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SECRET

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C.C. (52)

15th Conclusions

CABINET

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Prime Minister's Room, House of Commons, S.W. 1, on Monday, 11th February, 1952, at 5 p.m.

Present:

The Right Hon. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, M.P., Prime Minister and Minister of Defence (*in the Chair*).

The Right Hon. ANTHONY EDEN, M.P., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The Right Hon. LORD WOOLTON, Lord President of the Council.

The Most Hon. THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY, Lord Privy Seal.

The Right Hon. LORD SIMONDS, Lord Chancellor.

The Right Hon. Sir DAVID MAXWELL FYFE, Q.C., M.P., Secretary of State for the Home Department and Minister for Welsh Affairs.

The Right Hon. R. A. BUTLER, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The Right Hon. LORD ISMAY, Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.

The Right Hon. OLIVER LYTTTELTON, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The Right Hon. JAMES STUART, M.P., Secretary of State for Scotland.

The Right Hon. LORD LEATHERS, Secretary of State for Co-ordination of Transport, Fuel and Power.

The Right Hon. H. F. C. CROOKSHANK, M.P., Minister of Health.

The Right Hon. Sir WALTER MONCKTON, Q.C., M.P., Minister of Labour and National Service.

The Right Hon. HAROLD MACMILLAN, M.P., Minister of Housing and Local Government.

The Right Hon. PETER THORNEYCROFT, M.P., President of the Board of Trade.

The Right Hon. LORD CHERWELL, Paymaster-General.

The following were also present:

The Right Hon. ANTONY HEAD, M.P., Secretary of State for War (*Item 3*).

The Right Hon. DAVID ECCLES, M.P., Minister of Works (*Items 1-2*).

Secretariat:

Sir NORMAN BROOK.

Mr. T. PADMORE.

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The Coronation.

1. The Cabinet considered what advice should be offered to The Queen regarding the date of Her Coronation. The precedents pointed to a date in the early summer of 1953. It was to be hoped that by then conditions might be more settled than they seemed likely to be in 1952. If the Coronation took place in 1953, it might be possible for The Queen, if She so wished, to visit Australia and New Zealand in the winter of 1952-53. *The Minister of Works* said that there would be great difficulty in making the necessary building preparations at Westminster Abbey for a Coronation in 1952.

The Cabinet—

- (1) Asked the Lord Chancellor to verify that there would be no constitutional objection to a Royal Visit to other Commonwealth countries, if desired by Her Majesty, in advance of the Coronation.
- (2) Invited the Prime Minister, in ascertaining Her Majesty's wishes, to indicate their preference for holding the Coronation in the early summer of 1953.

The Stone of Scone.

2. The Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Lord Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Scotland (C. (52) 26) suggesting that the Coronation Stone should be replaced in the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey.

The Cabinet favoured this proposal but thought that, before any announcement was made, it would be desirable to consult through their Leader certain prominent Scottish Members of the Opposition. Similar consultations had taken place previously on matters concerning the Stone.

The Cabinet—

- (1) Approved in principle the proposal to restore the Stone of Scone to Westminster Abbey.
- (2) Invited the Prime Minister to seek the comments of leading Scottish members of the Opposition on this proposal.

Dunkirk Memorial.
(Previous Reference: C.C.(51) 16th Conclusions, Minute 3.)

3. The Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Secretary of State for War inviting them to decide whether the Imperial War Graves Commission should proceed with their plans for a modest memorial at Dunkirk at a cost of some £23,000 or should erect there at more substantial cost a national memorial commemorating the Dunkirk operation.

The Secretary of State for War said that, as the site which had been selected was on the sea front, any memorial which included a garden, as had been previously suggested by the Cabinet, must have a surrounding wall to retain the soil. A design had therefore been prepared for a national memorial which took the form of a courtyard surrounded by cloisters and enclosing a Garden of Remembrance. The cost to the public of erecting a memorial to this design would be about £77,000.

The Cabinet were disposed to favour the erection of a national memorial in preference to the more limited project of a small archway designed to commemorate those soldiers who fell in the 1939-40 Campaign and had no known graves. They did not, however, wish to authorise a grant for this purpose in the current economic circumstances.

The Cabinet—

Deferred their decision on the nature of the memorial to be erected at Dunkirk; and invited the Secretary of State for War to bring this matter before them again in the summer of 1953.

Atomic Energy. 4. The Cabinet were informed that an atomic bomb of British manufacture was to be exploded in Australia, under test conditions during the summer. All the arrangements for this test had now been concluded with the Australian Government, and the party in charge of it were shortly due to leave for Australia. Some information about the experiment had already found its way to the Press, and it was desirable that an official announcement should be made at an early date.

The Prime Minister said that no time should now be lost in settling the terms of the announcement, in consultation with the Australian Government, and arranging for its simultaneous release in this country and in Australia. *The Paymaster-General* undertook to make arrangements accordingly.

*Cabinet Office, S.W. 1,
11th February, 1952.*