CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1, on Tuesday, 20th June, 1967, at 9.45 a.m.

Present:
The Right Hon. MICHAEL STEWART, M P, First Secretary of State and Secretary of State for Economic Affairs
(In the Chair)
The Right Hon. JAMES CALLAGHAN, M P, Chancellor of the Exchequer
The Right Hon. HERBERT BOWDEN, M P, Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs
The Right Hon. DENIS HEALEY, M P, Secretary of State for Defence
The Right Hon. WILLIAM ROSS, M P, Secretary of State for Scotland
The Right Hon. ANTHONY CROSLAND, M P, Secretary of State for Education and Science
The Right Hon. THE EARL OF LONGFORD, Lord Privy Seal
The Right Hon. BARBARA CASTLE, M P, Minister of Transport
The Right Hon. RICHARD MARSH, M P, Minister of Power
The Right Hon. ANTHONY GREENWOOD, M P, Secretary of State for Education
The Right Hon. SIR ELWYN JONES, Q C, Attorney-General (Item 2)
Mr. JOHN MACKIE, M P, Joint Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Item 1)

The following were also present:
The Right Hon. GEORGE THOMSON, M P, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (Items 1 and 2)
Mr. JOHN SILKIN, M P, Parliamentary Secretary, Treasury

Secretariat:
Mr. P. ROGERS
Miss J. J. NUNN
Mr. L. ERRINGTON
Mr. H. L. LAWRENCE-WILSON
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I. The Cabinet considered a memorandum (C (67) 107) by the Home Secretary on the adoption of permanent summer time, to which was attached a memorandum and a report by officials which had previously been considered by the Home Affairs Committee.

The Home Secretary said that the Home Affairs Committee had approved by an overwhelming (but not complete) consensus, proposals to introduce summer time permanently by legislation taking effect in the autumn of 1968, and to extend the statutory period of summer time by order under the existing Summer Time Acts so as to begin on 18th February, 1968. The Secretary of State for Scotland, who had not been present at the meeting of the Committee, had asked that the matter be considered by the Cabinet. Though opinion tended admittedly to be subjective there was little doubt that there had been a shift of opinion in recent years and that the majority of organisations which had been consulted in England and Wales in the course of a recent review of the subject were now in favour of the adoption of permanent summer time (or Central European Time (CET)). Since the survey of opinion had been conducted before the Government announced their decision to seek membership of the European Economic Community, it seemed improbable that the prospect of entry to the Community had had much influence on the result. The Home Affairs Committee had considered but rejected a proposal that the change should be made experimentally. An experiment would be unsettling, and it seemed unwise to commit the Government to legislate further at the end of an experimental period.

The Secretary of State for Scotland said that he found the report on the review of the social and economic aspects of extended summer time appended to C (67) 107 most unconvincing. From enquiries which he had made of the Scottish TUC it appeared that the favourable opinion which they had expressed was based merely on consultation between the Secretary and the Agricultural Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union. Public opinion appeared to have been gauged partly by consultation with the organisers of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service and partly by the inclusion in a Gallup poll undertaken for other purposes of questions which had elicited that, while 45 per cent of those replying favoured the change, only one in 49 knew why, whereas one in three of the 25 per cent opposing it were able to give reasons. Whereas there was expected to be a marginal reduction in the number of road accidents it seemed clear that in the north at any rate insufficient account had been taken of the effect of the greater risk of fog and frost which was likely to result in an increase in accidents, particularly to children on their way to school. The probable cost of the change, including the necessity to invest an additional £40 million in generating capacity and the additional costs in the agricultural and construction industries, appeared to have been brushed aside. A proposal which affected every individual in the country should be more fully considered before a decision was taken.
In discussion it was suggested that in view of the opposition to the introduction of GET in Scotland, where the inconvenience of a prolonged period of cold and darkness in the mornings would be particularly felt, the change should not be made unless there were clear grounds of national interest for making it. On the other hand it was argued that the public would readily adjust to the change, as they had to double summer time during the Second World War; that there was undoubted advantage in the opportunities for recreation provided by the extra hour of daylight in the afternoon; and that business and commercial interests would benefit from the coincidence of business hours in this country with those in Western Europe. Moreover the cost, particularly to the agricultural industry, appeared to have been exaggerated and the Central Electricity Generating Board had withdrawn their previous opposition to the proposal, since they now expected to have sufficient generating capacity to meet the additional demand in the mornings for light and power. In a debate in the House of Lords on the previous day there had been no opposition to the proposal. There might be some advantage from the point of view of public opinion in presenting the change as an experiment; on the other hand this was a subject on which the public would expect the Government to take an early decision and if, in the event, the change proved unpopular or inconvenient, fresh legislation could be introduced. There would be advantage, however, in considering whether the new time could be called either West European Time or, to retain the association with Greenwich, Greenwich Summer or Greenwich Daylight Saving Time.

The First Secretary of State, summing up the discussion, said that the preponderant opinion in the Cabinet was in favour of the adoption of permanent summer time by legislation taking effect in the autumn of 1968 and preceded by an order extending the period of summer time under the existing legislation so that the change would in effect take place from 18th February, 1968. The Home Secretary should consider in the light of the discussion whether a title other than Central European Time could be adopted and meanwhile should announce the decision in general terms in reply to a Parliamentary Question on 22nd June.

The Cabinet—

(1) Approved the proposal in C (67) 107 for the introduction of permanent summer time by legislation having effect in the autumn of 1968 and preceded by an Order extending summer time in 1968 so as to begin on 18th February.

(2) Invited the Home Secretary to consider, in the light of their discussion, whether some title other than Central European Time could be found for permanent summer time.
2. The Minister of Power said that there had been no major change in oil supplies since the Cabinet had last discussed the subject; the Suez Canal was still blocked; Iraq and Libya were not producing oil; and all other Arab States were denying supplies to United Kingdom and United States destinations. There had been suggestions that the Soviet Union might be willing to supply oil to us and this possibility, which raised major questions of policy, was under discussion between the Departments concerned; Venezuela had indicated her willingness to supply additional oil but only in substantial quantities if long-term contracts were made. Despite hostile public statements by the Algerian Government they had recently allowed two tankers to be loaded with liquid methane for the United Kingdom and a third tanker was expected to be accepted for loading that day.

The oil stock situation was reasonably good since, when the emergency had started, we had had 90 days supplies in the country and a further 10 days in tankers at sea. Preparations for the introduction of petrol rationing were proceeding, however, and the necessary ration books and forms would have been issued to regional centres by the end of July. Discussions were taking place on how to share the supply and reduce consumption of fuel oil for industry.

French obstruction to a declaration by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of a state of emergency in relation to oil supplies continued; such a declaration was essential if American oil companies were to be able legally to co-operate with European companies in steps to deal with the emergency without contravening American anti-trust legislation. A further meeting of the Oil Sub-Committee of the Organisation would be held later that week in an effort to obtain agreement on the declaration of a state of emergency. There had been increases in the price of oil of about £1 per ton in West Germany, Switzerland and Belgium and increases were being considered in France and the Netherlands. British oil companies had given notice that they might wish to raise oil prices to meet the cost of longer tanker haulage and of higher purchase prices; if a definite request to raise prices were made, it would have to be dealt with quickly and without reference to the National Board on Prices and Incomes. The most difficult aspect of the current situation was not the shortage of supplies but the extra burden on our balance of payments; the present estimate was that, if the present situation continued, this might amount to £50 million over six months but this estimate was being re-examined.

In discussion, it was agreed that the question of lifting the embargo on the purchase of oil and oil products from the Soviet Union raised major policy issues which the Cabinet would wish to consider on the basis of a detailed paper. Although oil from the Soviet Union would be cheaper than other alternatives to Middle East supplies, we could not expect to obtain it except on long-term contracts. Our investments in the Middle East were substantial and...
important for our balance of payments and very careful consideration would therefore be necessary of the effects on our economic situation and also on our defence and foreign policy of any lifting of this embargo. Our main aim must be to re-establish as soon as possible normal supplies of oil from the Middle East. It was possible that an outbreak of hostilities in Nigeria might cause a stoppage in supplies but Nigerian oil was more important for the long than for the short term.

In further discussion the Cabinet considered the demand by the Government of Libya that we should withdraw our forces stationed in that country. The view was expressed that we should not aim, as we were at present, to retain our forces in Libya in the hope that the situation there would become calmer and the request for their removal be withdrawn, but that instead we should seize the opportunity to withdraw these forces quickly.

The First Secretary of State, summing up the discussion, said that the Cabinet would wish to give further consideration both to the issues that would be involved in any removal of the embargo on the purchase of oil and oil products from the Soviet Union and to an assessment of the attitudes of the Arab countries on the supply of oil to us. It would be desirable for this consideration to take place on the basis of memoranda rather than of oral statements, but in the meantime the Cabinet would wish the Minister of Power to make a further oral statement on the oil supply situation at their first meeting in the following week.

The Cabinet—

(1) Invited the Minister of Power to make a further statement on the oil supply situation at their first meeting in the following week.

(2) Invited the Minister of Power to circulate a memorandum on the issues that would be involved in the removal of the embargo on the purchase of oil from the Soviet Union.

(3) Invited the Foreign Secretary to circulate a memorandum assessing the manner in which the attitudes of Arab countries to the supply of oil to this country might develop and the consequences for our economic interests.

3. The Cabinet considered a memorandum (C (67) 106) by the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Minister of Housing and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Wales, to which was annexed the draft of a White Paper on Town and Country Planning.

The Minister of Housing and Local Government said that the purpose of the White Paper, which had been approved in draft by the Home Affairs Committee, was to announce the legislation which it was intended to introduce for England and Wales in the coming Session of Parliament and for Scotland in the 1968–69 Session. The
legislation would reduce the delays resulting from the present procedures, ensure wider public participation at the formative stage of planning schemes and adapt the planning process to enable development plans to deal not merely with land use but with the whole range of relevant social and economic considerations, including transport and investment policies. It was proposed that the new type of development plan should continue to be subject to the approval of the Minister but that the detailed implementation of the plans should be dealt with locally, subject to the power of the Minister to call a particular plan in for his own consideration, or to require the local planning authority to hold a public inquiry. The power to decide minor planning appeals, which at present rested with the Minister, would be delegated to Inspectors, subject to the control of the courts in case of error of law or procedure and to the supervision of the Council on Tribunals. The opportunity would be taken to redeem the pledge given in the White Paper on the Land Commission that public authorities would be enabled after the confirmation of the compulsory purchase order to use the more rapid vesting procedure for acquiring formal title to the land and to make some further improvements in the protection afforded to buildings of special historic or architectural interest. The proposals would be discussed in detail with interested organisations including the local authority associations and the Council on Tribunals. It had been suggested during the discussion of the draft White Paper by the Home Affairs Committee that either in the White Paper or at the Lobby Conference on its publication Ministers should indicate that the Government were considering the adequacy of the public local inquiry as a means of investigating and reaching conclusions on important schemes of development which raised novel issues and might have effects on a more than local scale. He proposed therefore in paragraph 28 of the draft White Paper, which already indicated that the Government were considering the methods of controlling development to be carried out by statutory undertakers, to give an indication that they were also reviewing the treatment of cases that raised wide and novel issues of more than local significance. If the Cabinet approved the draft he hoped that the White Paper would be published on 28th June.

In discussion the following principal points were made—

(a) The Inspectors to whom delegated powers were to be given would be concerned with relatively minor planning appeals dealing with individual properties and not with questions of more general interest such as the proposal to build a road across Christchurch Meadow. Their decisions would not be open to question by the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration unless maladministration were alleged. They would, however, be subject to the control of the courts on matters of law and procedure.

(b) It was a major defect in the existing planning machinery that the local inquiry on a particular proposal could not also investigate alternatives to that proposal. A local inquiry was in any event inappropriate for the investigation of proposals which involved
questions of national policy, such as the site for a third London airport; and means should be sought of reconciling the need for investigation of the wider issues which had to be determined before proposals affecting a particular locality could be formulated with the need for hearing local objections and balancing the considerations involved in a choice among several potential sites. There would be advantage in devoting a separate paragraph of the White Paper to an explanation of the nature of the problem which the Government were seeking to resolve.

The First Secretary of State, summing up the discussion, said that the Cabinet approved both the proposals for legislation set out in the draft White Paper and the form of the draft itself subject to the inclusion of a paragraph indicating the nature of the problem raised by proposals of more than local significance, the investigation of which by a purely local inquiry was unsatisfactory. The Ministers concerned with the White Paper should prepare such a paragraph in consultation with the Lord Chancellor and the Lord President. If necessary the publication of the White Paper should be delayed for this purpose, but if those concerned could agree on a new paragraph in time the White Paper should be published on 28th June.

The Cabinet—

(1) Approved the draft White Paper annexed to C (67) 106, subject to the addition of a paragraph on the lines indicated in the summing up of their discussion by the First Secretary of State.

(2) Invited the Ministers responsible for the White Paper to draft the new paragraph in consultation with the Lord Chancellor and the Lord President of the Council and to arrange if possible for the publication of the White Paper on 28th June.

4. The Minister of Labour said that, in consequence of the dispute over the opening of the new continental freight terminal at Stratford, there was a danger of industrial action by railwaymen. The terminal had been blacklisted by the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) in protest at the employment of outside workers by the forwarding agents leasing part of the depot and strike calls had been sent out the previous evening to a number of railwaymen at 21 freight and parcel depots in London. This might result in some damage to food supplies for London. The NUR had the right to report official disputes to the Minister of Labour, but if they did so he would not propose to use his good offices to attempt conciliation. The opening of the new freight terminal did not cause any redundancy among railwaymen and there was no justification for the threat of
industrial action. It was essential that the Government should do nothing which might weaken the stand being taken in respect of the Stratford terminal by the Board of British Railways.

In discussion there was full agreement with the views expressed by the Minister of Labour. It was noted that it might be necessary for the Official Committee on Emergencies to meet later in the day to consider action if the dispute should spread to other freight and parcel depots.

The Cabinet—

(1) Took note, with approval, of the statement by the Minister of Labour.

(2) Invited the Home Secretary to consider whether arrangements should be made for the Official Committee on Emergencies to meet to review the situation.

Cabinet Office, S.W.1,
20th June, 1967.