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- S E C R E T -

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CABINET 48 (20).

CONCLUSIONS of a Meeting of the Cabinet, held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.1, on FRIDAY, AUGUST 13, 1920, at 11-30 a.m.

PRESENT:-

The Prime Minister (in the Chair).

The Right Hon. A. Bonar Law, M.P., Lord Privy Seal.	The Right Hon. A.J. Balfour, O.M., M.P., Lord President of the Council.
The Right Hon. A. Chamberlain, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.	The Right Hon. Lord Birkenhead, Lord Chancellor.
The Right Hon. E. Shortt, K.C., M.P., Secretary of State for Home Affairs.	The Right Hon. the Viscount Milner, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Secretary of State for the Colonies.
The Right Hon. W.S. Churchill, M.P., Secretary of State for War and Air.	The Right Hon. Sir Hamar Green- wood, Bart., K.C., M.P., Chief Secretary for Ireland.
The Right Hon. R. Munro, K.C., M.P., Secretary for Scotland.	The Right Hon. T.J. Macnamara, LL.D., M.P., Minister of Labour.
The Right Hon. Sir Robert Horne, G.B.E., K.C., M.P., President of the Board of Trade.	The Right Hon. H.A.L. Fisher, M.P., President of the Board of Education.
The Right Hon. Lord Lee of Fareham, G.B.E., K.C.B., Minister of Agri- culture and Fisheries.	The Right Hon. Sir E. Geddes, G.C.B., G.B.E., M.P., Minister of Transport.
The Right Hon. Sir L. Worthington Evans, Bart., M.P.	

Mr Thomas JonesActing Secretary.

~~Captain L.F. Burgis~~.....Assistant Secretary.

LEAGUE OF
NATIONS.

International
Court of Jus-
tice.

(1) The Cabinet were informed that the League of Nations was bound, under the Covenant, to set up an International Court of Justice. A Committee had been appointed, which had produced a unanimous Report regarding the constitution of this Court, and it was necessary that a small Committee should be appointed to examine this Report critically, so that the views of the British Government on it might be available by the time the General Assembly of the League met in November next.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the Lord Chancellor, together with the Law Officers of the Crown, should examine the Report of the League of Nations Committee with regard to the establishment of an International Court of Justice and advise the Cabinet upon it.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

(2) The Cabinet had before them a Joint Memorandum by the Minister of Health and the Minister of Labour (Paper C.P.-1747) relating to Unemployment.

It was stated that in the coming Autumn the unemployment problem might constitute a serious danger, and that in order to try and lessen this danger it was necessary that the Government should be prepared with some scheme to provide employment during the winter months. There were ominous warnings that in certain trades, owing to lack of orders, there would be discharges on a large scale. In addition to this, there was the presence of 200,000 ex-Service men totally unskilled, for whom it was now impossible to find work. In the circumstances, it was proposed that a strong Cabinet Committee should be appointed to make recommendations as to the measures which might be necessary for dealing with this problem and to explore the proposals which the Minister of Health and the Minister of Labour had put forward in their Memorandum. Further, it was asked that this Committee might have executive power to make offers to Local Authorities, in the event of their being able to put forward a good, sound scheme, on which men might be employed, which would relieve distress in their localities, of a Government contribution of £1 for every £1 the Local Authorities would contribute to the cost of the undertaking. With regard to this suggestion it was contended that this would lead to manufacturing work with which the nation could dispense, for the relief of the unemployed when there was other work, such as houses, which were most urgently required. It was further suggested that it might be necessary for the Government to take a drastic step with regard to the attitude of skilled labour in the building trade in refusing to allow the employment of unskilled labour.

The Cabinet agreed ---

That a Committee should be appointed, composed as follows:-

Sir L. Worthington Evans (Chairman),
 Dr. Macnamara,
 Sir Robert Horne,
 Dr. Addison,
 Mr. Munro,
 Mr. Arthur Neal,

Mr Pembroke Wicks (Secretary),

to examine the measures which should be taken to meet abnormal unemployment in the coming winter, with special reference to —

- (a) The application of short time:
- (b) The Government's Housing Programme:
- (c) The training of unskilled ex-Service men:
- (d) Emigration.

PASSPORTS TO
 REVOLUTIONARIES
 WISHING TO GO
 TO RUSSIA.

(3) The Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Home Secretary (Paper C.P.-1690) stating that the question had arisen as to whether passports should be granted to Arthur Macmanus and David Ramsay, two men with revolutionary records, who had expressed a wish to go to Russia.

The Cabinet were generally agreed that, whilst Russia continued to detain British officers in prison, it was undesirable for the Government to grant passports to men with records such as Arthur Macmanus and David Ramsay to travel in that country, and that such a proceeding would be a contradiction in terms.

The Cabinet agreed —

That the passports should not be issued.

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SECRET
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EXTRACT FROM THE CONCLUSIONS OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET
HELD AT 10, DOWNING STREET, S.W., ON FRIDAY, AUGUST 13th.,
1920, AT 11.30 A.M.IRELAND.

- (4) The Cabinet had under consideration the position of the ten or twelve English Civil Servants now attached to the Irish Executive.

Position of
English Civil
Servants
attached to
the Irish
Executive.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that up to the present these men had been immune from the attacks of Sinn Fein, but he feared now that the Restoration of Order in Ireland Bill had been passed, that such a condition of affairs might not continue. Up to the present these men had not lived in the Castle, but the Chief Secretary agreed with him that it was now necessary for them to do so. In the circumstances, their usefulness to the Irish Executive must be greatly diminished and he enquired whether they should not be recalled. On the other hand, it was stated that the danger to those Civil Servants was not so great as suggested, and that the fact of these ten or twelve men being in the Castle would not affect the efficiency of the Civil Servants who remained outside the Castle to the degree which had been anticipated.

It was strongly urged that they should be allowed to remain.

The Cabinet agreed -

That the presence in Ireland of the ten or twelve English Civil Servants now attached to the Irish Executive was still desirable, and that they should reside in Dublin Castle.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
27th. August, 1920.

(5) Arising out of the discussion recorded in the ~~previous Conclusion~~, doubt was expressed as to whether the Restoration of Order in Ireland Act would succeed for any length of time unless the opinion of this country was behind it. Strong measures would be required to put down the policy of the extremists, and there might come a point when public opinion would desert the Government. Even if the Act was successful, there would be no party left in Ireland with which the Government could negotiate a settlement. The position at present was that the Six Counties wanted Home Rule for themselves, and would not be content simply to remain part of the United Kingdom. In the South and West there was no Unionist Party in the old sense left. Many of them were embracing, however reluctantly, the new ideas, and were not unwilling to make use of the Sinn Fein Courts. In the circumstances it was necessary that the Government should review its policy and the length it could go in the way of concessions.

It was stated that the Prime Minister had made the position of the Government clear in this respect on more than one occasion, and had expressed the limits within which the Government were prepared to negotiate. It was suggested, however, that there would be an advantage if the position of the Government could be re-stated by the Prime Minister on the adjournment of Parliament next week.

A draft of a fresh announcement was then read and considered by the Cabinet (Appendix). It was believed in some quarters that such an announcement, which did not differ in substance from those already made, would secure the support of the "Freeman's Journal", the "Irish Times", the Southern Unionists and the Nationalists, ^{and} if made by the Prime Minister would encourage the Civil Servants and Police in Ireland in the discharge of their difficult duties.

The Cabinet agreed --

That an announcement on the lines of the draft in the Appendix should be made by the Prime Minister on the Motion for the Adjournment.

LAND SETTLEMENT
COMMITTEE.

(6) With reference to Cabinet 40 (20), Conclusion 2, the Cabinet were informed that the Prime Minister had nominated the following Committee:-

Sir L. Worthington Evans. (Chairman)
Lord Lee,
Mr. Munro,
Mr. Montagu,
Sir Robert Horne,
Lord Clinton,
Lord Forteviot,
Lord Shaw,
Mr. W.S. Royce, M.P.,

Mr. R.B. Howorth (Secretary)

NAVAL CONSTRUCTION.

(7) The Cabinet took note of a Memorandum which had been circulated by the First Lord of the Admiralty on Naval Construction, it being understood that the steps proposed by the Board of Admiralty did not commit the Government to any expenditure (Paper C.P.-1677).

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2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.

August 13, 1920.

A P P E N D I X.

SUGGESTED ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE IRISH QUESTION, TO BE MADE BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE MOTION FOR THE ADJOURNMENT.

I thought I had already made the position on the Irish Question clear, but lest there be any doubt I will repeat it.

We will not break the pledges which successive Governments have given to the six counties of Ulster. They must not be coerced to any form of government which they do not desire.

We will not have a Republic. Let there be no ambiguity -- by that I mean England will insist on keeping control of the Navy, the Army, the ports for strategic purposes, International affairs and coinage.

We are willing to pay a great price for peace, and within these limits we are willing to negotiate with any body or persons who can assure us that an Act drawn within these limits will ensure peace. Beyond those limits we will never go, and if Ireland does not choose to negotiate within them then there can be no peace, but unending strife. It is for the Irish people to secure agreement amongst themselves within those limits.

. . . .