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SECRET.

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[To be returned to the Secretary, 2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.]

WAR CABINET, 5.

*Minutes of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10, Downing Street, on Wednesday,
December 13, 1916, at 3 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. A. HENDERSON, M.P.
The Right Hon. the VISCOUNT MILNER, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.	

In attendance :

The Right Hon. the LORD DEVONPORT, Food Controller.	Captain C. BATHURST, M.P.
The Right Hon. R. E. PROTHERO, President of the Board of Agriculture.	

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

Lieutenant-Colonel E. D. SWINTON, D.S.O., R.E., *Assistant Secretary*.

Food Production
at Home.

1. THE War Cabinet conferred with the Food Controller, the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, and Captain Bathurst in regard to the production of foodstuffs at home.

The War Cabinet reached the following conclusions :—

- (a.) The first step to be taken is to define the respective spheres of responsibility of the Food Controller and the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. Mr. Prothero and Lord Devonport undertook to confer with a view to framing an agreement on this subject, and to report the results of their conference to the War Cabinet.
- (b.) The principle of fixed prices for the 1917 harvest was approved. The details were left for agreement between the Food Controller and the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, who were invited, in the case of any difference of opinion, to lay the matter before the War Cabinet.
- (c.) If, after consultation, the Food Controller and the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries considered it desirable to extend the fixed prices beyond the year 1917, the matter should again be brought before the War Cabinet.

- (d.) In order to maintain the production of milk at a fixed price it was decided to include, in the powers of the Food Controller, authority over the prices of feeding-stuffs.
- (e.) The Food Controller and the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries must be empowered to incur the expenditure necessary for stimulating agricultural production in this country.
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2. Certain questions were left for discussion, in the first instance, at any rate, between the Secretary of State for War and the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. Among these were the extension of exemptions from Military Service of men over 25 years of age, and the concerting of arrangements to ensure that reservists released from the Colours for agricultural work shall remain in the posts or localities to which they are discharged.

(Initialled) A. B. L.

2, *Whitehall Gardens, S.W.*,
December 13, 1916.