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Secretary

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SECRET-

WAR CABINET 616A.

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MINUTES of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. on Friday, August 15th, 1919. at 11-30a.m.

PRESENT.

The Prime Minister (In the Chair).

- Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, The Right Hon. A. Chamberlain, M.P.,
- Right Hon. G.N. Barnes, M.P., The Right Hon. Sir E. Geddes, G.C.B., G.B.E., M.P.,

THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT.

- Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, M.P., Secretary of State for War. The Right Hon. Sir A.C. Geddes, K.C.B., M.P., President, Board of Trade.
- Right Hon. H.W. Forster, M.P., Financial Secretary, War Office. The Right Hon. H.A.L. Fisher, M.P., President, Board of Education.
- Field Marshal Sir H.H. Wilson, G.C.B., D.S.O., Chief of the Imperial General Staff. The Right Hon. C. Addison, M.P., Minister of Health.
- Major-General Sir C.H. Harrington, G.C.B., D.S.O., Deputy Chief of the Imperial General Staff. The Right Hon. Sir L. Cwrthgton Evans, Bt., M.P., Minister of Pensions.
- Right Hon. W. Long, M.P., First Lord of the Admiralty. The Right Hon. Sir RA S. Horne, K.B.E., K.C., M.P., Minister of Labour.
- Right Hon. Major General J.E.B. Seely, G.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P., Secretary of State for Air. The Right Hon. J.A. Clyde, K.C., M.P., Lord Advocate for Scotland.
- Right Hon. Sir J. Macley, Bt., Shipping Controller.

- Lieutenant Colonel Sir M.P.A. Hankey, G.C.B., Secretary.
- Mr. G.M. Evans.....Assistant Secretary.
- Lieutenant Colonel L. Storr, C.B., Assistant Secretary.
- Captain L. Burgis.....Assistant Secretary.

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SECRET

WAR CABINET 616 A.

DRAFT CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on FRIDAY, AUGUST 15, 1919, at 11-30 a.m.

VAL, MILITARY  
AND AIR ESTI-  
MATES.

The War Cabinet had before them the following documents:-

A Note by the Minister of Shipping, on Shipbuilding (Paper G.T.-7899),

An Admiralty Memorandum on Shipbuilding (Paper G.T.-7959).

The consideration of these Memoranda gave rise to a discussion on the Naval, Military and Air Estimates.

The War Cabinet reached the following Conclusions:-

The Admiralty, and the War Office and Air Ministry, should work out their Estimates on the following bases:-

- (1) It should be assumed, for framing revised Estimates, that the British Empire will not be engaged in any great war during the next ten years, and that no Expeditionary Force is required for this purpose.
- (2) No alteration should be made, without Cabinet authority, in the pre-war standard governing the size of the Navy.
- (3) No new Naval construction should be undertaken, and the Admiralty should make every effort to stop constructional work on vessels that have no value for mercantile purposes. This decision is taken from the point of view both of economy and of increasing the output of mercantile construction.
- (4) The principal function of the Military and Air Forces is to provide garrisons for India, Egypt, the new mandated territory and all territory (other than self-governing) under British control, as well as to provide the necessary support to the civil power at home.

- (5) As regards Ireland, the present conditions may necessitate a garrison in excess of the normal, but within twelve months there is a reasonable probability that a normal garrison will suffice.
- (6) In order to save man-power, the utmost possible use is to be made of mechanical contrivances, which should be regarded as a means of reducing Estimates.
- (7) In framing the Estimates, the following maximum figures should be aimed at:-

Royal Navy .....	£60,000,000
Army and Royal Air Force .	£75,000,000.

The First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War undertook to examine the problem on the above bases.

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2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.,

August 15, 1919.