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C.C. (62)
12th Conclusions

Copy No. 43

CABINET

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at Admiralty House, S.W. 1, on Thursday, 8th February, 1962, at 11 a.m.

Present :

The Right Hon. HAROLD MACMILLAN, M.P., Prime Minister

The Right Hon. R. A. BUTLER, M.P., Secretary of State for the Home Department	The Right Hon. VISCOUNT KILMUIR, Lord Chancellor
The Right Hon. SELWYN LLOYD, Q.C., M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer	The Right Hon. THE EARL of HOME, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
The Right Hon. VISCOUNT HAILSHAM, Q.C., Lord President of the Council and Minister for Science	The Right Hon. HENRY BROOKE, M.P., Chief Secretary to the Treasury and Paymaster General
The Right Hon. JOHN MACLAY, M.P., Secretary of State for Scotland	The Right Hon. IAIN MACLEOD, M.P., Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
The Right Hon. HAROLD WATKINSON, M.P., Minister of Defence	The Right Hon. Sir DAVID ECCLES, M.P., Minister of Education (<i>Items 4-5</i>)
The Right Hon. PETER THORNEycroft, M.P., Minister of Aviation	The Right Hon. LORD MILLS, Minister without Portfolio
The Right Hon. REGINALD MAUDLING, M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies	The Right Hon. JOHN HARE, M.P., Minister of Labour
The Right Hon. EDWARD HEATH, M.P., Lord Privy Seal	Dr. The Right Hon. CHARLES HILL, M.P., Minister of Housing and Local Government and Minister for Welsh Affairs
The Right Hon. ERNEST MARPLES, M.P., Minister of Transport	The Right Hon. CHRISTOPHER SOAMES, M.P., Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

The Right Hon. FREDERICK ERROLL,
M.P., President of the Board of Trade

The following were also present :

The Right Hon. MARTIN REDMAYNE, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Treasury	THE DUKE of DEVONSHIRE, Joint Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations (<i>Item 5</i>)
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Secretariat :

The Right Hon. Sir NORMAN BROOK
Mr. A. L. M. CARY
Mr. J. H. WADDELL

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West Indies
(Previous
Reference:
C.C. (62) 11th
Conclusions,
Minute 3)
Jamaica

1. *The Colonial Secretary* said that the current Conference on the Jamaican Constitution had made good progress. The only major question now outstanding was the date by which the island should become independent. The representatives of both the Jamaican political parties were prepared to accept 6th August, 1962, as the date for independence. He sought authority to accept this date on behalf of the United Kingdom Government.

The Colonial Secretary said that an independent Jamaica was likely to remain within the Commonwealth and to retain a monarchical form of constitution.

The Cabinet—

Agreed that the Conference on the Jamaican Constitution should be concluded on the basis that the island would attain independence on 6th August, 1962.

**Nuclear
Tests**
(Previous
Reference:
C.C. (62) 10th
Conclusions,
Minute 2)

2. *The Prime Minister* said that the French Government had not been willing to join in the new initiative which the Governments of the United Kingdom and the United States had decided to take in the hope of expediting progress towards an effective international agreement on disarmament. An Anglo-American approach was therefore being made to the Soviet Government, and a joint announcement would be issued that day, in London and in Washington. This would also cover the possibility that Christmas Island might be used for a further series of nuclear tests. The terms of the joint announcement would be incorporated in a full statement which he would make in the House of Commons that afternoon.

The Cabinet were informed that this statement might provoke an Opposition demand for an immediate debate. They agreed that, if this were conceded by the Speaker, the Government spokesmen in the debate should be the Minister of Defence and the Prime Minister.

The Cabinet—

Took note of this statement by the Prime Minister.

Parliament

3. The Cabinet were informed of the business to be taken in the House of Commons in the following week.

**Incomes
Policy**
Railwaymen's
Wages
(Previous
Reference:
C.C. (62) 10th
Conclusions,
Minute 4)

4. *The Chancellor of the Exchequer* said that the Chairman of the British Transport Commission had at his last meeting with the railwaymen's unions raised his offer of a wage increase from 2½ to 3 per cent. with effect from the beginning of April. He had, however, made it clear that neither the Commission nor the Government could be regarded as committed to a further increase later in the year. The unions had now asked for an interview with the Prime Minister.

Discussion showed that there was general support in the Cabinet for the view that representatives of the unions should be seen by the Prime Minister. There would be no question of increasing the offer made by the Chairman of the Commission. Before the meeting took place the Prime Minister would consider with the Ministers directly concerned what line he should take. Points of particular importance would be the possibility of arbitration and the prospect of re-opening

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negotiations later in the year. It would be important that the Government's position should be stated clearly in an agreed statement issued to the Press at the end of the meeting. If the meeting were held on 14th February, the Cabinet would have an opportunity to consider the matter further at their meeting on 13th February.

The Cabinet—

Took note that the Prime Minister would discuss with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Labour the terms of a statement of the Government's position for his use at his forthcoming meeting with representatives of the railwaymen's trade unions.

Kenya
(Previous
Reference:
C.C. (61) 75th
Conclusions,
Minute 6)

5. The Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the Colonial Secretary (C. (62) 22) on constitutional development in Kenya.

The Colonial Secretary said that the Kenya Constitutional Conference would open in London on 14th February. Its object was to settle a Constitution for Kenya during the period of internal self-government. In the light of precedents in other territories it would be generally assumed that the transition to full independence would take place about a year or 18 months after the attainment of self-government. Refusal to accept an early date for independence would probably lead to further outbreaks of violence, which would further reduce confidence in the country's future and intensify its economic problems. On the other hand, the early grant of independence might leave Kenya with an unstable and inefficient government, which would be equally disastrous to the economic prospects of the country. The first task was, however, to seek agreement on a Constitution with strong safeguards for African minorities and for the European settlers. It would then be a matter for judgment how far such a Constitution was likely in the event to be overthrown by unconstitutional means. Much would depend on the encouragement of moderate African opinion. *The Colonial Secretary* said that he intended to do all he could to isolate the extremists in the Kenya African National Union and to persuade its more moderate members to make common cause with the Kenya African Democratic Union.

The Chief Secretary, Treasury, outlined the financial prospects of Kenya. On the best assumptions Kenya would need economic aid at the rate of about £30 million a year for many years ahead. Unless some confidence in the country's stability could be restored, it would decline into complete bankruptcy. The cost of compensating European settlers for their land alone would amount to about £140 million. It was therefore important that the gravity of the situation and the need to restore confidence should be impressed from the outset on those attending the Constitutional Conference and that no promise should be given or implied that the United Kingdom Government would compensate displaced European settlers or increase the level of economic aid. We would continue to accept the obligations which flowed from our responsibility as a Colonial power; but we could not accept responsibility for additional aid which might be called for as the result of mismanagement by an independent state.

In discussion the following points were made:

(a) The question of safeguards was vital in the framing of a Constitution for self-government. So far as possible such safeguards should be independent of the legislature, particularly where the rights of African minorities were concerned. It would be difficult to devise stronger safeguards for the European settlers than a Bill of Rights

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C.C. 12 (62)

and an independent judiciary, but the possibility might be considered of conferring on the European members of the legislature some right of veto on measures affecting the vital interests of the European settlers. It must, however, be recognised that any Constitution now devised might break down during the period of self-government, thus requiring us to resort to direct rule. Even if it survived into the period of independence, it might be overthrown by revolution. It should be remembered, however, that predictions of political breakdown following the grant of independence to other territories—most recently, for example, the Cameroons—had not been borne out by the event; and in terms of administration, of public services, and of training Africans for the duties of government we had laid in Kenya a stronger foundation than in African territories administered by other Powers. Kenya was, for this reason less likely to relapse into the kind of chaos which had followed the grant of independence to the Congo. It would not be possible to form a proper view of the prospects until the Conference had started and had made some progress; much would depend on the emergence of a moderate African leadership.

(b) The grant of early independence to Kenya would be dangerous in the extreme. Responsible local opinion was unanimous that the advance of independence was too fast but there was almost equal agreement on the dangers of trying to slow it down. From every point of view it would be preferable to lengthen the period of self-government to something of the order of five years if means could be found of doing this without provoking a violent African reaction which would have the effect of further weakening confidence in Kenya and accelerating its economic collapse. It might be possible to devise some form of trusteeship under international, Commonwealth or United Nations auspices which would be acceptable to African opinion. Short of this, it might be possible to associate some other countries, in an advisory capacity, with our continuing administration of Kenya. These possibilities should be examined.

(c) The threat to Kenya's economic stability was of paramount importance. It put Kenya into a different category from other territories whose independence had already been granted or promised. The Government would be justified in withholding independence from territories which were not economically viable and had no reasonable prospect of becoming so. It was for consideration whether a frank explanation of Kenya's economic difficulties would not be accepted by world opinion and even by the Afro-Asian group in the United Nations as justifying delay. There was, however, a real danger that this might cause the Soviet Government or the Chinese Government, which was known to be taking an increasing interest in African affairs, to offer such economic aid as was needed to support the economy of an independent Kenya. We might then find ourselves obliged to grant early independence to Kenya in circumstances which would draw the country into the Communist camp. Even so, there would be advantage in obtaining a more general recognition of the economic difficulties facing Kenya and to this end it might be helpful if some independent authority, possibly the World Bank, could be invited to make an objective survey of Kenya's economy and prospects.

(d) During the period of self-government it would be possible to use British troops to maintain law and order. It would be more difficult to arrange for a British military presence after independence. But, if we made it plain that we were not proposing to retain a military base in Kenya after independence, it might be possible to arrange for a number of British troops to be stationed in the area, particularly for training purposes. Even so, the main burden of maintaining law and order in an independent Kenya would fall on the King's African Rifles. By the middle of 1963 only half the officers of this force would be African and it might be necessary for the Government to

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second British officers at United Kingdom expense to maintain its efficiency. It would be in our interest to do this: the consequences of failing to maintain organised forces at the disposal of government had been shown only too clearly in the Congo.

The Cabinet—

- (1) Took note that the Colonial Secretary, at the outset of the Kenya Constitutional Conference, would emphasise the economic difficulties facing Kenya and would seek to concentrate discussion on the problem of a Constitution for the period of internal self-government.
- (2) Invited the Colonial Secretary to consider whether some form of trusteeship for Kenya during the period of self-government could be devised and whether it would be to our advantage to invite some international authority to review Kenya's economy and prospects.
- (3) Agreed to resume their discussion at a later meeting in the light of developments at the Conference.

*Cabinet Office, S.W. 1.
8th February, 1962.*