisable to mention casualties in official communiques.

Sir George Cave pointed out that if this were not done exaggerated figures of casualties were bound to be spread about.

The Cabinet decided that—

A press announcement should be issued as to casualties, if possible before the House of Commons met that afternoon.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 328, Minute 5, the Director of Military Intelligence reported that two more German divisions had arrived on the Western front, one from Russia and one from Italy, making a total of 170 German divisions opposed to the Franco-British forces in France.

3. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that confirmation had been received that Austrian motor batteries were now in the Lens area, but there was no indication of the presence of other Austrian troops.

4. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that one and a half Austrian divisions had arrived from Roumania on the Italian front, making forty-four Austrian divisions on that front in all. There were not more than four German divisions now on the Italian front.

5. The Director of Military Intelligence reported Arab activity on the Hejaz Railway. The Arabs had occupied Tafileh, south of Kerek. The Director of Military Intelligence said he thought the Turks would try and reoccupy this place, as they were rather worried about the situation of Kerek, which was a great centre of wheat supply.
The opinion was expressed that the Arabs were very backward in pursuing operations against the Turkish force at Medina.

The Director of Military Intelligence was requested—

To enquire into the position there and to report as to the information in possession of the War Office on the matter.

East Africa.

The Director of Military Intelligence reported that two columns in Portuguese East Africa were advancing from the east and west, and that the enemy was retiring to Mauika, and would probably be forced into the Lujenda district.

Loss of H.M.S. "Hazard."

The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that the old gunboat H.M.S. "Hazard" was sunk on the morning of the 28th instant, as the result of a collision with a hospital transport at the eastern entrance of Portsmouth Harbour. A Court of Inquiry had already been instituted.

The "Goeben" and "Breslau."

8. With reference to War Cabinet 331, Minute 8, the Deputy First Sea Lord reported that our aircraft had been unable to locate the "Goeben" on the 28th instant, and had reported definitely that she was no longer at Narra. Our aircraft had also searched the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmora, but without result, and it was probable that the "Goeben" had made good her escape to Constantinople. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that the Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean proposed to defer his report on the "Goeben" and "Breslau" operations until he had received more information with regard to the "Goeben."

Provision and Payment of Oversea Garrisons after the War.

9. The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Secretary of State for War dealing with the maintenance of overseas garrisons in the period immediately following the conclusion of peace (Paper G.T.-345).

The Adjutant-General explained that the overseas garrisons were almost entirely composed of non-regular troops whom it would not be safe to withdraw until reliefs were available. By October next there would be only 84,000 men liable to serve beyond the duration of the war, the majority of whom are warrant or N.C. Officers. Before the war the overseas garrisons numbered about 110,000. The Army Council thought it would be possible to call for volunteers who would undertake to serve for, say, two or three years after the war, preferably single men. These volunteers would be given two months' leave, and then would be drafted into units selected for garrison duty in India, Singapore, Hong Kong, Aden, Egypt, Malta, Gibraltar, the West Indies, and similar stations.

Mr. Forster said that if such a policy were adopted it would be necessary for the War Cabinet to decide whether the recently increased rates of pay (and separation allowances), which are for the duration of the war, should be continued to those who volunteered for the period of two or three years. He thought it would be easier to obtain volunteers to replace the garrisons now, while the war was on, than when peace was in sight.

Lord Islington urged that the matter was one of the greatest importance for the Government of India, and one on which it would be desirable to consult the Commander-in-chief in India.

General Whigham reminded the War Cabinet that the Territorial Forces had been in India for about three years, and that when peace came there would be a justifiable demand put forward that
they should be brought home. Some interim arrangement would therefore be necessary to provide continuity in the garrison of India, until we were able to see more clearly what the character and size of our future army be. He suggested that we should be prepared to continue the existing rates of pay as a temporary war measure, to cover the transition period.

It was pointed out that the question of demobilisation of the garrisons referred to would be affected by the tonnage available.

In view of the recognised importance of the bearing of this question on India, the War Cabinet decided that—

The Secretary of State for War and the Acting Secretary of State for India should further consider the question, in consultation with the Government of India, and report later to the War Cabinet.

War Priorities Committee:
Air Policy Committee.

Publication in Dominion Newspapers of a Weekly Review of the War Situation.

10. Lord Curzon undertook to preside at the meetings of the War Priorities Committee and of the Air Policy Committee during the absence of General Smuts.

11. The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by Mr. Long, regarding the publication in Dominion newspapers of a weekly review of the War Situation (Paper G.T. 3426). The proposal contained in it was approved, and the War Cabinet decided that—

The Colonial Office, in conjunction with the Secretariat of the War Cabinet, should prepare a weekly telegram on the War Situation, for the Dominion press, and that this weekly survey should also be communicated to the War Aims Committee for the benefit of the home provincial newspapers.

Live-stock Policy and Feeding-stuffs Position.

12. The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the President of the Board of Agriculture, covering a memorandum dealing with the serious shortage of concentrated foods for live-stock, which it was proposed to issue to the public (Paper G.T. 3434).

Mr. Prothero said it was necessary to impress farmers with the grave situation which had arisen, and that it had been thought it would be more effective to supply definite figures rather than general statements. The disclosures made in the memorandum were undoubtedly of an alarming character. On the other hand, it had to be remembered that the figures dealt only with concentrated foods, whereas live-stock largely depend also on roots, hay, and straw, of which the season's supply had been generally favourable. The reason for the present concentrated feeding-stuffs position lay in the large decrease of imports.

Mr. Long thought that, in the present state of public opinion, it would be undesirable to publish the figures given in the memorandum.

Mr. Munro believed that an appeal made to the Scottish farmers, even with the details omitted, would elicit a good response.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The publication of the memorandum should be authorised, on the understanding that the President of the Board of Agriculture should revise the memorandum in the light of the discussion, omitting in particular the figures given in Section I.
13. On the question of imported substitutes, Mr. Long called the attention of the War Cabinet to the tonnage available in ships now in South African ports, owing to the recent arrangements resulting in a decreased export of wool. He suggested that the space thus released might be used to import maize and other food-stuffs to this country.

The War Cabinet invited—

Mr. Long to discuss the matter with the Shipping Controller.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,

January 29, 1918.
SECRET.

WAR CABINET, 334.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on
Wednesday, January 30, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. George N. Barnes, M.P.

The following were also present:—

The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign
Affairs (for Minute 8).

The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minutes
1 to 3).

Major-General Sir G. M. W. Macdonough,
K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military
Intelligence (for Minutes 1 to 7).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B.,
Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes
1 to 7).

The Right Hon. Lord Rhondda, Food
Controller (for Minute 9).

Mr. U. F. Wintour, C.B., C.M.G., Per-
manent Secretary, Ministry of Food (for
Minute 9).

The Right Hon. G. H. Roberts, M.P.,
Minister of Labour (for Minute 9).

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon.
J. C. Smuts, K.C.

Sir D. J. Shackleton, K.C.B., Ministry
of Labour (for Minute 9).

The Right Hon. A. H. Illingworth, M.P.,
Postmaster-General (for Minute 9).

Mr. W. H. Beveridge, C.B., Second
Secretary, Ministry of Food (for Minute
9).

Professor W. G. Adams (for Minute 9).

Major the Hon. Waldorf Astor, M.P.,
(for Minute 9).

Captain S. Tallents, Ministry of Food
(for Minute 9).

Mr. S. P. Vivian, Ministry of Food (for
Minute 9).

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Dally Ones, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.

Fleet-Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.
The Italian Front.

1. The Director of Military Intelligence informed the War Cabinet that on the 28th instant the Italians carried out an offensive on the Asiago Plateau, to the west of the Brenta, and that information had been received from General Plumer that it was very successful and a great improvement on previous efforts, their infantry attacking really well. It appeared that the Italians gained most of their objectives, and captured from 1,500 to 2,000 prisoners. Some of our batteries and aeroplanes assisted in the attack. General Macdonogh added that, although they had to give up some ground owing to counter-attacks, the Italians still retained a certain amount of new ground on the 8-kilometre front in question.

Palestine.

2. The Director of Military Intelligence stated that the railway in Palestine had been advanced sufficiently to enable a construction train to get through, on the 27th instant, to Jerusalem.

Bombing Raid.

3. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that a bombing raid was carried out on Coolkerke Aerodrome on the 29th instant, and that a fire was observed to break out amongst the buildings at the north-west corner of the aerodrome.

The "Goeben."

4. With reference to War Cabinet 333, Minute 8, the Deputy First Sea Lord stated that an air reconnaissance over Constantinople indicated that the "Goeben" was secured at her old billet alongside the S.S. "General," inside the inner bridge of the Golden Horn.

Submarine "E 14."

5. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that there was no news of submarine "E 14," which entered the Dardanelles with a view to attacking the "Goeben," and that, as she had failed to carry out her instructions as to keeping up communications, it was feared that the submarine was lost.

H.M.S. "Raglan" and "M 28."

6. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that a court-martial had been ordered to enquire into the loss of H.M.S. "Raglan" and the monitor "M 28."

Naval Loss.

7. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that an armed boarding steamer, whilst employed on convoy duties, had gone ashore on the coast of Norway, and it was under consideration, in view of the reasonable time allowed by the Norwegians for the carrying out of repairs under international law, to arrange for the vessel to proceed to Stavanger with a view to her being made seaworthy.

Missions to America.

8. Lord Robert Cecil brought to the notice of the War Cabinet the question of officials proceeding to America to join up with our Missions there without Lord Reading being made aware of the fact prior to their sailing. He pointed out that, by the terms of Lord Reading's appointment, he was in supreme charge of the whole of the Missions, and had power to send individual members home or to veto the taking up of their appointment. Lord Robert Cecil proposed that, before sending an official to the United States the Department concerned should communicate by telegraph with Lord Reading, and that, when making an application for a passport for the official in question, a notification should be made on the document that Lord Reading had been informed. Lord Robert Cecil
proposed that a circular should be addressed to all Departments concerned, with a view to their taking such action as he had indicated, and he would issue the necessary instructions to the Passport Office.

The War Cabinet decided that—

All Departments should, in the first instance, communicate to Lord Reading by telegraph the name of the official they proposed to send, and that, in due course, if no reply was received from Lord Reading, application should be made for the necessary passport, it being stated on the application that Lord Reading had been communicated with.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 296, Minute 15, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Food Controller on compulsory rationing (Paper G.-192), together with a Report by a Departmental Committee of the Ministry of Food on Rationing and Distribution.

Lord Rhondda briefly indicated the main features of his rationing policy as set forth in his Memorandum. Under an Order of the 22nd December, 1917, Food Control Committees were authorised to introduce local schemes of rationing in respect of all articles of which there was a shortage, in particular meat and fats. A uniform scheme to deal with meat and fats was being introduced for London and the Home Counties, which would cover a quarter of the population of Great Britain. A similar scheme was contemplated to cover practically the whole of Scotland. Schemes were already in operation in the West Midlands and on the North-East Coast. It was hoped that by the beginning of March the whole country would be covered by local rationing schemes, dealing in all cases with fats, in many with meat, and in some cases with other articles also. There had been in operation since the 1st January, 1918, a national and uniform scheme of rationing for sugar, which was working very well and was dealing with about 40,000 removals per week. Lord Rhondda expressed his thanks for the able assistance given by the Postmaster-General and the Post Office staff which contributed largely to the success of the sugar rationing scheme. An attempt was being made in regards the local schemes to combine local responsibility with central direction and advice, although, while every effort was being made to secure substantial uniformity in the local schemes, there was bound to be considerable delay and difficulty in attaining such uniformity under the national scheme recommended. One of the most difficult duties of the local committees would be the grading of workers in various ration classes, and in this, as in other matters, the Ministry would afford all possible assistance to the local committees. Considerable progress had been made in dealing with the production and distribution of margarine. A number of factories had been set up, installations were being brought over from Denmark and Holland and by next summer the supply would be four times what it was in 1915. The meat position would also be easier presently. There was no doubt that last autumn cattle came forward too rapidly, and though the present shortage had been to some extent discounted, it had not been anticipated that it would be so serious. At the present moment quotas of meat for the different districts were being worked out. Committees of farmers were being established, who would be responsible for controlling the supply of the cattle and sheep for the market. These farmers knew that unless supplies were forthcoming the cattle would be commandeered by the Department. He did not wish to conceal from the War Cabinet that the question of securing to each locality its proper quota of
food supplies was one of very great difficulty, owing to the number
and variety of existing trade channels, but he thought that the
meat situation just now was at its worst and would steadily im­
prove. With regard to cereals, and to bread in particular, he was
anxious to postpone rationing to the last possible moment.

Mr. G. H. Roberts said that it was most important that
Labour should be fully represented on the Local Food Committees,
and that Labour should, in that way, be made to feel very definite
responsibility for the machinery of food distribution. It was not
enough to make Labour representation optional; he would prefer
to see it mandatory, at least in all the great industrial centres.
He asked if it would not be possible for the Ministry of Food to con­
sult the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress,
and the Executive of the Labour Party on the matter.

Lord Rhondda explained that the Food Control Committees
had, in the first instance, been set up by the local authorities,
and he had taken steps to reduce the number of traders where
they were over-represented on the Committees, and had instructed
the Committees to take on additional representatives of Labour
in cases of under-representation. He did not think it was
desirable to compel the Local Committees to add Labour repre­
sentatives; it was important to carry the good-will of the local
authorities. In reply to a question whether the Ministry could
not take exceptional measures to meet the acute situation now
prevailing, Lord Rhondda replied that he thought it would be
dangerous to give higher temporary prices as a bonus. Special
allowances were at present being despatched to particular districts
where the shortage was serious. He thought perhaps the Army
Council might do more in the way of releasing some of their stores
temporarily, but, of course, the Army was bound to have first
call on the supplies.

Major Waldorf Astor said that some steps were necessary
to ensure that the Local Committees used the powers more rapidly
and effectively which had been delegated to them. The situation
in Plymouth, for example, was most unsatisfactory, as the Local
Committee could not get out of the habit of condemning the
Government instead of realising that the duty of rationing
supplies properly had been laid on them. He found that soldiers
were obtaining plenty of milk while children were going short
through bad distribution. Lord Rhondda replied that Plymouth
was an exceptional case, where for a long time there had been an
acute controversy between the local authorities and the repre­
sentatives of Labour. That was no doubt a case where mandatory
powers would have to be exercised.

Lord Rhondda stated that under the national scheme local
officers would be needed all over the country which would
practically have to be under central control. They would have to
be constantly visited by a trained inspectorate, and a large number
of officers would have to be set up outside those of the local
authorities. The cost of installing the scheme had been estimated
at about 3,000,000l., to come from Imperial Funds.

Mr. Vivian (Ministry of Food) stated that in obtaining
suitable premises the help of the Land Valuation Department
would be sought, and the use of municipal offices, schools, and
so forth would be carefully considered before any new expendi­
ture was incurred. If as many as 6,000 offices were required, the
annual cost on a conservative estimate would be about 1,500,000l.
for premises and staff.

Lord Rhondda stated that, in spite of the general instructions
issued by the War Cabinet that Departments should consider
favourably any applications for staff from the Ministry of Food
(War Cabinet 297, Minute 5), the Ministry had found it impos­
sible to secure the necessary number of trained civil servants.

Mr. G. H. Roberts urged that, in view of the grave industrial
unrest now prevailing and of the way in which the food shortage
was being exploited by extremists, it was very desirable to explain
the situation to the public. A comprehensive and authoritative
statement, in the most precise language possible, should appear
simultaneously in as many newspapers as practicable, especially the
Sunday and provincial newspapers. It should deal clearly with
the fact of the world-shortage, and with our obligations to our
Allies, and should set forth the policy and activities of the
Ministry of Food. Such a statement could be widely used by the
War Aims Committee.

It was suggested in this connection that the Prime Minister
or the Chancellor of the Exchequer might invite a number of
editors to Downing Street, in order to explain the situation fully
to them.

Mr. Wintour, who had just returned from a visit to France,
said that he was convinced that, compared with this country, there
was an abundance of food in France.

Sir David Shackleton wished to warn the War Cabinet
against the policy of sending extra supplies of food into industrial
centres where there were stoppages, on the ground of such
stoppages. Once the shop stewards realised that such was the
policy of the Government there would be repeated stoppages over
the country. It was important to remove the impression which
now existed that centres like the Clyde, Coventry, and Barrow
were being rationed on the basis of their pre-war population.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that tonnage was a
vital factor in the situation, and that so far as finance was con­
cerned he was prepared to say, on behalf of the Treasury, that
the Ministry of Food should not run short of supplies for lack of
money.

The War Cabinet decided—

To authorise the Food Controller—

(a.) To introduce, as from the most convenient date, a
national system of compulsory rationing, covering
meat and fats, in addition to sugar.

(b.) To set up the machinery for this and to make all neces­
sary preparations for including also cereals, on the
understanding that before actually rationing cereals
he should report again to the War Cabinet for their
assent.

(c.) To incur the expenditure necessary for these objects,
including the setting up and staffing of any necessary
offices and inspectorate.

The War Cabinet further instructed the Food Controller—

(i.) To consider, in consultation with the Minister of Labour,
the measures to be taken to strengthen Labour repre­
sentation on Local Food Committees.

(ii.) To draft, in consultation with the Minister of Labour
and representatives of Newspaper Associations, a
comprehensive statement on the food situation, for sub­
mission to the Cabinet with a view to publication.

(iii.) To prepare a Memorandum on the food situation in
France.

(iv.) To submit a list of officials at present employed in
Departments, whose services he wished to obtain
temporarily for the Ministry of Food.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was instructed on
behalf of the Cabinet to approach the Department in
order that they might spare from their staffs some of
the assistants whose help was especially needed by the
Food Ministry in this emergency.

[Initialled] A.B.L.

S. Whitelaw Gardens, S.W.
WAR CABINET. 335.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, January 31, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. George N. Barnes, M.P.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

The following were also present:—

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 8).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 8).

Major-General Sir G. M. W. Macdonogh, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence (for Minutes 1 to 8).

The Right Hon. Sir George Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minutes 9 to 11).

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Dally Jones, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.

Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burges, Assistant Secretary.

1. The Director of Military Intelligence read to the War Cabinet extracts from a letter he had received from General Wagstaff, at American General Headquarters. The letter stated that there was great enthusiasm among American divisions about to go into the line, and also much satisfaction had been expressed by the American troops when they heard of the possibility of their battalions being incorporated in British formations. The letter also stated that the latter proposal had been well received by the American people.

2. The Director of Military Intelligence read a telegram from General Plumer, which stated that the Italians had still further advanced their line west of the Brenta, and had held the ground gained on the 29th January. This telegram was dated 12:10 A.M., 31st January, 1918.
The Director of Military Intelligence also read a telegram received from General Delme-Radelit, dated 2:20 A.M., 31st January 1918, which stated that the total number of prisoners taken by the Italians was about 2,500. Several pieces of artillery, over 100 machine-guns, several trench mortars, and much material had also been captured. The Italian losses were heavy, these being about 4,000 killed and wounded. Four Austrian divisions had been engaged during the battle.

3. The Director of Military Intelligence stated that on 26th January, 1918, Turkish troops marching on Taliféh from Kerak were attacked by Arabs at Seile-El-Hesa. Severe fighting took place, which developed to the advantage of the Arabs, and many Turkish prisoners were taken. The Turks were now retreating towards Kerak in disorder, and were being vigorously pursued by the Arabs.

4. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that our infantry and cavalry had had a small engagement with enemy pickets outside Aden.

Salonika.

5. The Director of Military Intelligence stated that successful raids had been carried out by British troops east of Lake Doiran.

East Africa.

6. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that, on 26th January, 1918, our troops advanced, and found the enemy holding the right bank of the Lukulézi River.

Submarine "E-14."

7. With reference to War Cabinet 384, Minute 5, the Deputy First Sea Lord stated that, according to a Turkish report, submarine "E-14" had been sunk off Kum Kale, seven men being saved.

Russian Auxiliary Cruiser "Orel."

8. With reference to War Cabinet 328, Minute 14, the Deputy First Sea Lord stated that the Russian auxiliary cruiser "Orel," a training-ship for cadets, had arrived at Hong Kong on the 24th December, 1917, and two Russian destroyers on the 30th December, 1917. The captain of the "Orel" had informed the British Admiral at Hong Kong that it was impossible for him to return to Vladivostok, as the cadets would be murdered, and he proposed placing the ships at the disposal of the British Government, the "Orel" to continue as a naval school, these officers and men who wished to do so being allowed to return to Vladivostok. The captain of the "Orel" had also requested the Admiral at Hong Kong to assume command of his division.

The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that it was proposed to inform the British Admiral at Hong Kong that the request for him to assume command of the division cannot be agreed to, and that he should tell the captain of the "Orel" that, if he wished it, the ships might be paid off and remain at Hong Kong with a care and Maintenance party. If this course was adopted, the officers and men wishing to return to Russia might be sent to Vladivostok at the first opportunity.

The War Cabinet approved the action proposed by the Deputy First Sea Lord, and instructed him to issue the necessary orders.
9. The Chancellor of the Exchequer called attention to a private telegram from Sir R. Paget, Copenhagen, to Lord Hardinge, dated the 30th January, 1918, in which it was stated that, according to reports, the strike situation in Germany was serious. Sir R. Paget gathered, from indications at Copenhagen, that the more the Allied press could be kept from comments or any signs of jubilation, the better would be the prospect of the movement extending.

The Secretary of State for Home Affairs said that he proposed communicating to the press to ask them to act on the lines suggested by Sir R. Paget. He pointed out that, while he could stop telegrams, his powers of censorship were limited.

The War Cabinet approved the Home Secretary's proposed action, and requested him to hold up any further telegrams relating to strikes in Germany.

10. With reference to War Cabinet 232, Minute 16, Mr. Barnes stated that evidence supplied by the food card system went to show that the housing problem was not so acute as had been feared. Of the 250 semi-permanent dwellings to be built by the Ministry of Munitions, 202 had already been erected. Mr. Churchill had suggested, and he agreed with him, that the work on the remainder of the semi-permanent dwellings might now be stopped and that the erection of the permanent houses should be continued.

The War Cabinet agreed to this suggestion.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 328, Minute 18, Mr. Barnes referred to the case of Mr. Inkpin, the Secretary of the British Socialist Party, whom, he understood, it was proposed to prosecute. He urged that, if prosecutions were to be made, they should be directed against more influential persons than Mr. Inkpin.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Home Secretary not to proceed with the prosecution of Mr. Inkpin.

The War Cabinet further requested—

Mr. Barnes and the Home Secretary to communicate with the Foreign Office in the event of their hearing of any alarming developments in Bolshevist propaganda.

(Initialled) A. B. L.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W., January 31, 1918.
SECRET.

WAR CABINET, 336.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, February 1, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).


The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The following were also present:-


The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.

Major-General Sir G. M. W. Macdonogh, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence (for Minutes 1 to 4).

The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 6, 7, and 9).

Sir J. Hunter, K.B.E., Ministry of Munitions (for Minute 7).


Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minute 5).

The Right Hon. Lord Rothermere, Air Minister (for Minute 7).

Sir William Weir, Controller of Aeronautical Supplies, Air Ministry (for Minute 7).

Colonel F. J. Byrne, C.M.G. (for Minute 7).

Lieutenant-Colonel W. Dally Jones, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.

Mr. T. Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.

Transfer of German Divisions to the Western Front.

1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 333, Minute 2, the Director of Military Intelligence stated that two more German divisions had arrived on the Western front, one coming from Italy and one from Russia. This made a total of 172 German divisions opposed to the Franco-British forces in France. Only three German divisions were now on the Italian front.
2. With reference to War Cabinet 335, Minute 1, the Director of Military Intelligence informed the War Cabinet that two American divisions were going into the line that day. One of these would be on the Aisne, and another at Badenweiler. These divisions were taking over a sector of the line purely for training purposes, and each division would be attached to a French corps.

3. The Director of Military Intelligence stated, in answer to a question, that he did not anticipate any immediate attack by the Germans on the Western Front. There was a certain amount of activity in the Aisne-Oise area, but nowhere else. According to his information, 62 or 63 German divisions were carrying on an intensive training behind the line, and German artillery was also going through a course of training in special practice camps.

4. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that part of General Hawthorne's advanced force crossed the Lukulezi River, to the east of the enemy. The main body of Pamforce was moving to Ankuaba, and the enemy was reported to be in position 23 miles further west, at Mesya.

5. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that two of our submarines, "K. 17 and K. 4," had been sunk in collision near the Firth of Forth, and that two others had been damaged. He was afraid that there had been loss of life.

6. Mr. Churchill gave some details to the War Cabinet of the progress made by ourselves and by the enemy with regard to the manufacture and use of poison gas. Mr. Churchill suggested that General Thuillier, who was in charge of the Poison Gas Branch of the Ministry of Munitions, should be called before the War Cabinet to give his views on the subject, which Mr. Churchill thought would be of value.

   The War Cabinet decided that—

   The Minister of Munitions should arrange for General Thuillier to attend a meeting of the War Cabinet at an early date.

7. The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the War Priorities Committee (Paper G.T.-3488). Mr. Churchill said that, although this question had once been decided by the War Cabinet, new conditions had been found to exist since that decision. The new feature was the diminishing supply of steel. This coincided with an enhanced demand for production in which steel formed a main element. He admitted that the cut in steel imports could not be resisted, as that was the only import that could be cut. But he pointed out that the Admiralty demands for steel were the only demands protected from any sort of proportional reduction. He asked that there should be a fair examination of the Admiralty demands, in order that the whole reduction, required by the necessity of the situation, should not be only at the expense of the Army and Air Service. If the sheds could not be dispensed with, was it not possible for the Admiralty to effect an equivalent diminution of its demands for steel in some other department? On the merits, he doubted the validity of the claim for these sheds, when considered in relation to the whole situation. The three sheds required could not be completed, according to the Admiralty estimate, for 15½, 18½, and 20½ months respectively. He was advised that these figures were unduly optimistic. The same kind of steel and
of skilled labour required for this work was, in his view, needed for more urgent undertakings. It was for the War Cabinet to decide what was to be cut.

The First Lord said that the Admiralty view had been presented to the Cabinet in the summer, that it had been repeated at various intervals since, and that it remained the same. This was a reduced programme, and it had been understood that the Ministry of Munitions, after three months' priority had been granted to aeroplanes, would raise no further objections. Airship sheds would greatly increase the value of the airships now being built, and enable them to undertake long-distance scouting over the Atlantic, and would provide "ice" sheds, and thus ensure us against loss of ships unable on account of unfavourable winds and bad weather to make East Coast housing-sheds. If the decision of the War Cabinet were now revised, much time and labour would have been lost, and the only alternative would be an increased Light Cruiser programme.

It was pointed out that the scarcity of steel was a new feature that enforced reconsideration of the problem. The question was asked whether a decision not to build sheds would not render it useless to build airships.

Sir Eric Geddes replied that the ships were in course of construction, and that, although we had sheds on the East Coast, nothing could be substituted for the proposed structures on the West Coast to shelter airships employed on long-distance reconnaissance over the Atlantic.

Lord Derby drew attention to the cutting of steel for shell production, and suggested that these sheds were in the nature of a luxury. The very long time that must elapse before they would mature must also be considered.

Sir John Hunter expressed the opinion that the estimates on which the periods for completion had been calculated postulated absolute priority of labour and supplies. He had consulted the Shipping Controller, who was not hopeful of carrying the material from England to Ireland in the time assumed.

It was pointed out that means of cutting down the import of steel must be found, and the question was asked whether steel was being used on any other construction requiring two years for completion.

Sir Arthur Duckham stated that the only instance was a new factory for the production of chemical gas filling, but that its steel requirements were insignificant. It should be ready early next year.

Sir Eric Geddes pointed out that steel was being put into ships that would not be ready for a long period. He again reminded the War Cabinet that the alternative to the sheds was a bigger Light Cruiser programme.

The War Cabinet decided that—

No further supply of steel should be applied to the building of the three housing-sheds in question for rigid airships.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 332, Minute 1, the War Cabinet expressed a wish that, if the First Lord's arrangements, in connection with his forthcoming visit to the Mediterranean, made it possible for him, he should go to Alexandria in order to consult with General Smuts on the question of transportation.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 329, Minute 2, the Minister of Munitions called attention to the serious situation consequent on the continuance of the strike of sheet-metal workers in the London area. It was most desirable that someone should assume full responsibility for dealing with it and bringing it to an end.
At the request of the War Cabinet—

Mr. Barnes undertook to examine the matter that afternoon with representatives of the Ministry of Munitions and the Ministry of Labour, and should report to the War Cabinet what action they advised should be taken.

10 The War Cabinet asked—

The Secretary of State for War to examine, with the Minister of Labour, a demand for 500 Irish civilian labourers wanted to carry out the combined Anglo-American Tank programme in France.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 323, Minute 13, the attention of the War Cabinet was called to the present position of the conflict between the Minister of National Service and the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. It seemed certain that a strike would take place unless some means were devised to reopen negotiations. It was important to remember that Sir Auckland Geddes had obtained the approval of the War Cabinet in the steps which he had undertaken up to the present. In to-day's newspapers there had appeared a mischievous letter from Mr. Arthur Henderson. The letter had been shown by the Press Bureau, before publication, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Home Secretary, who agreed that there was no alternative but to allow it to appear. It appeared that the whole of the press took a view opposed to the Government, and in such circumstances it would be difficult for the Government to refuse to meet the Engineers.

Mr. Bonar Law said that he had discussed the position that morning with Sir Auckland Geddes, who had offered to resign, but he (Mr. Bonar Law) had insisted that the Government were responsible for the policy which had been adopted. Sir Auckland Geddes was preparing a reply to Mr. Henderson's letter, and would be able to make out an effective case for the Government. The most serious aspect of any concession which the Government might be inclined to make to the Engineers was the announced intention of the other unions to break off their engagements in the event of such concession. On the other hand, there was the widespread feeling in the country that the Government were standing aloof solely on a point of form.

The War Cabinet were agreed that any statement issued by the Minister of National Service should not close negotiations with the Engineers, and decided—

To adjourn the consideration of the subject to a Cabinet Meeting to be held at 5:30 that afternoon.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 4, 1918.
WAR CABINET. 337.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street S.W., on Friday, February 1, 1918, at 5.30 p.m.

Present:

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P. (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the EARL CuZON Of KEDleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C.

The Right Hon. GEORGE N. BARNES, M.P.

The following were also present: —

The Right Hon. SIR GEORGE CAVE, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs.

The Right Hon. SIR A. C. GEDDES, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service (for Minute 1).

Major P. LLOYD GHEAME, Ministry of National Service (for Minute 1).

Lieutenant-Colonel W. DALLY JONES, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.

Captain the Hon. W. ORMSSY-GORE, M.P., Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. BURGES, Assistant Secretary.

Man-Power: Position of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers.

1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 336, Minute 11, Sir Auckland Geddes read a draft statement to be given to the press that evening. After discussion and amendment, the War Cabinet approved the draft statement (Appendix) and its issue as an official statement in reply to Mr. Arthur Henderson's letter which had appeared in the newspapers that morning. The War Cabinet further requested—

Sir Auckland Geddes to get into touch with the editors of some of the London newspapers, with a view to explaining to them the position of the Government in the matter.

Strike of Sheet-Metal Workers.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 336, Minute 9, the War Cabinet had before them the following documents:—

(a.) Memorandum by Mr. Barnes (Paper G.T.-3503)

(b.) Minutes of an Interdepartmental Conference that had been held that afternoon (Paper G.T.-3503A).

Mr. Barnes said that, while he had formed the opinion that the strikers had no real case, forty-five out of the forty-eight firms concerned in the industry were already paying the 1s. 1d. per hour
minimum rate demanded from the remaining three firms. The case was further complicated by the production by Sir David Shackleton, of a letter dated the 18th December, 1917, from the Labour Supply Department of the Admiralty, saying that they would pay increased rates of wages in order to get the best men to increase production, in defiance of the Treasury agreement of 1915. The Committee on Production had refused to assent to the increased rate in the six cases which had been brought before them. The authority of the Committee on Production had been undermined, however, by the fact that, in spite of their decision, firms had paid the increased rate. At the conference that afternoon, which had consisted of—

Mr. Barnes (Chairman),
Mr. Churchill,
Sir George Gibb,
Sir George Asquith,
Sir David Shackleton,
Sir William Weir,
Mr. I. H. Mitchell,
Mr. H. Wolfe,
Mr. H. J. Wilson,

it had been unanimously decided that the contracting Department should be given power to adjust the wages at the two firms where the disputes in question had arisen, and to settle other outstanding matters in connection with the strike in any other Government or controlled firms. At the same time, the conference expressed the opinion most strongly that a more strict supervision should be exercised in regard to payment of wages by firms working for the Government, with a view to preventing increases which gave cause for subsequent trouble.

In this connection attention was drawn to War Cabinet 317, at which it had been decided that—

“All applications for an increase in war advances and wage disputes arising therefrom shall be referred for decision to the Ministry of Labour, who may refer them to the Committee on Production. The Ministry of Labour will have discretion to ask the Department concerned to carry on any necessary negotiations, but the final decision will in all cases rest with the Ministry of Labour.”

The War Cabinet approved the decision and recommendation of the conference, as stated above.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 332, Minute 2, Lord Curzon stated that, in view of the rejection, by a large majority, in the House of Commons of the Lords’ amendments to the Representation of the People Bill in regard to Proportional Representation, the supporters of Proportional Representation in the House of Lords now realised that it would not be possible for them to secure the adoption of the principle on anything like the scale which they had suggested. They were now anxious for a compromise, and desired to meet him on the following day, with a view to ascertaining the position of the Government in the matter.

Sir George Cave stated that, in his opinion, any scheme which sought to dispense with local enquiry regarding the boundaries and composition of the boroughs or counties to which Proportional Representation was to be applied would be rejected by the House of Commons. The only chance for Proportional Representation would be in the adoption of some restricted application of the principle on an experimental scale, after due enquiry by a Commission.
The War Cabinet decided that—

Lord Curzon be requested to inform the supporters of Proportional Representation in the House of Lords that the Government were prepared to appoint a Commission to frame an experimental scheme for the application of Proportional Representation to a limited number of counties and boroughs returning an aggregate of not exceeding 100 members of Parliament. Such a Commission would be empowered to carry out the necessary local enquiries. On receipt of their report the Government would undertake either to introduce a Bill on the same lines on which the Franchise Bill was introduced or to have a resolution submitted to the House of Commons to decide whether a Bill should be introduced.

The War Cabinet further decided that—

The Home Secretary should be present at the Conference between Lord Curzon and the Peers who supported Proportional Representation.

(Initialled) A. B. L.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 2, 1918.
APPENDIX.

(See Minute I.)

Official Statement issued to the Press.

1. It is common ground that the Amalgamated Society of Engineers were met separately on the occasions referred to by Mr. Henderson and that in the course of the meetings in April and May last year the Government undertook to issue, and did issue, instructions that until the original Schedule of Protected Occupations (M.M. 130) was revised, dilutees fit for general service in a given occupation should be called up before skilled men or apprentices. This provision was of general application, and was not limited to members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. Under it upwards of 50,000 men have been called to the colours.

It must be remembered that the original schedule provided that it was not intended at that time to take men over the age of 32, and on the 10th May, at a meeting with the principal unions constituting the Federation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades other than the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, Mr. Henderson explained that the instructions were not intended to apply to all dilutees up to the limit of military age.

Mr. Henderson.—"May I tell you that in the negotiations which have taken place during the past week that the demand was made upon the Government that no single man of a certain union whom you all know should be taken until every other diluted man was taken. . . . They say that not a single man shall be taken from that union until every dilutee under 41 years of age, in harmony with the Military Service Act, is first taken. Well, the Prime Minister may have said some strange things—we all do; but he has not said that every man of 40 with his big family shall be taken before men of 19 or 20 years of age are first taken."

2. It is common ground that Mr. Henderson, on behalf of the War Cabinet and members of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, signed a note stating that it had been agreed that the instructions above referred to should be issued, and that a telegram should be sent by the Amalgamated Society of Engineers to their local officials urging that there should be no stoppage of work.

3. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers claim that the arrangements contained in the instructions specially benefit to its members (statement by General Secretary, A.S.E., issued to the press on the 19th January, 1918). This is not so.

At the conference on the 5th May one of the delegates put forward the following suggestion:

Mr. Bradley.—"May I put a question to Dr. Addison on his own statement? He has pointed out how essential it is that all the special parts of machinery should be placed at the disposal of the armies in the field. I would ask him if in the interests of the nation, seeing that on his own statement engineers are so essential in the workshop, would it not be advantageous to the nation's welfare as a whole for the Government to contract with the Amalgamated Society of Engineers outside this Schedule M.M. 130 for total exemption?"

Dr. Addison.—"I do not want to go into the case all over again. I think the answer to that is that you cannot contract with the Amalgamated Society of Engineers only because there are a large number of other unions which have skilled members who are involved. . . . You cannot limit it to terms of one union; it is really not possible."

It will be seen that the claim of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers to special treatment was expressly rejected by the Government.

4. The undertaking given by the Government that all skilled men would be treated alike was reaffirmed by Mr. Henderson at the conference with the Engineering and Shipbuilding Federation on the 10th May, 1917. Referring to
A Delegate. — "Could you tell us whether any agreement, or arrangement, or understanding was come to with that particular organisation (the Amalgamated Society of Engineers), and if so will any arrangement made with that particular organisation be applicable to every other organisation in the engineering trade?"

Mr. Henderson. — "With regard to the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, the negotiations with the delegates of that society, to which I have already referred, have been going on for several days, and they closed at 9 or a little after Saturday night. The reason why the negotiations have been so protracted—they began in the previous week—was the determination of the Government to decline the request which was repeatedly made to us to abandon the schedule and to continue the trade card scheme. On behalf of the War Cabinet I told them as often as they put the question that their request could not be acceded to. They finally asked us what instructions were going to be issued for the application and administration of the schedule. We put before them the instructions that we had been busy drafting, instructions which had to apply to every trade union, not only to them, because we are determined to carry out loyally the arrangement which we have made, namely, that whatever is done in connection with the schedule and its working shall apply equitably to all the trade unions alike."

5. Mr. Henderson in his communication to the press contends that the Amalgamated Society of Engineers having been met separately last year ought to have been met separately in the recent conferences. One of the great difficulties in adopting this procedure has been the existence of a pledge given by Mr. Henderson at the conference held on the 10th May, 1917.

Mr. Henderson. — "We have issued these instructions and they are to apply to every society alike. The only arrangement we have made with the engineers is for the working of the schedule on these conditions. You will also notice that we have undertaken that before any departure from these instructions is made a conference of the trade unions concerned will again be held."

It was thus made abundantly clear last May that when it became necessary to alter the schedule the Government would meet not one but all the unions concerned.

6. In accordance with the pledge given by Mr. Henderson the Government invited all the unions concerned to attend a general conference on the 3rd January, 1918. When the Amalgamated Society of Engineers received the invitation to the general conference they raised no objection, but attended.

On the first day of the conference (3rd January), after a general statement had been made, the procedure to be adopted by the Conference was discussed, and it was decided that for detailed discussion a series of group conferences should be held.

In the proposal to meet by groups, Mr. Brownlie, chairman of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, speaking on behalf of his society, concurred.

Mr. Brownlie. — "The organisation which I have the honour to represent accepts the proposal put forward by Sir Auckland Geddes to meet in groups with regard to his proposal as to a clean cut with reference to occupations."

Notwithstanding this the Amalgamated Society of Engineers did not attend on the second day of the general conference, and took no further part in its meetings.

7. On the 17th January, 1918, Sir Auckland Geddes met certain officials of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers to attempt to find a way out of the impasse, and suggested that the Amalgamated Society of Engineers should meet the representatives of the Government together with other representatives of the engineering group. The officials suggested that Sir Auckland Geddes should receive a deputation the following morning prior to his meeting the general conference.

On the 18th January Sir Auckland Geddes received a deputation of officials and delegates of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, and explained to them the difficulties by which the Government was faced, and undertook to urge the conference to approve the suggestion that the Amalgamated Society of Engineers should
join in a further meeting of the engineering group, or that in order to avoid the inconvenience of the whole group reassembling that the meeting should be with selected delegates of other unions. The conference, after considerable debate, were persuaded to endorse this proposal, conditionally upon a further meeting of the engineering group, and as the general conference would not reassemble, two representatives from each of the other groups being present. This decision and invitation were communicated to the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and declined by them in letters which have already been made public.

8. It is necessary to realise that the question at issue, although it concerns procedure, is not a point of etiquette or punctilio. It is necessary also to realise that this is not a difference between the Government and one or more unions, but is a point of difference between the unions themselves, and is regarded both by the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and the other unions as involving a vital question of principle. It is well known that great exception was taken to the action of the Government in meeting the Amalgamated Society of Engineers separately previously. The resentment of the other unions was based on the belief that the Amalgamated Society of Engineers used the separate conferences as a means to try and establish a special privileged position for their union, and to obtain special terms for their union. This was why the other unions, not only those in the engineering groups, but all the other unions attending the conference (upwards of ninety in number) insisted on the Amalgamated Society of Engineers not being treated as a separate group. The Government have done all they can to bring them together, and if the Amalgamated Society of Engineers will now agree to meet with representatives of the other unions, or if the other unions will agree to the Amalgamated Society of Engineers meeting the Government separately from them, the representatives of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers will be given the fullest opportunity of making any statement they desire.

While the Government is not only willing but anxious to meet the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, it must be remembered that a departure from the procedure adopted by the conference, unless with the sanction of the conference, would be deeply resented by the other unions, which represent in the aggregate of membership far exceeding that of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. These unions take their stand not only upon the undertaking given to them in May by Mr. Arthur Henderson, speaking on behalf of the Government, but also upon their fixed resolve that no privileged treatment shall be accorded to any particular organisation or class.

It is of the utmost importance that no question of procedure shall obscure the broad man-power issue. The broad issue is that if we are to obtain enough men to maintain our armies in the field, we must withdraw from munitions a large number of men who are fit for general service; and this number cannot be met simply by taking the dilutees. It necessitates taking also large number of young men who are not dilutees, and who have hitherto been protected. The withdrawal of these men must be so arranged as to reduce the output of munitions as little as possible, consistently with the army getting its recruits in time for the critical period. Mr. Henderson's quotation from the Government instruction as to the recruitment of men of lower categories appears to have little bearing on the point at issue. Men not fit for general service have not been withdrawn from munition works; nor is it now intended to withdraw them. The instructions issued to the Munitions Area Dilution Officers provide that, in selecting men fit for general service for release from the classes now rendered available under the revised schedule, they should be guided by the consideration of the effect of such releases upon output, and that in considering the order of release, dilutees, other things being equal, should be taken first.

In this way, while it is not possible to give any specific pledge that the recruitment of dilutees can universally precede the recruitment of skilled men, the method of recruitment is based on the principle of leaving the most essential men to the last.
Co-operation of the U.S.A.

1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 331, Minute 4, the Prime Minister reported that an important meeting had taken place at Versailles on the 30th January, 1918, on the subject of the co-operation of United States troops with the British army. This meeting had been attended by Generals Bliss and Pershing, on behalf of the United States, and by himself, Lord Milner, Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, General Sir William Robertson and Sir Maurice Hankey. The Prime Minister explained to the Cabinet the reluctance with which General Pershing viewed the inclusion of American battalions in British divisions, for political reasons. It was found, however, that General Pershing raised no objection to American troops being used with British troops in training, and, since the best way of training troops would be by putting them in the line, we could rest assured that a large number of American infantrymen would be available for purposes of co-operation; in fact, there was no limit as to numbers, other than the limit imposed by the amount of shipping available and the rate at which we could equip the American divisions with material. General Pershing had stipulated that not only the infantry, but the whole fighting personnel of divisions should be brought over.
The Chief of the Imperial General Staff explained that the effect of this would be that, out of 150,000 men brought over, there would be 90,000 men available as infantry for the American battalions in the British brigades.

The War Cabinet approved the final agreement made with General Pershing (Appendix).

2. With reference to War Cabinet 229, Minute 13, the Prime Minister stated that the most important question discussed at Versailles was the creation of a General Reserve, in which matter he drew attention to War Cabinet Paper I.O.-48 A. The proposed Reserve would have two purposes:

(a.) To support the line, whether in the portion held by the British, French, or Italians, at the point or points threatened;
(b.) To take part in a counter-offensive.

The discussion on this question had lasted two days, and had resulted in complete and unanimous agreement between the four Allies, who would all contribute to the formation of the General Reserve. The Command of this General Reserve had been the subject of separate proposals by each of the four national delegations, who had in principle all suggested the same scheme, namely, that the General Reserve should be under the control of a special Board, upon which each of the Allies would be represented by their military representatives on the Supreme War Council at Versailles, with the exception of the French. The French had selected General Foch as their representative on the Board, and, by the unanimous wish of the representatives of the four nations at Versailles, General Foch would preside over the Board. In the event of any disagreement, the matter would be referred to the Supreme War Council. The question as to when, where, and to what extent the General Reserve should be utilised or withdrawn would be decided by the Board. From the moment that any allocation of troops from the General Reserve had been made by the Board, such troops would come under the command of the Commander-in-Chief in whose area they were to operate.

The question of the composition of the General Reserve was left to the Generals at Versailles to decide, in consultation with the Commander-in-Chief. He wished to make it clear that, while in the Reserve, the troops of any particular Ally would be under the sole command, as regards discipline, training, and organisation of officers of their own nationality.

The Secretary of State for War stated that he had not yet had sufficient time to study the reports submitted in regard to this question, and therefore must reserve judgment thereon.

The Prime Minister pointed out, in reply, that, as the matter had been decided unanimously by the Allied representatives, and by himself and Lord Milner, who had been empowered by the War Cabinet with full Cabinet authority to deal with this question on their behalf, he trusted that the matter would be considered by the Army Council in the most helpful spirit, and that there would be no delay in preparing the necessary Order in Council, if such were required, to give effect to their decision.

The War Cabinet took note of the following Agreement made by the Prime Minister and Lord Milner, on their behalf, in accordance with War Cabinet 229, Minute 13 (i) (b):

(1.) The Supreme War Council decided on the creation of a General Reserve for the whole of the armies on the Western, Italian, and Balkan fronts.

(2.) The Supreme War Council delegates to an Executive composed of the permanent military representatives of
Great Britain, Italy, and the United States of America, with General Foch for France, the following powers, to be exercised in consultation with the Commanders-in-Chief of the armies concerned:

(a.) To determine the strength in all arms and composition of the General Reserve, and the contribution of each national army thereto.
(b.) To select the localities in which the General Reserve is normally to be stationed.
(c.) To make the arrangements for the transportation and concentration of the General Reserve in the different areas.
(d.) To decide and issue orders as to the time, place, and period of employment of the General Reserve. The orders of the Executive Committee for the movement of the General Reserve shall be transmitted in the manner and by the persons who shall be designated by the Supreme War Council for that purpose in each particular case.
(e.) To determine the time, place, and strength of the counter-offensive, and then to hand over to one or more of the Commanders-in-Chief the necessary troops for the operation. The moment this movement of the General Reserve, or of any part of it, shall have begun, it will come under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief to whose assistance it is consigned.
(f.) Until the movement of the General Reserve begins, it will, for all purposes of discipline, instruction, and administration, be under the orders of the respective Commanders-in-Chief, but no movement can be ordered except by the Executive Committee.

(3.) In case of irreconcilable differences of opinion on a point of importance connected with the General Reserve, any military representative has the right to appeal to the Supreme War Council.
(4.) In order to facilitate its decisions, the Executive Committee has the right to visit any theatre of war.
(5.) The Supreme War Council designate General Foch as President of the Executive Committee for the General Reserve.

Publicity.

3. The War Cabinet instructed—
The Secretary to communicate with the Press Bureau regarding the undesirability of any reference being made in British newspapers regarding the formation or command of a General Inter-Allied Reserve;

and further requested—
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to communicate with the British Ambassadors in Paris, Rome, and Washington, with a view to ensuring, if possible, similar action in regard to the press of the Allied countries.

Extension of the British Line.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 329, Minute 13 (i) (a), the Prime Minister reported that the Supreme War Council had accepted the British proposal that the Versailles Report (Joint Note No. 10) should be accepted in principle, but that the execution should be left to Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig and
General Pétain, in consultation. The Prime Minister said that Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig had concurred in this decision.

The War Cabinet took note of the decision made by the Prime Minister and Lord Milner on their behalf.

5. The War Cabinet approved the decision of the Supreme War Council to remit to the Executive Committee for the General Reserve the study of the question of employing Italian troops on the Western Front.

6. The War Cabinet approved the resolution of the Supreme War Council to the effect that the Head of each Government represented on the Supreme War Council undertakes to notify the Military Representatives of the Supreme War Council as soon as possible whether any Joint Notes presented by them have been accepted by his Government, or whether he wishes them reserved for discussion at the next meeting of the Supreme War Council. If a Joint Note is accepted by all the Governments concerned, it shall, as from that date, be treated as a decision of the Supreme War Council.

7. The War Cabinet took note of the decision of the Supreme War Council to accept Note 12 of the Military Representatives on the Plan of Campaign for 1918, the British Government having made it clear that, in utilising in the most effective fashion the forces already at its disposal in the Eastern theatre, it has no intention of diverting forces from the Western Front, or in any way relaxing its efforts to maintain the safety of that front, which it regards as a vital interest of the whole Alliance.

8. The War Cabinet took note of the decision of the Supreme War Council to approve the Annexure to Joint Note No. 12, subject to the amendments proposed by Mr. Lloyd George (page 1, paragraph (1)), General Pétain (page 2, paragraph (1)(c)), and M. Clemenceau (page 2, last paragraph).

9. The War Cabinet took note that, with a view to the complete co-ordination of plans of operation during 1918, the Supreme War Council agree that the several Governments concerned shall direct their respective General Staffs and Commanders-in-Chief to submit their detailed plans on the basis of Joint Notes 1 and 12 by the Permanent Military Representatives, and shall forward these plans to the Supreme War Council.

10. The War Cabinet took note that the Supreme War Council approve Joint Note No. 1 of the Permanent Military Representatives dealing with Military Policy.

11. The War Cabinet took note that the Supreme War Council approve Joint Note No. 2 of the Permanent Military Representatives in regard to an increase in the number of divisions in the Belgian Army. They take note that the recommendations contained therein have already been carried out.
12. The War Cabinet took note that the Supreme War Council approve Joint Note No. 3 of the Permanent Military Representatives in regard to reinforcements for the Italian front.

13. The War Cabinet took note that the Supreme War Council postpone, for further consideration, Joint Note No. 4 of the Permanent Military Representatives dealing with the Balkan problem.

14. The War Cabinet took note that the Supreme War Council approve Joint Note No. 6 of the Permanent Military Representatives in regard to the Italian problem.

15. The War Cabinet took note that the Supreme War Council approve Joint Note No. 7 of the Permanent Military Representatives on the subject of aviation.

16. The War Cabinet took note that the Supreme War Council approve Joint Note No. 8 of the Permanent Military Representatives on the subject of transportation.

17. The War Cabinet took note that the Supreme War Council approve Joint Note No. 9 of the Permanent Military Representatives on the subject of Tanks.

18. The War Cabinet took note that the Supreme War Council do not accept Joint Note No. 11 of the Permanent Military Representatives on the subject of Chinese battalions.

19. The War Cabinet approved a draft speech for submission to His Majesty the King and to the Privy Council for delivery by His Majesty on the occasion of the prorogation of Parliament.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 4, 1918.
(A.) This memorandum refers to the request made by General Sir William Robertson, representing the British War Office, that the American Government send by British shipping to France 150 battalions of infantry for service in British divisions on the Western front.

Replying to this proposal, the following objections appear:

1. The national sentiment in the United States against service under a foreign flag.
2. The probability that such action by the United States would excite serious political opposition to the administration in the conduct of the war.
3. The certainty of its being used by German propagandists to stir up public opinion against the war.
4. It would dissipate the direction and effort of the American army.
5. Differences in national characteristics and military training of troops and consequent failure of complete co-operation would undoubtedly lead to friction and eventual misunderstanding between the two countries.
6. Additional man-power on the Western front could be provided as quickly by some plan not involving amalgamation.

(B.) In order to meet the situation, as presented by General Sir William Robertson, and hasten the arrival and training of American troops, it is therefore proposed that the British Government use the available sea transportation in question for bringing over the personnel of entire American divisions under the following conditions:

1. That the infantry and auxiliary troops of these divisions be trained with British divisions by battalions, or under such plan as may be agreed upon.
2. That the artillery be trained under American direction in the use of French material, as at present.
3. That the higher commanders and staff officers be assigned for training and experience with corresponding units for the British army.
4. That when sufficiently trained, these battalions be reformed into regiments, and that when the artillery is fully trained, all the units comprising each division be united under their own officers for service.
5. That the above plan be carried out without interference with the plans now in operation for bringing over American forces.
6. That question of supply be arranged by agreement between the British and American Commanders-in-Chief.
7. That question of arms and equipment be settled in similar manner.

(Signed) JOHN J. PERSHING,
Commander-in-Chief American Army.

January 28, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 339.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, February 5, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 6).
General Sir W. Robertson, G.C.B., K.C.V.O., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 and 2).
The Right Hon. Lord R. Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minutes 7 and 8).
The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 1 to 6).
Sir Stephenson Kent, K.C.B., Ministry of Munitions (for Minute 4).
The Right Hon. C. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour (for Minute 4).
Sir D. J. Shackleton, K.C.B., Secretary, Ministry of Labour (for Minute 4).
Major the Hon. Waldorf Astor, M.P. (for Minute 4).
Major P. Lloyd Greame, Ministry of National Service (for Minute 4).

Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 1 and 2).
Sir Alan G. Anderson, K.B.E., Controller, Admiralty (for Minute 4).
Sir Lynden Macassey, K.C., K.B.E., Director of Shipyard Labour (for Minute 4).
The Right Hon. Sir J. Macray, Bart., Shipping Controller (for Minutes 2, 6, and 7).
The Right Hon. Sir A. Stanley, M.P., President, Board of Trade (for Minutes 6 and 7).
Mr. J. B. Ball, M.I.C.E., M.I.M.E., Controller of Timber Supplies (for Minute 8).
The Right Hon. Sir G. Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minute 8).
Mr. J. Parker, M.P., Lord Commissioner of the Treasury (for Minute 8).
Captain the Hon. F. E. Guest, D.S.O., M.P., Joint Parliamentary Secretary, Treasury (for Minute 8).

SIR G. Younger, Bart., M.P. (for Minute 8).

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.
Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.
1. The First Sea Lord informed the War Cabinet that an enemy submarine had been sunk in the Straits of Dover by the destroyer "Zubian."

2. The War Cabinet had under consideration a Memorandum by the First Lord of the Admiralty (Paper G.T.-3495), relative to the guarantee of a safe-conduct to Russian vessels back to Murmansk if such vessels were allowed to leave that port for England.

   The Shipping Controller stated that the guarantee had only been given for two Russian vessels.

   The War Cabinet therefore decided that—

   It was not necessary to take further action unless the question were again brought up by the First Lord.

Mr. Barnes drew the attention of the War Cabinet to a Draft Instruction to Departments (Paper G.T.-3519) on the subject of wage increases, and stated that exception had been taken, by Sir Lynden Macassey, to the inclusion therein of a letter from the Admiralty (Shipyard Labour) Department. Mr. Barnes pointed out that many more illustrations of the actions of Departments in this respect could be furnished, but that the one in question was particularly appropriate, inasmuch as it had been used by the sheet-metal workers in connection with their recent strike.

The view was expressed that, as the letter as it stood did not give a complete history of the case, it was undesirable to promulgate the same, and Mr. Barnes was accordingly requested to amend the Draft Instruction as requisite.

The War Cabinet directed—

The Secretary to promulgate to the Departments concerned the amended Instruction.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 347, Minute 1, Sir Auckland Geddes said that, in his opinion, the position was less likely to produce serious trouble than seemed probable a few days ago. During the last few days he had seen representatives of various Unions (other than the Amalgamated Society of Engineers) and found that they were becoming favourable to a Conference at which they could reconsider their relations with the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. On the whole, he thought the result of such a Conference would be an expression of readiness to be present, with a watching brief only, at a meeting between representatives of the Government and the A.S.E. Difficulties, however, would certainly emerge later around the definition of "dilutee." If an agreement between the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and the other Unions—especially the Workers' Union—could be reached on the meaning of "dilutee," the most serious source of trouble would be over. The engineers had utilised their privileged position to absorb into their Society members from the unskilled Unions. These unskilled Unions wished to confine the meaning of "dilutee" to those who were not working in or about engineering works before the war. It would not be possible to agree to the claim of the engineers that all "dilutees" should be taken first. The effect of doing so would be most seriously to hamper production. It would also be unjust, because it would discriminate unfavourably against older members of the unskilled Unions. Further, there were great variations in the percentage of "dilutees" employed in different shops and by different firms. For that reason it was impossible to take any larger unit than a firm as the unit for recruiting. Certain minor complaints put forward by the engineers were due to misunderstanding. For example, it was provided in the Schedule that the men should only be called up by the
Recruiting Officer of the Munitions Area. The other Unions were sending manifestos to their men, requesting them on no account to come out on strike. He (Sir Auckland Geddes) was certain that the present conflict had had the effect of increasing the support obtained by the Government from these other Unions. He proposed therefore to summon representatives of all the Unions previously invited to a further Conference, at which the press should be present, and to endeavour to arrange that representatives of the other Unions should be present with a watching brief at a further Conference between the engineers and the Ministry of National Service. He thought there would be agreement as to the holding of the meeting, but, beyond that, he did not think there would be agreement. In the meantime, the delay in meeting the engineers was making no difference to the supply of recruits to the army. The Revised Schedule of Protected Occupations had already come into operation.

Sir Stephenson Kent said that he thought that at some period or other it would be necessary for the Government to meet the engineers. He thought the procedure indicated by the Minister of National Service was sound. It was important that there should be considerable publicity given to the proceedings of the Conference. The Government must be prepared to find the engineers coming to the Conference with impracticable terms.

Mr. Churchill said that a number of engineers were now volunteering. It should be possible to obtain from the great munition areas a stream of resolutions in favour of the vigorous prosecution of the war. Such resolutions should appear in increasing numbers day by day in the newspapers for at least a fortnight. They would have a marked effect on the disaffected elements. While much could thus be done by way of propaganda, it must not be forgotten that the engineers could paralyse every munitions industry for a time, but, fortunately, there were sufficient reserves to stand a short strike. It was necessary to consider in advance what steps should be taken in the face of a general dislocation of industry. It was most important that, should a trial of strength with the engineers take place, it should not be complicated by other issues, such as the shortage of food. It would be far better, during the critical weeks of the struggle, to draw on any available reserves of food. He was in favour of a small Special Committee being set up to prepare for emergencies.

Sir David Shackleton was in favour of holding the proposed Conference with the other unions, and of avowing its object, but only in the most general terms. It was desirable to prevent delegates arriving at the Conference already pledged by the votes of their executives against reopening negotiations with the engineers.

Mr. G. H. Roberts was in favour of the Conference. Should trouble arise later on, care should be taken not to provoke popular opposition by a threat to employ soldiers.

Lord Derby said that soldiers would only be used in the very last resort. He would prefer, in case of any impending conflict, to remove the soldiers from the shops into camps. In any case, the soldiers would only be used at the invitation of the Home Secretary.

Sir Alan Anderson said that on the Clyde there was a small knot of dangerous men, and a large crowd who were disgruntled. The best way of dealing with the latter was by improving the food situation.

The War Cabinet—

(a.) Approved the proposal of the Minister of National Service to hold a Conference with certain trade unions;

and decided that—

(b.) The following Committee should be appointed to consider the steps to be taken in the event of serious industrial...
5. The War Cabinet took note of the despatch by the Foreign Office of telegram No. 292, dated the 4th February, 1918, giving notice to the German Government that, unless Second Lieutenants Scholtz and Wookey, R.F.C., were released from prison, reprisals would be taken by His Majesty's Government.

6. The War Cabinet had before them a copy of a letter from the Secretary, War Office, in regard to the shipment of timber to France (Paper G.T.-3523).

Lord Derby explained that a sudden and very urgent demand for timber to allow deep dug-outs to be made, before any heavy attack could be made on us, had been received from General Headquarters, France. This new demand amounted to 24,000 tons deadweight.

The Shipping Controller said that, in view of recent increased demands upon tonnage, he suggested that the shipment of other Army stores destined for France should be reduced proportionately in order to make room for the timber.

Attention was called to the reserves of ammunition that had been built up in France, and it was suggested that the flow of ammunition might now be reduced temporarily, and the timber shipped in its place.

The Master-General of the Ordnance undertook so to arrange his shipments of stores to France that the 24,000 tons of timber should be carried during February and March.

Sir Albert Stanley said that the question was not exclusively one of tonnage. The shipment of this timber, which would be drawn from stocks in this country, already at a low point, would still further reduce our supplies that were required for Government purposes at home, and the stocks would have to be replaced later by purchases from Sweden.

The Master-General of the Ordnance said that the shipment now proposed was only a temporary one to meet an emergency, and he hoped that later on, owing to the steps taken by Lord Lovat to increase his supplies in France, it would be possible gradually to replace the shipment now drawn from the stocks in this country.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 319, Minute 8, the War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Ministry of Shipping (Paper G.T.-3470) in regard to the appointment of British representatives on the Inter-Allied Transport Council.

The Shipping Controller asked the War Cabinet for a decision in regard to the appointment of another Minister to serve in addition to himself.
8. With reference to War Cabinet 337, Minute 3, the War Cabinet discussed what should be the attitude of the Government in the House of Commons towards the amendment of the Representation of the People Bill carried in the House of Lords. Various alternatives were discussed and compromises suggested with a view to saving the Bill. Among these were:

(a.) The acceptance of the Lords' amendment, with a proviso that, if 5,000 electors should within thirty days petition that Proportional Representation should not apply to their constituency, the election should take place in the ordinary form;

(b.) The limitation of Proportional Representation to small boroughs returning not less than three and not more than five members;

(c.) The return by Proportional Representation of not more than 100 members of Parliament from boroughs and counties selected after local inquiry by a Commission.

It was suggested that a very restricted experimental application of Proportional Representation would tend to discredit the principle without giving it a fair trial.

The War Cabinet decided that:

(a.) The best course would be for the House of Commons to reject the Lords' amendment in favour of Proportional Representation, but to accept it in respect to the exclusion of the Alternative Vote;

(b.) If necessary, there should be an informal Conference between Party leaders of both Houses.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 5, 1918.
trouble arising in connection with the attitude of the engineers to the Government's man-power measures:—

Sir George Cave (Chairman),

together with representatives of the following Departments:—

The War Office,
The Admiralty,
The Ministry of National Service,
The Ministry of Munitions,
The Local Government Board,
The Ministry of Labour,
The Ministry of Food.

5. The War Cabinet took note of the despatch by the Foreign Office of telegram No. 292, dated the 4th February, 1918, giving notice to the German Government that, unless Second Lieutenants Scholtz and Wookey, R.E.F.C., were released from prison, reprisals would be taken by His Majesty's Government.

6. The War Cabinet had before them a copy of a letter from the Secretary, War Office, in regard to the shipment of timber to France (Paper G.T.-3228).

Lord Derby explained that a sudden and very urgent demand for timber to allow deep dug-outs to be made, before any heavy attack could be made on us, had been received from General Headquarters, France. This new demand amounted to 24,000 tons deadweight.

The Shipping Controller said that, in view of recent increased demands upon tonnage, he suggested that the shipment of other Army stores destined for France should be reduced proportionately in order to make room for the timber.

Attention was called to the reserves of ammunition that had been built up in France, and it was suggested that the flow of ammunition might now be reduced temporarily, and the timber shipped in its place.

The Master-General of the Ordnance undertook so to arrange his shipments of stores to France that the 24,000 tons of timber should be carried during February and March.

Sir Albert Stanley said that the question was not exclusively one of tonnage. The shipment of this timber, which would be drawn from stocks in this country, already at a low point, would still further reduce our supplies that were required for Government purposes at home, and the stocks would have to be replaced later by purchases from Sweden.

The Master-General of the Ordnance said that the shipment now proposed was only a temporary one to meet an emergency, and he hoped that later on, owing to the steps taken by Lord Lovat to increase his supplies in France, it would be possible gradually to replace the shipment now drawn from the stocks in this country.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 319, Minute 8, the War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Ministry of Shipping (Paper G.T.-3470) in regard to the appointment of British representatives on the Inter-Allied Transport Council.

The Shipping Controller asked the War Cabinet for a decision in regard to the appointment of another Minister to serve in addition to himself.
At the request of the War Cabinet—

Lord Robert Cecil undertook to act with the Shipping Controller on the Council.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 337, Minute 3, the War Cabinet discussed what should be the attitude of the Government in the House of Commons towards the amendment of the Representation of the People Bill carried in the House of Lords. Various alternatives were discussed and compromises suggested with a view to saving the Bill. Among these were:

(a.) The acceptance of the Lords' amendment, with a proviso that, if 5,000 electors should within thirty days petition that Proportional Representation should not apply to their constituency, the election should take place in the ordinary form;

(b.) The limitation of Proportional Representation to small boroughs returning not less than three and not more than five members;

(c.) The return by Proportional Representation of not more than 100 members of Parliament from boroughs and counties selected after local enquiry by a Commission.

It was suggested that a very restricted experimental application of Proportional Representation would tend to discredit the principle without giving it a fair trial.

The War Cabinet decided that:

(a.) The best course would be for the House of Commons to reject the Lords' amendment in favour of Proportional Representation, but to accept it in respect to the exclusion of the Alternative Vote;

(b.) If necessary, there should be an informal Conference between Party leaders of both Houses.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 5, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 340.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, February 7, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.
The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade.
Mr. P. H. Kerr (for Minutes 7 to 10).

Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.
Captain L. F. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.
Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.

The Hejaz.

1. THE Director of Military Intelligence reported that on the 28th January Sheriff Abdullah El Fair captured El Mezra, taking 60 prisoners, 10 tons of grain, 6 dhows, and sinking 1 launch. This operation was in every way successful, and it was pointed out that El Mezra, although small, was an important harbour, forming the outlet of an important grain-producing region. This action was the sequel to a Turkish attack from Kerak on the Arabs at Seil El Hesas on the 26th January, when the Arabs had captured twenty-three machine-guns. In the engagement at El Mezra only forty Turks managed to escape, and their total losses were estimated at between 600 and 700.
2. With reference to War Cabinet 336, Minute 1, the Director of Military Intelligence stated that no more German divisions had been moved to the Western front, and that the total still remained at 173. Since October last thirty German divisions in all had been transferred to the Western front, and the Director of Military Intelligence estimated that, if they wished, the Germans could move twenty-seven more. The Italian front had been depleted, and not more than three, and probably only two, German divisions remained there.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 336, Minute 3, in reply to a question the Director of Military Intelligence stated that he thought the Germans would make a big attack in the West at some time or other, but he could form no opinion as to the probable date of this attack.

The Prime Minister stated that General Smuts, who had recently visited France, had drawn his attention to the weakness of that part of the line held by the Portuguese.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff to enquire into the question of the risks and possible consequences of an attack by the Germans on that part of the line held by the Portuguese, and the arrangements made to provide against the contingency of a reverse in this sector.

4. The Secretary of State for War stated that, with reference to the decision to reduce all British divisions from a strength of twelve battalions to nine, he had received a communication from General Plumer saying that if this order was applied to the British divisions now in Italy it would have a bad moral effect on the Italians.

The Director of Military Intelligence said that General Har­rington, General Plumer's Chief of Staff, was now on leave in England.

The War Cabinet therefore requested—

(a.) The Secretary of State for War to ask General Harring­ton to attend a meeting of the War Cabinet at an early date, in order to discuss with him the reduction of the British divisions in Italy.

(b.) The Secretary of State for War to telegraph to General Plumer saying that the order regarding the reduction of British divisions in Italy was to be suspended until the War Cabinet had interviewed General Harrington, when definite instructions would be issued.

5. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff stated that the transport "Tuscania," carrying 2,400 United States troops, was torpedoed on the 5th February off the north-east coast of Ireland. Although full details were not yet available, he believed all on board would be saved, and it was reported that over 2,000 troops had already been landed.

6. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff reported that a convoy of three British and two Allied ships, under Italian escort, had been attacked and sunk in the Mediterranean. The leader of the convoy had also been torpedoed. No further details were yet available.
The War Cabinet directed—

The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff to telegraph to the First Lord of the Admiralty, who is in Italy, a request that he would enquire into the facts of this incident.

Russia:
Suggested Partial Recognition of Bolshevik Government, and Position of Mr. Lockhart.

7. The War Cabinet had before them telegram No. 304, dated the 5th January, Petrograd, which contained the suggestion that His Majesty's Government should extend the authority given to Mr. Lockhart as intermediary between the British Embassy in Petrograd and the Bolshevik Government, and thereby pave the way for a fuller understanding with the Bolshevik Government. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that he thought that Mr. Lockhart might be given political credentials, in addition to the commercial credentials which he already possessed, without our being committed to full recognition of the Bolshevik Government. Mr. Lockhart was not now in the same position as that occupied by our Consul at Helsingfors, who dealt direct in a political capacity with the de facto Government of Finland. Similarly, our late Consul-General at Odessa, Mr. Bagge, was now at Kiev in direct relations with the de facto Government of the Ukraine. He suggested that Mr. Lockhart should be placed in an analogous position in regard to his dealings with the de facto Government in Petrograd. It was not possible for us to recognise the Bolsheviks as the governors of the whole of Russia, as the whole of Russia did not acknowledge their authority; besides which, such recognition would be clearly incompatible with the modified degree of recognition and support which we had been, or were, giving to the Ukraine and the Don Cossacks. By taking the step suggested, we did not either support or condemn Bolshevism as such, but merely facilitated dealings with the de facto Government in Petrograd. At any moment an incident, either in Russia or in this country, might precipitate the breaking of the very fragile thread which maintained relations between His Majesty's Government and that of the Government at Petrograd. We clearly could not go the full length of accrediting an Ambassador in Petrograd, and his proposal would put our de facto relations with all the de facto Governments in Russia on an equality. With regard to the suggestion that by according this new authority to Mr. Lockhart, we should be enabled to arrive at some understanding with the Bolshevik Government in regard to the cessation of their efforts to spread Bolshevik propaganda in this country, it was, in his opinion, illusory, as, in the event of such an understanding being published in Russia, the whole basis of the position of MM. Lenin and Trotzki would be gone, the whole essence of the Bolshevik creed being that the various belligerent nations should make peace with one another as soon as possible, in order that the class war could be begun in all countries in place of the national war. He further realised that, in any attempt on the part of Mr. Lockhart to come to an understanding with the Bolsheviks, the question of boundaries of Bolshevik authority in Russia would prove a stumbling-block to any practical arrangement. Finland alone had a clearly defined boundary, the Ukraine and Cossack country had no clear boundaries.

Lord Robert Cecil said that he doubted whether it was judicious that anything should be done to please or encourage a Government which was behaving in such a manner. Such action might discourage what remained of the anti-Bolshevik elements, such as the Poles and Cossacks, and might prove helpful in the spread of Bolshevik propaganda in this country, as also in France and Italy. In Italy the danger of the spread of Bolshevik propaganda was serious. Further, it looked as if M. Trotzki, at any rate, had taken German money, and that there was little chance of M. Trotzki being either willing or able to hold out.
against a separate peace. As he read Mr. Lockhart’s telegram, he thought the latter was seeking something further than what had been adumbrated by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Prime Minister expressed the view that it was no concern of the British Government what socialist experiment or what form of government the Bolsheviks were trying to establish in Russia. In this connection he read an extract from page 42 of a book entitled “The Elements of International Law,” by George B. Davis, an American authority on these questions, in which it appeared clear that recognition of one Government by another depended entirely upon de facto conditions. In regard to the particular question before them, it was necessary to bear in mind that the Bolsheviks were a formidable menace to Austria and Germany, and that our information regarding the internal conditions in Austria was such as to encourage the view that the internal political condition of that Empire was seriously embarrassed by the spread of Bolshevism. Further, from a letter he had seen regarding conditions in Germany, it was apparent that the dominant factor in German politics to-day was the Brest-Litovsk situation. He had no fear that Bolshevism was a formidable menace to the internal peace of this country. The recent by-election at Prestwich, in Lancashire, showed that, even in an industrial constituency, the vast majority of the nation were opposed to revolutionary ideas and in favour of carrying on the national war to a successful issue. He therefore thought that the grant of fuller authority to Mr. Lockhart might prove a useful opportunity for getting certain conditions agreed to by the Bolshevik Government in regard to their non-interference in the internal politics of Allied countries. He was also most anxious that the War Cabinet should not refuse the advice tendered to them by the British representatives in Russia, and he instanced several cases in the past where he thought errors had been made in refusing to accept such advice. The opinion he had formed of Mr. Lockhart was such as to cause him to hesitate before rejecting any advice he offered.

Lord Curzon stated that he thought it would have a very unfortunate effect in this country, and in Allied countries, if we took any step in the direction of further recognition of the Bolshevik Government at a moment when it appeared likely that M. Trotsky was effecting a separate peace with Germany. He had spoken to Sir George Buchanan on the previous day regarding the proposal contained in Mr. Lockhart’s telegram, and had gathered that Sir George Buchanan was of the opinion that any further recognition of M. Trotsky would help Germany. Similarly, any recognition of the Bolsheviks would assist in the spread of their propaganda in this country, and therefore he advocated the taking of the more cautious line.

Lord Hardinge pointed out that full recognition of the Bolsheviks was not suggested. Full recognition would involve direct dealings between Mr. Lindley and M. Trotsky, whereas the degree of recognition advocated by Mr. Lockhart left all dealings in the hands of an intermediary.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to prepare a draft reply to Mr. Lockhart’s telegram, for their further consideration.
8. The War Cabinet had before them a copy of the following telegram from the Right Hon. Arthur Henderson, M.P., to M. Lenin, at Petrograd, which was being held up by the Censor (Paper G.T.-3546):

"British Labour Movement invites your party send delegates Inter-Allied Conference. London, Wednesday, February 20th. British movement secured general agreement on War Aims propose this document form agenda. Strongly hope your delegates can attend secure full representation all Allied sections preliminary full international."

The War Cabinet decided—
Not to prohibit the despatch of this telegram.

9. The War Cabinet had before them a telegram from General Ballard to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (B.A. 922), dated the 5th February, 1918, and a telegram from Sir George Barclay (Jassy, No. 94), dated the 30th January, 1918, regarding the possibility of Roumania making a separate peace. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs read to the Cabinet a telegram (which had been received while the Cabinet was sitting) from M. Bratiano, the Prime Minister of Roumania, stating that an ultimatum had been received from General von Mackensen, conveying notice of the termination of the armistice, and threatening military consequences should peace not be effected forthwith.

General Macdonogh stated that, as far as the military situation was concerned, General von Mackensen's ultimatum was a bluff. The Roumanians had fifteen good divisions and three others in course of formation, which were opposed by not more than twelve enemy divisions, five of which were Austrian and seven German. The Austrian divisions were extremely poor in quality, having been extensively combed out. The only main military danger to Roumania, as long as her armies could be supplied from Bessarabia, was an advance from the Bukowina, where, however, there were only ten indifferent Austrian divisions. There were no German divisions on this front, and it would take a considerable time for the Germans to concentrate an army sufficiently strong to deal with the Roumanians.

Mr. Balfour added that the French took the strongest possible view that the Roumanians should be discouraged from making a separate peace. However, if they insisted upon doing so, he thought it should be made quite clear that the Allies would be released from their treaty obligations to Roumania in regard to the undertaking given to Roumania when she entered the War.

The Cabinet decided that—
The Foreign Office should send a telegram to our representative at Jassy, pointing out the reasons which His Majesty's Government had for considering General von Mackensen's ultimatum a bluff, and informing him of the serious internal condition of Austria-Hungary, and instructing him to urge the Roumanian Government to refrain from making a separate peace.

10. The Secretary asked for a decision of the War Cabinet in regard to sending a telegram to the Dominions Governments containing the gist of the conclusions reached at the recent meeting of the Supreme War Council at Versailles.

The War Cabinet agreed that—
The Secretary of State for the Colonies should send a telegram, which the Prime Minister undertook to draft.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 7, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 341.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, February 8, 1918, at 12:30 P.M.

Present:

The PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P.

The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:—

The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minute 11).

The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minute 11).


Rear-Admiral S. R. FREMANTLE, C.B., M.V.O., Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 7-10).

The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, K.G., K.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1-6, 11).

Major-General SIR F. B. MAURICE, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for Minutes 1-6, 11).

Major-General SIR G. M. W. MACDONOGH, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence (for Minutes 1-6, 11).

Mr. PHILIP KERR (for Minute 11).

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

Mr. THOMAS JONES, Assistant Secretary.

Captain E. ABRAHAM, Assistant Secretary.

Captain the Hon. W. ORMSBY-GORE, M.P., Assistant Secretary.
1. With reference to War Cabinet 338, Minute 4, the Director of Military Operations reported that the British front had been extended to Barisis.

2. The Director of Military Operations stated that General Milne had been asked by General Guillaumet to extend his front to the Vardar, in consequence of the removal of the Russians from the line. In compensation, he was offered one of the new Greek divisions, which would be attached to his command. General Milne did not object to this arrangement, subject to the sanction of the War Cabinet. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff approved. The War Cabinet authorised the change.

3. The Director of Military Operations informed the War Cabinet that General Giardino had left Italy to replace General Cadorna at Versailles.

4. The Director of Military Operations stated that General Capello, who commanded the Second Italian Army when it collapsed, had been recalled to Rome for an enquiry.

5. The Director of Military Operations rehearsed the decisions of the late War Committee and of the War Cabinet concerning operations on the Western front. The last decision of the War Cabinet, which followed the enquiry of the Cabinet Committee on War Policy, had been that Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig should endeavour to clear the Flanders coast. General Maurice, on behalf of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, asked for authority to inform the Field-Marshal that these directions were automatically cancelled by Joint Notes 1 and 12, approved by the Supreme War Council and agreed to by the War Cabinet (War Cabinet 338, Minutes 7 and 10).

The War Cabinet authorised—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff to give instructions to Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig in this sense.

6. The Secretary of State for War drew the attention of the War Cabinet to a telegram conveying the approval of the American Government to the conveyance, on British vessels, of six American divisions for training with British troops. It was understood that a scheme had been drawn up by the Committee on the Restriction of Imports, whereby Great Britain would provide for the conveyance of these troops, and the Minister of Shipping would later obtain a quid pro quo from America.

The matter was left for the Secretary of State for War to deal with, in co-operation with the Minister of Shipping.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 340, Minute 5, the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff reported that 21 bodies had been washed ashore from the "Tuscania," and some 50 survivors had landed on the Isle of Islay. Survivors were landing in many isolated places, and it was not yet possible to give correct figures of lives lost, but it could safely be asserted that they did not exceed 300.
8. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff reported that an enemy submarine, possibly the one which torpedoed the "Tuscania," had probably been sunk the previous night off the Mull of Cantyre.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 340, Minute 6, the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff stated that only four vessels had been sunk. One of the five, mentioned on the previous day, a Norwegian ship, had not been struck, and had reached port.

10. With reference to War Cabinet 326, Minute 1, the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff stated that the Captain of H.M.S. "Suffolk," at Vladivostock, reported that the town had food for three days only, that there were 12,000 soldiers in it, and that the enforcement of the Chinese prohibition of export of food to Siberia would be disastrous and might lead to the sack of the town by the soldiers.

It was stated that the British Foreign Office had done all in its power to obtain the withdrawal of the Chinese prohibition.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 340, Minute 7, the War Cabinet had before them draft telegrams prepared by Mr. Balfour, with suggested amendments by Lord Robert Cecil and Mr. Philip Kerr, respectively.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that before considering the draft telegrams he wished to bring to the attention of the War Cabinet three collateral questions which had arisen since he had written his draft. First, he had that morning received a formal protest from M. Litvinoff against the further enlistment of Russian subjects into the British Army. The protest included threats to publish the correspondence that had passed concerning this matter. Under War Cabinet, 329, Minute 12, Lord Derby had been requested to summon a Committee to consider this question, but so far the Committee had not met. He feared that an awkward incident was threatened, and that further delay in giving an answer to M. Litvinoff could not be arranged. Secondly, a meeting had taken place on the previous evening, at which General Macdonogh and Count Horodysky, the representative of the Polish Council in London, had met Lord Robert Cecil and himself. Count Horodysky had informed them that there were now in existence three organised Polish Armies amounting to upwards of 60,000 men, who were well-paid, well-fed, and armed. It was claimed that these Polish forces had captured Krylenko and the Bolshevik Headquarters Staff at Mohileff, and were about to march upon Smolensk. Thirdly, a telegram had been received that morning from the Bolsheviks, submitting a complaint regarding the removal of stores from Vladivostock. In addition, a further telegram had been received from Mr. Lockhart, at Petrograd (F.O. 369), dated the 5th February, regarding the desirability of giving a visa to the passports issued by the Bolshevik Government to Messrs. Petroff and Chichirin to visit England, and regarding the recognition to be given to the Bolshevik Government. The closing paragraph of this telegram stated that there was no time to lose, and Mr. Lockhart pleaded most earnestly that, immediate consideration should be given to the policy which he advocated.

The Prime Minister stated that he wished to emphasise what he had said on the previous day regarding the inadvisability of refusing to accept the advice given by the man on the spot, viz., Mr. Lockhart. He added that he did not doubt Mr. Lockhart's views as to the influence which the Bolsheviks were bringing to bear in Germany and Austria-Hungary. He shared entirely the general principles laid down by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in his draft—that the internal politics of that part of Russia where the
Bolsheviks were the de facto Government was no concern of ours. In regard to the Polish movement, he gathered that the Polish armies in question were engaged not in fighting the Germans and Austrians, but in fighting the Bolsheviks. This was no concern of ours, and they could only be regarded as our friends if they diverted their armies against the Germans or Austrians, or, as was suggested, to the assistance of our Roumanian Allies. He thought that, by according the degree of recognition to the Bolshevik Government suggested by Mr. Lockhart, we should be in a position to influence the Bolsheviks in the direction of according better treatment to the Roumanians. In this connection he drew an analogy between the present situation and that which had been experienced during 1916 in regard to Greece, where we had recognised the de facto Government of King Constantine in that part of Greece in which he was de facto ruler, while we had recognised M. Venizelos in another part of Greece. Although King Constantine had been guilty of unfriendly acts to ourselves and to our Allies, we had, by means of recognition, been enabled to give substantial help to the Venizelist who remained under his rule. As regards the argument that, by according this partial recognition to the Bolshevik Government, we should be discouraging our friends in Russia, he expressed the opinion that it had turned out that the Ukrainians, whom we had regarded as our friends, had failed us. The only people in Russia who could definitely be regarded as our friends were those who were willing to fight, not against the Bolsheviks, but against the Austrians and Germans.

Lord Robert Cecil feared that he held a different opinion from that of the Prime Minister. He felt that there had been a series of mistakes in regard to our Russian policy during the past year. We had always tried to worship the rising sun, instead of standing firmly in support of those elements in Russia who were friendly to British aims and to the cause of the Allies. He thought it would be a fatal mistake to do anything which would dishearten the Armenians, Poles, or Roumanians, and that we should gain nothing by attempting to conciliate our enemies. He thought it a great mistake to go hat in hand to the Bolsheviks at the time when the Bolsheviks were making war upon our Allies the Roumanians.

The Prime Minister agreed that it was most desirable that the draft telegram to Mr. Lockhart should include definite instructions in regard to the Roumanian point.

In regard to the Polish question, the War Cabinet had before them a draft telegram from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff to General Spiers, for delivery to General Foch, urging the desirability that all Polish troops, together with the two Czech Divisions in the Ukraine, should be brought up on the right flank of the Roumanian Army, so as to oppose any enemy attempt to turn the latter by an advance north of the River Pruth.

After discussion and amendment, the War Cabinet approved—

(a.) That the Foreign Office should send a reply to Mr. Lockhart, based on Mr. Balfour's draft, with the addition of Mr. Kerr's draft and the final passage of Lord Robert Cecil's draft.

(b.) That the Chief of the Imperial General Staff should send to General Foch the Director of Military Intelligence's draft in regard to the Polish and Czech Divisions.

Re-assembling of Parliament:
Consideration of Draft of the King's Speech.

12. The War Cabinet approved a Draft Speech, for submission to His Majesty the King and to the Privy Council, for delivery by His Majesty on the occasion of the opening of the next Session of Parliament.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W., February 8, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 342.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.,
on Monday, February 11, 1918, at 12 noon.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.
The Right Hon. A. Bönar Law, M.P.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:—
The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade.
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.
Major-General Sir G. M. W. Macdonogh, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence (for Minutes 1 to 10, 14, 16).
Rear-Admiral S. R. Fremantle, C.B., M.V.O., Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 11 to 13).
Sir E. Cook, Press Bureau (for Minute 16).

Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.
Captain L. E. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.

1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 340, Minute 2, the Director of Military Intelligence informed the War Cabinet that another German Division had been identified on the Western Front, making a total of 175 Divisions now on that Front, 63 of which are in reserve.

The Prime Minister requested—
The Director of Military Intelligence to furnish the War Cabinet with information showing the number of Allied Divisions
(a) In the line,
(b) In reserve,
on the Western Front.
Bolsheviks were the *de facto* Government was no concern of ours. In regard to the Polish movement, he gathered that the Polish armies in question were engaged not in fighting the Germans and Austrians, but in fighting the Bolsheviks. This was no concern of ours, and they could only be regarded as our friends if they diverted their armies against the Germans or Austrians, or, as was suggested, to the assistance of our Roumanian Allies. He thought that, by according the degree of recognition to the Bolshevik Government suggested by Mr. Lockhart, we should be in a position to influence the Bolsheviks in the direction of according better treatment to the Roumanians. In this connection he drew an analogy between the present situation and that which had been experienced during 1916 in regard to Greece, where we had recognised the *de facto* Government of King Constantine in that part of Greece in which he was *de facto* ruler, while we had recognised M. Venizelos in another part of Greece. Although King Constantine had been guilty of unfriendly acts to ourselves and to our Allies, we had, by means of recognition, been enabled to give substantial help to the Venizelists who remained under his rule. As regards the argument that, by according this partial recognition to the Bolshevik Government, we should be discouraging our friends in Russia, he expressed the opinion that it had turned out that the Ukrainians, whom we had regarded as our friends, had failed us. The only people in Russia who could definitely be regarded as our friends were those who were willing to fight, not against the Bolsheviks, but against the Austrians and Germans.

Lord Robert Cecil feared that he held a different opinion from that of the Prime Minister. He felt that there had been a series of mistakes in regard to our Russian policy during the past year. We had always tried to worship the rising sun, instead of standing firmly in support of those elements in Russia who were friendly to British aims and to the cause of the Allies. He thought it would be a fatal mistake to do anything which would dishearten the Armenians, Poles, or Roumanians, and that we should gain nothing by attempting to conciliate our enemies. He thought it a great mistake to go hat in hand to the Bolsheviks at the time when the Bolsheviks were making war upon our Allies the Roumanians.

The Prime Minister agreed that it was most desirable that the draft telegram to Mr. Lockhart should include definite instructions in regard to the Roumanian point.

In regard to the Polish question, the War Cabinet had before them a draft telegram from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff to General Spiers, for delivery to General Foch, urging the desirability that all Polish troops, together with the two Czech Divisions in the Ukraine, should be brought up on the right flank of the Roumanian Army, so as to oppose any enemy attempt to turn the latter by an advance north of the River Pruth.

After discussion and amendment, the War Cabinet approved—

(a.) That the Foreign Office should send a reply to Mr. Lockhart, based on Mr. Balfour's draft, with the addition of Mr. Kerr's draft and the final passage of Lord Robert Cecil's draft.

(b.) That the Chief of the Imperial General Staff should send to General Foch the Director of Military Intelligence's draft in regard to the Polish and Czech Divisions.

Re-assembling of Parliament:

Consideration of Draft of the King's Speech:

12. The War Cabinet approved a Draft Speech, for submission to His Majesty the King and to the Privy Council, for delivery by His Majesty on the occasion of the opening of the next Session of Parliament.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.

February 8, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 342.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, February 11, 1918, at 12 noon.

Present:

The PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade.

The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.

Major-General SIR G. M. W. MACDONOGH, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence (for Minutes 1 to 10, 14, 16).

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

Captain the Hon. W. ORMSBY-GORE, M.P., Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. BURGIS, Assistant Secretary.

The Western Front:
Transfer of German Divisions.

1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 340, Minute 2, the Director of Military Intelligence informed the War Cabinet that another German Division had been identified on the Western Front, making a total of 175 Divisions now on that Front, 63 of which are in reserve.

The Prime Minister requested—

The Director of Military Intelligence to furnish the War Cabinet with information showing the number of Allied Divisions

(a) In the line,

(b) In reserve,

on the Western Front.
2. The Director of Military Intelligence stated that there were indications that the German General Headquarters were being re-established at Spa, near Liège.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 340, Minute 3, and in regard to the points most likely to form the object of a German attack, the Director of Military Intelligence stated that, so far as present indications went, the most likely point was just east of Rheims, though it might take place anywhere between Arras and the Argonne.

4. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that General Fayolle had handed over the command of the French troops in Italy to General Maistre, who formerly commanded the Sixth French Army at Malmaison.

5. The Director of Military Intelligence stated that a telegram had been received stating that the attitude of King Alexander, in regard to the recent mutinies, had been most correct, and that M. Venizelos was dealing with the matter with a firm hand.

6. With reference to War Cabinet 340, Minute 1, the Director of Military Intelligence reported the receipt of further information regarding the Arab victories at Seil-el-Hasas and El Mezra. In regard to the former, the Arabs appeared to have achieved an overwhelming victory, the whole of the Turkish force, which numbered about 800 men, being either killed or captured, with the exception of 1 officer and 25 men.

7. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that on the 31st January, a Turkish train had been blown up by the Arabs between Abu Naam and Antar, about 100 miles north of Medina. Subsequent attacks had been made on Turkish posts in the vicinity with good results.

8. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that the standard gauge railway from El Kantara, on the Suez Canal, had reached Ramleh. However, construction had been delayed owing to washouts on the wadis on either side of the town of Gaza. Use was being made of the Turkish 1'05-metre gauge railway from Beit Hanun, some 16 miles north of Gaza, to a junction station on the old French Jaffa-Jerusalem railway, and trains were now being run through to Jerusalem. Supplies were now being landed from the sea at Nahr-el-Sukereir, whence a new British railway connected with the main standard gauge railway.

9. The Director of Military Intelligence reported the receipt, by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, of a telegram from General Ballard, to the effect that he had seen General Averescu, the Commander-in-Chief of the Roumanian Army, on the 7th February, who had given him to understand that, in the event of General Averescu being concerned in the making of peace terms between Roumania and the Central Powers, every effort would be made to prevent guns, munitions, &c., from being handed over to the Central
Powers. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff thought that any reply to this telegram should be sent by the Foreign Office to Sir George Barclay.

The Cossacks. 10. The Director of Military Intelligence reported the receipt of a telegram from General de Candolle, at Rostov-on-Don, stating that the situation at that place was becoming increasingly precarious, owing to the spread of Bolshevism, and that it was likely that General Alexeieff would be compelled to retire to Ekaterinodar.

Assassination of Russian Commander-in-Chief at Murmansk. 11. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff reported that he had received a telegram from Murmansk which stated that Admiral Kettinsky, the Russian Commander-in-Chief at Murmansk, had been shot by two sailors in the street on the 10th February, and had died shortly afterwards. No further details were known at present, but the situation was quiet.

Cossack Conference at Iman. 12. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff reported that he had received a message from H.M.S. "Suffolk," at Vladivostock, which stated that the result of the Cossack Conference at Iman was highly satisfactory. A resolution, condemning Bolshevik policy and repudiating attempts to make a separate peace, was carried by 42 votes to 4. The message from H.M.S. "Suffolk" also stated that financial and material assistance was urgently required from the Allies in order to enable the Cossacks to organise a force to establish order in Eastern Siberia, and that enquiries were being made by the Cossacks as to whether the Allies were prepared to give such assistance.

Submarines. 13. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff reported that a successful attack had been made on an enemy submarine N.W. of Cape Grisnez on the 8th February. Two other attacks on the same date had also been made by destroyers on enemy submarines in the Bristol Channel, but it was doubtful if they were successful.

Visit of Bolshevik Delegates to England. 14. With reference to War Cabinet 341, Minute 11, the War Cabinet had before them telegram No. 358 from Mr. Lindley, Petrograd, containing a recommendation by Mr. Lockhart that M. Petroff should be allowed to pay a visit of short duration to England.

The War Cabinet also had before them a memorandum by the Home Office (Paper G.T.-3587) pointing out the undesirability of allowing a Bolshevik agent, who had been interned in this country for an offence against the Defence of the Realm Regulations, being allowed to return to England.

General Macdonogh stated that his Counter-Espionage Department felt strongly that it would be a grave danger to allow M. Petroff to return to this country.

In this connection attention was drawn to an article in the "Woolwich Pioneer" by M. Litvinoff, given under his official seal, inciting the munition workers at Woolwich to revolution.

General Macdonogh informed the Cabinet that he had been informed that M. Litvinoff had been endeavouring to tamper with the discipline of British troops, notably Russian-Canadians.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs undertook to see Mr. Leeper, who acts as the informal agent of communication between the Foreign Office and M. Litvinoff, with
regard to the actual or implied breach of diplomatic usage revealed by the issue of such a manifesto by M. Litvinoff.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should send a telegram to Mr. Lindley, at Petrograd, informing him of the reasons why His Majesty’s Government were unwilling to allow M. Petroff to visit this country.

and instructed—

The Home Secretary to warn newspapers that they would be guilty of a breach of the Defence of the Realm Regulations if they published similar revolutionary propaganda issued by M. Litvinoff.

In regard to the visit of M. Kameneff, it was understood that a visa had already been granted by the British Representatives at Petrograd to M. Kameneff’s passport to visit this country, and that the French Government had agreed to permit M. Kameneff to visit France, but intended to keep him under strict surveillance.

The War Cabinet decided that—

It was impracticable to refuse permission to M. Kameneff to visit this country;

and requested—

The Home Office to keep M. Kameneff under close observation.

15. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Mr. Barnes on the subject of a proposed International Labour Conference (Paper G.T.-3554).

It was pointed out that, until the Inter-Allied Labour Conference, which was to meet in Paris this week, had come to a definite decision regarding the place and character of the proposed International Labour Conference, it was desirable that the Cabinet should have a free hand, so as to be able to consider the case made out upon its merits, without previous consultation with the Allied Governments.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The matter should again be discussed as soon as the results of the Inter-Allied Labour Conference had been received.

16. The attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to an article by Lieutenant-Colonel Repington, which had appeared in that morning’s issue of the “Morning Post.” The article in question dealt with questions of military strategy, and with the discussions and conclusions reached at the last meeting of the Supreme War Council at Versailles, and more especially with the creation of a General Reserve. The article appeared to give valuable military information to the enemy, and constituted a definite breach of Regulation 18 of the Defence of the Realm Regulations, and also a defiance of the decision of the War Cabinet (War Cabinet 338, Minute 3) as to the undesirability of any reference being made in British newspapers regarding the formation or command of a General Inter-Allied Reserve.

Lord Derby stated that the article in question was clearly of a most mischievous character. He believed that it had been written from Paris, and that it was clear that Colonel Repington had become acquainted with information of a secret and confidential
character, which had now been made public by the Editor of "The Morning Post."

The Director of Military Intelligence stated that he understood the article in question had been submitted to the Press Bureau on the previous evening. The Press Bureau had communicated with him, and Sir Edward Cook had informed him that he had told the Editor that the article infringed Regulation 18 under the Defence of the Realm Act, and ignored the special request issued to the press on the 4th February (Press Bureau, Serial D 621).

Sir Edward Cook read to the War Cabinet portions of the article in its original form as first submitted to the Press Bureau. He had endeavoured to censor it, but its whole character was such that amendment was practically impossible. He had accordingly returned it to Mr. Gwynne with a letter conveying the warning above described. In spite of this fact, the article had appeared in a slightly amended form.

The Prime Minister pointed out that this was not the first occasion on which Colonel Repington had written articles for publication which were of the utmost military value to the enemy. Further, in connection with the Cabinet enquiries regarding the Man-Power situation, Colonel Repington had written articles, published by the "Morning Post," containing figures regarding our strength and reserves; and also an article damaging to British interests had been sent by him for publication in America. These articles, together with those by Mr. Lovat Fraser in the "Daily Mail," had been submitted to the Public Prosecutor, who had expressed the view that Colonel Repington's articles constituted a breach of the Regulations, but that it was doubtful whether it would be desirable that a prosecution should be undertaken.

It was pointed out that the most effective way of dealing with newspapers which published matter which gave information to the enemy was by the seizure of the printing-press rather than by a prosecution, which was dilatory. Press machinery had been seized in the case of the Glasgow "Forward" and "The Globe," and this policy could be put into effect by any competent military authority.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Solicitor-General to consult with the Director of Public Prosecutions, and to submit recommendations at a Special Meeting of the War Cabinet to be held that afternoon at 5 P.M.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 11, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 343.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, February 11, 1918, at 5 P.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. George N. Barnes, M.P.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. Sir George N. Barnes, M.P., Secretary of State for War.

Major-General Sir G. M. W. Macdonogh, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence.


Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Bugees, Assistant Secretary.

WITH reference to War Cabinet 342, Minute 16, the Solicitor-General stated that, on the legal point, the article committed three offences against the Defence of the Realm Regulation No. 18, in that—

(a.) It published information regarding the disposition of forces;
(b.) It revealed a plan, or supposed plan;
(c.) It gave information likely to be of use to the enemy.

As to the procedure to be adopted should the Cabinet decide to take action, he recommended the seizure by the Competent Military Authority rather than prosecution, as, in the event of a prosecution, not only would discussion of the subject dealt with by the article be necessary, but also one recalcitrant jurymen might render the prosecution to all intents and purposes null and void. He had made a careful comparison between the original proof submitted to the Press Bureau and the article as published. The result of this comparison revealed the fact that, so far from anything important to the legal case having been deleted in the published article, words had been added which showed deliberate defiance of the authority of
the Press Bureau. The passages omitted did not matter, and so there had been not a diminution, but an aggravation of the offence. As regards the action that might be taken by the "Morning Post" on seizure, he stated that the "Morning Post" could issue a writ for trespass, which would come before a Judge of the King's Bench. General Macdonogh stated that, in the event of a prosecution, either he or some other General Officer of the War Office might be called to appear as a witness, and in this event he felt some doubt as to the validity of the third point made by the Solicitor-General in his list of offences which he thought had been committed by the paper—that is to say, he would find it very difficult to state on oath in a court of law that information had been given which was likely to be of any great use to the enemy.

In this connection the attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to Joint Note No. 15, dated the 6th February, 1918, by the military representatives of the Supreme War Council, signed by the four general officers representing the Allies. This note included the following resolution, passed by the military representatives of the Supreme War Council on the 4th February, 1918:

"The military representatives wish respectfully to draw the attention of the Governments represented on the Supreme War Council to the undesirability, for military reasons, of any public discussion in the press or otherwise of the arrangements now being taken in hand for the creation and employment of an Inter-Allied General Reserve."

Attention was then drawn to a sentence in the article which stated that a decision had been reached whereby the Allied forces on the Western front were to be confined to a defensive role.

General Macdonogh stated that, in accordance with the decision of the War Cabinet (War Cabinet 338, Minute 3), the Press Bureau had issued a typed message to all the principal newspapers (Press Notice No. 61) directing the editors of all newspapers that no reference should be made to the formation of a General Inter-Allied Reserve or its command. The "Morning Post" had received this message, but, in spite of it, had submitted a proof of the article in question to the Press Bureau on the previous day. This proof was returned by the Press Bureau stamped "Not to be published." The Solicitor-General further pointed out that mere defiance of the Press Censor was not sufficient to warrant seizure or prosecution, but that the offence lay in defiance of the Press Censor in the commission of an offence.

Lord Derby stated that he took the view that the gravamen of the charge against the "Morning Post" consisted in the defiance by the editor of the decision of the Press Bureau, and that any action taken on this ground would meet with his and with general public support. He added that newspapers had been put on their honour in these matters.

Invited by the Prime Minister to submit his views on the question of policy, Sir Gordon Hewart stated that in his opinion there were two points which could be put against the policy of taking any action, namely:

(a.) That the Government were dealing with a newspaper which had been continuously in favour of the vigorous prosecution of the war.

(b.) That the mischief of the article had already been done by its publication.

On the other hand, he felt strongly that a flagrant contravention of Regulation 18 had been committed, and that if no action were taken the whole present scheme of censorship would be rendered nugatory and futile. He therefore was in favour of the seizure by
the Competent Military Authority of the plant of the "Morning Post."

Mr. Barnes stated that, unless action were taken in a case such as this against a wealthy and prominent London newspaper, it would be quite impossible to take proceedings against smaller Labour newspapers in future.

Lord Milner stated that he felt some misgivings in taking the proposed course of action, due to the fact that the action would tend to advertise the very point which the Government desired to conceal. As between prosecution and seizure, he was definitely in favour of seizure.

The Prime Minister added that he felt that the most serious feature of the case was the publication, in defiance of the Press Bureau, of an article openly professing to reveal the decisions of a secret War Council, not merely of the British Cabinet, but of the four Western Allies. He was quite convinced that, unless action were taken in this case, it would be quite impossible to take action against revolutionary newspapers at a future date. In considering this case the Cabinet were deciding whether or not any Government control over the press was or was not possible.

Lord Curzon drew the attention of the War Cabinet to an article which appeared on Sunday, the 3rd February, in the "Observer," which also discussed the future military policy of the Allies.

It was pointed out that this article advocated a policy rather than professed to give an account of the decisions actually taken, and also that, at the time when the "Observer" article had been written, no British representatives had returned from Versailles.

The War Cabinet decided that—

Action should be taken by the Competent Military Authority under Section 51 of the Defence of the Realm Regulations with a view to the seizure of the press of the "Morning Post" for a breach of Regulation No. 18 of the Defence of the Realm Regulations until such time as satisfactory assurances are forthcoming.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 11, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 344.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, February 12, 1918, at 12:30 P.M.

Present:

The PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair).


The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:—


Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 343, the Prime Minister stated that, after the Meeting of the War Cabinet on the previous evening, at which it had been decided to take action with a view to the seizure of the press of the "Morning Post," the matter had been further discussed at an informal meeting, at which the Home Secretary was present, and certain legal and other objections had been considered. He had therefore suspended action on the decision of the War Cabinet, and had asked Sir George Cave to place himself in communication with the Solicitor-General and to make a report as to what action they advised.

The War Cabinet agreed that—

If the question was raised in Parliament a reply should be given in the sense that the question was being examined by the legal advisers of the Government.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 338, Minute 3, the War Cabinet discussed briefly the attitude to be taken up in Parliament in regard to the establishment of an Inter-Allied General Reserve. It was pointed out that the "Morning Post" had given so much publicity to the plan that there was a good deal to be said in favour of a public statement being made in regard to it. On the other hand, it was urged that a public statement would have to be more definite and would be far more authoritative than what had leaked out in the "Morning Post."

The War Cabinet were reminded that, in his original statement in regard to the Supreme War Council, the Prime Minister had...
laid some stress on the fact that the Council would have no executive powers, and that it would have no Operations Department attached to it. Parliament would, in all probability, wish to know whether this position had been departed from, and, if so, why.

The War Cabinet agreed that—

If the Prime Minister was pressed on the question, he should point out to Parliament that, since the setting up of the Supreme War Council, the whole military situation had been entirely changed by the decision of the Bolshevists and the Ukraine not to continue the war; that very great enemy forces had now been released, which were being concentrated on the Western front; that this had necessitated the concerting of arrangements by the Allies for greater concentration of force at any threatened point; and that, consequently, the Supreme War Council had decided on an arrangement for the control of the Reserves, which involved some extension of the powers of the Military Representatives.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 12, 1918.
Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Wednesday, February 13, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. A. B. Law, M.P.


The Right Hon. Lord Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minutes 3 and 4).

The Right Hon. W. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minute 5).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 3).

General Sir W. Robertson, G.C.B., K.C.V.O., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 3).

Major-General Sir G. M. W. Macdonogh, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence (for Minute 3).

Major-General A. W. F. Knox, Military Attaché to the Russian Embassy (for Minute 3).

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. C. Addison, M.P., Minister of Reconstruction (for Minute 5).


The Right Hon. W. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minute 5).

The Right Hon. W. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minute 5).

The Right Hon. H. E. Duke, K.C., M.P., Chief Secretary for Ireland (for Minute 5).

The Right Hon. H. E. Duke, K.C., M.P., Chief Secretary for Ireland (for Minute 5).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 3).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 3).

The Right Hon. S. A. Geddes, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service (for Minute 3).

The Right Hon. S. A. Geddes, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service (for Minute 3).

Professor W. G. Adams (for Minute 5).

The Right Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.

The Right Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.
1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 340, Minute 4, General Harington made the following statement as to the situation on the Italian Front. He stated that when the British and French divisions arrived the position was insecure, but it was then felt that if the Piave was lost it would be possible to hold the Vicenza line. Since then the situation had considerably improved, the position had been made much more secure, and the Italians had been encouraged by the presence of the British and French troops, and also by the highly successful French attack which was carried out at the end of December 1917 (War Cabinet 309, Minute 10), and by our constant raids and activity.

General Harington informed the War Cabinet that the best assistance that could be rendered at the present moment to the Italian Army was to instruct them, so that they might profit by the lessons which we had learned during the war. Their idea of conducting a defence had been to put all their troops in the front line, with little or no reserves in support. With a view to changing the Italian methods, schools had been instituted, and as many as 100 Italian officers attended each course, and there was every indication that the Italians appreciated the instruction they received and were anxious to benefit by it. They did not yet realise, however, the need for serious training. Up to the present the work of the Italian artillery had been bad, and they did not carry out any counter-battery work, or understand the working of barrages either in offence or defence. A further fault, and perhaps the worst fault, in the Italian Army was the weakness of Staff work and the lack of control from Headquarters. They were perfectly willing to issue orders, but such orders were of an academic nature and often impossible of execution. In this connection General Harington pointed out that the failure of the attack on Asolone was entirely due to bad Staff work in changing the hour of zero too late, but that more recent attacks had been far more promising. He was of opinion that the Third Italian Army (the Due d'Aosta's) was very good. It was well commanded and better staffed than any of the others. The First and Fourth Armies, especially the Alpinis and the Bersaglieri troops—although the two armies had suffered heavy casualties—were also good. He thought, however, that the Italians were making a mistake in the way in which they were reorganising the Second Army, and, in support of that view, he mentioned that the other Italian armies did not place any trust in them. On the whole, he estimated that, since the retreat, the Italian Army had increased its efficiency by at least 40 per cent.

General Harington mentioned that, as regards the two sectors held by the British, we were trying to organise the same as models of defence: so that, if the necessity arose for our troops to be transferred elsewhere, these sectors could successfully be held by tired or untrained Italian troops. The French were doing the same as regards the organisation of the sectors they occupied.

As regards any possibility of an enemy attack, General Harington stated that there were no indications of such being made, and he was of opinion that one could not be carried out unless the same was very highly organised; and, moreover, it should be impossible, under the conditions of attack that might be expected, for any army to be driven back from the line of the Piave.

Questioned as to the moral of the Austrian troops, General Harington stated that, from those he had seen, he had gathered the impression that they were of poor quality and sick of the war, and that it had not been the infantry that had been the cause of any enemy success, but that such was entirely due to the work of the Austrian and German batteries.

General Harington mentioned to the War Cabinet that he understood that General Diaz had under consideration the possibility of an offensive, but had not at present, as far as he was
aware, approached General Plumer on the subject. His own view, however, was that, owing to the lack of training of the Italian troops, only a limited offensive would be possible, and that, even if they made an advance, their Staff work at present was such that it would be difficult to control them if such advance was over an extended area.

Questioned as to whether the number of British divisions in Italy could be reduced, General Harington expressed the opinion that the work we were now doing could be equally well done by three divisions instead of five, but was unaware what the proposed offensive would require. He was further of opinion that the Italians could now spare for the Western front in France ten good divisions, as they had an Italian Army of no less than 688 battalions. The strength of an Italian division was between 10,000 and 12,000 men.

As regards the reduction of the British divisions in Italy from twelve battalions to nine, General Harington said that the matter had been fully considered by General Plumer, and he was sure that the latter was strongly opposed, at the present stage, to any reduction in the number of battalions.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The order for the reduction of our divisions to nine battalions should not apply to the divisions in Italy until such was arranged between the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and General Plumer.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 342, Minute 1, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that two more German divisions had arrived on the Western front, making a total of 177. As regards the divisions in the front line and in reserve on the Western front, the Allies had 99 divisions in the front line and 63 in reserve, as against 112 German divisions in the front line and 65 in reserve.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 329, Minute 12, the War Cabinet had under consideration the Report of a Committee (Paper G.T.-3894) on the Anglo-Russian Military Service Agreement.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs pointed out that compulsory enlistment of Russians into the British Army was impracticable, that a protest had been received from M. Litvinoff practically denouncing the convention, and that information had been received from Russia that this convention was causing great irritation there and damaging British interests. Mr. Balfour added that machinery existed in Russia for exempting Englishmen from joining the Russian Army, but that no machinery was practicable here, and if the cases were referred to M. Litvinoff he would give exemption to every applicant. Up to the present the question of releasing Russians already in the British Army had not arisen, but it was possible that the point might arise in the near future, and Mr. Balfour thought it would be difficult to retain the men in the Army against their will, in view of Russia having made peace, when the men in question had been conscripted. There was one point, however, which arose in this connection, and that was that some of these men were not necessarily Bolsheviks; they might, for instance, be Ukrainians or Cossacks, in which case M. Litvinoff could hardly claim their release, as he did not in any way represent the Ukrainian or Cossack Governments.

Lord Derby mentioned that most of the Russians in the Imperial Army were serving with the Canadians.

Sir George Cave urged that these men should not be discharged from the Army, and pointed out, moreover, that to stop
recruiting would leave a large number of Russians in the East End, where there was bitter feeling against them, and where they would be a constant source of trouble. He therefore recommended that, if practicable, these Russians should be shipped to their own country.

It was suggested that the men should be called upon to join up forthwith, and if they failed to do so they should be informed that they would be expelled from the United Kingdom at the end of the war. It was felt, however, in view of the difficulties that were experienced in passing the Aliens Act some few years ago, that such a threat would be impossible of execution.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that, if we had to break with the Bolsheviks, we should break on grounds which would be supported by International Law, and that to enforce the convention under existing circumstances, by which we should be recruiting neutral subjects, would be indefensible.

The War Cabinet therefore decided—

To stop recruiting of Russians for the moment, but not to return those who had already joined the Army, unless circumstances arose which necessitated a reconsideration of this latter point.

Allied Peace Aims.

4. The War Cabinet had a short discussion in regard to an amendment to be moved in Parliament by Mr. Snowden and others, inviting the House of Commons to express its regret at the decision of the Supreme War Council at Versailles, which declared that the only immediate task before the Allies was the prosecution of military effort, thus closing the door to the continuation of peace discussions. The amendment urged that the Allies should formulate at once a joint statement of peace principles, to form a basis of an open Conference attended by all the belligerent nations.

The Prime Minister and Lord Milner stated that M. Clemenceau had wished the Supreme War Council to adopt a very detailed and definite statement of the peace aims of the Allies. On scrutiny, however, of the draft that was put forward, it became very clear that such a statement would cause great difficulties, insomuch as in a joint declaration of peace aims each nation tended to put its own aims at a maximum. In these circumstances it had been agreed at Versailles that any statement on this subject should only be of a very general character.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should deal with the matter in Parliament on the above lines.

The Irish Convention.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 321, Minute 18, the Prime Minister informed the War Cabinet that during the past week he had seen different sections of the Irish Convention. As a result, he gathered that the Unionists were divided into two quite distinct groups, one composed mainly of Southern Unionists and the other of the Ulster Party’s representatives. The Nationalists were divided into at least three groups: Mr. Redmond did not agree with Mr. Devlin, nor Mr. Devlin with Mr. Murphy. Outside the Convention stood the Sinn Feiners, who, though not represented in the Convention, had indirect influence upon the more extreme section of the Nationalists. He gathered, from all the interviews, that they were no longer fighting over the question of Parliamentary union, but mainly over the question of Customs. Retention of Customs had become the flag to which the Nationalists were rallying. The Belfast Labour men whom he saw were all in favour of a settlement, but he gathered from Sir Edward Carson that these Labour men did not accurately represent the views of the Protestant workmen in Belfast.
Mr. Barnes stated that he doubted Sir Edward Carson’s contention, and added that he had seen the Labour men, who had informed him that if a public meeting were held in Belfast they would be able to carry the great mass of Belfast labour with them in favour of a settlement.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he had learned from Mr. Hugh Barrie, M.P., that one of the Labour men, namely, Mr. Waugh, was not in favour of a settlement. The Chief Secretary, however, expressed a belief that Mr. Waugh did honestly desire a settlement.

Lord Southborough stated that the majority of the Labour men were pledged to sign the so-called 75 per cent. compromise, which had been proposed by Lord Midleton, and seconded by Lord Dunraven. He added that it was very difficult to secure pure Labour representatives in Belfast of the same type as British Labour representatives, as the position of Labour Leaders as Labour men was overruled by their political proclivities. Labour questions were apt to be pushed aside in the minds of the Belfast workmen by the old feeling for Protestant and racial ascendancy. However, there was a distinction between the Labour men and the rest of the Ulster representatives. The Labour men appeared to be plenipotentiaries, whereas the Ulster men were bound by an external body to whom they had to refer for orders. The Labour men had dared to put their heads into the noose of personal responsibility, which the other Ulster representatives did not dare to do. It was apparent that, as things stood, the Ulster representatives would take no initiative whatever, but that, if the 75 per cent. majority scheme recommended itself to the Government, the Ulster representatives would be willing to submit it to their people for consideration.

He thought the Cabinet might like to know how the question of Customs had become the acute question upon which the fate of the Convention seemed now to depend. There had been, in the first place, something approaching a general acceptance of the principle of a Dublin Parliament, of the principle that in such a Parliament there should be special arrangements for Ulster’s protection, and that there should be sufficient financial resources to enable the Parliament to work. The 75 per cent. were invited to agree that internal taxation and excise should be left to the Irish Parliament. A question had then been put to the Nationalists as to whether they admitted the principle that a contribution from the Irish revenues should be made to the Imperial Exchequer. The Nationalists had agreed to this. It was further agreed by the majority that a portion of the Customs revenue should be earmarked for the purpose of forming this contribution to the Imperial Exchequer. Discussion and division of opinion had subsequently arisen as to what should be done with the balance of the Customs receipts. Roman Catholic Prelates had made a demand that all the Customs revenues should be paid into the Irish Exchequer, and a portion handed to England as an Imperial contribution. The amount of this contribution had not been fixed, and it was difficult to see how it could be fixed during the continuance of the war. However, directly the principle of contribution to Imperial Funds was admitted, it became clear that a new partner, with which the Convention was not in touch, must be consulted, namely, the British Government. One of the main objects of the present discussions was, therefore, to ascertain the views of the British Government upon this question of Customs and Imperial contribution. The non-Nationalist representatives appeared to be determined against handing over Customs to the Irish Parliament. A number of the Nationalists, on the other hand, demanded not merely the right to administer the Customs revenue, but to fix and vary the Customs duties. The whole question had been
complicated moreover by the fact that it had never been possible to state, with anything like general acceptance, what was the true Irish revenue. Lord MacDonnell, for many years Under-Secretary in Ireland, had told the Convention that in his long years of experience he had never been able to ascertain what the Irish revenue really was.

Mr. Walter Long stated that he felt convinced that the majority of those who thought with him in Parliament would never agree to the handing over of Customs to an Irish Parliament.

The Chief Secretary for Ireland stated that he thought the Cabinet should realise that, if the deliberations of the Convention brought no fruition, the Government would be faced with the necessity of carrying on the government of Ireland by force. Influences were at work in the western counties which threatened the operation of all ordinary administration. Large numbers of young men had been kept in the country against their will, and were organised in such a manner as to make the carrying on of the government in the ordinary way quite impossible should there be no prospect of a settlement. In his opinion it was clear that any man or section which stood out against a settlement had thereby laid upon them the duty of assuming responsibility for the future government of Ireland. If there was a prospect of a settlement, there would be peace and he thought a certainty of improvement in Irish conditions. If, however, the prospect of a settlement failed, matters would drift into a state of affairs which could hardly be controlled.

On the point of giving Customs to the Irish Parliament, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Lord Milner both expressed the view that the shadow was more formidable than the substance, and that, provided treaty-making power was not conceded, Customs might conceivably be left to the Irish Parliament. The Chancellor of the Exchequer added that he gathered that the Ulstermen held the view that nothing could come of the Convention unless the British Government gave a lead as to what was the Government view.

The Prime Minister invited Professor Adams to make suggestions in regard to what the Prime Minister should say, on behalf of the Government, to the seventeen representatives of all sections of the Convention that afternoon.

Professor Adams stated that, in his opinion, the first thing to say was that an All-Ireland Parliament was the only basis of a solution. There was evidence that the Ulstermen were prepared to discuss the question of safeguards if they felt that they were urged by the British Government to accept the principle in Imperial interests. Neither the Southern Unionists nor the Nationalists would stay a day longer in the Convention unless there was a prospect of Ulster coming into the Dublin Parliament.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed that this should form the basis of the Government proposal.

Professor Adams then stated that, in regard to the Customs difficulty, several alternatives were possible. In the first place, it might be pointed out to the Nationalist representatives that, by claiming the power to vary the Customs imposed by the British Parliament during the continuance of the war, they incurred the risk of breaking up the Convention. He thought that an alternative way out of the difficulty would be to inform the Convention representatives that a Royal Commission would be established at the end of the war to settle the amount of the contribution to be made by Ireland to the Imperial Exchequer, provided that such contribution were fixed for a period of years at a definite sum, and that this Commission should examine the whole question of Customs. At any rate, until the Commission reports, the British Government should fix provisionally the amount of the
Imperial contribution. Professor Adams added that a letter from Sir Horace Plunkett showed that he took the view that the Prime Minister should avoid making a detailed statement to the joint meeting of representatives of different sections of the Convention. He thought that the Prime Minister should confine himself to making a general statement which should be followed by a more detailed written statement which could be read to the Convention at their re-assembly on Tuesday next.

Lord Southborough thought it important that, in addition to seeing the seventeen representatives, the Prime Minister should see the Ulster section separately at a subsequent meeting. The Convention were most anxious to obtain some definite proposals from the Ulster members which might be discussed; up to date no suggestions whatever had been put forward by them. If the parties were received together the difficulty was that, the moment the question of Customs was examined in detail, the pitch was queered as far as the Unionist representatives were concerned, and nothing would be got from them.

Mr. Long added that any offer at this stage by the Government of the Customs, would be regarded by the Nationalists as a political victory which would make the position of the Unionists almost, if not quite, impossible.

The Prime Minister then stated that, with the concurrence of his colleagues, he proposed to make a general statement to the joint meeting of the different sections that afternoon, to be followed by further conferences with the various sections. At the joint meeting he would point out the gravity of the position, both from the Imperial point of view and from the point of view of Irish nationalism. He would point out that, as long as the war lasted, Ireland had to be governed, and that, from the Irish point of view, it was of the utmost urgency that a settlement should be reached. He would make clear to the joint meeting that the Government took the view that during the war a settlement was only possible which involved the following three cardinal propositions:—

(a.) That there should be one Parliament for the whole of Ireland, sitting in Dublin;
(b.) That while the war continued, Customs could not be handed over to the Irish Parliament;
(c.) That during the continuance of the war, the control of the police must be retained by the Imperial Government.

The War Cabinet agreed to the procedure suggested by the Prime Minister.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 13, 1918.
Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, February 11, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 10).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., K.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.


The Right Hon. Sir George Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minute 12).


Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 1 and 12).

The Right Hon. Sir J. Maclay, Bart., Shipping Controller (for Minutes 11 to 15).


Major P. Lloyd Greame, M.C., Secretary, Ministry of National Service (for Minutes 11 to 15).

The Right Hon. T. J. Macnamara, LL.D., M.P., Financial Secretary, Admiralty (for Minute 11).


Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Fleet Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgis, Assistant Secretary.
1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 334, Minute 4, the First Sea Lord stated that an aerial reconnaissance over Constantinople indicated that much work was being done on the "Goeben."

2. The First Sea Lord reported an engagement by one of our destroyers with an enemy submarine in the North Sea. The result was unknown.

3. The War Cabinet took note of a Joint Report of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the First Sea Lord in regard to the position of Holland (Paper G.T.-3568), which was called for in War Cabinet 318, Minute 12.

4. The First Sea Lord read a telegram from the Rear-Admiral Commanding at Murmansk, which referred to the orders issued to intercept the ship "Dora" on her way to Murmansk. The telegram expressed the opinion that the ship should be allowed to proceed, in order that her cargo, which was badly required by the Russians, might be used as an inducement to the authorities at Archangel to give up the valuable British stores at that port, which at present they refused to do.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs referred to his telegram No. 851 to Washington, which expressed the same opinion with regard to the "Dora" as that held by the Rear-Admiral at Murmansk.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the First Sea Lord to arrange the matter between them.

5. The Secretary read out a statement received from the Ministry of Munitions regarding a fire and serious explosion which had occurred at Rainham T.N.T. Factory the previous evening. According to the information available, no lives had been lost, the staff and labour being able to make their escape in good time. Representatives of the Explosives Department were enquiring into the causes of the explosion, and would report in due course. The factory produced pure T.N.T., and if the factory is completely destroyed its loss will be inconvenient, but in no way serious.

6. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that in a recent conversation the French Ambassador had mentioned that a serious fire and explosion had taken place at an important French munitions factory, which was attributed to sabotage.

7. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that the French Ambassador had expressed serious misgivings in regard to the British food supply, and doubted whether the British people would be content with the proposed scale of rations. The French had tried the plan of limiting prices, and it failed completely, with the result that another system had had to be adopted. M. Cambon stated that the reserves of French livestock had been diminished by one-third since the beginning of the war, and he thought that if the British made a similar reduction the meat supply, at any rate, would be assured for some time to come. Mr. Balfour urged strongly that the War Cabinet should fully acquaint themselves with the facts of the food situation.
In the absence of the Prime Minister and the Food Controller the discussion was adjourned.

8. The War Cabinet took note of the constitution and conclusions reached at the first meeting of the Allied Naval Council (Papers I.C.-45 and I.C.-48).

9. With reference to War Cabinet 330A, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs informed the War Cabinet that he was about to circulate for their consideration a Memorandum dealing with the whole question of Japanese intervention in Siberia.

10. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs informed the War Cabinet that Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, late Ambassador to the United States Government, had died suddenly of heart failure at Ottawa the previous night.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 241, Minute 14, the War Cabinet had under consideration a Report by the Admiralty on the World Tonnage and Submarine and Mercantile Losses (Paper G.T.-3572), in which it was suggested that a statement should be laid before Parliament indicating a comparison between the losses sustained by the world's mercantile marine by the action of unrestricted submarine warfare and the output of world shipping by our Allies and neutrals.

The First Sea Lord stated that the Admiralty were exceedingly anxious, in view of the low standard of output of shipbuilding that was being achieved, more especially at such a critical period, and that therefore, after very careful and prolonged consideration, the Board had decided to make the recommendation set out in their Paper, with a view to inducing the workers in the shipbuilding and related industries to make far greater efforts than they had been doing in the past. The effect that such a publication would have in enemy countries had received most mature consideration, and the Board realised that, on balance, more advantage might be hoped to be obtained by publication in the form recommended. The Admiralty had further been influenced in this view by expert advice as to the very material effect the publication would have on the labour world.

Mr. Barnes confirmed this view, and thought it most important that the statement should be issued, as his experience had shown that it was impossible, without figures, to bring home to the workers the seriousness of the situation.

Sir Auckland Geddes pointed out that in the near future, owing to absence of raw materials, the unemployment question would become acute, and that a clear statement as to the reasons which led to such a state of affairs would be of assistance in preventing labour troubles.

Dr. Macnamara endorsed the view of the First Sea Lord, and recommended that, as the situation was changing from day to day, it was highly desirable that Sir Joseph Maclay should go through the document, with a view to putting forward any suggestions for its improvement. Dr. Macnamara also pointed out that the War Cabinet would probably find it necessary to obtain the sanction of our Allies before publication took place. In the event of the statement being put forward, he would suggest that, after it had been presented as a Parliamentary Paper, it should be communicated to the press, and that copies, together with a curve, should be sent to all the shipyards in the country. He realised that subsequently a somewhat similar statement and chart would have to be published periodically, but
the question of time would have to be further considered by the Admiralty.

The Minister of Shipping stated that he concurred with Dr. Macnamara, and was of opinion that the appeal should be made from the Admiralty, inasmuch as he thought such a course would have most influence with the workers.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Minister of Shipping, in conjunction with the Admiralty, to go over the statement, after which, subject to the Prime Minister’s approval, the Admiralty should communicate with our Allies, with a view to its publication.

12. The War Cabinet had under consideration a Memorandum by the Commissioner of Police (Paper G.T.-3564), transmitted by the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, and a Memorandum by the First Commissioner of Works (Paper G.T.-3599) as to the possibility of a strike on the part of the electrical trade union workers.

Sir George Cave stated that the matter was brought to the War Cabinet in view of the big question that would be involved if men from the Army and Navy were utilised to carry on the generation of electricity for the requirements of London. He pointed out that if affected industries could not be kept as going concerns everything would be demoralised. For instance, the maintenance of refrigeration in cold storage would be affected; public lighting, the working of tramways, underground railways, and the supply of electrical power for all purposes would be brought to a standstill.

The Secretary of State for War and the First Sea Lord stated that arrangements had been made to provide the necessary naval and military ratings that would be required pending volunteer workers being forthcoming to take their places.

The War Cabinet approved the proposal for naval and military ratings to be employed for the purpose in question, and also authorised—

The First Commissioner of Works to arrange with the Admiralty and War Office for such additional electrical workers as might be required for his Department.

The Commissioner of Police offered his assistance.

13. With reference to a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for War (Paper G.T.-3542) relative to the setting up of a Central Council to deal with waste products of all sorts, the War Cabinet authorised the establishment of this Council.

Lord Derby undertook to arrange with the Food Controller as to the chairmanship of the Council.

14. The War Cabinet approved the Report of the Committee on the Export of Printed Matter (Paper G.-191), and authorised the amendment of the Defence of the Realm Regulations 24 and 24 (b) as set out in the Appendix to the Report.

15. The Minister of Shipping brought to the notice of the War Cabinet a Memorandum (Paper G.T.-3492) which he had written relative to the oats ration for horses of the British Army. He urged the great seriousness of the tonnage position, and the effect it was going to have on the supply of foodstuffs for the popu-
lations of this and Allied countries. He stated that the effect of a reduction of the oats ration from 10 lb. to 9 lb. would be equivalent to 14,000 tons of shipping a month, and mentioned that he understood that the British Army in France had 414,450 horses and mules, of which 66,118 were heavy horses.

Lord Derby stated that he had very carefully gone into the question, and, if efficiency was to be maintained, he was of opinion that it was quite impossible to reduce the ration below the ration authorised (viz., 10 lb.) by War Cabinet 329, Minute 6, and added that he was taking steps to stop the import of any further horses from the United States of America, except such as had already been purchased in that country.

In view of the importance of effecting every possible saving in tonnage, however small, the War Cabinet requested—

Lord Curzon, assisted by such Departments or experts as he might desire, and after consultation with the Secretary of State for War and the Minister of Shipping, to enquire into and decide as to the reduction of the oats ration for Army horses.

The Secretary of State for War undertook to enquire further into the cutting down of the importation of horses, with a view, if possible, to the immediate cessation of shipments from the United States of America, and to communicate as requisite with the Minister of Shipping on the subject.

(Initialled) A. B. L.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 14, 1918.
Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, February 15, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.H., Secretary of State for War.
The Right Hon. W. H. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minutes 5 to 13).
The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 5 to 13).
Mr. W. T. Layton, C.B.E., Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 5 to 13).
The Right Hon. Sir A. Stanley, M.P., President of the Board of Trade (for Minutes 5 to 13).
Professor Chapman, Board of Trade (for Minutes 5 to 13).

Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.
Sir Alan G. Anderson, K.B.E., Controller, Admiralty (for Minutes 5 to 13).
Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Robert Horne, K.B.E., K.C., Admiralty Controller's Department (for Minutes 5 to 13).
The Right Hon. Sir J. Maclay, Bart., Shipping Controller (for Minutes 5 to 13).
Sir Leo G. Chiozza Money, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Shipping (for Minutes 5 to 13).
The Right Hon. Sir A. C. Geddes, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service (for Minutes 5 to 13).
Major P. Lloyd Creame, Ministry of National Service (for Minutes 5 to 13).
The Right Hon. G. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour (for Minutes 5 to 13).
Sir D. J. Shackleton, K.C.B., Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour (for Minutes 5 to 13).
Major the Hon. Waldorf Astor, M.P. (for Minutes 5 to 13).
The Right Hon. Lord Rhondda, Food Controller (for Minutes 5 to 13).
Mr. U. F. Wintour, C.B., C.M.G., Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Food (for Minutes 5 to 13).

Captain L. F. Burgis, Assistant Secretary.
Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.
1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff drew the attention of the War Cabinet to a report that tanks were being built by the Germans. He mentioned a statement that 500 had been ordered in Switzerland by the German Government.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 340, Minute 3, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff read a report from Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig relating to the part of the line held by the Portuguese, and to the measures taken by him to ensure its safety.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 345, Minute 1, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff read an urgent message he had received from General Foch, pointing out that, by a comparison of the opposing forces on the Western and Italian fronts, the enemy possessed a superiority of force on the former, and the Allies on the latter front; expressing his opinion that it was essential that part of the Allied forces now in Italy should, without delay, be brought back to the Western front; and suggesting that, as the British reserves in France are smaller than the French, and the British Front is apparently menaced more immediately, two British Divisions might be brought back at once from Italy to France, followed by French divisions. General Foch has asked to be informed by telegraph of General Robertson's views, and as to the earliest date on which the British divisions could begin their movement.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff expressed his opinion that the Allied forces on the Western Front should be regarded as part of the General Reserve of the Allies. From this point of view it seemed desirable that the question should be dealt with by the new Allied Executive in control of the Reserves. Personally, however, he agreed with General Foch that the British Divisions in Italy ought to be brought back to the Western Front.

The Secretary of State for War strongly urged that the Divisions should be brought back. He pointed out that General Foch, who was not only the Chief of the French General Staff, but was also the President of the new Allied Executive in control of the Reserves, strongly pressed it, and that the Chief of the Imperial General Staff supported him. The British and French Governments had, on their own initiative, sent the Divisions to Italy; the circumstances in which they were sent had now entirely changed; the point of danger was now on the Western and not on the Italian Front; and the Governments would therefore be perfectly within their rights in recalling the Divisions.

On the other hand, it was pointed out that this question was closely connected with that of the employment of Italian troops on the Western Front, the study of which had been remitted by the Supreme War Council to the Allied Executive in control of the General Reserve. It was very desirable to secure as many Italian Divisions as possible for the Western Front and for the General Reserve, and if the British Divisions were reduced quite suddenly the Italian Government might become nervous and decline to part with any Divisions at all.

It was pointed out that on the 13th February General Harington had expressed the opinion that the work the British forces in Italy were now doing could be equally well done by three Divisions instead of five (War Cabinet 315, Minute 1). It was also pointed out that, in the past, British and French Divisions had constantly been moved about on the Western Front in accordance with the exigencies of the military situation. For example, during the Flanders battle several French Divisions had co-operated on the British left, and on the conclusion of the battle they had been withdrawn.
The suggestion was made that the British Divisions might be used as a lever to induce the Italian Government to make a start with sending Divisions to the Western Front. For example, we might inform them that unless they sent, say, four Italian Divisions at once to the Western Front we should be compelled to withdraw two British Divisions. It was pointed out, however, that Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig might prefer to have two British rather than four Italian Divisions.

As this question appeared primarily to affect the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief the British Expeditionary Force, the War Cabinet decided—

1. That the Chief of the Imperial General Staff should ascertain from Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig whether he would prefer to be reinforced by two British or four Italian Divisions from the Italian Front.

2. That, in the event of a reply by the Field-Marshal that he would prefer two British Divisions, the following action should be taken:

(a.) The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should send orders to the General Officer Commanding the British Expeditionary Force in Italy to send two British Divisions at once to the Western Front, and that the Chief of the Imperial General Staff should also notify the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

(b.) That the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should at once notify the Italian Government of this step. In communicating with the Italian Government he should inform them of the fact that the enemy, while greatly inferior to the Allies on the Italian Front, had now achieved a superiority of force on the Western Front, and should add that the action now taken was consistent with the principles which had long governed the distribution of forces between the British and French sections of the Western Front, where the reinforcements had always been distributed in accordance with the strategical exigencies of the moment.

4. The First Sea Lord reported that during the preceding night an attack had been made on the Dover Patrol by enemy submarines and destroyers. Full information was lacking, and a further report would be made on the following day. Two drifters had certainly been sunk.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 330, Minute 1 (a), the War Cabinet had before them a Report of the Committee on the Restriction of Imports (Paper G.191) (Appendix), containing recommendations in regard to the further restriction of imports.

With regard to Paper and Pulp, the President of the Board of Trade pointed out that before the War these imports amounted to about 1,900,000 tons per annum. Last year they were cut down to 600,000 tons. In December 1917 another cut was authorised amounting to 150,000 tons per annum (War Cabinet 292, Minute 11). The Committee now recommended a further cut of 100,000 tons, leaving only 350,000 tons this year as compared with 600,000 tons last year. Last year the 600,000 tons had been divided as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government purposes</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boards and wrapping paper</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines</td>
<td>180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>250,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The President of the Board of Trade stated that the proposed cut of 100,000 tons (brining imports to less than one-fifth of the pre-War level) would necessitate reducing newspapers and periodicals below half their present size, entailing, presumably, the suppression of a number of them.

The War Cabinet decided—

To adopt the recommendation of the Committee, that a further reduction on the basis of 100,000 tons a year should be made.

6. As to cotton, the President of the Board of Trade pointed out that there were now about 40,000 unemployed (mainly on rota) who were supported out of the proceeds of levies imposed on the industry. This fund, however, would come to an end in June. The proposed cut of a further 200,000 tons on cotton would involve an increase in unemployment of 75,000 operatives, and an increased cut of work wages of, say, 250,000£ a month, or 3,000,000£ a year. It would further necessitate closing down some mills.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that, while 3,000,000£ a year did not seem an extreme figure, at the same time it would establish a principle of supporting unemployed, which might lead to far-reaching consequences.

Mr. Churchill pointed out that if it came to a question of closing down cotton mills or munition works, of the two choices it should be cotton and not munitions that should be restricted, having regard to the fact that the reduction in munitions import would also cause unemployment without a direct war result.

Sir Albert Stanley said he agreed that cotton must be cut down; whatever action was decided upon, it was vital that the Cotton Control Board's scheme of levies and unemployment payments to operatives should not be interfered with, because it had been accepted as part of a wages settlement. He suggested that when the scheme came to an end in June the whole financial position should be considered.

The War Cabinet decided—

(a.) To adopt the Committee's recommendation, that cotton should be further restricted on the basis of 200,000 tons per annum.
(b.) That the Board of Trade should take up with the Treasury the question of financial assistance.
(c.) That the cotton position should be reviewed by the Restriction of Imports Committee in June next.

7. Sir Albert Stanley said that, in the opinion of the Timber Controller, a further reduction of 200,000 tons of pitwood, recommended by the Committee, was impossible, but that 100,000 tons might be managed in the second half of the year, provided that all the Departments concerned (e.g., the Ministry of Munitions, the Ministry of National Service, &c.) rendered every possible assistance to the Timber Controller in regard to labour, transport, tools, &c. The Timber Controller proposed to make up the balance of 200,000 tons by sacrificing 75,000 tons of hard and soft wood from America, and 25,000 tons of imports from Scandinavia.

The War Cabinet decided—

To adopt the proposal of the President of the Board of Trade.

8. Some discussion took place in regard to the Committee's recommendation that the sugar ration should be reduced from 8 oz. to 6 oz. per head per week, in order to obtain a total saving of 150,000 tons a year.
Lord Rhondda explained that since the last meeting of the Committee he had had the food situation carefully analysed, and that the calorie value of other foods available was insufficient to permit of the proposed reduction being made. The minimum food indent previously approved by the War Cabinet was based on an average requirement of 4 billion calories per month. Of this figure, 884 billion calories should be provided by meat and fats, but at the present time not more than 443 billion calories were available. In these circumstances the reduction of the sugar ration was bound to re-act on the cereal consumption, which at the present time was at a dangerously high level, having regard to the supplies available. He pointed out that there was already widespread dissatisfaction in regard to the food problem, and that a curtailment of the sugar ration so soon after the scheme had been put into operation would introduce a new element of discontent. On the other hand, it was pointed out that no great objection had been raised by the public in regard to the 1/2-lb. ration, and that there were very large stocks of sugar in the country at present, amounting to some 170,000 tons, as compared with a stock of about only 23,000 tons at the worst time of last year. In reply to the suggestion that present stocks were sufficient to permit of the sugar ration being continued at the present rate until May next, Lord Rhondda explained that Cuba was now the only source of supply available, that large purchases had been made by the Sugar Commission, and that, unless these were lifted, they would probably be acquired and consumed by the United States, with the result that, when at a later stage we required to make good the deficiency, it would be necessary to fetch supplies from Java. In view of the above circumstances he strongly deprecated the suggestion to reduce the imports of sugar at the present time.

In view of the critical tonnage situation, and the fact that the total amount of reductions now recommended by the Committee do not meet the tonnage deficit by upwards of 1,000,000 tons, the War Cabinet decided—

To adopt the Committee's recommendation that the sugar ration should be reduced from 8 oz. to 6 oz. per head per week.
We are informed that while there are at present about 40,000 cotton operatives out of employment there appears to be no unrest at the moment, because the operatives out of employment are being supported by a fund. This fund, however, will cease in June, and it may be that the Government will then have to come to the assistance of the unemployed operatives if other work cannot be found for them.

It is estimated that, roughly speaking, a further reduction of 200,000 tons of cotton would mean a further 200,000 people being thrown out of employment.

The President of the Board of Trade has undertaken to prepare a paper showing the results of reductions of different dimensions, ranging from 100,000 tons to 250,000 tons.

The Committee recommend that a substantial reduction should be made, having regard, inter alia, to the fact that the reductions in munitions import also cause unemployment without a direct war result.


The extensive felling of home-grown timber has been one of the cardinal points in the policy of Restriction of Imports without which the tonnage situation could not have been saved.

In 1916 the imports of timber were about 6,300,000 tons. In 1917, owing to restrictions imposed, the imports are estimated to have fallen to about 2,600,000 tons.

In our previous Report (G-178) we recommended another cut of 1,000,000 tons of the 1917. We now recommend a further reduction in pitwood amounting to 200,000 tons.

In making this recommendation we feel bound to point out—

(a.) That the end of the tether, as regards the importation of timber, has almost been reached;

(b.) That in order to obtain the further amount of home-grown timber it will be necessary for all Departments concerned (e.g., the Ministry of Munitions and the Ministry of National Service) to render every possible assistance to the Timber Controller.

10. Sugar.

Sir Charles Bathurst has supplied us with details as to the sugar position. As compared with 1917 the situation is very satisfactory. There is now a stock of about 170,000 tons as compared with a stock of some 23,000 tons at the worst time of last year.

As regards further reduction it does not seem possible to take anything off the amount required for jam, and the only direction in which restriction might now be made appears to be in domestic uses.

The total domestic consumption for the year is estimated at about 610,000 tons. If the sugar ration were therefore reduced by a quarter, i.e., by two ounces from eight ounces to six ounces, there would be a total saving of 150,000 tons a year.

No great objection has been raised by the public in regard to the ½ lb. ration, and it seems likely that the public will submit to a further reduction.

In view of these facts we recommend the War Cabinet to authorise the reduction of the sugar ration from eight ounces to six ounces per head per week, in order to obtain a total saving of 150,000 tons a year.


We have had under consideration the possibility of the further slaughter of cattle in this country, and Lord Rhondda has undertaken to examine the question with the Board of Agriculture. He has, however, told us that he cannot hold out any encouragement of further reductions in the stocks of cattle.

In this connection we discussed the question of rationing in the army, navy, and merchant service. It was stated that whereas the civilian, working for instance on munitions, was lucky if he got ½ lbs. of meat a week, a sailor at sea or a soldier at the base in France received 1½ lbs. of meat a day.

We are of opinion that the ration scales should be revised from the point of view of work done, and as regards the army, of whether the area in which the soldier is serving, is a combatant or non-combatant area.
We suggest that the War Cabinet should instruct the Departments concerned to revise the ration scales from the point of view of the nature of the various duties and the areas in which they are performed.


We have considered the question of reducing the imports of petroleum. Our attention was called to the special importance of obtaining such tank vessels from America as would enable the Admiralty to dispense with the double bottoms for oil fuel. We also discussed the questions of increasing home supplies, and the desirability of restricting the use of petrol for commercial purposes such as retail deliveries. These are matters which come within the province of the Petroleum Executive, and therefore we have written to ask that Committee to consider a possible reduction in the imports of petroleum.

We hope that a reduction amounting to perhaps 50,000 tons may be possible, but until we hear from the Petroleum Committee we are not in a position to submit a definite figure.

13. Brewing.

On the 1st January the question of whether a reduction of 50,000 tons could be made in the amount of barley imported for brewing was referred to us by the War Cabinet (War Cabinet 309, Minute 4). We have examined the matter with representatives of the Ministry of Food and the Liquor Control Board, and we have approved the proposal of the Ministry of Food that 250,000 quarters of barley (equivalent to 50,000 tons of freight) should be taken from the brewing trade and released for the loaf. We have also agreed to the proposal of the Ministry of Food whereby a saving of some 20,000 tons of freight per annum can be effected by substituting 3,000 tons per month of glucose for barley.

A further considerable reduction, perhaps amounting to about one-third or one-fourth of the imports consumed could be effected without reducing the quantity of beer supplied by forcing the strong proprietary brewers to dilute down to the standard of other beer.

We recommend to the War Cabinet that the downward dilution should be made whereby a saving would be effected of about 200,000 tons of freight a year.

We understand that the Shipping Controller is bringing the larger question of total prohibition of brewing for separate and special consideration by the War Cabinet at an early date.


The Minister of Munitions has prepared a paper showing the effect of recent and proposed tonnage reductions.

The shipping required to meet programmes of all Departments in full would be 15,000,000 tons. The actual imports in 1917 were 12,500,000 tons.

On the basis of reductions imposed by the Restriction of Imports (G.-178), the imports in 1918 will be 11 millions. The Minister of Munitions has now been requested to prepare two programmes for further reductions by (a) 1,600,000 tons, (b) 1,500,000 tons, reducing the munitions import from the figure of last year by 2,500,000 and 3,000,000 tons respectively. Programme (a), involving 1,000,000 tons additional, will reduce the allocation to the Admiralty by 400,000 tons. No reduction was made from the allocations on the first cut of 1,500,000 tons, but in view of the objections to this proposal raised by the representatives of the Admiralty at our meeting, we have asked that Department to state their case on the subject to the War Cabinet.

We hesitate, at present at any rate, to recommend programme (b) involving 1,500,000 tons additional, because any further reduction beyond the 1,000,000 tons would have to come directly off the gun ammunition programme which, as the War Cabinet will remember, was cut down, under our previous recommendations in December, by 500,000 tons of steel for army shell.

We therefore recommend the War Cabinet to accept the Ministry of Munitions’ programme (a) for a further reduction of imports by 1,000,000 tons, including 400,000 tons from the Admiralty, leaving it to the latter Department to state their case to the War Cabinet.
15. Summary of Recommendations.

To summarise:—

The Committee were confronted by an additional estimated tonnage deficiency during the year of at least 2,500,000 tons.

This deficiency may be off-set by restriction of imports in the following way:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Tons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton, say</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitwood</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brewing materials</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munitions</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil, say (not yet agreed to by the Petroleum Executive)</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,000,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Remaining Deficit.

It will thus be seen that the total amount of reductions, now recommended, do not meet the tonnage deficit by some 500,000 tons. Moreover, the Ministry of Munitions' figures as now stated only include 300,000 tons of phosphate rock whereas the Board of Agriculture require 600,000 tons.

Even the suggested reductions are open to further comment, as regards Munitions by the Admiralty, Cotton and Miscellaneous by the Board of Trade, and Oil by the Petroleum Executive. The authority of the War Cabinet will be required before they can be made effective.

Further, the tonnage for the conveyance of 150,000 United States troops, amounting perhaps to 450,000 tons, has not been taken into account.

There remains, therefore, a deficit of upwards of 1,000,000 tons. Having regard, however, to the extreme uncertainties of the tonnage situation, we are of opinion that, for the present, we should leave this remaining deficit outstanding.

It is too early to decide upon which Departments the further reductions should fall. The requirements of munitions obviously depend largely upon the date and scale at which the enemy attempts in the West are opened. There are many other factors which are not yet clear. We think it desirable that the Committee should reassemble at a later date, when the position should be re-examined.

Meanwhile, we recommend that the Munitions Budget should be sanctioned on the reduced basis of 10,000,000 tons import, and that the Department should have authority to place orders sufficiently in excess of this amount to make sure that every advantage may be taken of the accidents of shipment.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON,
Chairman,
for the Committee.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 11, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 348.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, February 18, 1918, at 12:30 P.M.

Present:

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:


Changes in Military Appointments.

Mr. Bonar Law stated that General Sir Henry Wilson had now been appointed Chief of the Imperial General Staff and, by arrangement with General Sir William Robertson, would take over the duties on the following day. General Robertson had been appointed to the Eastern Command. Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig had visited England and had been consulted in regard to the selection of an officer for the appointment of the British Permanent Military Representative at Versailles. It was hoped it would be possible to announce this appointment very shortly.

Mr. Bonar Law further stated that the Prime Minister on the previous day had rather inclined to the view that the Government should make a statement in Parliament in regard to General Robertson's resignation the same afternoon. Two draft statements had been prepared, but it had been found that, if everything was said that ought to be said, the statement became as long as a speech, and, on the contrary, if the statement was shortened it was defective. To publish an incomplete statement would enable Parliamentary opposition to discover the general lines of the Government's case on this question, and to develop their attack accordingly. Consequently, he had telephoned to the Prime Minister to advise that no statement should be made to-day, and the Prime Minister, though not very willingly, had acquiesced.

The War Cabinet agreed that—

No statement should be made in Parliament till the following day.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 18, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 349.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, February 19, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minute 11).


The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 6 to 10).

Lieutenant-General Sir H. H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 6 to 8).

Sir W. Guy Granet, Director-General of Movements and Railways (for Minutes 12 and 13).

Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 1 to 5).

The Right Hon. T. J. Macnamara, LL.D., M.P., Parliamentary and Financial Secretary, Admiralty (for Minute 10).

The Right Hon. Sir J. MacLay, Bart., Shipping Controller (for Minutes 12 to 14).

The Right Hon. Lord Rhondda, Food Controller (for Minute 14).

Mr. U. F. Wintour, C.B., C.M.G., Secretary, Ministry of Food (for Minute 14).


Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.

Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.
1. The First Sea Lord reported that Loheiya (on the Arabian coast, 200 miles north of Perim) and El Atan are now in the hands of the Idrisi troops, the Turks having been driven out.

2. The First Sea Lord read out a telegram received from the Rear-Admiral at Murmansk, which stated that an intercepted Russian wireless message, sent out by M. Trotsky to the German Government on 17th February, ran as follows:

"To-day, 17th February, we received a communication by land wire from Brest-Litovsk saying that General Hoffmann stated 16th February that state of war between Germany and Russia will be renewed from noon 18th February. Government of Russian Republic presumes this telegram does not emanate from those persons by whom it is purported to be signed, and that it is of a provocative character, as, even admitting cessation of truce by Germany, in accordance with terms of armistice, seven days' notice, and not two, must be given. We request explanation of misunderstanding. Request Berlin acknowledge."

3. The First Sea Lord read a telegram received from the naval attaché, Petrograd, on the 18th instant, to the effect that Ishmaileff had been released and appointed Yamissar for the Fleet, but many of the ships refused him recognition. Duibencx ordered Ishmaileff to evacuate all stores from Helsingfors and Reval. On pleading lack of power to carry out this order, Duibencx ordered 600 bluejackets to be sent from Reval to carry out his orders. The telegram also stated that all bluejackets on Don and Ukraine fronts have been recalled to the Baltic fleet.

4. The question was asked whether, in the event of the Germans seizing the Russian fleet in the Baltic and the Black Sea, any action could be taken by us to redress the balance of power. The First Sea Lord stated that the Americans were ready to help in this respect, but in the opinion of the Admiralty it would be impossible for the Germans, even if they seized the Russian ships, to man them, as they had not the necessary personnel available.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 346, Minute 11, in which it was suggested that a statement should be laid before Parliament indicating a comparison between the losses sustained by the world's mercantile marine by the action of unrestricted submarine warfare and the output of world shipping by our Allies and neutrals, and with reference to the decision of the War Cabinet that the Minister of Shipping, in conjunction with the Admiralty, should go over the statement, after which, subject to the Prime Minister's approval, the Admiralty should communicate with our Allies with a view to its publication, the First Sea Lord stated that he hoped this question might soon be settled, and pointed out that he concluded it was not the Admiralty who should communicate with our Allies.
6. Lord Derby informed the War Cabinet that, owing to General Rawlinson's appointment as our Representative on the Supreme War Council at Versailles, General Plumer would return from Italy and command our Fourth Army in France, and that General Lord Cavan would succeed General Plumer in command of the British forces in Italy.

7. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff gave some information regarding the composition of the Allied General Reserve as proposed by the Executive Committee at Versailles, from which it transpired that nearly half the divisions it was proposed to allot to the Allied General Reserve, including three British divisions, were temporarily located in Italy.

With reference to War Cabinet 347, Minute 3, General Wilson pointed out that, as the two British divisions formed part of the Allied General Reserve, as agreed to by the Executive Committee, they ought not to be moved except by decision of that body.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff was instructed to discuss this question with General Rawlinson, and arrive at a decision on the subject with him.

8. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff suggested that a reply should be sent to General Smuts' telegram regarding the position in Palestine, to the effect that we were not yet in a position to give any advice on this subject.

The War Cabinet instructed—

The Secretary to telegraph to General Smuts in the above sense.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 328, Minute 17, the War Cabinet decided that, as the Quartermaster-General and the Chairman of the Royal Commission on Wheat Supplies were agreed on the subject—

Certain steamers, carrying 16,000 tons of oats, should be diverted to Italy, where oats were urgently required for the Italian Army.

10. With reference to War Cabinet 320, Minute 8, the War Cabinet approved the Fourth and Final Report of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Pay Committee (Paper G.-193).

11. The War Cabinet had before them Paper G.T.-3547, in which Mr. Balfour suggested that the functions of the Intelligence Branch of the Department of Information would more properly be performed by the Foreign Office.

The War Cabinet approved the transfer of the Intelligence Branch of the Department of Information to the Foreign Office, and requested—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to issue the necessary instructions.
12. With reference to War Cabinet 329, Minute 5, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for War (Paper G.T.-559) in regard to the provision of locomotives and wagons in connection with the mobilisation of the Greek Army. In this Memorandum it was pointed out that one of the most urgent demands in connection with the mobilisation of the Greek Army was for the supply of 10 locomotives and 300 railway wagons to increase the capacity of the Piraeus-Plati Railway in Old Greece.

Sir Guy Granet said that this demand for 300 wagons and 10 locomotives for the Greeks was in addition to the requirements of the British Director of Railways at Salonica, which amounted to 500 wagons, making a total of 800 wagons in all. He stated that a scheme was under consideration whereby the Greek railways should be taken over by a Joint Commission, just as the Salonica Railway was now managed. The idea was to expand the Salonica principle by adding a Greek representative to the Commission. The proposition had been put forward, but had not yet been definitely adopted.

Sir Joseph Maclay said that, in order to carry out the programme submitted, it would be necessary to allocate two ships running for four months.

In view of the vital importance of providing rolling-stock in connection with the mobilisation of the Greek Army, the War Cabinet decided that—

The Minister of Shipping should allocate the tonnage necessary for the conveyance of the 800 wagons and 10 locomotives.

13. With reference to War Cabinet 324, Minute 10, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Minister of Shipping (Paper G.T.-3491) in regard to the importation of Chinese coolies into France, in which he strongly advocated the complete suspension of the importation of Chinese coolies.

Sir Joseph Maclay said that he understood that the Secretary of State for War was prepared to stop the importation of coolies. The War Cabinet decided, in the light of this information, that—

No more coolies should be shipped from China, on the understanding that the Secretary of State for War agreed.

14. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Ministry of Shipping (Paper G.T.-3621), in which it was stated that, in view of the extreme urgency and gravity of the food position, general instructions had been sent by the Ministry of Shipping that, in liner shipments in the latter part of February and throughout March, food-stuffs should be loaded in all practicable cases in preference to other cargo, with the exception of certain key commodities.

The War Cabinet took note of this action on the part of the Ministry of Shipping, and gave it their covering approval.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 19, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 350.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Wednesday, February 20, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 6).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 7).

General Sir H. H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 6).


Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.

Rear-Admiral Lionel Halsey, C.B., C.M.G., Third Sea Lord of the Admiralty (for Minutes 11 and 12).

Sir Alan G. Anderson, K.B.E., Controller, the Admiralty (for Minutes 11 and 12).

Sir W. Guy Granet, Director-General of Movements and Railways (for Minute 7).

The Right Hon. T. J. MacNamara, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty (for Minutes 11 and 12).

The Right Hon. Sir Joseph MacAulay, Bt., M.P., Shipping Controller (for Minutes 8 and 9).

The Right Hon. Lord Rhondda, Food Controller (for Minute 9).

Mr. U. F. Wintour, C.B., C.M.G., Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Food (for Minute 9).

The Right Hon. Austen Chamberlain, M.P. (for Minute 9).

The Right Hon. G. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour (for Minutes 8 and 9).

Sir L. Worthington Evans, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 8 and 9).

Mr. W. T. Layton, C.B.E., Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 8 and 9).


Fleet Paymaster P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.

Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the Turks were pushing along the Black Sea littoral, and had taken Trebizond.

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that, whereas it had been estimated latterly that the Germans had three divisions on the Salonica front, it was now believed that their forces were reduced to one and a half or one and two-thirds divisions. The result of this was a numerical equality between the two sides on that front.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs pointed out that, if there was truth in the many rumours that Roumania has an understanding with the enemy, and in the story, published in the press that day, that the Bolsheviks had made peace with Germany, very large numbers of Austrians and Germans would be released for operations on the Balkan front.

General Wilson stated that this question had been examined at Versailles. The railways limited the numbers that could be brought to the Balkan front, but there was little doubt that sufficient troops could be brought to bear to drive the Allies out of their present line if the Bulgarians were disposed to fight. The result of the Versailles enquiry, however, had been to establish the belief that the Allies, even if they lost Salonica, would be able to deny Old Greece to the enemy.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that General Allenby had advanced four or five miles eastwards, and was established on the summit of the hills which sloped towards the Jordan and the Dead Sea. This movement might be considered as a prelude to further operations.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 346, Minute 9, the War Cabinet had a short discussion on the question of the proposed Japanese action in Siberia, in regard to which a number of important memoranda and telegrams had been circulated.

It was pointed out that the situation was changing from day to day, and that it was difficult to take a decision at the moment.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs gave a brief account of the present position. It was no longer a question of bringing help to the Cossacks by means of Japanese intervention, as it was now clear that the Cossacks no longer existed as an efficient fighting force. There were two principal theories upon the subject of Japanese action: one was the French, which saw in Japan the only means of countering German influence in Russia; the other was the American, which, apart from jealousy and suspicion of Japanese enterprises, considered the Japs as the worst possible agents of the Allies in Russia.

The War Cabinet agreed that the question should be brought up at an early date, when the Prime Minister was able to attend the meeting.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 347, Minute 2, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, in reply to a question, stated that the General Staff had no information to confirm the rumours of an imminent German attack on the Western front.
6. With reference to War Cabinet 336, Minute 6, attention was drawn to the rumours of a new and deadly poison gas which the Germans had in store for their offensive. It was also stated that the composition of this gas had been communicated through a neutral country. The formula had been given, and it was considered that our masks were more likely to be proof against it than those used by the Germans, as their masks were inferior to ours; and from this it might be inferred that the enemy would not risk the use of a gas against which they could not protect their own troops in case it were blown back upon them by the wind.

It was also pointed out that the use of gas bombs on London had been mentioned as a possibility.

The Secretary informed the War Cabinet that expert opinion had been consulted earlier in the war, and was divided on the subject of the probable efficacy of such a form of attack.

The War Cabinet decided that—

It was desirable that they should hear at an early date the views of General Thuillier on these questions.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 328, Minute 9, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Lord Milner (Paper G.T.-3590).

The Secretary of State for War pointed out that we had undertaken a great deal of extra work behind the front. He instanced salvage, and the cultivation of land placed at our disposal by the French Government. The value of Italian labour was that it would enable us to dispense with the importation of Chinese coolies. Each coolie saved would give us an American soldier. Labour must be found, and it could not be got in England. The French had given us 3,000 or 4,000 of the Italian labourers they had secured.

Questioned as to the expected report on the utilisation of labour in France, Lord Derby stated that Sir E. Pearson would shortly have a report ready.

Sir Guy Garnet pointed out that we should not rely on the French to pass on to us their surplus of Italian workmen, as the type of men we required was of the category of the semi-skilled. We should endeavour to select the men allotted to us.

The War Cabinet therefore decided that—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should send a telegram from the Prime Minister to Signor Orlando, in the form drafted by Lord Milner and appended to his Memorandum (Paper G.T.-3590), with the addition that, if the Italian Government agreed in principle, we would at once send someone to make arrangements (Appendix).

The selection of the agent was left to the Secretary of State for War.

8. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Ministry of Munitions (Paper G.T.-3501) and a Memorandum by the Ministry of Shipping (Paper G.T.-3632), in regard to the supply of raw materials from Spain.

Sir L. Worthington Evans stated that the shortage of coal required by the mines and railways in Spain was very acute. The Rio Tinto Company, which is the largest producer of pyrites, would be obliged to close down in about two weeks unless steps were taken to improve the position. Before the war, outward freight rates from Cardiff to Huelva were about 4s. 6d. per ton; now they were over 40s.; but, in spite of this rise, shipping was not attracted. In fact there was to-day no market, except in the technical sense, because, while there was competition in demand
there was no competition in supply. The Rio Tinto Company say that they cannot afford to pay $400 per ton, and they therefore ask for a subsidy from the Government in order to enable them to carry on their business. This company maintain that they cannot ask America to pay more, because of their standing contracts in America, which would have to be broken thereby.

Sir Joseph Maclay said that, while Spain wanted coal, she refused to send her own tonnage to convey it. Spain will not send a single ship, if she can avoid it, because she hopes to induce us to send our British ships into the trade and so enable her to employ her tonnage in safe waters. Sir Joseph Maclay further pointed out that if we were to give special accommodation to an English company, like the Rio Tinto, there would, in his opinion, be trouble with the Spanish Government, who would plead for equal treatment for Spanish interests. He advised the Government to remain firm and not to give special facilities, because in this way our pressure would, before long, bring the Spanish rates down and their vessels into the trade.

In this connection the Chancellor of the Exchequer drew the attention of the War Cabinet to a telegram from Sir A. Harding, Madrid, No. 200, dated the 19th February, to the effect that the German Ambassador at Madrid had given a verbal message to the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Germans would reluctantly torpedo any Spanish ship trading directly or indirectly with the Allies. The Chancellor of the Exchequer pointed out that the question was whether we should place British ships in the trade or not.

Owing to the fact that the Foreign Office were not represented, the War Cabinet asked—

Lord Milner to decide the question later in the day, in consultation with Lord Robert Cecil, Sir Joseph Maclay, and Sir L. Worthington Evans.

Munitions Budget for 1918: Steel.

9. The War Cabinet had before them two Memoranda by Mr. Churchill (Papers G.T.-3034 and G.T.-3481), and a Memorandum by Mr. Chamberlain (Paper G.T.-3126), in regard to the Munitions Budget of 1918 and the placing of orders in excess of tonnage allocated. On the 15th February (War Cabinet 347, Minutes 11 and 13) the War Cabinet, in adopting the Report of the Restriction of Imports Committee, agreed that the Munitions Budget should be sanctioned on the reduced basis of 10,000,000 tons import, and that the Department should have authority to place orders sufficiently in excess of this amount to make sure that every advantage may be taken of the accidents of shipment.

Mr. Chamberlain said that he was afraid of advising the Cabinet to spend dollars on goods for which there might be no tonnage available. If there were resources in excess of our needs, then it would be a wise and proper course to place our orders in excess of available tonnage. But this was not the case. The position as regards the Inter-Ally Council was different. It was never certain that the assurances of Mr. Crosby in the matter of credits would receive the approval of the United States Government. As regards food, the difficulties were not so great in finding dollars, because orders were for "spot" purchases, placed and delivered within a few weeks. The munitions programme, however, was more difficult, and Mr. Crosby wanted the programme of actual commitments to be kept separate from what were proposals rather than commitments.

Sir L Worthington Evans said that when Mr. Churchill agreed to the reduction (War Cabinet 347, Minute 11) in imports, he asked for authority to order goods in excess of tonnage because his experience had shown him that actual shipping
facilities were greater than those estimated. For instance, in January last the estimated shipping allocated was 40,000 tons, whereas 75,000 tons were actually lifted. In ordering now what was contemplated to be ordered later on, no addition was being made, in the long run, to the programme. The amount in dispute was the difference between 270,000 tons asked for by the Ministry of Munitions, and 90,000 tons authorised by the American Board, or a balance of 180,000 tons. In the event of there being a breakdown in tonnage for American shipments, the Ministry of Munitions could divert other tonnage allocated to them, e.g., for carrying iron ore which had not been paid for, to fetch the steel from America.

Lord Rhondda urged that in no case should the food position be affected by the question of dollar credits. Every estimate furnished by the Wheat Commission showed that the cereal position grew worse and worse. If, for want of grain, the ships were obliged to bring meat, then the dollar value of the cargoes would become greater.

The War Cabinet decided—

To authorise the Ministry of Munitions to place further orders up to 180,000 tons of steel.

10. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum from Mr. Crosby to the Prime Minister (Paper G.T.-3616) in which Mr. Crosby asked that instructions might be given to the various Departments to “reply to enquiries made on behalf of the Council for information concerning stocks.”

The War Cabinet instructed—

The Secretary to circulate copies of Mr. Crosby’s Memorandum to the Departments concerned, with the request that the wishes of Mr. Crosby in this respect should be met, as far as possible.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 325, Minute 2, the War Cabinet had under consideration an Admiralty Memorandum (Paper G.T.-3553) dealing with the proposed programme of warship and auxiliary construction for 1919, from the point of view of steel and wages, the latter giving an indication of the man-power required for the carrying out of the programme as compared with that for previous programmes.

The Admiralty Controller drew attention to the War Cabinet ruling as set out in War Cabinet 347, Minute 11, under which the Admiralty were authorised to carry out their existing programme, on the basis of 2,100,000 tons, without alteration. Sir Alan Anderson mentioned that, out of the total amount of steel required for the 1919 programme, only 90,000 tons was required for shipbuilding other than cargo vessels, or vessels to be employed either directly or indirectly for the protection of trade against submarine attack, and that most of that amount would be required for light cruisers. He added that of the total Admiralty requirements of steel during 1918 not more than 10,000 tons would be expended in vessels which would not complete before the end of 1910. He further mentioned that it was not proposed to expend any steel during 1918 on the battle cruiser included in Programme A.

The War Cabinet approved “Warship Programme A.”

12. The War Cabinet had under consideration a proposal by the Admiralty (Paper G.T.-3607) for the acquisition of the battleship “Almirante Cochrane,” which was now building at
Elswick for the Chilean Government, for the purpose of converting her into a seaplane carrier, the total cost of acquiring and completing the vessel being approximately £3,000,000.

The Third Sea Lord pointed out that the Chilean Authorities had been approached and the Chilean Minister had stated that his Government were willing to transfer the ship in consideration of the Admiralty supplying them with some aeroplanes during the next 12 or 18 months. He wished that the supply of such should not be deferred until after the end of the war. He added that the Chilean Government do not, however, make the transfer of the "Almirante Cochrane" conditional upon compliance with this request.

The War Cabinet approved the acquisition of the "Almirante Cochrane."

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 20, 1918.

APPENDIX.

Telegram from Prime Minister to Signor Orlando.

THERE is a question of great urgency which I wished to bring before your notice during our recent conferences, but the number of important matters which we had to discuss did not leave time for it. I refer to the shortage of military labour for the great amount of work which has still to be done in strengthening our defensive lines in Northern France. As you know, the British troops have been engaged in very heavy and continuous fighting on that front for months past. They are threatened with a heavy attack by the enemy in the near future, and under these circumstances it is not possible to detach as large a number for work behind the lines as is urgently required to make the necessary preparations. I would therefore make a very earnest appeal to you to assist us during the next few months with as many labour battalions as you can possibly spare. I am aware that you are already generously assisting the French for a similar purpose. Our need is no less great than theirs, and, having regard to the exceptional efforts we are being called upon to make, and gladly make to the extreme extent of our powers, to assist Italy in supplying her imperative wants in grain and coal, I feel justified in begging you to help us in respect of our no less urgent want of labour. We should, of course, be prepared to pay whatever you consider right in the way of wages, and to make ample provision for their rations and all other requirements. If, as we hope, you agree to the principle we will at once send someone to Italy to arrange about details. The matter is very pressing, and I hope you may be able to give it early and favourable consideration.

February 20, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 351.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, February 21, 1918, at 4 p.m.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minutes 2 to 8).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 10).

Lieutenant-General Sir H. H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 10).

Mr. F. S. Oliver (for Minute 8).


Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 10).


The Right Hon. C. Addison, M.D., M.P., Minister of Reconstruction (for Minutes 12 to 14).


Sir L. Worthington Evans, Bart., M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 2 to 8).

Professor W. G. Adams.


Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Assistant Secretary.
1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff explained on a map the recent advance in Palestine towards Jericho and the River Jordan.

2. The Secretary of State for War informed the War Cabinet that General Nash's Report on Railway Transport in France had been received and would shortly be circulated.

3. Lord Robert Cecil informed the War Cabinet that, at the request of the French Government, a coal expert had been appointed to examine the coal situation in France with reference to the requests for assistance from Italy.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 142, Minute 7, the War Cabinet authorised—

   The Secretary of State for War, in consultation with the Food Controller, to take steps to restrict the despatch of parcels containing breadstuffs to the troops in France.

5. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported the shipping losses of the previous day, which included the loss, off the Lizard, of two ships in the Atlantic convoy.

6. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that a seaplane had dropped bombs on an enemy submarine off Yarmouth. The stern of the submarine rose out of the water, and, after canting over at an angle of about 60°, disappeared. Immediately afterwards a patch of oil was observed in the same position.

7. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported the receipt of a telegram from the Rear-Admiral at Murmansk, stating that the command in Murmansk and district had been taken over temporarily by an Executive Committee representing the Soldiers' and Workmen's Union, the Central Fleet Committee, and the Railway Union. They had expressed a desire to continue on friendly relations with the Allies.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 312, Minute 7, the War Cabinet had before them the Seventh Interim Report of the Economic Offensive Committee, dealing with new issues of capital (Paper G.1–183), together with the Report and recommendations of a Sub-Committee consisting of the President of the Board of Trade, the Minister of Reconstruction, and the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (R.D.42) (Appendix).

   The War Committee approved the recommendations of the Sub-Committee, and appointed Mr. Stanley Baldwin as Chairman of the proposed Committee of Ministers.

9. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff, in reply to a question as to the probability of an early German attack on the Western Front, stated that it depended upon factors as to which our knowledge was not precise, such as the internal situation in Germany, and the belief of the Germans as to whether they really could break through the Allied line. He quoted a particularly well-informed Frenchman as holding the view that the Germans
were now convinced that they could break the line. If this information were correct, the best course for the Germans would be to wait until the country dried, in order to avoid fighting the mud as well as the Allies; but, of course, the pressure of internal events, or other circumstances, might precipitate matters. For an offensive on the largest possible scale the German railways offered much greater opportunities against the British than against the French line.

10. With reference to War Cabinet 347, Minute 3, the War Cabinet had before them a telegram from Signor Orlando to the Italian Ambassador (Paper G.T.-3678), in which surprise was expressed at the decision to withdraw two divisions from the Italian front, and at the procedure followed in arriving at this decision, which appeared to be in contradiction with the recent deliberations at Versailles. According to these deliberations, the question of the destination of the Allied divisions on the Italian front was to be intimately connected with the constitution of the Special Reserve, and this had to be decided by an Inter-Allied Superior Council following the proposal of the Military Committee. Signor Orlando also called attention to the almost inevitable conclusion of peace with Roumania, and the consequent release of Austrian battalions, which would be thrown against the Italian front.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff referred to the telegram which had been received from Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, in which he had expressed a preference to be reinforced by two British rather than by four Italian divisions from the Italian front. He (Sir Henry Wilson) had some sympathy with Signor Orlando’s complaint as to the procedure which had been followed. The matter ought to have been considered at Versailles. He himself would not have advised the War Cabinet to bring back the two divisions at the present moment.

Lord Derby said that he had wired the previous day to the Italian Minister of War, pointing out that there was now a preponderance of divisions against us. He hoped the War Cabinet would make no change in the decision which had been come to.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should draft a suitable reply to be sent to Signor Orlando by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on behalf of the Prime Minister.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 350, Minute 8, the War Cabinet took note of Lord Milner’s decision (Paper G.T.-3676) to the following effect:—

(a.) For one month coal to be shipped to the Rio Tinto Company in Spain for their requirements, estimated at about 5,000 tons;
(b.) Inter-Allied Chartering Committee to charter Spanish ships to carry that quantity at market rates;
(c.) Difference between 100s. and the market rate (at present about 400s.) to be borne by the British Government.

N.B.—On present rate of 400s., cost would be 15s. a ton, or 75,000l. a month.

(d.) No British ships to be directed into the trade for this purpose;
(e.) Foreign Office and Treasury to recover from French and United States Governments their share of the extra cost.
12. With reference to War Cabinet 345, Minute 5, the Prime Minister invited the War Cabinet's consideration and approval of two letters regarding the situation in the Irish Convention and the attitude of His Majesty's Government thereto, addressed to Mr. Hugh Barrie, M.P., representing the Ulster party, and to Sir Horace Plunkett, respectively. These letters covered more or less the same ground, but the one addressed to Mr. Hugh Barrie was designed for submission to the Ulster Unionist Council, and the one to Sir Horace Plunkett for submission to the Convention. The letters revealed the desire of the Government regarding the urgency of a settlement of the Irish question by agreement, should such prove to be possible. This desire was actuated by the importance, on international and Imperial grounds, of reaching a settlement before the Peace Conference. The Prime Minister stated that, when he placed the views of the Government, arrived at by War Cabinet 345, Minute 5, the previous week before the various sections of the Convention, the Ulster section of the Convention did not appear to have been shocked. However, Sir Edward Carson had not been present, and had refused to see the Ulster representatives. Sir Edward Carson had written him a perfectly non possumus letter. This attitude was most unfortunate, and had not pleased some of the other Ulstermen, such as Lord Londonderry.

Mr. Long stated, in regard to Sir Edward Carson's action, that he had been with him in Belfast on previous occasions. Sir Edward Carson was always most careful not to commit himself, and had adopted the attitude that he could decide nothing, but was willing to put matters before the Ulster Council for their decision. He probably wished to remain quite free at present.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that he found himself in a most embarrassing position. He agreed to the importance of arriving at a settlement of the Irish question from the point of view of the war, the Empire, our relations with America, and the Peace Conference, but he differed fundamentally from the methods proposed for achieving such a settlement. In common with most people, he believed that the Home Rule Act, as now upon the Statute Book, was unworkable, and, in his view, the only possible way out of the difficulty was to divide Ireland. There were fundamental differences of race, religion, and economic interest, which separated North-East Ulster from the rest of Ireland. In regard to that portion of the letter to Mr. Hugh Barrie, which referred to the growing desire for a settlement not only of the Irish question, but of devolution for the United Kingdom on Federal lines, he felt that any attempt to impose a Federal system on the United Kingdom was a retrograde and reactionary step.

A further objection he felt to the policy of His Majesty's Government was that no system which sought to give protection to the Ulstermen, and which was based upon undemocratic lines, could possibly last. He therefore felt it necessary to request that his protest against the policy of His Majesty's Government should be recorded.

Mr. Long stated that there was undoubtedly a change of attitude on the part of the Belfast operatives. He gathered that it would not take much to make the latter break with Sir Edward Carson. What the Belfast operatives were really keen on was progressive legislation dealing with such matters as temperance, education, housing, and industrial conditions. They consequently felt that power of modification and veto over Irish legislation was not sufficient, and he (Mr. Long) shared their view regarding the desirability of obtaining for Ulster powers of initiating or adopting such legislation. In regard to the actual position of the Convention, he feared that much of the discussion took place upon a wrong basis, namely, the basis of the 1914 Act. He thought it should be made clear to the Convention that such basis was illusory.

Subject to certain small amendments, the War Cabinet approved the terms of the Prime Minister's two letters.
13. The Chief Secretary for Ireland stated that there was a re-appearance of serious trouble in some of the Western Counties of Ireland, due to parties of Sinn-Feiners entering upon land for the purpose of breaking it up for tillage, and also of cattle-driving. Further, there had been cases of conflict between the Sinn-Fein parties and the Police. He asked for the covering authority of the War Cabinet for proclaiming Sinn-Fein to be a dangerous Association in certain areas, under the Crimes Act.

The War Cabinet gave this covering authority.

14. Mr. Duke stated that there appeared to be a conspiracy on the part of Sinn-Feiners, sentenced to imprisonment, to undergo starvation. The Irish prison doctors were unwilling to take the responsibility of forcible feeding, and the Roman Catholic Bishops took the view that such deliberate starving was a highly criminal act in the eyes of the Catholic Church. He was anxious, therefore, that no hunger-strikers should be released from prison without special reference to himself. The result might be that a certain number of these prisoners might die of starvation in prison, and he thought the Government should be prepared to accept the responsibility of such consequences.

The Chief Secretary also sought the sanction of the War Cabinet to the arrest, and deportation if necessary (to the Isle of Man or elsewhere), of Sinn Fein leaders whose speech or action was dangerous to the public interest.

The Prime Minister, on behalf of the War Cabinet, assured Mr. Duke that he continued to have the full support and authority of the Cabinet in taking any measures he thought necessary for dealing with lawlessness and the maintenance of order in Ireland.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 22, 1918.
APPENDIX.

Report and Recommendations of the Sub-Committee on New Issues of Capital

I. We have investigated the terms of reference of the New Issues Committee and the Treasury letter of instructions to them, and have come to the conclusion that it is not necessary nor desirable that either of them should be altered. A copy of the terms of reference and the letter of instructions and names of the members are attached.

2. We recommend that cases in which new issues are recommended by a Government Department and not sanctioned by the New Issues Committee within a fortnight after the application shall have been returned to the Secretary from the appropriate Department, shall be at once referred direct by them to the Minister concerned with full particulars of the reason for their refusal, which must be regarded in strict confidence.

3. That a Committee of Ministers be constituted, to which the Minister responsible for any Department whose recommendation has not been accepted by the New Issues Committee may refer such cases for consideration and decision.

4. That the Committee of Ministers should consist of the following:—

Financial Secretary to the Treasury.
President of the Board of Trade.
Minister of Munitions.
Minister of Reconstruction.

(Signed) A. H. STANLEY.
C. ADDISON.
STANLEY BALDWIN.

December 6, 1917.
Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, February 22, 1918, at 12:30 P.M.

Present:
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 7).
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 5 to 7).
General Sir H. H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 7).
Lieutenant-General Sir C. F. N. Macready, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., Adjutant-General to the Forces (for Minutes 9, 10, and 11).
Brigadier-General R. E. W. Childs, C.M.G., Director of Personal Supplies (for Minute 10).
Sir Sam Fay, Director of Movements (for Minute 9).
The Right Hon. W. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minutes 1 to 10).
Mr. W. A. S. Hewins, M.P., Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minute 10).
The Right Hon. Sir A. Stanley, M.P., President of the Board of Trade (for Minute 9).
The Right Hon. Sir G. Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minutes 10 to 12).
Mr. J. Lamb, C.B., Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Scotland (for Minutes 10 and 11).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 8).
The Right Hon. Sir J. Maclay, Bart., Shipping Controller (for Minute 9).
Sir A. Norman Hill, Ministry of Shipping (for Minute 9).
The Right Hon. T. J. Macnamara, LL.D., M.P., Financial Secretary, Admiralty (for Minute 11).
Mr. E. P. Thursfield, Law Department, Admiralty (for Minute 10).
Surgeon-General J. P. McNabb, Deputy Director-General of the Navy (for Minute 10).
Mr. I. G. Gibbon, Local Government Board (for Minutes 10 and 11).
Sir Horace C. Monro, K.C.B., Permanent Secretary, Local Government Board (for Minutes 10 and 11).
Major P. Lloyd Greame, M.C., Secretary, Ministry of National Service (for Minute 9).

Colonel W. Dalby Jones, C.M.G., Acting Secretary.
Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.
Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby Gore, Assistant Secretary.
Captain L. F. Burges, Assistant Secretary.
Palestine

1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that our troops had captured Jericho on the 21st instant and that cavalry patrols now covered the town northward and as far eastward as the River Jordan. The enemy had retired to a position east of the Jordan, which was now in flood.

East Africa.

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that General von Lettow had fallen back into Portuguese country without fighting. General Wilson said that the nature of this country was absolutely unknown, and he thought it possible that von Lettow's force might now be starved out.

Russia.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that Minsk had been taken by the Germans.

British Divisions on the Italian Front.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 351, Minute 10, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that he had received a telegram from General Plumer, dated the 21st instant, which stated that General Diaz was rather perturbed about the withdrawal of two British divisions from Italy. General Wilson said that a telegram had already been sent to General Alfieri expressing regret for the manner in which these two divisions were ordered away from Italy, and saying that they would form part of the Allied General Reserve in France. He thought that this statement would satisfy General Diaz.

The Western Front:

5. With reference to War Cabinet 345, Minute 2, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that one more German division had arrived on the Western front, making a total of 179.

British Superiority.

6. In reply to a question, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that, as regards heavy guns and aeroplanes, we were in a superiority to the Germans on the Western front, but he feared that by May our superiority in heavy guns would be lost.

The War Cabinet instructed—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff to prepare a comparative estimate of the numbers of men and guns possessed by the Germans and the Allies on the Western front.

Japan: Propaganda.

7. The attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to telegram No. 154, dated 19th February, 1918, in which a request was made by Sir C. Greene, at Tokyo, that information regarding the general attitude in this country towards the war might be furnished him in order to counteract the impression which was gaining ground in Japan that Great Britain was at her last gasp, Sir C. Greene suggested that Commander Josiah Wedgwood, who was due to arrive in Tokyo on the 25th instant, should explain the real situation by means of an interview whilst he was in Japan, in order to try and dispel the unfortunate impression which the Japanese had gained.

It was suggested that perhaps Commander Wedgwood would not be a very suitable person for this purpose.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to send a telegram to Sir C. Greene, giving him very full information as regards the situation in this country, which would enable the Ambassador to counteract the impression in Japan that England is suffering from war-weariness.
8. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported as follows:

(a) In the Mediterranean, on the 20th instant, the steamship "Eleric" sighted and fired at a submarine, which she claims to have hit.

(b) On the 21st instant the Italian transport "Memfi," with 750 troops on board, was attacked by a submarine which fired two torpedoes, both of which missed. The escort "Ginocchio" towed a mine which exploded and brought great quantities of bubbles and wreckage to the surface.

Transport Workers' Battalions.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 237, Minute 3, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Ministry of Shipping (Paper G.T.-3534) and a letter from the Port and Transit Executive Committee (Paper G.T.-3500), from which it appeared that there were two questions for consideration:

(a) Whether the strength of the battalions should be increased by 5,000 men.

(b) Whether the War Office should nominate representatives to serve on the local committees.

Sir Norman Hill outlined the general position as regards the present strength of the battalions. The total strength was about 10,300 men. Of these there were nominally some 750 kept at headquarters, and 750 on duty for hospital or other reasons, leaving a balance of about 8,800 men for work at the ports, on the railways, and on the canals. The development of the convoy system had led, by the arrival of ships in batches, to far more spasmodic and fluctuating work at the ports than was the case in peace time. As a result, many demands were made upon the Port and Transit Committee which could not be met. One of the best results of the formation of the Transport Workers' Battalions had been the extra stimulus to greater exertion on the part of civilian labour. These battalions had succeeded where the Dockers' Battalions had failed, because the latter had been regarded with suspicion by the civilian dockers.

Sir Joseph Maclay said that he attached the greatest value to the work of the Transport Workers' Battalions, and strongly urged, in view of the convoy system of arrivals at the ports, the need for increasing the battalions by 5,000 men.

The Adjutant-General said that the War Office did not take the same view of the matter as Sir Norman Hill. Men in these battalions formed part of the Home Defence Force, but the Field-Marshal Commanding could not regard them as being of any use as soldiers in the event of an invasion. In such a case they would be required to clear traffic away to the West, and could not be relied upon to fight. They were, therefore, not a military potential asset.

On the other hand, it was pointed out that, if an invasion took place, traffic would certainly have to be cleared westward, and as the work could only be done by soldiers the Transport Workers' Battalions would be very useful.

As regards the appointment of War Office representatives to serve on the local committees, Sir Norman Hill referred to the work of the battalions in private sidings and on railway premises in the Bradford and Sheffield areas. In both these areas the experiment had been completely successful. By the employment of a very limited number of men from the battalions, blocks had been avoided and the flow of traffic maintained. In view of this success at Sheffield and Bradford, the War Office had been asked to nominate representatives to serve on the local committees. Representatives of the Railway Executive Committee and of the National Union of Railwaymen had been appointed for each local committee.
but the War Office had declined to appoint its representatives. At a full meeting of the Port and Transit Executive Committee recently, the representatives of labour said that they attached the greatest importance to both the increase of numbers by 5,000, and the nomination of War Office representatives.

The Adjutant-General said that, in the opinion of the War Office, it was no part of the duties of a soldier to give an opinion on the efficiency or otherwise of civilian labour, but that, in order to make the scheme a success and satisfy the wishes of Labour, the War Office would agree to nominate representatives to act under instructions from the Army Council, and so enable the work to be extended to railways outside the Bradford and Sheffield areas.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(a.) The strength of the Transport Workers' Battalions should be increased by 5,000 men;

(b.) The War Office should nominate representatives to serve on the local Committees.

Veneral Diseases.

10. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Paper G.T.-3,598), asking for the sanction of the War Cabinet to a new Regulation under the Defence of the Realm Act, making it an offence for a woman suffering from venereal disease in a communicable form to have sexual intercourse with any member of His Majesty's forces.

Mr. Long stated that the matter arose out of a recommendation of the Imperial War Conference, 1917 (Resolution No. 24), and that the Dominion Governments were very anxious that steps should be taken to stop the spread of venereal infection among their troops in this country. The Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases proved that in a number of cases it would be possible to identify the women who constituted the chief danger, many of whom did not belong to the professional prostitute class. At present there was no means of dealing with them.

It was pointed out to the War Cabinet that objection to the Regulation might be raised in Parliament on the ground that the penalties imposed applied only to women and not to men. It might be possible that a demand would be put forward that the offence should be made reciprocal to both sexes. The difficulty was that it was not possible to deal with the male civilian population by means of the Defence of the Realm Act. The Army took the view that it was undesirable to differentiate between the soldier and the civilian. If the Regulation were to apply to male persons, it should therefore apply to the civilian as well as to the soldier or sailor.

The Adjutant-General pointed out that it was an offence under the Army Act for a soldier to conceal venereal disease, and that, once it was established that he had venereal disease, he was kept in hospital until cured.

Mr. Long pointed out that, in the case of syphilis, there was an infective period between the time when the man contracted the disease and the time when the disease could be definitely diagnosed. It was during this period that the disease was spread. He added that there was a strong feeling outside the Army that the Regulation should be applied to male as well as female persons.

The War Cabinet approved the Regulation and requested—

The Secretary of State for War to give the question of its extension to include male persons in the armed forces of the Crown his further consideration, in the event of the question being raised in Parliament.
11. With reference to War Cabinet 339, Minute 8, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the President of the Local Government Board (Paper G.T.-3675).
The proposal contained therein was approved.

12. With reference to War Cabinet 298, Minute 18, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Mr. Barnes (Paper G.T.-3473).
The War Cabinet decided that—
No change should be made in the present procedure.

(Initialled) A B L

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 22, 1918.
Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, February 25, 1918, at 12 noon.

Present:

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P. (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade.

The Right Hon. SIR GEORGE CAVE, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs.


Admiral SIR R. E. WEMYSS, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.

The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 8).

Major-General SIR G. M. W. MACDONAGH, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

Captain the Hon. W. ORMSBY-GORE, M.P., Assistant Secretary.

Captain E. ABRAHAM, Assistant Secretary.

[1365—353]
1. With reference to War Cabinet 352, Minute 5, the Director of Military Intelligence reported that a fresh German division had been identified on the Western Front, making a total of 180.

2. With reference to the telegram discussed in War Cabinet 351, Minute 10, and particularly to Signor Orlando's statement therein that there were signs of a great concentration of Austrian troops in the Trentino, the Director of Military Intelligence remarked that, according to our information and Italian intelligence reports, this was only a local concentration.

It was understood that the situation would receive due consideration by the Allied representatives at Versailles.

3. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that five classes of reservists of the 2nd Division (Athens district) have been called up to join the colours by the 7th March, 1918.

4. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that Arab operations were continuing, and that a pro-Sherif rising was expected shortly in the area between the Dead Sea and the Hejaz Railway. The railway had been damaged by mines between Maan and Tibuk. Scurvy had broken out at the latter place, and this, in addition to looting and pilfering along the line, was hampering the Turkish supplies. The Turkish Commander-in-Chief had been inspecting the line of communications, and this had doubtless given rise to the rumours that he had fled.

5. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that General Marshall was advancing towards Hit, and had reached Kubba, a place 10 miles south of it.

Lord Curzon recalled that some weeks ago he had urged the occupation of Hit, on account of the oil wells, but that military objections had been raised.

General Macdonough explained that the advance had been undertaken on the report, since proved erroneous, that the Turks had evacuated Hit. They probably had about 3,000 rifles there.

6. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that General Milne had been offered by General Guillaumat the services of Russian troops, to work behind his lines. They were ready to work, though not to fight. General Milne wished to know whether there were political objections to his accepting.

The War Cabinet decided that—

There were no political objections.

7. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that the Spanish Ambassador had given him a verbal message intimating that the King of Spain had been in communication with the German Government with a view to checking aerial attacks on open towns.

It was agreed that—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should send a courteous reply, to the effect that we had always objected to the bombardment of open towns, and would like to know what attitude the enemy adopted.
8. The Secretary of State for the Colonies reported that the Dominion Premiers would arrive in the first week in June for the Imperial War Cabinet.

9. A suggestion was put forward that the vacant Chairmanship of the Committee, appointed by War Cabinet 323, Minute 8, to deal with the distribution of paper, should be offered to Mr. Austen Chamberlain. It was pointed out, however, that a recent decision of the Committee on the Restriction of Imports (War Cabinet 347, Minute 5) affected the question.

The Secretary was instructed to communicate with the President of the Board of Trade and ascertain his views on the subject. In the event of Sir Albert Stanley's concurrence, he should invite Mr. Austen Chamberlain to become chairman.

10. With reference to War Cabinet 342, Minute 14, the Secretary of State for Home Affairs stated that, although the speeches of M. Litvinoff had shown a quieter tone since the warning had been given to him as a result of his proclamation in "The Woolwich Pioneer," his actions had been such as to necessitate the consideration of what measures should be taken by the Government to put a stop to his activities. It appeared that the real name of M. Litvinoff was "David Finkelstein" and that he subsequently adopted various aliases, notably "Gustav Graf Buchman," "Harrison," and more recently, "Litvinoff." There was a possibility that evidence might be forthcoming connecting him with the robbery at a bank at Tiflis some years ago. This robbery was organised from Berlin. His most recent actions, which called for consideration, were:

(a.) Attempts to undermine the discipline of Russian Jews serving in the British and Canadian Forces.

(b.) The formation of an Information Bureau in the East End of London for the dissemination of Bolshevik propaganda.

(c.) The formation of Red Guards in London.

The question of the attitude to be taken towards M. Litvinoff was further complicated by the arrival at Aberdeen on Saturday, and subsequently in London, of three Bolsheviks, M. Kameneff, M. Saalkind, and a diplomatic courier. M. Kameneff was found to be in possession of a cheque on an English Bank for £5,000, which had been seized and was now deposited at Scotland Yard. The three agents had brought with them a good deal of baggage, some of which was personal and some under diplomatic seal. It was proposed that the personal baggage should be searched, and that endeavours should be made to secure the opening of the sealed bags by M. Litvinoff in the presence of a Home Office representative. On the previous afternoon the police had raided the Communist Club, in Soho, and found a meeting of Russian revolutionaries taking place. One of the three new arrivals was present, but it was felt that he could not be arrested with thirty-seven other revolutionaries who had been arrested. A careful watch was being maintained on the movements of the three envoys, and it was proposed that M. Saalkind, who had a passport for Switzerland, should be hastened on his way thither. A certain number of papers had been seized at the Communist Club, including the Register of the Club, of which M. Litvinoff was a member, under the name of "Harrison," subsequently changed in the register to Litvinoff. As regards M. Kameneff, it was understood that he had intended to proceed to France, but now proposed to stay in England.
The Home Secretary also proposed that an Order in Council should be made under the Aliens Restriction Order, enabling a Secretary of State to prohibit any alien from addressing meetings or engaging in propaganda.

Lord Haringle stated that the visa given to M. Kameneff's passport by Mr. Lindley in Petrograd, gave him the right to come to England, and not merely to pass through England on his way to France. However, the Government were within their rights in doing whatever they chose with him while in this country.

The Director of Military Intelligence stated that the War Office were considerably perturbed by the attempts which were being made by Bolshevik agents to undermine discipline in the British Army, and hoped that action would be taken to put a stop to such proceedings. He understood that M. Litvinoff was accused not only of being connected with the bank robbery at Tiflis, but also of forgery. A telegram had been sent to Tiflis with a view to obtaining further information upon this point.

The Home Secretary stated that he had to answer a question on the subject of M. Litvinoff, put by General Page-Croft, in the House of Commons that afternoon.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(1.) The Home Secretary should give whatever information he thought fit regarding M. Litvinoff's aliases, but should refrain from committing the Government to any particular course of action in regard to him, pending the receipt of further evidence against him.

(2.) The Home Secretary should keep a careful watch over the proceedings of the Bolshevik agents in London, and in the event of sufficient evidence of malpractices being forthcoming, should at once take appropriate action against them, including deportation in case of necessity. No action, however, should be taken against M. Litvinoff without the authority of the War Cabinet.

(3.) An Order in Council should be made as proposed.

Return of British Representatives in Russia.

11. The Director of Military Intelligence stated that he had received a telegram from our Military Attaché in Petrograd asking for instructions as to leaving Petrograd with General Barter and Staff. The War Office had replied, telling our Military Attaché to conform to the movements of Mr. Lindley. The Director of Military Intelligence added that the Military Attaché thought that the best chance of getting away from Russia would be via Murmansk, as the chances of getting through Finland were now small.

Sir George Buchanan thought that the time had come when it was desirable that our representatives should leave Russia. It would take them at least ten days to get away.

Lord Robert Cecil thought there was serious risk of the British Representatives at Petrograd falling into the hands of the Germans, who might very soon be in a position to send a body of troops to Petrograd. He thought that we could no longer adopt a policy of leaving it to the Englishmen on the spot to decide whether they should leave their posts, but that instructions should be given to them to withdraw as soon as possible.

The Director of Military Intelligence stated that we should be able to obtain information from a certain number of Intelligence Officers and Secret Agents who would remain in Russia after the withdrawal of the Missions.

It was pointed out, however, that if the Embassy staff and the Military Mission were withdrawn, no means would remain for the transmission of cipher telegrams.
In this connection it was pointed out that it was improbable that any large number of Englishmen would be able to get away from Russia in the present circumstances.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that the whole point of our Representatives remaining in Petrograd was the chance that was thereby given of their influencing Bolshevik policy in our favour. The German peace terms accepted by the Bolsheviks negatived this function.

The War Cabinet requested, subject to the approval of the Prime Minister:

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to send a telegram to Mr. Lindley, suggesting that he and the Embassy Staff should return to this country as soon as possible, unless they saw any object in remaining longer; and further, to send telegrams to Paris, Rome, and Washington, informing our Representatives at those places of our proposed action in this matter.

12. With reference to War Cabinet 350, Minute 4, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that he had had an interview with the Japanese Ambassador on the 23rd February, 1918. The latter had informed him that the Japanese Government were anxious to proceed at once to seize the junction of the Amur Railway. This would safeguard Vladivostock. Mr. Balfour then questioned the Ambassador regarding the further proposal that the Japanese should seize the whole of the Siberian Railway as far as the Ural, in order to deny the use of the railway and of Siberian produce to the Germans. The Japanese Ambassador fully understood the point, but had received no instructions from his Government. Mr. Balfour then raised the question of mandate. He gathered that the Japanese fully understood that they would go in as the mandatory of the Allies, simply as a move against Germany, and would disavow any intentions with regard to annexation. He gathered, however, that the Japanese were vehemently opposed to the addition of Allied detachments to the Japanese force sent to effect these purposes, on the ground that Japanese public opinion would be suspicious, owing to the impression that was generally felt in Japan that earlier in the war, the British had tried to curtail Japanese activities. The Japanese amour-propre had been deeply injured, and it would be most difficult to persuade the Japanese to accept Allied co-operation other than that of Russians, such as General Semenoff. This being the case, we should have a difficult task in persuading President Wilson to agree to our policy.

It was pointed out to the War Cabinet that the French Government only favoured Japanese intervention on the distinct understanding that the Japanese Government would agree to the major proposition of taking charge of the whole of the Siberian Railway.

Lord Robert Cecil thought that we should ask the Japanese Government to contemplate the seizure of the railway as far as Cheliabinsk, the junction immediately east of the Ural. He gathered, from conversations with Englishmen and Russians who knew Siberia, that Japanese intervention would not now produce a bad effect upon public opinion in Siberia.

Sir George Buchanan agreed with this view, and thought that the situation in Russia as regards the Japanese had undergone a considerable change in the last few months. It should be clearly pointed out to the Russians that the Japanese were being brought...
in to save Asiatic Russia from being dominated entirely by Germany.

Lord Milner took the view that in the near future Russia would have a German-controlled Government at Petrograd, either under the Bolsheviks or a pro-German Czar. He attached little importance to the desirability of having small Allied detachments attached to the Japanese force. The great thing, in his view, was to remove the suspicion regarding our attitude which existed in the minds of the Japanese. We had steadily snubbed the Japanese, and treated them as a convenience, and, looking to the future, he thought it was most essential that we should take such action as would remove this sense of grievance.

The Director of Military Intelligence added that, as far as he could gather from Japanese officers in this country, if we trusted the Japanese we should get a great deal more out of them than we had hitherto.

Mr. Long stated that he did not think the Dominion Governments would object to Japanese intervention, but in the event of our communicating a decision of the Government favourable to Japanese intervention to our Representative in Washington, he would be glad if instructions were given to Lord Reading to inform and consult the Canadian Representatives at Washington in regard to the matter.

Subject to the concurrence of the Prime Minister, the War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to send a telegram to Lord Reading, informing him that His Majesty's Government viewed with favour the idea of Japanese intervention in Siberia up to Cheliabinsk, giving him the reasons which had led to His Majesty's Government arriving at this decision, and requesting him to obtain the concurrence of the American Government.

A telegram to be sent to our representative at Tokio telling him for his confidential information of the action taken at Washington, and leaving it to his discretion to make such preliminary and tentative approaches to the Japanese to act, as he might think fit.

13. With reference to War Cabinet 351, Minute 13, the War Cabinet had before them a telegram from the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Paper G.T.-8720) regarding the serious character of the present state of unrest in some counties in Ireland, in which he asked—

(1.) For a direction to the Army Council that removal orders under Defence of the Realm Regulation 14 shall be made immediately in cases of individuals where the Chief Secretary concurs with the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Ireland, in the necessity for removal.

(2.) That such orders shall be made effective in England by means of directions fixing the place of residence of each person.

(3.) That directions shall be given to the Home Office for the issue of internment orders without delay in any cases in which internment may appear justifiable and necessary.

The Secretary reported that, on receipt of a communication from the Irish Office on the previous day, he had already taken action with the Army Council in regard to (1), and that the Army Council had empowered the General Officer Commanding Irish Command to take action under Regulation No. 14 of the
Defence of the Realm Act in such cases as may be sanctioned by the Chief Secretary, and that the Chief Secretary had been so informed.

The War Cabinet—

1. Approved the action taken by the Secretary and the Army Council.

2. Instructed the Secretary to inform the Chief Secretary for Ireland that, in view of his telegram, they felt the necessity for strong measures, and would support the Chief Secretary in any action he thought necessary to take to enforce law and order.

3. Instructed the Secretary to place himself in communication with the Home Secretary in regard to the action by the Home Office, asked for by Mr. Duke.

(Initialled) A. B. L.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 25, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 354.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, February 26, 1918, at 4 p.m.

Present:

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 7).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 10).

Major-General Sir G. M. W. Macdonogh, G.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence (for Minutes 1 to 8).


The Right Hon. S. F. E. Smith, K.C., M.P., Attorney-General (for Minute 8).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 5).

The Right Hon. W. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minute 8).

The Right Hon. Sir G. Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minute 8).

The Right Hon. H. A. L. Fisher, LL.D., M.P., President, Board of Education (for Minute 8).

Professor W. G. Adams (for Minute 8).

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M. P. A. Hankey, Secretary.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain the Hon. W. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., K.C.B., Assistant Secretary.
The Western Front: 1. With reference to War Cabinet 353, Minute 1, the Director of Military Intelligence reported that another German division had been identified on the Western front, making a total of 181 German divisions on that front.

Possible German Attack. 2. With reference to War Cabinet 350, Minute 5, in reply to a question as to the position of the Belgian army, the Director of Military Intelligence stated that the inundations on the Flanders front were still full. The Director of Military Intelligence stated that, while there was little doubt that the enemy intended to make a great attack in due course, there was no sign of its immediate commencement. By 1st March the German cadres would be full, and an attack might come any time after that. There were at present no signs of an impending attack on the Flanders front. There were some preparations, mainly defensive, on the front from La Bassée to Arras, and definite signs of offensive preparations on the front Arras–St. Quentin.

Russia. 3. The Director of Military Intelligence reported that the British military attaché at Petrograd had endeavoured to persuade the Sailors' Committees at Reval to destroy the stores there. Information had been received that a quantity of stores had been evacuated before the arrival of the Germans. The advance of the Germans in North Russia was being made by very small forces. In telegrams received at the end of the previous week it was stated that M. Trotsky had talked of the possibility of guerilla warfare taking place.

Trans-Caucasia. 4. The Director of Military Intelligence stated that a good deal of information was coming to hand about the Russian withdrawal in Turkish Armenia. The Russian troops were completely demoralised, and bands of armed Armenians were committing all sorts of excesses. The Russians intended to evacuate Erzeroum.

The Director of Military Intelligence, who had been in telephonic communication with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, raised the question of the policy to be adopted in Persia, in view of General Dunsterville's enforced withdrawal from Trans-Caucasia, where he was to have done what he could to organise the forces favourable to the Allies in that region. General Wilson had suggested that the best course was to instruct General Dunsterville to endeavour to organise levies in the Kermanshah area, and to support him by means of cavalry and armoured cars, sent up by General Marshall from Kasr-i-Shirin as soon as the snow melted. It was most important to secure the safety of the roads leading from Mesopotamia through Kermanshah to Telleran and to the Caspian Sea. The matter had been discussed on the previous day by the Persian Committee, and the War Office had been asked to report on the military aspect of the situation.

The Cabinet were informed that the Persian Committee had also authorised a telegram to be sent to Sir C. Marling, asking his opinion on the War Office proposals. Hitherto His Majesty's Government had tried to conciliate the democratic elements in Persia, and had been giving them substantial financial assistance. In order to keep in touch with these elements, we had been prepared to withdraw our troops, and to make other concessions in return for a quid pro quo. Sir C. Marling had urged a military occupation of North-West Persia against Tartars, Bolsheviks, and Persian Extremists. The Persian Committee had deprecated such action, and had suggested alternatives, which, so far, had come to nothing. The War Office were pressing for military action, but, as this would
be tantamount to declaring war on Persia, it was necessary that the matter should be examined from every side.

The Director of Military Intelligence said that the matter was one of considerable urgency, as disorder was spreading from the Caspian along the road to Kasr-i-Shirin.

The War Cabinet decided—

To refer the matter to the Persian Committee, which should be summoned immediately a reply had been received from Sir C. Marling to the telegram agreed to by the Committee on the previous day.

5. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that reports had been received that the destroyer "Onslow" had dropped charges on an enemy submarine, which came to the surface vertically and dived stern first; and that His Majesty's ship "Montbretia" had dropped a depth charge on an enemy submarine 5 miles south of the entrance to Milford Haven.

6. With reference to War Cabinet 353, Minute 12, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that the Prime Minister had approved the telegram which he had drafted, and a copy had been sent to Tokio for the information of Sir C. Greene, but that he (Mr. Balfour) would not approach the Japanese Ambassador until the view of the American Government had been obtained.

7. The War Cabinet had before them Memoranda dealing with Reconstruction Finance by Dr. Addison (Paper G.T.-3643), Sir A. Mond (Paper G.T.-3651), and Mr. G. H. Roberts (Paper G.T.-3735).

The Chancellor of the Exchequer undertook to see the Minister of Reconstruction on the points raised in these Memoranda.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 353, Minute 13, the War Cabinet gave further consideration to the proposals contained in the Chief Secretary's telegram (Paper G.T.-3720) for dealing with Sinn Fein agitators convicted for various offences against the law.

The Home Secretary stated that there was a legal difficulty in carrying out the Chief Secretary's second proposal, viz., the internment of certain Sinn Fein leaders, as, in order to intern British subjects, it was necessary to prove legally hostile association. It was more than doubtful whether connection with the Dublin rebellion of 1916 could still be legally regarded as hostile association.

The Attorney-General concurred in this view.

The Home Secretary stated that, under the Defence of the Realm Act, the military authorities had the power to restrict the movements of undesirables and to confine them to residence in a certain specified area. As regards the establishment of a permit system between Great Britain and Ireland, he was advised such a system was quite practicable, if considered necessary. In this case Regulation 14 G would have to be amended by omitting the words (previously inserted at the request of the Irish Government) "or a British subject proceeding from one port in the United Kingdom to another." Further, it would be necessary to establish a Permit Office at Glasgow, and strengthen the one at Liverpool. Additional Aliens Officers would be required at Fishguard, Fleetwood, and Ardrossan. The Irish Government would have to arrange some system of permits from Ireland.
On the other hand, it was pointed out to the Cabinet that the proposed system would cause a good deal of inconvenience to the ordinary passengers to and from Ireland.

Mr. Long thought that, under the general circumstances now obtaining in Ireland, such objection should not be allowed to stand. He welcomed the proposal of the Chief Secretary to take action in this matter.

The War Cabinet approved the proposal of the Chief Secretary that orders for removal from Ireland should be made effective in England by action of the military authorities, who would in all cases be advised by him: as regards the proposed internment in England of Irish undesirables, they decided that action should not be taken except in cases where hostile association could be definitely proved: as regards the proposed permit or passport system, the War Cabinet desired the Chief Secretary to consider the question of establishing machinery in Ireland, and requested his reasons for the proposal, and a statement as to whether, on a review of all aspects of the question, he definitely recommended it, and instructed the Secretary to communicate with Mr. Duke accordingly.

9. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Minister of National Service (Paper G.T.-3670).

In the absence of Sir Auckland Geddes, it was agreed that the War Office, and the Ministry of National Service, in consultation with the President of the Local Government Board, should confer on the subject, with a view to reaching an agreement, and that only failing agreement should the question again be brought before the War Cabinet.

10. Lord Derby requested the approval of the War Cabinet to a Draft Bill, already circulated (Paper G.T.-3562), to amend the law concerning the qualifications of Deputy Lieutenants.

The War Cabinet sanctioned the introduction of the Bill.

(Initialled) A. B. L.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 27, 1918.
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WAR CABINET, HELD AT 10, DOWNING STREET, S.W., ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1918, AT 11.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P. (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. VISCOUNT MILNER, M.G., C.M.G., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 5).
The Right Hon. Lord ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minutes 3 to 9).
The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, KG., C.I.O., C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 13).
Major-General Sir P. A. M. NASH, C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for Minutes 1 to 12).
Major-General Sir P. A. M. NASH, C.M.G., C.B., Director-General of Transportation (for Minutes 7 to 9).
Sir W. GUY GRANET, Director-General of Movements and Railways (for Minutes 7 to 9).
The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minutes 13 to 16).
The Right Hon. A. STANLEY, M.P., President of the Board of Trade (for Minutes 7 to 9 and 13).

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. SIR J. MACLAY, M.P., Shipping Controller (for Minutes 7 to 9).
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 9).
The Right Hon. Lord ROTHERMERE, Air Minister (for Minutes 11 and 12).
Rear-Admiral MARK E. F. KERR, C.B., M.V.O., Air Board (for Minutes 11 and 12).

SIR L. WORTHINGTON EVANS, M.P., Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 11 and 12).
SIR ARTHUR LEE, G.B.E., K.C.B., M.P., Director-General Food Production Department (for Minute 13).
SIR J. F. BEALE, K.B.E., Secretary, Wheat Commission (for Minute 14).
The Right Hon. W. HAYES FISHER, M.P., President of the Local Government Board (for Minutes 11 and 12).
The Right Hon. LORD NEWTON (for Minute 13).

Lieutenant-General Sir H. E. BELFIELD, K.C.B., D.S.O., Director of Prisoners of War (for Minute 13).
SIR E. WYLDBORE SMITH, Commission internationale de Ravitaillement (for Minute 7).

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.
Paymaster-in-Chief F. H. ROW, R.N., Assistant Secretary.
Captain CLEMENT JONES, Assistant Secretary.
Mr. THOMAS JONES, Assistant Secretary.
Captain ABRAHAM, Assistant Secretary.
1. THE Chancellor of the Exchequer asked for the facts in regard to the following statement by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of the War Office:—

"The strength of the German army on the Western front is already far greater than it has been in any previous period of the war, and although the Allies are at present superior, both in men and guns, the balance will soon be in favour of the enemy."

The Secretary pointed out, and the Director of Military Operations agreed, that the position might be stated in the following way: Although the Allies would always have superiority on the whole front from the Channel to the Adriatic, nevertheless, on the Western front there was a danger lest in May next the enemy might have the superiority.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Chancellor of the Exchequer should modify the statement of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of the War Office, by stating the actual position in the above sense.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 328, Minute 12, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that the question of Lady Maude's pension had been taken in hand by the Treasury, and proposals would be introduced in the House of Commons next Monday, when he hoped the Prime Minister would take the necessary action.

3. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that Captain Stanley Wilson, M.P., who considered that he had been unjustly condemned by a Court of Enquiry, was anxious to be allowed a court-martial. He had been asked to give up his Commission, and this practically meant that he could not remain in the House of Commons.

The Secretary of State for War understood that an appeal to the King under section 42 of the Army Act was about to be made. Pending its receipt he could not express an opinion.

4. The Director of Military Operations reported that General Allenby had made progress to the north and east. The enemy's cavalry were still in small numbers to the west of the Jordan in some places, and an engagement had taken place on the previous day in which they had been driven back. The total change on that front was not material, but the port of Rujiu-el-Bahr, at the north end of the Dead Sea, which had been used by the Turks, had been occupied by our troops.

5. The Director of Military Operations stated that General Marshall reported that the Turkish position at Hit had been bombed and that our patrols were in touch with the enemy at Hit. Evidently General Marshall's intention was to take Hit by surrounding it, in much the same way as we had captured Ramadie.

6. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that Swansea reported, that the Hospital Ship "Glenart Castle," bound from Newport (Monmouth) to Brest, had been torpedoed without warning, six miles to the North of Hartland Point. The ship was showing all her lights; she sank in about seven minutes. There were no patients on board, but the crew and medical staff numbered about 200. Twenty-four survivors had been landed at Swansea, and nine at Milford, but there were still eight or nine boats adrift. Admiral Hope pointed out that this vessel had been sunk inside the free area.
The War Cabinet decided that—

(a.) The Admiralty, when publishing the news of this loss, should lay stress on the fact that the "Glenart Castle" was in the free area, and was sunk in breach of the German pledge.

(b.) The Foreign Office should telegraph to Spain, instructing the British Ambassador to communicate the details privately to the King of Spain.

(c.) The Admiralty should at once communicate the facts to the Minister of Information, with a view to their widespread dissemination.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 351, Minute 3, the War Cabinet had before them a Report on General Transportation on the Western Front, by Major-General Nash (Paper G.T.-3719).

Lord Robert Cecil expressed the view that the French had made out a case for the supply of coal for their railways, involving a demand for 216,000 tons of coal. General Nash and Mr. Capel had both confirmed this. Lord Robert Cecil recalled that he had exchanged letters with M. Clémenceau, who had made a strong point of the fact that the French only use 4,000,000 tons of coal a month, whereas we consume 15,000,000 tons a month. This statement, which at first had appeared a bad argument, inasmuch as we are producers of coal, nevertheless, on examination, was found to have some force, owing to the fact that a great part of our coal was carried coastwise in ships which could be utilised for cross-Channel purposes. Lord Robert Cecil urged an examination of the whole question of coastwise transport, with a view to an alleviation of the shipping situation. He further suggested that there should be a drastic revision of the train services in this country.

The Minister of Shipping supported Lord Robert Cecil to the extent that he had already urged that there should be a stoppage of non-essential traffic and cross-traffic.

It was stated some steps had already been taken to avoid cross-traffic by confining the consumption of coal and beer to the districts in which these commodities were obtained. It was understood that the Food Controller was also making arrangements for the distribution of margarine and meat supplied locally.

Sir Guy Granet pointed out that London had always been fed to the extent of 50 per cent. by rail. This amount was now increased. The Midland Railway was sending 70 big trains a day to London, which was considerably more than in pre-war times. He pointed out that General Nash's report showed that, bad as the situation was in France, the French had more locomotives and more wagons now than they had at the beginning of the war. In England, on the other hand, there was less rolling-stock, more traffic, and a considerably greater percentage of loss.

The President of the Board of Trade pointed out that traffic could not be cut down without very severe restriction. At the present time, he said, the railways were carrying more traffic, both passenger and freight, than before the war. It was true that more passenger trains could be taken off, but this could be done only upon sentimental grounds unless a large number were withdrawn. The congestion on the railways was largely due to terminal difficulties.

The Minister of Shipping outlined the Italian coal position as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tons per Month.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The French Government had agreed to send ... 240,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They would rail extra British coal through France ... 110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be sent from England through France by Blaye ... 90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be sent by sea from England ... 150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong> ... 590,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Minister of Shipping stated that the quantities to go by rail would go partly by rail all the way and partly by sea from Marseilles, the Italian and French tonnage now in the Mediterranean being used for the latter purpose.

General Nash, on the other hand, said that he had been informed in Rome that shipping was not available in the Mediterranean.

Lord Robert Cecil drew attention to a telegram sent to Lord Bertie on the 20th February (No. 435), in which it was stated that we had received through the Italian Ambassador an official statement that the French Government had agreed with Signor Crespi that they should provide for Italy at the rate of 240,000 tons of French coal per month up to the 1st April. It was further agreed that they would rail up to 110,000 tons of British coal imported through the Gironde or Rochefort. This undertaking had been accepted by Signor Crespi, and it was important that no other arrangement should be made which would in any way modify the obligation so assumed by the French Government, on which we should henceforward rely. We would do our utmost on our side to assist in meeting Italy's needs.

Sir Joseph Maclay gave an account of an interview with M. Clémentel in Paris on this subject, in which Sir Joseph had asked M. Clémentel to provide the 350,000 tons from French sources. M. Clémentel at first was very difficult, and there was a somewhat heated discussion, but on the following day they had met again, and the French agreed to go on with about 8,000 tons a day, but this had not been carried out. Compensation was not promised.

As to this, General Nash said that he believed that the French could not carry out their bargain without danger to the strategical situation by the depletion of their coal supplies. He insisted that the trucks were not available for the carriage of 440,000 tons by rail, even if the Marseilles-Genoa sea route were employed. In his view 270,000 tons a month was the maximum amount that could be sent by all-rail route, whereas under the above scheme the total amount required to be carried was 440,000 tons a month, leaving 170,000 tons to be handled by Marseilles-Genoa route.

Lord Robert Cecil pointed out that there were two separate problems, namely:

(a.) Coal to Italy;
(b.) Strategical coal to France.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that it was essential to send the coal to Italy. For this it was necessary for the French to carry out their bargain. The French could not do this without danger, unless their own needs for coal for military purposes were made good. This could only be done at the expense of our shipping, and by our sacrifice of something else, such as our coasting trade or the diversion of tonnage from some other purpose, it being clearly understood that in no case was the food supply of this country to be affected by any re-allocations of tonnage.

The War Cabinet inclined strongly to the view that it was vitally necessary to make good the French shortage. They decided that:

A Conference should be held at the Board of Trade to consider ways and means, at which General Nash should be asked to attend.

Lord Robert Cecil undertook to notify the War Cabinet of the result of the Conference.

8. In connection with the previous Minute, the Minister of Shipping called attention to the very little assistance which was being received from America in the solution of our problems. For
instance, American troops in France, who, General Nash stated, were 450 miles from their base, were occupying waggons taken from French and British resources, whereas they had promised to get their own waggons over from America. The Americans were therefore indirectly helping to prevent coal going to Italy. Again, the Americans, who had promised to assist us in transporting their troops from this country to France, had not yet sent the four coastal transports which they had agreed to despatch. The Americans were still using their steamers, such as the "St. Louis" and the "St. Paul," in the passenger trade, while we were carrying their troops in our steamers. On the other hand we were, out of our resources, giving the United States every assistance. We were, for instance, providing them with blankets and clothing made out of wool which we had imported from Australia, &c., and which we could ill afford to spare.

The War Cabinet asked—

The Minister of Shipping to draw up a statement of the case, pointing out the grievances which he had enumerated, which should be submitted to the Foreign Office to be forwarded to Washington.

Poison Gas

9. With reference to War Cabinet 351, Minute 2, the War Cabinet decided that—

The Secretary should send a copy of General Nash's report to Versailles, inquiring the views of the military representatives on the subject, and arranging that the matter should be discussed at the next meeting of the Supreme War Council.

10. With reference to War Cabinet 350, Minute 6, General Thuillier was asked to give an estimate of British efficiency in the matter of gas, and of the threatened measures on the part of Germany. He stated that the rumours on the latter point were vague and contradictory. If, as most of the evidence indicated, the Germans meant to use a gas of the hydrocyanic type, such a gas was inferior to that used by ourselves and to their own previous gases. Our masks and the French masks were proof against a gas of this sort. It was possible, on this hypothesis, that the display of advertisement by Germany of a coming gas attack was deliberately intended to incite the propaganda of the Geneva Red Cross for the stoppage of gas altogether. Since July, however, the Germans had used a new type of gas, composed of minute particles of a substance which, if effectively discharged into the atmosphere, could penetrate the masks with which our troops were furnished. But they had failed, so far, to discover means of discharging this new form of gas in a dangerous way, and there was no evidence as yet of a single casualty in the British forces due to that cause. It was possible, nevertheless, that this gas would be used in shells with a very high detonation, or even in clouds emitted out of cylinders. Clouds of gas were affected by winds, and on the Western front the chances against a wind favourable to the Germans were as six to one. Consequently, as the German mask was decidedly inferior to ours, and quite inadequate to protect their troops against such a gas if blown back on them, it was unlikely that an attack with such a gas would take place. Precautions were being taken. A completely new mask would take a long time to make, but a temporary addition to the mask at present in use was being prepared which would afford protection against this form of attack should it occur. In a few weeks many hundreds of thousands would be ready. Questioned as to improvements in the gas used by our own forces, General Thuillier said that experiments were being made of gases which would penetrate the
German mask. These experiments were not as yet conclusive. There might be useful results in two or three months. Many scientific men of great authority were working at the subject. General Thuillier further explained that it is always a matter of great difficulty to use gas in an attack, as its use depends on weather, which cannot be forced to harmonise with a time-table, as other preparations for an attack must. Its use was practically confined to conditions of stagnant trench warfare, when favourable weather could be waited for. The same considerations militated against its employment—save in shells—for defensive operations; the troops resented the presence of cylinders in the line, as they were likely to be burst, to their own detriment, by the enemy’s bombardment. Questioned as to the likelihood of an improvement in the German gas-masks, General Thuillier stated that there was no information, but that the lack of rubber in Germany was unfavourable to any great improvement. Leather had been tried by the enemy, but had proved a failure. Their present mask was good against phosgene and chlorine gases, but latterly we had found means of using these gases in such a way as to cause the enemy great casualties.

The apprehension was expressed that the agitation concerning the use of gas portended some new and deadly device, as the previous charge against us of using it had preceded its unprovoked employment in the second battle of Ypres.

It was pointed out, as against this, that the enemy had not trumpeted the advent of the mustard gas, which had done us much harm, and that the indications were rather that the enemy was now beaten at his own game, and would welcome the stoppage of gas attacks altogether.

With reference to War Cabinet 320, Minute 9, the War Cabinet had before them a Report by Lord French and by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (Paper G.T.-3095).

The Director of Military Operations explained that the Field-Marshal had been asked to devise plans for the protection of London against aerial attack by a maximum of eighty machines. The Report embodied his proposals. There was, at the same time, a demand for guns to protect our aerodrome near Nancy, from which bombing raids on German towns were made. It was not possible to satisfy both demands in the matter of guns. It was therefore proposed that the 3-inch 20-cwt. guns available should be retained for home defence, and that lighter guns should go to Nancy. The Field-Marshal also asked for two additional squadrons of aeroplanes, but we had not such a superiority on the Western front as to warrant the granting of this request.

Sir L. Worthington Evans remarked that the situation would be relieved were it possible for the Admiralty to redivide some of the high-angle guns lately supplied to them. The same applied to searchlights, in which the Field-Marshal was deficient, and which might be spared by the Admiralty. Some of the old battle-ships and cruisers—for example, His Majesty’s ship “Queen,” at Taranto, and vessels outside submarine area on distant stations—could, perhaps, spare some searchlights.

The General Staff proposal that Home Defence should, for the present, be given precedence over France as regards the heavier anti-aircraft guns, but that France should have precedence as regards aeroplanes, was agreed to.

It was also decided that—

The General Staff should arrange for a conference with the Ministry of Munitions and the Admiralty to consider the possibility referred to, of diverting more guns and searchlights to the defence of London.
12. With reference to War Cabinet 320, Minute 9, the War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Secretary of State for War (Paper G.T.-3263) embodying an appeal from the inhabitants of Sheerness.

The Home Secretary pointed out that the Home Office could not be responsible outside the Metropolitan District.

The President of the Local Government Board remarked that any provision of shelters outside that area would bring about a demand for equivalent protection within it.

It was generally agreed that, while shelters should be provided for people in the streets at the time of an air raid, the remainder should be encouraged to stay at home, and that any attempt to provide bomb-proof retreats for the whole population was impracticable and useless.

It was also stated that compensation was being paid by the Treasury on behalf of civilians killed or injured by air raids on the lines of the Workmen’s Compensation Act.

13. The War Cabinet had under consideration a memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies re the feeding of German soldier and alien civilian prisoners working on the land as compared with our own agricultural labourers (Paper G.T.-3338).

The War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for War and the Food Controller, in conjunction with the Prisoners of War Department, to deal with the point raised by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

14. The War Cabinet had before them Interim Report No. 10 of the Economic Offensive Committee, covering a statement by the Royal Commission on Wheat Supply as to a further purchase of wheat in Australia (Paper G.-197).

Impressed by the desirability of obtaining complete control over wheat shipments from Australia, both at the present time and in the period immediately following the conclusion of peace, and also by the political difficulties which will arise if Mr. Hughes has trouble in fulfilling his guarantee to his farmers, the War Cabinet approved in principle the opening of negotiations for the purchase of the surplus Australian wheat. They were of opinion that these negotiations should be regarded not primarily as of a commercial character, but as aimed at effecting, in the general interests, a settlement of certain outstanding questions between the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments. In particular, the following objects should be borne in mind:—

(a.) That an agreement satisfactory to the Ministry of Shipping should be obtained from the Commonwealth Government as to tonnage arrangements.

(b.) That the financial arrangements should be such as to safeguard the parity of exchanges between this country and Australia, the purchase-money being set off against the cash claims of the War Office in respect of the maintenance of Australian troops.

(c.) That the price paid should not exceed the figure of Mr. Hughes’ guarantee to the farmers, with an allowance for expenses.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The drafting of telegrams and negotiation of details should be in the hands of a Committee representing the Treasury, the Ministry of Shipping, and the Royal Commission on Wheat Supplies, and that the proposals of this Committee...
should be transmitted to the Commonwealth Government through the Colonial Office and the Governor-General, and should be subject to the approval of the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

15. With reference to War Cabinet 323, Minute 8, and War Cabinet 353, Minute 9, the War Cabinet had under consideration a Memorandum (Paper G.T. - 3740) from the President of the Board of Trade, proposing the appointment of a Paper Controller, to be under the Board of Trade, the necessity for such being agreed to by the Minister of Munitions and the Chairman of the Royal Commission on Paper.

It was proposed that the existing Paper Commission, with any necessary modifications, should become an Advisory Council, or be incorporated in a system of Advisory Committees, the Ministry of Munitions being strongly represented.

The War Cabinet approved the proposals of the President of the Board of Trade, which would, it was understood, supersede the existing organisations dealing with paper.

16. With reference to War Cabinet 354, Minute 8, the War Cabinet took note of a telegram, dated 26th February, 1918 (Paper G.T. - 3747), from the Chief Secretary for Ireland, which indicated inter alia that since the despatch of troops to Clare there had been no extension of lawless demonstrations in that county.
WAR CABINET, 356.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, February 28, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the EARL CUCEZON of KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:—


The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.

Major-General Sir F. MAURICE, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for Minutes 1 to 9).

Brigadier-General G. K. COCKERILL, C.B., Sub-Director of Military Intelligence (for Minute 14).

Brigadier-General B. E. W. CHILDS, G.C.M., Director of Personal Services (for Minute 14).

The Right Hon. W. LONG, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minutes 13 and 14).

The Right Hon. SIR G. CAVE, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minute 14).

The Right Hon. SIR F. E. SMITH, Bt., K.C., M.P., Attorney-General (for Minute 14).


Admiral Sir R. E. WEMYSS, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 10 to 12).

The Right Hon. T. J. MACNAMARA, LL.D., M.P., Financial Secretary, Admiralty (for Minute 12).

The Right Hon. Sir J. MACLAY, Bart., Shipping Controller (for Minute 12).


Professor W. G. ADAMS (for Minutes 13 and 14).

PHILIP KERR, Esq. (for Minute 13).

CECIL HARMSWORTH, Esq., M.P. (for Minute 13).

The Right Hon. SIR A. C. GEDDES, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service (for Minute 15).

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

Mr. THOMAS JONES, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. BURGIS, Assistant Secretary.

Captain the Hon. W. ORMSBY-GORE, M.P., Assistant Secretary.
The Western Front: Possible German Attack.

1. WITH reference to a report, received from French sources, that the enemy hoped to capture Calais by the 15th March, the Director of Military Operations stated that the General Staff had ascertained that the report emanated from German agents in France. His general deduction was that this information merely confirmed our previous intelligence, that the enemy would be ready by the second week in March, and that there were indications of preparations for an attack and concentrations on the Arras-Cambrai front (War Cabinet 354, Minute 2).

The Italian Front.

2. Attention was drawn to the fact that the various rumours never pointed to the probability of an attack on the Italian front, although attacks on nearly all the other fronts were hinted at.

The Director of Military Operations repeated the information given by the Director of Military Intelligence (War Cabinet 353, Minute 2) that there were no signs of more than local enemy concentrations in that region. This did not exclude the possibility of an attack on the Italian front later on, and if the enemy's internal condition enabled him to postpone his attack until May, it was by no means unlikely that a great attack might take place in that theatre.

The Prime Minister asked that General Plumer, on leaving the Italian command, might attend a meeting of the War Cabinet in order to give the latest information.

Rumoured Naval Attack.

3. Attention was drawn to various rumours that an attack on the Western front might be accompanied by a naval attack.

The First Sea Lord stated that there were no signs of an impending naval attack, and he did not think this was possible at present, as the enemy were fully engaged in the Baltic.

Palestine.

4. In answer to a question, the Director of Military Operations stated that General Allenby's intention was to cross the Jordan and cut the Hejaz Railway. If he accomplished this, it was almost certain that Medina would eventually be evacuated or surrendered. It was also possible that we should be able to take an area east of the Dead Sea from which supplies might be drawn. The Director of Military Operations said that, according to our estimate, there were two Turkish divisions along the Hejaz Railway, including the garrison at Medina.

Review of the Military Situation.

5. The War Cabinet asked that the General Staff should give a general review of the whole military situation. They agreed, however, to the suggestion of the Director of Military Operations that it should be postponed until the question of our policy in Palestine and Mesopotamia had been decided.

The War Cabinet suggested that, when the Memorandum was prepared, the General Staff should state their view as to the possibility of a military decision being arrived at ultimately, and that the General Staff should, in particular, take into consideration mechanical devices and especially a great development of the supply of tanks, on which question the General Staff should confer with those in charge of tank construction and tactics.

Austrian Participation in Offensive against Russia.

6. In answer to a question, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that he was without any authentic knowledge of the refusal of the Austrians to take part in the offensive which was now being conducted against the Russians.
7. The Prime Minister drew the attention of his colleagues to the very conflicting information from Russia, which was probably due to divided counsels, as indicated in Mr. Ransome’s despatches to the “Daily News.” Some of the telegrams indicated mere surrender, while others suggested an intention to resist. In this latter category he referred to the latest telegram from Mr. Lockhart (No. 595), in which M. Petroff was reported to contemplate a withdrawal to Nijni-Novgorod and the formation there of an army of 1,000,000 men, for which he desired Allied assistance. The Prime Minister asked whether the possibilities of a formidable guerilla warfare had not been underrated. History in Spain and elsewhere had shown that large numbers of troops could be occupied by these means, particularly in forest country.

The Director of Military Operations pointed out that developments of modern warfare, such as aircraft, armoured cars, and machine-guns, were all in favour of regular, and against guerilla, troops. He admitted the possibility, however, that an active guerilla warfare in Russia might still be very troublesome to the enemy.

M. Kameneff.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 353, Minute 10, attention was drawn to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald’s account in the House of Commons of the treatment accorded to M. Kameneff and his fellow Bolsheviks in this country, and to the subsequent debate.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that he had given orders that these gentlemen should be treated with every consideration, and that he had stopped their being sent straight to France, as had been suggested, and he had since heard that the French Government would not receive them. M. Kameneff was now being allowed to stay in this country until arrangements could be made for his return to Russia. Mr. Balfour added that the greater part of M. Kameneff’s baggage had not been opened and examined by the police.

Railway Transport in France:

General Nash’s Report.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 355, Minute 9, in which it was decided that the Secretary should send a copy of General Nash’s Report on Railway Transport in France to Versailles for the consideration of the military representatives of the Supreme War Council, the Secretary of State for War requested that the War Cabinet should decide whether General Nash’s recommendations should be accepted. He pointed out that the decision to refer the matter to Versailles meant delay at a time when delay would be especially inconvenient.

The War Cabinet agreed with this view, and requested—

The Secretary of State for War to send a copy of General Nash’s Report to the Allied Governments concerned, and to ask whether they concur, and to nominate their representatives.

Submarine attack on American Destroyer.

10. The First Sea Lord stated that an enemy submarine had made an unsuccessful attack on an American destroyer.

Shipping Losses.

11. Attention was drawn to the severe losses from enemy submarines during February as compared with January.

The First Sea Lord attributed this to the fact that the enemy’s attacks appeared to be spasmodic, and that during January we had succeeded in preventing a number of enemy submarines leaving port, but during February they had been coming out in greater numbers.
12. With reference to War Cabinet 349, Minute 5, when the War Cabinet approved the publication of mercantile losses from submarines, subject to the Prime Minister's approval, the Prime Minister expressed some doubt as to the desirability and necessity of this action. He questioned the suggestion in the First Sea Lord's memorandum that the reduction in mercantile output was in reality due to slackness on the part of labour. He thought that many causes were operating. Unless absolutely compelled, he was reluctant to publish these figures. He felt that the real reason for the reduction of output required to be probed to the bottom before a decision was taken.

Dr. Macnamara said that the shortage was due not so much to strikes as to the fact that the men were not working with good-will. This was due to the fact that the time rate, plus the 20s. bonus, plus the 12½ per cent., brought the men's wages to within 7 or 8 per cent. of their piece rates, and, therefore, there was no inducement to work on piece rates.

The decision was reserved until the Prime Minister had held certain conferences with the First Lord of the Admiralty, shipbuilders, and others.

13. With reference to War Cabinet 256, Minute 10, the War Cabinet had before them the proofs of the War Cabinet Report for the year 1917.

The suggestion was made that the Report would be more suitable if it constituted merely a record of facts instead of being a document of high literary merit. It would be criticised as a partisan vindication of the Government's policy, and its publication at the public expense might be resented.

In reply, it was pointed out, however, that eulogy had been omitted, and that a large number of facts in the original document had been suppressed because Government Departments had considered that publication was not in the public interest.

It was also pointed out that many Government Departments, as well as the Governments of India and Egypt, published Annual Reports.

Mr. Long, who paid tribute to the style of the Imperial and Colonial section, suggested that the precedent of the Imperial Conference Reports might be followed, and that merely the headings of the confidential portions should be retained.

The Report was criticised on the ground that the cumulative effect was to accentuate the strain which had been placed on us by the enemy's submarine activities, and that it might afford encouragement to the enemy.

Mr. Cecil Harmsworth stated that the Report was being carefully scrutinised from this point of view, and it was hoped to render it harmless.

The military chapter was also criticised, on the ground that it did not give sufficient credit to the great achievements of the Army. The War Cabinet approved the publication of the Report, and requested—

Lord Curzon to go through it, with the authors, with a view to emphasising the achievements of our military forces and eliminating such passages as might convey the impression that the book was a eulogy of the Government's activities.
14. With reference to the War Cabinet 355, Minute 16, the War Cabinet had before them a further telegram from Mr. Duke (Paper G.T.-3761).

The Prime Minister stated that he had received a document from Professor Mahaffy, of Trinity College, Dublin, enclosing a Memorial signed by 40 per cent. of the members of the Convention, stating that the memorialists took a strong view that the proper consideration of the Prime Minister's letter was prejudiced by the prevalent lawlessness in certain parts of Ireland. A further letter on the same subject had been received, in even stronger language, from fifteen high sheriffs of counties in Ireland, and a letter from Lord Granard (a Liberal Home Ruler), who, as Lord Lieutenant of the County of Longford, took a serious view of the agrarian outrages which were threatened in that county.

The Home Secretary stated that he gathered from Mr. Duke's telegram that he took the view that the deportation of Irish undesirables from Ireland would be rendered ineffective unless a permit system were established which would prevent the return of these undesirables to Ireland. As far as he was concerned he had no objection to the establishment of a permit system.

Mr. Long welcomed the proposal to establish a permit system, not only on the grounds already put forward, but also on the ground that a great deal of unnecessary travelling between England and Ireland was now taking place. The trains and boats were overcrowded, and a permit system might help to remedy this evil. Further, he thought it would be good policy to take powers by Regulation to restrict the movement, and even to fix the place of residence, of Irish undesirables in this country.

The President of the Board of Education stated that in his constituency most of the labour difficulties were caused by Irish agitators.

General Cockerill expressed the view that power already existed, under the Defence of the Realm Act Regulations, which would enable the Government to confine Irish undesirables to a given area, but he feared that the proposed permit system would prove ineffective unless all the small as well as the large ports whence vessels plied to Ireland were carefully watched.

The Home Secretary suggested that the best course would be to prepare a new Regulation under the Defence of the Realm Act for establishing a permit system, and to get the machinery for the purpose in order. The time when the Regulation should be made and put into practice could then be left to the three Departments concerned, namely, the Home Office, the Irish Office, and the War Office, to determine.

The War Cabinet approved that the proposed new Regulation should be framed, and requested—

The Secretary of State for War, the Secretary of State for Home Affairs, and the Chief Secretary for Ireland to consult together with a view to giving effect to the Regulation as soon as the necessary machinery had been established and the Chief Secretary so desired.

15. With reference to War Cabinet 339, Minute 4, the Prime Minister stated that he had received a telegram from the General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers announcing the result of the recent ballot of the society on the Government's proposals, and asking the Prime Minister to receive a deputation of delegates to consider the position of their organisation. According to the telegram there had been a majority of 93,000 against the proposals of the Government.

Sir Auckland Geddes recounted the history of the dispute
between the Engineers and the other Unions. It was important not to go back on the arrangement come to with the other Unions without their consent, because it was from among their members that by far the greater number of recruits would be taken. The actual number of men from the Engineers' Society to be taken compulsorily was not great. He thought the engineers, having realised that they could not secure a two-thirds majority in favour of a strike, were now seeking a way out of their difficulties. He saw no objection to the Prime Minister receiving a deputation within the limits laid down in the telegram from their General Secretary.

Mr. Herbert Fisher said that, according to his information, the general body of workmen were strongly opposed to the attitude taken up by the Amalgamated Society of Engineers.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Prime Minister, accompanied by Mr. Barnes and Sir Auckland Geddes, should receive the deputation that afternoon at 5:30 p.m., and a telegram to the General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers was agreed to.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
February 28, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 357.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, March 1, 1918, at 3 30 P.M.

Present:
The PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P
Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C.
The following were also present:
The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.
Captain CLEMENT JONES, Assistant Secretary.
Captain E. ABRAHAM, Assistant Secretary.

Murmansk:

1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 351, Minute 7, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that the question had been raised as to the desirability of sending a small party, composed of an officer and twenty men, to Murmansk for demolition purposes there and in Archangel. The Russian Committee had approved this. As the Admiralty have a man-of-war at Murmansk and, as Admiral Hope reported, have been considering arrangements for demolition work in case of necessity, the War Cabinet decided that—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should communicate with the Admiralty on the subject.

The Western Front:

2. WITH reference to War Cabinet 356, Minute 1, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that there was evidence of a possible German attack.
German concentration on the front Arras-Peronne. There were some signs of the possibility of an early attack.

With reference to War Cabinet 356, Minute 2, some indications were brought before the War Cabinet of the possible transfer of the attack from the Western front to the Italian front, owing to the repercussion on German public opinion of a possible failure.

General Smuts recounted a conversation which he had had with Baron Sonnino in Rome, during which the latter had expressed strong dissatisfaction with the forthcoming removal of two British divisions from Italy. Baron Sonnino was of opinion that Italy could be kept in the war to the end, but that this removal of British divisions was not the way to help her to do so; if any troops were to go, they should be French rather than British, because the British were so popular, and had had so good an effect on the Italian moral. Baron Sonnino had said that Austrian divisions were pouring in on the Italian front, and that, while he was not actually apprehensive of disaster, he could not help being anxious to some extent. Bad influences were at work in Italy, and among them the shortage of coal had played its part. While it was true that German divisions had gone away, peace with the Ukraine had, on the other hand, released numbers of Austrian troops. Baron Sonnino said that if a big attack came and the Italians failed, they would say that we had deserted them, and the blame would be put upon us.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff, with reference to the alleged pouring in of Austrian troops, pointed out that, while the Italians asserted that eight or nine Austrian divisions had arrived in the Trentino, the British and French intelligence reports only mentioned two additional Austrian divisions on that front. These rumours and apprehensions always came from Rome, and not from General Diaz. General Wilson said that, in his opinion, while it was quite possible that the Germans might attack Italy, the attack could not come until the snow melted, although there was less snow this year than usual.

With reference to the removal of British divisions from Italy, General Wilson had approached General Foch on the subject, and General Foch had admitted that the initiative came from him, and this was because the Executive Committee at Versailles had not yet got into working order, and that the Italians had not been consulted either through Versailles or direct. One of the two British divisions was starting to-day, and the second would follow later. It would take about ten days to move a division at the rate of sixteen trains a day.

The War Cabinet were reminded that in the discussion on General Nash's Report on Transportation (War Cabinet 355, Minute 9, and War Cabinet 356, Minute 9), it had been pointed out that any troop movement limited the amount of coal that could be transported, and that that was a factor which ought to be considered.

As to the Allied General Reserve (War Cabinet 349, Minute 7), it was pointed out that the contributions would be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Divisions</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French (6 from France and 4 from Italy)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The War Cabinet decided that—

(a.) The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should refer the following questions to the Executive Committee at Versailles for the Control of the Reserves:
(1.) The question of whether the second British division should be moved from the Italian front.

(2.) The question of whether, and, if so, how many, Italian divisions should be brought.

(b.) The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should inform the Italian Government of this decision.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 356, Minute 5, the Prime Minister drew the attention of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff to the decision of the War Cabinet on the previous day, requesting the General Staff to give a general review of the whole military situation, including the question of the development of the supply of Tanks.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff undertook to furnish this report as soon as certain decisions in policy had been taken.

5. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that the Persian Committee had many important matters to consider the same evening, which might influence the decisions as to military policy in Palestine and Mesopotamia.

6. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported the capture, on 22nd February, off the coast of Norway, of the German steamship "Diisseldorf," unarmed, with a cargo of iron ore. A prize crew had been placed on board, and the ship ordered to sail for Lerwick.

7. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported a message from H.M.S. "Suffolk," to the effect that the Ussuri Cossacks required support independently of Semenov, with whom they were not in contact. They could not make a start until they were supported financially and materially. They could probably be induced to accept assistance from the Japanese if assured that the Japanese Government were acting in accord with other Allied Governments, and were not actuated by selfish motives. If financial assistance were delayed, it was feared that they would come under Bolshevik influence, their economic wants being of extreme urgency. The first step should be the supply of grain and arms to Harbin, whence the Cossacks would be able to take them by their own means secretly to Iman. They would then be in a position to take possession of the railway, and Vladivostock would be at their mercy. These movements would be preliminary to an advance through Siberia in concert with other Cossack forces. The Cossack leaders were at present of opinion that the assistance of Allied forces would then become necessary. The object the Cossack leaders had in view was the formation of an independent State east of Balkal, under Allied protection.

8. The War Cabinet had before them the Report of the Economic Offensive Committee containing a proposed scheme of State requisition of Egyptian cotton crops (Paper G.-198).

The War Cabinet approved the scheme.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 1, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 358.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, March 4, 1918, at 12 noon.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.


Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff.


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

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.

The Western Front:

1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 357, Minute 2, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the Germans appeared to be concentrating at two places on the Western front, viz.:

   (a.) As already reported, opposite the Arras–Peronne front, where 35 divisions were concentrated as compared with a previous 9 divisions.

   (b.) In front of the French, opposite the Soissons–Rheims front.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the total number of German divisions on the Western front was now 183.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff did not attach special importance to the German raid on the Portuguese front, reported in last Saturday's communiqué.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff undertook to ascertain whether the counter-attack mentioned in the communiqué had been made by British or Portuguese troops.
The Italian Front:
Withdrawal of British Divisions.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 357, Minute 3, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the Executive Committee for the Control of Reserves was meeting that afternoon at Versailles to settle the question of the transfer of divisions from the Italian to the Western front.

Poland.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported the receipt of information that the Poles had crossed the frontier and had placed themselves under the orders of the Regency Council, which was tantamount to joining the enemy.

Russia:
Japanese Intervention.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 354, Minute 6, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that the United States had agreed to Japanese intervention in Siberia, subject to the proviso that they, in accordance with their usual custom, would not subscribe to a joint declaration of the Allies, although they would subsequently make a declaration of their own, supporting the Allied policy. Mr. Balfour said that he had drafted a telegram to Tokyo, stating that the United States of America had consented, and that the next move was with Japan. He had also drafted his idea of the sort of proclamation the Allies should make. The telegram, he hoped, would be sent that afternoon.

Loss of steamship "Calgarian."

5. The First Sea Lord reported that the "Calgarian" was torpedoed on the 1st March, about 8 miles North-West of Rathlin Island, and that only 49 men were missing out of a total of 600 on board.

Stornoway Town Hall.

6. The First Sea Lord reported that Stornoway Town Hall had been completely gutted by fire on the 2nd instant, but that it was hoped that all the important documents of the naval office established there had been saved.

Submarines.

7. The First Sea Lord stated that the "Rutherglen" reported that she had rammed a submarine 12 miles South of Holyhead on the 2nd instant. It was feared that this submarine might have been one of our own on patrol.

Murmansk.

8. The First Sea Lord read a telegram from the Rear-Admiral Commanding at Murmansk, which stated that the local Soviet had received a telegram from M. Trotzki, saying that peace negotiations had apparently broken off and that measures were being taken to defend Petrograd to the last drop of blood, it was the duty of the Soviet to do everything they could to defend the Murman line, and ordering them to co-operate with Allied Missions in everything. The local Soviet communicated this telegram to the French representative and the Rear-Admiral at Murmansk, and suggested that the executive command of the armed forces under the supreme command of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies should be vested in three persons, one of whom would be appointed by the Council, and the other two would be British and French officers. The Soviet also asked that the British and French should provide armed force, equipment, and stores for the defence of Murmansk as far as possible. Before the receipt of this telegram the Admiralty had decided to reinforce the Rear-Admiral Commanding at Murmansk with a cruiser. The French had undertaken to do the same, and Admiral Sims had made a similar proposal to his Government for consideration.
The Secretary of State for War read a letter from the French Military Attaché on this subject.

The first Sea Lord then read a draft of the instructions he proposed to send to the Rear-Admiral at Murmansk, which stated that it was impossible to send troops to reinforce the garrison at Murmansk, but that one cruiser from Great Britain, one from France, and possibly one from America, were on their way to that port. The Admiral was not to undertake operations against the Bolsheviks except in a case of extreme urgency, and the Rear-Admiral was requested to state what, in his view, would constitute such a case.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Admiralty should inform the Rear-Admiral that we cannot send land forces; that naval reinforcements are coming; and that he should be authorised to land the troops if, in his judgment, any useful assistance could be given by them to any Russian forces against the Germans.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 353, Minute 7, the War Cabinet had a further short discussion on the subject of air raids on open towns.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that he had replied to the communication received from the Spanish Ambassador in the sense that Great Britain had always deprecated this form of warfare, and were quite prepared to consider any proposals the Germans had to make on the subject.

It was suggested that a public declaration should be made, as it was easily possible to show that the Germans were the first to start raiding open towns. Some doubt being expressed on this point—

The Secretary was instructed to investigate the matter, with the aid of the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and to report to the War Cabinet at an early date.

10. The attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to the fact that the "Manchester Guardian" had published information which, though incorrect in detail, was substantially similar to that contained in War Cabinet 353, Minute 7. The Spanish Minister had complained to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of this leakage.

11. The Secretary of State for War stated that the Army Council wished to establish a flow of promotion in the British Expeditionary Force. It was felt that it would be very hard, in the event of certain commanders being removed from their posts without any reason being assigned for removing them except to help promotion, that they should suddenly be reduced from full to half-pay. Lord Derby said that it was proposed shortly to bring home eight corps commanders, now in France. Two commands at home would shortly become vacant. He asked the authorisation of the War Cabinet to retain all eight officers on full pay for three months at home, after which they should then revert to half-pay if not again required to hold commands in France, or at home.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he was in agreement with this proposal, but, as it involved a departure from the usual Treasury practice, he had thought it necessary to obtain War Cabinet sanction.

The War Cabinet agreed to this proposal.
12. With reference to the transport of six American divisions to France, the Secretary of State for War stated that he was in communication with Lord Reading on this subject, and would be glad if the War Cabinet would postpone its discussion until he had received further particulars from Lord Reading.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 4, 1918.
WAR CABINET. 359.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, March 5, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

The Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P.

The Right Hon. GEORGE N. BARNES, M.P.

The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 6 to 14).

The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minutes 10 to 14).

The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 5).


Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 5).

Viscount NORTHCLIFFE, Director of Propaganda in Enemy Countries (for Minute 6).

The Right Hon. LORD BEAVERBROOK, Minister of Information (for Minutes 6 to 9).

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

Captain L. F. BURGES, Assistant Secretary.

Paymaster-in-Chief P. H. ROW, R.N., Assistant Secretary.

Mr. THOMAS JONES, Assistant Secretary.

Mr. PEMBROKE WICKS, Assistant Secretary.

1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff informed the War Cabinet that, according to a German report, the Roumanians had agreed to an armistice.

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the headquarters of the 14th German Army had been located in the vicinity of Vimy, but that no information had yet been received that the troops to form that army had arrived. It indicated, however, the possibility of the front of the German attack being extended more to the Northward.
The Italian Front:
Recall of General Plumer.

3. The Secretary of State for War informed the War Cabinet that he had been urged by Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig to recall General Plumer from Italy to take over the command of one of the armies in France, and that the necessary instructions had been sent to General Plumer.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs drew the attention of the War Cabinet to a telegram from the British Minister in Rome, from which it was gathered that the Italian authorities urged that General Plumer might be allowed to remain in Italy.

The War Cabinet, while recognising the very valuable services which General Plumer is rendering in Italy, were of opinion that, in view of the serious events anticipated on the Western front, they could not refuse Sir Douglas Haig's request. They therefore approved the action of the Secretary of State for War.

Submarines.

4. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that—

(a) The patrol boat "P. 61" had dropped a depth charge in an oil patch, with the result that an object which appeared to be a submarine's conning-tower came to the surface; two more depth charges were then dropped in the vicinity;

(b) Information had been received that an enemy submarine had shelled the steamship "Spey" in the vicinity of Crete. The latter fired ten rounds at the submarine, and claimed that two shots hit the submarine, which dived, and, on reappearing shortly afterwards, was well down by the bows. Owing to a defective steering engine, the "Spey" was forced to withdraw from the engagement.

Incendiary and Explosive Bullets for use against Aircraft.

5. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that a request had been received from the Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean fleet for permission to use in the Mediterranean Brock and Pomeroy ammunition, as there were indications that extended cruises by Zeppelins in the near future might take place in that area. Admiral Hope stated that it was only intended that such ammunition should be supplied to and used by pilots who could not be forced to land on an enemy's country.

It was pointed out that, when previous applications had been made for the use of this ammunition outside the United Kingdom, such had been refused (War Cabinet 102, Minute 3; War Cabinet 119, Minute 22; War Cabinet 168, Minute 1).

The War Cabinet decided—

To approve the request of the Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean fleet, subject to the concurrence of the Air Ministry; if the latter considered the use of this ammunition, in these special circumstances, was undesirable, they should bring the matter before the War Cabinet for further consideration.

Propaganda in Enemy Countries.

6. The War Cabinet had before them correspondence between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Lord Northcliffe on the subject of propaganda in Austria (Paper G.T.-3762).

Lord Northcliffe gave a general indication of the lines on which he proposed to work.

The War Cabinet approved that Lord Northcliffe should carry on his operations on the lines indicated, subject to the following arrangements, which were agreed upon:
(a.) No promise should be made to the subject races in Austria which we could not redeem: for example, we must not promise them complete independence if the best we could get was autonomy.

(b.) Lord Northcliffe agreed to show the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the leaflets he proposes to issue, in order to ensure that it might not be possible later on to charge the British Government with a breach of faith.

(c.) Lord Northcliffe should place himself in communication with the General Staff, with a view to making use of the resources of the British forces in Italy to distribute propaganda in the enemy's lines.

7. The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Minister of Information (Paper G.T.-3702), together with a memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Paper G.T.-3738), with regard to the decision of the War Cabinet that the Intelligence Branch of the Ministry of Information should be transferred to the Foreign Office (War Cabinet 349, Minute 11).

The War Cabinet decided that—

The questions raised in the above papers should be referred to a Conference, to be presided over by General Smuts, composed of representatives of—

The Foreign Office,
The War Office,
The Admiralty,
The Ministry of Information;

failing agreement, the matter to be referred back to the War Cabinet.

8. The War Cabinet had under consideration a memorandum by the Minister of Information (Paper G.T.-3703), in which he asked that his duties should be defined with regard to home propaganda; together with a memorandum by Captain Guest, Chairman of the National War Aims Committee (Paper G.T.-3757), and a memorandum by the Food Controller (Paper G.T.-3809).

The War Cabinet decided that—

The matter should be referred to General Smuts to settle, in conjunction with the Departments concerned.

9. The War Cabinet had under consideration a note by the Secretary (G.T.-3752) asking for instructions as to the papers to be issued to the Ministry of Information.

The War Cabinet approved that the list should be as follows:—

(1.) Papers distributed by the Secretary of the War Cabinet—

All War Cabinet Minutes affecting the work of the Ministry,
The Weekly Eastern Report,
The Weekly Western Report (Parts I and II),
The Weekly Reports of the Intelligence Bureau on the various countries,
The Weekly Report of the Ministry of Labour,
The Weekly Report of the Ministry of Food,
10. The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the
Minister of Blockade dealing with the position of Dutch shipping in
relation to the needs of the Allies (Paper G.T.-3805).
The War Cabinet decided—
To refer the question to the following Committee:—
Lord Milner (Chairman),
General Smuts,
Lord Robert Cecil,
Sir Joseph Maclay,
Captain Clement Jones (Secretary);
the Committee to meet that afternoon, and, in case of
serious doubt as to the policy to be followed, to bring the
matter before the War Cabinet on the following day.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 358, Minute 4, the War
Cabinet had under consideration telegram No. 1, dated the
4th March, 1918, from Mr. Lockhart, in which he had urged a
suspension of the proposed intervention of Japan in Siberia, and
Mr. Balfour's reply, No. 1, dated the 4th March, 1918, in which he
had fully explained the policy of the British Government. This
latter telegram was approved, subject to the suggestion that it
might have been added that if the Bolsheviks proposed to put up a
fight against the Germans, they might enlist the Japanese as Allies.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs undertook to consider
the desirability of sending a further telegram in this
sense.
The War Cabinet also approved Mr. Balfour's telegram No. 198
of the 4th March, 1918, in which he initiated the invitation
to the Japanese to take action.

12. The War Cabinet had under consideration a memorandum
by the Minister of National Service (G.T.-3804) on the subject of
the recruiting of coal-miners, in which he stated that the Miners'
Federation had decided to take a ballot on the subject of whether
they could agree to the withdrawal of 50,000 men from the mines
for military service, as approved by the War Cabinet Committee on
Man-Power (G.-185, paragraph 52), and, if so, as to whether the
Federation machinery should be used for the purpose of finding the
requisite number.

Sir Auckland Geddes, in his memorandum, anticipated that
practically all the post-war miners who are of a sufficient degree of
medical fitness to be accepted for service in the Army will have been withdrawn from the mines by the middle of this month, and he stated that it was essential that their withdrawal should be followed promptly by the recruitment of the necessary number of pre-war miners. He asked the authority of the War Cabinet to proceed immediately with the issue of a decertification order, withdrawing all certificates of exemption issued on grounds of employment to pre-war miners between the ages of 18 years 8 months and 25 years.

The War Cabinet approved that the Minister of National Service should proceed in the recruiting of the prescribed number of men on the lines indicated above.

13. The Chancellor of the Exchequer read a long draft reply to a question in the House of Commons in regard to the conditions in Ireland, which had been telegraphed to him by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The War Cabinet felt that the draft proposed by Mr. Duke might call too much attention to the unrest in Ireland. They decided that—

The Chancellor of the Exchequer should reply in the sense that the Chief Secretary for Ireland and Field-Marshal Lord French were both at the present time in Ireland, and that their reports agreed that the measures already taken for restoring order were having a good effect.

14. With reference to War Cabinet 355, Minute 7, the War Cabinet had before them two telegrams from the British Ambassador in Paris, dated 4th March (Nos. 326 and 327), which recorded the fact that the President of the Council had undertaken to furnish Italy with 8,000 tons a day of coal up to 12th March, but expressed inability to continue after that date, and urged that the forthcoming meeting of the Inter-Allied Maritime Transport Council, at which this question could be further considered, should take place next week in Paris instead of in London, as already arranged. The second telegram, No. 327, also drew attention to the serious situation in France in regard to oats.

The War Cabinet were agreed that—

It would be highly inconvenient to hold the meeting of the Inter-Allied Maritime Transport Council in Paris, since the whole of the information in regard to shipping and kindred matters is concentrated in London and not in Paris. Moreover, the representative of the United States of America had already arrived in London to attend the Conference, and all arrangements had been made. The Prime Minister reminded the War Cabinet that, at the last meeting of the Supreme War Council at Versailles, it had been arranged that the next meeting of the Supreme War Council should be held in London. As there are a considerable number of questions awaiting decision by the Supreme War Council, and as the time has come for the monthly meeting, he suggested that an invitation should be sent to M. Clemenceau to come to London for meetings both of the Supreme War Council and of the Inter-Allied Maritime Transport Council.

The War Cabinet instructed the Secretary to draft a telegram from the Prime Minister to the President of the Council in this sense.
WAR CABINET, 360.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Wednesday, March 6, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:—
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.
General Sir H. H. Wilson, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 15).
Lieutenant-General Sir H. E. Belfield, K.C.B., D.S.O., Director of Prisoners of War (for Minute 16).

Paymaster-in-Chief P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.
Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
Captain L. F. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.

The Italian Front.
1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 357, Minute 3, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that there was much snow on the Alps, but that avalanches were occurring, which indicated thaw. The Piave was in flood.

Questioned as to the likelihood of an enemy attack in the centre of the line, in the direction of Milan, General Wilson pointed out that railways were lacking to furnish an adequate impetus to such an attack; that the only two available passes were snowed up and well guarded by the Italians; and that until summer no serious effort could be made. Another possible line of attack further West involved violating the neutrality of Switzerland. This possibility was being studied.
The Western Front: Transfer of German Divisions.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 358, Minute 1, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that there were 183 ascertained enemy divisions on the Western front in France. The French estimated a possible 8 or 10 more, as that number of divisions remained unlocated. Questioned as to the possibility of the appearance of these divisions on the Italian front, General Wilson expressed the opinion that the known withdrawal of German troops from that front rendered this hypothesis an unlikely one, considering the strain such movements would put on the railways.

German Aeroplanes.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that a German airman, taken prisoner by the French, had stated that the enemy were going to bring up fifty new flights of “Pursuers” on the Western front; each flight, according to the informant, was to have eighteen pilots, but this did not necessarily mean eighteen machines.

General Smuts expressed the view that each flight probably numbered six machines.

Possible German Attack.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 359, Minute 2, in reply to a question as to further symptoms of an impending attack on the Western front, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that there was a good deal of aerial activity on the part of the Germans, but that we had undoubtedly the upper hand in that respect; without obtaining local superiority, the enemy might not think it wise to attack. Aerial reconnaissance had revealed the presence of a few new dumps and railheads, but no conclusive evidence of any immediate offensive.

German Tanks.

5. Questioned as to the possibility of an offensive without preliminary bombardment, but with the help of Tanks, General Wilson stated that no enemy Tanks had as yet been detected on the actual front, although information had been received which indicated the possibility of the transport of German Tanks through Belgium. It was believed that the enemy had probably built as many as 400. The Commanders in the Field were well aware of the possibility of an attack of this nature and were ready with defensive schemes.

British Tanks.

6. The Prime Minister decided to hold a discussion on Friday afternoon next on the output of British Tanks, which was reported to be unsatisfactory. He invited any of his colleagues who were interested to attend.

Summer Time.

7. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the French and Italians were changing to summer time on the 9th March and asked the approval of the War Cabinet to a simultaneous change for the British forces in France and Italy. This was approved.

Russia.

8. The Deputy First Sea Lord read a report from the Naval Attaché to Russia, dated from Helsingfors, to the effect that the submarine “Ugor” had been abandoned in the ice, and the “Edinorog” sunk in Reval Harbour during the abandonment of Reval. Seven ships—presumably cruisers—were in ice, bound for Helsingfors. The captains of the “Rurik” and “Bogatyr” had deserted in Reval. The enemy had landed in the Aland Islands and had made several air reconnaissances over Helsingfors.
With reference to War Cabinet 241, Minute 11, the Deputy First Sea Lord reported that a Chilean schooner had arrived on the 2nd March at Talcahuano, in Chile, with fifty-eight of the crew of the German raider "See-Adler," out of a French schooner which had been wrecked on Easter Island and which they had captured after the wreck of their own ship.

Questioned as to the career of the raider "Wolf," Admiral Hope explained that she had remained in hiding, avoiding capturing ships for considerable periods, and had, on the whole, done less damage than might have been expected.

The Deputy First Sea Lord read a report from Copenhagen of statements by interned German sailors that there were so many mines in the Heligoland Bight that German submarines now used the Little Belt and Sound almost entirely. This represented a loss of time of from forty-eight to ninety-six hours.

With reference to War Cabinet 358, Minute 8, Admiral American Cruiser Hope reported that he learned from Admiral Sims that the United States Government was not at present willing to order a cruiser to Murmansk, but that, if pressed by Lord Reading, they might reconsider their decision.

The War Cabinet decided that:

The Admiralty should send to the Foreign Office, for transmission to Lord Reading, a telegram requesting him to approach the United States Government on the subject.

The Deputy First Sea Lord read a report from Penzance that three survivors of the Belgian fishing-smack "Eduard Marie" had been picked up. They stated that the smack had been attacked by gunfire and sunk by bombs; the master, lying wounded on the deck, had been shot dead with a revolver by a member of the submarine's crew.

The War Cabinet decided that:

This incident, after due confirmation, should be published by the Admiralty.

With reference to War Cabinet 346, Minute 1, attention was drawn to the statement made by Commander Bellairs on the previous day, in the House of Commons, concerning the sortie of the "Goeben" and "Breslau" from the Dardanelles. This statement had got into Hansard, and, if correct, did not reflect credit to the responsible British naval authority concerned.

The War Cabinet were given to understand that the statement in question contained exaggerations, but that the whole matter had been investigated by the First Lord during his visit to the Mediterranean, and that appropriate action had been taken.

The War Cabinet had under consideration a letter (Paper G.T.-3813) from the British Military Representative at Versailles, stating that the Allied Military Representatives had agreed that the Joint Committees on Aviation and Tanks should consist of not more than five and not less than two members from each nation, and asking for the covering sanction of the British section of the Supreme War Council.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that, before arriving at a decision as to any increase in the number of members on these committees.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Admiralty should send to the Foreign Office, for transmission to Lord Reading, a telegram requesting him to approach the United States Government on the subject.
Committees, it was necessary that the matter should be considered by the Departments concerned, and the War Cabinet therefore requested—

The Secretary of State for War to arrange for the necessary departmental conferences to be held, and to report to the War Cabinet the conclusions at which they arrived.

16. With reference to War Cabinet 181, Minute 7, the War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Secretary of State for War (Paper G.T.-3737) and a memorandum by Lord Newton (Paper G.T.-3744) on the subject of the exchange of interned prisoners.

Lord Newton said that his proposal was that all civilians interned in the United Kingdom and Germany should be at liberty to return to their own country; but that, as the number of Germans who would probably avail themselves of the permission—estimated at 15,000—is much in excess of the 3,000 (which number includes men of the mercantile marine) whom we may hope to receive, a condition should be made that 5,000 British private soldiers should be transferred to Holland from Germany, and that all mercantile marine officers and crews now in Germany should be included among the civilians.

Lord Derby pointed out that the Germans regarded the merchant seamen as combatants, and he thought the Admiralty were of the opinion that no action should be taken which might be interpreted by Germany that we regarded these merchant seamen as combatants.

General Belfreld said he felt strongly that the proposed exchange of prisoners should not take place, on the ground that we had over and over again urged our Allies not to conclude any agreement with the enemy regarding the exchange of prisoners. On one occasion the French had almost concluded an agreement with the Germans for the exchange of prisoners, but had, on representations being made by us, repudiated the agreement.

Lord Newton urged, in reply, that there was no ground for assuming that our views had influenced the French in any respect in the course of their negotiations and that it was not in our interests to associate ourselves with them.

It was pointed out that the proposal ran directly counter to the decision of the War Cabinet on 28th March, 1917 (War Cabinet 107, Minute 10); that the Admiralty, the War Office, the Home Office, and the Ministry of National Service were all opposed to the proposed exchange; and that, in these circumstances, the War Cabinet could hardly override the opinion held by these Departments unless some new factor of great importance had arisen, and unless the Allies had agreed upon a change of policy.

The War Cabinet decided that—

Lord Newton, if he so desired, should arrange with the Secretary to bring up the matter for consideration at the forthcoming Inter-Allied Conference to be held in London the following week, but that otherwise no action should be taken.

17. With reference to reports from the President of the Board of Agriculture (Paper G.T.-396), the Minister of Reconstruction (Paper G.-189), Lord Lovat (Paper G.T.-3319), the Forestry Sub-Committee (Paper G.T.-3342), the Secretary for Scotland (Paper G.T.-3433), and a Resolution by the Royal English Agricultural Society (Paper G.T.-3652), the War Cabinet requested Lord Milner and Mr. Barnes to go into the question, in consultation with the Departments and authorities concerned, and report to the War Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 6, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 361.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, March 7, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 15).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 15).

The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minutes 1 to 8).


The Right Hon. Lord Rothermere, Secretary of State for the Air Force (for Minutes 12 to 20).


The following were also present:

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord.

The Right Hon. Sir J. Maclay, Bart., Shipping Controller (for Minutes 1 to 3).


Sir E. Wyldbore Smith, Chairman Commission internationale de Ravitaillement (for Minutes 2 and 3).

Sir William Weir, Controller Aeronautical Supplies (for Minutes 12 to 20).

Mr. W. T. Layton, C.B.E., Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 12 to 20).


Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgis, Assistant Secretary.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.

[1365–361]
Acquisition of Dutch Tonnage.

1. With reference to War Cabinet 359, Minute 10, Lord Robert Cecil once more raised the question of the acquisition of Dutch shipping. He reminded the War Cabinet that the question had been delegated to Lord Milner, General Smuts, Sir Joseph Maclay, and himself, who had reached the following decision, recorded in Paper G.T.-3818, which had been circulated:

"The Dutch Government should be given one final chance of ratifying the agreement. In the event, however, of their failing to do so by Monday, the 11th March, the date of the first Meeting of the Allied Maritime Transport Council, we should encourage our American, French, and Italian colleagues on that Council to agree to the requisitioning of the ships."

Sir Joseph Maclay had since come to him and had urged that the decision ought to be reconsidered.

Sir Joseph Maclay said that the gravity of the situation had been brought home to him more than ever by the recent correspondence between the Prime Minister and the French President of the Council in regard to the coal position in France and Italy, which emphasised the vital need for additional tonnage for these purposes. The acquisition of 400,000 tons of Dutch shipping in the United States of America, and 200,000 tons elsewhere, would make all the difference to France and Italy, and to the whole shipping situation. Perhaps it might prove the most important factor in the war. If we gave Holland further time to consider the matter she would probably consult Germany, and means might be found for further delay and obstruction.

Lord Robert Cecil explained that he had seen Herr Van Vollenhoven, and had warned him that we would wait no longer.

Lord Robert Cecil then gave an outline of a new agreement he proposed should be put before the Dutch Government, the new agreement replacing the old one. This agreement provided, inter alia, that we should requisition the Dutch tonnage above referred to; that we should be entitled to employ it in the war zone; and that we should guarantee that the Allies would replace, after the war, any ships sunk in the war zone by enemy action. If not accepted by Monday, the 18th March, 1918, we should be obliged to requisition the Dutch shipping.

The War Cabinet decided that:

(a.) The Dutch Minister in London should be notified regarding the proposed fresh agreement.

(b.) The new agreement should be considered by the Allied Maritime Transport Council, so far as concerned the incidence of liability for replacement among the different Allies.

Supplies to Greece

2. The War Cabinet had before them a telegram from M. Venizelos to the Prime Minister, dated the 27th February, 1918 (Paper G.T.-3816), in which he requested that 1,200 tons of seed should be brought from Alexandria to Greece, in order that it might be sown and give a crop of 60,000 tons of fodder in June next. The telegram stated that the Egyptian Government had so far refused to export the seed asked for,

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should place himself in communication with the Egyptian Government, in order to ascertain the position, and should issue to them instructions that the seed requested by M. Venizelos should be forwarded, if available.
3. The War Cabinet also had before them a further telegram from M. Venizelos (Paper G.T.-3819), in which he complained that the tonnage placed at the disposal of Greece was inadequate for their needs, and made a request that further tonnage should be placed at the disposal of the Greek Government to replace ships lost by enemy action. M. Venizelos also complained that their demands for food had been unsatisfied.

Sir Joseph Maclay stated that the cereals deliveries were only about 9 per cent. behind arrangements made with Greece. He hoped that by May all the deficit would be wiped off. He undertook to inform the Wheat Commission relative to the Cabinet memorandum.

It was pointed out that in respect to replacing the lost shipping, the Allies were under rather a special obligation to Greece, since, earlier in the war, they had obtained control of practically the whole of the Greek mercantile marine.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The question of replacing the lost Greek ships should meantime be dealt with by the Shipping Controller.

4. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the Belgians claimed a great success at Ramscapelle, where they had captured 100 prisoners.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 358, Minute 1, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that, with regard to the attack by the Germans on the Portuguese front, a Portuguese division had been called up from reserve and had reoccupied the lost trenches.

6. With reference to War Cabinet 360, Minute 2, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the total of German divisions now on the Western front was 184. There were no further signs of a German attack other than those already reported.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 322, Minute 2, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff raised the question of the payment of the Italian soldiers' separation allowance out of British funds. Lord Milner explained the difficulty of raising the question with the Italian Government.

General Smuts said he had discussed the matter with Baron Sonnino, who had explained that the Italian Government wished to do something, but that their ability to do so depended to some extent upon the results of the Italian War Loan.

While it was recognised that any direct payment to the Italians for this purpose could hardly be made without offending Italian susceptibilities, it was suggested that the difficulty might possibly be surmounted by means of a British subscription to the Italian War Loan.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should take advantage of the presence of the Italian Ministers in this country the following week to discuss the question, if a favourable opportunity presented itself.
Anglo-Russian Military Service Agreement.

With reference to War Cabinet 345, Minute 3, and Paper G.T.-3828, Lord Derby stated that a rule for a writ of *habeas corpus* was obtained on the 5th instant at the suit of a Russian named Kutchinsky against the Officer Commanding the 39th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, at Plymouth, and that this would also be served on the Secretary of State for War. Lord Derby stated that he had been informed by word of mouth from the Treasury Solicitor that if this matter was brought before a Court, the man would probably secure a release. Lord Derby also stated that there were about 1,600 Russians now at Plymouth, and he expected these men would create some difficulties with regard to serving in the British Army, on account of the fact that our agreements with Russia were no longer valid, as, in accordance with the agreement under which these men signed on, they were now liberated.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Secretary of State for War should fight the case of the Russian Kutchinsky in the Courts.

The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that Stockholm reported through the Berlin wireless, that four Russian cruisers had arrived at Helsingfors from Reval.

It was also stated that, for the protection of Helsingfors and the Labourers' Council, the Marine Department at Helsingfors had decided upon the formation of a Red Fleet which was to continue to fight without regard to the German-Russian peace.

The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that one of our seaplanes had attacked an enemy submarine 35 miles N.W. of Cape Antifer, on the 6th instant. The seaplane had dropped two bombs, but it was not known whether she had succeeded in sinking the submarine.

The War Cabinet had under consideration the question of publishing the report on the visit of the Labour Delegation to Russia during April and May 1917, by Mr. J. O'Grady, M.P., Mr. W. Thorne, M.P., and Captain W. S. Saunders (Paper G.-150).

The War Cabinet decided that—

A summary of this report, prepared under the supervision of Mr. Barnes, should be published.

With reference to War Cabinet 358, Minute 9, it was pointed out that Mr. Bonar Law might be called upon, in the House of Commons, to make a statement on behalf of the Government, regarding a speech in the Bavarian Chamber which appeared to signify an offer on behalf of Germany to abandon air raids on open towns if we agreed to do the same (Telegram No. 932 from The Hague).

The opinion was expressed that the offer could only have as its motive the consideration that we were able to do the Germans more damage than they could do us. Even in the last three months, with as yet undeveloped means, we had done more harm to them than they to us. It was also indicated that if, for example, it were agreed on both sides to confine bombing to an area within 20 or 30 kilometres of the front line, the effect on the Western front would be that both sides would concentrate all the damage they could inflict on French and Belgian towns. It was generally agreed that to abandon the bombing of distant objectives could only now profit the enemy; that we could not agree to abandon such operations without consulting our Allies; and that, in the
interest of the world's peace in the future, it was not desirable that the civil population of Germany should be the one population among the belligerent nations immune from the worst sufferings of war.

It was concluded that Mr. Bonar Law should make no statement unless questioned on the subject, but that, if questioned, he should base his reply on the following propositions:

(a.) That we had not bombed open towns except in very rare cases, as direct reprisals.
(b.) That we are most desirous of diminishing the sufferings of non-combatants, especially women and children.
(c.) That we cannot give up the right to bomb genuine military objectives.

13. The War Cabinet had before them a Report on the output of machines with a view to increased offensive against German towns (Paper G.T.-3436).

General Trenchard explained that since January little had occurred to modify the conclusions and forecasts contained in the report. There might be a slight diminution in the output of Handley-Page machines from August onwards, in favour of expediting the output of the flying-boat programme. If the ‘Liberty’ engine were ready in time, however, this diminution might be avoided.

14. With regard to the ‘Liberty’ engine, General Trenchard said that three Liberty engines were being tested in France. The test was so far satisfactory, but it could not be said that this type of engine had yet passed the inevitable ‘teething troubles,’ for which adequate allowance in time had been made in our programme.

15. Questioned as to the supply of aircraft for anti-submarine work, Admiral Hope stated that the Admiralty and the Air Board had reached a satisfactory arrangement. The use of aeroplanes for this purpose near the coast was being extended. This was being done from Dunkirk and Otranto, but there were many parts of the coasts where it was difficult to find sites for aerodromes; hence the need of long-distance flying-boats, and the continued necessity of patrol craft.

Mr. Churchill pointed out, in this connection, that 60 per cent. of the shipping sunk of late by submarines, was sunk within 10 miles of the shore; that in no case had a ship escorted by aeroplanes been sunk; that a pilot ran less risk over the sea in close proximity to a friendly ship than over enemy territory; and that an increasing surplus of aeroplanes could be expected.

Lord Rothermere stated that, while seaplanes can fly on an average one day in seven, aeroplanes can defy the weather on five. The value of aeroplanes for this service was, therefore, great, and it was understood that the De Haviland 9, when fitted with twin engines, would be very effective.

The War Cabinet took note with satisfaction of the development of aircraft for anti-submarine work.

16. The Minister of Munitions gave figures of the comparative production of aeroplanes in the last four years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Figures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>... 211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>... 2,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>... 6,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>... 14,168</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
He also gave estimates for the coming months:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>2,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>2,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>2,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>3,165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The production of engines followed about the same ascending scale. After June there would be a slowing down in the process as new types would be undertaken, which had not been decided on sufficiently in advance. These remarkable figures were due to the energy and ability of Sir William Weir.

The War Cabinet expressed its satisfaction at the results achieved, and congratulated Sir William Weir on the success which had attended his efforts.

17. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Lord Rothermere (Paper G.T.-3727) on the proposed increase in the Air Force Programme.

Mr. Churchill expressed the view that production would soon outstrip the man-power requisite for utilising its results. By the 1st July, according to present estimates, 10,000 additional fighting machines would be delivered. A big indent had been made for machine guns, and it would be carried out. In the next six months 27,000 more aircraft machine guns might be expected, but they would not be needed as fast as they were made. Wastage in aeroplanes, moreover, had proved to be only 75 per cent., and in engines only 50 per cent. of the estimate. It followed that by the end of June there would be a large stock of material ready without the man-power to handle it.

General Trenchard agreed that there would be a surplus of machine-guns, but did not agree that there would be a surplus of aeroplanes, in view of the greater enterprises that would be undertaken, and of the need of keeping a reserve. It was never possible to foresee which type of machine would fare best; there might at times prove to be a surplus of some types, but, as a whole, there would be no excess. He agreed, however, that if the man-power asked for in the Memorandum by Lord Rothermere (Paper G.T.-3727) were not forthcoming, much of the material would perforce remain idle.

The War Cabinet approved the proposed increase of the Air Force Programme by 40 squadrons, as set forth in the Memorandum, and decided that—

The Secretary of State for the Air Force should arrange for a Conference, on the subject of his needs in personnel, with the Secretary of State for War and the Minister of National Service, and that the result should be reported to the War Cabinet.

18. Questioned as to the adequacy of the supply of pilots, General Trenchard said that the season was adverse to training, and that the situation at this time was always an anxious one. He had hopes, however, that if the man-power requirements were solved, there would be a sufficient number of pilots. There were 14,000 under training, and there would be some 8,000 at the front. Lord Rothermere pointed out that training aerodromes had not been made ready as fast as had been hoped. In Egypt there were 5 training squadrons, which would be increased to 20; and in Canada 6, which likewise would be raised to 20.
American Output.

19. With reference to War Cabinet 323, Minute 5, it was stated that reports of progress in America were conflicting, and that it was not easy to form a correct estimate. On the data available it seemed likely that the Americans would not have more than 24 squadrons for service in France before the end of the year, and another 84 in 1919.

Sir William Weir pointed out that the American problem was governed by the shipping factor. The Americans could not ship complete aeroplanes, because of the space they require, and had no developed arrangements for assembling parts and organising squadrons on this side of the Atlantic. Their output of parts was ample, but their organisation for erecting and building was not concurrent. It was very necessary that they should face this problem.

It was decided by the War Cabinet that—

The Secretary of State for the Air Force should draft a telegram, for transmission by the Foreign Office, to Lord Reading, requesting him to draw the attention of the President of the United States of America to the serious situation of the American aerial output.

The “A.B.C.” Engine.

20. Mention was made of a new British machine known as the “A.B.C.” which Sir William Weir said was the first machine which it might be advisable to standardise. He gave certain particulars of the merits of this new engine.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 7, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 362.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, March 8, 1918, at 12.30 P.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. George N. Barnes, M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 4).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minute 7).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 8).

General Sir H. H. Wilson, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 6).


Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgis, Assistant Secretary.

1. The War Cabinet decided that—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in answer to a question to be arranged in Parliament, should make a statement of sympathy with Roumania, with a declaration that we do not in any way recognise the peace forced on Roumania by the Central Powers.

2. The War Cabinet considered a proposal by Mr. H. J. Mackinder for the formation of a Committee with the object of showing our sympathy with Roumania in her present plight, and of enquiring what could be done for the relief of Roumanian prisoners of war in enemy countries.

It was suggested that the proposal was belated, since the Treaty of Peace would inevitably include a provision for the return of prisoners of war.

It was also suggested that the question was a matter for private charity, on the ground that it would be inadvisable to do for...
Roumania what had not been done for Serbia and other countries overrun by the enemy.

The War Cabinet decided to take no action.

**Propaganda in Regard to the Far East.**

3. Lord Curzon pointed out the far-reaching effects which a peace with Roumania would have on the Far-Eastern policy of Germany. Germany would be supreme on the Black Sea, and also in Turkish territory in this part of the world, with possibilities of penetration into Persia and through Turkestan towards India. He suggested that it was a case in which those responsible for propaganda might be usefully employed to write up the far-reaching effects of German influence in these countries.

The War Cabinet requested—

Lord Curzon to place himself in communication with the Ministry of Information and the War Aims Committee, with a view to carrying out his (Lord Curzon's) suggestion.

**South-East Russia.**

4. The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Paper G.T.-3840) dealing with the political and other consequences likely to follow upon the changes in the relations of South-East Russia with Germany.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The General Staff should consider and report upon the military value of the new route from Berlin to the Caspian, with special reference to the transport of troops to Odessa, the facilities for carrying them across the Black Sea to Batum, and then by railway to Baku or Julfa.

**Air Raid on London.**

5. The War Cabinet had before them the report of the Home Defence Forces on the air raid on London on the night of the 7th-8th March. In view of the great destructive effect of the large bombs now employed by the Germans, the War Cabinet were of opinion that the damage done in recent raids should be carefully investigated, with a view to ascertaining for our guidance the precise effect of the bombs used, and the extent of the protection afforded, or resistance offered, by various sorts of buildings. Such information should be useful both from the point of view of offence as well as defence.

The War Cabinet directed—

The Secretary to write to the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, Home Forces, and to the Home Secretary, requesting them to render reports on the lines set forth above.

**The Italian Front.**

6. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff read out a telegram which General Harrington, Chief of Staff to General Plumer, had received from Rome, reporting that the moral of the Italian troops on the Asiago Plateau was far from satisfactory. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that he was arranging with General Delmé-Radcliffe for a full investigation to be made into this allegation, and would report to the War Cabinet.

**Submarines.**

7. With reference to War Cabinet, 358, Minute 7, in regard to the submarine which was rammed by the steamship "Rutherfden," the Deputy First Sea Lord stated that submarine "H. 5" was overdue from patrol, and that the Admiralty had given up all hope
of her returning to port. The Deputy First Sea Lord said that the “Rutherglen” had run over her accidentally in the dark.

8. The War Cabinet approved that General Trenchard, the Chief of the Staff to the Air Ministry, should occupy the same relationship towards the War Cabinet in aerial matters as the First Sea Lord in naval matters, and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in military matters.

They decided that—

In the event of his having any information of importance to communicate, he should attend the War Cabinet during the usual statements on political, naval, military, and aerial subjects, and that he should, in any event, attend not less than once a fortnight to inform them as to the latest aerial developments in aerial operations.

They further decided that—

He should attend the War Cabinet whenever questions of operations involving or affecting the Air Ministry were under consideration.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 304, Minute 9, and to War Cabinet 347, Minute 10, the War Cabinet had before them a memorandum on “Tonnage and Brewing,” by Sir Joseph Maclay (Paper G.T.-3535), and on “The Continuance of Brewing,” by Lord Rhondda (Paper G.T.-3832).

It was explained that, in order to maintain the present bulk barrelage, Lord Rhondda was in favour of enforcing a general reduction in the gravity of beer, a proposal which was supported by the Restriction of Imports Committee. In order to assist this policy of downward dilution, and in order to secure the greatest possible quantity of barley for use in the loaf, Lord Rhondda had arranged for the surrender of 500,000 quarters of barley, representing 100,000 tons of freight.

The War Cabinet approved the first alternative recommended by Lord Rhondda in his memorandum (Paper G.T.-3832), viz., to retain the present bulk barrelage of about 22,000,000 barrels per annum and to reduce the average gravity at which the statutory barrelage is brewed to 1030° in Great Britain and 1015° in Ireland.

10. The War Cabinet had before them the Ninth Interim Report of the Economic Offensive Committee (Paper G.-196), a memorandum by Sir E. Carson (Paper G.-190), and a memorandum by Dr. Addison (Paper G.T.-3531).

The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that, in reply to a question in the House of Commons yesterday, he had expressed the hope that an opportunity for making a general statement of the Government’s policy might be afforded in connection with the introduction of the Imports and Exports (Temporary Control) Bill. Sir Albert Stanley was preparing such a statement.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 8, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 363.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, March 11, 1918, at 12 noon.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The following were also present:
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
Captain L. F. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.

The Western Front.

1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that on the 9th instant the Germans had made two attacks, one on the Menin Road and the other at Houthulst Forest. Both these attacks took place on the front of about a battalion, and were preceded by a heavy artillery preparation. The attacks had both been repulsed and our lines regained. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff was of opinion that the object of the Germans was to prevent our withdrawing troops from this portion of the line.

Transfer of German Divisions.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 361, Minute 6, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that there were now 186 German divisions on the Western front.

Possible German Attack.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 360, Minute 4, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the situation looked very much as if the Germans meant to attack the British line, as they were concentrating on our front and had 92 divisions opposed to
our 57. Some of these 92 divisions, however, were concentrated as far back as Namur, and might therefore be moved to the French front. Included in the above number were four divisions of which one had come from the Argonne, one from Russia, one from Italy, and one from Alsace.

General Wilson also reported that civilian traffic had been entirely suspended in Belgium. On the other hand, from Verdun to the south, that is to say, on the French front, traffic was reported as normal. Civilians were being moved out of all towns between Lille and La Bassée, but so far Lille itself had not been evacuated. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff added that there were heavy-artillery movements through Belgium towards our front.

Strength of German Divisions.

4. In answer to a question, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that a German division consisted of nine battalions, each battalion being about 850 strong. The German divisions were, roughly, of the same strength as ours, although, perhaps, ours might be a little stronger.

Armistice at Easter:
Proposal by the Vatican:

5. The War Cabinet had under consideration telegram No. 15 from the Vatican, which proposed that there should be an armistice of one or two weeks for all belligerents in the Western and Italian fronts at Easter.

It was pointed out that any acceptance of this proposal would be bound to interrupt aerial reconnaissance work, and that this would be of great assistance to the enemy in preparing a sudden attack. Consequently, even though acceptance might give some clue to the date of the enemy’s offensive, the War Cabinet felt that it was inadvisable to accept the appeal.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The question should be discussed with our Allies at the forthcoming meeting of the Supreme War Council.

Man-Power.

6. The Secretary of State for War undertook to give the War Cabinet a statement on the present position in regard to man-power.

Poison Gas.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 355, Minute 10, the attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to a suggestion in Mr. Churchill’s Munitions Programme for 1919 (Paper G.T.-3835) to supplement our military preparations in 1919 by provision for a gas attack on a very large scale.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that he had the whole of the questions raised in Mr. Churchill’s report under consideration. Limitations, he pointed out, were placed on the offensive employment of poison gas by the fact that the force employing it was prevented from penetrating into the gassed area for a period of time sufficient to enable the enemy to organise his defence.

It was suggested that the views of the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief in France should be ascertained on this subject.

Tanks

8. With reference to the discussion on Tanks which took place at 10, Downing Street, on the 8th March, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff pointed out the difficulties which the defence would oppose to Tanks. Low-flying aeroplanes might be defeated by our
own aeroplanes; "camouflaged" guns might be circumvented by smoke and night attack; but land mines presented a problem of the utmost difficulty.

The Italian Front.

9. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that a good deal of snow had fallen on the Italian front. General Plumer had handed over his command to Lord Cavan on the 10th instant, and had returned to France.

Palestine.

10. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that General Allenby had pushed on another two or three miles, in pursuance of the development of his plans.

Mesopotamia.

11. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that Hit had been captured without fighting, the Turks having evacuated the place and retired to a position some 20 to 25 miles in rear.

Submarines.

12. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that a trawler had dropped ten depth charges on an enemy submarine off the coast of Cornwall; large quantities of oil and bubbles were seen coming to the surface. He also stated that a report had been received from Dover that on the 10th March a patrol boat felt a heavy explosion under the water, and later a large oil patch was sighted; also wreckage, which appeared to be the internal fittings of a submarine. In addition, documents were picked up giving particulars of trials of "U.B. 58."

13. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that during a bombing raid carried out by the Dunkirk patrol a giant enemy aeroplane, which had made a forced landing, was sighted on the ground and bombed.

14. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that the hospital ship "Guildford Castle" was attacked by an enemy submarine on the evening of the 10th instant in the Bristol Channel, at about the same spot where the "Glencart Castle" was torpedoed. Fortunately, the torpedo which struck the "Guildford Castle" did not explode. The ship had a full complement of sick on board. The Deputy First Sea Lord was ascertaining further particulars, with a view to publication.

15. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that a report had been received from the French Admiral at Kingston that a riot had occurred at Antigua.

16. With reference to War Cabinet 340, Minute 6, the Deputy First Sea Lord undertook to ascertain the composition of the force which escorted the convoy out of which five ships were torpedoed in the Mediterranean on the 6th February.

Russia.

17. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that he had received some evidence which showed that German and Austrian troops were moving on Odessa.

The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that he had received a telegram from the Naval Attaché, Petrograd, which said that the Russian ice-breaker "Tarno" deserted to Reval on the 5th March,

[1365–363]
thus leaving the Fleet with only two ice-breakers. The battleships
had been ordered to Cronstadt, but the crews wished to go by
train. Orders had been issued to prepare the ships for destruc-
tion, but definite action could not be relied upon.

18. With reference to War Cabinet 346, Minute 4, and War
Cabinet 357, Minute 1, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
raised the question as to what action had been taken by the
Admiralty to protect the Allied stores at Archangel and
Murmansk. He was of opinion that this question had a big
bearing on the general policy of the Allies.

The Deputy First Sea Lord said that arrangements were
being made to send an armed icebreaker to Archangel if required.
This boat would fly the White Ensign. British and French

19. With reference to War Cabinet 359, Minute 11, the
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs explained the position at
the moment regarding Japanese intervention in Siberia. America
had first acquiesced in the proposed enterprise, but had since
reverted to her misgivings. In consequence of this change of
attitude, our Ambassador in Tokyo had not acted on the instruc-
tions conveyed to him by telegram (No. 198 to Tokyo) on the 5th
March. The Japanese Government therefore had not yet been
officially approached on the subject of intervention in Siberia, in
the character of mandatory of the Allies. Mr. Balfour had, on the
9th March, sent a further telegram to Sir C. Greene (No. 218),
authorising him to proceed at once on the instructions conveyed
in the previous despatch (No. 198). The only modification in the
instructions was that our Ambassador was to report to the Foreign
Office the results of his conversation with the Japanese Minister
for Foreign Affairs before taking part with his French and
Italian colleagues in any joint invitation to the Japanese Govern-
ment.

In the discussion that followed, the opinion was expressed
that Japan was unlikely to act, in view of the lukewarmness of
the American attitude, and that the Japanese Government’s state of
mind could be inferred from Sir C. Greene’s telegram No. 204, of
the 7th March. It seemed that the situation was materially
altered. Not only had Japanese eagerness abated in consequence
of American reluctance, but most of the advice received from
Russia dissuaded us from encouraging or countenancing a
Japanese invasion of Siberia, as certain to drive Russia into
league with Germany.

As against this view, it was urged that Russia, even if
animated with hatred of Germany, was quite unable, without
foreign assistance, to make any sort of resistance to the Germans.
General Knox and Captain Pecor were instanced as among those
who considered the situation lost unless Japan acted and acted
soon. There was little prospect of any hardening of the Russians
if left to themselves; and to wait for an invitation from them to
Japan would be to wait for an uncertainty and, in any case, to
wait too long.
The attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to a twofold risk of the policy of Japanese intervention in Siberia: (a) Russian hatred of Germany, a foundation it might be possible to build on, would be transferred to us, for letting loose Asia on a temporarily prostrate Russia; (b) There was a possibility of a rift on a matter of cardinal policy between ourselves and the United States of America, to secure which was one of the aims of German policy. Japan in any case would not go far West, as she had ceased to feel confident that her Allies were on the winning side. We should not prevail on her to go far enough to engage in serious armed conflict with the Germans. All we needed for our immediate purpose was protection of the stores at Vladivostock. This could be done without the invasion of Siberia up to the Urals and running the risk of incurring all the odium and reaping none of the benefit.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs pointed out that it was early to assume that America would not go with us, and that Japan would refuse to go West. He urged that the result of our demarche at Tokyo should be awaited. If the present views of the United States of America, as expressed in telegram No. 929 from Washington, had, as might be inferred from a telegram (No. 73) from Sir W. Wiseman to Sir E. Drummond of the 6th March, already been communicated to Japan, we should obtain the considered opinion of the Japanese Government with the alternatives clearly before it.

It was decided that—

The result of Sir C. Greene's conversation with the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs should be awaited.

20. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (Paper G.T.-3834).

It was pointed out that there were three Committees dealing with what were really three aspects of one problem, and that each frequently deliberated without knowing what had been decided by the others, with results sometimes inclined to be incoherent. One of these Committees, the Middle East Committee, was a Cabinet Committee; of the others, the Russia Committee was a Foreign Office Committee, and the Persia Committee interdepartmental, with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs as chairman. It was decided that one Committee should be formed of these three, and that, as it would have to co-ordinate the work of several Departments, it should be a War Cabinet Committee; but it was agreed that care must be taken to safeguard the Departmental authority and responsibility of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The War Cabinet requested—

Lord Curzon to draft the Terms of Reference to this Committee.
WAR CABINET. 364.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, March 12, 1918, at 11-30 A.M.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 14).
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 14).

General Sir H. H. Wilson, K.C.B., C.V.O., M.V.O., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 11).

SIR Horace C. Munro, K.C.B., Permanent Secretary, Local Government Board (for Minutes 15 and 16).


The Right Hon. G. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour (for Minute 15).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 17).
The Right Hon. W. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minute 16).
The Right Hon. C. Addison, M.D., M.P., Minister of Reconstruction (for Minutes 15 and 16).

The Right Hon. Sir G. Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minutes 14, 15, and 16).
The Right Hon. R. Munro, K.C., M.P., Secretary for Scotland (for Minutes 14 to 16).

SIR J. M. Dodds, K.C.B., Under-Secretary for Scotland (for Minutes 14 to 16).
The Right Hon. R. E. Prothero, M.V.O., M.P., President, Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (for Minutes 15 to 17).

Sir Charles Bathurst, K.B.E., M.P., Chairman, Sugar Commission (for Minutes 17 and 18).

Mr. W. H. Beveridge, C.B., Second Secretary, Ministry of Food (for Minutes 16 to 18).


Captain L. F. Burgis, Assistant Secretary.

Captain E. A. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.
1. With reference to War Cabinet 363, Minute 3, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that an increased number of dumps, a development of light railways, and signs of enemy concentration in the area opposite to the line from Arras to St. Quentin, constituted the only additional evidence of an impending German attack. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff explained the whole position on a map.

M. Cambon was quoted as holding the view that the Germans would not attack, their object being to depress the moral of the defending force by a constant but deferred threat of an assault in superior numbers.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that he felt no certainty that an attack was coming, as it must depend upon whether or not the Germans felt confident of their ability to defeat us in the field.

Palestine.

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that General Allenby's advance had achieved its immediate objective, as designed for this stage of his operations.

Co-operation of French Forces.

3. The question of the co-operation of French forces in Palestine was discussed, and it was decided that—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should undertake to find a solution of this question in collaboration with General Foch.

Mesopotamia.

4. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that our forces had advanced seven miles up-stream beyond Hit.

Turkey:

Distribution of Forces.

5. Attention was called to the apparent smallness of the Turkish forces in all the active theatres.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff undertook to circulate a statement of the present disposition of the Turkish forces.

Russian Forces at Salonica.

6. With reference to War Cabinet 353, Minute 6, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff drew attention to the necessity, in the interest of discipline among the Allied forces in Salonica, of removing the Russian troops from that area. At present, according to a report from General Guillaumat, they were attempting to corrupt the Serbians, and there was a danger that they might also demoralise the Greeks. As this was a question of policy, General Wilson urged that the Prime Minister should discuss the question with M. Clemenceau.

Submarines.

7. The Deputy First Sea Lord read a report from Newport that the steamship "Flixton" had been attacked by an enemy submarine twenty miles east of Portland Bill. By use of the helm the torpedo had been avoided, and the steamship "Flixton" had then made for the position of the submarine, which dived. A terrific explosion then took place, and no more was seen of the submarine.

The Deputy First Sea Lord also stated that the Rear-Admiral, Harwich Force, reported having sunk a submarine sixty-five miles N.N.E. of Harwich on the 11th instant. The
submarine was attacked by destroyers with depth charges, and wreckage was picked up.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 359, Minute 14, the War Cabinet decided that—

The Secretary should confer with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, the Permanent Military Representatives, and the Versailles Secretariat, and prepare the Agenda for the Supreme War Council.

The War Cabinet further instructed—

The Secretary to prepare, for the Prime Minister's signature, a letter to each of the Allied Premiers with reference to limiting the numbers present at the meetings of the Supreme War Council.

9. The War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to consider what subjects should be raised at a political conference to be held during the presence in London of the statesmen of the Allied countries. Among such subjects would be the question of Japanese intervention in Siberia.

It was agreed that—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should send a private telegram to Washington, to give an opportunity for the selection of an American representative to be present at the discussions on foreign affairs.

10. Attention was called to a message, published in the press, from President Wilson, expressing sympathy with the people of Russia on the occasion of the opening of the Congress of Soviets at Moscow.

It was pointed out that this document did on behalf of the United States exactly what Mr. Lockhart had urged the British Government to do. The American public, however, had not the same cause for resentment against Russia as the European Allies, who had made great investments in Russia, and who had been deserted in the midst of the struggle.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 363, Minute 19, the attention of the War Cabinet was directed to telegram No. 74 from Sir William Wiseman to Sir Eric Drummond, which indicated that hope should not be abandoned of another change in American policy on the subject of Japanese intervention in Siberia.

12. Mention was made of a Memorandum by Mr. Barnes (Paper G.T.-3869) on the subject of American labour employed in shipbuilding, and recommending that representations should be made to Lord Reading, so that the methods successfully employed in this country should be brought to the notice of both employers and employed.

The War Cabinet decided that—

Mr. Barnes should draft a telegram containing the substance of this matter, to be transmitted by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Lord Reading.
13. With reference to War Cabinet 349, Minute 10, attention was drawn to a letter from Dr. Macnamara to the Secretary of the War Cabinet (Paper G.T.-3859) concerning the reference to the Soldiers' and Sailors' Pay Committee of the question of equalising the rates of separation allowance in the Navy and Army. The letter stated that Sir Edward Carson would be willing, if invited by the War Cabinet, to continue to serve as Chairman of this Committee.

The War Cabinet decided that—

Sir Edward Carson should be invited by the Secretary of the War Cabinet to do so.

14. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary for Scotland on revolutionary agitation in Glasgow and Clydeside, with special reference to the cases of John MacLean and others (Paper G.T.-3838).

Mr. Munro explained that John MacLean was a ticket-of-leave man who had been sentenced in 1916 to three years' penal servitude. He had been liberated because of the state of his health, on condition that he should report himself to the police from time to time by letter. For a time he had kept quiet, but now he had made a number of speeches in Glasgow and in Fife which contravened the Defence of the Realm Act. He had recently been appointed “Russian Consul” in Glasgow by Litvinoff, and he had applied to be exempted from the requirement to report to the police. He (Mr. Munro) and the Lord Advocate had considerable hesitation in prosecuting him. He was more or less a lunatic; imprisonment would lead to his ill-health and to demands for his release, and it would, moreover, be difficult to proceed against him alone, as he would pose as a victim. In any case, he had felt it necessary to obtain the approval of the War Cabinet to the course to be adopted, as political considerations might be involved.

Sir Spencer Ewart, Commanding-in-Chief Scottish Command, Mr. Munro said, was in favour of taking proceedings against John MacLean, James McDougall, and Lewis Shammas.

The Lord Advocate stated that there was very little at present to justify proceedings against McDougall. Shammas was a Russian revolutionary whom MacLean had appointed as his Consular Assistant, and whom it would be possible to deport.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said that the Foreign Office would offer no opposition to his deportation, nor to the prosecution of MacLean.

Mr. Herbert Fisher said that he learned from a reliable French source that there was an intimate connection between the more extreme Labour leaders in Glasgow and similar Labour leaders at St. Etienne. The latter were taking instructions from Glasgow. His correspondent, who had visited Glasgow, had urged the necessity of a generous housing policy as a solvent of industrial unrest.

The Attorney-General said that, on the facts, it seemed to him a prosecution would be justified.

The War Cabinet authorised—

Proceedings to be taken in any case where the Lord Advocate was of opinion that conviction would be probable.
Housing Policy.

15. With reference to War Cabinet 194, Minute 1, the War Cabinet had before them the following memoranda dealing with the housing of the working-classes after the war:

- G.T.-3617 by Mr. Hayes Fisher,
- G.T.-3665 by Mr. R. Munro,
- G.T.-3682 by Mr. Duke,
- G.T.-3693 by Mr. Barnes,
- G.T.-3724 by Mr. Prothero,
- G.T.-3503 by Dr. Addison,
- G.T.-3877 by Dr. Addison,
- G.T.-3876 by Lord Salisbury.
- G.T.-3911 by Dr. Addison.

Mr. Hayes Fisher reminded the War Cabinet that on the 24th July they had authorised the issue of a circular, promising substantial financial assistance from public funds to those Local Authorities who would be prepared to carry through without delay, at the conclusion of the war, a programme of housing for the working-classes approved by the Local Government Board. He had been pressed for some time by the Local Authorities to make this promise more specific and detailed, and he now asked the War Cabinet to sanction the issue of the circular which he had set forth as an Appendix to his Memorandum (Paper G.T.-3617) and the introducing of his small Bill for conferring powers in connection with housing upon County Councils. A great deal of preliminary work would have to be done if a housing programme were to be launched on the conclusion of peace. Some 1,800 authorities would have to secure options on land, prepare estimates of cost and balance sheet, and conclude financial arrangements with the Local Government Board. He proposed that the State should enter into a partnership with the Local Authorities for the provision of the houses, and the Lords of the Treasury had agreed that the necessary State assistance should be given in the form of a grant of a percentage of the loan charges, sufficient to relieve the authority of 75 per cent. of the estimated annual deficit. In special cases, where a burden of even 25 per cent. on the Local Authority might prove somewhat heavy, the Treasury had agreed that the Local Government Board should have discretion to increase the grant from 75 per cent. to 100 per cent., less the produce of a rate of a penny in the pound. It was true that the Treasury's offer was subject to the financial exigencies of the State at the end of the war, but the Local Authorities could be told that those who applied first would be helped first, so long as any money available lasted.

Mr. Munro said he wished to support the policy outlined by Mr. Hayes Fisher. He was being pressed by his Scottish colleagues to approach the Minister of Reconstruction with a view to setting up a Reconstruction Committee on Scottish Housing. That would involve further delay; but if the proposed circular were immediately issued, the public demand would be met, and the Committee would be unnecessary.

Dr. Addison said he wished to offer a number of serious criticisms of the Local Government Board's policy. He was very doubtful whether, if that policy were adopted, the houses would be forthcoming in anything approaching the number required. He strongly objected to Sections 5 and 3 of the proposed circular, according to which the Treasury retained the right of granting little or no assistance to a big housing policy. To issue a circular of the kind proposed, and to couple with it such a reservation, would profoundly discourage the Local Authorities. For these two sections there should be substituted, as an incentive to the Local Authorities, a specific undertaking that the Treasury will finance a scheme certified by the Local Government Board as urgently required. In the next place, inasmuch as the schemes
of some authorities would be inadequate, power should be taken to require such authorities to deal with the situation. There did not appear to be adequate machinery for dealing with inert or recalcitrant authorities. Thirdly, the inflation in building costs, clearly attributable to the war, should be a national charge. This amount could be determined by taking the actual cost and the normal post-war cost of building, ascertained by a valuation after a period of, say, five or seven years. Fourthly, if a really comprehensive scheme, adequate to the needs of the country and to the expectations which had been raised, were to be undertaken, it was essential to strengthen the staff of the Local Government Board and to provide for some decentralisation by the appointment of responsible officers empowered to settle schemes on the spot with the Local Authorities. Lastly, in view of the magnitude of the State grant, the Government should have some control over the level of rents imposed by the Local Authorities.

Lord Salisbury thought that the principle of “first come, first served” was a wrong one. The proper criterion to apply was the urgency of the need. The Housing Committee over which he presided had put forward the figure of 300,000 houses for England and Wales, as a conservative estimate. It was better to look at the problem as a whole from the beginning than to imagine it to be possible to build the first 150,000 on one set of conditions and the second 150,000 on some other and less favourable conditions. It was most necessary to deal with authorities which might have the worst houses, and which would be most reluctant to build. It was true that the throwing of 25 per cent. on the Local Authority would be an inducement to economical administration, but when they came to grips with the case of the poorer authorities, this inducement would disappear with the penny rate as a fixed limit. He agreed with what Dr. Addison had said about the need for local machinery.

Mr. Hayes Fisher said he believed the larger municipalities would be willing to shoulder a part of the burden. He was in favour of gradually developing the machinery of decentralisation, but he did not wish at this stage to stimulate criticism in the House of Commons by creating a number of highly-paid officials with local staffs and offices. The urgent need at the moment was the issue of the circular, so that the Councils might get on with the preparation of their plans and estimates. The Bill which he had drafted gave power to the Local Government Board to put County Councils in motion where the smaller Authorities were inert.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed with Lord Salisbury that, subject to the financial situation, the right principle was that of local need. On the question of inflated building costs, it was true that they were due to the war, but it was also true that the war had put heavier burdens on the tax-payers than on the rate-payers. The tax-payers had to bear the burden of the National Debt. It was bad finance to make the tax-payers bear a larger proportion of local burdens than in the past, especially in the cases where there were rich rate-payers capable of bearing them. On the question of the indefiniteness of the language of the Treasury, he agreed with Dr. Addison that it was undesirable to suggest that there would be no money available. On the other hand, he would be most unwilling to pledge the Government to find the large sum contemplated immediately after the war. There would be at that time the keenest competition for money, and it would be most unwise for the Treasury to enter into obligations now to raise large loans at the end of the war. He suggested, in order to go some way to meet Dr. Addison’s criticism, that section 5 of the draft circular should be omitted.

It was generally agreed that the force of some of the main criticisms made during the discussion would best be tested by the issue of the circular to the Local Authorities. It would then be
discovered how far they were prepared to take action on the strength of the Treasury's conditional promise, it being understood that if the result appeared to be inadequate it might then be necessary to issue an undertaking of a more definite kind, as suggested by the Minister of Reconstruction. Many amendments would also doubtless be suggested when the Housing Bill was before the House of Commons.

It was also pointed out that, in developing our schemes of reconstruction, we might be led to consider the system of Préfets in force in France.

The War Cabinet decided—

(a.) To authorise the President of the Local Government Board to issue the proposed circular to Local Authorities in England and Wales, with the omission of Section 5, also that the supervisory power of the Central Department as to the rents to be charged during the transition period for State-assisted houses (which the President of the Local Government Board said was involved in paragraph 10 of the Treasury letter) should be made explicit.

(b.) To authorise the Secretary for Scotland to issue a similar circular for Scotland.

(c.) To request the President of the Local Government Board to circulate his Housing Bill to the War Cabinet before introducing it in the House of Commons, when the Minister of Reconstruction would have an opportunity of raising the points of criticism indicated by him that day.

16. With reference to War Cabinet 323, Minute 12, the War Cabinet had before them the draft of a Bill dealing with Maternity and Child Welfare, as amended by the Committee of Ministers to whom it had been referred (Paper G.T.-3830), together with a note by the President of the Local Government Board, and also a note by the Minister of Reconstruction (Paper G.T.-3884).

Mr. Long said that the Bill was in the form in which it was accepted by the Committee of Ministers. He added that the Bill was very badly wanted, and that the Government was being severely criticised for the delay in introducing it.

Sir Edwin Cornwall said he was not in a position to say that there would not be controversy in the House of Commons over the proposed Bill. There might be difficulties, but he was prepared to do what he could to meet them.

Dr. Addison felt certain there would be opposition in the House of Commons from those who thought that the Government were trying to play this Bill off against the demand for a Ministry of Health. He had proceeded so far with the negotiations for the establishment for a Ministry of Health that he hoped to be able to submit substantially agreed proposals on the subject to the War Cabinet in a week or two. The introduction of the Maternity and Child Welfare Bill now might prejudice the negotiations he was conducting.

The War Cabinet decided—

(a.) To authorise the President of the Local Government Board to introduce the Maternity and Child Welfare Bill.

(b.) To announce that this Bill was not to be regarded as in any way prejudicing the Government’s intention to introduce legislation as speedily as possible for the establishment of a Ministry of Health.
17. With reference to War Cabinet 347, Minute 8, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Food Controller (Paper G.T.-3743), in which he asked that the War Cabinet should reconsider their previous decision that the sugar ration should be reduced from 8 oz. to 6 oz. per head per week.

Sir Charles Bathurst, who represented Lord Rhondda, stated that the maintenance of the sugar ration at its present rate would not require any more tonnage being allocated by the Ministry of Shipping. All he asked was that the decision to reduce the sugar ration should be postponed until after the soft-fruit season. This would enable private households, including especially those who bought fruit for jam-making, to save sugar for the first jam-making out of their present ration. The Ministry of Food had already placed on one side 210,000 tons of sugar for the jam factories, and a further 10,000 to 12,000 tons was being held in reserve for the private growers. Sir Charles Bathurst added that it was the intention of the Food Controller to allow sugar to the domestic fruit-grower to provide 10 lb. per head, any additional jam to go to the common stock. The Food Committees could exceed this allowance in special cases. The domestic ration showed a prospective reduction in consumption at the rate of at least 20,000 tons per annum, and mainly owing to the alteration in the ration to the Home Forces during the last two months, there appeared likely to be a reduction in the demands of the War Office at the rate of 40,000 tons per annum. Further, the Department had budgeted on last season’s fruit crop, which was a very good one, and as this year’s crop would probably be less there might be a saving of some 20,000 tons under that head. By these arrangements and other economies it was hoped to save 89,000 tons as compared with last year. Sir Charles Bathurst pointed out that the proposed reduction in tonnage for sugar of 150,000 tons represented a greater reduction in the domestic ration than the 2 oz. intended, as a margin had to be allowed for losses in carriage and distribution.

Mr. Beveridge said that there had been a considerable increase in pulping and canning machinery for fruit preservation this year, which Sir Charles Bathurst estimated at double the capacity of last year.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The reduction of the sugar ration should be postponed until the end of the first fruit season, provided that this postponement would not necessitate a further demand on the Ministry of Shipping for more tonnage.

18. In accordance with the decision of the War Cabinet of the 25th November, 1917 (War Cabinet 285, Minute 14), Lord Rhondda asked for the approval of the War Cabinet to a redraft of the Bill which he had made in order to meet the objection of the Solicitor-General that the original draft did not prevent the original consignee from going to the Defence of the Realm Losses Commission and applying for compensation.

Mr. Beveridge, who represented Lord Rhondda, stated that the Solicitor-General had approved the re-drafted Bill.

The War Cabinet approved the re-draft of the Bill submitted by Lord Rhondda.

19. With reference to War Cabinet 356, Minute 13, the War Cabinet decided that the "War Cabinet Report for the year 1917" should be published without the signature of any member of the War Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 12, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 365.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.,
on Wednesday, March 13, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P. (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.
Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. O. Smuts, K.C.

The following were also present:—
The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 12).
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 14 and 15).
Major-General Sir F. B. Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for Minutes 1 to 11).
Brigadier-General B. E. W. Childs, C.M.G., Director of Personal Services (for Minute 14).
Rear-Admiral R. S. Fremantle, C.B., M.V.O., Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 1 to 11).
The Right Hon. W. Long, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies (for Minute 14).
The Right Hon. Sir George Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minute 14).
The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minute 15).
The Right Hon. W. Hayes Fisher, M.P., President Local Government Board (for Minute 14).
The Right Hon. R. Munro, K.C., M.P., Secretary for Scotland (for Minute 14).

Paymaster-in-Chief P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.
Lieutenant-Colonel L. Wilson, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P., Assistant Secretary.
Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.
1. With reference to War Cabinet 364, Minute 9, in view of representations put forward by the Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs, the War Cabinet decided that—

It was desirable, with a view to keeping the political discussions separate from those appertaining to military affairs, that the meeting of the Supreme War Council with regard to the former should be held on Friday next.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 364, Minute 1, the Director of Military Operations reported that the only new indication of an impending attack on the British front was the appearance of the Brandenburg Corps, in reserve, south of Lille. This corps consisted of two divisions, the 5th and 6th. He also pointed out that this made no difference in the total number of enemy divisions, which remained at 186, of which 79 were in reserve. This gave an approximate total of enemy rifle strength of 1,370,000 men and 15,700 guns, while the total Allied rifle strength on the Western front numbered 1,500,000 infantry and 16,600 guns. The relative strength of a British division was slightly larger than that of a German division.

3. With reference to telegram No. 359, of the 12th March, 1918, from the British Minister at Berne, relative to a change in the movements of the ex-King of Greece, possibly in consequence of a telegram received from the German Emperor, it was suggested to the War Cabinet that the German concentration in the West might be intended to conceal the intention of a sudden and rapid attack on the Balkan front.

The Director of Military Operations pointed out that, on the last occasion when he had been asked his view on this question, he had expressed the opinion that an attack on the Balkan front was by no means improbable. There were no signs at present of any preparations for such an attack, but it was always difficult to obtain news of any strategic movements, and local information only was possible.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said that, so far as Foreign Office information went, the Bulgarians were reluctant to fight for what they did not desire to keep.

The Director of Military Operations stated that information received from a number of Bulgarians, who had been captured, confirmed this view. The General Staff had constantly pressed for General Guillaumat's plans, but they had not yet received them. According to the latest information, an officer was on his way from Salonika with the plans. It was pointed out by the Director of Military Operations that, in the event of the Allied forces having to fall back on Salonica, it might be possible, if the enemy advanced via Monastir and occupied the south-west corner of the Gulf of Salonica, for them to deny the use of the port to our shipping, &c.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The question should be raised at the meeting of the Supreme War Council, with a view to its consideration by the Permanent Military Representatives.

4. The Director of Military Operations reported that information had been received from General Allenby that the enemy had a force of 3,500 rifles and 25 guns south of the Dead Sea, and that they were operating there with a view to assisting the withdrawal of their forces on the Hedjaz Railway. There
were 1,500 rifles and 100 guns between Amman and Medina. All the operations contemplated in this theatre of war had so far been completed by the dates forecasted in General Allenby’s programme.

5. The Director of Military Operations reported that five Zeppelins passed over Yorkshire, crossing the coast at Flamborough Head, on the previous night. Very little damage was reported. The weather was thick and misty, and observation was difficult. The Director of Military Operations also reported that a squadron of giant aeroplanes crossed to the coast at Dover, but turned back apparently owing to the state of the weather.

6. The Director of Military Operations reported that, in the air raid which took place on the night of the 11th instant, three bombs were dropped on the French War Office, the enemy aeroplanes coming down to a height of 400 feet over the building. The losses in Paris were very heavy, due mainly to a panic in a tube station. It was stated that the air defences of Paris were inadequate.

7. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff reported that in a heavy bombing raid carried out from Dunkirk on the night of the 11th/12th March, 54 bombs were dropped on Bruges Dock. The visibility was bad, preventing any observation of results. Attention was drawn to the large expenditure of bombs on this area, and the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff explained that this constant bombing of Bruges Dock considerably hampered the work in progress, and impeded movements.

8. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff also reported that, when two “America” flying boats were on patrol, they found five German seaplanes lying on the water directly on the course taken by the Dutch convoy between Harwich and Rotterdam. The British seaplanes attacked, and the engagement lasted half an hour. One enemy plane crashed, the observer in another was killed, and a third descended on to the water, but escaped. Our boats fought until all their ammunition was expended, and the only casualty on our side was one wireless rating wounded.

9. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff reported the receipt of a telegram from the Naval Attaché at Petrograd, which stated that the resignation of M. Trotzki was not taken seriously, as he will be asked to continue in office. It was also stated in the telegram that any action taken by the Japanese might drive the Russians into the arms of Germany. The Naval Attaché was repeatedly being questioned as to how far we were working in accordance with the Japanese, and requested information.

10. The Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff reported the arrangements the Admiralty had in view for depriving the Germans of any effective use of Russian warships.
11. Attention was drawn to telegram No. 1412, of the 12th March, 1918, to Lord Reading, in which reference was made to the possibility of German action in Spitzbergen.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs pointed out that a new situation had arisen in Spitzbergen, which had already been under his consideration, and that he was in communication with the Admiralty on the subject. He pointed out that Germany was making advances as regards securing a locus standi in Spitzbergen, and that, if this situation were to stand after the war, our line of communication to Siberia would be threatened. In view of the large deposits of coal in Spitzbergen, and the possible barring of the route to Siberia, it was evident that a very serious situation would arise if Germany got a special hold upon Spitzbergen.

The Secretary mentioned that he had received frequent communications from Colonel Yate, M.P., relative to the importance of Spitzbergen, and the possible use by the enemy of a wireless telegraphy station that had been erected there by the Germans prior to the outbreak of war.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Foreign Office should confer with the Admiralty on the subject, and report to the War Cabinet.

12. The War Cabinet had before them the Report of the Egyptian Administration Committee (Paper G.-162), which they approved.

13. The War Cabinet had under consideration the Report (Paper G.T. 3814) of a Committee appointed by War Cabinet 339, Minute 4 (b) to consider the steps to be taken in the event of serious industrial trouble arising in connection with the attitude of the engineers towards the Government’s man-power measures, and authorised—

The Secretary of State for Home Affairs to take action on the lines recommended in the Report of the Committee, in conjunction with the Departments concerned.

14. With reference to War Cabinet 352, Minute 10, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Home Affairs (Paper G.T. 3812), and a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Paper G.T. 3824).

Mr. Long reminded the Cabinet that the Government had been urged in the strongest possible terms, at the Imperial War Conference, 1917, to take immediate steps to remedy what was admittedly a public scandal. The Dominion Governments were profoundly dissatisfied with the inaction of His Majesty’s Government. Messages were constantly arriving from the Dominions calling his (Mr. Long’s) attention to the matter. The whole subject had been discussed by a Departmental Conference, and a Regulation had been unanimously adopted, and subsequently approved by the War Cabinet. Any further delay would cause very grave trouble with the Dominions. In his view, the procedure must be a civil procedure, through the police.

Sir George Cave said that the Regulation, if made, would be open to criticism on the ground (1) that its penalties applied to women and not to men, and (2) that it protected soldiers and sailors and excluded civilians. He wished to raise two questions: Who would defend the Regulation in Parliament? and Who would enforce the Regulation? He contended that he could not properly represent soldiers and sailors in the House, and that the prosecuting authority at the back of the police must be the
military and naval authorities. The situation would be eased if there were some means of punishing the men as well as the women concerned.

Brigadier-General Childs said that the soldier could be dealt with indirectly. It was an offence, on the part of a soldier, to conceal the fact that he was suffering from venereal disease. If suffering from such disease he should be in hospital. If a woman alleged that she had been infected by a soldier, he could be medically examined, and, if found to be suffering from venereal disease would be punished by the Army Authorities for concealment. For this offence he is liable to two years’ imprisonment with hard labour.

Lord Derby said that to make a soldier punishable for communicating the disease would require an alteration in the Army Act. He did not see why soldiers and sailors should be thus selected and put in a worse position than civilians.

Sir George Cave was of the opinion that it would not be possible to deal with communication of disease to civilians under the Defence of the Realm Act. If the War Office would defend the Regulation in Parliament, and take the initial action in prosecutions, he was prepared to render all possible support at the Home Office.

The War Cabinet re-affirmed their approval of the Regulation, and decided that—

(a.) Steps should be taken, so far as possible, to make the punishment of the soldier reciprocal with that falling on the woman offender; and also of the sailor if the Naval Discipline Act corresponded with the Army Act.

(b.) The Representative of the War Office, supported by Mr. Long and Sir George Cave, should defend the Regulation in Parliament, if it were challenged.

(c.) The initial action in a prosecution should lie with the army and navy authorities, and the prosecution itself be conducted by the Police.

Tank Programme.

15. The War Cabinet had under consideration the question of the allocation of steel for the extended British tank programme as compared with the Anglo-American tank programme (Conclusion (c) of the Minutes of a Meeting held on the 8th March, 1918).

Mr. Churchill drew attention to War Cabinet 318, Minute 13, and the Appendix thereto, in which the agreement between the British and American Governments is set out as regards the building of American tanks, and under which the latter undertake to give priority as regards material, shipping, &c., and to replace the armour plates for the United States tanks in the form of ship-plates, on or about the date of delivery of the armour plate to the factory, on the basis of ton for ton. Mr. Churchill added that, if the United States failed to be punctual as regards deliveries in this matter, the armour plate that had been provided for their tanks would be diverted for the construction of the British tanks under our extended programme, but that he hoped to be able to meet all three programmes at a greater rate than trained personnel could be made available for manning the tanks.

On the above conditions as to supply, Lord Derby agreed to the cancellation of Conclusion (c) of the Minutes.

The War Cabinet approved.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W., March 18, 1918.
Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, March 18, 1918, at noon.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:—

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 2 to 12).

The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minutes 8 to 12).


The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.H., Secretary of State for War.


Mr. J. I. Macpherson, M.P., Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for War (for Minute 13).

Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 1 to 12).

The Right Hon. Lord Beaverbrook, M.P., Minister of Information (for Minute 10).


Sir L. Wortington Evans, Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 14 and 15).


Paymaster-in-Chief P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. Wilson, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P., Assistant Secretary.

Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.
The Western Front.

1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that there was no change on the Western front, except that, during the last half of February, 40 new heavy batteries of 160 guns, which had been moved from Russia, had been located. It had previously been calculated that 400 batteries a month would be moved.

Camouflage.

2. The Prime Minister stated that he had received a letter from Mr. Solomon, the artist, who claimed that the German camouflage behind their lines was very complete, and that it had totally deceived us.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that, with daily photography, he was disinclined to believe this.

The Prime Minister suggested that the Chief of the Imperial General Staff should see Mr. Solomon on the matter.

Palestine.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that Amman, which is to be General Allenby's objective, had been strengthened by 3,000 rifles. It was probable, therefore, that the enemy intended to fight there.

Mesopotamia.

4. Attention was drawn to a telegram from the Commander-in-Chief, India, to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, which indicated the possibility of the British forces in Mesopotamia being attacked after they had been reduced by the movement of troops from that area.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff pointed out that General Marshall still had more troops than he could handle, and General Wilson considered that it was quite safe to continue with the proposed movement of troops.

Inter-Allied Committees on Aviation and Tanks.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 390, Minute 15, the Secretary of State for War laid before the War Cabinet the Reports of the Committees on Tanks and Aviation (Papers G.T.-3918 and G.T.-3919), which the War Cabinet approved, subject to agreement by the other nations represented on the Supreme War Council.

Hospital Ships: Reprisals.

6. With reference to War Cabinet 150, Minute 7, the Chancellor of the Exchequer reported that a question was being asked in the House of Commons that day, by Major Hunt, M.P., as to whether German prisoners were to be put on board hospital ships for the purpose of safeguarding our wounded officers and men.

The War Cabinet were reminded of their previous decision on this subject, and it was stated that definite information had been obtained that no German officers were placed on board French hospital ships in the Mediterranean. It was pointed out that, if this practice were adopted, German submarines might cause British hospital ships to be boarded, take off the German prisoners, and then sink the ships. It was also pointed out by the First Sea Lord that if we placed German prisoners on board our hospital ships it would prejudice their status.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Chancellor of the Exchequer should reply that this matter had been carefully considered, in conjunction with the naval and military authorities, but that it was not a fit subject for Parliamentary discussion.
7. The First Sea Lord reported that a large raid had that day been carried out in the Cattegat, with a view to the seizure of any German craft in those waters, but that no reports had yet been received. He also reported considerable activity off Zeebrugge, causing commotion among torpedo-boats and destroyers. The actual damage had not been ascertained.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 363, Minute 20, enquiry was made as to what progress had been made with the constitution of the new Eastern Committee.

Lord Curzon explained that, acting on instructions from the War Cabinet, he had drawn up the proposed Terms of Reference, which he had sent to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Blockade for their comments.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said that he had prepared a memorandum on the subject. He laid stress on the importance of not weakening the responsibility of the Departments concerned, and of centralising all work with the Committee.

As the Committee would confine itself primarily to questions of policy and the co-ordination of Departmental action in relief of the work of the War Cabinet, he supported the view that a member of the War Cabinet without Portfolio should be chairman.

The War Cabinet postponed further discussion until Lord Curzon's memorandum and the memorandum of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs were available.

9. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs pointed out that there was every indication of a considerable change in our policy in Persia, which change was being forced on us by the course of events.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The question should be brought up for discussion at an early date.

10. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Lord Beaverbrook, on the subject of the Proposed Mission to Japan (Paper G.T.-3916).

The Secretary of State for War stated that the Mission had nothing to do with propaganda, and was entirely a Military Mission for the purpose of the presentation of a baton to the Mikado, and he urged that the military mission should be kept entirely distinct from any political mission.

Lord Robert Cecil stated that, in his opinion, the Mission would have little value from the point of view of removing an impression in the minds of the Japanese that we were doing badly in the war. There were, however, advantages in sending a Mission to raise our prestige in Japan.

He considered that there were great advantages in sending, as head of the Mission, some person of dignity and importance to uphold British prestige and strengthen the Alliance.

It was generally agreed that H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught, if in sufficiently good health and if prepared to undertake it, would be eminently suitable to head the Mission.

Mr. Barnes pointed out that, from messages he had seen from Japan, it was evident that serious misapprehensions existed in that country with regard to the attitude of British labour towards the war.

The War Cabinet decided that it was desirable to form the Mission on the following principles—

(a) That H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught, or, failing him,
H.R.H. Prince Arthur of Connaught, should be asked to head the Mission.

(b.) That a peer of distinction should also be added.

c.) That the Minister of Information should consider the names of minor officials who might be suitable as members of the Mission.

d.) That the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should telegraph to our Ambassador at Tokio, asking him to give confidentially his views as to the best kind of Mission it would be desirable to send.

e.) That the final decision, and all other action except that mentioned in (d), should be postponed until a report had been received from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Meeting of Supreme War Council

Allied General Reserve.

Employment of Italian Troops on Western Front.
Transfer of British and French Divisions from Italian to French Front.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 359, Minute 14, the Prime Minister informed the War Cabinet that the following resolutions had been agreed to at the meetings of the Supreme War Council on the 14th and 15th March, 1918:

(a.) (1.) The creation of a General Reserve for the whole of the armies on the Western, Italian, and Balkan fronts, as decided at Versailles on the 2nd February, 1918, is maintained (see War Cabinet 338, Minute 2).

(2.) In view of the great enemy concentration on the Western front, and the likelihood of an early attack on the British section of the line, the proposals of the Executive War Board for the composition of the General Reserve require modification.

(3.) The British and French divisions now on the Italian front, together with the British division which has just left that front, and a quota of Italian divisions, to be determined by the Executive War Board, shall form the nucleus of the General Reserve.

(4.) The Executive War Board are at once to decide the following questions:

(a.) The number of divisions to be allotted as the Italian quota of the General Reserve.

(b.) The desirability of an immediate transfer to the Western front of some of the British, French, and Italian divisions now on the Italian front.

(5.) To assist them in carrying out paragraph 4 above, the Executive War Board, or a Committee of General Officers nominated by them with the approval of their Governments, are at once to confer with the Commander-in-Chief of the Italian army.

At a later meeting the following General Officers were nominated:

General Maistre to represent France,
General Rawlinson to represent Great Britain,
General Bliss to represent the United States of America,
General Giardino to represent Italy.

(6.) The decision of the Executive War Board on the above points will immediately be notified to the
The Functions of the Executive War Board, and the Creation of an Allied General Reserve.

Aerial "Reprisals."

Requisitioning of Dutch Shipping.

Employment of Dutch Shipping.

Creation of Inter-Allied Transportation Council.

The Supreme War Council decided—

(i.) That the agreement arrived at between the Commanders-in-Chief of the Allied armies in France for mutual support shall be communicated formally to the Permanent Military Representatives at Versailles,

(ii.) That the Permanent Military Representatives shall prepare forthwith, in consultation with the Commanders-in-Chief concerned, a plan for supporting the Italian army in the event of an enemy offensive on that front, and submit their proposals to their respective Governments.

(b.) The Supreme War Council agree that the British and French Governments should announce that the operations of British and French aircraft, even when carried out as measures of reprisals for the bombardment of open towns by the enemy, are always, as a matter of fact, directed against objectives of military importance.

(c.) The Supreme War Council have carefully considered the Memorandum of the Allied Naval Council, setting forth the disadvantages of drawing Holland into the war, whether as an ally or as an enemy. They have also considered Joint Note No. 17 of the Permanent Military Representatives, on the possible military consequences of such an eventuality. The Supreme War Council are of opinion that the risk of Holland being drawn into the war in consequence of the requisition of Dutch shipping is a remote one, and that, in view of the urgent and immediate need of shipping, as set forth in the Note of the Allied Maritime Transport Council, the risk is one that should be accepted. They therefore recommend that the policy of requisitioning Dutch shipping should be adhered to.

(d.) As the French Government have agreed not to discontinue the transport of 350,000 tons of French coal into Italy by the 15th April, 1918, the Supreme War Council are of opinion that the Dutch shipping in American ports should be used, in the first place, for the indispensable requirements of the American Military Programme.

(e.) The Supreme War Council approve the recommendation of Major-General Sir P. A. M. Nash for the creation of an Inter-Allied Transportation Council at Paris, under the Supreme War Council, consisting of a representative of each of the four Allied Governments, and
charged with the functions set forth in section 3, par. 11, of General Nash's Report:

"I recommend that an Inter-Allied Transportation Council should be created at Paris under the Supreme War Council, consisting of a representative of each of the four Allied Governments. This Council should be charged with fulfilling the following main functions:

(i.) (a.) To advise the Supreme War Council at Versailles of the transportation aspect of all plans of campaign on the Western front.
(b.) To negotiate with the Allied Governments concerned as to the provision of such additional railway facilities as are necessary to give effect to any accepted plan of campaign, or to relieve the general position, and to arrange for any extraneous assistance required in men or material.

(ii.) (a.) To prepare, when called upon to do so, schemes for the consideration of the Supreme War Council for all large movements of troops between one section of the front and another.
(b.) To make, when instructed to do so, necessary preparation with the Inter-Allied Governments concerned for the carrying out of such movements, including when necessary a redistribution of mobile resources of railway material and personnel.

(iii.) To study the enemy position regarding transportation facilities of every kind, and advise the Supreme War Council as to the enemy's capabilities of concentrating and maintaining their forces on any particular sector of their front, and as to the points at which, and methods by which, the enemy's railway communications can be attacked from the air with greatest effect.

(iv.) To prepare schemes to develop continental railway lines of communication so as to relieve sea lines of communication, and to negotiate with the Governments concerned regarding the best utilisation of the Allied railway resources to economise sea transport.

(v.) To watch the performance of the different agencies operating the lines of communication on the Western front, bringing to the notice of the Governments or armies concerned cases in which the fullest use does not appear to be made of available resources, and suggesting remedies."

The War Cabinet approved the foregoing resolutions, and in connection with resolution (b) decided that--

Although the British Government was to make an announcement as to the nature of our aerial reprisals, such announcement should not be made until a question was raised in Parliament as to the reprisals referred to.
As regards resolution (d), Lord Robert Cecil pointed out that, since the Supreme War Council had met, he had received a communication from Mr. Stevens to the effect that the latter was afraid the resolution, as it stood, would be interpreted by the authorities of the United States of America as meaning that the Dutch shipping in question was to be used exclusively for military transport, and that he (Lord Robert Cecil) had replied that the Allied Maritime Transport Council had been of opinion that, although the Dutch shipping had been primarily earmarked for that purpose, the latter Council thought that a portion, say 70,000 tons, could be spared in connection with the conveyance of coal to Italy.

The War Cabinet requested—

Lord Robert Cecil to send a telegram to Lord Reading, pointing out the views of the Allied Maritime Transport Council in this matter, for communication to the Government of the United States of America.

12. The Prime Minister informed the War Cabinet that a Political Conference had been held on the 15th instant, attended by the Prime Ministers of France, Italy, and himself, and the following conclusions had been reached:—

(a.) Note had been taken of the views of the Permanent Military Representatives, as set forth in Joint Note No. 16, and the Conference had agreed that a joint telegraphic dispatch should be sent to President Wilson advocating Japanese intervention in Siberia.

(b.) The Conference having heard an explanation by Sir Eric Geddes, agreed that particulars of the losses from submarine attack and of the shipbuilding output, should be published. At the request of Sir Eric Geddes they agreed that no announcement should be made before the 21st March. Sir Eric Geddes undertook, in drafting the announcement, to take special care that stress was laid on the exaggerated figures of submarine losses published in Germany.

(c.) The Conference agreed on the issue of a joint declaration, condemning, in the most effective manner possible, Germany's treatment of Russia after the surrender of the Bolsheviks, which merely afforded a stimulus to the Allies not to make the same mistake of treating with a treacherous enemy.

(d.) On the proposal of Mr. Lloyd George it was decided that, if agreeable to the Italian Government, the next meeting of the Supreme War Council should be held in Italy, at some place to be selected by the Italian Government.

The War Cabinet approved the conclusions reached at the Political Conference, as set out above.
meat that if the houses were placed out of bounds it was expected that there would be a considerable increase in venereal disease. The streets would have to be picketed, involving an increase in the military police, and men who entered the houses would be punished by court-martial. At present the amount of disease was serious enough, the number of cases averaging about 8,000, or, in other words, little short of one division permanently out of action.

Mr. Macpherson said the question appeared to him to be a national rather than a military one. He received daily an enormous number of letters indignantly protesting against what was regarded as our approval of, or connivance at, these institutions. He felt that, unless these houses were placed out of bounds, the action of the Government could not be defended in the House of Commons or the country, and that the goodwill of a most respectable part of the community towards the national cause would be alienated.

It was further pointed out that, while it was hitherto thought that if we placed the houses out of bounds, our action might offend the susceptibilities of our Allies, it has now been stated by M. Clemenceau and M. Pichon that they were quite willing to consent to our exercising our judgment in any way we pleased.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(a.) The maisons tolérées in France should be placed out of bounds for His Majesty's Naval, Military, and Air Forces of the Crown.

(b.) The Army Council should investigate what steps were being taken by the French Government and the Canadian Military Authorities to prevent venereal disease.

14. The War Cabinet had before them a letter from Mr. Crosby to the Prime Minister in regard to the co-ordination, by the Supreme War Council, of requests for credits for the purchase of material of war (Paper G.T.-3886).

Mr. Chamberlain said that there were various Allied Executives dealing with such commodities as wheat, meats, and fats, &c., but there was no similar machinery for dealing with materials of war, e.g., lorries. He suggested that there should be some body co-ordinating requests and in control of the pool of such supplies. He supported Mr. Crosby's letter proposing that the stocks in hand and new requirements of the several armies should be examined by the Military Representatives on the Supreme War Council.

The War Cabinet concurred with Mr. Chamberlain, subject to the other Governments approving similar action, and decided that—

(a.) The Secretary should communicate their approval of Mr. Crosby's proposal to the British Military Representatives at Versailles.

(b.) Mr. Crosby should be notified by the Secretary of this decision, and should be informed that the War Cabinet assume that he will ascertain the decision of the other Allied Governments concerned, with a view to similar action, and will notify Versailles of their decisions.

15. With reference to War Cabinet 347, Minute 9, Mr. Chamberlain called attention to the fact that, whereas the British soldier was receiving a meat ration greatly in excess of the civilian ration, he was also able, not only in France, but also in England, to purchase at the canteens additional meatstuffs. The whole question of dollars, supplies, and tonnage was involved. He suggested that the time had come for consideration whether either
the ration should be reduced or the sale of rationed products at the canteens stopped at home.

The men who enjoyed this privilege included "soldiers" engaged on purely office work, men of low categories who would never be sent abroad.

The Prime Minister observed that this raised a very important question. He thought that the whole position, not only in Great Britain, but in France also, should be reconsidered.

Lord Derby said that an experiment had already been made in the direction of differentiating between soldiers doing hard manual work, on the one hand, and sedentary work on the other, but that it had led to great difficulty.

Mr. Chamberlain undertook to send the Secretary a Memorandum on the question for circulation to the War Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 18, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 367.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, March 19, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

The PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minutes 14 to 21).

The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 13).


The Right Hon. SIR A. C. GEDDES, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service (for Minute 13).

Major P. LLOYD GREAME, Ministry of National Service (for Minute 13).

The Right Hon. SIR A. STANLEY, M.P., President of the Board of Trade (for Minutes 15 to 20).

The Right Hon. C. ADDISON, M.D., M.P., Minister of Reconstruction (for Minutes 15 to 20).

The Right Hon. H. ROBERTS, M.P., Minister of Labour (for Minute 13).

Mr. GUY CALTHORPE, Coal Controller (for Minutes 16 and 17).

The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.

The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C.


Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPKINS, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 10).


SIR ALAN G. ANDERSON, K.B.E., Controller, Admiralty (for Minute 13).

Major-General A. S. COLLARD, C.B., Deputy Controller, Admiralty (for Minute 13).

The Right Hon. LORD ROTHERMERE, Secretary of State for the Air Force (for Minutes 13 and 14).


Brigadier-General G. LIVINGSTON, C.M.G., Director of Air Organisation (for Minute 13).

SIR E. W. YLDBORE SMITH, Chairman, Commission internationale de Ravitaillement (for Minute 13).

SIR STEPHENSON KENT, K.C.B., Ministry of Munitions (for Minute 13).

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

Captain L. F. BURGIS, Assistant Secretary.

Captain CLEMENT JONES, Assistant Secretary.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. WILSON, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P., Assistant Secretary.
Maisons tolérées in France:

1. With reference to War Cabinet 366, Minute 13, attention was drawn to the leakage which had apparently occurred in the Press with regard to the War Cabinet's decision on the subject of maison tolérées.

Air Raid on Mannheim:

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that Mannheim had been bombed, and that a ton of bombs had been dropped. Good results were observed, and the Badische Soda-fabrik had been hit. All our machines had returned safely.

The Western Front:

3. With reference to War Cabinet 363, Minute 2, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that two more German Divisions had arrived from Russia, one of which had been sent to the Argonne and one to Namur. He also reported that 100 heavy batteries had arrived last month, comprising 400 guns.

Possible German Attack:

4. With reference to War Cabinet 365, Minute 2, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that General Cox, the Director of Military Intelligence, British Expeditionary Force, was of opinion that the Germans would attack this month on a large scale.

Casualties from Gas Shells:

5. The Secretary of State for War reported the number of casualties from gas shells, but not from any new gas. There had been 1,600 casualties in one division, and 1,700 in another, principally from gas shells fired on billets.

Economy of Man-Power by Mechanical Means:

6. With reference to War Cabinet 322, Minute 16, the attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to a Memorandum by the British Permanent Military Representative at Versailles (Paper G.T.3947), covering a detailed Memorandum drawn up by the British Section, Supreme War Council. The War Cabinet commended this Memorandum to the attention of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that he had already sent this document round the War Office, and that action on some points had already been taken. He undertook to report more fully on the subject to the War Cabinet.

The Cattegat:

7. With reference to War Cabinet 366, Minute 7, the Deputy First Sea Lord reported that the Naval Forces which went into the Cattegat on the previous day were unable to accomplish anything, owing to heavy fog.

Bomb found in H.M.S. "Alsatian."

8. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that a small incendiary bomb had been found in H.M.S. "Alsatian," on the 9th March, after she had been docked at Liverpool.

Loss of Mediterranean Convoy:

9. With reference to War Cabinet 363, Minute 16, the Deputy First Sea Lord reported that the convoy referred to was not one of the Mediterranean convoys, but was a controlled sailing under the escort of an Italian armed merchant cruiser. He stated that the convoy left Genoa on the 1st February, and was accompanied by an Italian destroyer as far as Toulon. During the night of the 2nd February, the convoy was repeatedly attacked by submarines. The escorting vessel took no steps to drive off the submarines, and
did not give any orders to the ships, and was herself subsequently sunk. Admiral Hope stated that the Italian Commander-in-Chief at Spezzia had ordered a Court of Enquiry to investigate the matter. Admiral Hope added that since the 1st February, a system of organised convoys had been established between these two ports, under British escort.

The War Cabinet felt that this remarkable instance of Italian naval incompetence ought not to be passed over in silence, and that some action was called for.

The Deputy First Sea Lord undertook to bring the matter to the attention of the First Lord, with a view to drastic intervention with the Italian Government as regards their Naval Higher Command.

10. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that a large "America" seaplane, on special patrol, had sighted two hostile seaplanes, which were engaged. After all available ammunition had been expended, the action was broken off. On the return journey, three further hostile seaplanes were encountered. Although the "America" was hit in several places, she returned safely, without any casualties.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 366, Minute 9, the War Cabinet decided that—

The discussion on Persian affairs should take place on Thursday next.

12. The War Cabinet decided that—

The question of food should be discussed on Friday next, with special reference to the following points:

(a.) The proposal to separate supply from distribution.
(b.) The readjustment of army and civilian rations.
(c.) Potatoes.

The War Cabinet requested—

Lord Milner to make a preliminary investigation on these subjects.

13. With reference to War Cabinet 328, Minute 19, the War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Sir Eric Geddes (Paper G.T.-3949), and a Note by the Secretary (Paper G.T.-3963), with reference to labour for merchant shipbuilding.

It was pointed out by the Minister of National Service that this was a very large and complicated question. An arrangement was in force whereby the release for the armed forces of men under Schedule covered skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled men, and on this Schedule the whole supply for the Navy, Army, and Air Force was based. He stated that in the Army it was estimated that there were roughly only 5,000 to 6,000 men who had been skilled shipyard workers before enlistment, and if it was intended to supply the shipyards with skilled men above this number it would be necessary to take men of the trade although they had never worked in shipyards before the war. He emphasised the fact that if such men were taken from the Army and the Air Force, the Air Force would be utterly shattered, and the artillery in the Army seriously affected, and that if such men were obtained from munition factories by transfers, the whole basis of recruiting would be affected. He also said that the Navy had taken action which seriously interfered with the supply of men for the forces. He was strongly of opinion that if any central Department moved without consulting the Ministry of National Service, the whole
position would become impossible. He suggested that it would be advisable to ascertain the number of skilled shipyard workers at present in the forces, and stated that it was not desirable to take men, as was being done now, from the forces, who were semi-skilled or unskilled for work in shipyards.

The Adjutant-General stated that the Army were now returning men more quickly than they could be used in the shipyards.

Sir Alan Anderson pointed out that, while this statement was quite correct, owing to a delay caused by the distribution of men through Labour Exchanges, the matter had now been put right. He also stated that there was a greater output in the year 1917, with less skilled men, than ever before.

During the course of the discussion it was pointed out that if all the skilled men who had been trained in the army and the Air Force were taken, it would be impossible to replace them.

The First Lord of the Admiralty insisted on the importance of skilled men being released not only from the Home Forces but also from the forces abroad, in view of the fact that considerable time would be lost if only the Home Forces were dealt with first, and then the forces overseas later.

The Adjutant-General stated that the card index gave the number of 20,000 such men available in the army, but of these there was a certain proportion who did not desire to be returned to civil life.

The War Cabinet decided—

(a.) To adhere to their previous decision, that the construction of ships should have the first claim on man-power after the fighting requirements of the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force.

(b.) That the Minister of National Service should undertake to do his best, in co-operation with the other Departments concerned, to obtain men for the shipyards, which, inter alia, will involve the release, at the earliest possible date, of all men who were skilled shipyard workers or apprentices before they entered the Service; the term "shipyard worker" being understood to include all skilled workers on hull construction and repairs.

(c.) That the Secretary of State for War, on behalf of the Army Council, should do his utmost to release the above men from the forces at home and overseas, in all cases where this can be done without really serious detriment to the efficiency of the forces.

(d.) That the First Lord of the Admiralty should give a similar undertaking on behalf of the Board of Admiralty.

(e.) That the Secretary of State for the Air should co-operate in the same manner.

(f.) That men should not be released who are employed at their trades with the Navy, Army, or Air Force, or who are fit for General Service and are under the ages specified in the Revised Schedule of Protected Occupations (M.M.-130 revised)

(g.) That the First Lord of the Admiralty should furnish the War Cabinet with the state of all personnel in the navy, giving medical categories, on the same lines as that given by the War Office, and working in concert with the Adjutant-General.

(h.) That no figures should be given in the House of Commons as to the number of men which were to be released for this work.
14. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by Lord Rothermere on the question of continued assistance to the Norwegian Government in the matter of aviation (Paper G.T.-3908), in which the War Cabinet were asked for a decision as to whether the facilities given in the past in the way of training a small number of pilots, supplying drawings of aeroplanes, and, in a few cases, complete aeroplanes, should be continued.

General Trenchard pointed out that the Air Council were adverse to continuing assistance, because it appeared that, if Norwegian pilots had the benefit of training in the United Kingdom, there was a risk amounting almost to a certainty that Germany would obtain particulars of this training.

Lord Robert Cecil said that, on the other hand, it seemed likely that if these facilities were abruptly stopped, it would have a bad effect on public opinion in Norway. He would prefer to delay sending manuals, machines, &c., rather than make a sudden change.

The War Cabinet decided that—

Without abruptly discontinuing facilities to the Norwegian Government, the Air Council should, as far as possible, delay sending manuals, and in any case should only send the old type of machines.

15. General Trenchard, in reply to a question as to why the British and German reports of aerial engagements differed so widely, said that, whereas the British reports differentiated between cases of "crash" and being driven down "out of control," the German reports claimed "out of control" cases as "crashes." Experience showed that, on an average, about 50 per cent of the "out of control" cases recovered. With regard to recent air fighting, while it was perhaps too much to say that our superiority in the air had delayed the expected German offensive, nevertheless it might have been a factor in the delay. In any case the German inferiority must have proved a source of difficulty to their artillery and to their aerial photography.

16. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade in regard to Restrictions on Use of Gas and Electric Light (Paper G.T.-3885).

Sir Albert Stanley said that the result of withdrawing coasting steamers, normally bringing coal to London and the South of England, for the purpose of conveying coal to Italy, via France, was that there must be a severe restriction on the use of coal; a drastic reduction in the amount of gas and electricity used for lighting and power had become necessary. He proposed that an Order should be issued prohibiting shop-window lighting throughout the country. He further stated that it had been suggested that lights should be extinguished in the public rooms of restaurants, hotels, and clubs at 10 o'clock, and that all places of amusements should be closed at 9.30 p.m.

On this point the War Cabinet were of opinion that 9.30 appeared to be too early an hour. They suggested instead that 10.30 would be a suitable hour for closing theatres.

The War Cabinet authorised—

The President of the Board of Trade to proceed on these lines, and agreed to the other proposals contained in his Memorandum on the subject.
17. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum prepared by the Coal Controller in regard to the rationing of coal for domestic purposes (Paper G.T.-3898).

Sir Albert Stanley said that the only safe course to adopt was to ration coal supplies. This had already been done with respect to household coal in the metropolitan area, without experiencing any serious difficulty or causing any disturbance. It was now proposed to extend the scheme, which had been in effect in the metropolitan area, to the whole of England and Wales (exclusive of certain coalfields), subject to such improvements as had been suggested to those engaged in the work since August last, when it was first instituted. The rationing of industrial coal (except for minor or domestic industries) was deferred for the moment. The saving to be made on domestic coal was estimated at about 5,000,000 tons per annum.

The War Cabinet agreed to the proposals contained in the Coal Controller's Memorandum on this subject.

18. The War Cabinet had before them various Papers (G.T.-3430, 3749, 3903, and 3929) in regard to making the British Executive Staff of the Commission internationale de Ravitaillement responsible in future to the Foreign Office instead of to the Board of Trade, as in the past.

The President of the Board of Trade, Lord Robert Cecil, and Sir E. Wyldbore Smith, all expressed their agreement to the proposed transfer, and the War Cabinet decided—

That the change should be made.

19. The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by General Smuts (Paper G.T.-3939) and Minutes of a Conference (Paper G.T.-3942) in regard to the Intelligence Bureau of the Department of Information.

The War Cabinet requested—

Lord Robert Cecil to confer with Lord Beaverbrook on the subject.

20. With reference to War Cabinet 331, Minute 9, in which the War Cabinet, at the instance of the Board of Trade, decided to set up a Road Transport Board, the War Cabinet had before them a Note by the Secretary (Paper G.T.-3959), in which it was stated that the Minister of Reconstruction had called attention to two points not dealt with in the War Cabinet Minute.

In Dr. Addison's opinion—

(a) The new organisation should not prejudice any system of transport that may be considered advisable during the reconstruction period; and

(b) It should be limited to the duration of the war, unless an arrangement continuing it be made with the concurrence of the Minister of Reconstruction.

The President of the Board of Trade stated that he saw no objection to the first point raised by Dr. Addison, but was of opinion that the second should be decided by the War Cabinet.

The War Cabinet gave their approval to his suggestion on both points.
21. The War Cabinet approved the appointment of the following Committee to deal with the proposed new pensions warrant:

Mr. Barnes (Chairman),
Mr. Hayes Fisher,
Dr. Addison,
Mr. Hodge,
Sir Robert Chalmers (representing the Treasury).

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 19, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 368.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Wednesday, March 20, 1918, at 11.30 a.m.

Present:
The Right Hon. A. BONAR LAW, M.P. (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the EARL CURZON OF KEDLESTON, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. A. J. BALFOUR, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 14).
The Right Hon. LORD ROBERT CECIL, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade (for Minute 13).
The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 14).

The following were also present:—

The Right Hon. G. N. BARNES, M.P.
The Right Hon. the EARL OF DERBY, K.G., Minister of Labour (for Minute 15).

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. SMUTS, K.C.O.

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. HOPE, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 14).
The Right Hon. SIR GEORGE CAVE, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minute 14).

The Right Hon. SIR WILLIAM COLLINS, K.C.V.O., M.P., Chairman Conciliation and Arbitration Board (for Minute 15).


SIR E. WYLDEBORE SMITH, Chairman Commission Internationale de Ravitaillement (for Minute 13).

Lieutenant-Colonel SIR M. P. A. HANKEY, K.C.B., Secretary.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. WILSON, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P. Assistant Secretary.

Captain CLEMENT JONES, Assistant Secretary.

Mr. THOMAS JONES, Assistant Secretary.
The Western Front. 1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the only fresh news from the Western front was an increase in enemy aircraft activity.

The Italian Front. 2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that a certain agitation had been raised in Rome, endeavouring to prove an increase in the number of Austrian divisions on the Italian front, which, it was asserted, had now reached 55. The correct number, according to our information, was 48½.

British Military Representative in the United States of America. 3. The Secretary of State for War said that he and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff had agreed that the Army ought to be represented by a more senior officer in the United States of America than was there at present, and had decided that General Bridges was the best possible selection. The War Cabinet approved this appointment.

Director-General of Movements and Railways. 4. The Secretary of State for War said that Sir Guy Granet was leaving the Army Council, and was going to the United States on behalf of the Food Controller. In America he would be ready to assist Lord Reading from the Army point of view in all questions of transportation. Sir Sam Fay, at present the Director of Movements, would take the place of Sir Guy Granet on the Army Council, and General Delano-Osborne, the Deputy Director of Movements, would succeed Sir Sam Fay.

Zeppelin going to Egypt. 5. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that a report had been received to the effect that a Zeppelin was going to Egypt. In this connection the War Cabinet had their attention drawn to their previous decision with regard to the use of anti-aircraft bullets (War Cabinet 359, Minute 5), where it was decided that the request of the Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean for permission to use Brock and Pomeroy ammunition should be granted, subject to the concurrence of the Air Ministry. The War Cabinet decided that the ammunition in question should be issued in Egypt, having regard to the fact that Egypt was not a foreign country.

Shipping Losses. 6. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that on the previous day five British ships had been sunk (two in the English Channel and one in the Mediterranean), and two Allied and neutral ships.

Seaplane Engagement. 7. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that long-distance reconnaissance had been carried out by our seaplanes, three of them engaging two enemy seaplanes off Borkum Island, one of which had been driven down in flames. All our machines had returned safely.

Collision between British Armed Merchantman and United States Destroyer. 8. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that H.M.S. "Motagua," an armed merchantman, and the United States destroyer "Manley," had been in collision 145 miles W.S.W. of Bishop’s Rock, Scillies. Depth charges had exploded on both ships, damaging them aft, but both vessels were making their way to port.
9. The attention of the War Cabinet was called to the recent escape of Zeppelins on two occasions when they had attacked the North-East Coast. There was an impression in the country that the Zeppelins had escaped owing to the supposed reduction of Air Squadrons in this country.

The Secretary of State for War said that his impression was that the squadrons kept for defence in this country had not been reduced, but he undertook to make enquiries on the subject from the Field-Marshal Commanding Home Forces, and to report to the War Cabinet.

10. With reference to War Cabinet 367, Minute 1, the Secretary reported that a further leakage of information had occurred in regard to the appointment of the Committee to deal with the proposed new Pensions Warrant (War Cabinet 367, Minute 21). In order to make quite certain that the leakage had not occurred in the offices of the War Cabinet, the Secretary had communicated with the editor of "The Times," who had informed him that on both the occasions referred to the information had been supplied in the Lobby of the House of Commons.

11. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs reported that Mr. Page, the United States Ambassador, had asked him to receive a deputation of American temperance reformers. The attitude of a certain section of people in America was that no more grain ought to be shipped from the United States to this country until the British Government prohibited brewing. Mr. Balfour said that he thought it would be better for the deputation to be received by the Prime Minister rather than by himself, and that it would be well if Mr. Clynes could be present at the interview.

The War Cabinet concurred in Mr. Balfour's opinion, and instructed—

The Secretary to bring the matter to the Prime Minister's attention.

12. The War Cabinet had under consideration a note by Mr. Barnes, urging that the Increase of Rent Bill should be pressed on with (Paper G.T.-3913).

The Secretary of State for Home Affairs informed the War Cabinet that this Bill had passed the House of Lords, and that either he or the President of the Local Government Board would take charge of the Bill in the House of Commons, where he hoped that it would be introduced and ordered to be printed to-morrow. He pointed out that the fact that the Bill was retrospective to the date of its introduction would deter people from taking action which would be rendered ineffective when it became law.

13. The War Cabinet had before them a note from Mr. Crosby to the Prime Minister (Paper G.T.-3887), and a letter from Sir E. Wyldbore Smith to the Secretary (Paper G.T.-3952), in regard to the disposal of Russian goods ordered against British, French, and American credits.

Sir E. Wyldbore Smith said that he was in favour of referring to the Versailles Council the question of the disposal of the residue of goods remaining after each creditor Government had disposed of what it could. When everything possible had been done by the creditor Governments, there would presumably still remain a residue consisting of such goods as arms and ammunition of Russian calibre, and manufactured articles of Russian specification. The use to which such stores might best
be applied should doubtless be decided, on grounds of military or other policy, by some central body of Inter-Allied authority, such as the Versailles Council. To this end he proposed, if so directed, to have lists compiled of goods not required by the British or Allied Governments, which had been bought on British credits.

The Secretary said that he had heard from Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who was unable to be present, to the effect that he agreed with the views of Sir E. Wyldborke Smith.

The War Cabinet decided, subject to the agreement of the other Allies, that—

(a.) The proposals contained in Sir E. Wyldborke Smith's letter (Paper G.T.-3952) should be adopted.

(b.) The Secretary should reply to Mr. Cresy notifying him of this decision.

Prisoners of War

14. The War Cabinet had before them the following papers dealing with the responsibility for decisions with regard to prisoners of war:

- Memorandum by Lord Newton (Paper G.T.-3900),
- Memorandum by Sir G. Cave (Paper G.T.-3968),

Lord Robert Cecil stated that Departmental obstacles were frequently encountered in connection with any fresh proposals for dealing with prisoners of war, and it might be desirable, when the less important matters of policy were involved, to leave them to some small executive authority.

The War Cabinet decided that—

In cases of Departmental disagreement concerning prisoners of war, not involving high matters of policy, Lord Curzon should act on behalf of the War Cabinet at the request of any of the Departments interested.

15. With reference to War Cabinet 317, Minute 1, the War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by Mr. Barnes (Paper G.T.-3966), dealing with the effect upon the Conciliation and Arbitration Board of the War Cabinet's decision that all applications for an increase in war advances, and wages disputes arising therefrom, should be referred to the Ministry of Labour who might refer them to the Committee on Production.

Mr. Barnes said that the War Cabinet, when they reached this decision of the 7th January, had no intention of diminishing the power of the Conciliation and Arbitration Board for Government employees. Claims from Government employees for the 12½ per cent. bonus were at present being referred to the Conciliation and Arbitration Board, and the Board wished to know whether they were prevented from dealing with them. He was of opinion that, inasmuch as, when the 12½ per cent. was initiated, men on an upstanding wage were excluded from its operation, claims made by Government employees in receipt of an upstanding wage or salary should not be accepted by the Conciliation and Arbitration Board.

Sir William Collins said that the Board over which he presided had been set up by the War Cabinet, and had heard from 50 to 60 claims from Government servants. Two claims involving the 12½ per cent. bonus had recently come before them from clerks in the Royal Dockyards, and from writers in Royal Ordnance Factories. The exceptional aspect of these particular claims was the fact that the award might affect the whole of the Civil Service. The claim of the clerical employees in the Royal
Dockyards for an increase of 12½ per cent, on their present earnings arose out of instructions issued by the Admiralty that the time-work earnings of workmen in the Royal Dockyards should be increased by 12½ per cent. There was an over-riding minimum wage arrangement according to which increases to manual workers automatically affected the lowest grade of clerical workers in the dockyards. The Board would welcome information as to the grounds for the original grant of the 12½ per cent. increase, in order to be in a position to decide how far the same considerations were applicable to the claims now before them.

The War Cabinet were agreed that their intention had been to refer manual workers to the Committee on Production. There had been no intention of referring Government employees engaged on clerical work to that Committee, or of extending the 12½ per cent. bonus to clerical workers. Further, inasmuch as the Conciliation and Arbitration Board exercised quasi judicial functions, it was undesirable to restrict their Terms of Reference to meet a particular case.

The War Cabinet decided that—

Minute 1 of War Cabinet 317, of the 7th January, 1918, was not to be read as in any way limiting the sphere of the Conciliation and Arbitration Board as set forth in its Terms of Reference.

Ireland:
Weekly Reports.

16. With reference to War Cabinet 190, Minute 13, the attention of the War Cabinet was drawn to the fact that the weekly reports on the state of Ireland are not being furnished regularly. As the War Cabinet are very interested in the state of Ireland—

The Secretary was instructed to write to the Chief Secretary for Ireland on the subject.

League of Nations.

17. Mr. Barnes drew the attention of the War Cabinet to the debate which took place in the House of Lords on the previous day on the subject of the League of Nations, and expressed the hope that Lord Curzon, in his reply, would, on behalf of the Government, strongly support the proposal. He alluded to the strong views on this subject held by the Labour Party, which he himself shared.

Lord Curzon said that the debate on this question had been adjourned until after the recess, and stated that he had no intention of being condemning in his reply, being anxious to accept the principles involved, but that it would be desirable to point out that the formation of any League of Nations was hardly possible during hostilities, and that the application of such a policy must depend on the issues of the war.

At Lord Curzon’s invitation—

Mr. Barnes undertook to forward Lord Curzon a memorandum on the subject.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 20, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 369.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, March 21, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 9).

General Sir H. H. Wilson, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 11).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 10).

The Right Hon. Lord Islington, G.C.M.G., D.S.O., Acting Secretary of State for India (for Minutes 10 to 12).

The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C.M.G., M.P., Minister of Blockade.

Mr. L. Oliphant, C.M.G., Foreign Office (for Minutes 10 and 11).

Sir George V. Fiddes, G.C.M.G., C.B., Permanent Under-Secretary, Colonial Office (for Minute 12).

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


Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
SECRET.

WAR CABINET, 369.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, March 21, 1918, at 11:30 A.M.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 9).

General Sir H. Wilson, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 11).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 1 to 10).
The Right Hon. Lord Islington, G.C.M.G., D.S.O., Acting Secretary of State for India (for Minutes 10 to 12).
The Right Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, K.C., M.P., Minister of Blockade.

Mr. L. Oliphant, C.M.G., Foreign Office (for Minutes 10 and 11).

Sir George V. Fiddes, G.C.M.G., C.B., Permanent Under-Secretary, Colonial Office (for Minute 12).

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


Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgis, Assistant Secretary.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
The Western Front. With reference to War Cabinet 367, Minute 4, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff informed the War Cabinet that the Germans had commenced a heavy bombardment that morning, on a front of 80 kilometres, from the Scarpe to the Oise. This front of attack was in general accord with the one anticipated by the British Staff at Versailles. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff was of opinion that this looked like the beginning of an attack on a large scale, although there was the possibility that it might only develop into a big raid or demonstration. General Wilson stated that we had 18 divisions in the front line in this sector, and 7 divisions in Army Reserves.

Incendiary and Explosive Bullets for use against Aircraft. With reference to War Cabinet 368, Minute 5, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that the authorities in Egypt had received in October last the tracer bullets for dealing with Zeppelins, and were prepared to use them in case of necessity.

Submarines. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that on the morning of the 20th instant a heavy under-water explosion was heard close to a drifter, between Folkestone and the Varne. Subsequently large quantities of oil were seen, and papers were picked up. It was most probable that a submarine had been destroyed by the deep mines.

Detention of British Ships in Dutch East Indies. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that, according to an intercepted commercial telegram, British ships in the Dutch East Indies ports had stopped loading and were being detained. There was no news of the detention of any British ships at Rotterdam.

Requisitioning of Dutch Shipping. With reference to War Cabinet 366, Minute 11 (c), the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated that we were requisitioning Dutch tonnage that day. It was suggested that, as Lord Robert Cecil was making a speech on the question of blockade that afternoon, he might mention the fact that Dutch tonnage was being requisitioned.

Loss of Mediterranean Convoy. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that he was enquiring into the matter.

Russian Black Sea Fleet. With reference to War Cabinet 367, Minute 9, attention was drawn to the fact that in the last two days two convoys had been attacked in the Mediterranean and ships sunk. The Deputy First Sea Lord stated that he was enquiring into the matter.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 365, Minute 10, in reply to a question as to what steps were being taken by the Admiralty to prevent the Germans from capturing the Black Sea Fleet, the Deputy First Sea Lord stated that the matter had been considered by the Allied Naval Council. The Council had decided not to take immediate action, as it was thought that the Germans would find great difficulty in manning the ships. The Germans had captured a few small naval ships at Odessa, but the greater part of the Russian Black Sea Fleet was at Sebastopol. The War Cabinet asked that—

The Admiralty should prepare a memorandum on the subject of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, and the effect of its possible capture by the Germans.
8. Admiral Hope communicated to the War Cabinet a telegram received from the captain of H.M.S. "Suffolk," stating that orders had been received from the Inspector of Artillery at Havarovsk to forward 45,000 rounds of 3-inch shell from the Allied stores at Vladivostock. A strong protest was being made, but the captain of the "Suffolk" wished to know whether, in the event of this protest being disregarded, forcible steps should be taken to prevent the removal of these munitions.

There was some discussion as to the right of the Allies to interfere with the disposal of stores which, even if not paid for, had in fact passed into the hands of the previous Russian Government, and, from them, to their de facto successors, and as to the probable destination of the ammunition. With regard to the latter point, the War Cabinet concluded that the ammunition was almost certainly meant for the forcible propagation of Bolshevism in Eastern Siberia, and would be used against moderate elements, such as Captain Semenoff, whom we ourselves were arming and paying.

The War Cabinet decided that—

A telegram should be sent by the Admiralty to the captain of H.M.S. "Suffolk," expressing the view that the stores should not be removed, and instructing him to concert with the Allied commanders as to how the removal could best be prevented.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 366, Minute 12 (a), the War Cabinet discussed the general question of Japanese intervention in Siberia, more particularly in connection with the memorandum of enquiry from the Japanese Government (Sir C. Greene, No. 261). In this memorandum the Japanese Government raised two questions:

(a) Whether they could have an assurance from His Majesty's Government that Japan would have the moral and material support of the United States in intervening in Russia

(b) Whether His Majesty's Government wished for an explicit declaration on the part of Japan that she was prepared to go as far as Chekiabinsk, or at least as far as Omsk.

The general view of the War Cabinet was that Japanese intervention would not be of any real use unless it extended sufficiently far to deny the very large resources of Western Siberia to the Germans. The case for intervention was, in fact, that there were large supplies actually available at this moment in Western Siberia, which might be of very great importance to the Germans if, as all the evidence seemed to show, they were not likely to get sufficient relief to their food situation from the Ukraine and European Russia generally during the next few months.

It was also urged that to leave Western Siberia open to the enemy would completely uncover Turkestan and so largely frustrate our efforts to prevent a German advance eastward through Persia. There was also the possibility that Japanese intervention might have a considerable moral effect upon public opinion in the Central Empires. Doubts about the wisdom of the terms of peace extorted from Russia would be reinforced by the thought that this had brought into the scale against them the whole strength of the country, whose military resources were probably exaggerated by them, and involve them in a new interminable series of operations in the East.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff suggested that there were really two problems, that of Europe and that of Siberia. There was no question of getting Japanese troops to Moscow, nor,
on the other hand, one of German regulars being able to get to Vladivostock, or of interfering with Japanese operations in Siberia. If the Germans once secured control of Siberia, their influence would extend south into Turkestan, and our whole position in India would be imperilled. The problem was, in fact, part of the same problem as that raised by the danger to Persia. It was a question of pulling Siberia out of the wreck, in order to save India.

It was contended, on the other hand, that these were arguments of despair, frankly involving the abandonment of European Russia to the Germans and denying the possibility of the Bolsheviks putting up any effective resistance to the Germans, in spite of their recent declarations that they meant to renew the war with all their might. It was urged that Japanese intervention would not only definitely alienate the Bolsheviks, but would throw on the side of Germany all the elements of law and order in European Russia. It was admitted that the real question was whether there was any prospect of the Bolsheviks really making good their intentions of renewing the contest.

In this connection the War Cabinet considered Mr. Lockhart's recent telegrams, and a speech made by M. Trotzki in which he declared himself in favour of drastic discipline in the army and the abolition of the election of officers.

It was suggested that M. Trotzki's action was mainly aimed at trying to prevent Japanese intervention. The success of the Bolsheviks had lain throughout in the very fact that they were for peace at any price, and, although it was true that the anti-Bolshevik forces which we had previously attempted to organise for the defence of Russia against Germany had failed us, there was nothing to show that the Bolsheviks were either able or determined to renew the war with Germany.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff said it was fantastic to think that Trotzki or anyone else in Russia could put up a fight against the Germans.

General Smuts concurred in this view, in so far as it was a question of meeting a great Germany army. On the other hand, if the revolution had any real spirit in it—on which point there was no material for arriving at a sound conclusion—it might, if seriously bent on resistance, cause great embarrassment to the Germans.

It was suggested that the War Cabinet might with advantage hear the views of General Poole, who was due to arrive on the 22nd instant.

With regard to the actual enquiry raised in Sir C. Greene's telegram No. 261, the War Cabinet felt that it was not possible to indicate to the Japanese our belief that the Americans would, in fact, lend moral and material support, unless an assurance to that effect, or at any rate an assurance of benevolent neutrality towards intervention, had first been secured from President Wilson.

It was pointed out that, although the Japanese penetration of Siberia might prove easy in the first instance, formidable difficulties might arise later, with which Japan could only cope if she could rely upon the assistance in money and supplies which could be furnished by the United States.

It was felt that the only thing that could be done was to renew the effort to persuade President Wilson of the necessity of intervention, drawing his attention to the most recent information, in order to convince him that a situation was in fact rapidly arising which, as he had suggested in his latest interview with Lord Reading, might cause him to modify his previous attitude. As the effort in this direction would be simply following out the policy already decided upon in concert with the other Allies at a recent meeting, there was no reason for communicating further with them.
The War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to take action on
the lines of the above general conclusion.

10. With reference to War Cabinet 366, Minute 9, the
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs gave an outline of the situa-
tion brought about in Persia by the collapse of Russia. In North
Persia, which had been the Russian sphere, there was now no disci-
plined force able to resist German and Turkish influences.
Further, our access to Trans-Caucasia had been intercepted by un-
ruy elements (Jangalis) in North-West Persia, together with
Bolsheviks; and our Mission under General Dunsterville, which
it had been hoped would be able to organise the Georgians and
Armenians in resistance to the Turks, had been forced to turn
back. The question of British intervention in North Persia had
been considered in the Persia Committee, but the view had pre-
vailed until lately that it was not advisable to undertake so new
and dangerous a venture.

It was pointed out by Lord Curzon that we were then attempt-
ing to work in harmony with the democrats in Teheran, who would
have been alienated by any action of that kind. Latterly, Mr.
Balfour explained, the situation had grown so much worse that it
was clear some disciplined force must be sent into North-West
Persia, and it had been decided to despatch a force of some 1,300
men, with armoured cars, into the country. This force, however,
was held up by snow in the mountains, and meanwhile the powers
of disorder beyond the passes were gathering momentum. The
general situation might be regarded as potentially very serious.
Persia was unable to be effectually neutral. Germany in control
of Trans-Caucasia, the Caspian and North Persia, would be a
threat to India. The seriousness or imminence of this threat might
be variously estimated, but the Persian situation was already of
immediate concern to us.

It was also pointed out, by Lord Curzon, that Sir Percy
Sykes commanded in South Persia a force of some 5,000 or 6,000
men. This force, known as the South Persian Rifles, was a kind
of militia or gendarmerie. It was supported by a body of some
1,200 Indian regulars. The Persian Government had desired the
removal of this latter contingent, and we had been ready to con-
clude them by complying, until the situation had grown so much
worse. It was now a question of reinforcing these troops. Our
representative at Teheran had been consulted, and his reply was
awaited. The development of our force in South Persia, combined
with an advance in North-West Persia, would place the capital,
as it were, within a forceps, and might enable us to keep the enemy
out of it, though he was already reported to have emissaries in
Kasvin. Very small forces would suffice. We also had a cordon
protecting the Afghan frontier of Persia.

The opinion was expressed that it was of great importance to
reach the Caspian and to control it. Failing this, the enemy
would gain unimpeded access to Turkestan, and outflank the land
route to India.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 366, Minute 8, the War
Cabinet had under consideration a memorandum by Lord Curzon
(Paper G.T.-3905), and a memorandum by Mr. Balfour (Paper
G.T.-3978).

It was pointed out that, in view of the situation disclosed by
the discussion on Persia, the proposed Committee would have to
deal with military even more than with diplomatic questions. It
should be of the nature of a Vigilance Committee, ready to warn
the War Cabinet and furnish advice on the Eastern area of operations.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Eastern Committee should supersede and absorb the functions of the Persia and Middle East Committee, and should be composed of—

Lord Curzon (Chairman).
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and/or his Deputy.
The Secretary of State for India.
The Chief of the Imperial General Staff.
General Smuts.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary, War Cabinet (Secretary).

The constitution and scope of the Committee as outlined in Lord Curzon's memorandum (Paper G.T.-3905) were approved.

12. Lord Islington drew the attention of the War Cabinet to the question of the status of the Indian representatives at the forthcoming session of the Imperial War Cabinet. He pointed out that the statements made by the Prime Minister on the 16th May, 1917, and by the then Secretary of State for India on the 23rd May, 1917, indicated clearly that, at future annual meetings of the Imperial Cabinet, a representative of the people of India, nominated by the Viceroy, was to attend the Imperial Cabinet with the same status as the Dominion members of the Imperial Cabinet. These statements had been published broadcast in India, and there would be the greatest disappointment if there was any idea that the promise was being evaded in any way. The Viceroy was particularly anxious to be able to make an announcement to that effect at the last meeting of his Legislative Council on the 22nd.

Sir G. V. Fiddes explained that, in view of the wording of the reference to a meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet in the recent King's Speech, the Secretary of State for the Colonies understood that the forthcoming Cabinet would only be a continuation of the session held last year, and not a session of the Imperial Cabinet referred to in the statement quoted. That being so, India would only be represented by the Secretary of State for India with Assessors, as on the last occasion.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that the promise held out to India would certainly be taken in India to refer to the forthcoming meeting, whether technically described as an "Imperial War Cabinet" or an "Imperial Cabinet," and that if the question of status arose it should be made clear that the representative of India was there as a member of the Imperial War Cabinet.

Lord Islington also raised the question of the status of the representative of the Indian Native States. The Viceroy had suggested that such a representative should be added to the Imperial War Cabinet as an additional member. If there were a difficulty in acceding to this proposal, he suggested that a representative of the Native States should come over to take part as a member in the meetings of the Imperial Conference, and should attend meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet when invited by the Prime Minister.

The War Cabinet accepted this suggestion, and did not consider that any difficulty with regard to status would arise in this connection.
The War Cabinet requested—

Lord Islington to send a telegram to the Viceroy, stating that British India would be represented at the meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet by an accredited member, and that a representative of the Native States would take part in the meetings of the Imperial Conference, and would attend meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet, on the invitation of the Prime Minister, on the same footing as Ministers of the Dominions accompanying their Prime Ministers.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 21, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 370.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, March 22, 1918, at 11-30 A.M.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (for Minutes 1 to 19).
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War (for Minutes 1 to 19).
General Sir H. H. Wilson, K.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff (for Minutes 1 to 19).
The Right Hon. C. Addison, M.D., M.P., Minister of Reconstruction (for Minutes 20 and 21).
The Right Hon. G. H. Roberts, M.P., Minister of Labour (for Minutes 20 and 21).
Sir D. J. Shackleton, K.C.B., Secretary, Ministry of Labour (for Minutes 20 and 21).

Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.C.B., C.M.G., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 20 and 21).
Major P. Lloyd Greame, M.C., Secretary, Ministry of National Service (for Minutes 20 and 21).
Mr. F. G. Kellaway, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 20 and 21).
Sir Stephenson Kent, K.C.B., Ministry of Munitions (for Minutes 20 and 21).
The Right Hon. A. H. Illingworth, M.P., Postmaster-General (for Minute 20).

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.
Lieutenant-Colonel L. Wilson, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P., Assistant Secretary.
Captain L. F. Burgis, Assistant Secretary.
The Western Front:

German Attack.

1. WITH reference to War Cabinet 369, Minute 1, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that prisoners from seventeen German divisions which had taken part in the attack had been obtained. In the course of the discussion some doubt was expressed as to whether these were additional to some twenty other divisions which had been identified. General Wilson said that the Germans had a large number of divisions in reserve, and that it might reasonably be expected that a movement would start that night or on the following day. The attack had been on a front of from 80 to 85 kilom., from the Scarpe to the Oise, and General Wilson said that, as far as he could ascertain, the whole of the front had fallen back from the outpost line to the battle position. The battle position consisted of a series of posts, villages, &c., which were at a distance varying from a few hundred to a few thousand yards in rear of the original front line trenches. He pointed out that the battle zone was very strongly defended, and that, except in places where the front line and the battle line were 4,000 to 5,000 yards apart, there were very few guns in position. He consequently hoped that the losses in guns were not very heavy. In certain places, which were not yet very clearly defined, the enemy appeared to have made lodgments in the battle zone, although there was no information that these lodgments were of any depth. General Wilson also stated that there was a very large amount of wire protection in the battle zone. Reports had been received giving information that the enemy casualties were very heavy, but no particulars had yet been received as regards our own casualties. No information was yet available to enable a definite judgment to be formed as to our own position, as the reports must necessarily, at present, be of a very conflicting character. Information received up to now, however, gave no cause for anxiety.

2. The Prime Minister suggested that a service of liaison officers should be established between General Headquarters and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, in order that the War Cabinet might receive more detailed information as to the course of events.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the German General Headquarters had been definitely located at Spa.

4. With reference to War Cabinet 366, Minute 11 (4) (b), the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that he had received a telegram from General Rawlinson with reference to the transfer of Allied divisions to France from Italy. General Rawlinson, General Bliss, and General Foch all considered that now was an opportune moment to transfer two Italian, two French, and one British division, which would be the second British division transferred, from the Italian front to France. General Giardino was of opinion that the two Italian divisions should be transferred now, and that the question of the transfer of the French and British divisions should be considered at a later date. M. Clemenceau had advised the transfer of all five divisions. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff advised the War Cabinet that the two Italian divisions should be brought to France at once, followed by the two French, and finally the British, divisions. His object in bringing the Italians first was to avoid a controversy with the Italian Government. The Italian divisions, on arrival in France, would be able to relieve two British or French divisions in the line.
The War Cabinet agreed with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff that two Italian, two French, and one British divisions should be withdrawn in that order, and instructed—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff to notify the Supreme War Council at Versailles to that effect.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 368, Minute 11 (a), the Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that the Executive War Board had decided that the Italian quota to the General Reserve should consist of four divisions.

6. With reference to War Cabinet 368, Minute 5, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that a Zeppelin had been seen three miles north of Port Said. He was of opinion that the base from which it operated was in Macedonia.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 366, Minute 2, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that he had seen Mr. Solomon on the subject of German camouflage, but that he did not consider that Mr. Solomon's information was correct.

8. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff undertook to lay before the War Cabinet a paper giving details as regards the strength of the British and German forces and their reserves of man-power, and also stating the prospects of the belligerents in the event of the present attack on the Western front continuing for a few days more at its present intensity. He was of opinion that the attack would develop into a long-drawn battle deliberately intended for a trial of strength, in order that a decisive result might be arrived at.

9. The Prime Minister stated that a miners' deputation had visited him on the previous day with reference to the comb-out. He informed the War Cabinet that he had considered it his duty to speak very plainly to the deputation which he had received, and he announced that he had just received news that the Miners' Executive had decided to accept the comb-out after hearing an explanation of the military situation from the Director of Military Operations.

10. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff, referring to a discussion which had taken place at a meeting of the Supreme War Council in regard to the state of congestion in the French ports, stated that General Nash had verified the information which he had given, but which M. Clemenceau had refused to believe. This information had been communicated to M. Clemenceau, and it would be found necessary to modify the whole of the programme which had been proposed for the landing of United States troops.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 368, Minute 9, the Secretary of State for War reported that the aeroplane squadrons for the defence of the East Coast had been increased by 140 machines. On the occasion of the first of the recent Zeppelin raids, the machines had been unable to go up owing to fog. On the occasion of the second raid they had driven off the enemy without bringing one down.
Bombardment of Dunkirk, and a Naval Engagement.

12. The First Sea Lord reported that a force of German torpedo-boat destroyers bombarded Dunkirk on the morning of the 21st instant, and withdrew at once. Two British and three French destroyers slipped cable and chased, but apparently fell in with another division of torpedo-boat destroyers and engaged them. One large German destroyer was hit by a torpedo, and one rammed by a British destroyer, which was afterwards torpedoed, but arrived safely in harbour. Two other German destroyers were stated to have been torpedoed and sunk, and another torpedo-boat had been sunk by gunfire. Survivors were picked up, also papers containing valuable information as to the attack. Our casualties were not heavy.

Bombardment of Ostend.

13. The First Sea Lord reported that Ostend was bombarded by H.M.S. “Terror” on 21st March, with satisfactory results.

Submarines.

14. The First Sea Lord stated that a British airship, operating from Flamborough Head, had bombed an enemy submarine, and that one bomb was observed to have struck her stern.

Shipping Losses.

15. Attention was drawn to the very serious losses by submarines during the last few days, particularly in the Mediterranean.

The First Sea Lord indicated the steps which were being taken by the Admiralty to deal with the situation in these waters.

Norway.

German Submarines in Territorial Waters.

16. The First Sea Lord stated that the British Consul at Stavanger had reported that when three British steamships were eastward bound under a Norwegian escort, a periscope was observed inside territorial waters, and that a fishing boat reported the presence of a German submarine. The British Consul apprehended that the Germans intend torpedoing ships inside territorial waters, even in the presence of a Norwegian escort, by way of retaliation for the capture of German vessels by the British on the Norwegian coast.

Removal of Stores from Vladivostock.

17. With reference to War Cabinet 369, Minute 8, the First Sea Lord stated that the Commanding Officer of H.M.S. “Suffolk,” at Vladivostock, had reported that a satisfactory reply had been received from the Inspector of Artillery with reference to the Allied protest against 45,000 rounds of 3-inch shell of Allied stores being handed over, and that no Allied munitions would be sent away for the present.

Russian Black Sea Fleet.

18. With reference to War Cabinet 369, Minute 7, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs asked what information had reached the Admiralty with reference to the Russian Black Sea Fleet.

Attention was drawn to telegram No. 71, from Helsingfors, stating that the Russian Admiralty had instructed the Commanders-in-Chief of the Baltic and Black Sea Fleets to destroy the Fleets.

It was stated that there was apparently no reason why the Bolsheviks should give up or destroy any ships in the Black Sea, and the War Cabinet felt that the attitude which would be taken by the Bolsheviks as regards these Fleets would be a test as to the sincerity of the Bolsheviks’ announced intentions.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should communicate with Mr. Lockhart in this sense, and should ask him for
Conciliation and Arbitration Board:
Equal Remuneration of Men and Women.

19. The First Sea Lord stated that the aggregate strength of the Allied Fleets in the Mediterranean was already sufficient to deal with any increment of strength which the enemy might derive from a possible acquisition of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, although fresh dispositions of their forces would be necessary. The French had already agreed to the proposed redistribution of force, should the emergency arise, and the Admiralty was in communication with the Italian Ministry of Marine on the subject.

20. The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum (Paper G.T.-3960) by the Conciliation and Arbitration Board for Government employees on the question of remuneration of men and women engaged on similar duties.

Sir Thomas Heath stated that the Board had now before them two claims (from the Postmen's Federation and the National Federation of Women Civil Servants respectively) which were, in effect, claims for the recognition in the Civil Service of the principle that women should be paid the same remuneration as men engaged on similar duties. Sir Thomas Heath was of opinion that these claims involved an important question of policy, and therefore fell outside the terms of reference of the Conciliation and Arbitration Board.

Mr. Illingworth concurred in the opinion expressed by Sir Thomas Heath, and added that, in the Post Office, what sometimes appeared to be similar duties performed by men and women were not proved on investigation to be so.

The War Cabinet agreed that the matter involved a question of principle, and was therefore not within the competence of the Board of Conciliation and Arbitration to settle.

21. With reference to War Cabinet 317, Minute 1, Mr. Barnes called attention to applications which were being received in connection with the 12½ per cent bonus from local authorities and others who were being pressed to make the grant of the bonus to their employees retrospective. The result of conceding this demand might be to force the local authorities to raise their rates and to force contractors to re-open accounts for undertakings which had been completed. He had discussed the matter with the Minister of Labour, and it was proposed to send a letter to the Committee on Production advising that awards should not be ante-dated further back than the date of application, or some such similar date which may be determined by the particular circumstances of the case.

Mr. Roberts did not think such a decision was likely to lead to serious industrial trouble, unless there were sympathetic strikes. In the case of the shipyards the granting of the bonus had already been arranged.

Sir David Shackleton thought there would be trouble with local authorities and public utility Companies. There were three classes of cases affected:

(a) Companies now controlled under the penal part of the Munitions of War Act, e.g., gas-works.
(b) Cases which could be proclaimed if the Ministry of Munitions thought a strike could not be risked.
In the first and second groups, applications for the bonus would be made, and if the Government advised the companies not to resist lest there should be a strike, there would be danger of collusion between the companies and their employees. The fact was such cases were never contemplated in the original award. They were not definitely concerned with munitions of war, and could make no claim on the ground of the higher cost of living: they were simply trying to take advantage of an award granted in quite another field of employment.

Sir Stephenson Kent thought that, on the whole, the date of application was as convenient a stopping-place as any that could be suggested.

The War Cabinet authorised —

The Ministry of Labour to advise the Committee on Production that the lines indicated by Mr. Barnes, viz., that, as the local authority employees were not entitled to be covered when the original orders were issued, it would be desirable for the Committee not to ante-date an award further back than the date of application, or some similar date which may be determined by the particular circumstances of the case.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 22, 1918.
WAR CABINET. 371.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at the War Office, on Saturday, March 23, 1918, at 4 P.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The Right Hon. George N. Barnes, M.P.

Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.


Major-General Sir G. M. W. Macdonogh, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Intelligence.


Major-General R. Hutchinson, D.S.O., Director of Organisation, War Office.

Major-General P. Lloyd Greame, M.C., Ministry of National Service.

Colonel W. M. St. G. Kirke, D.S.O., War Office.


Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
1. The War Cabinet met to consider the enemy attack on the Western front now in progress, and such action as might be desirable to relieve the position. The situation was explained by Colonel Kirke, of the General Staff, who, in accordance with the arrangement approved by the War Cabinet on the previous day (War Cabinet 370, Minute 2), had just arrived by aeroplane from General Headquarters, where he had seen General Davidson. Colonel Kirke stated that the enemy's attack had started with a very heavy bombardment lasting from 2 to 4 hours and consisting mainly of high explosive shells, although some poison gas had also been used. The enemy had then advanced in a mist, which had prevented our aeroplanes from obtaining much information, and had hampered our artillery and machine-guns. In spite of this, enormous slaughter had undoubtedly been inflicted on the enemy in places. There was no doubt that the enemy was taking every risk to gain a great success, for example, before his attack the enemy had brought up over 100 batteries into the open near Quatran, where they had been heavily shelled by our heavy artillery. On the Third Army front the enemy had, in the main, been held firmly on the battle zone, except at Mory, where it was reported he had penetrated. The situation in the vicinity of Mory was not quite clear, but 2 divisions had been brought up to deal with it, and 5 more divisions were being brought into the Arras region in case the enemy should effect a serious penetration at this point and attempt to swing up north. Of these 5 divisions the first would arrive to-morrow, and the whole within four days. Colonel Kirke added that Monchy-le-Preux, which had been heavily bombarded by the enemy, had been evacuated under orders, to conform with other movements. On the Fifth Army front the enemy had succeeded in penetrating our battle zone and reserve lines, and a retreat had, in consequence, been made to the line of the Somme. This retreat, he believed, had been carried out in good order, although the troops which had retreated some 12 miles were naturally very tired. Practically all the reserve divisions on the Fifth Army front had now come into line. The total British casualties were estimated roughly at 40,000, and probably not less than 60 guns had been lost, including, perhaps, 100 heavy guns. Supplies of ammunition, however, had been placed in rear positions, so that the batteries were able to replenish their stocks and to retire fighting. The original lines that our armies had held before the battle of the Somme were now being got ready, all possible labour being brought up to work on them. The French were to-day taking over the line as far as St. Simon, and it was hoped that they would take over very shortly along the line of the Somme as far as Ham, and later as far as Peronne. Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig had gone to-day to meet General Pétain with a view to arranging this.

No information had been received of the use of tanks by the enemy, nor had there been any new poison gas development. 30 enemy aeroplanes had been destroyed on the previous day.

2. From information given partly by the Director of Military Intelligence and partly by Colonel Kirke, it appeared that 49 German divisions had already been identified as engaged on the battle front. General Headquarters estimated that beyond this there were probably 10 divisions in immediate reserve which might or might not have been engaged, and that there were an additional 30 divisions behind, which could be brought into action. The Director of Military Intelligence estimated that, in addition to the 49 divisions in the battle front, there were 53, and possibly 55, German divisions in reserve on the whole of the Western front. Another 9 or 10 divisions might be expected from the East.
From figures given by the Director of Military Intelligence and Director of Military Operations it appeared that the comparison of enemy and Allied forces was as follows:

**Germany:**

- Divisions: 101
- Rifle strength: 1,402,800

**Allies:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Divisions</th>
<th>Rifle strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(None as yet available for heavy fighting.)*

It was pointed out that the rifle strength of the Allies included 40,000 Americans, 55,000 Belgians, and 26,000 Portuguese. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff considered that, for purposes of calculation, the present forces might be reckoned as approximately equal.

**French Assistance.**

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff pointed out that the British Army was now attacked by a large proportion of the German Army, and was menaced with a possible attack by the whole. It was clear that the size of our army was not sufficient to enable us to cope with so heavy an attack whatever measures might be taken in regard to man-power, and that French assistance was indispensable. It had to be remembered, however, that the French were themselves expecting an attack in Champagne, and we must not make too great a demand upon them until the situation there was clearer. He had ascertained that what Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig desired was that the French should take over the line of the Somme as soon as possible as far as Ham, and shortly after as far as Péronne. This would ease the immediate situation. As Colonel Kirke had pointed out, the Field-Marshal was in consultation with General Pétain on the subject to-day.

The question was then raised as to whether it was necessary to put any political pressure on the French Government to render us the necessary assistance, and it was suggested that the Prime Minister or some other Member of the War Cabinet might proceed to Paris for the purpose.

The Prime Minister pointed out that if the Versailles scheme for the constitution and control of the Allied General Reserve had only been brought into full operation, it would not have been necessary to have this bargaining process with the French, but that the Executive War Board would have decided immediately as to the disposition of the forces.

The War Cabinet had no reason to suppose that the French would show any reluctance, and decided—

That the question of putting political pressure on the French Government need not arise until the result of Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig’s conference with General Pétain was known.

**Divisions from Italy.**

4. With reference to War Cabinet 370, Minute 4, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff informed the War Cabinet that the Executive War Board had decided, in view of the present situation on the Western front, to alter the order in which the divisions
were to be transported from the Italian to the Western front to the following:

- 2 French divisions,
- 4 Brigades of British field artillery,
- 1 British division.

All the above to precede any Italian divisions.

5. The War Cabinet considered the possibility of bringing reinforcements from Palestine to meet the present emergency on the Western front. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that a proposal had been made by the Permanent Military Representatives at Versailles that a certain number of White battalions should be brought from Egypt to France. He stated that there were 3 British divisions in Egypt. In this connection attention was drawn to a telegram from the Commander-in-Chief in India (No. 22677), dated the 21st March, expressing anxiety about the possible developments in the East consequent on the collapse of Russia, and the resulting danger to our position in India. The telegram drew attention to an arrangement which had formerly existed, and had never been cancelled, under which 2 British divisions had been maintained at Salonica or Egypt as a potential emergency reserve for India. (War Committee Paper W.C.-33, Minute 1 (b).)

The War Cabinet decided that—

The question should be reserved for further consideration.

6. The suggestion was made that an Indian division, which is under orders to move from Mesopotamia to Palestine, might be sent straight through to Marseilles as a reinforcement to the British Expeditionary Force in France. It was pointed out that the division could not leave Basra for another week, and that no immediate decision was necessary.

Field-Marshal Lord French pointed out that an Indian division was not quite equal in fighting value to a British division, even in summer, and was of comparatively small value on the Western front for climatic reasons.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should ask Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig if he would care to have an Indian division.

7. The War Cabinet agreed with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff that—

None of the 4 British divisions (with one brigade) in the Salonica theatre, should be brought to France, since, although up to strength numerically, they were weakened by malaria.

8. General Hutchinson made a statement of the resources in this country from which drafts could be furnished for the Western front—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infantrymen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Drafts under orders to go overseas between the 23rd and 31st March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) From cyclist brigades, by substituting boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) From the 214th Brigade, by substituting boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) From Guards Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Specialists under training, chiefly signallers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(f.) From some 5,000 N.C.O.'s undergoing various courses, some 500
(g.) Drafts for other theatres, diverted 2,000
(h.) On leave, lent to Agriculture 1,500
All these were available at once, or in a very short time, and together made a total of 27,000

(II.) Men on leave from France, returning at the rate of about 6,000 a day 88,000
(III.) Boys over 18½ but under 19 years of age, who have completed their training 50,000
(IV.) From 10,000 "A" men being trained to become officers in various Cadet Units, half of whom might be taken, on the understanding that if they survived this emergency they would receive their commissions 5,000
(V.) In addition to the above, there were 29,000 men in munition works who were trained soldiers, and who could be called up at three days' notice for home defence. Of these it might be possible to claim 16,000
(VI.) Of 63,000 men in agriculture, some 80 per cent. were trained soldiers, but mostly ungraded, say 45,000

In addition to the above there were 30,000 drafts in depôts in France.

In the ensuing discussion on these figures it was pointed out that, including the 88,000 men on leave, the 27,000 men of group (I.), the 50,000 boys of group (III.), and the 5,000 men of group (IV.), we had a force of some 170,000 which could be moved as fast as transport capacity allowed. In practice it was found possible to move about 8,000 men a day. The transport of this force would, therefore, take up the whole of our cross-Channel transport capacity during the next three weeks, which could be expected to be the period of severest trial. The other categories might be reserved for later consideration, as it was evident that the calling up of large numbers from munition work and from agriculture must seriously affect those industries, and deserved further study.

The question was asked whether any help could be obtained from the Colonial troops. The following figures were given:—
The Canadians had 2,000 men over establishment in France, and 1,500 trained men in this country.
The Australians were 1,000 over strength in France, and had 1,500 men under training in England. These habitually went out in trained batches of 100.
The New Zealand forces were 5,000 above strength in France, and had very few trained men in England.

With reference to these figures it was pointed out that the 88,000 men on leave were on the establishment in France, and could not be counted as an addition to Sir Douglas Haig's forces; secondly, that the despatch overseas of the 50,000 boys between the ages of 18½ and 19 was not only an expenditure of capital for which no immediate substitute could be found, and a very notable weakening of the Home Forces, but that this step required a special decision of the War Cabinet, in view of the undertaking that boys of this age should not be sent abroad save in case of national emergency.

With reference to the last point, it was decided by the War Cabinet that—
The emergency had arisen, and that the trained contingent of boys of this age should be sent overseas.
9. The War Cabinet decided that—

The Minister of National Service should immediately put forward proposals with a view to an increase in the total amount of man-power procurable for military services. His proposals should deal not only with measures for speeding up recruiting from all existing sources, but also for surmounting the many obstacles that stand in the way of the full mobilisation of our man-power, and for tapping such new sources as still remain.

The Minister of National Service was asked to bear in mind that the present military situation might afford an exceptional opportunity for overcoming difficulties that had hitherto proved insurmountable.

10. The following suggestions were made—

(a.) That in view of the pressing need for military recruits, recruiting should be stopped for the Royal Navy of men fit for general service over the age of 18 years.

(b.) That the Admiralty should, according to their previous undertaking, expedite the release of 12,500 men from Admiralty "A" firms, and of 1,000 men from the Royal Dockyards under the schedule of protected occupations (M.M. 130, Revised).

The Secretary was instructed to write to the First Lord of the Admiralty on this subject.

11. The War Cabinet asked the Chief of the Imperial General Staff to communicate immediately with Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig in the following sense—

(1.) That in addition to the 88,000 men in this country on leave, he could count on the despatch of about 82,000 drafts (a total of 170,000 men) requiring three weeks for their transport.

(2.) That the question of maintaining a constant stream of drafts after this was under consideration.

(3.) The decision of the Executive War Board to bring the French and British divisions from Italy before the Italian divisions.

(4.) To ask the Field-Marshal if he was satisfied as to the extent of the co-operation being given by the French Government.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 23, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 372.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, March 25, 1918, at 11 A.M.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.
Mr. G. H. Wardle, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Board of Trade (for Minute 18).
The Right Hon. Sir Joseph Maclay, Bt., M.P., Minister of Shipping (for Minute 18).

The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.
Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord.
The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions.
Major P. Lloyd Greame, M.C., Secretary, Ministry of National Service.


Sir Stephenson Kent, K.C.B., Ministry of Munitions.

Captain E. Abraham, Assistant Secretary.
Paymaster-in-Chief P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.
The Western Front:

German Attack:

Present Position.

1. The Director of Military Operations reported that the Germans had made a very heavy attack north of Péronne, and had effected a breach over a front of five miles. Two fresh divisions would shortly arrive there, namely, a New Zealand Division and the 12th Division. The 3rd and 4th Australian Divisions, and the 2nd Canadian Division were advancing towards that area, and he was of opinion that the two first-named divisions should be in time to fill the gap. There were, moreover, 300 tanks in the neighbourhood. He stated that the 3rd Army had behaved splendidly, and had repulsed the principal German attacks, and that the 5th Army were showing signs of recovery, inasmuch as they had counter-attacked the enemy and had driven him back across the Somme, with the result that in that area our line was continuous, and that he hoped the situation there was safe until the French reserves had time to come up and fully restore it. General Maurice held the view that the emergency had now resolved itself into a question of time, and that to-day was the critical day. If the enemy got through on the Somme battlefield, the battle would resolve itself into an engagement between the reserves in the open. He stated that the Germans had adopted the same methods as those they had practised in Russia. They had had 59 divisions engaged up to the 23rd, and as soon as one division was knocked out they passed another division through it, and were carrying on without transport other than that which could accompany the attacking divisions. General Maurice added that 14 German divisions had been transferred from the French front, and that 12 French divisions were coming to our assistance. As regards the likelihood of an attack on the French front, he indicated that no heavy attacks were probable, but that a local attack was possible in Alsace.

At a later stage in the meeting, General Maurice reported that on the 3rd Army front the Germans had captured Bapaume, but that we held the outskirts at the rear of the town: that our line North of Bapaume was intact in spite of the Germans pressing their attack very heavily: that they had made no progress in the gap north of Péronne: and that the New Zealand Division had arrived, and the 12th Division was in the immediate vicinity; that the enemy were not pressing to the northward of Ham, but that to the south of Ham and St. Simon hard fighting was taking place between the Germans and the French.

With a view to expressing the gratitude of the country for the excellent defence which was being put up by our troops at the front, and also with a view to sustaining the morale of the troops there, the War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for War to send a telegram from the War Cabinet to General Sir Douglas Haig, expressing their gratitude to the British Expeditionary Force, and informing it at the same time that reinforcements were being sent as rapidly as possible, and that more guns were being supplied immediately than had been lost.

2. The War Cabinet proceeded to consider the steps to be taken to reinforce Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, and Lord Derby informed the War Cabinet that the estimated losses since the 21st March were 53,000 men. It appeared that a total of 106,000 men, of whom nine-tenths were infantry, were available for immediate transfer to France. To these should be added 88,000 men at present on leave, who were part of the existing establishment in France. Up to the 20th April, 18,000 trained men would be available as drafts, which meant that by the 20th April 212,000 men were available for transfer from the United Kingdom to France. As regards the transport of these men across
the Channel, Lord Derby stated that the War Office were anxious to have the shipping resources in this connection improved, so that they might convey from 20,000 to 25,000 a day.

The Minister of Shipping said he hoped to be able to arrange this.

The War Cabinet requested—

Lord Derby, the First Sea Lord, and the Minister of Shipping to go into this question immediately, with a view to the necessary facilities being given for the transport of this number.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 371, Minute 8 (V), as regards a further supply of men, the Adjutant-General stated that—

(a.) Approximately 25,000 men, who had served as soldiers, might be withdrawn from munitions.

With regard to the proposal to take these men away from munitions, Mr. Churchill said that he considered it very unsound. Of this number, 7,000 were employed in shipyards; 3,000 were in blast-furnaces, on which the output of steel-plate absolutely depended. This left 15,000 men, fit for general service, to be found from other sources, and he was firmly convinced that it would be folly to move key men from gun industries, and the manufacture of tanks and aeroplanes. Having in view the fact that the Ministry of Munitions was at present releasing 100,000 men for the army, he urged that no steps should be taken to withdraw a further 25,000 until the matter had been thoroughly gone into to see what fit men could reasonably be spared from the several industries under the Ministry of Munitions.

The Adjutant-General said that—

(b.) Another 9,000 men might be taken from the Army Reserve munition workers.

(c.) That a further number of “A” men, say 5,000 (the actual figures were now being gone into), could be procured from men who had been discharged from the Territorial Force on compassionate grounds.

As regards taking soldiers from agriculture, the War Cabinet held the view that it would be undesirable, as probably very few “A” men would be forthcoming, to withdraw any men from that source until the sowing, &c., had been completed by the end of April.

Taking the above possible increases, it appeared to the War Cabinet that the sum total of men available by these means for France was 251,000.

The Minister of Munitions, however, undertook to scrutinise all sources of supply of man-power from the munitions industry, and to report as soon as possible.

4. As regards any combing-out from the British troops now employed in Ireland, Lord French informed the War Cabinet that at present there were in Ireland the equivalent of a division, approximately 13,000 strong, and 10 reserve battalions.

The Adjutant-General said that of this force all the “A” men had already been removed, and he did not think that there were more than 2,000 “B. 1” men among the troops in question.
3. Field-Marshal Lord French suggested that the Volunteers might be mobilised, and the Adjutant-General was of opinion that if the army were allowed to take over the Volunteers they would be able to get a good number of men available for France; it being pointed out that the Volunteers formed the best half-trained reserve that we had.

Lord French stated that only about one-third of the Volunteers had taken the oath, and that legislation would be necessary before we could call on any of the remaining two-thirds (about 200,000 men) for service, except in a case of national emergency.

Sir Auckland Geddes stated that the Volunteers might be drawn on by two means:

(i.) By going to the tribunals and getting the tribunals to cancel the exemptions of fit men; and he had given orders that endeavours were to be made to do this.

(ii.) By bringing in a short Bill to cancel all exemptions, which would do away with tribunals.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Minister of National Service to provide for calling up the fit men among the Volunteers, as part of a Draft Bill he was preparing. (See Minute 14.)

6. As regards other sources of supply, the question was raised as to whether any men who had been wounded and discharged earlier in the war should be recalled to the Colours. It was pointed out in this connection that the Government were under a pledge not to recall such men. It was stated by Sir Auckland Geddes that, in his opinion, not more than 1 per cent. of the men discharged were physically fit for service at the front.

7. The Adjutant-General informed the War Cabinet that the Director-General of Medical Services had recently been going into the question of the standard of eye-sight required by the troops, and that a new test would shortly be instituted which should result in the number of "A" men for the army being increased.

8. The Prime Minister drew the attention of the War Cabinet to the fact that it might be possible to use the United States troops in France, and stated that it had been suggested to him that the Americans might put four divisions in the line in the French sector.

General Maurice suggested that the four American divisions should not be called upon to take over more line than at present held by four French divisions in a quiet sector, and that these French divisions should then be sent to the battle front; further, that, as the American divisions gained experience, they should eventually enable two more French divisions to be withdrawn, for our assistance.

The Prime Minister added that he had been informed that of the two American displacement divisions, one was complete save as regards transport, and he would therefore recommend that we should supply the necessary transport for that division, and ask the United States Government to agree to its being placed in the line.

It was further suggested that the Americans should be asked to send to our front such field-guns and heavy guns (together with their crews) as we might require from those at present allocated for the use of the American army.
It was also pointed out that there were 300,000 United States troops in France, and that of that number a considerable portion were high-class engineers, who were now building cold storage depots, &c., and that we should urge the American Government to send such men, as well as any Labour battalions that might have been formed, or could be formed, to the British front, with a view to perfecting the existing defences and creating others in their rear.

At this stage the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs interviewed Mr. Baker, the United States Secretary of State for War, and later informed the War Cabinet that they had urged Mr. Baker to take the necessary steps to give effect to the assistance suggested above, and, as he was going across to France, to see General Pershing on the subject at the earliest moment.

It was mentioned that General Pershing had supreme powers as regards the allocation of the American troops in France, and the War Cabinet therefore directed—

The Secretary to inform Lord Milner as to the points in the discussion which had taken place so that he might render such assistance as might be possible in persuading General Pershing to issue immediate orders on the subject.

They also requested—

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to send a personal telegram to Colonel House, notifying him of the proposals made to General Pershing, and pointing out the pressing need of such assistance.

Marines from the Navy.

The First Lord of the Admiralty was asked whether the navy could assist by loaning to the army any Royal Marines. It was suggested that the incorporation of even a few of these highly trained and disciplined troops among the drafts for the battered battalions relieved from the battle front might prove of great value. Sir Eric Geddes stated that the total marine establishment was 45,680 men. Of these, 8,690 were in France as infantrymen or gunners, 4,900 in labour corps, 1,410 in Madros, 2,240 were employed in coast defence or in Ireland, and 400 in submarine mining. 17,870 were afloat in ships, 3,650 were untrained men under the age of 19, and 3,800 were boys, bandmen, or men employed as part of the training staff or men unfit and in hospital. There remained available for draft 1,930 (including 400 under 19); 1,324 of these were appropriated for draft; and the 4th R.M. battalion was 700 strong. As regards the men serving in ships, he explained to the War Cabinet the duties upon which marines serving afloat were employed, and instanced the fact that they manned the turrets, barbettes, groups of 6-inch guns, and performed other duties intimately connected with the fighting efficiency of the ships as a whole, and that to withdraw such men in these circumstances would have a very serious effect on the efficiency of the Grand Fleet. It was also pointed out that, with the United Kingdom now depleted of efficient army men, a far greater responsibility devolved on the navy for the protection of our shores. Sir Eric Geddes stated that he would be only too glad to go into the question of relieving, as far as possible, from coast defence or elsewhere, all men of the Royal Marines capable of manning heavy batteries.

The War Cabinet approved this proposal, and requested the First Lord of the Admiralty to communicate as requisite with the War Office on the subject.
10. With reference to War Cabinet 373, Minute 10 (a), the Minister of National Service informed the War Cabinet that, with regard to the recommendations contained in the Report of the Cabinet Committee on Man-Power, the total number of recruits obtained from the 1st January to the 20th March, 1918, for the Royal Navy and the Royal Naval Air Service were as follows:

The Royal Navy ... ... ... 12,616
The Royal Naval Air Service ... 8,796

The War Cabinet approved the stoppage of recruiting for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines as follows:

No person over 18 years of age, except certain skilled ratings, should be recruited for a period of two months from that date. The question should then be reviewed.

As regards the skilled ratings, a considerable number would be required for the army, and the two Services should put forward their requirements to the Minister of National Service.

11. In connection with the losses of guns during the present battle, the Minister of Munitions was called upon by the War Cabinet for a statement as to what steps he could take to replace those that had been lost.

Mr. Churchill stated that the question might be considered from the point of view of the guns—

(a) In France or in transit to France;
(b) In the United Kingdom in stock;
(c) In the United Kingdom under proof, or at the factory.

Reserves of carriages and guns in France were not balanced in all cases. But taking all stocks into account, the maximum number of complete equipments that could be made up from available reserves, including guns and carriages awaiting proof, was approximately as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Equipment</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-pr. equipments</td>
<td>677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5-inch equipments</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-pr. equipments</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-inch howitzer equipments</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-inch gun equipments</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-inch howitzer equipments</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2-inch howitzer equipments</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-inch howitzer equipments</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

making a total of—

1,014 field guns,
384 medium guns,
239 heavy guns.

There were, in addition, a number of carriages under repair in France for which guns were available, and a considerable number of 6-inch and 8-inch howitzer equipments of obsolescent pattern.

As an illustration of the output, Mr. Churchill stated that last week's output was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Equipment</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-pr.</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carriages</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5-inch guns</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-pr. guns</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-inch howitzers</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note by the Secretary.—The Admiralty and Ministry of National Service have since agreed to reduce this to one month, after which the question will be reviewed again.

† For figures since supplied by Ministry of Munitions, showing estimated number of equipments available on the 6th April, 1918, see Appendix.
Further Recruiting:

Raising the Age Limit.

He mentioned that carriages were and would be the limiting factor, and added that, in view of the small number of guns that proved defective whilst undergoing proof, he considered that it was safe and reasonable to release all such guns and send them to the front as and when required, and had issued instructions accordingly.

As regards machine-guns, Mr. Churchill stated that there were in stock in Great Britain and France 1,200 ground pattern Vickers guns, as well as 600 awaiting repair. A further 1,300 were in transit to France. There were 3,712 Lewis guns in reserve in France, and 3,200 in reserve in England, in addition to 2,000 which were now in transit. They were now being produced at the rate of 800 a week.

12. The War Cabinet next proceeded to consider the question of the extension of the existing system of recruiting in the United Kingdom.

Sir Auckland Geddes pointed out that by raising the age limit to 45, approximately 150,000 men fit for general service would become liable to recruitment, and of these at least 50,000 could be made available for military service. By raising the age limit to 50, a further 250,000 men fit for general service would become liable to recruitment, of whom he estimated 60,000 could be made available for military service. The question, however, of increasing the age limit involved a large question of policy, and the most careful consideration must be given as to the age to which it should be raised and the method of carrying it out, so that the resources of the country should be crippled as little as possible. He therefore recommended that, before any decision was taken, the whole position should be most carefully considered.

13. As regards applying the Military Service Act to Ireland, Field-Marshal Lord French pointed out that during his recent visit to that country he obtained the impression that two-thirds of the Sinn Feiners were entirely influenced by their leaders, and he was strongly of opinion that it would be possible, with a slight augmentation of the existing troops in Ireland, to maintain order and still carry out any policy of army recruitment there. He was further of opinion (and in this he was supported by the Adjutant-General) that such Irish as were recruited should not be put in Irish battalions, but embodied in English and Scotch regiments. He held the view that this procedure would be more acceptable to all concerned, insomuch as the latter would welcome the Irish recruits, whereas the Irish regiments would be inclined to accord them less favourable treatment.

It was pointed out that politically such incorporation would have very undesirable effects, and would not encourage Irish unity, and would shatter any hope of the Convention being a success.

The Minister of National Service stated that his estimate with regard to Ireland was that within the present limits of military age 150,000 men fit for general service could be recruited, that by raising the age to 45 a further 25,000 could be obtained, and another 25,000 if the age limit was raised to 50. He added that, as tribunals would not be possible in Ireland, it would be necessary, if compulsory recruiting was made applicable to that country, to abolish tribunals in England, and use the present assessors as advisers, with no ruling powers.

[1305—372]
14. The War Cabinet considered the question of summoning Parliament with a view to passing new legislation in regard to recruiting, and it was felt that it was imperative that advantage should be taken of the present situation to obtain from Parliament powers to extend the Military Service Act to Ireland, and to increase the age up to 50 or 55.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Minister of National Service to prepare, at the earliest moment, a short Bill for the consideration of the War Cabinet, covering these two questions.

15. Lord Derby asked permission of the War Cabinet to send conscientious objectors abroad for labour work.

It was pointed out by Sir Auckland Geddes that a pledge had been given by the late Prime Minister and others that this would not be done.

The War Cabinet felt that as these men would be sent as a non-combatant corps, it was essential in the interests of the country under the present circumstances, that any pledges that had been given in this respect should be withdrawn, and instructed—

Sir Auckland Geddes, when introducing in Parliament the Bill referred to in the preceding Minute, to make a statement on the subject.

16. Attention was drawn to the fact that a very large number of ministers of religion of excellent physique were available for military service, it being mentioned that the French and Germans, as well as other nations who were our Allies, employed their ministers of religion amongst the fighting troops.

The War Cabinet decided that—

A clause should be inserted in the Bill rendering ministers of religion, within the limits of age laid down, subject to medical fitness, liable for military service.

17. Sir Auckland Geddes informed the War Cabinet that the Divisional High Court had given a decision on Saturday to the effect that the Russian Convention still had legal force, and he consequently asked for the approval of the War Cabinet to proceed with the recruiting of Russians for labour battalions.

Mr. Balfour stated that, in view of the serious situation prevailing on the Western front, it might be appropriate to over-ride the diplomatic difficulties which would arise as regards recruitment of Russians in this country.

The War Cabinet decided—

To reverse the decision as set out in War Cabinet 345, Minute 3, and authorised the Minister of National Service to proceed with the recruitment for labour work of Russians in this country.

18. The Minister of National Service stated that the release of port labour was being seriously delayed. He suggested that of the 6,000 required, a clean cut should be made of 1,000 men who were over 18 years and 8 months, but had not attained the age of 25 upon the 1st January, 1918, and that the remaining 5,000 should be given up by the 31st May, 1918, at latest, or earlier, if the Transport Workers' Battalions were increased by 5,000 as authorised by War Cabinet 352, Minute 9.
Mr. Wardle, of the Board of Trade, said that the position was difficult, and that if the immediate recruitment of these men were insisted on, the effect would be serious as regards our imports and supply of ore for shipbuilding, as well as the receipts of food supplies for the civil population, &c.

It was mentioned that the East Coast ports were not now being used. Mr. Wardle stated that very little port labour now existed in those ports. He added that no withdrawal from the Western ports should take place without simultaneous substitution. Moreover, taking away 1,000 men under the age of 25 would seriously affect the discharge of ships.

On the other hand, it was pointed out that our imports were steadily decreasing, and consequently that less men were required for port labour.

In view of the urgent need of men for the army the War Cabinet approved—

The immediate withdrawal of 1,000 men under the age of 25, and the combing out of the remaining 5,000 by the 31st May at latest, or earlier, should the Transport Workers' Battalions be increased as authorised.

Medical Boards.

19. The War Cabinet approved a proposal of the Minister of National Service to cut down the ordinary Medical Boards from 1 chairman and 3 members to 1 chairman and 2 members, and the Travelling Medical Boards from 1 chairman and 2 members to 1 chairman and 1 member, thus speeding up the rate of examination. The Travelling Medical Boards should then be able to deal approximately with 90,000 men a week.

Calling-up Notices.

20. The War Cabinet approved a proposal of the Minister of National Service that the calling-up notices should be reduced from 14 days to 7 days, and authorised the Minister of National Service to make a statement to that effect when the House of Commons meets.

Coal Miners.

21. The Minister of National Service informed the War Cabinet that after 50,000 miners had been taken (see War Cabinet 370, Minute 9), there would be approximately 200,000 Grade I men over 16 years and 8 months still left in coal mines. He stated that he was in consultation with the Coal Controller as to the maximum number of these it was feasible to release if every possible economy were introduced. He added that any further release would have to be made from whatever coalfield could spare men, and that the resolution of the Miners' Federation that the quotas should be applied all over the coalfields of Great Britain proportionately to the total number of men employed, must be overridden.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Minister of National Service to inform the War Cabinet as soon as possible of the result of his consultation with the Coal Controller.

Withdrawal of Men from the Admiralty.

22. With reference to the withdrawal of 100,000 Grade I men employed in the various munitions industries, and the arrangement by which Admiralty A firms were to release 12,500 and dockyard and labour establishments 1,000 of this total, the Minister of National Service stated that these men were not being released as had been approved, and that consequently the whole position as regards recruiting of labour was being hampered. He pointed out that men in similar positions in other Departments who were working side by side with Admiralty men felt that equality of treatment was not being meted out.
The Minister of National Service therefore asked that the War Cabinet should direct the Admiralty and the Ministry of Munitions to release at a sufficient rate to enable the 100,000 men to be posted before the end of June.

The First Lord of the Admiralty stated that the men were not being released because no substitutes were forthcoming, in spite of the arrangement made when the decision to discharge these 12,500 men was arrived at.

The War Cabinet requested—

The First Lord of the Admiralty to go further into the question with the Minister of National Service with a view to enabling the releases to be carried out as asked without detriment to the output of mercantile shipbuilding.

23. A report was handed to the War Cabinet by the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff which indicated that a spasmodic bombardment of Dunkirk and Malo had been carried out by the enemy from Lueder boom between the afternoon of the 23rd and the morning of the 24th March. No damage of importance resulted.

24. The report also indicated that the German submarine "U.B. 48" had arrived at Ferrol in a damaged condition, and had been interned.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 25, 1918.

APPENDIX.

Munitions Losses.

1. The following are my revised figures for guns and carriages complete available by the 6th April, including those in reserve in France and England, or in transit or at proof:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gun Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-pr.</td>
<td>797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5-inch Howitzer</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-pr.</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-inch Howitzer</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-inch gun</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-inch Howitzer</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2-inch Howitzer</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-inch Howitzer</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total equipments</strong></td>
<td><strong>1906</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures are in advance of my previous estimate in each class—field, medium, and heavy—though the details are varied. They differ from the revised figures given in the printed minutes by including the current fortnight's output, which can be handed over immediately without waiting for proof.

2. There have been heavy expenditures and still heavier losses of small arms ammunition in this moving warfare, and General Headquarters has asked us for 230 million rounds at once. This can be supplied.

(Signed) WINSTON S. CHURCHILL.
March 26, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 373.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on
Tuesday, March 26, 1918, at 11-30 A.M.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.
The Right Hon. George N. Barnes, M.P.
Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.

The following were also present:—
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.

I. The Secretary reported that he had received a telephone message from Colonel Amery to the effect that a meeting was being held that day at Doullens, attended by Lord Milner, M. Clemenceau, Sir Douglas Haig, Sir Henry Wilson, General Foch, and General Pétain. The Conference would discuss the question of greater co-ordination in the command of the Allied troops on the Western Front. Sir Douglas Haig had expressed himself as feeling the necessity for some such co-ordinating authority.

German Reserves.

2. The Director of Military Operations reported that the Germans were drawing their reserves from all parts of the Western Front for the battle. They had withdrawn 15 divisions from the French
The number of German divisions identified in the battlefield since the beginning of the present fighting was 62, of which at least 15, and probably more, had been withdrawn. It was probable that the actual number of German divisions engaged or near the battlefield was over 80. In the confusion of battle it was difficult to obtain definite information, but it appeared safe to estimate that there were at present 52 German divisions opposed to our forces between Arras and the Oise. Against these forces we had 34 divisions, of which 7 had been withdrawn. Our figures include 2 French divisions, but not the other divisions on their way. It must be remembered that the German divisions are of slightly less strength than ours.

The Director of Military Operations reported that two divisions—the 12th and the New Zealand Division—referred to in War Cabinet 372, Minute 1, were due to arrive on the previous night in the neighbourhood of Albert. One Australian division had arrived south of Arras, while three more British and one French division from the north were coming down. With regard to this question of moving reserves promptly to the battlefield, it was pointed out how fatal it would be if there were any hesitation on the part of the French in sending their divisions to support us.

On this point, however, the Secretary was able to inform the Cabinet that he had heard by telephone from Versailles that Lord Milner had seen General Pétain and was quite satisfied that the French reserves were being pushed forward as fast as the railways could carry them.

3. Asked as to his views of the present situation and the prospects of the battle, Lord French said that he thought, from all the information that he had examined, that there was a chance of our being able to form an effective defensive line before we arrived at a stage at which it might be necessary to retire our right flank in order to protect the coast ports. In his opinion, it was too early to say yet when a decision on this latter point should be taken, because we must first see what the result of our reinforcements would be; but he held that the policy to be adopted in the contingency he had mentioned ought to be considered immediately. Supposing, for instance, that the enemy should capture Amiens, or should separate the British Army from the French Army, he was of opinion that there was no real alternative for us except to cover the Channel ports and hold the Cherbourg Peninsula at all costs. In such an event our main forces would not be severed (although the 5th Army, now under the French, might have to retire with them), but they would be separated from the French.

4. The Director of Military Operations reported that the enemy’s attacks had been renewed yesterday afternoon, when the Germans made a heavy attack to the south of the Somme. They had captured Nesle and Guiscard. The French reserves had then arrived, and from the latest information it appeared that the situation was now in hand. At the same time the Germans had attacked north of the Somme, and had driven back our troops to the line of the Ancre, namely, Albert–Miraumont–Boyelles. The situation in this sector was the most dangerous, because the Germans have captured the greater part of the Bazentin–Martinpuich plateau, except Montauban, which remained in our hands. Up to 10 A.M. this morning the enemy had not attacked, but it appeared likely that they might repeat to-day what they did yesterday. To sum up, General Maurice said that, although the situation was undoubtedly serious, it was still far from desperate. If our troops were forced back from the Ancre and a breach were made, the position might then become desperate.
This, however, has not yet happened; the line is still continuous and intact, and the French reserves have scarcely been touched.

5. The Director of Military Operations reported that there were no signs of any Austrian troops being moved to France from Italy, though some of their guns had been sent. He stated that there were some indications of an Austrian concentration on the Italian front.

6. With reference to War Cabinet 372, Minute 8, the Secretary reported that he had heard by telephone that Lord Milner had been unable to see General Pershing, but had arranged for General Rawlinson to interview him instead. In the event of General Rawlinson being unable to obtain a satisfactory undertaking from General Pershing, Lord Milner proposed to return from Doullens to see General Pershing on the subject.

7. The Prime Minister read to the War Cabinet a telegram which he had received from Lord Reading, which stated that he was going to speak in New York and would be glad to receive a steadying statement which would act as a stimulus for the obtaining of more men and ships.

The Prime Minister undertook to send Lord Reading a message in this sense.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 372, Minute 2, Lord Derby reported that he had seen the Adjutant-General, who had informed him that arrangements were being made for the transport of at least 20,000 men a day from the 29th instant until the source of supply is exhausted.

9. The question was raised of possible operations elsewhere to relieve the situation in the Somme area. After some discussion, the question was postponed until after the return of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff from his conferences in France, where this subject would certainly have been considered.


Lord French said that, while he was in complete agreement that it was essential to send every available man to France, at the same time he had felt bound to point out to the War Cabinet the effect of their decisions on Home Defence.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 372, Minute 13, the Prime Minister informed the War Cabinet that he had invited Mr. Duke, Sir Bryan Mahon, and the Head of the Irish Constabulary to come to London the same day to discuss the question of applying the Military Service Act to Ireland.

The view was expressed that there was much to be said for waiting for the Report of the Convention before taking steps for the application of compulsory recruitment in Ireland. Mr. GILL, a Nationalist, who was regarded as a good authority on the Irish question, was of opinion, the Prime Minister said, that conscription now, without waiting for the Report of the Convention, would lead to the most serious trouble. This report could not be received
immediately, because no meetings of the Convention were being held
during Holy Week, but there was reason to believe that when the
Report was made it would be in favour of the War Cabinet's letter
(War Cabinet 351, Minute 12).

12. The First Sea Lord reported that the steamship "Denbigh-
shire's" convoy was attacked by a submarine 6 miles west of
Holyhead at 5 P.M. on the 24th instant. The submarine was hit by
a shell from the steamship "Austrian," and was believed to be sunk.
No ship in the convoy was sunk.

13. The First Sea Lord reported that a raid had been carried
out on Bruges during the night of the 23rd-24th instant. Four
230-lb. and 48 112-lb. bombs were dropped. Good shooting was
made, bombs being seen to fall across the east and west basins, the
tongue of land, and the southern quays of the commercial basin.
All our machines returned safely.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 26, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 374.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on
Wednesday, March 27, 1918, at 11.30 a.m.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.
Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.
The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.

Captain L. F. Burghis, Assistant Secretary.
Lieutenant-Colonel L. Wilson, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P., Assistant Secretary.
Submarines.

1. The First Sea Lord reported that an enemy submarine was certainly damaged, and probably destroyed, by patrol-boat “No. 31” in St. George's Channel.

French Submarine “Watt.”

2. The First Sea Lord stated that he had received a report that the French submarine “Watt” had been attacked by one of our convoys by mistake. He regretted to state that the captain and one man had been killed, and three others wounded.

Enemy Submarines at Santorin.

3. The First Sea Lord reported that he had received information from Syra that the Greek authorities stated that an enemy submarine had entered Santorin harbour on the morning of the 26th instant, and that four merchant ships in the harbour had been sunk.

Bombing Raids.

4. The First Sea Lord stated that an enemy machine had been brought down at Dunkirk on our side of the line yesterday morning, and that a formation of eight scouts attacked Dunkirk the same evening. Four of these were destroyed, one falling in our lines. He also stated that 17 25-lb. and 27 16-lb. bombs had been dropped on Ghistelles aerodrome. Four bombs had also been dropped on Zeebrugge mole, and four near the coastal motor-boat base at Blankenberge. All our machines had returned safely.

Immediate Reinforcements and their Transport.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 373, Minute 8, the Secretary reported that he had received the following letter from the First Lord of the Admiralty, with regard to the proposed increase of the movement of troops to France:

"Admiralty, Whitehall,
March 26, 1918.

"Dear Hankey,

"At a meeting in the Prime Minister’s room with the Director of Movements and Railways and the Director of Transport and Shipping, the Prime Minister, Mr. Bonar Law, and myself being present, and also at a later stage the Adjutant-General, it was decided to increase the movement of troops to France to 30,000 a day.

"I was asked whether the Admiralty could provide additional escorts for this number. I said that, while it might be possible to reduce escorts in other directions and devote them to this cross-Channel work, I did not feel that my Naval Advisers would recommend that any of our consolidated forces should be reduced at the present time, and that it was infinitely preferable to take the necessary risk and send troop transports either unescorted or with a lighter escort, whether that be attained by increasing the size of the convoys or reducing the strength of the escort.

"I was to let the Director of Transport and Shipping and the Director of Movements and Railways know if, upon consulting my Naval Advisers, any modification of this view was to be made. I find that no modification is desired by them, and they concur in the views I expressed, and orders have already been given to effect what is desired; but, of course, it will be understood by the Cabinet that the thinning of the escorts and the possibility of troopships going unescorted, or with reduced escort, involves a risk which must be faced, but which, in the circumstances, the Admiralty consider preferable to reducing our consolidated forces elsewhere.

"As far as possible, it will be arranged to send these troopships with an escort, even although it is an inadequate one, so
that, should one be torpedoed, the escort will be available for
life-saving.

"You will, perhaps, place this upon the minutes of the
next Cabinet Meeting, so that it shall be on record.

"A copy has been sent to the Adjutant-General, to the
Director of Movements and Railways, and to the Shipping
Controller.

"Yours sincerely,

"(Signed)  E.  GEDDES."

It was stated that 30,000 men could be got across to-morrow,
but the Secretary of State for War said that he could not work up
to this number at present, for two reasons:

(a.) That he could not move the men at present in sufficient
numbers to the ports.
(b.) That France would not be able to absorb as many men at
the present moment into the army.

6. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff explained the
present situation on a map. He stated that the enemy had made a
small pocket between the Ancre and the Somme, just east of
Corbie, at the junction of the two rivers. Later in the meeting,
however, information was received that the Australians had counter-
attacked and captured Morlancourt. The enemy forces were now
about 25 kilom. from Amiens. Reports had been received that it
was now raining, and the change in the weather should be in our
favour. He reported that south of the Somme our troops were very
weak, and that the resistance in this particular area was not very
strong. Questioned as to any signs of the attack dying away,
General Wilson stated that there were such signs north of the
Somme. He further said that a message had been intercepted
which gave information that a strong attack was likely to be made
at Bucquoy, and that a fresh division of three German Guards
regiments had been brought up with this object. We had in this
area a New Zealand division and a number of tired divisions in
reserve, but the 2nd Canadian Division was arriving shortly. With
regard to our reserves still unengaged, General Wilson stated that
there were five divisions available, two of which should arrive
to-day. He further reported that the French were taking over the
line up to the Somme, and that General Gough, commanding the
5th Army, was now under the orders of General Payolle.

Attention was drawn to the menace to Amiens, and the Chief
of the Imperial General Staff considered the next few days critical.

Field-Marshal Lord French considered that the ground east of
Amiens was very suitable for defensive purposes.

General Wilson reported that nine French divisions had been
moved up as reinforcements, and that more divisions (the number
of which he mentioned) were on their way.

At a later stage in the meeting the Director of Military
Operations reported that a telegram had just been received stating
that during the night the British troops were pressed back a short
distance on both banks of the Somme, and that early this morning
they were holding a position Rosières-Harbonnieres-Sailley-le-
Sec-Méricourt-L'Abbé, and that the enemy had now reached
Albert. General Maurice also stated that at one time the enemy had
crossed the Ancre north of Albert, but had been driven out by a
counter-attack, and that north of this point there was no change in
the situation. Information had been received that south of the
river the 16th Irish Division, although it had suffered very heavy
losses, was holding the ground well, but that a further attack was
anticipated in this area. South of Rosières the Vth Army, under
the command of the French, was holding its positions well. There was no change at Roye and Noyon. Our aeroplanes had dropped 224 tons of bombs on Bapaume and Péronne, and the low-flying machines were inflicting heavy losses on the enemy's reserves.

7. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that the Vth Army could no longer be regarded as a fighting unit. It was even doubtful whether any of the corps in this army could be considered as fighting units. There were, perhaps, some divisions, but there was very little information available, and he had at the present no idea of the number of casualties. He stated that this army had passed to the command of the French, who were now relieving it, and who were gradually extending towards the Somme. It was hoped that by degrees the divisions would be taken out of the line and re-organised. General Wilson stated that the French were detaining at Montdidier, and in this area it was really a race as to whether the French could collect enough men to prevent the capture of Amiens. It had been agreed that the British and French forces should do their utmost to avoid being separated.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 373, Minute 6, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that General Rawlinson had seen General Pershing at Versailles yesterday, and that General Pershing would not agree to put the American battalions in the British divisions, as he was very anxious to keep his organisation of divisions intact. He had, however, agreed to send American engineers to the front, and to put American divisions into the line to relieve French divisions. General Wilson said that there was to be another meeting at Versailles to-day.

The War Council decided that—

A strongly-worded telegram, drafted by the Prime Minister, with a view to ultimate publication, should be sent direct to President Wilson from the War Cabinet, explaining the whole situation.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 373, Minute 1, Lord Milner gave a full account of his recent visit to France, particulars of which he undertook to circulate. At an important Conference at Doullens yesterday, which was attended by the President of the French Republic, M. Clemenceau, M. Loucheur, Lord Milner himself, Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Pétain, and General Foch, the following decision had been taken:—

"Le Général Foch est chargé par les gouvernements britannique et français de coordonner l'action des armées alliées sur le front ouest. Il s'entendra à cet effet avec les généraux en chef, qui sont invités à lui fournir tous les renseignements nécessaires."

"General Foch is charged by the British and French Governments to co-ordinate the action of the Allied armies on the Western front. He will work to this end with the Commanders-in-Chief, who are asked to furnish him with all necessary information."

"(Signé) CLEMENCEAU."

"(Signed) CLEMENCEAU.

MILNER."

"Doullens, le 26 mars, 1918."  

"Doullens, March 26, 1918."

Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig had approved and welcomed this arrangement. Lord Milner explained that the practical effect of this arrangement was to put the supreme control under General
The War Cabinet approved this arrangement, and placed on record their thanks to Lord Milner for the action he had taken.

The War Cabinet decided that the following action should be taken:

(a.) That the Chief of the Imperial General Staff should inform Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig of the approval of the War Cabinet to the above agreement.

(b.) That the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should inform the French Government by telegram of the War Cabinet's approval.

(c.) That the Prime Minister should incorporate this information in his telegram to President Wilson, alluded to in Minute 8.

German Reserves.

10. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that the Germans still had 31 divisions in reserve and not yet employed. Their total strength was 193 divisions on the Western front, of which 70 had been identified by the British forces during the recent fighting.

Telegram to Lord Reading.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 373, Minute 7, the War Cabinet took note of the following telegram which had been sent by the Prime Minister to Lord Reading to be read at a banquet in New York:

"Your personal telegram of 25th March. We are at the crisis of the war. Attacked by an immense superiority of German troops our army has been forced to retire. The retirement has been carried out methodically before the pressure of a steady succession of fresh German reserves, which are suffering enormous losses. The situation is being faced with splendid courage and resolution. The dogged pluck of our troops has for the moment checked the ceaseless onrush of the enemy, and the French have now joined in the struggle. But this battle, the greatest and most momentous in the history of the world, is only just beginning. Throughout it French and British are buoyed up with the knowledge that the great republic of the West will neglect no effort which can hasten its troops and its ships to Europe. In war, time is vital. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of getting American reinforcements across the Atlantic in the shortest possible space of time.

(Signed) "LLOYD GEORGE."
12. With reference to War Cabinet 379, Minute 11, a preliminary discussion took place on the subject of compulsory military service in Ireland.

The Prime Minister said that he had yesterday seen the Chief Secretary for Ireland, General Sir Bryan Mahon, and General Byrne, the head of the Royal Irish Constabulary, whom he had asked to come over to consider the question of man-power. He had first interviewed Mr. Duke, who had expressed grave doubts on the proposal. He then saw General Byrne, who expressed the opinion that he had no doubt that compulsory military service in Ireland would be a mistake; that, by passing and enforcing such a measure, both the whole of the Catholics and the Nationalists in Ireland would be united against the British Empire; that there would be the greatest difficulty in enlisting men; that in towns there would be actual riots; and that, when the men were obtained, he was very doubtful as to what their actual worth would be. The Prime Minister had then interviewed Sir Bryan Mahon, who, on the whole, was in favour of the proposal. General Mahon, however, was of opinion that considerable trouble would ensue in Ireland. The Prime Minister informed the War Cabinet that he had left General Mahon and General Byrne together, in order to discuss the proposal, and to make a report for his information. The Chief Secretary had forwarded the report to the Prime Minister (Appendix).

On the other hand, the War Cabinet were reminded that the enforcement of a drastic application of compulsory military service in Great Britain, as contemplated in the draft Bill circulated by the Minister of National Service (Paper G.T.-4036), would be very difficult if Ireland were exempted.

The War Cabinet decided that—

This question should be discussed at a War Cabinet meeting to be summoned for 5.30 that evening, and that the Chief Secretary for Ireland, General Sir Bryan Mahon, and General Byrne, the head of the Royal Irish Constabulary, should be invited to attend.

With a view to throwing some light on the probable fighting value of conscripted Irishmen, on which expert opinion is divided—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff was asked to obtain the facts as to the fighting qualities displayed by the 16th Irish Division during the recent fighting.

In the most recent phase of the battle this division had been reported to be fighting well (see Minute 6).

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 27, 1918.
Conscription can be enforced, but with the greatest difficulty. It will be bitterly opposed by the united Nationalists and the clergy. The present time is the worst for it since I have been in Ireland, because the cry will be: England down, "Ireland's opportunity." Some of the difficulties would be organised strikes dislocating the life of the country, railway, post office and telegraph communications cut. There are fewer troops in Ireland than there have been for some time. More have to be taken. We would have to have additional troops for the time, at least two brigades (? I think considerably more). These, I do not anticipate, would be required for more than three months.

Ireland would have to be divided into several districts. It would be a question that will have to be considered if compulsion is put in force in the whole simultaneously, or district by district. But to render it feasible either way, the country must be put under some kind of military control. Law would have to be dropped, because ordinarily, for the first fortnight at least, there would be bloodshed and a great deal of suffering to the civil population in every way, and hardships.

The number of men we would get I cannot estimate. Ten months ago I estimated 160,000, with very liberal exemptions. It ought to be more now with increased age. I am of opinion that some of the men when got would make good and reliable soldiers (a considerable number might be likely to give trouble). The police would have to be concentrated into larger parties, thus curtailing their usefulness. Coast watching would be interfered with, also tillage.

I would suggest that the first thing is to get all known leaders out of the way at once; extra troops should be on the spot simultaneously, and everyone, irrespective of who he is, arrested on first sign of giving trouble. These measures would be drastic, but the situation is serious, or it would not be considered necessary to have conscription at this inopportune time.
WAR CABINET, 375.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Wednesday, March 27, 1918, at 5:30 p.m.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.
Major P. Lloyd Greame, M.C., Secretary, Ministry of National Service.
Mr. G. H. Wardle, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Board of Trade (for Minutes 3 and 4).
Mr. Stephen Walsh, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Local Government Board (for Minutes 2 to 4).

The Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Minister of Munitions (for Minutes 2 to 4).
The Right Hon. Sir A. Stanley, M.P., President, Board of Trade (for Minutes 3 and 4).
The Right Hon. C. Addison, M.D., M.P., Minister of Reconstruction.
The Right Hon. R. Munro, K.C., M.P., Secretary for Scotland (for Minutes 3 and 4).
Brigadier-General J. A. Byrne, Inspector-General Royal Irish Constabulary (for part Minute 2).

Professor W. G. Adams.

Captain L. F. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.
Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.
1. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that he had received information from France to the effect that the enemy had occupied the villages of Davenscourt and Laboissière, which brought them to within three miles of Montdidier, where the French were detraining. No details were yet available to enable an opinion to be formed as to the seriousness of this information. It would be embarrassing to the French reinforcements if this railway fell into the enemy's hands.

On the British front the position appeared for the moment to be quieter, except for an attack at Bucquoy by the 3rd German Guards, which did not appear to have made much progress.

2. With reference to War Cabinet 374, Minute 12, the War Cabinet further considered the application of compulsory military service to Ireland, and had before them a memorandum by the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Irish Command, together with observations upon it by General Byrne (Paper G.T.-4049).

The Prime Minister outlined the proposals put forward by the Minister of National Service for increasing the available manpower of the Kingdom. These proposals, if they all materialised, should furnish 555,000 men from Great Britain, and 150,000 from Ireland, in all about 700,000 men. The numbers from Great Britain were made up as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men exempted by Tribunals:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Grade I</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Grades</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserved occupations, if drastically combed out</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining (in addition to the recent 50,000)</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By raising the age to 50 (in Grade I)</td>
<td>110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By lowering the age to 17</td>
<td>120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>555,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such numbers were based on the assumption that the situation was thoroughly bad, and that the nation was bound to make a supreme effort. Clergymen and ministers of religion were included, but no further men were included from shipbuilding nor from transport. It was not intended that boys aged 17 should be sent overseas, but that they should be trained at home in order to take the place of others who might be sent abroad.

The Prime Minister next summarised, for the benefit of those who had not been present, the views expressed at previous discussions by Field-Marshal Lord French, as well as the views expressed to him personally by General Sir Bryan Mahon and General Byrne (War Cabinet 374, Minute 12). The Prime Minister suggested that two alternatives presented themselves:

(a.) Ireland could be told, “Come and fight, and without any loss of time we will give you Home Rule on the basis of the Convention Report”; that is to say, beginning by saying that their nationality was recognised, and the right of self-determination given them, but that they must fight for the Empire;

or

(b.) We should say to Ireland, “Are you prepared to fight for this country in this emergency?” Ireland might reply, “We will fight if you give us self-government.” On the other hand, if Ireland said, “No, under no conditions
will we fight," then it would be hopeless to invite Parliament to take its thoughts away from the war in order to carry through a Home Rule measure.

The Chief Secretary for Ireland expressed the view that it would be impossible to extend the Military Service Act to Ireland in such a way as to help the war; it would be a complete change of policy; it would unite all Catholics and Nationalists against us. General Mahon believed that, sooner or later, 150,000 men could be got out of Ireland, but in his (Mr. Duke's) view we might almost as well recruit Germans. He believed the result would be the loss of Ireland. He suggested that, after the conclusion of the Convention, it might be possible to obtain powers, by amendment of the Military Service Act, to apply a process similar to the Militia Ballot by Order in Council for the maintenance of the nine Irish regiments. The Ballot could be applied equally over the country, beginning with the age class 20-25, which probably offered least resistance. Generals Mahon and Byrne expressed the view that this method would require exactly the same machinery as the larger proposal, but that it would disarm some part of the opposition. The advantage of this scheme was that only a proportion of the men would be taken, and that those that remained would be so glad to have escaped that they would not make trouble. It would be necessary, simultaneously with this arrangement, to give legislative effect to the recommendations of the Convention. It was fallacious to draw analogies from the fact that the Germans had made the hostile elements within their Empire fight against us. The existence of a conscript system over many years made such analogies inapplicable.

The Secretary of State for War pointed out that Mr. Duke's proposal would involve the incorporation of many dangerous men in the Irish units instead of spreading them throughout the Army.

Field-Marshal Lord French agreed with Lord Derby that this would be most undesirable, although it would be less objectionable to put them into battalions than into divisions, as the battalions could be more easily mixed with loyal troops.

Mr. Churchill was rather attracted by Mr. Duke's suggestion, because it recognised nationality, and he would be inclined to support it if it meant that from 70,000 to 80,000 men would be forthcoming with the goodwill of the rest of the population. He thought the Government should declare its policy clearly in advance, and put its demands sufficiently high in order to have something to concede.

Mr. Walsh said the Government was certain to be opposed by Mr. Dillon. On the other hand, he did not believe the man-power proposals now put forward could be applied in England unless at the same time conscription was applied in Ireland. On the question of calling up boys of 17, he was certain that such a proposal would meet with the most strenuous opposition in the ranks of labour. There would be strikes among the miners against the lowering of the age, but they would offer no opposition to the raising of it.

The War Cabinet felt that in the present crisis the important question was not the degree of difficulty in obtaining the Irish recruits so much as whether they would fight. In this connection, and with reference to War Cabinet 374, Minutes 6 and 12, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that he had made enquiries, and there was no evidence that the 16th Division had not fought well; its losses had not been so great as had at first been supposed. Lord Derby pointed out, however, that a third of this division was now composed of English drafts. General Mahon and General Byrne, who were invited to express their views, both considered that the moral situation would be slightly eased by applying the suggested Ballot; that the difficulties would nevertheless be very great, but that eventually the men would be obtained. General Byrne anticipated that the efficient Sinn Fein organisation would probably
be utilised to develop conscientious objection and passive resistance on a large scale. He considered that we should do well if half the recruits taken became efficient soldiers, but General Mahon thought that the proportion would be as high as 50 per cent. Lord French suggested that, by training the men in a theatre of war where extreme penalties could be inflicted for serious breaches of discipline, these men could be made into soldiers. General Byrne agreed with the Field-Marshal that the men should be removed from Ireland as soon as recruited, and should be trained in France. General Mahon said that, in order to carry out conscription, it would be necessary, as a temporary measure, to increase the garrison of Ireland, now numbering 20,000 men, by perhaps two brigades, although Lord French thought this was an over-estimate if the Cyclist Division were utilised.

Before they withdrew the Prime Minister impressed strongly on General Mahon and General Byrne the importance of avoiding arousing suspicion in Ireland that the question of extending conscription to Ireland was under discussion.

The Prime Minister pointed out that it would be impossible to carry Home Rule in this country unless compulsory military service, or its equivalent, were applied to Ireland.

Mr. Balfour suggested that, while it would not do to give the aspect of a bargain to the transaction, the effect of a bargain could be obtained by bringing in the Convention Bill and the Military Service Bill simultaneously. On the other hand, there was the danger that the Convention might raise its terms.

3. The War Cabinet had a short discussion on the preliminary draft Bill for the amendment of the Military Service Act circulated by the Minister of National Service (Paper Q.T.-4036).

Sir Auckland Geddes explained the main provisions of the Bill, and indicated that it was entirely military in character, and did not deal with industrial service, although, of course, the men called up might be used on aerodromes, heavy digging, and so forth.

Dr. Addison thought it to be a serious mistake to abolish the existing Tribunals and to leave the decisions on recruiting to the discretion of the Minister of National Service. Such a proposal altered the whole machinery of recruiting, would be opposed in the House of Commons, and, unless the new arrangement was certain to secure more men, he should advise dropping it from the Bill.

Sir Auckland Geddes explained that the proposal now was to obtain every possible man for the Army, but the Government would hold back only the men absolutely essential for civil occupations.

Mr. Barnes thought it would be preferable to have two Bills involving different degrees of combing-out. He was doubtful about the inclusion of Ireland; he thought the age might safely be raised to 50, and exemptions wiped out; but if the age was to be lowered to 17, then pledges should be given that the boys should not be sent overseas for military duty.

In this connection it was suggested that the boys might be registered and given a certain amount of military training, as was done with the “C” Class of Volunteers.

Sir Auckland Geddes was requested to put his Bill into the hands of the parliamentary draughtsman, for immediate circulation to the War Cabinet.
4. With reference to War Cabinet 372, Minute 14, the Chancellor of the Exchequer called the attention of the War Cabinet to certain legal difficulties in connection with the immediate summoning of Parliament. He thought, however, these could be got over by a subsequent Act of Indemnity.

Mr. Duke said he thought the Report of the Convention would be in the hands of the Cabinet on Saturday, the 6th April.

It was generally agreed that it would be easier to proceed with man-power legislation in Parliament if the military situation had had time to clear up definitely, for better or for worse.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff thought that within a week such a definite decision would have been reached, and in this view Lord French concurred.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 28, 1918.
WARRINGFORD, 376.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Thursday, March 28, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, C.B., G.C.M.G.

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.

The following were also present:


The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.


The Right Hon. Sir A. C. Geddes, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service (for Minutes 5 to 7).

Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord.

The Right Hon. H. E. Duke, K.C., M.P., Chief Secretary for Ireland (for Minutes 5 to 7).

The Right Hon. Sir James Campbell, Bart., M.P., Lord Chief Justice of Ireland.

The Right Hon. Sir Edward Carson, K.C., M.P. (for Minutes 1 to 5).

Professor W. G. S. Adams (for Minutes 5 to 7).


Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.

Paymaster-in-Chief P. H. Row, R.N., Assistant Secretary.

The Western Front.

German Attack.

The Present Position.

1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that both north and south of the Somme heavy fighting had taken place on the 27th instant. The enemy in certain directions had made some progress, but vigorous counter-attacks by British, Australian, and New Zealand divisions are reported to have greatly restored the situation. South of the Somme our troops and the French were also heavily attacked, but had maintained their position except for the capture of Montdidier by the Germans. The
capture of this place affected the detraining of the French reserves, which was not being carried out at a point as close as possible to Montdidier as well as at St. Just, where a parallel line exists at a distance of 10 miles from Montdidier. The French General Headquarters had stated that they were satisfied as regards the situation in the vicinity of Montdidier.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff explained the plan on which General Fayolle was operating. Field-Marshal Lord French and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff both considered that the situation had not deteriorated. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that seventy-eight German divisions had been identified on the battle front, four more had probably arrived yesterday, and the Germans had twenty-two fresh divisions in reserve. He mentioned that four United States divisions were replacing four French divisions, with a view to the latter being utilised, if necessary, on the battle front. He further stated that the War Cabinet, in taking into consideration the situation, must bear in mind that in the near future, when the Germans get their heavy guns up, the very important railway junction at Amiens will be under fire, which will be extremely serious.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff further stated that the enemy was to-day making an attack east of Arras. Sir Douglas Haig, however, anticipated this attack, and had divisions in reserve behind the line.

2. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that a telegram had been received from the General Officer Commanding in Mesopotamia to the effect that our operations on the Euphrates had been completely successful. On the evening of the 26th March the enemy's position north of Khan Baghldi was carried by assault, and our cavalry, by means of a wide movement, had established itself in the rear of the Turks astride the Aleppo road. The attempt of the enemy to break through the cavalry failed, without heavy losses, and practically the whole of the Turkish force on the right bank of the Euphrates below Haditha was captured and destroyed. The pursuit of the fugitives is in progress, and up to the present prisoners are estimated at 3,000, including 200 officers, 2,000 rifles, 10 guns, many machine guns, 900 animals, and other booty spread over a wide region were also taken. Our casualties are very slight.

3. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that H.M.S. "Kale," "Exe," and "Wavnev" had passed into one of our minefields, and that H.M.S. "Kale" had sunk and H.M.S. "Exe" had been damaged, one officer and forty-two men being lost from the former and three officers and two men from the latter. The vessels were off their authorised course and in a prohibited area. A Court of Enquiry is being held.

4. The Deputy First Sea Lord reported that bombing raids had been carried out from Dunkirk on the night of the 26th March on the railway communications in the rear of the enemy battle-front, a total of over 6 tons of bombs being dropped. He added that a raid was also carried out on Ostend seaplane base.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 375, Minute 2, the Prime Minister informed the War Cabinet that, with a view to obtaining additional evidence as to the feeling that might be expected in Ireland in regard to conscription and its effects on the Convention, he had asked Sir Edward Carson and Sir James Campbell, the
Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, to attend the meeting for the purpose of giving the War Cabinet the benefit of their opinions on these matters.

Sir James Campbell said that he had been considering the matter anxiously, and some two years ago there had been three opportunities when, in his opinion, conscription could have been put in force in Ireland without serious trouble arising, but that advantage had not been taken of them at the time. The most favourable of these three had been after the rebellion. Since then the position had vitally changed. During the past two years a new class had grown up, and the late backbone of the Irish disaffection, namely, farmers and their sons, had given place to a body composed of shop assistants, clerks, Government officials, school teachers, &c., who were more or less educated and had ideas of their own, and also had the characteristic of being devoid of fear. It was also to be borne in mind that emigration during the past four years from Ireland had been stopped, and that whereas before the war the rate of emigration was 30,000 a year, it had only been 40,000 in the past four years, which left a balance of those who would have emigrated, if they could, of 50,000. Of this latter figure, 50,000 might be taken as representing young men of military age who had not the slightest intention of fighting. As regards the educated and semi-educated class referred to above, it must be understood that it was not bluff on their part when they defied the Magistrates before whom they were brought; they did not even take the trouble to defend themselves, as in the past, and claimed that they were haled before a British Court to which they owed no allegiance.

Sir James Campbell was convinced that conscription could only now be enforced in Ireland at the cost of tremendous bloodshed. National military service, if applied to Ireland at all, must be of universal application, and no system of exemptions by tribunal was practicable. Further, it must be borne in mind that, if conscription was introduced, practically the whole of the clergy, from the Archbishops downwards, would take the field against the British Government, and the whole of the Nationalist officials and all public bodies would also go against the Government, as well as certain sections in Ulster, inasmuch as the agricultural population of Ulster objected to conscription, and as regards voluntary recruiting, had done little better than the other parts of Ireland. If it was a question of only taking men who could be depended upon, the numbers gained by the introduction of conscription would, in his opinion, be very small.

Questioned as to why the situation should have changed so much as regards conscription since the rebellion, Sir James Campbell stated that, after the rebellion, the people generally were gravely concerned at the failure of the same and the penalties to which they consequently rendered themselves liable; and if conscription had then been introduced, the tendency would have been to look upon it as an act of clemency in lieu of punishment authorised by law, and further the number of Sinn Feiners at that date was small compared with the present.

A suggestion was made that Sir James Campbell should get into touch with a few of the leading men in Ireland whose views might be of help, and discuss the matter of conscription with them; but this course was considered undesirable, as it might lead to the break-up of the Convention.

Sir Edward Carson stated that he did not profess to know the situation as regards the South and West of Ireland, and he did not feel that he could go against the views expressed by Sir James Campbell, whose whole heart was in the war, and who had formerly strongly favoured compulsory service for Ireland. He thought that it would be desirable, as a first step, to get the Bill, which would result in much opposition in the House of Commons, but could be passed by closure. That, however, would cause tremendous opposition in Ireland, and the Nationalists would probably endeavour to get back under their banner the other Irish parties. He was of opinion that, with the strong opposition of the Sinn Feiners, the
number of reliable men that could be got would be very small, as at least two-thirds to be obtained would be anti-British. He was therefore forced to the conclusion, with much regret, that the result of conscription in Ireland would be such that its introduction was not worth contemplating, in view of the disturbances that would be caused. He felt that if conscription was made applicable only to Ulster, which would tend to create the feeling that one party was being bled at the expense of another, there would be trouble amongst the farmers of that county. While expressing views in the above sense on the question as viewed from a purely Irish standpoint, Sir Edward Carson, when asked by Lord Curzon to give his opinion from an Imperial point of view, agreed that if the British Government found themselves unable to get men from Great Britain without enforcing conscription in Ireland, the question became a very different one.

In view of the effect which conscription would have on the Convention, Mr. Duke suggested that the two matters might be treated separately, namely, that the Convention was one matter and part of our permanent policy and should be kept in the forefront, and, secondly, conscription under entire military control should be treated as a secondary matter, dependent on the acceptance of the Convention. He stated that he was under the impression that a Defence Committee, appointed by the Convention, was rendering a separate Report as regards military control in Ireland, and that the Imperial Parliament was held to be responsible. Mr. Duke mentioned that, as far as his experience of Ireland went, it was not impossible to carry out in that country measures which were demonstrably just.

[At this point Sir Edward Carson left the meeting.]

In the general discussion that followed, it was mentioned—

(a.) That since the rebellion the number of Sinn Feiners had multiplied by at least twenty or thirty.
(b.) That the question of conscription had now become an Imperial one, and that we could only maintain our position in the war by further sacrifices and effort.
(c.) That directly conscription for Ireland was broached as being probable, the Convention would break up, and we should have the whole of Ireland against us.
(d.) That the Irish, even if conscripted, would not fight, and would be a weakness instead of a strength, and that it was possible they might even shoot their officers. In this connection, however, the military authorities present held the view that, if Irishmen were once conscripted, spread over the whole of the British Army, and subjected to discipline, the likelihood of their failing to fight well was remote.
(e.) That, in deciding as to conscription or otherwise, and its effects on the Convention, our position as regards the United States and the Dominions must be carefully borne in mind.
(f.) If further conscription was forced on Great Britain and conscription not applied to Ireland, the British public would not submit to the passing of legislation based on the Report of the Convention.
(g.) That the Report of the Convention might be accepted by Parliament, subject to conscription being enforced as regards Ireland.
(h.) That the Government are pledged to Home Rule in the terms of the Prime Minister’s letter to the Convention, and that, if there was a substantial measure of agreement with such letter on the part of the Convention, the logical order would be first to pass Home Rule, so removing a
wrong, or an imaginary wrong, to the people of Ireland, and then to bring in conscription.

(i.) That provision might be made in the Bill for the Government to take power by Order in Council to extend conscription to Ireland, and not to put such power into operation until the Report of the Convention had been accepted by the Government.

With reference to War Cabinet 375, Minute 3, Sir Auckland Geddes stated that his proposal to raise 450,000 men in England could not be carried out without tremendous industrial disturbance, and it was mentioned, in connection with taking a quota of men away from agriculture, that, as compared with 1916, some 4,000,000 additional acres of land had been ploughed in the United Kingdom, and that any withdrawal in that direction in the near future would be disastrous to our agricultural policy. Sir Auckland Geddes continued that to obtain these numbers it would be essential to do away with Tribunals. He pointed out that in next May or June there would be a big gap as regards drafts for the Army. At the present moment he was putting on every possible pressure, and the number of recruits was improving, but that every day lost in bringing forward a Bill for extending compulsory military service meant a further gap as regards the intake of men for drafts. He added that, as far as he had gathered when touring the country, the British public would not accept an extension of the age to 50 with no Tribunals unless conscription was applied to Ireland. He stated that, as regards his numbers, he had made allowance for an increase in the numbers employed in shipyards. There was no real reservoir of fighting men in the luxury trades now, and to obtain the men required, if the mines were to be maintained, important trades other than direct war trades would have to be very seriously curtailed.

As regards the question of introducing to Parliament any extension of the Military Service Act, a view was expressed that it was desirable to defer the introduction of any Bill until the Report of the Convention had been received. It was stated that its receipt might be expected on or about the 4th April, and that therefore it would be desirable to defer the meeting of Parliament from the 2nd until the 9th April. As against any delay, it was urged that the feeling in the country at the present moment was such that any measures introduced forthwith into Parliament with a view to strengthening our armed forces in the field would have much better prospects of being passed speedily through both Houses than if there were delay, and the situation had cleared somewhat.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported, however, that it was improbable that the situation would have finally cleared by 9th April. He urged with the utmost emphasis, and asked that it might be placed on record, that from a military point of view every single day of delay in introducing new measures for additional men was dangerous, and that each day now was of value. He added, with equal emphasis, that this crisis was only the first of several, and possibly not even the most deadly.

The Secretary of State for War and Field-Marshal Lord French supported General Wilson’s views on the military importance of early action.

The War Cabinet, after deliberating amongst themselves, decided that—

Parliament should not be summoned to meet next Tuesday, 2nd April, 1918. (See also War Cabinet 376 A, where Lord Milner’s dissent from this conclusion is recorded.)
7. The general view was expressed that the feeling of this country was such that to lower the age of recruiting to 17 was impracticable.

S. With reference to War Cabinet 374, Minute 8, the Prime Minister read a telegram, which had arrived during the meeting, from Mr. Baker, in which he recorded that the following action was being taken by General Pershing:

(a.) The four American divisions were being put immediately into the trenches in order to relieve French divisions.

(b.) Three regiments of engineer troops were being sent to assist Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, and further divisions would be sent as soon as transportation was available.

(c.) In the case of American divisions under orders to leave the United States of America, the infantry would be sent first.

The War Cabinet expressed gratification at the prompt action taken by Mr. Baker and General Pershing.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 28, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 377.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, March 29, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:
The Prime Minister (in the Chair).
The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.
Major-General Sir F. B. Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for Minute 1).

Admiral Sir R. E. Wemyss, K.O.B., O.M.C., M.V.O., First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff (for Minutes 4 to 7).
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord (for Minutes 4 to 7).
Mr. Graeme Thomson, C.B., Director of Transports and Shipping (for Minute 7).
The Right Hon. Sir A. C. Geddes, K.C.B., M.P., Minister of National Service (for Minutes 5, 6, 8, 10, and 11).
The Right Hon. Sir George Cave, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs (for Minute 11).

Mr. Thomas Jones, Assistant Secretary.
Lieutenant-Colonel L. Wilson, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P., Assistant Secretary.
Captain L. F. Burgess, Assistant Secretary.

[1365–377]
7. The general view was expressed that the feeling of this country was such that to lower the age of recruiting to 17 was impracticable.

8. With reference to War Cabinet 374, Minute 8, the Prime Minister read a telegram, which had arrived during the meeting, from Mr. Baker, in which he recorded that the following action was being taken by General Pershing:

(a.) The four American divisions were being put immediately into the trenches in order to relieve French divisions.

(b.) Three regiments of engineer troops were being sent to assist Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig, and further divisions would be sent as soon as transportation was available.

(c.) In the case of American divisions under orders to leave the United States of America, the infantry would be sent first.

The War Cabinet expressed gratification at the prompt action taken by Mr. Baker and General Pershing.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 28, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 377.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Friday, March 29, 1918, at 11.30 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).


The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., M.V.O., First Lord of the Admiralty.


Mr. THOMAS JONES, Assistant Secretary.

Lieutenant-Colonel L. Wilson, C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P., Assistant Secretary.

Captain L. F. Burgis, Assistant Secretary.
1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that seventy-nine German divisions had been identified, exclusive of those identified on the French front during the last two days. The total number of German divisions would be about eighty-five if we allowed the French six or seven divisions which they had not so far reported to us. On this basis, the Germans had about twelve fresh divisions left. One of the most hopeful signs, in the opinion of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, was the immense rate at which German divisions are passing through the battle. It was very extravagant in time and transport for them to withdraw a division before it was essential.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that the attack in front of Arras appeared to have done us no great damage, and to have been repulsed with greatly inferior numbers. Further south, a slight advantage had been secured by the enemy, and they had gained the Morlancourt position. Immediately south of the Somme, nothing but the remnants of the Vth Army were available. In this connection, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff said that much depended on whether the French counter-offensive west of Noyon was able to make satisfactory progress. It was unlikely that the Germans had so far been able to bring up guns heavy enough to shell Amiens.

At a later stage the Director of Military Operations informed the War Cabinet that there had been no further attacks on our front. He further stated that the attack on Arras had been brought to a standstill. It was expected that the Germans would attack south of the Somme today, but that no attack had been made up to the present. As regards the front held by the French, he considered that the line south of the Oise was now safe. Between the Somme and the Oise there were now fifteen French divisions, of which seven were new divisions ready for immediate use, while it was expected two more infantry divisions and two more cavalry divisions would arrive today. He reported that between the Somme and the Oise the Germans had twenty-three divisions, of which only five were fresh ones.

2. The Secretary of State for War stated that he considered it inadvisable to despatch the cyclists divisions to France, as Lord French had informed him that this was the only available reinforcement for use in Ireland if necessity arose.

The War Cabinet decided that—

The cyclists divisions should not be sent to France at present.

3. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff stated that General Rawlinson had left Versailles to command the Vth Army, and the War Cabinet approved the proposal of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff that—

General Sackville-West should be appointed as Acting British Permanent Military Representative at Versailles.

4. The First Sea Lord reported that H.M.S. “Tithonus” had been sunk by a submarine on the 28th instant, 51 miles from Girdleness; 140 survivors had been picked up by a torpedo-boat destroyer.

5. With reference to War Cabinet 372, Minute 9, the First Sea Lord said that the Second Sea Lord had done his utmost to find men for the Army, and had succeeded in releasing between 400 and 500 trained gunners. In addition, some young Marines were being
released for coast defence, to relieve skilled gunners. Sir Rosslyn Wemyss said it was impossible for the Admiralty to countenance the withdrawal of Royal Marines from the Grand Fleet, as this would disorganise the fighting efficiency of the Fleet. He explained the interdependence of the different parts of organisation of a ship, showing that the withdrawal of one group of trained fighting men would disorganise the ship. The increase of 25 per cent made to the personnel of the Fleet in the early stages of the war applied only to stokers and young seamen. He stated that our ships are less heavily manned than the Germans by about 15 per cent.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff urged that, just as the Army were compelled to thin their line and take risks in order to release men for the decisive point, so the Navy ought to be prepared to reduce their margin of safety.

The War Cabinet decided that—

They would not take the responsibility of overruling the Admiralty on a point involving technical and professional considerations, upon which the Admiralty were the sole judges.

6. A suggestion was made that the United States Fleet might furnish units, beyond the forces already operating in British waters, to enable some of the older units of our Fleet to be demobilised, with a view to the employment of their personnel in some manner to relieve the present emergency.

The First Sea Lord stated that there were none of the older classes of ships in commission in home waters. There were five United States battleships at present in the North Sea Fleet, but he had been in personal communication with the Commander-in-Chief, Grand Fleet, and, having regard to its limited experience in the present war, he could not advise that the United States Navy was at present in a state of efficiency to replace fighting units.

7. With reference to War Cabinet 376, Minute 8, the War Cabinet had under consideration the question of the possibility of transporting a large contingent of American troops across the Atlantic. It was stated that it was necessary, if possible, to transport at least 100,000 a month.

The Secretary of State for War reported that he had received a letter from Sir Sam Fay, who informed him that the only information procurable as to expected sailings was as follows: the "Megantic," with 1,772 troops; the "Cretic," with 1,381 troops; the "Lapland," with 2,247 troops; the "Carmania," with 2,700 troops; making a total of 8,600 for the next week. Sir Sam Fay said that he considered that this was more than disappointing; that he could only suppose that ships were being held up in New York to load up cargo, and that he was taking the matter up strongly with the Shipping Controller.

Mr. Graeme Thomson expressed the opinion that, with the assistance of American, Dutch, and British tonnage, we could, during the month of April, transport 120,000 American troops across the Atlantic, and thereafter a small monthly increase on that number.

It was pointed out that, even if guns and equipment were not brought across, this would make no difference to the total number of infantry which could be transported, as such stores were carried entirely in a different class of vessel.

The Prime Minister laid great stress on the urgency of this problem, and the importance of bringing all possible pressure to bear on President Wilson immediately. He was of opinion that President Wilson should be told that it was essential that these American troops should be forthcoming within the next few months.
During the next three or four months the Americans should suspend building up their own army in France, and make the large majority of their men arriving in France available for attachment to British or French brigades. It was true that at Versailles the difficulty of the Americans fighting under a foreign flag had been emphasised, but in the present crisis, and taking into consideration the present temper of the American public, he thought this difficulty would be swept aside.

The War Cabinet decided that—

(a) The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should send a telegram to President Wilson to the effect that, pending the results of the British manpower proposals, there would, for the next few months, be a very serious gap with regard to the number of men available for drafts to the Allied forces, and that it was most essential that American infantry should be transported to France at the rate of not less than 100,000 per month for the next three months for incorporation by battalions in the British or French armies;

(b) The Chief of the Imperial General Staff should prepare a draft of the telegram on the lines indicated above;

(c) Mr. Graeme Thomson should prepare a Memorandum stating the amount of shipping available and the number of infantry which could be transported across the Atlantic during the course of the next three months, and that the information in this Memorandum should be communicated to President Wilson.

Man-Power: Proposed Lowering of Age Limit.

8. Attention was called to the draft Minute 7 of War Cabinet 376, circulated by the Secretary, in which it was recorded that the War Cabinet had decided that the feeling of this country was such that to lower the age of recruiting to 17 was impracticable. It was agreed that, while there had been a general consensus of opinion in this sense, no actual decision had been taken, and—

The Secretary was instructed to amend the draft accordingly.

Field-Marshal Lord French pointed out that if youths of 17 could be incorporated with Class "C" of the Volunteers they would receive a certain number of hours' training a week.

The Minister of National Service said that in his draft Bill he suggested that boys of 17 should do some training, but that unless it was made compulsory he thought it was improbable that these youths would attend drills voluntarily.

The War Cabinet decided—

To adopt Lord French's proposal, and make it compulsory for youths of 17 to be enrolled in Class "C" of the Volunteers and to attend the number of drills laid down for this Class.

Ireland: Letter from General Mahon to Lord French.

9. Field-Marshal Lord French read out to the War Cabinet a letter that he had received that morning from General Mahon. The letter referred to the remark made by the Prime Minister about secrecy (War Cabinet 375, Minute 2), and stated that General Mahon had discovered, on arrival in Dublin, that the subject of conscription was common talk, and that it was the general impression that it was going to be enforced. General Mahon had made a few enquiries as to how it would be received, and he gathered that the opposition would be less than he had stated before the Cabinet (War Cabinet 375, Minute 2). The sudden advance of the Germans in France, the letter continued, had evidently made an impression which had swung anti-conscription
Views of Labour Members of the Government.

Man-Power Proposals.

The Prime Minister stated that he had yesterday interviewed some of his Labour colleagues, and had heard from them their views on the enforcement of the Military Service Act on Ireland. Though at first opposed to the idea, their general feeling after the conversation was that, if the application of the Military Service Act to Ireland was accompanied by a pledge to carry Home Rule, the situation would be made easier. One of his Labour colleagues had expressed the opinion that he would not feel justified in advocating on the platform the raising of the military age in Great Britain to 50 unless some form of compulsion was applied to Ireland.

11. With reference to War Cabinet 375, Minute 6, the War Cabinet had before them the following documents:—

Draft Bill (Paper G.T.-4057),
Memorandum by Mr. Duke (Paper G.T.-4052),
Memorandum by Mr. Munro (Paper G.T.-4055),
Memorandum by Mr. Hayes Fisher (Paper G.T.-4058),
Memorandum by Sir Albert Stanley (Paper G.T.-4059).

The Prime Minister stated that, in view of the diversity of opinions indicated in the Papers circulated by the various Departments, more particularly with regard to the proposed substitution of Military Service Advisory Committees for the existing Tribunals, he considered it advisable that all the clauses of the Bill should be considered by a small Committee, on which Committee Lord Milner might be requested to represent the War Cabinet.

The War Cabinet decided—

To appoint the following Committee to consider the draft of the Military Service Bill (Paper G.T.-4057):—

Sir George Cave (Chairman),
Lord Milner,
Sir Auckland Geddes,
Mr. Duke,
Mr. Munro,
Mr. Hayes Fisher,
Mr. Roberts,
Mr. T. Jones (Secretary),

and that the Committee should have power to summon any representatives of Departments concerned.
12. With reference to War Cabinet 366, Minute 10, with regard to the Military Mission to present a baton to the Mikado of Japan, the War Cabinet decided that—

The composition of the Mission should be left in the hands of the Secretary of State for War, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Lord Beaverbrook.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 29, 1918.
WAR CABINET, 378.

Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Saturday, March 30, 1918, at 11 A.M.

Present:

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. the Earl Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.
The Right Hon. G. N. Barnes, M.P.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.V.O., C.B., Secretary of State for War.
Major-General Sir F. B. Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B., Director of Military Operations (for Minutes 1 and 2).

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.
Lieutenant-General the Right Hon. J. C. Smuts, K.C.
Rear-Admiral G. P. W. Hope, C.B., Deputy First Sea Lord.

Captain L. F. Burges, Assistant Secretary.
Captain Clement Jones, Assistant Secretary.
1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff explained the situation on a map. Immediately south of the Somme the enemy had achieved a maximum advance in the last 24 hours of two to three kilometres. French divisions were coming up to oppose this advance. In the region of Montdidier the French had counter-attacked, and heavy fighting was going on in the streets of that town. The French attack west of Noyon was still proceeding.

Eighty-two German divisions had been identified, and the total number of enemy divisions engaged probably numbered 90, leaving from 5 to 8 entirely fresh divisions still to come in. After this the routement would begin.

At a later stage in the meeting the Director of Military Operations reported that north of the Somme there had been no further enemy attacks, and the situation appeared to be well in hand. All the evidence tended to show that the enemy had received a severe defeat in his recent attacks on the Arras front. He was reported to be digging in on the line Thiepval—Aveluy. Between the Somme and the Aisne the Australians had the situation well in hand. South of the Somme we were holding a line of trenches west of Ignaucourt—western edge of Marcelcave—western edge of Lamotte-en-Santerre—west of Hamel, thence Saillly-le-Sec. On this portion of the front the enemy was holding a line of shell-holes, running roughly from Cerisy to east of Guillicourt. The situation was generally quiet, with the exception that the enemy was shelling Corbie. Our artillery was in action east of Villers—Bretonneux. North of the Somme we now had six fresh divisions in reserve, and three quite fresh divisions in line. We had withdrawn 16 tired divisions, and it was estimated that the enemy had withdrawn 40. The total number of field and heavy guns lost by us was 879. The enemy claimed 1,100. This number, therefore, probably included old 15-pounders used as anti-tank guns, tank guns, anti-aircraft guns, and some French guns, number unknown.

2. The Director of Military Operations reported that the French General Headquarters, telephoning at 10 o'clock that morning, expressed themselves as well satisfied with the result of the fighting yesterday, which they regarded as a critical day. Heavy fighting took place along the Rivers Luce and Avre, the result of which was that part of the ground lost yesterday was regained. Demuin was recaptured, and the enemy was driven back to the western outskirts of Mézières. The French had entered Montdidier, and fighting was going on in that place. Between Montdidier and Lassigny both sides were digging in. There was no change east of Lassigny. There had been great enemy aircraft activity south of the Somme, particularly on the part of scout machines.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 374, Minute 7, the Prime Minister read a message which he had received from Mr. Churchill urging the importance of reconstituting the Vth Army.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff to send a special officer to France to ascertain what assistance could be rendered in the direction of reconstituting this army.

4. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that a telegram had been received from General Marshall, dated the 29th March, showing that the recent success at Khan Baghdadiya, in Mesopotamia (War Cabinet 376, Minute 2), had been even more important than was indicated by the enemy's casualties.
The War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for War to send a telegram conveying their congratulations to General Marshall and the troops under his command on this success.

5. The War Cabinet had some discussion on the question of a further appeal to the Dominions for increased effort in recruiting, along the lines which would have to be adopted in this country. In this connection Lord Derby said that he had seen Sir Edward Kemp on this subject, who had informed him that everything possible was being done in Canada, and that it therefore did not seem desirable to approach the Canadian Government officially, but urged that a personal telegram should be sent by the Prime Minister to Mr. Hughes on the subject.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that some message should be sent to Australia.

The Prime Minister undertook to send a personal message to Mr. Hughes on the subject.

6. With reference to War Cabinet 374, Minute 9, the Prime Minister informed the War Cabinet that a message had been published in Washington from President Wilson congratulating General Foch on his new appointment. The Prime Minister added that the Press Bureau wished to know whether such messages were to be published in this country, or whether the British Government were going to make any announcement on the subject.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that an official announcement should be made in this country as soon as possible to the following effect:

"That, with the cordial co-operation of the British and French Commanders-in-Chief, General Foch had been charged by the British, French, and American Governments to co-ordinate the action of the Allied Armies on the Western front."

The War Cabinet decided that—

President Wilson's message should be kept back from publication, and that the Foreign Office should inform the French Government that we are going to make an announcement immediately in our press.

7. In addition to the announcement authorised in the previous Minute, the War Cabinet decided—

That a statement should be issued to the press in the sense that, since the commencement of the German attack, the War Cabinet has been in constant session. They have taken many decisions dealing with the immediate situation; they have dealt with the question of despatching reinforcements and guns to replace losses; they also have in course of preparation a series of measures for dealing with the situation in the future for the supply of large numbers of men and guns to maintain our army throughout the summer. These measures will necessarily take a few days to prepare, and they will be announced, so far as is in the public interest, when Parliament meets.

The War Cabinet also decided that—

The Prime Minister should settle the wording of these messages, and then they should be issued.
1. THE Chief of the Imperial General Staff explained the situation on a map. Immediately south of the Somme the enemy had achieved a maximum advance in the last 24 hours of two to three kilometres. French divisions were coming up to oppose this advance. In the region of Montdidier the French had counter-attacked, and heavy fighting was going on in the streets of that town. The French attack west of Noyon was still proceeding. Eighty-two German divisions had been identified, and the total number of enemy divisions engaged probably numbered 90, leaving from 5 to 8 entirely fresh divisions still to come in. After this the roulement would begin.

At a later stage in the meeting the Director of Military Operations reported that north of the Somme there had been no further enemy attacks, and the situation appeared to be well in hand. All the evidence tended to show that the enemy had received a severe defeat in his recent attacks on the Arras front. He was reported to be digging in on the line Thiepval—Aveluy. Between the Somme and the Ancre the Australians had the situation well in hand. South of the Somme we were holding a line of trenches west of Ignaucourt—western edge of Marcelcave—western edge of Lamotte-en-Santerre—west of Hamel, thence Sailly-le-Sec. On this portion of the front the enemy was holding a line of shell-holes, running roughly from Cerny to east of Guillaucourt. The situation was generally quiet, with the exception that the enemy was shelling Corbie. Our artillery was in action east of Villers—Bretoneux. North of the Somme we now had six fresh divisions in reserve, and three quite fresh divisions in line. We had withdrawn 16 tired divisions, and it was estimated that the enemy had withdrawn 40. The total number of field and heavy guns lost by us was 879. The enemy claimed 1,100. This number, therefore, probably included old 15-pounders used as anti-tank guns, tank guns, anti-aircraft guns, and some French guns, number unknown.

2. The Director of Military Operations reported that the French General Headquarters, telephoning at 10 o'clock that morning, expressed themselves as well satisfied with the result of the fighting yesterday, which they regarded as a critical day. Heavy fighting took place along the Rivers Luce and Avre, the result of which was that part of the ground lost yesterday was regained. Demuin was recaptured, and the enemy was driven back to the western outskirts of Mézières. The French had entered Montdidier, and fighting was going on in that place. Between Montdidier and Lassigny both sides were digging in. There was no change east of Lassigny. There had been great enemy air activity south of the Somme, particularly on the part of scout machines.

3. With reference to War Cabinet 374, Minute 7, the Prime Minister read a message which he had received from Mr. Churchill urging the importance of reconstituting the Vth Army.

The War Cabinet requested—

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff to send a special officer to France to ascertain what assistance could be rendered in the direction of reconstituting this army.

4. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff reported that a telegram had been received from General Marshall, dated the 29th March, showing that the recent success at Khan Baghdadiya, in Mesopotamia (War Cabinet 376, Minute 2), had been even more important than was indicated by the enemy's casualties.
The War Cabinet requested—

The Secretary of State for War to send a telegram conveying their congratulations to General Marshall and the troops under his command on this success.

5. The War Cabinet had some discussion on the question of a further appeal to the Dominions for increased effort in recruiting, along the lines which would have to be adopted in this country.

In this connection Lord Derby said that he had seen Sir Edward Kemp on this subject, who had informed him that everything possible was being done in Canada, and that it therefore did not seem desirable to approach the Canadian Government officially, but urged that a personal telegram should be sent by the Prime Minister to Mr. Hughes on the subject.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that some message should be sent to Australia.

The Prime Minister undertook to send a personal message to Mr. Hughes on the subject.

6. With reference to War Cabinet 374, Minute 9, the Prime Minister informed the War Cabinet that a message had been published in Washington from President Wilson congratulating General Foch on his new appointment. The Prime Minister added that the Press Bureau wished to know whether such messages were to be published in this country, or whether the British Government were going to make any announcement on the subject.

The War Cabinet were of opinion that an official announcement should be made in this country as soon as possible to the following effect:

"That, with the cordial co-operation of the British and French Commanders-in-Chief, General Foch had been charged by the British, French, and American Governments to coordinate the action of the Allied Armies on the Western front."

The War Cabinet decided that—

President Wilson's message should be kept back from publication, and that the Foreign Office should inform the French Government that we are going to make an announcement immediately in our press.

7. In addition to the announcement authorised in the previous Minute, the War Cabinet decided—

That a statement should be issued to the press in the sense that, since the commencement of the German attack, the War Cabinet has been in constant session. They have taken many decisions dealing with the immediate situation; they have dealt with the question of despatching reinforcements and guns to replace losses; they also have in course of preparation a series of measures for dealing with the situation in the future for the supply of large numbers of men and guns to maintain our army throughout the summer. These measures will necessarily take a few days to prepare, and they will be announced, so far as is in the public interest, when Parliament meets.

The War Cabinet also decided that—

The Prime Minister should settle the wording of these messages, and then they should be issued.
8. With reference to War Cabinet 377, Minute 7 (a), it was suggested that, should there be any reluctance on the part of the American Government to comply with the proposal put forward, it might be desirable to convene a Special Meeting of the Supreme War Council, either at Versailles or some place more convenient to General Foch, which should be attended by Generals Pershing and Bliss, and Mr. Baker, the American Secretary for War.

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff said he was in favour of such a plan, having regard to the fact that President Wilson had all along been a supporter of the Versailles Council.

9. With reference to War Cabinet 372, Minute 22, the War Cabinet had before them an Admiralty memorandum in regard to the contribution of approximately 12,500 men by the Admiralty "A" firms (Paper G.T.-4067). In this memorandum it was pointed out that, unless the Minister of National Service diverted suitable substitutes to Admiralty firms quickly and in sufficient numbers, output would suffer seriously. The Admiralty, however, did not wish to oppose the contribution of 12,500 men, but merely to warn the Government of what would, in their opinion, be the consequences. The Minister of National Service recognised that an adjustment to marine engineering will be necessary not only as regards the men to be taken away under the scheme, but also as regards the additional men who will shortly be required. The memorandum also pointed out that there would undoubtedly be an outcry from the employers who are primarily responsible for the output of marine engines, which must be set off against any beneficial effect on the A.S.E. The Admiralty considered that the method of levy should be to take a uniform percentage of the total number of male employees of every engineering firm, and that before a pivotal man is called up the employer shall have a right to appeal. The Ministry of Munitions had stated that time would not permit of this protracted procedure.

The War Cabinet, in reaffirming their decision that the 12,500 men should be contributed, took the responsibility for whatever consequences might follow.

10. With reference to War Cabinet 369, Minute 9, the War Cabinet had under consideration Lord Curzon's Memorandum on the question of Japanese intervention in Siberia and our policy in Russia (Paper G.T.-4048).

Reference was made to the latest telegrams that had been exchanged between this country and America on the subject, as well as to telegram No. 291 from Tokio, and to Mr. Lockhart's recent telegrams from Russia (e.g., No. 42) indicating the possibility that the Bolsheviks might yet be persuaded themselves to invite the assistance of Japan.

The view was expressed that it would be fatal if, now that M. Trotzki and the American Government were coming round to a view less hostile to Japanese intervention, the Japanese Government should decide not to intervene.

The War Cabinet decided that, if this had not already been done—

The Foreign Office should inform His Majesty's Ambassador at Tokio of the latest telegrams received from Mr. Lockhart, indicating that the Bolsheviks were regarding Japanese intervention in a more favourable light.

2. Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
March 30, 1918.
SECRET.

WAR CABINET.

SUBJECT INDEX TO MINUTES OF MEETINGS.

War Cabinet Papers (309 to 378, inclusive).

(January 1 to March 30, 1918.)

NOTE.—The numbers of the Minutes, &c., are printed within parentheses after the number of the Meeting, e.g., 97 (17 and Appendix II) indicates 97th War Cabinet Paper, 17th Minute, and Second Appendix.

A.

"A.B.C." aero-engines 361 (20).
Abbyssinian troops 324 (2).
Accommodation for the Inter-Allied Council 323 (11).
Acquisition of land: powers enabling the State to secure the increased value of land in proximity to land acquired for Government works 318 (14).
Aden: engagement with enemy pickets 335 (4).
Admiralty "A" firms, release of men from, for military service 371 (10), 372 (22); Admiralty memorandum with regard to substitutes for men withdrawn; War Cabinet re-affirm their decision that 12,500 men should be contributed, and take responsibility for whatever consequences might follow 378 (9).
acquisition of the Chilean battleship "Almirante Cochrane" 350 (12).
Board of Naval policy, discussion with First and Naval Lords: memorandum by First Lord on the "Naval Situation in the North Sea," dated January 17, 1918; secret despatch from Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet: strategical policy of main operations and of anti-submarine warfare; materiel available for 1918; co-operation of the United States Navy; policy of the Board of Admiralty approved 325 (1).
claims on tonnage 330 (1); recommendations of Restriction of Imports Committee 347 (11 and Appendix).
contracts 310 (5).
Director of Overseas Purchase and his staff; transfer to Ministry of Shipping 324 (15).
First Lord of the, asked to go to Alexandria to consult with General Smuts on the question of transportation 336 (6).
"to furnish the War Cabinet with the state, of all personnel in the Navy, giving medical categories, on the same lines as that given by the War Office 387 (13).
"transport of immediate reinforcements to the Western front; letter to Secretary of War Cabinet 374 (5).
memorandum on Imperial and local defence in Ireland 320 (12).
shipbuilding priority for 312 (5).
Shipyard Labour Department, letter from; instructions to Departments on wage increases 339 (3).
steel requirements; building of airship sheds 336 (7).
Admiralty steel requirements; naval programme for 1919 325 (2), 347 (11 and Appendix), 370 (11).

Aerial reprisals; resolution of Supreme War Council 366 (11).

Aero-engines; "Liberty" 321 (9), 361 (13 and 14); the "A.B.C." engine 361 (20).

Aerodromes at Cyprus and Mudros 318 (7).

Aeroplanes (British, French, and German) on the Western front, numbers of 323 (5).

for Mesopotamia 318 (8).

for the offensive in Germany; Air Minister to report on output 329 (9), 361 (13).

from America; slow rate of supply 320 (9); engines 321 (9), 322 (12); assembly of parts in Great Britain by American mechanics 323 (5); telegram to Lord Reading asking him to draw the attention of the President to the serious situation of the American output 361 (19).

German; statement of a German prisoner 360 (3).

manufacture of; employment of cotton operatives 309 (4); effect of the strike of sheetmetal workers upon output 329 (2).

output of; comparative figures for the years 1914-17; estimates for 1918; Sir W. Weir congratulated 361 (16).

Age-limit for military service, raising of 372 (12), 375 (3).

Agricultural land; requisitioning for naval and military purposes 320 (10).

Agriculture, Board of; memorandum on the shortage of concentrated foods for live-stock; publication authorised, subject to omission of certain figures 333 (12).

effect of new man-power proposals on 376 (6).

feeding of live-stock 333 (12).

withdrawal of soldiers from 371 (8), 372 (2).

Air co-ordination, Allied 322 (12).

force in Palestine 318 (9 and 7).

proposed increase; supply of personnel; memorandum by Lord Rothermere on proposed increase in the Air Force programme; conference of Air Minister, War Secretary, and Ministry of National Service to be held 361 (17); supply of pilots 361 (18).

release of shipyard workers; War Cabinet decision 367 (13).

Minister; memorandum on proposed increase in the Air Force programme 361 (17).

... to report on the output of aeroplanes for the offensive in Germany 320 (9), 361 (13).

Ministry; acquisition of the British Museum 309 (2), 318 (1).

offensive in Germany 320 (9); air raid on Karlsruhe 322 (10); air raid on Mannheim 367 (2).

... report on the output of aircraft 361 (13).

Organisation Committee, dissolution of; note by General Smuts; dissolution approved 318 (3).

pilots, supply of 361 (18).

Policy Committee; Lord Curzon to preside during the absence of General Smuts 333 (10).

raids, attempted, at Dover 365 (4).

... on Dunkirk. March 26 374 (4).

... on Karlsruhe 322 (10).

... on Paris on March 11 355 (6).

... (Zeppelin) over Yorkshire, March 14 365 (5).

raids as reprisals 322 (10), 322 (12), 366 (11).

... compensation for injuries to civilians 355 (12).

... railwaymen 331 (11), 355 (12).

... defence against; search-lights 333 (1).

... of London 320 (9), 333 (1), 335 (11).

... from Dunkirk 375 (4).

... general defensive and offensive policy 320 (9).

... in Belgium; Bruges Dock 365 (7).

... Bruges 375 (4).

... Blankenberge; Ghistelles aerodrome; Zeebrugge mole 374 (3); Ostend seaplane base 376 (4).

... Coolkerke aerodrome 334 (3).

... indemnity against; resolution from Sheerness; memorandum by War Secretary 320 (9), 355 (12).

... on London; January 28-29, 1918; details given by General Ashmore; casualties; mention in official communiques 333 (1); March 7 and 8, 1918 362 (9).
Aircraft, use of, against submarines 361 (15).

Airship attack on an enemy submarine 370 (14).

programme, reduced: steel for airship sheds 336 (7).

squadrons for defence; escape of Zeppelins on occasions of raids on north-east coast; question of adequacy of defensive force 368 (9), 370 (11).

Staff, Chief of the: relationship of General Trenchard towards the War Cabinet 362 (8).

supremacy (British); disparity between British and German reports of air engagements 367 (15).

Allenby, General, to confer with General Smuts in Egypt 322 (1).

Allied general reserve. (See "Western Front").

Allies, allotment of tonnage to the 330 (1).

American aero-engines; the "Liberty" engine 321 (9), 321 (13), 322 (12); assembly of parts in Great Britain by American mechanics 323 (5); telegram to Lord Reading asking him to draw the attention of the President to the serious situation of the American output 361 (19).

American Board, instructions to, regarding priority of finance for various purchases in the United States 321 (9).

contracts; instructions to the American Board 323 (9).

destroyer, submarine attack on 356 (10).

divisions under orders to leave the United States for France; infantry to be sent first 376 (9).

forces in France 319 (2), 323 (4), 331 (3), 331 (4), 335 (1), 336 (2), 371 (2), 372 (8), 375 (8), 377 (7).

resolution of Supreme War Council 366 (11).

protection and cover; casualties in shelters 333 (1); enquiry as to the protection afforded, or resistance offered by various sorts of buildings, and the effect of the bombs used 362 (5).

provost of cover; resolution from Sheerness; memorandum by War Secretary 366 (12).

protection and cover; casualties in shelters 333 (1); report on the output of machines with a view to an increased offensive against German towns 361 (13); reprisals; resolution of Supreme War Council 366 (11).

presentation of information on open towns; King of Spain in communication with the German Government 353 (7), 358 (9 and 10); discussion with regard to a statement of our policy 361 (12); report on the output of machines with a view to an increased offensive against German towns 361 (13); reprisals; resolution of Supreme War Council 366 (11).
American Government, information to, regarding the strength of the British Armies, the man-power resources of the British Empire, number of men in the Navy, our share of the transport of the European Allies, and the industrial effort of Great Britain: 323 (3 and Appendix).

lack of delegation of authority; delay in settling vital matters 321 (9), 321 (11).

guns in France 319 (2).

military co-operation: conference of C.I.G.S. with Generals Pershing and Leonard Wood 319 (2); memorandum by C.I.G.S. 321 (9), 322 (3) and Appendix; despatch of American troops; message from Prime Minister to President Wilson 328 (3); divisions expected in France in 1918; training by divisions or battalions; transport 331 (3); American reinforcements and the extension of the British line in France 331 (4); two divisions in the French line for training purposes 336 (2); meeting at Versailles, January 30, 1918, on the co-operation of United States troops with the British Army; agreement with General Pershing 338 (1 and Appendix); approval of the American Government to the transport of six American divisions in British ships 341 (6).

missions to Great Britain 321 (9 and 11).

naval co-operation 325 (1).

Navy; further relief to our Fleet; opinion of First Sea Lord 377 (6).

representation in Europe 321 (9 and 11).

representative at political conference of Allied Statesmen in London, March 1918; telegram to Washington 364 (9).

shipbuilding 321 (9); memorandum by Mr. Barnes on the subject of American labour employed in shipbuilding 364 (12).

troops, clothing and equipment of 321 (9).

incorporation in British divisions; message to President Wilson 321 (9); telegram from General Pershing 322 (3 and Appendix); 335 (1); agreement with General Pershing at Versailles, January 30, 1918 338 (1 and Appendix), 341 (6), 377 (7).

training of; French report from New York; British instructors 328 (2), 331 (3), 336 (2), 338 (1 and Appendix), 341 (6).

transport of; congestion in French ports and railways 370 (10).

loan of the “Aquitania,” “Manetania” 306 (15); transhipment at British ports 321 (9); 321 (3); 338 (1 and Appendix); loss of the transport “Tusciana” 340 (5), 341 (7 and 8); transport of six American divisions in British ships 341 (6), 347 (Appendix), 355 (8), 358 (12), 377 (7).

use of French ports 321 (9).

Ammunition; shipments to France 339 (6).

small-arm; 230,000,000 rounds to be sent to the Western front 372 (Appendix).

Anglo-Russian Military Service Agreement; paper by Mr. Balfour on the conscription of Russians in this country 329 (12); report of a Committee on the Anglo-Russian Agreement; discussion; decision to stop recruiting of Russians for the moment, but to retain those already in the Army 345 (3); writ of habeas corpus at the suit of one Kutchinsky; case to be fought in the Courts; trouble anticipated among Russian soldiers at Plymouth 361 (8); decision of High Court; decision of War Cabinet 345 (9); War Cabinet’s decision reversed 372 (17).

Antigua, riot at 363 (15).

Anti-submarine warfare. (See “Naval Policy.”)

“Aquitania,” loan of, as a transport for American troops 306 (15).

Arab countries, Allies’ intentions for; telegram from Sir Reginald Wingate regarding assurances to the Arabs; proposed message to the King of the Hedjaz 330 (5).

Arabia; Hedjaz Railway, attacks on 320 (5).

Prime Minister’s statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).

successful raid by Arabs near Medina 331 (5); Arab activity on the Hedjaz Railway; occupation of Tafhish; enquiry as to the position near Medina 333 (5); successful attack by the Arabs at Seled-el-Hosa 335 (3); capture of El Mecca by the Arabs on January 28, 1918 346 (1), 342 (6); Turkish train blown up by the Arabs on January 31, 1918; subsequent attacks on Turkish posts 342 (7); Lohiya and El Atan in the hands of the Idrisi troops 349 (1).

“Aragon,” troopship, loss of 309 (12); casualties 311 (7).

Armed forces of the British Empire; information for the American Government 323 (3 and Appendix).

Armenia; German peace treaty with Russia; joint declaration by the Allies 366 (12).

Prime Minister’s statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).

(Turkish); Russian withdrawal 354 (4).

Armistice at Easter; proposal from the Vatican 333 (5).
Army Council; Sir Sam Fay to take the place of Sir Guy Granet 368 (4).

... discipline and propaganda by means of lectures by wounded officers and escaped prisoners of war 381 (12).

... General Sir H. Wilson appointed C.I.G.S.; General Sir W. Robertson appointed to the Eastern Command; selection of Permanent Military Representative at Versailles; statement in Parliament in regard to General Robertson's resignation 348; General Rawlinson appointed Military Representative on the Supreme War Council; General Plumer to command our Fourth Army in France; General Lord Cavan to succeed General Plumer in command of British forces in Italy 349 (6).

... oat ration 329 (6), 330 (1).

... overseas garrisons; maintenance, pay, &c, after the war; memorandum by War Secretary 333 (9).

... promotion in; promotion to higher ranks of old and new Army officers 330 (5).

... relief of Higher Command 358 (11).

... rations for troops at home 329 (7).

... release of 20,000 men for shipbuilding 328 (19), 367 (13).

... soldiers' pay; third report of Soldiers' and Sailors' Pay Committee 320 (8); fourth and final report approved 349 (10); separation allowances 364 (13).

... supply of doctors for the; memorandum by Minister of National Service 354 (9).

... venereal diseases; new regulation under the Defence of the Realm Act 352 (10); memoranda by Home and Colonial Secretaries 365 (14): maisons tolérées in France 366 (13).

... waste products, salvage of 324 (13).

... Asquith, Mr., communication with, on the subject of the Government's declaration of war aims 313 (2), 314 (1), 315 (2).

... Australia, recruiting in; message to Mr. Hughes appealing for increased effort 378 (5).

... Australian wheat, purchase of 355 (14).

... Austria, propaganda in; correspondence between Foreign Secretary and Lord Northcliffe 359 (6).

... statement of our war aims 312 (8), 313 (3); our desire that she should retain a position of influence in South-East Europe 314 (5 and Appendix).

... Hungary, autonomy for Italians, Croats, Slovaks, and Czechs in 312 (8), 314 (Appendix).

... Austrian artillery: movement to Flanders 322 (4); Austrian motor batteries in the Lens area 333 (3).

... participation in the offensive against Russia 356 (6).

... troops, moved of 345 (1).

... Automatic rifles, economy in man-power, casualties, &c, by the use of 322 (16).

... Aviation; assistance to Norway; training of pilots; memorandum by Lord Rothermere; Air Council to delay sending manuals of instruction, machines, &c. 367 (14).

... Handley-Page machines 361 (13); “ Liberty” engines 361 (13 and 14); “A.B.C.” engines 361 (20); use of aircraft against submarines 361 (15); output of aeroplanes in years 1914-17; estimates for 1918 361 (16); supply of personnel for increased Air Force 361 (17); pilots 361 (18); American output of aeroplanes 361 (19).

... Inter-Allied Committee on 360 (15); report approved 366 (5).

... joint note, No. 7, by Military Representatives on the Supreme War Council 322 (12); joint note approved by Supreme War Council 338 (15); Inter-Allied Committee 360 (19).

B. Bacon ration for troops at home 329 (7).

Balfour of Burleigh, Lord; Committee on Commercial and Industrial Policy after the War; final report 311 (9).

Balkan front. (See also “Salonika.”)

... Bulgarian attack, telegram from Berne suggesting the probability of 322 (7); possibility of the Allies being driven from their present line in the event of the Bulgarians joining in an Austro-German offensive 350 (2).

... employment of Russian troops behind the line 353 (6).

... enemy offensive, possibility of; movements of the ex-King of Greece; opinion of D.M.O.; attitude of the Bulgarians; General Guillaumat's plans 365 (3).

... French troops, strength of 322 (7).

... problem; joint note, No. 4, by Military Representatives postponed by the Supreme War Council for further consideration 338 (19); release of Austrian and German troops for operations on the Balkan front, in the event of peace with Roumania and Russia; question examined at Versailles 330 (2).
Balkan States; settlement of their boundaries on an ethnographical basis 314 (6).
Baltic, the; Aland Islands, German landing in the 300 (14).

British submarines in the 309 (14).

BARNES, Mr.; the 12½ per cent. bonus dilemma; draft statement as the basis of the Government declaration 310 (Appendix); urges an immediate statement of Government policy; to prepare a formula of policy for submission to the War Cabinet 314 (7); drafting of a proclamation; Committee appointed 315 (1); drafts of formula and proclamation as considered by the Committee; Mr. Barnes to have power to decide on behalf of the War Cabinet in cases referred to him by the Minister of Labour; proclamation not to be made 317; statement as to revision of lower priced piece-rates; proposal by the Committee on Production for a bonus of 7½ per cent. to piece-workers; the award in the case of Belfast to be issued simultaneously with a statement by the Government; proposed action approved by the War Cabinet 326 (3); discussion on an alternative proposal by the Ministry of Munitions as to the revision of piece-work prices and premiums bonus time allowances; decision of January 21, 1918 (W.C. 326 (3)) confirmed 329 (1).

Barrow, housing accommodation at 335 (10).

Belfield, General; exchange of British and Turkish prisoners of war. (See "Prisoners of War.")

Belgian Army; increase in the number of divisions; joint note, No. 2, by Military Representatives approved by the Supreme War Council 338 (11).

Belgium; Spa, indications of re-establishment of German General Headquarters at 342 (2), 370 (3).

Berne: conference of British and Turkish delegates on the exchange of prisoners of war 322 (1).

Black Sea Fleet (Russian); murder of officers 320 (6).

Bolshevik delegates to England; visa to passports issued by the Bolshevik Government to MM. Petroff and Chichimts 341 (11), 342 (14); arrival of MM. Kamenoff and Saalkind 353 (10); influences in Great Britain 324 (9), 327, 340 (7), 353 (10).

Bremen, housing accommodation at 335 (10).

Bomb, incendiary, found in H.M.S. "Alsatian" 367 (8).

Bombardment of Dunkirk and Malo on March 23-24 372 (23).

Bombardment of Yarmouth, January 14, 1918 322 (3).

Bombs used by the Germans in air raids, enquiry as to the effect of 322 (5).

Boys of 17, military service for 375 (2 and 3), 376 (7); decision to make enrolment in Class "C" of the Volunteers compulsory 377 (8).

Bread; compulsory rationing 384 (9).

Breadstuffs, restriction of, in parcels for the troops in France 351 (4).
Brewing, continuance of; memorandum by Lord Rhondda 352 (9).

 materials; recommendations of Restriction of Imports Committee 347 (10 and Appendix).

 prohibition of, by the British Government; temperance agitation in America; proposed
 deputation of American temperance reformers to the Prime Minister 398 (11).

 Bridges, General; appointment as British Military Representative in the United States approved
 308 (3).

 British airmen imprisoned in Germany for dropping pamphlets 339 (5).

 British Armies, total strength of; information for the American Government 323 (3 and Appendix).

 divisions; reduction of strength 340 (4), 345 (1).

 Expeditionary Force in France, promotion in; relief of Higher Command 358 (11).

 Museum, acquisition for the Air Ministry 300 (2), 318 (1).

 danger from bombs 318 (2).

 ships in Dutch East Indies, detention of 369 (4).

 Bulgarian attack, telegram from Bern suggesting the probability of 322 (7).

 Bullets, incendiary and explosive; use against aircraft 359 (5), 368 (5), 369 (2).

 Business; restriction of non-essential industries 320 (11).

 C.

 Cabinet Labour Committee; the 12½ per cent. bonus dilemma 310 (and Appendix), 314 (7), 315 (1),
 317.

 Cadorna, General; enquiry into his conduct of the operations in Italy; recall from Versailles
 328 (10).

 “Calgarian” torpedoed 358 (5).

 Cambray. (See “Western Front.”)

 Camouflage, German, on the Western front 366 (3), 370 (7).

 Canada and the re-establishment of Germany in the Pacific 312 (9).

 anxiety as to the possible acquisition by Germany of wireless stations and submarine bases in
 the Pacific 311 (10).

 fish supplies from 318 (4).

 recruiting in; increased effort; Sir E. Kemp says everything possible is being done 378 (5).

 Canadian man-power; Sir E. Kemp’s statement as to the number of men proposed to be raised by
 conscription 312 (2).

 Canterbury, Archbishop of, and the acquisition of the British Museum by the Air Ministry 318 (1).

 Capital, new issues of; Interim Report, No. 7, of the Economic Offensive Committee 312 (7),
 351 (8 and Appendix).

 Cardinal Logue; suggestion by General Mahon that a communication be made to him with reference
 to conscription in Ireland 377 (9).

 Carson, Sir E.; dissent from decision of the War Cabinet that we should do all in our power to keep
 Roumania in the war; his view that she should be allowed to make a separate
 peace 316 (17).

 German overtures to Spain; propaganda 318 (11).

 Casualties; economy by the fullest use of machine guns, tanks, and other mechanical devices
 322 (16), 367 (8).

 Casualty lists; insufficiency of details regarding the sick 316 (7).

 Cattana, British naval raid in the 366 (7), 367 (7).

 Cattle, control of supplies 324 (9).

 reserves of; reduction suggested 346 (7), 347 (Appendix).

 Caucasus; railway communications; reports from Colonel Jack and General Candolle 311 (5).

 Turkish advances in; capture of Trebizond 356 (2).

 Cavan, General Lord, to succeed General Plumer in command of the British forces in Italy 349 (6).

 Cecil, Lord Robert, to act as representative on the Inter-Allied Council on Tonnage and Imports
 339 (7).

 Central Powers; peace negotiations with the Bolshevik party; declaration of policy by Count Czernin;
 counter-statement by the British Government with regard to our war aims; discussions on
 the form, substance, and method of the announcement 312 (8), 313 (1-3), 314 (1-6 and
 Appendix), 315 (2).

 Cereals; compulsory rationing 334 (9).

 reserves of 330 (1).

 tonnage for; memorandum by Ministry of Shipping 330 (1).
Chief of the Imperial General Staff; appointment of General Sir H. Wilson; statement in Parliament in regard to General Robertson's resignation 373 (1), 374 (9).

Child welfare. (See "Maternity and Child Welfare Bill.")

Chilean battleship "Almirante Cochrane," acquisition of, approved 350 (12).

Chinese coolies in France 324 (16), 349 (13).

Pioneer battalions for the Western front 324 (1); joint note, No. 11, not accepted by the Supreme War Council 338 (18).

Prohibition of export of food to Siberia 341 (10).

Churches, the, and propaganda in regard to the capture of Jerusalem 311 (12).

Civil disturbance; steps to be taken for dealing with trouble arising in connection with the attitude of the engineers towards the Government's man-power measures 355 (4), 365 (13).

Service; equal remuneration of men and women engaged on similar duties 375 (10).

Clémenceau, M., at Doullens Conference 373 (1), 374 (9).

Clergymen, military service for 372 (16).

Clyde, revolutionary agitation on the; memorandum by Secretary for Scotland with special reference to the cases of John Maclean and others; discussion on the question of prosecution; Lord Advocate authorised to take proceedings in cases where conviction would be probable 304 (14).

Coal deposits in Ireland; memoranda by Minister of Reconstruction and Chief Secretary for Ireland; proposals approved 311 (12).

... for Italy 353 (1), 355 (7), 357 (3), 359 (14), 366 (11).

... for Spain 350 (8), 351 (11).

French and Italian requirements; conference to be held at the Board of Trade 355 (7).

Miners, recruiting of; memorandum by Minister of National Service; the proposed withdrawal of 50,000 men for military service 350 (12); deputation to the Prime Minister 370 (9); further withdrawal for military service 372 (21).

Rationing of, for domestic use 375 (17).

Commercial and industrial policy after the war; final report of Lord Balfour of Burleigh's Committee; memorandum by the Minister of Reconstruction; consultation of the Dominions and India before publication 311 (9).

... the British dye industry 329 (4).

... policy of the Government; general statement of 319 (6).

... representation (British) in Russia 309 (19).

... Treaties, denunciation of 312 (6).

Commons, House of; state of opinion in regard to the commercial policy of the Government; the "Non-Perforated Metals Bill" and "Imports and Exports Control Bill"; general statement of the Government's policy 312 (6).

Compulsory rationing. (See "Food Situation.")

Conciliation and Arbitration Board; memorandum on the remuneration of men and women engaged on similar duties; the matter not within the competence of the Board to settle 357 (20).

Position of, in regard to claims for the 12½ per cent. bonus by Government employees 368 (15).

Conference at Doullens 373 (1), 374 (9).

Connaught, H.R.H. the Duke of, or H.R.H. Prince Arthur of Connaught, to be asked to be head of the Mission to Japan 366 (10).

Conscription; objections in the employ of the Post Office, payment of; memorandum by Mr. Barnes 352 (12).

... labour abroad; Minister of National Service to make a statement in Parliament 372 (2).

Conscription in Canada; Sir E. Kemp's statement as to the number of men proposed to be raised 312 (2).

Contracts, control of; Committee appointed to enquire into Admiralty, War Office, and Munitions contracts 319 (5).

... in America; instructions to the American Board 323 (9).

Convoys; attack on Scandinavian convoy on December 12, 1917; more men reported saved from vessels sunk 319 (4); armed boarding steamer, on convoy duties, ashore on the Norwegian coast 334 (7); loss of Mediterranean convoy 340 (5), 341 (9), 353 (16). 367 (9); Atlantic convoy; loss of two ships off the Lizard 351 (5); further attacks on Mediterranean convoys; ships sunk 350 (6); convoy of steamship "Denbighshire" attacked by submarine near Holyhead on 24th March 373 (12).

Coolie labour in France 324 (16), 349 (13).
Cost of living and the agitation for increase of wages 310 (and Appendix), 315 (1).
Cotton crop, Egyptian, State requisition of 357 (8).
Imports for 1918; memorandum by President of the Board of Trade; increased tonnage 309 (4); report of Restriction of Imports Committee; reduction of tonnage 347 (6 and Appendix).
Industry; employment of cotton operatives for aeroplane work 309 (4).
Unemployment due to restriction of raw material 320 (13), 347 (6 and Appendix).
Credit for purchase of material of war, coordination of requests for, by the Supreme War Council; letter from Mr. Crosby to the Prime Minister 366 (14).
Crown colonies and the principle of self-determination 313 (3).
Curzon, Lord, Chairman of Eastern Committee 369 (11).
Conference with the supporters of Proportional Representation in the House of Lords 337 (3).
Dissent to acquisition of the British Museum for the Air Ministry 309 (2).
Memorandum on the future of the German and Turkish territories captured in the war 309 (18).
Question of Japanese intervention in Siberia, and our policy in Russia 378 (10).
Suggestion with regard to propaganda in the Far East 362 (7).
To act on behalf of the War Cabinet in cases of departmental disagreement concerning prisoners of war 368 (14).
To preside over the War Priorities Committee and the Air Policy Committee during the absence of General Smuts 333 (10).
Cyclist divisions not to be sent to France 377 (2).
Cyprus, aerodrome in, 318 (7).
And the principle of self-determination; agitation for union with Greece 313 (3).
Czech divisions for the support of the Romanian Army 341 (11).

D.

"Daily News"; despatch from Mr. A. Ransome at Petrograd announcing the threatened breakdown of the Bolshevik peace negotiations 311 (11).
Dardanelles Commission; Second Report; memorandum by Mr. Churchill; observations by C.I.G.S.; observations by the Foreign Office; memorandum by the Naval Staff; question of publication; employment for Sir Ian Hamilton; decision not to publish the Report at present 318 (10); question of communicating this decision to the Chairman of the Commission 319 (9).
Sortie of the "Goeben" and "Breslau"; "Breslau" sunk and "Goeben" damaged by mines; statements by prisoners from the "Breslau" 328 (13); air attack on the "Goeben"; salvage of her guns; news of the disaster to be spread in Constantinople 329 (11); question of bombardment across the Gallipoli Peninsula 330 (4); further air attacks; British submarines near the Dardanelles 331 (8), 333 (8), 334 (5), 335 (7); statement by Commander Bellairs in the House of Commons 360 (14).
Defence of the Realm (Acquisition of Land) Bill; memorandum by War Secretary on the increased value of land in proximity to land acquired for Government works; draft clause empowering the State to secure the increased value 318 (14).
Act; new regulation with regard to venereal diseases 352 (10).
(Beans, Peas, and Pulse Orders) Bill 364 (18).
Regulation 14; removal orders in Ireland 353 (13); permit system between Great Britain and Ireland; amendment of Regulation 14 c 354 (8), 356 (14).
A 18; article by Lieutenant-Colonel Repington in the "Morning Post" 342 (10), 343, 344 (1).
Regulations, amendment of; export of printed matter 346 (14).
Publication of Bolshevik propaganda 322 (18), 342 (14).
Delano-Osborne, General, to succeed Sir Sam Fay as Director of Movements 368 (4).
Denmark, machine guns from 319 (7).
Deputy Lieutenants, qualifications of; draft Bill to amend the law relating to; introduction of the Bill sanctioned 354 (10).
Derby, Lord; dissent from decision to stop shipments of stone to France 324 (18).
Destroyers, increase in the production of 321 (5).
Dieppe as a port for the British Expeditionary Force 324 (17).

Director-General of Movements and Railways; Sir Guy Granet leaving the Army Council; General Delano-Osborne to succeed Sir Sam Fay as Director of Movements 368 (4).

Discharged men; recall to the Colours 372 (3 and 6).

Dock labour; release of 6,000 men for the Army 372 (18).

Doctors for the Army; supply of; memorandum by Minister of National Service 354 (9).

Dominion Governments and the economic offensive; control of materials within the Empire 312 (6).

Prestiers; arrival expected in June for the Imperial War Cabinet 353 (8).

press, weekly review of the war situation for the 333 (11),

Premiers; arrival expected in June for the Imperial War Cabinet 353 (8).

Dominions, recruiting in; message to Australia appealing for increased effort 378 (5).

telegram to, containing the gist of the conclusions reached at the meeting of the Supreme War Council 349 (10).

"Dora," steamship, cargo of; stores at Archangel 346 (4).

Doullens, conference at, attended by Lord Milner, M. Clemenceau, Sir D. Haig, Sir H. Wilson, General Foch and General Pétain, to discuss the question of greater co-ordination of the Allied command on the Western front 373 (1); General Foch charged with the co-ordination of the action of the Allied Armies on the Western front 374 (9); President Wilson’s congratulations; public announcement to be made 378 (9).

Dover patrol, enemy attack on, February 14, 1918 347 (4).

Dunkirk, air raid on, March 26 374 (4).

Dunkirk, and Malo, bombardment of, on March 23-24 372 (23).

Dunkirk, bombardment of, and naval engagement on March 21 370 (12).

Dutch East Indies, detention of British ships in 369 (4).

Dye industry 329 (4).

East Africa, Portuguese; military operations 333 (6), 335 (6), 336 (4), 332 (2).

Eastern command; appointment of General Sir W. Robertson 348.

Committee, formation of; memorandum by C.I.G.S.; amalgamation of Middle East, Russia, and Persia Committees 363 (20); terms of reference drawn up by Lord Curzon 366 (8); memoranda by Lord Curzon and Mr. Balfour; composition of the Committee; Lord Curzon, Chairman 369 (11).

Economic conditions after the war; Prime Minister’s statement of war aims 514 (Appendix).

offensive; British dye industry 329 (4).

Committee; interim report No. 6; denunciation of Commercial Treaties; state of opinion in the House of Commons in regard to the Non-Ferrous Metals Bill and the Imports and Exports Temporary Control Bill; statement of the general commercial policy of the Government; views of Dr. Addison and Sir A. Stanley; Mr. Long’s opinion as to the attitude of the Dominion Governments; Lord R. Cecil on the suspension of the “most-favoured-nation” clause; Mr. Churchill in agreement with the measures proposed, only in so far as they were war measures; decisions; Imports and Exports Control Bill to be considered by Parliament at the earliest possible date; convenient opportunity to be found for statement of general commercial policy; report of Economic Offensive Committee approved, with reservations 312 (6).

interim report No. 7; new issues of capital 312 (7), 351 (8); report and recommendations of Sub-Committee on new issues of capital; Committee of Ministers (Mr. Stanley Baldwin, Chairman) 353 (8 and Appendix).

interim report No. 8; the British dye industry 329 (4).

interim report No. 9; memoranda by Sir E. Carson and Dr. Addison 362 (10).
Economic Offensive Committee; report containing a proposed scheme of State requisition of Egyptian cotton crops 357 (8).

Government policy; statement in connection with the introduction of the Imports and Exports (Temporary Control) Bill 362 (10).

policy of the Government; statement in connection with the introduction of the Imports and Exports (Temporary Control) Bill 362 (10).

Education; President of the Board of, and promotion in the Army 330 (5).

Egypt; future Government of; report of the Egyptian Administration Committee approved 365 (12).

General Smuts to confer with Generals Allenby and Marshall, the Naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, the Egyptian Government, &c, on the military situation in the Middle East 332 (1); First Lord of the Admiralty asked to visit Alexandria to consult with General Smuts on the question of transportation 336 (8).

Egyptian Administration Committee; future government of Egypt; report approved 365 (12).

cotton crop; scheme of State requisition; report of the Economic Offensive Committee 357 (8).

Electoral reform; proportional representation; situation created by the House of Lords amendment to the Representation of the People Bill 330 (1), 332 (2), 337 (3), 339 (8).

Representation of the People Act; qualifying period; memorandum by President of Local Government Board 352 (11).

Electric light and gas; restrictions on the use of; memorandum by President of Board of Trade; prohibition of shop window lighting; hours for extinguishing lights in restaurants, hotels, clubs, and places of amusement; authority to President of Board of Trade 367 (18).

power, price of 315 (1).

Electrical Trades Union; threatened strike for the 12½ per cent, bonus 315 (1); memoranda by Commissioner of Police and First Commissioner of Works; utilisation of men from the Army and Navy to carry on the work 346 (12).


Engineers, Amalgamated Society of; the Government man-power proposals; deputation proposed 323 (13); 325 (15); 336 (11); draft official statement for publication 337 (1 and Appendix); proposal of Minister of National Service for a conference with certain trades unions approved; Committee appointed (Sir G. Cave, Chairman) to consider steps to be taken in the event of industrial trouble 339 (4), 365 (13); Prime Minister, Mr. Barnes, and Sir A. Geddes to receive a deputation 356 (15).

Equal remuneration for men and women engaged on similar duties 370 (20).

Excess profits, appropriation of 310 (and Appendix), 315 (1).

Exchange; credits for Transatlantic fish supplies 318 (4).

of interned civilian prisoners; memoranda by War Secretary and Lord Newton 360 (16).

Executive War Board 366 (11); decision as to Italian quota to the General Reserve 370 (5); transfer of British, French, and Italian divisions from the Italian to the French front; order of transfer 370 (4), 371 (4).

and the appointment of General Foch to the control of the Allied Armies on Western front 374 (9).

Explosion at Rainham munitions factory 346 (5).

in a French munitions factory 346 (6).

Explosive bullets; use against aircraft 359 (5), 368 (5), 369 (2).

Export of printed matter; report of the Committee; amendment of Defence of the Realm Regulations 24 and 24 b 346 (14).

Extension of the British front in France; joint note No. 10 by the military representatives on the Supreme War Council; report by Sir D. Haig 322 (15); memorandum by Sir D. Haig, with covering note by C.I.G.S.; military representatives asked for the reasons for their recommendations 324 (11); discussion of the question at the Supreme War Council 329 (13), 331 (4), 338 (4); British front extended to Barisis 341 (1).

Eye-sight test, modification of 379 (17).

Eyoub Sabri; question of his inclusion in the first batch of exchanged Turkish prisoners 322 (1).

F.

Far East, propaganda in regard to German influence and policy in the 362 (3).

Farm lands; requisitioning for naval and military purposes 320 (10).

Feeding of live-stock 333 (12).
Ferrol, internment of a German submarine at 372 (21).

Finance; credits for Transatlantic fish supplies 318 (4).

Financial priority for purchases in America; instructions to the American Board 321 (9).

representation (British) in Russia 300 (10).

Fish supplies from Canada and Newfoundland 318 (4).

Foch, General, at Doullens Conference 374 (1), 374 (9).

charged with the co-ordination of the action of the Allied Armies on the Western front 374 (9); message of congratulation by President Wilson published in Washington; question from Press Bureau as to publication in this country of such messages; President Wilson's message to be kept back from publication; French Government to be informed that an official announcement is to be made immediately 378 (6).

Food allowances to railway workers 331 (10).

Control Committees; compulsory rationing; Labour representation; mandatory powers; central control 334 (9).

inadequate penalties for offences against Orders; introduction of a Bill approved 329 (3).

reduction of sugar ration; meat rations; revision of scales for the Army, Navy, and Mercantile Marine according to duties and areas 347 (9 and Appendix), 366 (15).

waste products, Central Council to deal with 346 (13).

Controller; claims on tonnage 330 (1).

memorandum on tonnage for food 330 (1).

Compulsory Rationing; authorised to introduce a national system covering meat and fats in addition to sugar; to make preparations for including cereals; and to incur the necessary expenditure 334 (9).

purchases in America; priority of finance; instructions to the American Board 321 (9).

distribution in industrial areas 334 (9).

imports of; utilisation of shipping in South African ports 333 (12).

inequality of distribution; food supply in the country compared with that in towns 336 (1).

Ministry of; report of a Departmental Committee on Rationing and Distribution 334 (9).

transfer of officials from other Departments 334 (9).

position, British and French 346 (7).

prices and the agitation for increase of wages 310 (and Appendix), 315 (1).

question; its importance as a factor in the war 336 (1).

saving to be effected by reduction of rations for troops at home 329 (7), 347 (9 and Appendix).

situation; compulsory rationing; memorandum by the Food Controller; report by a Departmental Committee of the Ministry of Food on Rationing and Distribution; Food Controller authorised to introduce a national compulsory rationing system covering meat and fats, in addition to sugar; to make preparations for including cereals; and to incur necessary expenditure; a statement on the Food situation to be drafted with a view to publication in the press 334 (9); British and French food position; misgivings of French Ambassador in regard to British food supply, and the proposed scale of rations; failure of French plan of limiting prices; reduction of reserves of livestock 346 (7), 347 (Appendix); reduction of the sugar ration 347 (8 and Appendix), 364 (17); meat rations; revision of scales for the Army, Navy, and Mercantile Marine according to duties and areas 347 (9 and Appendix), 366 (15); priority for shipments of foodstuffs for February and March 349 (14).

question to be discussed on March 22, with special reference to (a) the proposal to separate supply from distribution; (b) the readjustment of Army and civilian rations; (c) potatoes 367 (12).

supply; requisitioning of farm lands for naval and military purposes 320 (10).

tonage for; memorandum by Food Controller 330 (1); priority for shipments of foodstuffs for February and March 349 (14).

Transatlantic fish supplies 318 (4).

Foodstuffs, priority for shipments of; for February and March 349 (14).

Foreign Office, transfer of Intelligence Branch of Department of Information to 349 (11).

Secretary; safeguarding of his authority and responsibility in connection with the functions of the Eastern Committee 363 (20); his views as to the functions and Chairmanship of the Committee 366 (6).

France; Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).

railway transport in; General Nash's report 351 (2), 355 (7, 8, and 9), 356 (9), 357 (3).
French Army; strength of battalions 326 (4).
- coal for Italy 351 (3), 355 (7), 359 (14), 366 (11).
- divisions; withdrawal from Italy 324 (3).
- Field-Marshal Lord, letter from, in regard to troops available for Home Defence 373 (10).
- munitions factory, explosion in 346 (6).
- ports, American use of 321 (9).
- and railwys, congestion in 370 (10).
- Dieppe as a port for the British Expeditionary Force 324 (17).
- submarine attacked by mistake 374 (3).
- troops at Salonica, equipment of, reported by General Guillaumat to be unsatisfactory 309 (7); shortage of supplies; the force 28,000 below strength; despatch of drafts 331 (2).

G.

Garrisons, oversea; maintenance, pay, &c, after the war; memorandum by War Secretary 333 (9).
Gas and electric light, restrictions on use of; memorandum by President of Board of Trade; prohibition of shop-window lighting; hours for extinguishing lights in restaurants, hotels, clubs, and places of amusement; authority to President of Board of Trade 367 (15).
- attacks; munitions programme for 1919; limitations on the offensive employment of poison gas 363 (7).
- bombs, use of; air raids on London 350 (6).
- masks 350 (6), 355 (10).
- poisons 326 (6), 350 (6), 355 (10), 367 (7).
- shells, casualties from 367 (5).
Geddes, Sir E., transport of immediate reinforcements to the Western front; letter to Secretary of War Cabinet 374 (5).

German aeroplanes 360 (3).
- and Turkish territories captured in the war, future of; memorandum by Lord Curzon 309 (18); Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).
- Army; its strength on the Western and Italian fronts compared with the Allies 355 (1).
- strength of battalions 326 (4).
- colonies, disposal of; memorandum by the Colonial Office; the United States and Canada and the re-establishment of Germany in the Pacific 312 (9); Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).
- in the Pacific 311 (19).
- Commander-in-Chief on the Western front 329 (4).
- divisions, strength of 363 (4).
- General Headquarters; indications of re-establing at Spa 342 (2), 379 (3).
- influence and policy in the Far East, propaganda in regard to 362 (3).
- merchant ship "Düsseldorf," capture of 337 (6).
- naval losses; torpedoes-boats "A-75" and "A-77" 331 (6).
- Navy; reports of mutinies at Wilhelmshaven and Kiel 322 (6).
- offensive on the Western front, preparations for 322 (4); information from Russia and Copenhagen 322 (5); information from General Knox as to transfer from the Russian front of artillery, aircraft, ammunition, and railway material 324 (5); statement by the King of Spain to the French Military Attaché at Madrid 328 (4); German divisions and artillery in training behind the line 336 (3); weakness of the Portuguese line 340 (3), 347 (2); most likely point of attack 342 (3), 350 (5); poison gas 350 (6), 355 (10); opinions of C.I.G.S. 351 (9); of D.M.I. 354 (2); reports disseminated by German agents in France; opinion of D.M.O. as to probable time and point of attack 356 (1); rumours of German naval co-operation in the offensive 359 (3); German concentration on the Arras-Peronne front 357 (2), 358 (1); on the (French) Soissons-Rheims front 358 (1); possibility of front of the attack being extended northward 359 (2); aerial activity 360 (4); German Tanks 360 (5), 361 (6); reports by C.I.G.S. 363 (3), 364 (1); views of M. Cambon and C.I.G.S. 364 (1); report by D.M.O. 355 (2), 367 (4); forty new enemy heavy batteries from Russia located 366 (1); arrival of 490 heavy guns in February 367 (7); increased enemy aircraft activity 368 (1).
German overtures to Spain; paper by Sir E. Carson; French and British propaganda in Spain 318 (11).

... penetration in South-East Russia; new route from Berlin to the Caspian 362 (4).

... prisoners in hospital ships 366 (6).

... raider in the Pacific 323 (6).

... "Sao-Adler" 360 (9).

... "Wolf" 360 (10).

... Tanks 347 (1), 360 (5).

... troops in Holstein 313 (5).

Germany, air offensive in 320 (9); air raid on Karlsruhe 322 (10); air raid on Mannheim 367 (2).

... imprisonment of British airmen for dropping pamphlets 339 (5).

... internal situation 322 (5).

... Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).

... strikes in; Home Secretary requested to hold up telegrams 335 (9).

Glasgow, revolutionary agitation at; memorandum by Secretary for Scotland, with special reference to the cases of John MacLean and others 364 (14).

"Goeben"; sortie from the Dardanelles; damaged by a mine and beached; her position 328 (13); attacks by aircraft; salvage of her guns; news of the disaster to be spread in Constantinople 329 (11); question of bombardment across the Gallipoli peninsula 330 (4); further air attacks 331 (8), 333 (8); her return to Constantinople 334 (4); reported to be under repair 346 (1); statement by Commander Bellairs in the House of Commons 369 (14).

Government Departments, staffing and organisation of 319 (5).

Grain from the United States; temperance agitation in America for stoppage of shipment until the British Government prohibit brewing; proposed deputation of American temperance reformers to the Prime Minister 368 (11).

Grenet, Sir Guy, going to the United States on behalf of the Food Controller, and to assist Lord Reading in all questions of transportation 366 (4).

Greek Army, equipment of 328 (15).

... mobilisation of 328 (16), 349 (12), 353 (3).

... railways, control of; Joint Commission 349 (12).

Grey, Lord, communication with, on the subject of the Government's declaration of war aims 314 (1), 315 (2).

Guillaumat, General 322 (7).

Gun position; replacement of guns lost on the Western front; statement by Minister of Munitions of guns available 372 (11 and Appendix).

H.

Haig, Field Marshal, Sir D., at Doullen's Conference 373 (1), 374 (9).

... communication to, with regard to reinforcements for the Western front, the transfer of divisions from Italy, and the extent of French co-operation 371 (11); telegram to, expressing the gratitude of the War Cabinet to the B.E.F. and announcing the despatch of reinforcements and guns 372 (1).

... consultation in regard to the selection of an officer as British Permanent Military Representative at Versailles in lieu of General Sir H. Wilson 348.
Haig, Sir D., conference with the War Cabinet, January 7, 1918, on questions connected with the position on the Western front, and on the question of troops for Home Defence (Not printed, see 316 (8-15)).

Hamilton, General Sir Ian, employment for 318 (10).

Health, Ministry of; Government's intention to introduce legislation for its establishment not to be prejudiced by the introduction of the Maternity and Child Welfare Bill 364 (16).

Helijaz, King of the, proposed message to, with regard to the Allies' intentions for Arab countries 330 (3).

Heligoland Bight, mines in the 360 (11).

Henderson, Mr. A.; communication to the Bolsheviks 324 (9).

Higher Command (Army), relief of 358 (11).

Holland, position of; report of the Northern Neutrals Committee 318 (12); joint report by C.I.G.S. and First Sea Lord 346 (3).

Home Defence, troops available for; letter from Local French 373 (16).

Hong-Kong, Russian warships at; statement by captain of the "Orel" to rear admirals at Hong-Kong 328 (14), 335 (8).

Horses, importation of; question of cessation of purchases and shipments from America 323 (9), 346 (15).

Hospital ship "Aquitania," loan of, for the transport of American troops 309 (15).

Ice-breakers in the Baltic 363 (17).

Imperial Conference; a representative of the Indian Native States to take part in the meetings 369 (12).

Imports and Exports Temporary Control Bill 312 (6).

Ice-breaker (armed) for Archangel 363 (18).

Ice-breakers in the Baltic 363 (17).

Hospitals for Greece 328 (16).

Housing accommodation at Barrow 335 (10).

Increase of Rent Bill 368 (12).
India, emergency reserve force for, at Salonica or in Egypt 371 (5).

representation of British India and the Native States at the Imperial War Cabinet 369 (12).

telegram from Commander-in-Chief, dated March 21, with reference to possible developments in the East consequent on the collapse of Russia, and danger to our position in India; and drawing attention to the arrangement (War Committee Paper—W.C. 23 (11)) for maintaining a potential emergency reserve for India at Salonica or in Egypt 371 (5).

Industrial and Commercial Policy after the war; final report of Lord Balfour of Burleigh's Committee; memorandum by the Minister of Reconstruction; consultation of the Dominions and India before publication 311 (9).

the British dye industry 329 (4).

effort of Great Britain; information for the American Government 323 (3 and Appendix).

Industries; effect of new man-power proposals on 376 (6).

restriction of; memoranda by Sir A. Geddes and Dr. Addison 320 (11).

restriction of; unemployment due to; Committee appointed 320 (13).

the British dye industry 329 (4).

Information, Department of; Intelligence Branch transferred to the Foreign Office 349 (11).

 leakage of 358 (10); maison télékine in France; War Cabinet's decision 361 (2); appointment of Committee to deal with the new Pensions Warrant 368 (10).

Minister of; list of papers to be issued to him 349 (9).

Ministry of, Intelligence Bureau for 359 (7), 367 (10).

Intelligence Branch of Department of Information; transfer to the Foreign Office 349 (11).

Bureau for the Ministry of Information; memoranda by Minister of Information and Foreign Secretary; questions raised referred to a Conference presided over by General Smuts 359 (7); memorandum by General Smuts, and minutes of Conference 367 (19).

weekly summary of; the Western front 336 (4).

Inter-Allied Council, office accommodation for 323 (11).

Supreme War Council. (See "Supreme War Council."

Maritime Transport Council. (See "Maritime Transport Council."

Inter-Allied Council on purchases; co-ordination of requests for credit; letter from Mr. Crosby to the Prime Minister 366 (14).

; purchases and finance; information from Departments concerning stocks 365 (10).

International law; Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix); conscription of Russians in Great Britain 345 (3).

Invasion; reported concentration of German troops in Holstein 318 (5).

Ireland, coal deposits in; memorandum by Minister of Reconstruction and the Chief Secretary for Ireland; proposals approved 311 (13).

compulsory military service; memorandum by Commander-in-Chief in Ireland; in his consultation with General Byrne, on the difficulties of enforcing conscription and the measures to be taken to cope with them 374 (Appendix); 375 (2); views of Sir Edward Carson and Sir James Campbell 376 (8); letter from General Mahon to Lord French modifying his previous opinion (375 (2)); as to the opposition to be encountered, and suggesting that Cardinal Logue should be informed when conscription was decided on; decision that it would be inadvisable to make any communication to Cardinal Logue and instructing General Mahon to take no action 377 (9); views of Labour Members of the Government 377 (10).

in; secrecy as to the proposals 376 (2), 377 (9).

Customs 345 (5).

Defence of the Realm Regulation 14; removal orders 353 (13); permit system between Great Britain and Ireland; amendment of Regulation 14 G. 354 (8), 356 (14).

drill; memorandum by Chief Secretary; action to be taken with regard to offenders; referred for settlement between the War, Home, and Irish Offices 311 (8).

Imperial and local defence of; memoranda by the Admiralty and the Chief Secretary 320 (12).

man-power proposals; estimated results 375 (2).

oat stocks in 328 (17).

reinforcements for cyclist's divisions 377 (2).
Ireland: Sinn Fein lawlessness in; entering upon and breaking up land; cattle-driving; conflicts with the police; covering authority of the War Cabinet for proclaiming Sinn Fein given to Chief Secretary 351 (13); deportation of Sinn Fein leaders 351 (14); telegraph from Chief Secretary asking for directions to be given to the Army Council and Home Office for the issue of removal and internment orders; G.O.C. Irish Command empowered to take action under Defence of the Realm Regulation 14; Chief Secretary to be supported in any action thought necessary for enforcing law and order 353 (13); legal difficulties in regard to internment; powers of military authorities under the Defence of the Realm Act to restrict the movements of undesirables; establishment of a permit or passport system between Great Britain and Ireland; 354 (8); telegram from Chief Secretary. February 26, 1918; no extension of lawless demonstrations in Clare since the despatch of troops 355 (16); memorial signed by 40 per cent. of the members of the Convention with regard to the prevalent lawlessness in certain parts of Ireland, and letters from Lord Granard and High Sheriffs; further telegram from Chief Secretary; deportation of undesirables and establishment of a permit system; War and Home Secretaries and Chief Secretary for Ireland to confer with a view to giving effect to the new Regulation 356 (14); question in House of Commons with regard to the conditions in Ireland; draft of reply 359 (13).

Irish civilian labour for France 336 (10).}

Convention 321 (14); Prime Minister's interviews with representatives of different sections of the Convention; the position of the various parties; the question of the retention of the Customs predominant; majority of Labour men in favour of a settlement; general discussion on the questions of the Customs and an All-Ireland Parliament; Prime Minister's proposal to make a statement to the joint meeting of representatives of the various sections as to the Government's views, agreed to 345 (5); Prime Minister's letters to Mr. Hugh Barris, M.P. (representing the Ulster Party), and to Sir Horace Plunkett, considered and approved 351 (12).

Imperial and local defence in Ireland 320 (12), 376 (5).

Imperial control of 345 (5).

Imperial contribution from 345 (5).

16th Division, its fighting qualities 374 (6 and 12), 375 (2).

Imperial Army, improvement in efficiency 345 (1).

artillery work 345 (1).

defensive methods 345 (1).

front; Asiago 311 (4); Italian success 334 (1), 335 (2).

plateau, moral of Italian troops on the 362 (6).

Astico; information of an intened attack on the French line 329 (9).

Austrian concentration 373 (5).

divisions on the 333 (4).

British aircraft 334 (1).

artillery 324 (1).

and French divisions, reduction of the number of 345 (1); message from General Foch to C.I.G.S.; balance of forces on the Western and Italian fronts; withdrawal of British divisions; Italian divisions for the Western front; C.I.G.S. to ascertain from Sir D. Haig whether he would prefer two British or four Italian divisions from the Italian front; action to be taken in the event of his preference for two British divisions; orders to General Plumer; communication to the Italian Government 347 (5); British divisions from Italy for the Allied General Reserve 349 (7); telegram from Signor Orlando with reference to the decision to withdraw two British divisions; the procedure followed stated to be contrary to the
recent deliberations at Versailles 351 (10); telegram from General Plumer, February 21, stating that General Diaz was rather perturbed at the withdrawal of two British divisions 352 (4); Signor Orlando's statement as to Austrian concentration in the Trentino 353 (2); General Smuts' accounts of Baron Sommio's apprehensions; various objections raised; question of removal of a second British division from the Italian front, or of Italian divisions, referred to the General Reserve Executive Committee 357 (3); 358 (2); resolutions of Supreme War Council at meetings in London on March 14 and 15, 1918 366 (11); War Cabinet agree with C.I.G.S. that two Italian, two French, and one British divisions should be withdrawn from Italy, in the order named, and instruct him to notify the Supreme War Council to that effect 370 (4); order of withdrawal altered; British and French to precede Italian divisions 371 (4).

Italian front, British divisions on the; reduction of strength 340 (4), 345 (1).

... sectors 345 (1).

... troops to occupy another sector on the Piave 328 (8).

... enemy offensive, prospects of 345 (1), 356 (2), 357 (3), 360 (1).

French sectors 345 (1).

... troops, command of 342 (4).

German divisions on the 326 (2), 333 (4), 340 (2).

Mount Asolone; capture of a position and 250 prisoners by the Italians on January 14, 1918; subsequent evacuations 323 (2), 345 (1).

Piave 311 (4), 328 (8), 360 (1).

... recall of General Plumer to the Western front 349 (6), 359 (3).

... reinforcements for; joint note No. 3 by Military Representatives approved by the Supreme War Council 338 (12).

... schools of instruction for Italian officers 345 (1).

... Switzerland, possible enemy attack through 360 (1).

... transfer of British and French divisions to the French front 366 (11), 370 (4), 371 (4)

... Trentino; Austrian concentration 353 (2).

... weather conditions 363 (9).

General Staff 345 (1).

... Headquarters, lack of control from 345 (1).

... labour for the Western front 322 (2), 324 (4 and 16), 328 (9); telegram from Prime Minister to Signor Orlando 350 (7 and Appendix).

... Military Representative on the Supreme War Council; General Giardino to replace General Cadorna 341 (3).

... naval incompetence; loss of ships and escort from a convoy sailing from Genoa to Toulon 367 (9).

... offensive 345 (1).

... problem; joint note No. 6 by Military Representatives approved by the Supreme War Council 338 (14).

... soldiers, pay and separation allowances of 322 (2), 361 (7).

... transport "Memfi" attacked by a submarine 352 (8).

... troops; employment on the Western front 338 (9), 345 (1), 347 (3), 351 (10), 366 (11), 370 (4).

... on the Asiago plateau, naval of 332 (6).

... command of the British Forces in; appointment of General Lord Cavan to succeed General Plumer 340 (6); command handed over to Lord Cavan. 363 (9).

... financial assistance to 322 (2).

... General Capello, Commander of the 2nd Italian Army, recalled to Rome for an enquiry 341 (4).

... enquiry into General Cadorna's conduct of the operations 328 (10).

... internal situation. 322 (2).

... invasion of; report from General Plumer on the French attack; 1,400 Austrians captured 309 (10); heavy snow-fall on the Italian front; the Piave; Austrians cleared out of the Zenson bend 311 (4); Mount Asolone; capture and subsequent evacuation of a position by the Italians 323 (2); occupation of another sector on the Piave by British troops 328 (8); enquiry into General Cadorna's conduct of the operations 328 (10); information from prisoners of an intended attack on the French line near Astico 329 (9); successful Italian offensive on the Asiago plateau 334 (1), 335 (2); reduction of strength of British divisions on the Italian front; General Plumer's anticipation of its bad moral effect on the
Italians; General Harington to discuss the question with the War Cabinet 340 (4); General Harington's statement as to the situation on the Italian front since the arrival of the British and French divisions; the instruction of the Italian Army the best means of assistance at the moment; defects of their defensive methods; bad artillery work; weakness of Staff work and lack of control from Headquarters; his opinion of the quality of the First, Third and Fourth Armies; the reorganisation of the Second Army; his estimate of the increase efficiency of the Italian Army since the retreat; the British and French sectors; their organisation as models of defence; possibility of enemy attack; war of the Austrian troops; General Diaz considering the possibility of a new offensive; question of reducing the number of British divisions; Italian divisions for the Western front; General Plumer opposed to the reduction of strength of British divisions to nine battalions; War Cabinet decide that the order for the reduction of strength shall not apply to the divisions in Italy 345 (1); question of the possible transfer of the enemy offensive from the Western to the Italian front; Baron Sonnino's apprehensions; objection to the removal of British divisions from the Italian front; alleged concentration of Austrian troops; one British division starting for France; question of the removal of the second referred to the General Reserve Executive Committee 357 (3); report by C.I.G.S. on weather conditions on the Italian front, and their influence on the possibility of an enemy attack; possible line of attack through Switzerland mentioned 360 (1).

Italy; man-power 322 (2).

* oats for the Army 328 (17), 349 (9).
* our obligations to 313 (2), 314 (5 and Appendix).
* Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).
* withdrawal of French divisions from 324 (3).

Italy's war aims; disappointment in Italy at scanty reference in the British Prime Minister's speech; message from the Prime Minister to Signor Orlando 328 (11).

J.

Jam-making, sugar for 364 (17).

Japan, British propaganda in 352 (7).

proposed British mission to; memorandum by Lord Beaverbrook; views of War Secretary, Lord R. Cecil, and Mr. Barnes; H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, or Prince Arthur of Connaught to be asked to head the mission; its personnel; views of our Ambassador at Tokyo as to the best kind of mission, to be obtained 360 (10); composition of the mission to be left in the hands of the War and Foreign Secretaries and Lord Beaverbrook 377 (12).

Japanese intentions with regard to Vladivostock 316 (2), 323 (7).

* intervention in Russia 323 (7), 327, 346 (9), 350 (4), 352 (3), 354 (5), 357 (7), 358 (4), 359 (11), 366 (9), 366 (12); discussion on the general question; view to securing American support 360 (9); Lord Curzon's memorandum on Japanese intervention in Siberia and our policy in Russia; telegrams from Mr. Lockhart indicating the possibility that the Bolshevics may yet be persuaded to invite Japanese intervention; British Ambassador at Tokyo to be informed 378 (10).

Jewish Regiment 329 (12).

K.

Kameneff, M. his treatment in this country 356 (8).

Kemp, Sir Edward, at the War Cabinet 312 (1); Canadian man-power 312 (2).

L.

Labour Conference, Inter-Allied; telegram from Mr. Arthur Henderson to M. Lenin at Petrograd 340 (8), 342 (15).

* International; memorandum by Mr. Barnes 342 (15).
* delegation to Russia in April and May 1917; publication of report 361 (11).
* disputes, Co-ordinating Committee on; to be replaced by the Ministry of Labour in dealing with wage disputes 317.
* from China, West Indies, South Africa, and India 324 (16).
* in ports and docks; release of 6,000 men for the Army 372 (18).
* leaders, statement to, in regard to our war aims 312 (8), 313 (1-3), 314 (1), 315 (2).
Labour Members of Parliament and the Military Service Amendment Bill 324 (9), 326 (5).

Minister of, and the restriction of non-essential industries 320 (11).

Ministers; views on conscription in Ireland 377 (10).

Ministry of, reference of wage disputes to 317; 326 (9), 329 (1), 329 (2), 337 (2).

newspapers and Bolshevist propaganda 322 (18).

party, British, and the Bolsheviks 324 (9).

Executive Committee; Military Service Amendment Bill; letter to the Prime Minister urging the danger of hastily pressing forward the Bill in the absence of a number of Labour Members, and advocating a week's delay; discussion; decision to press forward the Bill 326 (5).

policy of the Government; wages 310 (and Appendix), 314 (7), 317, 326 (3), 329 (1).

restriction of non-essential industries 320 (11).

representation on Local Food Committees 334 (9).

troubles; strike of sheet-metal workers 329 (2), 336 (9), 337 (2).

unemployment due to restriction of industries and raw material 320 (15).

wages; the 12½ per cent, bonus 309 (3), 310 (and Appendix), 314 (7), 315 (1), 317; 7½ per cent. bonus to piece-workers 326 (3), 329 (1); demands of sheet-metal workers 329 (2), 336 (9), 337 (2).

Land, agricultural; requisitioning for naval and military purposes 320 (10).

mines as obstacles to tanks 363 (9).

powers enabling the State to secure the increased value of land in proximity to land acquired for Government works 318 (14).

Lands, Director-General of; Sir Howard Frank; requisitioning of farm lands 320 (10).

League of Nations; debate in the House of Lords on March 19, 1918 368 (17).

Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).

Liaison officer between General Headquarters on the Western front and C.I.G.S. 370 (2), 371 (1).

"Liberty" aero-engines 321 (9), 361 (13 and 14).

Lighting in restaurants, hotels, clubs, and places of amusement, restriction as to 367 (16).

of shop windows, prohibition of 367 (16).

Linseed oil, shortage of 320 (14).

Linen oil, shortage of 320 (14).

Liquor restriction; brewing; importation of barley, &c.; recommendations of Restriction of Imports Committee 347 (10 and Appendix).

tonnage and brewing; memorandum by Sir Joseph Maclay; continuance of brewing; memorandum by Lord Inkhams; retention of present bulk barriage and reduction of gravity approved 308 (9).


representative in Great Britain 316 (16), 320 (1), 323 (18), 327, 328 (18), 329 (12), 340 (11), 341 (11), 342 (14), 343 (3), 355 (10), 364 (14).

question of his deportation 322 (18), 328 (18).

Live stocks, reserves of; reduction suggested 346 (7).

shortage of concentrated foods for; memorandum from the Board of Agriculture; publication authorised subject to omission of certain figures 333 (12).

Locomotives for Greece 349 (12).

London, air raids on 333 (1), 362 (5).

defence against air raids 320 (9), 333 (1), 355 (11).

M.

Machine-guns; economy in man-power, casualties, &c., by the use of 322 (16), 367 (6).

for the Western front; statement by Minister of Munitions of numbers available 372 (11).

from Denmark 319 (7).

Maize, imports of; utilisation of tonnage in South African ports 333 (12).

Méthodes tolérées in France 308 (13); leakage of information with regard to the War Cabinet's decision 367 (1).

Man-power, Cabinet Committee on; draft report; release of 20,000 men from the Army for shipbuilding 329 (10); decisions of War Cabinet 357 (19).
Man-power. Cabinet Committee on; restriction of non-essential industries 320 (11).

Canadian; Sir E. Kemp’s statement as to the number of men proposed to be raised by conscription 312 (2).

cancellation of exemptions from military service; Military Service Act Amendment Bill 321 (10), 324 (10), 320 (5).

comparison of British and German strength, and prospects of the belligerents in the German offensive on the Western front 379 (8), 372 (2).

demobilisation of older naval units with a view to the employment of their personnel to relieve the emergency 377 (6).

economy by the fullest use of machine-guns, tanks, and other mechanical devices 322 (16), 367 (6).

for military service: additional men from Munitions; Army Reserve Munition workers; recall of men discharged from the Territorial Force; recall of soldiers from agriculture 373 (3); troops in Ireland 372 (4); mobilisation of Volunteers 372 (5); recall to the Colours of wounded and discharged men 372 (6); modification of sight-test 372 (7); raising of age limit 372 (12); recruiting in Ireland; application of Military Service Act 372 (13 and 14), 373 (11), 374 (12), 375 (2), 376 (5), 377 (9); new legislation 372 (14); labour abroad for conscientious objectors 372 (15); ministers of religion 372 (16); recruiting of Russians 372 (17); release of port labour 372 (18); coal-miners 372 (21); withdrawal of men from Admiralty “A” firms and munitions 372 (32); discussion on the preliminary draft of a Bill for amendment of the Military Service Act 375 (9).

new proposals invited: Minister of National Service to put forward proposals with a view to an increase in the amount of man-power procurable 371 (9); stoppage of recruitment for the Navy of men over 18; release of men from Admiralty “A” firms and from the Royal Dockyards 371 (10), 372; Admiralty memorandum with regard to substitutes for men withdrawn from “A” firms; War Cabinet re-affirm their decision that 12,000 men should be contributed 378 (9).

naval shipbuilding programme 325 (2), 350 (11).

negotiations with trades union leaders with regard to Government pledges; the wages question 319, 315 (1); position of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers with regard to the Government proposals; deputation proposed 322 (15), 328 (15), 336 (11), 337 (1 and Appendix), 339 (4), 350 (13). New Zealand 312 (8).

position in regard to: War Secretary to give a statement 363 (6).

proposals; draft Military Service Bill; memoranda by Mr. Deke, Mr. Munro, Mr. Hare-Fisher, and Sir Albert Stanley; Committee appointed to consider the draft Bill (Sir G. Cave, Chairman), Lord Milner to represent the War Cabinet on the Committee 377 (11). estimated results in Great Britain and Ireland 375 (2).

Sir A. Geddes’ proposal to raise 450,000 men in England; industrial and agricultural disturbance; abolition of tribunals; position of recruiting; public attitude towards the extension of age limit; further curtailment of non-war trades; question of deferring the introduction of the Military Service Act Amendment Bill until the receipt of the report of the Irish Convention; delay deprecated by C.I.G.S., Lord French, and War Secretary; Parliament not to be summoned on April 2 372 (6).

statement to be issued to the press relative to measures taken by the War Cabinet since the commencement of the German attack on the Western front 378 (7).

reinforcements for the Western front 371 (5-11), 372, 373 (8 and 19).

from Home sources for the Western front; statement by General Hutchinson of the resources in this country from which drafts could be furnished; trained men: men on leave from France; boys between 18½ and 19; “A” men in Cadet units; trained soldiers in munition works; trained soldiers in agriculture; Dominion troops 371 (8), 372 (2).

recruiting of coal-miners 350 (12).

registration (compulsory) of boys and of immigrants from Ireland 321 (12).

requirements for naval shipbuilding programmes for 1918 and 1919 325 (2).

resources of the British Empire; information for the American Government 323 (3 and Appendix).
Man-power, revised draft report on; correctness of certain figures questioned; General Smuts to enquire and report 319 (10).

supply of labour in shipyards: memorandum by the Admiralty on labour for merchant shipbuilding: draft report of the Cabinet Committee on man-power; 20,000 men to be released from the Army 326 (19); memorandum by Sir E. Geddes and note by the Secretary with reference to labour for merchant shipbuilding; discussion; decisions of War Cabinet 367 (13).

Transport Workers' battalions; increase of strength 352 (9).

Manufactures; restriction of non-essential industries 320 (11); the British dye industry 329 (4).

Marines, loan of, to the Army 372 (9), 377 (5).

Maritime Transport Council, Inter-Allied; question of Paris or London as the place for forthcoming meeting; M. Clemenceau invited to attend 339 (14); acquisition of Dutch shipping 361 (1); employment of a portion of the Dutch shipping for conveyance of coal to Italy 366 (11).

Marshall, General, to confer with General Smuts in Egypt 332 (1).

Maternity and Child Welfare Bill: memoranda by Dr. Addison, Sir E. Cornwall, Mr. Long, and Mr. Hayes Fisher; discussion on the draft Bill; Bill referred to a Committee (Mr. Hayes Fisher, Chairman) for consideration and report 328 (12); draft of Bill as amended by the Committee with notes by President of Local Government Board and Minister of Reconstruction; introduction of the Bill authorised, with an announcement that it is not to be regarded as prejudicing the Government's intention to introduce legislation for the establishment of a Ministry of Health 364 (16).

Maude, Lady, provision for 328 (12), 355 (2).

"Mauretania," loan of, as a transport for American troops 309 (15).

Meat rations (Army, Navy, and Mercantile Marine); revision of scales according to duties and areas 347 (9 and Appendix).

for troops at home 329 (7), 347 (9 and Appendix). 366 (15).

supplies; compulsory rationing 324 (9), 347 (9 and Appendix).

Mechanical transport, suspension of purchases in America 323 (9).

test (sight), modification of 372 (7).

Mercantile marine prisoners in Germany, exchange of 360 (16).

Merchant shipbuilding; naval programme to have priority over 312 (5).

Mesopotamia; air force in; replacement of old machines 318 (8).

British officers and non-commissioned officers at Baghdad about to start for the Caucasus 328 (7).

Euphrates, operations on the; British advance towards Hit; Turkish force there 353 (5), 355 (5); Hit captured without fighting 363 (11); advance up-stream beyond Hit 364 (4); complete success of our operations; operations on March 26 north of Khan Baghdeir described; the whole Turkish force on right bank of the Euphrates below Haditha practically captured or destroyed; prisoners, guns, &c, taken; our casualties slight 376 (2); telegram from General Marshall dated March 29, showing that the success was greater than had been indicated by the enemy's casualties; congratulations to General Marshall 378 (4).

floods in the Baghdad area 319 (1).

Kermanshah; General Bicharakhov endeavouring to rally loyal Russian troops in that region; arrangements for food supplies; facilities for Russian officers in France and England to join General Bicharakhov 311 (3).

occupation of, after the war; the Allies' intentions 330 (3).

Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).

reduction of British forces; telegram from Commander-in-Chief, India, indicating the possibility of an enemy attack 396 (4).

reinforcements from, for the Western front 371 (6).

Russian force under General Baratoff to be raised in the Caucasus 328 (7).

troops in 311 (3), 310 (1).

Metal, scrap, salvage of 324 (13).

Middle East; General Smuts deputed to confer with Generals Allenby and Marshall, the naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, the Egyptian Government, and other authorities, on the military situation, and to advise the War Cabinet on the best use and co-ordination of our resources for the prosecution of the war against Turkey 332 (1); telegram from General Smuts regarding the position in Palestine 349 (8).

Military appointments; General Sir H. Wilson appointed C.I.G.S.; General Sir W. Robertson appointed to the Eastern Command; selection of Permanent Military Representative
at Versailles; statement in Parliament in regard to General Robertson's resignation

348: General Rawlinson appointed Military Representative on the Supreme War Council; General Plumer to command our Fourth Army in France; General Lord Cavan to succeed General Plumer in command of British forces in Italy 349 (6).

Military policy; joint note No. 1, by the Military Representatives approved by the Supreme War Council 338 (10).

Service Act Amendment Bill; cancellation of exemptions 321 (13); attitude of Labour and Ulster Members; decision to press the Bill forward without delay 324 (10); protest from Labour Party Executive Committee against haste in pressing forward the Bill; previous decision adhered to 326 (5).

extension to Ireland 372 (13 and 14), 373 (11), 374 (12 and Appendix) 375 (2), 376 (5), 377 (9).

raising of age limit 379 (12), 375 (3).

Acts to be applied to Russians in Great Britain 329 (12), 341 (11), 345 (3), 361 (8), 372 (17).

Bill, draft of; memoranda by Mr. Duke, Mr. Mauro, Mr. Hayes Fisher, and Sir Albert Stanley; committee appointed to consider the draft Bill (Sir G. Care, Chairman); Lord Milner to represent the War Cabinet on the Committee 377 (11).

to extend the Military Service Act to Ireland; to raise the age limits and to include ministers of religion; Minister of National Service to prepare a Bill for consideration of War Cabinet 372 (14 and 16); discussion on preliminary draft Bill; to be put in the hands of the parliamentary draughtsman for immediate circulation to the War Cabinet 375 (3); question of postponing the introduction of the Bill until receipt of report of Irish Convention 376 (6).

calling-up notice reduced to seven days 372 (20).

for boys of 16 375 (2 and 3), 376 (7); decision to make enrolment in Class “C” of the Volunteers compulsory 377 (8).

increase of man-power procurable for; Minister of National Service to put forward new proposals 371 (9), 372, 375 (3), 376 (6).

lowering of the age limit 375 (2 and 3), 376 (7), 377 (8).

overseas; boys under 16; decision of War Cabinet that the trained contingent of boys between 18 and 18 should be sent overseas 371 (8).

position of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers with regard to the Government proposals; deputation proposed 323 (13), 328 (15).

raising of the age limit 372 (12), 375 (3).

situation as a whole; General Staff to give a review, with their views as to the possibility of an ultimate military decision 356 (5), 357 (4).

Milner, Lord, at Doullens Conference 373 (1), 374 (9).

Minelaying near Alexandria 309 (12).

Miners, wages of; the 12½ per cent, bonus 310 (and Appendix), 314 (7), 315 (1).

Federation and the proposed withdrawal of 50,000 coal-miners for military service 359 (12), 370 (9); further withdrawals 372 (21).

recruiting of 359 (12), 370 (9), 372 (21).

Mines in the Heligoland Bight 330 (11).

(land) as obstacles to tanks 363 (8).

Ministers of religion, military service for 372 (16).

Montenegro; Prime Minister's statement of war aims 313 (3), 314 (Appendix).

“Morning Post”; article by Lieutenant-Colonel Reptoning 342 (16), 343, 344 (1 and 2).

“Most-favoured-nation” clause; denunciation of commercial treaties 312 (8).

“Motagua,” H.M.S., in collision with U.S. destroyer “Manley” 368 (8).

Mudros, aerodrome in 318 (7).

Munition workers, wages of; the 12½ per cent, bonus 309 (3), 310 (and Appendix), 314 (7), 315 (1), 317, 320 (9), 329 (1).

Munitions Budget for 1918; steel 347 (11 and Appendix); Ministry of Munitions authorised to place further orders up to 186,000 tons 350 (9).

Minister of; powers for settlement of labour disputes 317.

Ministry of; claims on tonnage 330 (1); recommendations of Restriction of Imports Committee 347 (11 and Appendix), 350 (9).

contract 319 (5).

memorandum conveying a suggested alternative as to the revision of piece-work rates, and premium bonus time allowances 329 (1).
Munitions, Ministry of; memorandum on tonnage for nitrates 330 (1).

...of War Acts; powers for settlement of labour disputes 317.

release of men for the Army 371 (8), 372 (2).

steel for 336 (7), 347 (11 and Appendix), 350 (9).

supply of; Mr. Churchill's protest against appropriation of additional tonnage for cotton at the expense of steel and raw material for munitions 309 (4); output of munitions; Mr. Churchill's remarks on the decision of January 21, 1918 (W.C. 326 (3)), on the 7½ per cent. bonus to piece-workers 329 (1).

Museums, removal of treasures from; danger from bombs 318 (1 and 2).

Mutiny in the German Navy 322 (6).

N.

Nash, General; report on railway transport in France 351 (2), 355 (7, 8, and 9), 356 (9), 357 (3), 366 (11).

National Expenditure, Select Committee on; second report; appointment of committees; Committee to inquire into the staffing and organisation of departments which have recruited large clerical staffs during the war; Committee to inquire into the steps taken by the Admiralty, War Office, and Ministry of Munitions to control contract prices and limit profits, and to consider the questions of co-ordination and improvement 319 (5).

Registration Amendment Bill; registration of boys; registration of immigrants from Ireland 321 (12).

Salvage Board 324 (13).

Service, Minister of; man-power for military service: new proposals with a view to increasing the total amount procurable and for speeding up of recruiting 371 (9), 372, 375 (3), 376 (6).

negotiations with Trades Union leaders with regard to Government pledges; the wages question 310, 315 (1); position of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers; deputation proposed 328 (13), 328 (15), 336 (11), 337 (1 and Appendix); proposal for a conference with certain Trades Unions approved 339 (4).

powers in regard to the withdrawal of men from other departments for military service; Military Service Act Amendment Bill 321 (13), 326 (5).

...restriciton of non-essential industries 326 (11).

...to co-operate with other departments concerned in obtaining labour for shipyards, including the release of skilled shipyard workers or apprentices from the Army, Navy, and Air Force; War Cabinet decision 367 (13).

Native labour from China, West Indies, South Africa, and India 324 (16).

Naval casualties (vessels damaged) 334 (7), 336 (15), 368 (8), 376 (3).

Council, Allied 345 (8).

dockyards, release of men from, for the Army 371 (10), 372 (22).

engagement, and bombardment of Dunkirk on March 21 370 (12).

engagements; attack on the Dover patrol, February 14, 1918 347 (4).

losses; destroyer "Attack" 309 (12), 311 (7); H.M.S. "Partridge" and armed trawlers "Tokio" and "Livingstone"; more men reported saved 319 (4), H.M.S. "Raccoon" wrecked on the Irish coast 320 (7); destroyers "Opal" and "Narborough" lost near the Pentland Firth 321 (4), 322 (8); submarine "G 8" 321 (4), 324 (7); H.M.S. "Hazard" 333 (7); H.M.S. "Baglan" and monitor "M 28"; court of inquiry 334 (6); submarines "K 4" and "K 17" sunk in collision near the Firth of Forth 336 (6); "Calgaran" torpedoed 358 (5); submarine "H 49" 358 (7), 362 (7); H.M.S. "Kals" sunk in a minefield 376 (3); H.M.S. "Tithonus" sunk 377 (4).

...policy; discussion with First and several Naval Lords of the Admiralty; memorandum by the First Lord on the naval situation in the North Sea, dated January 17, 1918; secret despatch from Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet; strategical policy of main operations and of anti-submarine warfare; matériel available for 1918; co-operation of the United States Navy; policy of the Board of Admiralty approved 325 (1).

...shipbuilding programme for 1919; programme of warship and auxiliary construction, dated January 17, 1918, as proposed by the Board of Admiralty; question of post-bellic construction considered; effect of the proposals on the programmes of other departments, in the matter of raw materials and man-power, to be ascertained before sanctioning the naval programme 326 (2); Admiralty pro-
gramme authorised on the basis of 2,100,000 tons of imported material 347 (11); Admiralty memorandum dealing with the proposed programme from the point of view of steel, wages, and man-power; allocation of steel between warships and auxiliaries; "Warship Programme A" approved 350 (11).

Naval shipbuilding programme, priority for 312 (5). 
... production of destroyers 321 (5). 
... situation in the North Sea; memorandum dated January 17, 1918, by First Lord of the Admiralty; secret despatch from Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet; discussion with First and Naval Lords of the Admiralty 325 (1). 

Navy: demobilisation of older units with a view to employment of their personnel to relieve the emergency 377 (6). 
... number of men in; information for the American Government 323 (3 and Appendix). 
... release of shipyard workers: War Cabinet decision 367 (13). 
... sailors' pay: Third Report of Soldiers' and Sailors' Pay Committee 320 (8); Fourth and Final report approved 349 (10); separation allowances 364 (13). 
... state of all personnel in, with medical categories, to be furnished to the War Cabinet by First Lord of the Admiralty 307 (13). 
... stoppage of recruitment of men over 18 371 (10), 372 (10). 

New issues of capital; Interim Report No. 7 of the Economic Offensive Committee 312 (7). 

New Zealand; man-power; recruiting 312 (2). 

Newfoundland; debt obligations in London; agreement with British Government as to credits for fish supplies 318 (4). 

Newspaper indiscretions: "scare" headlines 326 (1). 

Newton, Lord: exchange of British and Turkish prisoners of war. (See "Prisoners of War"). 

Nitrate, tonnage for; memorandum by Ministry of Munitions 330 (1). 

Non-Ferrous Metals Bill 312 (6). 

North Sea, naval situation in; memorandum dated January 17, 1918, by First Lord of the Admiralty; secret despatch from Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet; discussion with First and Naval Lords of the Admiralty 325 (1). 

Northcliffe, Lord: effect of his letter in America; British and American powers of organisation 321 (9). 

Northern Neutrals Committee, report of, in relation to Holland 318 (12); position of Holland; joint report by C.I.G.S. and First Sea Lord 346 (3). 

Norway, assistance in aviation to; training of pilots; memorandum by Lord Bothermere; Air Council to delay sending manuals of instruction, machines, &c. 357 (14). 

German submarines in territorial waters 370 (10).
Ostend bombarded by H.M.S. "Terror" on March 21. 370 (13).
Overseas garrisons, maintenance, pay, &c., after the war; memorandum by War Secretary 333 (9).
Overseas Purchase, Director of, and his Staff; transfer to Ministry of Shipping 324 (15).

P.

Pacific, German colonies in; danger to the United States and Canada of the re-establishment of Germany 312 (9).
Palestine, air force in 318 (6 and 7).
" Amman, Turkish reinforcements at; General Allenby's objective 366 (3).
" Arab operations in; railway damaged 353 (4).
" casualties (British) 311 (2).
" co-operation of French forces in 344 (3).
" future operations in; military representatives on the Supreme War Council asked to hasten their report 324 (12).
" Haifa Railway, attacks on 320 (5), 353 (4).
" General Allenby's intentions 356 (4).
" Jaffa, capture of 352 (1).
" occupation of, after the war; the Allies' intentions 330 (3).
" position in; telegram from General Smuts 349 (8).
" Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).
" propaganda in regard to the capture of Jerusalem 311 (12).
" railways 334 (2), 342 (8).
" reinforcements from, for the Western front 371 (5).
" the offensive in 309 (11), 350 (3), 351 (1), 352 (1), 355 (4), 356 (4), 363 (10), 364 (2), 365 (4), 366 (3).
" Turkish forces south of the Dead Sea and on the Hedjaz Railway 365 (4).
" Turkish losses in killed and prisoners 309 (11), 311 (2).
" weather in 319 (1).

Paper and pulp; reduction of import 347 (5 and Appendix).
" Commission 323 (5); to become an Advisory Council 355 (15).
" Controller, appointment of; memorandum from the President of the Board of Trade 355 (15).
" shortage; memorandum by Sir E. Carson; supply to newspapers; stoppage of unnecessary publications; prevention of waste in Government Departments; the Paper Commission; collection of waste; Committee (Sir E. Carson, Chairman) appointed to review the whole question 323 (8); offer of vacant Chairmanship to Mr. A. Chamberlain 333 (9).

Papers for Ministry of Information 350 (9).

Parcels for troops in France; restriction of breadstuffs 351 (4).

Parliament prorogation of; draft of the King's speech 358 (19).
" re-assembling of; draft of the King's speech 341 (12).
" statement in regard to the resignation of General Sir W. Robertson 348.
" summoning of, for new legislation in regard to recruiting 372 (14); legal difficulties 375 (4); Parliament not to be summoned on April 2; 376 (6).

Parliamentary procedure, machinery of, in the period following the termination of the war; memorandum by Dr. Addison; question of a Select Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament 324 (14).

Passports to America 334 (8).

Payment by results 310, 329 (1).

Peace negotiations; Mr. A. Ransome's despatch to the "Daily News" announcing the threatened breakdown of the Bolshevik peace negotiations 311 (11).

Pensions to dependants of men shot for cowardice 322 (19).
" warrant; Committee appointed (Mr. Barnes, Chairman) to deal with the proposed new warrant 367 (21); leakage of information in regard to appointment of Committee 368 (10).

Persia, British policy in; military occupation of North-West Persia urged by Sir C. Martling; question referred to the Persian Committee 354 (4); indications of necessity for a change in our policy 366 (9), 367 (11), 369 (10).
" South Persian Rifles 369 (10).

Persian Committee, question of policy to be adopted in Persia, referred to 354 (4), 357 (5).
" to be merged in the Eastern Committee 363 (20).
Pershing, General 321 (9); agreement with British Government on the co-operation of United States troops with the British Army 338 (1 and Appendix).

Petain, General, at Doullens Conference 373 (1), 374 (9).

Petroleum, imports of 347 (12 and Appendix).

Phosphate rock, tonnage for 347 (Appendix).

Piece-workers, wages of; the 12½ per cent. bonus; 309 (3), 310 (and (Appendix), 314 (7), 315 (1), 317; 7½ per cent. bonus 326 (3), 329 (1).

Pilot ship sunk by a German submarine in the Mersey 321 (7).

Pitwood; reduction of import 347 (7 and Appendix).

Plumer, General; his recall from Italy 349 (6), 859 (3); his return to France 363 (9).

Plymouth; the Local Food Committee 334 (9).

Poison gas 326 (6), 350 (6), 355 (10), 363 (7).

Poland; German peace treaties with Russia and the Ukraine; joint declaration by the Allies 366 (12).

independence of; statement of our war aims 312 (8), 314 (Appendix).

information that the Poles had crossed the frontier and placed themselves under the orders of the Regency Council 358 (3).

Polish Army, French report from Russia of difficulties in the formation of 315 (4); operations against the Bolshevists; Polish divisions for the support of the Roumanian Army 341 (11).

Political conference of Allied statesmen in London, March 1918; subjects to be raised; American representative 364 (9); report by Prime Minister; conclusions approved by War Cabinet 366 (12).

Pope, the; proposed armistice at Easter 363 (5).

Port and Transit Committees (local), War Office representatives on 352 (9).

labour; release of 6,000 men for the Army 372 (18).

Post Office; assistance in the sugar rationing scheme 334 (9).

equal remuneration of men and women engaged on similar duties 370 (20).

payment of conscientious objectors in the employ of; memorandum by Mr. Barnes 352 (12).

Potatoes; the 1918 crop; guaranteed prices 369 (1).

Premium bonus system 310, 315 (1), 317, 320 (1).

President Wilson and General Foch’s appointment to the control of the Allied Armies in France 378 (6).

message of sympathy with the people of Russia on the occasion of opening the Congress of Soviets at Moscow 364 (10).

Wilson’s speech on war aims 321 (10).

Press (British and Allied); suppression of references regarding the formation or command of a General Inter-Allied Reserve 338 (3); article by Lieutenant-Colonel Repington in the “Morning Post” 342 (16), 349, 344 (1 and 2).

Bureau; article by Lieutenant-Colonel Repington in the “Morning Post” 342 (16), 343, 344 (1 and 2).

food situation; a comprehensive statement to be drafted by the Food Controller, with a view to publication 345 (9).

indiscretions; scare headlines 320 (1).

leakage of information 358 (10).

provincial; weekly review of the war situation 333 (11).

statement to be issued by War Cabinet, relative to measures taken since the commencement of the German attack on the Western front, for dealing with the immediate situation, and for the supply of large numbers of men and guns throughout the summer 378 (7).

strikes in Germany; suppression of comments or signs of jubilation in the Allied press 335 (9).

Printed matter, export of; report of the Committee approved; amendment of Defence of Realm Regulations 24 and 24 b 345 (14).

Priority for naval shipbuilding 312 (5).

for Tanks 318 (Appendix).

of tonnage; requirements of the Food Controller, the Ministry of Munitions, the Admiralty, and other Departments 336 (1); priority for shipments of foodstuffs for February and March 346 (14).

Prisoners (interned civilian), exchange of; memoranda by War Secretary and Lord Newton 360 (18).

(British and Turkish), exchange of; Agreement between British and Turkish delegates; memorandum by Lord Newton; inclusion of Eyoub Sabri; agreement to be ratified on the part of the British Government; no announcement to be made until ratified by the Turkish Government; thanks to Lord Newton and General Belfield 322 (1).
Prisoners of war (British) in Germany; transfer to Holland 360 (16).

" " labour and food; memorandum by the Colonial Secretary 355 (13).

" " responsibility for decisions with regard to; memorandum by Lord Newton, Sir G. Cave, Lord Derby, and Sir E. Geddes; Lord Curzon to act on behalf of War Cabinet in cases of Departmental disagreement 368 (14).

" " (Roumanian) relief of 362 (2).

Proclamation with regard to the agitation for increase of wages 310 (and Appendix), 314 (7), 315 (1), 317.

Production, Committee on, and claims of Government employees for increase of wages; memorandum by Mr. Barnes on the effect of the War Cabinet's decision (W.C. 317), 368 (15).

" " and the ante-dating of awards of the 12½ per cent. bonus to local authority employees 376 (21).

" " and wage disputes 317; proposal for 7½ per cent. bonus to piece-workers 328 (3), 329 (1); demands of sheet-metal workers 329 (2), 336 (9), 337 (2); claims of Government employees 368 (15).

Profit-sharing and the agitation for increase of wages 310 (and Appendix) 315 (1).

Promotion in the Army 330 (5).

Propaganda at home; memorandum by Sir E. Carson covering communications from Major-General Swinton and Lord Denbigh; lectures by wounded officers and escaped prisoners of war; objections on grounds of discipline; arguments for and against the scheme; officers and men to be released for short periods for the service of the War Aims Committee 331 (12).

" " (British) in Japan 352 (7).

" " counter-offensive to Bolshevik propaganda in Great Britain 328 (18).

" " Department; lectures by wounded officers and escaped prisoners of war 331 (12).

" " (Home), responsibility for; memorandum by Minister of Information, Chairman of the War Aims Committee, and Food Controller; definition of duties of Minister of Information; matter referred to General Smuts for settlement 359 (8).

" " in enemy countries; correspondence between Foreign Secretary and Lord Northcliffe on propaganda in Austria 359 (6).

" " in regard to German influence and policy in the Far East 362 (3).

" " in regard to the capture of Jerusalem 311 (12).

" " in Spain; paper by Sir E. Carson 318 (11).

" " Intelligence Department for the Ministry of Information 359 (7).

" " the psychological offensive 311 (10).

Proportional Representation; situation created by the House of Lords amendment 333 (1), 332 (2); conference of Lord Curzon with supporters of Proportional Representation in the House of Lords 337 (3), 338 (8).

Psychological offensive; propaganda; memorandum by Sir E. Carson and Dr. Addison; statement of our War Aims; German colonies in the Pacific; feeling in Canada; machinery for propaganda 311 (10).

Purchase of merchant shipping abroad; transfer to Ministry of Shipping 324 (15).

Purchases in America; priority of finance; instructions to the American Board 323 (9).

R.

Railway transport in France; General Nash's report 351 (2), 355 (7, 8, and 9), 356 (9), 357 (3), 366 (11).

" " in Great Britain 355 (7).

" " workers; food allowances 331 (10).

" " workshops, munition workers in; wages; the 12½ per cent. bonus 310 (and Appendix), 314 (7), 317.

Railways; compensation for injury through air raids to be conceded 331 (11).

" " wages of; the 12½ per cent. bonus 310 (Appendix), 314 (7), 315 (1), 317.

Railways; Director-General of Movements and Railways; General Delano-Osborne to succeed; Sir Sam Fay as Director of Movements 368 (4).

Rainham munitions factory, explosion at 346 (5).

Ransome, Mr. Arthur; dispatch to the "Daily News" announcing the threatened breakdown of the Bolshevik peace negotiations 311 (11).

Rationing, compulsory. (See "Food Situation".)

" " of coal for domestic use 355 (17).
Rations for troops at home 329 (7), 347 (9 and Appendix), 366 (15).

Bavitaillement, Commission internationale de, to be responsible in future to the Foreign Office instead of the Board of Trade 367 (18).

Raw material, restriction of, unemployment due to 320 (13).

Rawlinson, General, appointment as British Military Representative on the Supreme War Council 348 (6).

... to command the Fifth Army in France 377 (3).

Reading, Lord; question of officials proceeding to America without his knowledge; Departments to communicate names to him 334 (8).

... telegram from, asking for a message to act as a stimulus to the obtaining of more men and ships from America 373 (7); the Prime Minister's message 374 (11).

Reafforestation: Lord Milner and Mr. Barnes to go into the question in consultation with Departments and Authorities concerned 369 (17).

Reconstruction finance; memoranda by Dr. Addison, Sir A. Mond, and Mr. G. H. Roberts 354 (7).

... Parliamentary procedure, machinery of; memorandum by Dr. Addison; question of a Select Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament 324 (14).

Recruiting: compulsory registration of boys 321 (12).

in the Dominions; message to Australia appealing for increased effort 378 (5).

... lowering of the age limit 373 (2 and 3), 376 (7), 377 (8).

... Minister of National Service; new proposals for speeding up recruiting and increasing the amount of man-power procurable 371 (9), 372, 375 (3), 376 (6).

... of coal-mines 359 (12), 370 (9), 372 (21).

... of Russians in Great Britain 327, 329 (12), 341 (11), 345 (3), 361 (8), 372 (17).

... raising of the age limit 372 (12), 375 (3), 376 (6).

Registration (compulsory); boys; immigrants from Ireland 321 (12).

National, Amendment Bill 321 (12).

Remounts; suspension of purchases in America 323 (9), 346 (15).

Rent; Increase of Rent Bill 368 (12).

Repington, Lieutenant-Colonel; article in the "Morning Post" 342 (16), 343, 344 (1 and 2).

Representation of the People Act; qualifying period; memorandum by President of Local Government Board 352 (11).

... Bill; proportional representation; situation created by the House of Lords' amendment 330 (2), 332 (2), 337 (3), 339 (8).

Reprisals for imprisonment of British airmen in Germany 339 (5).

Reprisals, policy of; air raids on German towns; official communiques to state that they are undertaken as reprisals 322 (10), 322 (12); resolution of Supreme War Council 366 (11).

Restriction of Imports Committee, recommendations of; munitions budget for 1918; steel; placing of orders in excess of available tonnage; Ministry of Munitions authorised to place further orders for 180,000 tons 350 (9).

... to reassemble and investigate the position as regards the claims on tonnage of the Pool Controller, the Ministry of Munitions, and other Departments 330 (1); report of the Committee, with recommendations as to further restrictions; paper and pulp, timber, sugar, meat, petroleum, brewing materials, munitions; remaining deficit of tonnage; the munitions budget 347 (5-13 and Appendix); decisions with regard to paper, question of Chairmanship of Committee on Paper Shortage affected by 353 (9).

... of industries and raw material, unemployment due to; Committee appointed 320 (13).

... of non-essential industries; memoranda by Sir A. Geddes and Dr. Addison 326 (11).

Retail businesses; restriction of non-essential industries 320 (11).

Revolutionary agitation in Glasgow and Clydeside 364 (14).

Road Transport Board 331 (9), 337 (20).

... control of 331 (9), 337 (20).

Robertson, General Sir W; appointment to the Eastern Command; statement in Parliament in regard to his resignation of the post of C.I.G.S. 348.

Rolling-stock for Greece 328 (16), 329 (5), 349 (12).

Roumania; armistice; German report 350 (1).

... Bolshevist ultimatum to 324 (6).

... peace with Germany; its effect on German policy in the Far East 362 (3).

... rumours of understanding with the enemy 356 (2).
Roumania; situation in; some of the Ministry anxious to make a separate peace; the King's attitude; prospects of an Austro-German offensive; the Ukrainians; effect of Roumania's continuance in the war; Austro-German forces tied up on her front; German policy with regard to Roumania; decision to communicate to French Government the view that we should do all in our power to keep Roumania in the war, and to suggest joint representations to that effect; dissent of Sir E. Carson, and expression of his view that Roumania should be allowed to make a separate peace - 316 (17); Bolshevist ultimatum to Roumania 324 (6); the Roumanian Army securing railway communications in Bessarabia; unfavourable disposition of the Ukrainians; withdrawal of German troops from the Bukowina 328 (5 and 6); telegrams from General Ballard to C.I.G.S. February 5, 1918, and from Sir G. Barclay, January 30, 1918, regarding the possibility of Roumania making a separate peace; telegram from M. Bratiano stating that an ultimatum had been received from General von Mackensen; General Macdouagh's opinion that it was a bluff; the military situation; telegram to Sir G. Barclay, instructing him to dissuade the Roumanian Government from making a separate peace 340 (9); telegram from C.I.G.S. to General Foch urging the desirability of bringing Polish and Czech divisions to the support of the Roumanian Army 340 (11); telegram from General Ballard; General Averescu willing to make every effort to prevent guns, munitions, &c, being handed over to the Central Powers in the event of his being concerned in the making of peace terms 342 (9); rumours of an understanding with the enemy 350 (2); German report of Roumanian agreement to an armistice 359 (1).

Statement in Parliament of sympathy with Roumania, with a declaration that we do not recognise the peace forced upon her 362 (1).

Roumanian Army; General Averescu willing to make every effort to prevent guns, munitions, &c, being handed over to the Central Powers 342 (9).

Russian guns for 329 (8).

Supplies from the Ukraine 324 (6); supplies from Bessarabia 340 (9).

Three new divisions to replace the Russian divisions withdrawn from the Roumanian front 329 (8); number of divisions as compared with the Austrians and Germans on the Roumanian front 340 (9); Polish and Czech divisions for the support of the Roumanian Army 341 (11).

Front; prospects of enemy offensive 316 (17), 323 (1), 328 (6), 340 (9), 341 (11).

Russian troops, evacuation of 327, 329 (8).

Minister at Petrograd, arrest of 322 (18).

Prisoners of war, relief of 362 (2).

Russia's access to the open seas 314 (4).

Archangel, destruction of stores at 357 (1).

Stores at; cargo of steamship "Dona" 346 (4).

Protection and removal 363 (18).

Armistice terminated by General Hoffmann; wireless message from M. Trotsky to the German Government asking for an explanation 349 (2).

Baltic fleet; despatch of ice-breaker "Tarno" to Reval; battleships ordered to Cronstadt; orders issued to prepare the ships for destruction 363 (17).

Ismailjeff appointed Yaminar; evacuation of stores from Helsingfors and Reval; recall of sailors from the Don and Ukraine fronts 349 (3).

Bessarabia; Roumanian Army securing its hold on railway communications 328 (6); supplies for the Roumanian Army 340 (9).

Bolshevik party, British diplomatic relations with the 315 (16), 319 (6), 324 (9), 327, 330 (6), 340 (7).

Bolsheviks, our attitude to the 312 (8), 314 (4 and Appendix), 324 (9), 327, 336 (6), 340 (7).

Bolshevik influence at Vladivostock 323 (7).

Ultimatum to Roumania 324 (6).

British commercial and financial representative, appointment of; telegram from General Poole to Colonel Byrne, dated December 26, 1917; General Poole's recommendation approved in principle 309 (19).

Representation in 306 (19), 311 (5), 316 (16), 319 (6), 324 (9), 340 (9), 349 (7).

Representative and his staff; discretion as to leaving Petrograd in case of emergency 330 (6); instructions to Mr. Lindley as to his return to England with the Embassy Staff; note by Secretary of War Cabinet with reference to the carrying out of this decision 350 (12).
Russia; Caucasus, British and Russian officers and n.c.o.'s for the 328 (17).

railway communications; reports from Colonel Jack and General de Camolol 311 (5).

Cossacks, financial support to the 327, 328 (20), 342 (12), 357 (7).

telegram from General de Camolol regarding the situation at Rostov-on-Don; General Alexeif's position 342 (10).

Diplomatic Corps in 322 (18), 324 (9).

disposal of military stores ordered against British, French, and American credits 368 (13).

Donetz coal basin, control of 327.

Eastern Siberia; Cossack Conference at Iman 342 (12); support for the Usurii Cossacks; their intention to secure the railway and co-operate with other Cossack forces in an advance through Siberia; their object the formation of an independent State under Allied protection 357 (7).

financial support and recognition of the Cossacks and other friendly elements 327, 328 (20), 340 (7), 342 (12), 357 (7).

food supplies to Germany 327.

General Kaledin 327.

German advance in; possibility of guerrilla warfare 354 (3), 356 (7); German and Austrian troops moving on Odessa 363 (17).

General at Kieff organising a force composed of Austrian prisoners 323 (1).

peace treaties with Russia and the Ukraine; joint declaration by the Allies condemning Germany's treatment of Russia after the surrender of the Bolsheviks 366 (12).

goods ordered against British, French, and American credits. disposal of; note from Mr. Crosby to the Prime Minister and letter from Sir E. Wyldsbore Smith to the Secretary of the War Cabinet; decisions 368 (11).

Helsingfors; arrival of four Russian cruisers from Reval; formation of a Red Fleet 361 (9).

Japanese intervention 323 (7), 327, 346 (9), 350 (4), 353 (12), 354 (6), 357 (7), 358 (4), 359 (11), 363 (19), 364 (9 and 11), 365 (9), 366 (12); discussion on the general question; Foreign Secretary to take action with a view to securing American support 360 (8); Lord Curzon's memorandum on Japanese intervention in Siberia and our policy in Russia; telegrams from Mr. Lockhart indicating the possibility that the Bolsheviks may yet be persuaded to invite Japanese intervention; British Ambassador at Tokio to be informed 378 (10).

joint note No. 5 by the military representatives on the Supreme War Council 322 (11).

Labour delegation to, in April and May 1917; publication of report 361 (11).

military situation in 327.

Minsk taken by the Germans 352 (3).

M. Trotzki 327, 340 (7), 349 (2).

resignation of 365 (9).

Murmansk; assassination of Admiral Ketlinsky 342 (11); the command taken over by an Executive Committee; their desire for friendly relations with the Allies 351 (7).

destruction of stores at 357 (1).

stores at; protection and removal 363 (18).

telegram from British Naval Commander, with reference to the proposals of the local Soviet for the defence of the Murman line; British, French, and American naval reinforcements for Murmansk; telegram to Naval Commander notifying him of naval reinforcements and instructing him as to his action with regard to landing a force 358 (8); American cruiser for Murmansk 360 (12); British and French cruisers on their way to Murmansk 363 (13).

Odessa. German and Austrian troops advancing towards 365 (17).

peace negotiations with the Central Powers; declaration of policy by Count Czernin; counter-statement by the British Government with regard to our war aims; discussions on the form, substance, and method of the announcement 312 (8), 313 (1-3), 314 (1-6 and Appendix), 315 (2).

peace with Germany 360 (2).

Polish Army, report of difficulties in the formation of 316 (4); three organised Polish Armies in existence; their operations against the Bolsheviks; Polish divisions for the support of the Romanian Army 341 (11).

President Wilson's message of sympathy with the people of Russia on the occasion of opening the Congress of Soviets at Moscow 364 (10).

Reval, evacuation of stores at 354 (3).

position of Russian warships at 360 (8), 361 (9).
Russia; Russian Minister, arrest of 322 (18).

Siberian Railway, British control of 316 (2).

situation in; Mr. Arthur Ramsden's dispatch to the "Daily News" (published on January 2, 1918) announcing the threatened breakdown of the Bolshevist peace negotiations; position and policy of M. Trotsky; manipulation of the Socialist parties in various countries; British Ambassador to get in touch with further information 311 (1); latest in the peace negotiations; resumption of the Joint Conference postponed; differences over the "no annexation" clause; evacuation of Russian territory occupied by the Germans; independence of Poland and Courland; Kulman said to be endeavoring to induce the German General Staff to agree to M. Trotsky's wishes, state of the Russian Army; risk of their losing their guns in the event of these negotiations breaking down; a long interview with Mr. Lottimore, lately returned from Petrograd; his personal opinion of M. Trotsky 312 (4); reported difficulties in the formation of the Polish Army 316 (4); Mr. Lockhart, late Consul-General at Moscow, about to take up his duties as the channel of communication with the Bolshevist Party; locum tenens until his arrival; demand that the funds of the Russian Embassy in London should be handed over to M. Livichoff; Lord R. Cecil's objections; Press report indicating a quarrel between M. Trotsky and the Germans; probable attitude of the Social Revolutionary Party 316 (16); Mr. Lindley's telegram from Petrograd suggesting that the British Government should enter into relations with all the de facto regional authorities; decision to continue the present policy of communicating with the Bolshevist Government through Mr. Lockhart 319 (8); telegram from Odessa, January 12, 1918, indicating a deterioration in the situation in South Russia; Bolshevist influences gaining ground in the Ukraine 321 (3) against the Russian Minister to Russia; united protest by the Diplomatic Corps; possibility of their leaving to leave Petrograd 322 (18); telegrams from Mr. Lindley regarding the position of the Diplomatic Corps in Petrograd; possibility of arrest of our Embassy Staff; destruction of cyphers and documents; views of the Foreign Secretary regarding our policy towards the Bolshevists 324 (9); discussion on policy with regard to our relations with the Bolshevist Government; views of Mr. Balfour and Sir G. Buchanan; Generals Knox and Macdonough on the military situation; the Volunteer Army; supplies to the Germans from Southern Russia; creation of an effective anti-German force in Southern Russia; control of the Donetz coal basin; our recognition of the Bolshevists prejudicial to the effective support of the Cossacks, and likely to prevent Russian officers joining General Kaledin; the Russian Armies rapidly melting away; Germans preparing to advance their line without meeting resistance; desertions from the Baltic fleet; evacuation of Russian troops from the Polish Armies in South-East Russia; telegrams from Major Keyes suggesting an advance of five million pounds to an unnamed capitalist with a view to financing the Cossacks and obtaining control of industrial resources in Southern Russia; recruiting of Russian Jews in Great Britain; anti-Bolshevist propaganda by repatriated Russian Jews; memoranda by the Foreign Office on the questions of Japanese intervention and the recruitment of Russian Jews in the British Army to be considered before coming to any further decisions 327; reply telegram regarding the advance of five million pounds suggested by Major Keyes 328 (20); further discussion on our policy towards the Bolshevists; Mr. Lindley given discretion as to leaving Petrograd with his staff in case of emergency; effect of relations with the Bolshevists upon friendly elements in South Russia 330 (6); telegrams from Mr. Lockhart, dated January 5, 1918; suggested partial recognition of the Bolshevist Government by Great Britain; position of Mr. Lockhart; extension of his authority as intermediary between the British Embassy and the Bolshevist Government; discussion on policy; Foreign Secretary to prepare a draft reply to Mr. Lockhart's telegram 340 (7); draft telegrams prepared by Mr. Balfour, with suggested amendments by Lord R. Cecil and Mr. Philip Kerr; attention directed to questions which had arisen since the writing of Mr. Balfour's draft; viz., protest of M. Livichoff against enlistment of Russians in the British Army; information as to the Polish Armies in Russia and their operations against the Bolshevists; telegrams from the Bolshevists complaining of removal of stores from Vladivostok; telegram from Mr. Lockhart regarding his view to passports issued by the Bolshevist Government to M.M. Petroff and Chichirin to visit England; views of the Prime Minister and Lord R. Cecil; draft of telegram to General Foch regarding Polish and Czech divisions for the support of the Romanian Army; decisions; Foreign Office to send a reply to Mr. Lockhart based on Mr. Balfour's draft, with the addition of Mr. Key's draft and the final passage of Lord R. Cecil's; C.I.G.S. to send to General Foch the message as drafted by D.M.O. in regard to the Polish and Czech divisions 341 (11); the Cossacks; telegram from General de Candolle regarding the situation at Kostov-on-Don; position of General Alexeief 342 (10); assassination of Admiral Khetinsky at Murmansk 342 (11); Cossack Conference at Imn 342 (12); intercepted wireless message from M. Trotsky to the German Government regarding the termination of the armistice by General Hoffmann; and questionnaire sent from Naval Attaché at Petrograd, February 15, regarding the release of Ismahaloff and his appointment as Yaminiss for the Fleet; evacuation of stores from Helsingfors and
Recall of sailors on the Don and Ukraine fronts to the Baltic Fleet 349 (3); question of the possible seizure of the Russian Fleet in the Baltic and Black Sea by the Germans 349 (4); conflicting information from Russia; telegram from Mr. Lindley reporting that M. Petroff contemplated withdrawal to Novgorod and raising of an army of 1,000,000 men there; possibility of guerilla warfare discussed 356 (7); telegram from M. Trotzki to the local Soviet at Murmansk with regard to the defence of Petrograd, and ordering the local Soviet to co-operate with the Allied Missions in the defence of the Murman line; reinforcement of the Allied naval force at Murmansk 358 (8); situation of Russian reserves and submarines at Recal; German landing in the Abalak Islands 360 (8); telegram from Naval Attaché at Petrograd stating that the resignation of M. Trotzki was not taken seriously, as he would be asked to continue in office; that any action taken by the Japanese might drive the Russians into the arms of Germany; and asking for information as to how far we were working in accordance with the Japanese 365 (9).

Russia: Social Revolutionary Party 327.

South, effect of our relations with the Bolsheviks upon friendly elements in 327 (6), 340 (7), 341 (11).

Interchange of information in regard to military reports in the British and French spheres; Foreign Office to provide political information through the Military Advisers to the Supreme War Council 311 (5); Bolshevist influences gaining ground in the Ukraine; 321 (3); supplies to the Germans from Southern Russia; control of the Donetz coal basin; creation of an effective anti-German force; support of General Kaledin and the Cossacks; cattle in the Ukraine 327.

South-East; memorandum by the Foreign Secretary on the consequences likely to follow on the changes in the relations of South-East Russia with Germany; the new route from Berlin to the Caspian 362 (4).

Telegraphic communications; Germans in Petrograd reported to be in control of a direct wire between Petrograd and Berlin 309 (5).

Ukraine 316 (17), 321 (5), 324 (6), 327, 328 (6), 340 (7), 341 (11).

Vladivostock: Japanese intentions; question of sending British troops 316 (2); telegram from H.M.S. "Suffolk" describing the general situation; Bolshevist influence strong; arrival of a Japanese warship; anarchy in the garrison and fleet 323 (7); telegram from H.M.S. "Suffolk"; partial demobilisation of the garrison; disbandment of military regiments 329 (1); result of the Cossack Conference at Amur; financial and material assistance for the Cossacks in the Eastern Siberia 342 (12); message from H.M.S. "Suffolk" with reference to financial and material support for the Cossacks; their intention to secure the railway and co-operate with other Cossack forces in an advance through Siberia; their object the formation of an independent State under Allied protection 357 (7).

Protection of stores at 363 (19).

Stores at; order to H.M.S. "Suffolk" 316 (2), 323 (7), 326 (1); report from H.M.S. "Suffolk" that only three days' supply of food remained; enforcement of Chinese prohibition of export of food might lead to the sack of the town by the soldiers 341 (10); Bolshevik complaint regarding the removal of stores 341 (11).

Requisition for 45,000 rounds of 3-inch shell by Inspector of Artillery at Havorovsk; telegram to captain of H.M.S. "Suffolk" 369 (8), 370 (17).

Volunteer Army 327.

Russian Army 327.

Baltic Fleet, destruction of, ordered by the Russian Admiralty 370 (18).

Black Sea Fleet; murder of officers 320 (6).

The greater part at Sevastopol; a few small ships captured by the Germans at Odessa; question as to steps taken by the Admiralty to prevent capture by the Germans; Admiralty to prepare a memorandum 309 (9); destruction of Baltic and Black Sea Fleets ordered by the Russian Admiralty 370 (18).

Bolshevist representation in Great Britain; M. Litvinoff; funds of the Russian Embassy 316 (16); proclamation published in the "Herald" 320 (1), 327; protest against further enlistment of Russians in the British Army 324 (11); incitement to revolution among munition workers at Woolwich; endeavours to tamper with discipline of troops 342 (14); his position in regard to claims for the release of Ukrainians or Cossacks from the British Army 345 (9); Litvinoff's activities in Great Britain; his aliases and antecedents; measures to be taken for dealing with Bolshevist agents; arrival in London of MM. Kameneff and Smilkine; meeting of Russian revolutionaries raided by the police; action to be taken by Home Secretary 353 (10); treatment of M. Kameneff and his fellow delegates in this country 364 (9). John MacLean, a ticket-of-leave man, appointed Russian consul in Glasgow by Litvinoff; his appointment of Lewis Shammas as his consular assistant 364 (14).
Russian Committee to be merged in the Eastern Committee 363 (26).

Credit and Treasury Bills: memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer 322 (17).

democracy, our attitude to; statement of our war aims 312 (8), 314 (4 and Appendix).

Embassy in London 316 (16).

fleet; question of its possible seizure by the Germans 349 (4), 369 (7); destruction ordered by the Russian Admiralty 370 (18).

guns for the Roumanian Army 329 (8).

ice-breakers 363 (17); armed ice-breaker for Archangel 363 (18).

Jews; recruitment in the British Army 327.

naval officers, murder of 320 (6); assassination of Admiral Ketlinsky at Murmansk 342 (11).

officers in England and France; facilities for their joining General Eicharakhov in Mesopota­mania 311 (3).

shipping; future employment of the Russian Steam Mercantile Marine 369 (16); the Russian steamer "Czar" 369 (17).

Treasury Bills 322 (17).

trips at Kermanshah 311 (5).

Salonica 316 (5); their removal from the line 341 (2); danger of their demoralising the Serbians and Greeks 364 (6).

warships at Hong Kong; statement by Captain of the "Orel" to Rear-Admiral at Hong Kong 328 (14), 335 (8).

at Reval; position of submarines and cruisers; report from Naval Attaché at Helsingfors 360 (8); departure of four cruisers for Helsingfors 361 (9).

report by Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff of the arrangements for depriving the Germans of their use 365 (10), 369 (7), 370 (18).

Russians in Great Britain; conscription of; Military Service Acts to be enforced, with the alternative of deportation to Russia; Inter-Departmental Committee to carry out this decision 329 (12); protest by M. Litvinoff 341 (11); decision to stop recruiting of Russians for the moment, but to retain those already in the Army 345 (3); writ of habeas corpus at the suit of one Kutehinsky; case to be fought in the Courts; trouble anticipated among Russian soldiers at Plymouth 361 (8); decision of High Court; decision of War Cabinet (345 (3)) reversed 372 (17).

S.

Sackville-West, General, to be Acting British Permanent Military Representative at Versailles 377 (3).

Safe-conduct for Russian ships to Murmansk 339 (2).

Sailors' pay; Third Report of Soldiers' and Sailors' Pay Committee 320 (8); Fourth and Final Report approved 349 (10); equalisation of rates of separation allowances in the Army and Navy; Sir E. Carson invited to continue to serve as Chairman of the Committee 364 (15).

Salonica. (See also "Balkan Front.")

British raids East of Lake Doiran 335 (5).

enemy attack on Greek positions west of the Vardar 328 (1).

extension of the British front 341 (2).

French troops, equipment of, reported by General Guillaumat to be unsatisfactory and inferior to the British and Italian 369 (7); shortage of supplies; the force 28,000 below strength; despatch of drafts 331 (2).

front, Germans divisions on the 350 (2).

General Guillaumat 322 (7).

Greek division for the British line 341 (2).

health of the troops; prevalence of malaria 316 (6), 322 (7).

hospitals at 316 (7).

no British divisions to be brought to France 371 (7).

position in the event of an enemy advance via Monastir 365 (3).

possible loss of in the event of the Bulgarians joining in an Aastro-German offensive 360 (2).

Russian troops, unsatisfactory condition of 318 (5); offer by General Guillaumat to General Milne of Russian troops for work behind his lines; no political objections to his accepting 353 (6); necessity for removal of Russian troops in the interest of discipline; their attempts to corrupt the Serbians; danger to the morale of the Greeks 364 (5).
Salonica; Serbian Army; incorporation of Serbians from Russia 329 (10).

Salvage of waste products; memoranda by President of Board of Agriculture, Food Controller; Dr. Addison, Mr. Hayes Fisher, and War Secretary; Army and civilian waste products; control of slaughter-houses; scrap metal; representatives of the Departments concerned to examine and report 324 (15); Central Council to deal with waste products 346 (13).

Santorin, enemy submarines at; ships sunk 374 (3).

Scandinavian convoy; attack on December 12, 1917; more men reported saved 319 (4).

Schleswig-Holstein, German troops in 318 (5).

Scrap metal, salvage of 324 (13).

Seamen, reparation for outrages on; Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).

Self-determination, principle of; Government's statement of our war aims 312 (8), 313 (3), 314 (3 and Appendix).

Separation allowances, equalisation of the rates of, in the Army and Navy 364 (13).

Serbia; statement of our war aims 312 (8), 314 (6 and Appendix).

Serbian Army; incorporation of Serbians from Russia at Salouica 329 (10).

Sheep, control of supplies 334 (9).

Sheffield; threatened strike at 310. 315 (1).

Shipbuilding, labour for; men not to be released who are employed at their trades with the Army, Navy, or Air Force, or who are fit for general service and under the ages specified in the Revised Schedule of Protected Occupations 367 (13).

...... release of 20,000 men from the Army 328 (9), 367 (13).

...... (merchant) abroad; transfer of responsibility to the Ministry of Shipping 324 (15).

...... naval and mercantile; question of relative priority raised by General Smuts; previous decision (W.C. 58 (1) ) confirmed 312 (5).

...... programme for 1919. (See " Naval Shipbuilding."

...... priority of claims on man-power after the fighting requirements of Navy and Air Force; decision of War Cabinet 367 (13).

...... release of men for; numbers of men released not to be given in the House of Commons 367 (13).

...... wages; the 12½ per cent. bonus 310 (and Appendix), 329 (1); effect on output 356 (12).

Shipments to France; timber or ammunition 339 (6).

Shipping; appropriation of tonnage for increased import of cotton at the expense of steel and raw material for munitions; Mr. Churchill's protest 309 (4).

...... available for transport of American infantry to France; Mr. Graeme Thomson to prepare a memorandum for communication to President Wilson 377 (7).

...... Controller appointed as representative on the Inter-Allied Council on Tonnage and Imports 339 (7).

...... for Greece 361 (3).

...... for stone and slag to France, stoppage of 324 (18).

...... for transport of Chinese pioneer battalions 324 (1); for Chinese coolies 324 (15), 348 (15).

...... in South African ports; utilisation for imports of maize and other foodstuffs 333 (12).

...... losses from enemy submarines 321 (7), 340 (5 and 6), 346 (11), 349 (5), 351 (5), 356 (11), 368 (6), 370 (15).

...... submarines, publication of; report by the Admiralty on the world tonnage and submarine and mercantile losses; statement showing a comparison of the world losses and output of shipping; question of its publication 346 (11); communication with the Allies 349 (5); causes of shortage of output of shipping 356 (12); publication of losses; conclusion reached at political conference of Allied statesmen in London on March 15, 1918 366 (12).

...... (merchant); building and purchase abroad; responsibility transferred to Ministry of Shipping 324 (15).

...... memorandum on tonnage for cereals; proposals approved 330 (1).
Shipping, Russian; future employment of the Russian steam mercantile marine 309 (15); the Russian steamer "Czar" 309 (17).

Spanish 350 (8), 351 (11).

the tonnage situation: tonnage for cereals, food, and nitrates; memoranda by the Ministry of Shipping, the Food Controller, and the Ministry of Munitions; conflicting claims of the Food Controller, Ministry of Munitions, and other Departments; Restriction of Imports Committee to reassemble and investigate the position; Admiralty requirements to be gone into separately; proposals of the Ministry of Shipping approved 330 (1).

tonnage for oats and horses 346 (15).

Shop-window lighting, prohibition of 367 (16).

Siberian Railway. (See "Russia.")

Sickness among the troops; insufficiency of details in casualty lists 316 (7).

Slag; shipments to France to be stopped 324 (16).

Slaughter-houses, control of 324 (13).

Smuts, General, deputed to confer in Egypt with Generals Allenby and Marshall, the Naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, the Egyptian Government, and other authorities, on the military situation in the Middle East; and to advise the War Cabinet on the best use and co-ordination of our resources for the prosecution of the war against Turkey 332 (1); First Lord of the Admiralty asked to join the Conference 364 (8).

 telegram from, regarding the position in Palestine 349 (8).

Soldiers' pay; Third Report of Soldiers' and Sailors' Pay Committee 320 (8); Fourth and Final Report approved 349 (10); equalisation of rates of separation allowances in the Army and Navy; Sir E. Carson invited to continue to act as Chairman of the Committee 364 (13).

shot for cowardice; communication to their relatives; pensions for their dependants 322 (18).

South Africa, imports from; tonnage for maize and other foodstuffs in lieu of wool 333 (13).

Spain, German overtures to 318 (11).

King of; air raids on open towns; communication to the German Government 333 (7), 358 (9 and 10).

communication to, by British Ambassador, as to the torpedoeing of the hospital ship "Glenart Castle" 355 (6).

propaganda in; paper by Sir E. Carson 318 (11).

supply of raw materials from; memoranda by Ministry of Munitions and Ministry of Shipping; shortage of coal in Spain; increase in freight rates; withholding of Spanish shipping; German threats 350 (8); Lord Milner's decisions; shipments of coal to Spain; clustering of Spanish ships; freight rates; no British ships to be diverted for this purpose; recovery of their share of extra cost from French and United States Governments 351 (11).

Spitzbergen, German action in 365 (11).

Spring-Rice, Sir Cecil, death of 346 (10).

Steel for airship sheds 336 (7).

for France 323 (10).

for the naval shipbuilding programme for 1919 325 (2), 347 (11 and Appendix), 359 (11).

Munitions Budget for 1918 347 (11 and Appendix), 350 (9).

replacement of steel used for tanks for the American Government, by an equal quantity in the form of ship-plates; agreement 318 (13 and Appendix), 385 (15).

Steelworkers' wages; the 12½ per cent. bonus 310, 315 (1), 317, 329 (1).

Stone; stoppage of shipment to France; memorandum by Shipping Controller; dissent of War Secretary from decision to stop shipment 324 (18).

Stornoway Town Hall, fire at 358 (8).

Submarine attack on an American destroyer 356 (10).

(enemy) attacked by a seaplane 361 (10).

(bombed by an airship 370 (14).

(French) attacked by mistake 374 (2).

(German) "U.B. 48" interned at Ferrol 372 (24).

"H 5" accidentally sunk 355 (7), 362 (7).

named by the steamship "Buttinglen"; doubts as to her nationality 355 (7), 362 (7).

situation 316 (1); strategic policy of anti-submarine warfare 325 (1).

(British) "G 8," overdue 321 (6), 324 (7); "H 10" overdue 324 (7); "K 14" in the Dardanelles 31 (6), 334 (5), 335 (7); "K 4" and "K 17" sunk in collision near the Firth of Forth; two others damaged 336 (5).

in the Baltic 309 (14).
Submarines (enemy) 322 (9).

... at Santorin; ships sunk 374 (3).
... destruction of 309 (13), 316 (1), 318 (9), 324 (8), 331 (7), 339 (1), 341 (8), 342 (13), 351 (6), 352 (8), 354 (5), 359 (4), 363 (12), 364 (7), 359 (3), 370 (14), 378 (12), 374 (1).
... engagements with 346 (2), 353 (6), 359 (4), 364 (7).
... shipping losses from 321 (7), 340 (5 and 6), 345 (11), 349 (5), 351 (5), 356 (11), 368 (6), 370 (15).
... engagements between 309 (13).
... (German) in Norwegian territorial waters 370 (16).
... use of aircraft against 361 (15).

Sugar, imports of 347 (8).
... ration, curtailment of 347 (8 and Appendix), 364 (17).
... for troops at home 329 (7), 364 (17).
... rationing scheme; Post Office assistance 334 (9).

Summer time, French and Italian; simultaneous change for British forces in France and Italy 360 (7).

Supreme War Council; Allied General Reserve 329 (13), 338 (2 and 3), 342 (19), 343, 344 (2), 347 (3), 349 (7), 351 (10), 352 (4), 357 (3), 358 (2), 366 (11).
... arrangement of a meeting on January 30, 1918; Prime Minister and Lord Milner to represent the British Cabinet; questions of extension of the British front and disposition and command of the General Reserve on the Western front; question of supply and distribution of oats not to be submitted 329 (15); Prime Minister's report to War Cabinet 338 (2 and 4).

British Permanent Military Representative; selection of an officer in lieu of General Sir H. Wilson 348; appointment of General Rawlinson 349 (6); General Sackville-West to be Acting British Military Representative in place of General Rawlinson 377 (3).
... co-ordination of requests for credit for the purchase of war material 366 (14).
... discussion in regard to congestion in French ports 370 (10).
... employment of Italian troops on the Western front 358 (5), 347 (3), 351 (10).

General Cadorna's recall to Italy; request for another Italian representative in his place 328 (10).

General Sackville-West to be Acting British Permanent Military Representative at Versailles in place of General Rawlinson 377 (3).

Italian Military Representative; General Garibudo to replace General Cadorna at Versailles 341 (3).
... joint note. No. 1 (military policy), approved 338 (10); cancellation of previous instructions to Sir D. Haig regarding the plan of campaign for 1918 344 (9).
... No. 2 (increase in number of divisions in the Belgian Army), approved 338 (11).
... No. 3 (reinforcements for the Italian front), approved 338 (12).
... No. 4 (the Balkan problem), postponed for further consideration 338 (13).
... No. 5, by Military Representatives; situation in Russia 322 (11).
... No. 6 (the Italian problem), approved 338 (14).
... No. 7, by Military Representatives; question of aviation; co-ordination of Inter-Allied action 322 (12); joint note approved 338 (15); Inter-Allied Committee on Aviation 360 (15).
... No. 8, by the Military Representatives; transportation; General Nash's investigation of the problem on the Western front; Inter-Allied Expert Committee not considered desirable; action deferred pending receipt of General Nash's report 322 (13); joint note approved 338 (16); General Nash's report to be discussed 355 (9), 356 (9).
... No. 9, by the Military Representatives; Tanks; appointment of Inter-Allied Expert Committee approved by the War Cabinet 322 (14); joint note approved 338 (17); Inter-Allied Committee on Tanks 360 (15).
... No. 10, by the Military Representatives; extension of the British front; report by Sir D. Haig 322 (15); Military Representatives asked for the reasons for their recommendations 338 (18).
Sir D. Haig to meet the Prime Minister at Versailles before the discussion; opinion of D.M.O. that the decision should not be affected by the expectation of American reinforcements; joint note, No. 10, accepted in principle; exclusion left to Sir D. Haig and General Pétain in consultation.

Supreme War Council; joint note, No. 11; employment of Chinese troops on the Western front; joint note, No. 11, not accepted by the Supreme War Council.

No. 12; plans of campaign for 1918; telegram from C.I.G.S., dated January 25, 1918; strength of Turkish forces; general scheme of military operations for 1918; joint note accepted by Supreme War Council; British Government's intention to maintain the security of the Western front; annexure to joint note approved; amendments by Mr. Lloyd George, General Pétain, and M. Clemenceau; several Governments concerned to direct their respective General Staffs to submit their detailed plans to the Supreme War Council on the basis of joint notes, Nos. 1 and 12.

No. 16; Japanese intervention in Siberia.

No. 17; Holland; possible military consequences of her being drawn into the war.

Notes by the Military Representatives, procedure in regard to limitations of numbers present at the meetings of: letters to the Allied Premiers.

Meeting in London on March 14 and 15, 1918; preparation of the agenda; questions to be discussed at a conference of Allied statesmen present in London; Allied General Reserve; employment of Italian troops on the Western front; transfer of British and French divisions from Italian to French front; functions of the Executive War Board and the creation of an Allied General Reserve; aerial reprisals; requisitioning of Dutch shipping; employment of Dutch shipping; creation of Inter-Allied Transportation Council; resolutions approved by War Cabinet; telegram to Lord Reading, for communication to the United States Government, pointing out the views of the Allied Maritime Transport Council on the question of the employment of a portion of the Dutch shipping for carrying coal to Italy; Political Conference of the Prime Ministers of France, Italy, and Great Britain on March 15, 1918; report by Prime Minister; Japan and Siberia; publication of mercantile shipping losses; declarations with regard to the German-Russian and German-Ukraine Peace, Poland, and Armenia; next meeting of the Supreme War Council; conclusions of the Political Conference approved by the War Cabinet.

Palestine, future operations in; Military Representatives asked to hasten their report.

Postponement of a meeting.

Proposal from the Vatican for an armistice at Easter to be discussed.

Question of alternate meetings in Paris and London.

Special meeting suggested, in the event of any reluctance on the part of the American Government to comply with the proposals put forward for American military assistance on the Western front.

Telegram to Military Representatives with regard to economy in manpower, casualties, and tonnage by the fullest use of machine guns, automatic rifles, tanks, and other mechanical devices.

Memorandum by British Military Representative, covering a detailed memorandum drawn up by the British section.

To the Dominions containing the gist of the conclusions reached at Versailles.

Syria, occupation of, after the war; the Allies' intentions.

Prime Minister's statement of war aims.
Tank construction and tactics. General Staff to confer with the officers in charge of, in connection with their review of the military situation 356 (5), 357 (4).

Tanks; allocation between Great Britain, France, and the United States; price; finance 318 (Appendix), 365 (15).

"components for; provision in Great Britain and the United States respectively 318 (Appendix), 365 (15).

discussion at 10, Downing Street, on March 6; difficulties opposed to tanks by the defence 363 (8).

economy in man-power, casualties, &c., by the use of 322 (16), 367 (9).

for the American Government; agreement 318 (13 and Appendix), 365 (15).

"output of 360 (6).

Tea ration for troops at home 329 (7).

Temperance agitation in America; prohibition of brewing in Great Britain; proposed deputation of American temperance reformers to the Prime Minister 368 (11).

Territorial Force, recall of men discharged from 372 (2).

forces in India 333 (9).

Territories (German and Turkish) captured in the war; memorandum by Lord Curzon 309 (18); Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).

Timber for France; letter from Secretary to the War Office 339 (6).

"reduction of import 347 (7 and Appendix).

Time-workers, wages of; the 12½ per cent. bonus 309 (3), 310 (and Appendix), 314 (7), 315 (1), 317, 329 (1); demands of sheet metal workers 329 (2).

Tonnage; allotment to the Allies 330 (1).

"and brewing; memorandum by Sir Joseph Maclay 362 (9).

"imports, Inter-Allied Council on; appointment of two British Ministers; French representatives 319 (8); appointment of Lord R. Cecil and the Shipping Controller 339 (7).

"economy by the fullest use of machine-guns, Tanks, and other mechanical devices 322 (16).

"for timber for France 339 (6).

"situation; tonnage for cotton; memorandum by the Ministry of Shipping; tonnage for Fool; memorandum by the Food Controller; tonnage for nitrates; memorandum by the Ministry of Munitions; conflicting claims of the Food Controller, the Ministry of Munitions, and other Departments; Restriction of Imports Committee to reassemble and investigate the position; Admiralty requirements to be gone into separately; proposals in the memorandum by the Ministry of Shipping approved 330 (1); recommendations of the Restriction of Imports Committee 347 (13-15 and Appendix).

Torpedo-boats (German) "A 75" and "A 77," sinking of 331 (6).

Trade agreements on wages 310, 315 (1), 317.

"restriction of non-essential industries 320 (11).

"war. (See "Economic Offensive.")

Trades Union leaders, statement to, in regard to our war aims 312 (8), 313 (1-3), 314 (1), 315 (2).

"Unions and the extension of the 12½ per cent. bonus 310 (and Appendix), 314 (7), 315 (1), 317, 329 (1).

"position of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers in regard to the man-power proposals of the Government; proposal of Minister of National Service for a Conference approved 339 (4).

Transatlantic Fish Supplies, Report of the Committee on 318 (4).

Trans-Caucasia; Russian withdrawal in Turkish Armenia; policy to be adopted in Persia; discussion of the question by the Persian Committee; their telegram to Sir C. Marling asking his opinion on the proposals of the War Office; question referred to the Persian Committee for immediate consideration on receipt of Sir C. Marling's reply 354 (4).
Transport; Director-General of Movements and Railways: General Delano-Osboihe to succeed Sir Sam Fay as Director of Movements 368 (4).

... internal, improvement of 330 (1).
... maritime. (See "Maritime Transport Council.")

... of American infantry to France; Mr. Greene Thomson to prepare a memorandum for communication to President Wilson 377 (7).

... of Chinese pioneer battalions 324 (1).

... of coolies 324 (15), 349 (18).

... of immediate reinforcements for the Western front; letter from Sir E. Geddes to Secretary of War Cabinet 374 (5).

... of immediate reinforcements for the Western front 371 (8), 372 (2), 373 (8), 374 (5).

... of the European Allies; Great Britain's share; information for the American Government 323 (3 and Appendix).

... (railway) in France; General Nash's report 351 (3), 355 (7, 8, and 9), 356 (9), 357 (3), 366 (11).

... road, control of; memoranda by President of Board of Trade and Minister of Reconstruction; co-ordination of horse and mechanical transport; Road Transport Board; its composition; terms of reference; representation of Ministry of Reconstruction and other Departments; scheme as outlined by President of Board of Trade approved; 331 (9); new organisation not to prejudice any system of transport considered advisable during reconstruction period; and to be limited to the duration of the war 367 (20).

... Workers' Battalions; memorandum by Ministry of Shipping and letter from Port and Transit Executive Committee; strength to be increased by 5,000 men; War Office to nominate representatives on local Port and Transit Committees 352 (9).

Transportation; congestion in French ports and railways 370 (10).

... Council, Inter-Allied, at Paris, creation of, approved by Supreme War Council 366 (11).

... joint note No. 8 by the military representatives on the Supreme War Council; General Nash's investigation of the problem on the Western front; Inter-Allied Expert Committee not considered desirable; action deferred pending receipt of General Nash's report 322 (15); joint note approved by Supreme War Council 338 (16); General Nash's report 355 (7, 8, and 9), 356 (9), 357 (3), 366 (11).

... question of; First Lord of the Admiralty asked to go to Alexandria to consult with General Smuts 336 (8).

Treasury Bills and Russian credits; memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer 322 (17).

... enquiries into the numbers and organisation of large clerical staffs; control of contracts 319 (5).

Treaties, commercial; denunciation of; the "most-favoured-nation" clause 312 (6).

Trebizond captured by the Turks 350 (2).

Trenchard, General; Chief of the Air Staff; his relationship towards the War Cabinet 362 (8).

Tribunals (recruiting) abolition of 376 (6), 377 (11).

Tribunals (recruiting) abolition of 376 (5), 377 (11).

Tropship "Aragon," loss of 309 (12); casualties 311 (7).

"Osmanieh," loss of; casualties 311 (6).

Tropships; loan of the "Aquitania" and "Mauretania" for the transport of American troops 309 (15); loss of the "Tuscania" 340 (5), 341 (7 and 8); transport of six American divisions in British ships 341 (6), 347 (Appendix), 355 (8), 358 (12), 370 (10); 377 (7).

Turkey; statement of our war aims 312 (8), 313 (3), 314 (Appendix), 322 (1).

Turkish advance in the Caucasus; capture of Trebizond 350 (2).

... and German territories captured in the war, future of; memorandum by Lord Curzon 309 (18); Prime Minister's statement of War Aims 314 (Appendix).

... divisions along the Hedjaz Railway 336 (4).

forces, distribution of 364 (5).

moral; statements of prisoners from the "Breslau" 328 (13).

prisoners of war, exchange of. (See "Prisoners of War.")
"Tuscana," transport, carrying United States troops, torpedoed off the N.E. coast of Ireland 340 (5), 341 (7 and 8).

**U.**

Unemployment due to restriction of industries and raw material; Committee appointed 320 (13).

United States: aero-engines; the "Liberty" engine 321 (9), 361 (13 and 14).

U.S. forces in France: slow rate of supply 320 (9); engines 321 (9), 322 (12); assembly of parts in Great Britain by American mechanics 323 (5); telegram to Lord Reading asking him to draw the attention of the President to the serious situation of the American output 361 (19).

and the re-establishment of Germany in the Pacific 312 (8).

contracts; instructions to the American Board 323 (9).

divisions under orders for France; infantry to be sent first 376 (8).

forces in France: 319 (2), 325 (4), 331 (3 and 4), 332 (1), 336 (2), 371 (2); 372 (8), 376 (8), 377 (7).

" " assistance from 372 (8), 373 (5), 374 (1), 376 (1), 377 (7); special meeting of the Supreme War Council suggested 378 (8).

Government: communication to, with regard to the British Government’s declaration of War Aims 315 (2).

" " information to, regarding the strength of the British Armies, the man-power resources of the British Empire, number of men in the Navy, our share of the transport of the European Allies, and the industrial effort of Great Britain 325 (3 and Appendix).

" " lack of delegation of authority; delay in settling vital matters 321 (9), 321 (11).

guns in France 319 (2).

Lord Northcliffe’s letter 321 (9).

man-power; feeling in Canada 312 (2).

military co-operation; conference of C.I.G.S. with Generals Pershing and Leonard Wood 319 (3); memorandum by C.I.G.S. 321 (9), 325 (3 and Appendix); despatch of American troops; message from Prime Minister to President Wilson 328 (9); divisions expected in France in 1918; training by divisions or battalions; transport 331 (3); American reinforcements and the extension of the British line in France 331 (4); two divisions in the French line for training 336 (2); meeting at Versailles, January 30, 1918, on the co-operation of United States troops with the British Army; agreement with General Pershing 338 (1 and Appendix); approval of American Government to the transport of six American divisions in British ships 341 (6).

" " representative (British) in; appointment of General Bridges approved 368 (3).

Missions to Great Britain 321 (9 and 11).

" " to; question of officials proceeding to America without the knowledge of Lord Reading; Departments to communicate names of officials to Lord Reading 334 (8).

Naval co-operation 325 (1).

Navy: further relief to our Fleet; opinion of First Sea Lord 377 (6).

President’s speech on War Aims; telegram of congratulation from the Prime Minister 321 (10).

priority for railway transport of foodstuffs 330 (1).

purchase; priority of finance; memorandum by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on financial priority for the Food Controller’s programme; instructions to the American Board 328 (9).

representation in Europe 321 (9 and 11).

shipbuilding 321 (9); memorandum by Mr. Barnes on the subject of American labour employed in shipbuilding 364 (12).

transport difficulties in the 330 (1).

troops, clothing and equipment of 321 (9).

" " incorporation in British divisions; message to President Wilson 321 (9); telegram from General Pershing 338 (3 and Appendix), 335 (1); agreement with General Pershing at Versailles, January 30, 1918 338 (1 and Appendix), 341 (6).
United States troops, training of; French report from New York; British instructors 328 (2), 331 (3), 336 (2), 338 (1 and Appendix), 341 (9).

transport of; congestion in French ports and railways 370 (10).

loan of the "Aquitania" and "Mauretania" 309 (15); transshipment at British ports 321 (9), 324 (16), 331 (3), 338 (1 and Appendix); loss of the transport "Tuscania" 340 (5), 341 (7 and 8); transport of six American divisions in British ships 341 (6), 347 (Appendix), 355 (8), 358 (12), 377 (7).

Universities and promotion in the Army 339 (5).

V.

Vatican, telegram from, proposing an armistice at Easter 363 (5).

Venereal diseases; new Regulation under the Defence of the Realm Act 352 (10); memoranda by Home and Colonial Secretaries 365 (14); various theories in France 366 (13).

Vladivostock. (See under "Russia.")

Volunteers: Class "C"; compulsory enrolment of boys of 17 377 (8).

mobilisation of 372 (5).

Von Woyrsch, Field-Marshal 320 (4).

W.

Wage increases, instructions to Departments on 339 (5).

Wages; naval shipbuilding programme; Admiralty memorandum 350 (11).

paid by firms working for the Government, supervision of 337 (2); instructions to Departments 339 (3).

payment by results 310, 329 (1).

premium bonus system 310, 315 (1), 317, 329 (1).

the 12½ per cent. bonus 309 (3), 310 (and Appendix), 314 (7), 315 (1), 317; 7½ per cent. bonus to piece-workers 326 (3), 329 (1); demands of sheet-metal workers 329 (2), 336 (8), 357 (2).

local authorities and the ante-dating of awards 370 (21).

position of the Conciliation and Arbitration Board in regard to claims from Government employees 368 (15).

War aims; Allies' intentions with regard to the occupation of Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Syria after the war: proposed message to the King of the Hedjaz 330 (3).

Committee; propaganda at home; lectures by wounded officers and escaped prisoners of war 331 (12).

weekly review of the war situation to be communicated to 333 (11).

German colonies, disposal of; memorandum by the Colonial Office; the United States and Canada and the re-establishment of Germany in the Pacific 312 (9); Prime Minister's statement of war aims 314 (Appendix).

our obligations to our Allies; synopsis to be prepared by the Foreign Office 312 (9).

statement by Prime Minister with reference to the declaration by the Central Powers in their peace negotiations with the Bolshevik party; declaration of our own war aims advisable; the terms we could offer; restoration and separation for Belgium, Serbia, and Roumania; question of the Polish claims; our support of Italian claims; autonomy for Italian, Croats, Slovaks, Czechs, &c, now under Austrian rule; independence of Poland; the German colonies, Mesopotamia, and Palestine; application of the principle of self-determination; drafting of a statement in accordance with the democratic principles enunciated by the Bolsheviks; question of discussing the statement with the Allies before publishing it, or of issuing an independent statement; the form of our reply; note, official statement, or speech; suggestion that the Prime Minister should make a statement at the conference with the trade unions on man-power; discussion on the proposal; decisions; Mr. Barns to arrange for the Prime Minister's statement; three draft statements to be prepared; the Colonial Secretary authorised to inform the Dominions and explain the reasons for issuing a statement 312 (8); further discussion on the method of making the announcement; the proposal to make the statement to the trade unions agreed to 313 (1); communication with the Leader of the Opposition; Mr. Asquith's agreement to the course proposed; note by the Secretary with reference to the participation of the Dominions and Colonies 315 (2); text of the statement; the three drafts by Lord R. Cecil, General Smuts, and Mr. Philip Ker discussed; Lord R. Cecil's draft; caveat by the Colonial Secretary against too much stress on the principle of self-determination; its effect in
the Crown colonies; Prime Minister's opinion that the statement should be regarded as a war move; its effect on Austria and Turkey; importance of avoiding any suggestion that we will not carry out our obligations to Italy and Rumania; Montenegro to be omitted; Mr. Bryce's account of the Trade Union Meeting; arguments of Mr. J. H. Thomas against the proposal raised in the Cabinet; question left open 313 (3); Mr. Albert Thomas in agreement with draft of proposed statement; draft to be shown to Mr. Asquith and Lord Grey; Prime Minister to state in his speech that he had consulted the Leader of the Opposition and the Leaders of Labour and such representatives of the Dominions as were available, and that the statement might be taken as representing the views of the nation 314 (1); the statement, based partly on Lord B. Cecil's draft and partly on General Smuts' drafts 314 (2 and Appendix); the principle of self-determination to apply to European nationalities only 314 (3); Russia; the Bolshevik separate negotiations with the enemy; importance of preventing Comand and Lithuania falling into the hands of the Germans; Russia's access to open seas; lack of outlet a future danger to peace 314 (4); Austria; assertion of our desire that Austria-Hungary should retain influence in South-East Europe 314 (5); reference to Rumania and Serbia; reparation for damage done in their territories; settlement of the boundaries of Balkan States on an ethnographical basis 314 (6); draft statement as approved by the War Cabinet shown to Mr. Asquith and Lord Grey; decisions; statement to be telegraphed to foreign countries and the Dominions; telegram to be sent to British Ambassador at Washington directing him to inform the United States Government that a statement had been made to the Trades Union Conference and the reasons for taking that course 315 (2); effect of the statement in Turkey 322 (1); Italy's war aims; disappointment in Italy at the scanty reference in the Prime Minister's speech 328 (11).

War aims, statement of: psychological offensive 311 (10). 
Cabinet Committees: Eastern Committee, formation of; absorption of the Middle East Committee 333 (29).
... Papers; list of Papers to be issued to Minister of Information 359 (9).
... report for the year 1917 356 (13); to be published without signature of any member of the War Cabinet 364 (19).
... statement to be issued to the Press relative to measures taken since the commencement of the German attack on the Western front, for dealing with the immediate situation, and for the supply of large numbers of men and guns throughout the summer 378 (7).

Council, Inter-Allied Supreme. (See "Supreme War Council.")
material, purchase of; co-ordination of requests for credit by the Supreme War Council; letter from Mr. Grosjean to the Prime Minister 366 (14).
Office contracts 319 (5).
Priorities Committee; linseed oil for linoleum manufacture 320 (14).
... Lord Curzon to preside during the absence of General Smuts 333 (10).
... memorandum on the supply of steel for Airship sheds under the reduced Airship programme 336 (7).
... Press announcement 321 (8).
... naval and mercantile shipbuilding, relative priority of; question raised by General Smuts; decision (W.C.-58 (1)) as to priority for reduced naval programme confirmed 312 (5).

Secretary's dissent from decision to stop shipments of stone to France 324 (13).
situation, weekly review of, for the Dominion newspapers 335 (11).
Waste products, salvage of 324 (13); Central Council to deal with waste products 346 (13).
Weather, influence of, in Italy, Palestine, and Mesopotamia 319 (1).
Weekly summary of intelligence; the Western front 326 (4).
Western front; aeroplanes (British, French, and German), numbers of 323 (5); British superiority 353 (6).
... Allied and enemy strength 321 (2), 326 (4), 345 (2), 347 (3); C.I.G.S. to prepare a comparative estimate of the numbers of men and guns 352 (4); statement by Parliamentary Secretary to the War Office to be modified 355 (1); report by D.M.O. 365 (2); reports by D.M.I. and Colonel Kirke, liaison officer; figures given by D.M.I. and D.M.O. 371 (2), 373 (2).

command, co-ordination of; Conference at Doullens 373 (1); decision that General Foch should be charged by the British and French Governments with the co-ordination of the action of the Allied Armies; Sir D. Haig's approval of the arrangement; Sir D. Haig, the French Government, and President Wilson to be informed that the War Cabinet approve the arrangement 374 (9); congratulation by President Wilson to General Foch; public announcement to be made 378 (6).
Western front; Allied divisions in the line and in reserve, number of; D.M.I. to furnish information 342 (1), 345 (2).

General Reserve; discussion of the question at the Supreme War Council 329 (13); agreement between the Allied representatives on the creation of a General Reserve for the Armies on the Western, Italian, and Balkan fronts: delegation of certain powers with regard thereto to an Executive composed of the permanent military representatives of Great Britain, Italy, and the United States with General Foch; right of appeal to the Supreme War Council; General Foch designated President of the Executive Committee 338 (2); suppression of publicity 338 (3), 342 (1), 343, 344 (1); the question of publicity: statement to be made by Prime Minister if pressed in Parliament 344 (2); withdrawal of British divisions from Italy, and Italian divisions for the Western front 347 (3); composition of the Allied General Reserve; movement of British divisions from Italy a matter for the Executive Committee at Versailles 349 (7), 351 (10), 352 (4); British, French, and Italian contributions to the General Reserve; removal of British or Italian divisions from the Italian front 357 (3), 358 (2); resolutions agreed to at the meetings of the Supreme War Council in London on March 14 and 15, 1918 366 (11); Italian quota to the General Reserve; decision of Executive War Board 370 (5).

reserves, movements of 371 (1), 372 (1), 373 (2 and 4), 374 (6), 377 (1), 378 (1).

Alsace, possible enemy attack 372 (1).

American artillery 319 (2), 338 (Appendix).

forces 319 (2), 326 (4), 331 (3 and 4), 335 (1), 336 (2), 371 (2), 372 (8), 376 (8), 377 (7).

military co-operation; conference of C.I.G.S. with Generals Pershing and Leonard Wood 319 (5); memorandum by C.I.G.S. 321 (9); 323 (3 and Appendix); despatch of American troops; message from Prime Minister to President Wilson 328 (2); divisions expected in France in 1918; training by divisions or battalions; transport 331 (3); American reinforcements and the extension of the British line 331 (4); two divisions in the French line for training purposes 336 (2); meeting at Versailles, January 30, 1918, on the co-operation of United States troops with the British Army; agreement with General Pershing 338 (1 and Appendix); approval of American Government to the transport of six American divisions in British ships 341 (6).

troops incorporation in British divisions; 321 (9); telegram from General Pershing 323 (3 and Appendix), 335 (1); agreement with General Pershing at Versailles, January 30, 1918 338 (1 and Appendix), 341 (6).

American artillery in Flanders 322 (4); Austrian motor batteries in the Lens area 333 (3).

Bapaume captured by the Germans 372 (1).

British line, extension of; joint note, No. 10, by the Military Representatives on the Supreme War Council; report by Sir D. Haig 322 (15), 324 (11); discussion of the question at the Supreme War Council 329 (13), 331 (4); opinion of D.M.O. that the decision should not be affected by the expectation of American reinforcements 331 (4); joint note, No. 10, accepted in principle by Supreme War Council; execution left to Sir D. Haig and General Foch in consultation 338 (4); British front extended to Baisieux 341 (1).

reinforcements 311 (1), 321 (2), 371 (4 and 8 and 11), 372 (1-6 and 9), 373 (9), 374 (6).

superiority in heavy guns and aeroplanes 352 (6).

Cambrai; enquiry with regard to the battle of Cambrai; report from Sir D. Haig on the operations 309 (3).

Rheims front; enemy concentration 320 (3), 321 (2).

casualties (British) in the German offensive 371 (1), 372 (2),
Western front: casualties from gas shells 367 (5).

Chinese pioneer battalions 324 (1), 338 (18); coolie labour, 324 (16), 349 (13).

counter-attack (Allied) to relieve the situation in the Somme area, question of 373 (9).

cyclist divisions not to be sent to France 377 (2).

divisions from Italy, 345 (1), 347 (3), 349 (7), 351 (10), 352 (4), 353 (2), 357 (3), 358 (8), 366 (11), 370 (4), 371 (4).

Doullens conference at, to discuss the question of greater co-ordination in the Allied Command 373 (1); General Foch charged by British and French Governments with the co-ordination of the action of the Allied Armies 374 (9).

divisions from Italy, 345 (1), 347 (8), 849 (7), 851 (10), 352 (4), 353 (2), 357 (3), 358 (2), 366 (11), 370 (4), 371 (4).

doullens conference at, to discuss the question of greater co-ordination in the Allied Command 373 (1); General Foch charged by British and French Governments with the co-ordination of the action of the Allied Armies 374 (9).

doullens conference at, to discuss the question of greater co-ordination in the Allied Command 373 (1); General Foch charged by British and French Governments with the co-ordination of the action of the Allied Armies 374 (9).

doullens conference at, to discuss the question of greater co-ordination in the Allied Command 373 (1); General Foch charged by British and French Governments with the co-ordination of the action of the Allied Armies 374 (9).

Doullens conference at, to discuss the question of greater co-ordination in the Allied Command 373 (1); General Foch charged by British and French Governments with the co-ordination of the action of the Allied Armies 374 (9).

doullens conference at, to discuss the question of greater co-ordination in the Allied Command 373 (1); General Foch charged by British and French Governments with the co-ordination of the action of the Allied Armies 374 (9).

Doullens conference at, to discuss the question of greater co-ordination in the Allied Command 373 (1); General Foch charged by British and French Governments with the co-ordination of the action of the Allied Armies 374 (9).

divisions from Italy, 345 (1), 347 (8), 849 (7), 851 (10), 352 (4), 353 (2), 357 (3), 358 (2), 366 (11), 370 (4), 371 (4).

divisions from Italy, 345 (1), 347 (8), 849 (7), 851 (10), 352 (4), 353 (2), 357 (3), 358 (2), 366 (11), 370 (4), 371 (4).


Fifth Army, 371 (1), 372 (1), 373 (3), 374 (6 and 7), 377 (1 and 3), 378 (6).

General Rawlinson to command, 377 (3).

four American divisions replace four French divisions with a view to the latter being used in the battle front, 376 (1), 376 (8).

Fourth British Army, command of: appointment of General Plumer 349 (6).

(French): telephone message from French G.H.Q. reporting the operations on March 29, and expressing satisfaction with the result 378 (2).

French line: portion to be taken over by American divisions, 325 (4), 355 (1), 355 (2).

General Fayolle's plan of operations explained by C.I.G.S. 375 (1).


Flanders, inundations in 354 (2).

naval attack, rumours of 356 (3).

naval attack, rumours of 356 (3).

German offensive; commencement of the attack on Thursday, March 21; heavy bombardment on a front of 80 kilometres from the Scarpe to the Oise; British divisions in this sector 369 (1); report by C.I.G.S., identification of German divisions taking part in the attack; German divisions in reserve; the extent of the front attacked; British retirement from the outpost line to the battle position on the whole front; description of the battle zone and its defences; reports of very heavy enemy casualties, but no particulars as to our own; no information yet available for a definite judgment of our own position, but no cause yet shown for anxiety 370 (1); liaison officer between General Headquarters and C.I.G.S. to report course of events daily 370 (2), 371 (1); man-power, British and German; prospects of the battlefronts in the event of the continuation of the attack in its present intensity; C.I.G.S. to furnish details 370 (8); situation explained by Colonel Kirke, liaison officer; his resume of the first day's operations; British divisions for reinforcement in the vicinity of Mory and in the Arras region; evacuation of Monchy-le-Preux; the Fifth Army front penetrated; retirement to the line of the Somme; all the reserves of the Fifth Army now in the line; estimated British casualties and losses of guns; supplies of ammunition; our original lines before the battle of the Somme being got ready; the French takingtl
over the line as far as St. Simon; Sir D. Haig meeting General Petain to arrange for a further extension of the French line; no information as to the use of tanks by the enemy, nor any new poison gas development; 30 enemy aeroplanes destroyed on March 22; French assistance; divisions from Italy; two French and one British division, and four brigades of British Field Artillery to precede any Italian divisions; possibility of reinforcements from Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Home sources; C.I.G.S. to inform Sir D. Haig that in addition to 88,000 men returning from leave at home he could count on 82,000 drafts, that the maintenance of a constant stream of drafts was under consideration, the decision as to precedence of French and British divisions from Italy, and asking if he was satisfied as to the extent of French co-operation; report by D.M.O.; heavy German attack north of Peronne affects a breach over a front of 5 miles; the 12th Division with four colonial divisions advancing towards that area; 300 tanks in the neighbourhood; splendid behaviour of the Third Army; recovery of the Fifth Army; their counter-attack; hopes of restoring the situation on the Somme; General Maurice's opinion that Monday, March 25, was the critical day; German method of attack; 14 German and 12 French divisions transferred from the French front; probabilities of attack on the French front; later report; Bapaume captured by the Germans; the outskirts held; our line north of Bapaume intact; gas north of Peronne held; arrival of 12th and New Zealand Divisions; hard fighting between French and Germans south of Ham and St. Simon; telegram from War Cabinet to Sir D. Haig expressing gratitude to the British Army, and announcing the despatch of reinforcements and guns; estimated losses; immediate reinforcements and their transport; later reinforcements; report by D.M.O.; German attack south of the Somme and capture of Neils and Gueyec; arrival of French reserve; the situation summed up as serious, but not desperate; possible counter-attack to relieve the situation in the Somme area; position at the junction of the Ancre and Somme; recapture of Merlancourt by the Australians; enemy about 25 kilometres from Amiens; change in the weather: weakness of our troops south of the Somme; signs of the attack on the Somme; no information of intended German attack at Bapaume; our forces in that area; our available unengaged reserves; French taking over the line up to the Somme; General Gough commanding Fifth Army, under General Fayolle's orders; message to Amiens; French divisions for reinforcement; later reports; British pressed back on both banks of the Somme; Albert reached by the enemy; 16th Irish Division holding its ground south of the Ancre; Fifth Army, under French command, holding its positions; no change at Roye and Noyon; air activity; Bapaume and Peronne bombèd; condition of the Fifth Army; its relief and reorganisation; French detaining at Montdidier; race to prevent the capture of Amiens; enemy within 3 miles of Montdidier; British front; position quieter for the moment, except for an attack at Bapaume by the 3rd German Guards; reports by C.I.G.S.; heavy fighting north and south of the Somme; some progress made by the enemy in the north, but the situation generally restored by counter-attacks by British, Australian, and New Zealand divisions; British and French heavily attacked south of the Somme, but positions maintained, except for the capture of Montdidier; detaining of French troops in that region; French G.H.Q. satisfied with the situation there; General Fayolle's plan of operations; 78 German divisions identified on the battle front and 22 fresh divisions in reserve; replacement of 4 French divisions by 4 American divisions to release the former for the battle front; probability of Austrian coming under fire; enemy attack east of Arras; reports by C.I.G.S. and D.M.O.; identification of German divisions; immense rate at which they are passing through the battle; attack in front of Arras repulsed; slight enemy advantage further south and gain of the Mortlancourt position; position immediately south of the Somme; only the remnants of the Fifth Army available; French counter-attack west of Noyon; attack on Arras brought to a standstill; attack south of the Somme expected; French lines south of the Oise considered safe; French and German divisions between the Somme and the Oise; General Ralston to command the Fifth Army; position on March 30; enemy advance of 2 to 3 kilometres immediately south of the Somme; French counter-attacks at Montdidier and west of Noyon; no further attacks north of the Somme; severe defeat of the enemy in attacks on Arras front; reported to be digging in on the line Thiepval-Aveluy; Australians holding their ground and point between the Somme and the Oise; south of the Somme; our fresh divisions in line and in reserve north of the Somme; number of British and German divisions withdrawn; number of guns lost; French front; position on March 30; condition of the Fifth Army.
Western front; German offensive; French assistance; question of political pressure on the French Government not to arise until the result of Sir D. Haig's conference with General Pétain is known 371 (3).

losses of British guns 370 (1), 371 (1).

preparations for reinforcements 322 (4); information from Russia and Copenhagen 322 (5); information from General Knox as to transfer of material from the Russian front; preparations for gas attacks 324 (5); statement by the King of Spain to the French Military Attaché 328 (4); German divisions and artillery in training behind the line 336 (2); weakness of the Portuguese line 340 (7), 347 (2); most likely point of attack 342 (3); 360 (5); poison gas 350 (6), 355 (10); opinions of C.I.G.S. 351 (9); of D.M.I. 354 (2); reports spread by German agents in France; opinion of D.M.O. as to probable time and point of attack 356 (1); rumours of German naval co-operation in the offensive 366 (2); German concentration on the Arras–Peronne front 357 (2), 358 (1); on the (French) Soissons–Rheinis front 358 (1); possibility of front of the attack being extended northward 359 (2); aerial activity 360 (4); German Tanks 360 (5), 361 (9); reports by C.I.G.S. 363 (3), 364 (1); views of M. Cambon and C.I.G.S. 364 (1); report by D.M.O. 365 (2), 367 (4); forty new heavy batteries from Russia located 366 (1); arrival of 400 heavy guns in February 367 (3); increased enemy aircraft activity 368 (1).

replacement of guns lost; statement by Minister of Munitions of the artillery machine-guns, &c., available; supply of small-arm ammunition 372 (11 and Appendix).

guns (heavy), British superiority in 352 (6).

reserves; fifteen divisions withdrawn from the French front, and seventeen from the British front north of Arras, for the offensive 373 (2), 374 (10), 376 (1), 377 (1), 378 (1).

High Command, relief of 358 (11).

Hoithulks Forest; German attack 363 (1).

immediate reinforcements from Home and their transport 371 (8), 372 (2), 373 (8), 374 (5).

Irish Division (16th); its fighting qualities 374 (6 and 12), 375 (2).

Italian labour 322 (2), 324 (4 and 16), 328 (9); telegram from Prime Minister to Signor Orlando 350 (7 and Appendix).

troops, employment of 338 (3), 348 (1), 347 (3), 351 (10), 366 (11), 370 (4).

liaison officer between General Headquarters and C.I.G.S. to report daily on the course of events 370 (2), 371 (1).

Ménil Road; German attack 363 (1).

Montdidier 374 (7), 375 (1), 376 (1), 378 (1 and 2).

Morlancourt 377 (1).

plan of campaign for 1918 541 (5).

Portuguese forces 371 (2).

line, German raid on 358 (1), 361 (5).

weakness of 340 (3), 347 (2).

railway communications at Montdidier and St. Just 376 (1).

Ranscapelle, Belgian success at 361 (4).

recall of General Plumer from Italy 349 (6), 359 (3).

reinforcements for; statement to be issued to the press relative to the measures taken by the War Cabinet since the commencement of the German attack 375 (7).

from America; infantry to be sent first 376 (8); question of transport of troops from America at the rate of 100,000 a month considered; telegram to President Wilson with regard to the serious lack of men for drafts to the Allied forces and that it was essential that American infantry should be transported to France at the rate of not less than 100,000 a month for incorporation in
the British or French Armies; Mr. Graeme Thomson to prepare a memorandum, for communication to President Wilson, showing the shipping available and the number of infantry which could be transported in the next three months; suggestion that a special meeting of the Supreme War Council should be convened, in the event of any reluctance on the part of the American Government to comply with the proposal put forward.

Western front; reinforcements from American forces in France; meeting of the Supreme War Council suggested.

Rheims
Sir D. Haig's conference with the War Cabinet, January 7, 1918, on questions connected with the position on the Western front. (Not printed, see 316 (8-15.).)
Somme area
Third Army
timber for dug-outs
transport problem; General Nash's investigation
Vimy, Headquarters of Fourteenth German Army located at
Weekly Summary of Intelligence; Prime Minister's comments on the omission of vital considerations and statistics; balance of Allied and enemy strength; reduction of strength of German battalions; reply of C.I.G.S.; revised figures to be furnished.

Wheat (Australian), purchase of
for Greece
Wilson, Captain Stanley, M.P., case of
General Sir H., appointed C.I.G.S.
at Doullens’ Conference
Wingate, Sir Reginald, telegram from, respecting assurances to the Arabs as to the Allies' intentions with regard to Arab countries.
"Wolff," German raider
Women; equality of remuneration with men engaged on similar duties
Works, First Commissioner of, and the acquisition of the British Museum by the Air Ministry.
Wounded and discharged men; recall to the Colours.

Y.
Yarmouth, bombardment of (January 14, 1918)

Z.
Zeebrugge, naval activity off
Zeppelin going to Egypt
raids on Great Britain; escape of Zeppelins; question of adequacy of air squadrons for defence.