CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held in Mr Bonar Law's Room, House of Commons, S.W.1, on FRIDAY, JUNE 11, 1920, at 12 Noon.

PRESENT:—

The Prime Minister (in the Chair),

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P., Lord Privy Seal.
The Right Hon. A. Chamberlain, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The following were also present:—

Mr H.S. Shackleton, K.C.B., Joint Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour (for Conclusion 4).
Mr A.R. Duncan, Coal Controller (for Conclusion 4).

Mr Thomas Jones, Principal Assistant Secretary.
Cabinet had before them a draft of the Suspensory Clause, circulated by the First Lord of the Admiralty, with a covering Memorandum explaining that the draft had been prepared to carry out the assurances given in the Debate on the Second Reading of the Government of Ireland Bill, and on other occasions, that powers would be inserted in the Bill to suspend its operation in the event of the Parliament of Southern Ireland either refusing to function or endeavouring to act unconstitutionally (Paper C.P.-1458). (See Appendix I.)

The following alternatives to the draft Clause for meeting the above contingency were suggested:

(i) That Southern Ireland should revert as nearly as possible to the status quo, retaining the right to send members to the Imperial Parliament, and the administration remaining as at present;

(ii) That a nominated assembly, perhaps of smaller size but sufficient to form a quorum, should be substituted for the elected assembly, with the same powers as are provided in the Bill.

Attention was also drawn to the desirability of considering further the question of whether provision should not be made for the oath of allegiance to be administered by a representative of the Crown.

The Cabinet agreed—

To refer the above questions, in the first instance, to Mr Long's Committee of Ministers, on the Government of Ireland Bill, to which the following Ministers should be added for the consideration of this question:—


The Committee were asked to consider the question in the light of the following pledge given by Mr Bonar Law in the House of Commons on March 30, 1920:—

"I think the House has a right to know what will happen if the contingency suggested by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division (Mr. E. O'Connor) really happens, if the Sinn Feiners were in a majority, and refused to work our Parliament. What would happen would be that instantly we should revert.
to the present position, and if the Bill does not make that clear — and I do not think it does — it must be made perfectly plain that until the Parliament is properly constituted and has taken the oath, the Act cannot come into operation." (Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 127, No. 36, p. 1136.)

(2) With reference to Cabinet 23 (20), Conclusion 5, the Cabinet approved the following arrangements which had been reached between the Prime Minister and the Ministers at the head of the Departments concerned in regard to Batum:

(a) Colonel Stokes will start immediately for Batum, entrusted with a Special Mission from His Majesty's Government to negotiate an agreement with the Georgian Government by which, under suitable conditions, the province and port of Batum will be handed over by the Allied forces to that Government.

(b) He will be accompanied by M. Gambashidze, the principal delegate of the Georgian Government in England.

(c) He will call at Constantinople in order to see the High Commissioner and the General Officer Commanding (General Milne).

(d) He will proceed without delay to Batum, where he will enter into immediate communication with the Georgian Government.

(e) He will endeavour to secure, in his arrangements with the Georgian Government, conditions of free transit over the Caucasian Railway, and free use of the port of Batum for the Republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan.

(f) Upon the conclusion of this agreement, the General Officer Commanding will hand over the port and province of Batum to the Georgian Government, and will then withdraw the Allied forces.

(g) The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should make the necessary communications to the various foreign Governments concerned.
With reference to Cabinet 21 (20), Conclusion 5(a), the Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for War on the subject of Travelling Concessions for Relatives visiting the Graves of the Fallen in France and Belgium (Paper C.P.-1363), as well as an extract from a reply by the Prime Minister to a Deputation from the National Federation of Discharged and Demobilised Sailors and Soldiers on February 6, 1930 (Paper C.P.-1105).

It was explained that the Young Men's Christian Association had an organisation for the purpose, but that in the case of many people a reduction in the expense due to railways and passports was necessary to place their facilities within their reach.

The Cabinet agreed —

To approve in principle the proposals of the Secretary of State for War, and to leave the amount of the expenditure and the safeguards against any abuse of the facilities to be arranged between the Secretary of State for War and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.
(4) With reference to Cabinet 10 (20), Conclusion 2, and Cabinet 8 (25), Appendix III (2), the Cabinet had before them the draft of the Ministry of Mines Bill, together with a covering Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade, explaining that the Bill dealt only with——

(i) Powers of control during any emergency period that may continue after August 31 next:

(ii) The future ordering of the industry on a permanent basis, including the establishment of a sub-ministry of Mines:

and

(iii) To some extent, provision for the improvement of social conditions in mining districts.

The Memorandum further explained that it was essential that a Bill should be passed before August 31, when the powers under which control is now operated come to an end, and that the complicated question of the acquisition of royalties by the State was not included in the draft, as the controversy which would be aroused by its inclusion would render it impossible to get the Bill through.

In addition, the Cabinet had before them the following documents:

A Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade (Paper C.P.-367),
A Memorandum by the President of the Board of Trade (Paper C.P.-513),
A Note by the Board of Trade (Paper C.P.-604),
A Memorandum by the Minister of Health (Paper C.P.-653),
A Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Home Affairs (Paper C.P.-634),
A Memorandum by the Minister of Health (Paper C.P.-922),
A Memorandum by the President of the Board of Education (Paper C.P.-1094),
A Memorandum by the Minister of Health (Paper C.P.-1439).

After the President of the Board of Trade had given a full explanation of the various provisions in the Bill, and these had been discussed in some detail, the Cabinet agreed——
To approve the introduction of the Bill, subject to the following:

(a) Agreement between the President of the Board of Trade, the Lord President of the Council, the President of the Board of Education and the Minister of Health, in regard to the Clauses relating respectively to research, education and health:

(b) In view of the strong desire of the mining community, as expressed to members of the Government on numerous occasions by the miners' leaders, to have a voice in determining the conditions of health and safety, Clause 2 of the Draft Bill, involving the transfer from the Home Office to the Ministry of Mines of the responsibility for the inspection and safety of the mines, should stand:

(c) The operation of the Clause (Clause 20) providing for the levy of a fund to be devoted to improving the amenities of the mining district, should be limited to ten years, and the objects of the fund should be widely interpreted so as to embrace not only mining but educational and recreative facilities, and the composition of the Committee (Clause 22, sub-section 3) should be agreed between the President of the Board of Trade, the President of the Board of Education and the Minister of Health:

(d) The withdrawal of Clause 16, requiring an undertaking by workers in coal mines not to cease work pending proceedings for the settlement of disputes:

(e) At the introduction of the Bill, an explanation should be made of the omission of royalties from this Bill, and an undertaking given that the Government proposed to bring in a Bill this Session to deal with royalties, on the lines of the Prime Minister's pledge.
With reference to Cabinet SB (29), Conclusion 3, the Cabinet further considered the allocation of the profits arising out of the Cotton Control Scheme in Egypt during the war.

It was pointed out that, while we had undertaken to bear half the losses of the Scheme, the disposal of the profits (if any) had been left to be agreed upon by the two Governments. The Home Government had, in fact, borne very real risks, and in equity was entitled to halve the profits. On the other hand, it was recognised that the political arguments against this course were very strong, owing to the inflamed state of Egyptian opinion and the importance of doing nothing to prejudice the conversations which were at present taking place with a view to allaying the discontent in Egypt.

In the course of the discussion it was suggested that a possible solution might be to allow the Egyptian Government to have £3,000,000 and to allocate the remaining £1,000,000 to the promotion of the cotton industry, and especially of research within the Empire. Attention was drawn to the reaction of any such solution upon the Wool Agreement with Australia.

The Cabinet decided —

To adjourn the question pending the conclusion of the negotiations now proceeding with representative Egyptians.
(6) With reference to Cabinet 33 (20), Conclusion 4, the Cabinet had before them a Joint Memorandum by the Secretary for Scotland and the President of the Board of Trade, stating that any improvement in the general herring situation which the Export Credits Scheme could produce would not be such as to enable the fishermen to put to sea and make a living, in view of the absence of immediate opportunities to dispose of the goods for cash; nor could much, if any, reliance be placed on the disposal of herrings to the countries assisted by the Relief Credits (Paper C.P.-1440).

The Cabinet were informed that the announcement of their refusal to assist the trade had caused dismay throughout the fishing community of Great Britain; local authorities were passing resolutions of protest, and agitators were beginning to prey on what was normally a peaceful industry. The representatives of the fisherfolk would, it was believed, be willing to proceed on a Treasury guarantee of £2,000,000 as against £3,500,000 which they had previously asked for Scotland. On this basis the maximum guarantee for both countries would be £4,000,000.

After some discussion the Cabinet agreed —

(a) To accept a suggestion made by the President of the Board of Trade that he should forego the use under the Export Credits Scheme of such sum as he found feasible in order that it might be devoted to the assistance of theEnglish and Scottish Herring Fishery:

(b) That the President of the Board of Trade, the Secretary for Scotland and the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, should concert a scheme for the application of the above guarantee in the most economical and advantageous manner, and should, inter alia, consider the advisability of reducing prices and, indirectly, wages:

(c) That under the guarantee the Government should have priority over a number of barrels for export:

(d) That Sir Robert Horne, Mr Munro and Lord Lee should meet the representatives of the industry and endeavour to come to an agreement within the limits of the above scheme.
The Cabinet took note of the Conclusions of the following Conference of Ministers:-

Conference of Ministers held on June 7, 1920, at 4.45 p.m.:-

NEGOTIATIONS WITH M. KRASSIN:-

(a) Release of British Subjects in Russia.
(b) Anti-British Propaganda.
(c) Position of General Wrangel.
(d) British Naval Forces in the Baltic and Black Sea.
(e) Attitude of the Polish Government.
(f) Minefields in the Baltic.

(See Appendix II).

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1,
June 11, 1920.
CABINET.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND BILL.

NOTE by Mr. W. LONG, covering Draft of the Suspensory Clause.

I circulate to the Cabinet a draft of the Suspensory Clause which carries out the assurances given in the Debate on Second Reading and on other occasions, that powers would be inserted in the Bill to suspend its operation in the event of the Parliament of Southern Ireland either refusing to function or endeavouring to act unconstitutionally.

I hope the Cabinet will come to a decision on this important question at our meeting tomorrow, as I am convinced that it will be difficult to carry the Bill, without delaying tactics being adopted in the House, until we have our Amendment on the Paper.

It is, no doubt, drastic, but it is necessary if we are to convince the Sinn-Feiners and, indeed, a good many others, that we mean business; that this Bill is a reality; and that, if it is not put into force, then other measures will have to be adopted. It has been impossible to submit this in its present form to the Committee.

(Int.) W.H.L.
(1) A candidate at an election of members for the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland shall, during the time during which nominations may be received, take and subscribe before the Returning Officer the oath of allegiance, and if he fails to do so, he shall be deemed to be withdrawn within the meaning of the provisions of the Ballot Act, 1872.

(2) It shall be the duty of the Returning Officer, and he is hereby empowered, to administer such oath.

(3) The returning officer shall send to the officer to whom returns to writs are sent with each return the forms of oath subscribed by the persons to whom the return relates, and any return to a writ not accompanied by those forms shall be invalid. The returning officer shall also forward to the same officer, with the packets of ballot papers and other documents which he is required so to forward, the forms of oaths subscribed by candidates not included in the returns to the writs.

(4) If a returning officer fails to comply with any of the provisions of this section, he shall forfeit the sum of (three hundred) pounds, recoverable at the instance of any person aggrieved or of His Majesty before a judge of the High Court sitting without a jury, and also forfeit his right to receive any sum in payment of his charges at the election.

(5) A form of oath subscribed under this section shall be deemed to be a public document within the meaning of the Forgery Act 1913.
(1) If the Lord Lieutenant certifies that the number of members of the House of Commons of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland validly returned at the first election of members of the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland is less than half the total number of members of that House, or that the number of members of the House of Commons of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland who have taken the oath as such members within days from the date on which the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland is first summoned to meet is less than one-half of the total number of members of that House, His Majesty in Council may, by Order, provide:

(a) for the dissolution of the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland as the case may be and for postponing the issue of a proclamation for summoning a new Parliament for such time as may be specified in the Order;

(b) for the exercise in the meantime of the powers of the Government of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland as the case may be by the Lord Lieutenant with the assistance of a committee consisting of such members of the Privy Council of Ireland as His Majesty may appoint for the purpose, and of the powers of the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland as the case may be by a legislative assembly consisting of the members of the said committee together with such other persons as His Majesty may appoint for the purpose;

and the Order may make such modifications in this Act as may appear to His Majesty to be necessary for giving effect to the Order, and may contain such other
consequential, incidental and supplemental provisions as may appear necessary for the purposes of the Order, and any such Order shall have effect as if enacted in this Act, but may be varied by any subsequent Order in Council.

(2) A person holding office in the House of Commons of Southern Ireland and of Northern Ireland corresponding to the office of Speaker of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom shall, at the expiration of the said period of 90 days from the date on which the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland as the case may be is first summoned to meet, send to the Lord Lieutenant a list containing the names of the members of the House who have taken the oath as such members, and for the purposes of this section a member shall be deemed not to have taken that oath unless his name is included in the list so sent.

(3) Where at the expiration of the period mentioned in any such Order-in-Council a proclamation is issued summoning a new Parliament to meet this section shall apply in like manner as it applies in the case of the first election and first summoning of Parliament.

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2 Whitehall Gardens, S.V.I.

June 10, 1920.
CONCLUSIONS of a Conference of Ministers, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, June 7th, 1920 at 4.45 p.m.

PRESENT:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair).


The Rt. Hon. Sir E. Worthington-Evans, Bart, M.P.

THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:


Sir H. Llewellyn Smith, G.C.B., Economic Adviser, Board of Trade.

Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, M.P., Joint Parliamentary Secretary, Foreign Office.

Mr. E. F. Wise, C.B., Second Secretary, Ministry of Food.

Mr. P. Kerr.


Mr. T. St. Quintin Hill, Assistant Secretary.
With reference to Cabinet 33(20), Conclusion (7)(a)

the Conference met to consider the reply of M. Krassin to the questions which had been put to him at the Conference held on May 31, 1920 (C.P.1421) and to advise the Prime Minister as to the line which should be taken with M. Krassin at a further meeting which was to be held that afternoon.

The attention of the Conference was drawn to the statement made in para. 1 of M. Krassin's reply (C.P.1421) that there were a number of Russians in England who, in spite of the agreement made between M. Litvinoff and Mr. O'Grady, were prevented by the British Government from leaving England.

The Conference were informed that the British Government had decided that every Russian who desired to do so should be allowed to return to Russia. The Soviet Government, however, had refused to take all the Russians in question, but desired to select only a limited number (125 persons). To this the Foreign Office had objected, and had insisted that all Russians who wished to return to Russia should be allowed to do so.

The Conference agreed:

That the policy hitherto adopted by the British Government should be confirmed, and that M. Krassin should be informed that the British Government had no objection whatever to all Russians who wished to return to Russia.

The Conference took note of the statement made in para. 2 of M. Krassin's reply (C.P.1421) regarding Anti-British propaganda, and agreed:

That the guarantees proposed by M. Krassin were sufficiently wide in its terms.

With reference to para. 6 of M. Krassin's reply (C.P.1421), some discussion ensued as to the line which
should be taken in regard to General Wrangel's army.

The Conference were informed that General Wrangel's army in the Crimea was now in good condition, and an important military factor. If General Wrangel were to make an attack it would be because he could not live on the Crimea, and was obliged to advance in order to obtain food for his forces. It was therefore suggested that the British Government should state that they could not support General Wrangel in a policy of aggression outside the Crimea and that such a policy would have to be undertaken by him on his own responsibility. If, however, General Wrangel would remain quiescent, the British Government would endeavour to come to an arrangement with the Soviet Government, and would in the meanwhile use their best endeavours to furnish foodstuffs to his forces.

The Conference agreed that in regard to General Wrangel a statement should be made to M. Krassin in the following sense:—

The British Government is willing to mediate between the army of General Wrangel and the Soviet Government with a view to securing effective guarantees for the security of these forces and of the refugees they are protecting. His Majesty's Government will not support offensive action by the army of General Wrangel outside the limits of the Crimea, and in the event of General Wrangel refusing mediation or refusing to accept what in the opinion of H.M. Government are effective guarantees for their security, H.M. Government will feel freed from all further responsibility on their account. If, on the other hand, the Soviet Government refuse to give what H.M. Government regard as effective guarantees for security in regard to General Wrangel's forces, and endeavour to attack their place of refuge in the Crimea, H.M. Government will consider themselves free to take any course they think fit.
The Conference took note of the suggestion in para. 7 of J. Krassin's note (3.2.1921), that all warships belonging to Powers not possessing territory bordering the Baltic and the Black Sea, should be withdrawn from those seas.

It was generally agreed:

That this request was impossible.

The opinion was expressed that the Polish Government was desirous of entering upon peace negotiations with the Soviet Government, but were waiting for a remarkable success before doing so. The military position was distinctly favourable at the moment to the Poles, who were also stated to be arranging for the transport of corn supplies from the Ukraine to Central Europe.

The Conference were generally agreed:

That it would be impossible for the British Government to make the first suggestion to the Polish Government of peace negotiations with the Soviet Government, since the British Government would in that case be held to have incurred a certain responsibility in the event of any failure of those negotiations.

With reference to Conclusion 1 of the Conference of Ministers held on June 3rd at 5.30 p.m., the Conference were informed that in the opinion of the Admiralty the duty of sweeping-up minefields in the Baltic was one which should be undertaken by Russian and German mineweepers, and in no circumstances by British sailors or vessels. Few of the mines in the Baltic were British mines.
I circulate to the Cabinet a draft of the Suspensory Clause which carries out the assurances given in the Debate on Second Reading and on other occasions, that powers would be inserted in the Bill to suspend its operation in the event of the Parliament of Southern Ireland either refusing to function or endeavouring to act unconstitutionally.

I hope the Cabinet will come to a decision on this important question at our meeting tomorrow, as I am convinced that it will be difficult to carry the Bill without delaying tactics being adopted in the House, until we have our Amendment on the Paper.

It is, no doubt, drastic, but it is necessary if we are to convince the Sinn-Feiners and, indeed, a good many others, that we mean business; that this Bill is a reality; and that, if it is not put into force, then other measures will have to be adopted. It has been impossible to submit this in its present form to the Committee.

(Int.) W.H.L.
(1) A candidate at an election of members for the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland shall, during the time during which nominations may be received, take and subscribe before the Returning Officer the oath of allegiance, and if he fails to do so, he shall be deemed to be withdrawn within the meaning of the provisions of the Ballot Act, 1872.

(2) It shall be the duty of the Returning Officer, and he is hereby empowered, to administer such oath.

(3) The returning officer shall send to the officer to whom returns to writs are sent with each return the forms of oath subscribed by the persons to whom the return relates, and any return to a writ not accompanied by those forms shall be invalid. The returning officer shall also forward to the same officer, with the packets of ballot papers and other documents which he is required so to forward, the forms of oaths subscribed by candidates not included in the returns to the writs.

(4) If a returning officer fails to comply with any of the provisions of this section, he shall forfeit the sum of (three hundred) pounds, recoverable at the instance of any person aggrieved or of His Majesty before a judge of the High Court sitting without a jury, and also forfeit his right to receive any sum in payment of his charges at the election.

(5) A form of oath subscribed under this section shall be deemed to be a public document within the meaning of the Forgery Act 1913.
(1) If the Lord Lieutenant certifies that the number of members of the House of Commons of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland validly returned at the first election of members of the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland is less than half the total number of members of that House, or that the number of members of the House of Commons of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland who have taken the oath as such members within days from the date on which the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland is first summoned to meet is less than one-half of the total number of members of that House, His Majesty in Council may, by Order, provide —

(a) for the dissolution of the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland as the case may be and for postponing the issue of a proclamation for summoning a new Parliament for such time as may be specified in the Order;

(b) for the exercise in the meantime of the powers of the Government of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland as the case may be by the Lord Lieutenant with the assistance of a committee consisting of such members of the Privy Council of Ireland as His Majesty may appoint for the purpose, and of the powers of the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland as the case may be by a legislative assembly consisting of the members of the said committee together with such other persons as His Majesty may appoint for the purpose;

and the Order may make such modifications in this Act as may appear to His Majesty to be necessary for giving effect to the Order, and may contain such other
consequential, incidental and supplemental provisions as may appear necessary for the purposes of the Order, and any such Order shall have effect as if enacted in this Act, but may be varied by any subsequent Order in Council.

(2) A person holding office in the House of Commons of Southern Ireland and of Northern Ireland corresponding to the office of Speaker of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom shall, at the expiration of the said period of days from the date on which the Parliament of Southern Ireland or Northern Ireland as the case may be is first summoned to meet, send to the Lord Lieutenant a list containing the names of the members of the House who have taken the oath as such members, and for the purposes of this section a member shall be deemed not to have taken that oath unless his name is included in the list so sent.

(3) Where at the expiration of the period mentioned in any such Order-in-Council a proclamation is issued summoning a new Parliament to meet this section shall apply in like manner as it applies in the case of the first election and first summoning of Parliament.
DRAFT CONCLUSIONS of a Conference of Ministers, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W., on Monday, June 7th, 1920 at 4:45 p.m.

PRESENT:

THE PRIME MINISTER (in the Chair).

Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P.,
and Privy Seal.

Right Hon. A. Chamberlain,
P., Chancellor of the
Exchequer.

Right Hon. W. S. Churchill,
P., Secretary of State for
Air.

Right Hon. Sir E. Godden,
G.B.E., M.P., Minister
of Transport.

Right Hon. H. A. L. Fisher,
P., President, Board of
Trade.

THE FOLLOWING WERE ALSO PRESENT:

V. G. Collway, M.P., Director
Overseas Trade.

H. Llewellyn Smith, C.C.B.,
Economic Adviser, Board of
Trade.

Mr. F. C. Kerr.

Mr. Cecil Harmsworth, M.P., Joint
Parliamentary Secretary,
Foreign Office.

Mr. E. F. Wise, C.B., Second Secre-
ty, Ministry of Food.

S. T. St. Quintin Hill, Assistant Secretary.
With reference to Cabinet 33(25), Conclusion (7)(c)

The Conference met to consider the reply of M. Krassin to the questions which had been put to him at the Conference held on May 31, 1920 (C.P.1421) and to advise the Prime Minister as to the line which should be taken with M. Krassin at a further meeting which was to be held that afternoon.

The attention of the Conference was drawn to the statement made in para. 1 of M. Krassin's reply (C.P.1421) that there were a number of Russians in England who, in spite of the agreement made between M. Litvinoff and Mr. O'Seara, were prevented by the British Government from leaving England.

The Conference were informed that the British Government had decided that every Russian who desired to do so should be allowed to return to Russia. The Soviet Government, however, had refused to take all the Russians in question, but desired to select only a limited number (125 persons). To this the Foreign Office had objected, and had insisted that all Russians who wished to return to Russia should be allowed to do so.

The Conference agreed:

That the policy hitherto adopted by the British Government should be continued, and that M. Krassin should be informed that the British Government had no objection whatever to all Russians who wished to return to Russia.

The Conference took note of the statement made in para. 2 of M. Krassin's reply (C.P.1421) regarding anti-British propaganda, and agreed:

That the guarantee proposed by M. Krassin was sufficiently wide in its terms.

With reference to para. 6 of M. Krassin's reply (C.P.1421), some discussion ensued as to the line which should
should be taken in regard to General Wrangel's army.

The Conference were informed that General Wrangel's army in the Crimea was now in good condition, and an important military factor. If General Wrangel were to make an attack it would be because he could not live on the Crimea, and was obliged to advance in order to obtain food for his Forces. It was therefore suggested that the British Government should state that they could not support General Wrangel in a policy of aggression outside the Crimea and that such a policy would have to be undertaken by him on his own responsibility. If, however, General Wrangel would remain quiescent, the British Government would endeavour to come to an arrangement with the Soviet Government, and would in the meanwhile use their best endeavours to furnish foodstuffs to his Forces.

The Conference agreed that in regard to General Wrangel a statement should be made to M. Krassin in the following sense:

The British Government is willing to mediate between the army of General Wrangel and the Soviet Government with a view to securing effective guarantees for the security of these forces and of the refugees they are protecting. His Majesty's Government will not support offensive action by the army of General Wrangel outside the limits of the Crimea, and in the event of General Wrangel refusing mediation or refusing to accept what in the opinion of H.M. Government are effective guarantees for their security, H.M. Government will feel freed from all further responsibility on their account. If, on the other hand, the Soviet Government refuse to give what H.M. Government regard as effective guarantees for security in regard to General Wrangel's forces, and endeavour to attack their place of refuge in the Crimea, H.M. Government will consider themselves free to take any course they think fit.
The Conference took note of the suggestion in para. 7 of M. Krasin's note (C.P.1461), that all warships belonging to Powers not possessing territory bordering the Baltic and the Black Sea, should be withdrawn from those Seas.

It was generally agreed:

That this request was impossible.

The opinion was expressed that the Polish Government was Steveous of entering upon peace negotiations with the Soviet Government, but were waiting for a remarkable success before doing so. The military position was distinctly favourable at the moment to the Poles, who were also stated to be arranging for the transport of corn supplies from the Ukraine to Central Europe.

The Conference were generally agreed:

That it would be impossible for the British Government to make the first suggestion to the Polish Government of peace negotiations with the Soviet Government, since the British Government would in that case be held to have incurred a certain responsibility in the event of any failure of those negotiations.

(2) Minefields in the Baltic.

With reference to conclusion 1 of the Conference of Ministers held on June 3rd at 8.30 p.m., the Conference were informed that in the opinion of the Admiralty the duty of sweeping-up minefields in the Baltic was one which should be undertaken by Russian and German minesweepers, and in no circumstances by British sailors or vessels. Few of the mines in the Baltic were British mines.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W.1.
7th June, 1920.